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HOW CAN I IMPROVE BEHAVIOUR IN MY SCHOOL, IN PARTICULAR, FOR
CHILDREN WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITION ON THE PLAYGROUND?

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ABSTRACT

This study sets out to discover how behaviour in school can be improved, in particular, for pupils with autistic spectrum condition at playtimes. It was prompted by the recognition that there had been little scholarly attention paid to playground behaviour for some years. The lack of written evidence on the subject was noted by Blatchford and other researchers in 1989; and 16 years later in 2005 Pellegrini made a similar observation. In the Primary National Strategy for playtimes and lunchtimes, DfES (2005a) it was suggested that without clear organisation structures and caring supervision, playgrounds can become unruly places where symptoms of unease can aggravate and grow. These concerns were also recognised in the school where this study took place and was a catalyst for the research. Through an action research approach of planning, implementing and then reviewing the cycles of research, some conclusions have been reached. The school where the study was conducted has since closed. It was a mixed community special school in South Yorkshire. The study was conducted by a class teacher at the school and concludes with a discussion of a topology of behaviours which could affect conduct on the playground for children with autistic spectrum condition.

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There were some class teachers and senior managers who were working together within the management group looking at behaviour in school during the first cycle of research. Some of the presented data came from this behaviour management group as we collaborated to develop ways to improve the overall behaviour management in school. Most of the work which has been described in this cycle was carried out by the researcher. I am also grateful to the Teaching Assistants who worked in the study school and were involved in activities to help achieve the aims of the second and third cycle of research which was to improve children's behaviour on the playground. The Teaching Assistants were students themselves at the time and on various courses. They readily shared their observations of pupils with me in a positive way. These colleagues helped me to maintain motivation with other staff as together there was a sense of overall purpose.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

<u>Introduction</u>	1
The purpose of my research.	2
The school in which I conducted my research.	2
The reason for this particular field of study.	3
Data collection	4
Background to the research	5
Autistic Spectrum Condition	7
My prima facie question	8

Chapter 2

<u>Literature review</u>	10
Theories of behaviour	10
Playtime and behaviour.	23
Behaviour on the playground and ASC	39
Real life examples from the literature	46
The Incredible 5-Point Scale	48
Social stories	48
Summary	51

Chapter 3

<u>Methodology 1</u>	54
Research questions	54
Cycles of research	55
First cycle methods	56
Second cycle methods	57
Third cycle; case study methods	58
Constraints	62
Generalisation	63
Validity	64

Chapter 4

<u>Methodology 2</u>	67
Background	67
Participant Action Research Theory	67
Participant Action Research Findings	68
Research and the Researcher	72
Methods	73
Questionnaires	74
The questionnaires in the first cycle	75
Pupil	75
Staff	76

Parent	76
Second Cycle; Playground questionnaire	77
Third Cycle; Interviews of pupils with ASC using a questionnaire.	79
Visual drawing method	81
Registers	82
Diaries	83
Ethical issues	84

Chapter 5

<u>The First Cycle.</u>	88
The keeping pupils safe project	90
The study of Luiselli et al (2005)	91
Positive behaviour	95
Pupil questionnaire	96
Analysis of the pupil questionnaire	97
Staff questionnaire	100
Analysis of the staff questionnaire	102
Parent questionnaire	103
Analysis of the parent questionnaire	104
New procedures for behaviour management	105
Conclusion of the first cycle	106

Chapter 6

<u>The Second Cycle</u>	115
The playground questionnaire	120
Analysing the playground questionnaire	123
Data from registers; 2006-2007	126
Conclusion of the second cycle	129

Chapter 7

<u>The Third Cycle</u>	135
Commonality	135
Interviews using a questionnaire	137
Visual drawings findings	139
Analysis of the participants	144
Conclusion of the third cycle.	156
Topology of behaviours which could affect conduct on the playground.	161

Chapter 8

Conclusion	172
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<u>List of Appendices</u>	179
Appendix 1	
1 st Cycle; Behaviour management group, chronological diary of events	179
Appendix 2	
2nd cycle - Diary of observations on the playground	182
Appendix 3	
3rd cycle - Diary of observations of 4 pupils on the playground	189
Appendix 4-Jay first questionnaire	199
Contrasting drawings; Appendix 4 and Appendix 5	200
Appendix 5-Jay second questionnaire	201
Appendix 6-Lou first questionnaire	202
Contrasting drawings; Appendix 6 and Appendix 7	203
Appendix 7- Lou second questionnaire	204
Appendix 8-Adie first questionnaire	205
Contrasting drawings; Appendix 8 and Appendix 9	206

Appendix 9- Adie second questionnaire	207
Appendix 10- Ian first questionnaire	208
Contrasting drawings; Appendix 10 and Appendix 11	209
Appendix 11- Ian second questionnaire	210
Appendix 12- White Sheet	211
Appendix 13- Pink Sheet	212
Appendix 14- Letter to governors	213
Appendix 15- compilation chart of the involvement in activities	214
Appendix 16- A Selection of photographs from the study	215
Appendix 17- A selection of photographs to show how my practice has been incorporated into my new school.	219
Poster about the research.	221
<u>List of References</u>	223

List of Tables

Table 1 – Third Cycle Questionnaire	80
Table 2 - Total figures of completed white behaviour sheets	88
Table 3 – White behaviour sheet comparison	92
Table 4 - Selected pupil questionnaire responses	96
Table 5 - Selected staff questionnaire responses	101
Table 6 - Selected parent questionnaire responses	103
Table 7- Selected playground questionnaire responses	121

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASC	Autism Spectrum Condition
CBT	Cognitive/Behavioural Therapy
BERA	British Educational Research Association
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DfEE	Department for Education and Employment
DfES	Department for Education and Science
DMBC	Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council
DVD	Digital Versatile Disc
ECM	Every Child Matters Agenda
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
ILS	Integrated Learning Systems
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulties
MSSR	Moderated School Self Review
NASUWT	National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers
NHS	National Health Service
NT	Neuro Typical
Ofsted	Office for standards in education
PAR	Participatory Action Research
PE	Physical Education
PESS	Physical Education and School Sport
PESSCL	Physical Education School Sport and Club Links
PESSYP	Physical Education and Sport Strategy for Young People
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
QCA	Qualifications and Curriculum Agency
SEAL	Social Emotional Aspects of Learning programme
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEBD	Social Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
TA	Teaching Assistant
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

S. Endicott
XXXXXX

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As a class teacher in a community special school, I enrolled on the Education Doctorate course because I wanted to acquire personal knowledge and conduct some research in a professional context which could improve learning and school development. My initial intention for the research was, to some extent, to help improve the behaviour in the school where I worked. I was aware that this research was my personal choice rather than a professional expectation of a teacher and it lead me to ask the question, “Why was I driven to do this research, other than the obvious enhancement of my professional development?” I attempted to answer this question nine years ago when I enrolled on the Education Doctorate; I wrote in my research diary,

I know that I want to undertake research to find out things that I don’t know concerning my classroom practice. I want to be able to answer some specific questions. I want to explore and explain some ideas, and once I have investigated these ideas the next questions I need to ask myself are, what will my next step be? What will I do with the knowledge I have gained? After the research will I want to change my classroom practice?

Currently, I still ask myself similar questions about my practice, but some of my methods have been changed as a result of my research. I am an experienced teacher and now have a job in senior management in a community special school but, by comparison, I am still a relative newcomer to undertaking research projects.

Hitchcock (95:7) implies that “teacher research,” refers to the research that a practicing teacher is able to undertake in the context of their professional practice. As a teacher researcher I still

wonder if I am a teacher who is a researcher or a researcher who is a teacher. I have the continued desire to be involved in putting theory into practice, but during my studies I have shaped my design to pin down the exact area which I wanted to research. I began to realise that this area was behaviour management.

The purpose of my research

The purpose of my research is:

- To find out how I can improve the management of behaviour in my school.
- To discover what theories of learning underpin behaviour management changes in my school?
- To answer whether structured sports activities can help with the management of behaviour at playtimes?
- To answer whether structured sports activities can help with the behaviour management of children, statemented with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), at playtimes?

The school in which I conducted my research

In line with school's policy on confidentiality, and in order to ensure good ethical practice, I have changed the name of the school. It is referred to throughout by the fictitious name „Hay School“. To protect their identity, participants are given pseudonyms when it is necessary to name them. Hay School, which has since closed, was a mixed community special school in South Yorkshire. It catered for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD). It was housed on a split location site of upper and lower school. The lower site was about two miles distance from the upper site. I

worked in the lower school and conducted my study there. In lower school there were four classes which were organised in ability groups rather than chronologically. All of the pupils attending Hay had transferred from a mainstream setting at various stages of their education. Some of the pupils were identified with additional communication problems and ASC. There were also some pupils with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). At the time of the study, around one quarter of the pupils were noted to have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD). Many of these pupils had previously experienced interruptions in their education because of their negative behaviour and such difficulties often lead them to display unacceptable behaviour and lack of self-control. In class this could vary from a pupil shouting out to a display of severe aggression which made Hay school unusual in terms of school behaviour.

The reason for this particular field of study

I need to explain what led me to choose this particular field of study. During the previous few years there had been changes in the school's management and the school had been through a period of significant organisational turbulence. These changes had a huge impact on many aspects of the school's work, notably, achieving consistency in managing behaviour. Concern about behaviour management in school was highlighted on Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council (DMBC, 2004) and the Office for standards in education (Ofsted, 2006) inspection reports. Consequently, morale at the school became low not only in response to the report but also the growing disaffection of the pupils. In May 2005, the temporary headteacher was permanently appointed and she made a start on improving behaviour management. A management group was formed in November 2005. Procedures and strategies used in school

were restructured. I joined the group because I wanted to expand my knowledge of behaviour management and support any future developments. Ultimately, I wanted to bring about behaviour management improvements in my school. This then became a main focus for my research.

Data collection

Collection of data for the study was made over a three year period; initially, from the permanent appointment of a new headteacher at the school in May 2005 and the subsequent formation of the behaviour management group in November 2005, to the end of July 2008; the date when the school closed down. Because of this I had to finish the collection of data, before the validity became compromised. I was unable to continue the data collection in the next school where I worked because many of the variables in my research had changed particularly, the cohort of children and the staff. Between the years 2005-2008, I was also studying research methods. This helped clarify the aim and purpose of my doctoral research. In turn, this assisted me to make clearer decisions about my research methods, and having identified the purpose of my research, the method choices followed.

My philosophy for education is active and fun based, involving all children and staff in the relevant learning so the pupils can be helped to make sense of the world around them. I am always striving for a change for the better and want to establish why and how I can improve matters. My specific interest is to change something about the behaviour in school with an emphasis on action and interpretation. I believe that my project sits comfortably with the participatory action research (PAR) approach; studying behaviour improvement in my school whilst working there was a good premise for this kind of methodology.

The study for my doctorate was established as a result of the behaviour I wanted to change in my school. My research also guided me to review and revise my own practice. I could only change this by using systematic research and gaining knowledge of some robust theoretical models to critically apply to the learning problems in my school. PAR is a systematic interactive approach which involves collecting evidence, and the data I collected became the foundation for rigorous reflection and action. Over the three years of the study, a positive spiral of improved practice was created and a change was made after each cycle of the three cycles of research.

Background to the research

My professional background is of diverse experiences as a teacher and a nursery nurse, all of which I bring with me to my research. It involves many years of working in mainstream and special schools and observing children with SEN at playtimes. As a teacher I am interested in a “Get Active” programme of play and sport activities to use as a tool to improve behaviour on the playground. I did not undertake the research to provide evidence of any one theory or to test a hypothesis in a controlled way; the aims are to investigate, reflect and improve behaviour in the school. If I am able to generate some new knowledge about behaviour in school and on the playground because of my research, then this will help to develop new ways to assist the children to interact more positively. The study will enable me to reflect on and develop further, my own style of positive behaviour management with learners in my school. Greater understanding of the theories of learning and practices will assist me in helping pupils acquire more acceptable behaviour in school and on the playground. The Steer Report (DfES, 2005b) presents the core belief that there is no single solution to the problem of poor behaviour. It says that all schools possess the potential to raise standards if they are consistent in implementing good practice in

learning, teaching and behaviour management. The report (2005b:12) reiterates the belief that good teaching is directly linked to effective learning, which ultimately minimises poor behaviour. It appears therefore that in order to improve behaviour throughout school, good quality teaching needs to take place in the classroom and on the playground.

Blatchford, in Britain, and Pellegrini, in America, are two of the main researchers in the field of playground behaviour. Blatchford (1989) stated that there was surprisingly little written material about school playground behaviour and it could be interesting to note why such behaviour has not been studied before. He recognised that most evidence was embedded in school policy, or from research which was anecdotal and small-scale. He suggested that playtimes could be the forgotten part of the school day. Literature about playtimes discusses the interventionist view of playtimes, which involves deliberate management of pupil's behaviour, supported by environmental changes. By 2008 the Government published some documented school projects which are about the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency (QCA) (due to education reforms this agency was terminated at the end of March 2012) and Physical Education and School Sport (PESS) school projects. Such projects support the notion that pupil behaviour on the playground improves as a result of organised physical activities at break times (QCA, 2006; 2008). These reports also support the idea of pupils being involved in physical play or sport type activity which is directed by staff or older pupils at playtimes. Such organised activities could substantiate the idea that the Government could be steering playtimes to become a part of the prescribed National Curriculum for PE. In opposition to this, there is Blatchford's non-interventionist view which suggests giving pupils more autonomy to play interactively and opportunities to develop socially. However, this

freedom presents the danger of negative behaviour being predominant at play times and as a result, tension is being created between control and independence on the playground. It begs the question that as educationalists, do we support prescriptive playtimes or freedom of choice? It could be that the sense of freedom in the open space of the playground may make children feel emotionally insecure and this could manifest itself through a change in behaviour.

ASC

I observed that some children with ASC do not readily participate in structured activities on the playground. This could make it appear that they lack interest or are being deviant at playtimes. I wondered if they could be engaged in structured sports activities and if so, would this help with the behaviour management of these children? Consequently, children with ASC became an additional focus of my research. Wolfberg (2003) explains that the reality for many children with autism is that their behaviour does not fit into peer perceptions of what is “normal”. For example, unconventional attempts to socialise and play are frequently mistaken as a sign of deviance or limited social interest. The final part of my literature review examined the behaviour of children with ASC on the playground, calling on the work of White (2006) and Plimley and Bowen (2006) who have observed common characteristics in children with an ASC diagnosis, which may affect their social play and behaviour on the playground. I also used the work of Williams (1992, 2003, and 2005); an author with autism, who, upon meeting her in 2009 gave me her own personal accounts about what it is like at playtimes for a pupil with ASC. This will be discussed further in the relevant chapters.

My prima facie question

The initial intention of my research was about improving the behaviour in the school where I worked. My focuses eventually lead to the playground where I have taken a particular interest in the behaviour of children with ASC.

My prima facie question became:

“How can I improve behaviour in my school, in particular, on the playground?”

I believe this question focused the aims of my study but also recognised that it may be developed further.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Here follows a review of the key literature relating to the theme of my research. The review is divided into three parts. The first will be about theories of learning and the relevant ideas that have underpinned work in special education, particularly behaviour management and are still evident today. The second part will move on to examine recent literature about school playtimes which is specific to my research. The final part will look at characteristics of ASC and observed behaviour at playtime, in school, for pupils with ASC. The literature clearly points out that the children with ASCs attempts to socialise with others are regularly perceived as a sign of deviance. The review is presented in this way as the research brings the different views together. Theory is useful to structure thinking and is a compatible framework to build my study on. My educational research is informed by my literature review about theory as this can be used as an intellectual tool to map the knowledge domain, drive the research and support new practices in school.

Theories of behaviour

Within the humanistic approach, as suggested by Rogers (1951; 1967), classroom learning tends to be highly value-driven. There is a notion of the adult as the facilitator of fundamental reinforcement. Teachers encourage pupils to recognise for themselves that they are inherently self motivated to be rewarded. The reward is a sense of achievement, from within, a satisfaction of a personal need which leads to feeling good and involves understanding your own strengths and weaknesses. Pupils care for and help each other and ultimately can become independent learners.

The Assessment Reform Group's assessment principles for learning (2002) use key factors which include recognising the profound influence assessment and involving pupils in self assessment have on their self esteem, their motivation, ownership of their learning and raising their achievement levels, during which they can become aware of their own intrinsic worth. A perspective on child development and behaviour is provided by Maslow (1970) who formulated the theory of human motivation. This is arranged in a hierarchy of five needs, beginning at the bottom with physical requirements and then progressively leading to the peak of the hierarchy. This stage would then be, as Hough (2006) explains the development of one's full potential as a human being, self actualisation, the ability to become what one is capable of becoming. It is quite noticeable within my school setting how quickly a pupil's behaviour becomes agitated and demanding if their lower hierarchy physical needs and relationship expectations are not being met. Atkinson (2002:19) reiterates that if these needs are not met the child will be unable to meet higher order needs and progress towards the fifth level of the hierarchy, which is the fulfilment of one's potential. Classroom practice which creates an environment for learning is conducive to reaching potential and is planned around pupil's strengths where everyone is accepted as they are with conditions of personal involvement, stimulation of thinking and self evaluation (Reece and Walker, 2003). Learners feel comfortable considering new ideas and take charge of their own learning.

There are shared values between Roger's (1951) and Maslow's (1970) theories. The similarities are the existence of positive attitudes between teacher and learner in a personal centred approach to learning. Rogers (1951) put forward the concept of unconditional positive regard. He believes, along with Berryman (2005) and Hough (2006) that qualities of worth and self esteem need

developing along with an empathetic relationship, taking account of any emotional difficulties and embracing reciprocity of liking, so that pupils can reach their best potential. This would appear to echo Maslow's concept of self actualisation (1970). It also reflects the sentiment that failure at school can easily lead to global low self esteem (Atkinson, 2002 and Holt, 2004) and is particularly true in the school in my study, where the children have learning difficulties and have also previously failed in mainstream settings. Cooper (1994) and Travell (cited in Reader, 1999) identify that an essentially humanistic view of children is required as a key element of pedagogy, particularly when teaching those with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This can include experiencing, in class, an ethos of unconditional positive regard to enhance self esteem and thrive in school. That is providing an atmosphere in which pupils are loved for themselves and disciplined for their behaviour. The humanist perspective which is a more personal one is a valuable consideration which may assist my study because many of the pupils require development of their concept of self; their self esteem, their self control and their sense of pride.

In contrast there is the behaviourist learning perspective in which the emphasis is on extrinsic rewards. Motivation is external to the learner. It is about observations and rewards from the world within which you are operating. Such rewards and consequences are competency based and are influenced by behavioural themes. In school this can be instant visual rewards of stickers, stars, merits, prizes, certificates and commendations in class and school assemblies or an auditory reward of positive verbal reinforcement. Such incentives can be instantly effective in celebrating achievement when used appropriately. Hough (2006) makes it clear that the behaviourist school of thought believe that children respond well to rewards. That is applying a reward for positive behaviour as a way of reinforcing and shaping more acceptable behaviour and when rewards are

not given then the required behaviour diminishes. Responses followed by reinforcers are likely to be repeated. Rewards are given step by step until you achieve what you want. This is a method of behavioural control. In the second half of the last century, behaviourism tended to dominate attempts to understand and deal with emotional and behavioural difficulties in educational settings (Cooper, 1994). Behavioural applications have been useful when dealing with problems of classroom control. This has certainly been true in my setting as the behaviour management policy in school reflects this standpoint. The behaviour management policy in „Hay“ school will be examined as part of my study.

Cooper (1994), Robertson (1996) and Cowley (2006) suggest using rewards and sanctions as a way of encouraging and enforcing improved behaviour. Rewards help to motivate students, especially those who do not have a natural inclination to stay on task. Sanctions give a way of making pupils work within set boundaries. Robertson (1996) and Donaldson (1978) explain that if rewards are withdrawn from activities, pupils may lose interest in the activities themselves, therefore a token economy could lead to token learning. It may be more fitting to look beyond rewards to find ways of motivating learning (Levine and Fasnacht, 1979:816). Rewards should be introduced to develop skills and behaviours and they should be phased out when expectations are being met. The Elton report (DES,1989) and Allen (cited in Reader,1999) explain that working in an atmosphere of praise rather than criticism raises everyone's self esteem, so praise can be used to emphasise the positive and continue the recognition of good conduct. They also recognise this constructive method of dealing with misbehaviour as applying one of the principles of good classroom management.

In my school, pupils statemented with SEBD, some of whom are included in my study, can feel uncomfortable accepting open praise, especially if they have a history of experiencing negative encounters. Rogers (2006:124) says that it seems to be more effective to praise in private or among amicable peers. As the pupils in my study moved up school it appears that their role models changed. In this instance, the adult influence became less important and in class, they seem to be more influenced by members of their peer group rather than the adults around them. According to Mukherji (2001:19), this is one reason why it appears to be more of a challenge for teachers to influence the behaviour of the older pupils in school. At this point, it is important to note that if teachers are role models for their pupils, then their behaviour may bring about observational learning for the young people in their care so it would be beneficial to mention the positive conduct of teachers in the school behaviour or code of conduct policy. Hay school places emphasis on the expectations it sets for staff and this is recognised in the school behaviour policy. Providing positive role models and being punctual, is included and I suggest that these could be a part of any educationalist's pre-emptive strategies in behaviour management.

Seminal behavioural psychologists such as Pavlov (1927) and Skinner (1953) showed that human behaviour, including learning, is a mechanical relationship between an organism and its environment, by chance or design, which is observable. Through meticulous studies in a pure and measurable way, Skinner showed that you could actually shape behaviour how you want, by ignoring undesired behaviour and using reinforcers to reward desired behaviour (cited in Pritchard, 2005:19). A dilemma is created here when using this method of operant conditioning with pupils at school because personal values, mental processes and individual understanding are overlooked. Learning appears to be taken at a superficial level as any underlying emotional

issues, which could be factors contributing to behaviour are ignored. There appears to be no difference between actions, feelings and thinking. Behaviour is controlled by conditioning. Medcof (1984) says that behaviourism is criticised because it is too mechanistic and concerned with overt behaviour, rather than internal processing. This is not at all surprising, considering that Skinner examined pigeons and rat's behaviour and then generalised his findings to explain all learning development in humans. Some psychologists were interested to see if the results of the animal studies could be applied to children in school. An American study (Hall and Jackson, 1968 cited in Mukherji, 2001:13) looked at the effects of reinforcement on a boy who was considered to be very disruptive with a low concentration span. The teacher used praise, smiles and a pat on the back as ways for reinforcing good behaviour and this was found to have a dramatic effect and the child's behaviour improved. However, when the teacher withdrew the reinforcement, the child's behaviour deteriorated.

Teaching based on the principles of behaviourism is used in education today. In the Local Authority in which I am working, there is a Portage Early Intervention Educational System. Portage (Jennings, 1988) and the Lovaas Method (2002) are influenced by applied behaviour techniques, for young children with SEN who are taught in a structured manner under controlled conditions, accompanied by lots of praise and reinforcement using the technique of shaping. This is a useful way of looking at things as objectives can be broken down into small achievable strands with pupils receiving rewards of praise for achieving each stage; it could be identified as a special pedagogy for the early year's child with a special need. The portage model of teaching can also enable parents and teachers to plan in a prescriptive way so that appropriate learning may take place for young children with developmental delay. There are conflicts however,

because these models aim solely at changing behaviour and are not always concerned with thoughts. The achievement of Portage, over the past twenty years in Great Britain, has been researched, evaluated and documented (Cameron and Coleman, 1997). Lovaas' original study (1987) was replicated by Howard et al (2006) and again showed gains in the children's I.Q points compared with a second group who received no behavioural treatment. Pritchard (2005) explains that programmed learning is developed from the theories of Skinner and others. In particular, the Integrated Learning Systems (ILS), a computer based system for learning, where information is presented in small amounts and correct responses reinforced. This method assumes that the pupil's learning is solitary and could leave the pupil lacking understanding about the lesson itself. Behavioural teaching takes the stance of defining a problem in a pupil and sorting it out with a programme. It is direct and instructional, prescriptive and diagnostic and moves away from my theory which is that teaching is as an interactive activity. The theory is to find out what is wrong with the child with a series of tests and then give a programme that develops individual skills. Having worked as a portage teacher within the framework of behaviourism for part of my teaching career, it is easy to see the continued effect that behavioural models have on shaping learning and achieving effective behaviour management techniques with very young children, especially those with SEN. Behaviourism could be a suitable theory to underpin my study, however, as Thomas (2007:22) suggests, underpinning learning with a certain theory is;

Bound up with the teacher's own beliefs, values, experience and context.

Teachers do not undertake their practice naked; they have their own ideas about things which they construct in their social situation. This reflects in their practice and may affect the way in which the teacher presents their teaching and learning to make it operate successfully for them, in

their school, which for me is often a place with much challenging behaviour. The idea of the behaviourist learning theory is extended through personal experience and metacognition, in my teaching world, to a new theory about learning, which is then individual or practical to me and it is about the social construction of learning in my workplace.

This personal theory could have affected the way I thought about my research question of changing the management of behaviour in my school and developing new ideas in my classroom practice, by underpinning it with some of my own knowledge, especially my knowledge about Portage methods. Cooper (1994:05) explains that theory can be used by the practising teacher as a means of formulating new hypotheses to be employed in their own working context. Ainscow (1998) makes clear how he is continually provoked into reconsidering his own thinking and practice. His selection and use of a particular teaching approach and strategy arises from personal perceptions about learning and learners. My perceptions too are influenced by my Portage teaching methods as I continually break down objectives into small achievable tasks. Thomas (2007) says that students of education have also been encouraged to develop their own personal or practical theories. Travell (cited in Reader, 1999) suggests that it is important to recognise and take into account the perspective of the researcher themselves and of their prevailing social climate during the formulation of any theories concerning child development. Practically, the behavioural approach is helpful for guiding thoughts although it is not set in stone and should not limit or eliminate any of my personal thinking. It is useful to clarify and refine where my thinking is coming from, my own ontology. I do not want to become so obsessed with behaviourism that I begin to lose sight of other relevant theories. To some extent, I agree with Pritchard (2005:13) who says that, in class, behaviourism can produce changes in the right

direction by decreasing negative behaviour and establishing a more orderly atmosphere which is conducive to learning.

Personal use of behaviourism as a theory is a useful foundation for achieving this. It moves forward a number of ideas about behaviour management changes in my school and assists any development in my epistemology. My classroom practice was suitably influenced by studying this theory and from that practice there is some new knowledge about behaviour management in school. The behavioural approach can produce changes in the desired direction and was useful to understand any behaviour management changes in the school in which I was working. However, changes can happen by intrinsic motivation as well.

Unlike behavioural psychology, cognitive psychology acknowledges the existence of internal mental states like personal beliefs and motivation. The cognitive learning theory places focus on the student and how they gain and organise knowledge. Pritchard (05:37) reiterates that learning is an active not a passive activity. It examines internal cognitive processes such as problem solving, perceiving, reasoning and language, which alternates between stimulus and response to help pupils to make sense of the environment. Learning occurs regardless of any change in behaviour. Cognitivism adds the conscious force back into the learning process and presents learning as a goal, helping pupils to develop different thinking habits.

McNamara (2001) presents a case study of Tony, who was placed in a school for SEBD pupils because of his violent and aggressive behaviour. Unsuccessful attempts were made to meet his needs within a behavioural learning regime. By addressing his thoughts and feelings as

well as his behaviour the model was changed to a cognitive behavioural model of intervention and Tony's behaviour was improved by how he thought about himself, how he changed his negative thinking patterns and developed his self efficacy, his belief that he could change his behaviour. The study demonstrated that the behaviourist and cognitive models can complement each other.

Bruner (1960) is an advocate of discovery learning. He believes that learning is a process of interaction between learners and the world around them. Pupils can explore and learn for themselves and are not spoon-fed knowledge all the time by their teachers. Within this social learning theory, sits learning from each other and reinforcement for positive behaviour. The teacher encourages the pupil to have a sense of pride and satisfaction because they have learned a new skill which develops self esteem. In the school in my research, teachers encourage children to be proud of their work using displays and achievement assemblies. It could be more helpful for pupils to rely on this intrinsic reinforcement, which comes from within the individual, rather than the external rewards of behaviourism. Mukherji (01: 20) explains that as the children mature they will encounter situations where there is no immediate reward for positive behaviour so they need to learn to persist at their work out of a sense of pride. There are shared commonalities here with the humanistic approach to learning, where teachers encourage pupils to learn that they can be self motivated to be rewarded. It is clear here that acquiring self worth is a developmental task of childhood, therefore, encouraging a sense of worth or self esteem is one of the teacher's fundamental tasks. Atkinson (2002:19) makes it clear that it is not surprising that the children who exhibit signs of behaviour problems have low self esteem as a common feature. This needs some consideration in my study as many pupils in my school have low self esteem. Bruner (1960)

suggested that adults, including teachers, help children to learn by scaffolding their learning, which is, supplying help to make learning something new, more manageable for the learner at the appropriate time and level to help them to move on to an improved level of understanding. The interaction between the learner and someone more knowledgeable is an important aspect of scaffolding, as is interaction with peers (Mukherji, 2001 and Pritchard, 2005).

The social model explains how this learning happens, describing the child as being an active seeker of knowledge. Learners in this model construct knowledge for themselves; shaped by individual or social experiences, they make meaning; learning is active with the environment, not passive. So, constructing meaning is learning. Wells' study (1986) shows how children actively constructed meaning in their language acquisition. Social constructivists place emphasis on interactions with others to learn. Constructivists like Vygotsky, Wells and Bruner have highlighted the importance of the role language plays in enabling children to learn. Vygotsky's (1962) legacy for learning involves social activity with teachers and significant others. In terms of the classroom, there is a notion that teachers will be facilitators of learning who help pupils to figure things out for themselves but this only arises if the significant other, the teacher, can successfully negotiate this with the learners, so a failure to negotiate positively could be rooted in the environment they are in. However, Holt's philosophy of education (2004) proposes that children do not need to be shown how to learn about the world around them as they have an innate ability to do this. He suggests that learning in the school environment can place fear of failure in children because they may not feel good enough to achieve in the system. He presents a more relevant case which advocates moving away from the traditional compulsory classroom curriculum with all its social conditions, which he sees as fruitless and fearful to a stress reduced,

creative, self-directed learning approach in which parents play a major part and do not follow conventional schooling patterns.

One of Vygotsky's main educational theories (1978:86) is the concept termed the, zone of proximal development (ZPD), a theoretical space of understanding. This is the difference between what the child knows and understands and can achieve alone compared to what he can achieve with cues from one more able than himself (Wood, 1991 and Pritchard, 2005). The notion of the ZPD may help to understand how staff learning about behaviour management changes can assist the pupils' development in school by operating in the zone. Pritchard (2005: 95) explains the relevance of Vygotsky's work on pitching learning at the correct level for the pupil to achieve. Learning cannot have an effect if the material offered is too simple or too complex. However, this idea is eclipsed when the pupil is in a state of stress and they fail to function successfully (Holt, 2004). They find difficulty working at even the simplest level of achievement. This is often the case in the school in my study where pupils often display unacceptable, challenging behaviour and lack of self-control when they have a fear that they cannot achieve the set task. This results in the pupil shutting down and not interacting at all. My classroom observations of pupils with ASC also show that they can quickly shut down if they become over anxious.

Bruner's more recent writing on education (1996) places his work on learning as a culture and this provides the toolkit by which the world around is constructed. If this is true, then, in school the child will learn through the culture of the school. In the school in my study, part of the culture is to apply boundaries to manage the behaviour in each setting, whether it is in the classroom or

on the playground. Boundaries can be necessary when teaching groups of children who present with disruptive behaviour problems, as continual negative behaviours often distract from attempts to engage pupils in educational activities.

Weaving the elements together of the three learning theories previously described, an objective for my study, could be constructed towards how behaviour in school can be shaped (behaviourism) with some mechanisms to help to do this (cognitivism and humanism). In a teacher's bank of knowledge and understanding about learning theory there is a place for threads of behaviourist, humanist and constructivist theory. These need to be interpreted and then applied to practice. As the researcher, I need to fit the jigsaw of learning together with different elements from each theory which may assist the development of behaviour management strategies in my school. I know that I want to improve behaviour in my school, in particular, on the playground. Knowledge of the underlying theories helps me to understand why a particular behaviour management strategy works and can be transferred successfully from the classroom to the playground situation. Humanistic and constructivist learning theory will allow pupils to be proactive and gives them space to plan, reflect and regulate their own ideas about behaviour in school whilst the behaviouristic view to learning lends itself to reinforcing and shaping more acceptable behaviour. Significant adults sharing an awareness of these processes with pupils can help them to reflect on their learning and bring them under their own conscious control to regulate their behaviour.

Cooper (1994) agrees that the learning approaches, discussed previously, involve some underlying commitment to providing pupils with a positive rewarding experience of schooling

rather than a negative and punitive one. These can play some part in shaping the behaviour management changes in the school in my study. Luiselli et al (2005) established some effective discipline practices to ensure academic success and provide a safe learning environment. In their study, the effects of a whole-school behaviour support method on discipline problems and the academic outcomes of students were studied. Over the course of several academic years the intervention of their research was associated with decreasing discipline problems such as negative behaviour referrals and school suspensions. Effective discipline practices were established using the whole-school model which was designed through consultation with teachers who emphasised: improving instructional methods; formulating behavioural expectations; increasing classroom activity/engagement; reinforcing positive performance and monitoring efficacy through database evaluation.

The aforementioned research findings (Luiselli et al, 2005) about promoting positive behaviour were worth some consideration in my study, although they appeared behavioural in their approach. To some extent they became the baseline objective when studying behaviour management changes in school in which I was working. Most definitely, they were a suitable starting point for the behaviour management group in the school in my study to discuss and will be mentioned in the first cycle of my research.

Playtime and behaviour

The second part of the key literature will move on to examine recent literature relating to school playtimes. A House of Commons session, about education outside of the classroom, reported that if playtimes are not managed properly, they can be a time of increased bullying and difficult

behaviour for some children (Sheerman, 2005). Some pupils in school find it a problem to socialise and cooperate confidently with their peers especially in playground situations. In my school, many incidents of negative behaviour occur during break times and lunchtimes. To help overcome this difficulty and encourage relationship building, my study moves to a second cycle which examines ways of improving behaviour on the playground by using a whole school approach.

Empirical research shows that play skills often give a good indication of the social development in a child, (Nutbrown, 2006; Wolfberg, 2003; Wolfberg and Schuler cited in Charman and Stone. Ed, 2006; DCMS, 2004 and Brown and Vaughan, 2010). These studies show the fundamental importance of play as a tool for teaching and learning for both practitioners and children and some have recognised the contribution that it can make to reducing anti-social behaviour. White (2006) suggests that social play is about relating to others and making friends. She believes that these are important skills to be learned, which have a long term impact on the child's adaptation into society. Brown and Vaughan (2010) run concurrent to White stating that play is an essential way humans learn to socialise. They note that its benefits have profound implications for child development.

Within the Primary National Strategy for playtimes and lunchtimes, DfES (2005a) it is suggested that without clear organisation structures and caring supervision, playtimes can become unruly, bleak places where bullying and other signs of unease can fester and grow. When this situation is allowed to develop, then, valuable teaching time is lost as teachers try to sort out the problems of frayed emotions and bruised self-esteem that playtimes and lunchtime break have provoked.

This, however, need not be the case. If all the factors that combine to make a playground socially effective are considered, playtime and lunch breaks can be a positive social learning experience for children. The DfES (2005a) has clearly suggested, in their training guidelines for promoting practical strategies for successful primary playtimes, that schools should develop a proactive approach to the environment allowing pupils autonomy. They advocate effective practices involving teaching pupils games in Physical Education (PE) which they can then practice on the playground with help from adults, but they also promote the use of prearranged playground zoning of different activities to assist playground management. These practices suggest a more structured approach to playtimes and therefore appear to create conflict in the same training about playtimes, by presenting this dichotomy in the Department's National Strategy training guidelines.

My research question of how to improve behaviour especially on the playground could be underpinned with some mechanisms from humanist and constructivist theory which allows pupils to be proactive; valuing and supporting each other and alongside this, allowing them space to plan, reflect and regulate their own ideas about behaviour at break times. Another facet can be to involve some mechanisms from a behaviourist approach to learning which lends itself to the reinforcing and shaping of more acceptable behaviour, suggesting a more reactive approach to playtime behaviour. Further reading about playtimes may help to understand whether a proactive, reactive or mixed view is the best to consider. The DfES (2005a) do also emphasise the need for congruence between the expectations, procedures, reward and sanction systems used in the playground and those of the school as a whole. A whole school behaviour policy needs to point towards this.

Blatchford in Britain and Pellegrini in America are at the forefront of research into playground behaviour. Blatchford (1989; 1998a and 1998b) Blatchford and Sumpner (1998), The Elton Report (DES, 1989) argues that, historically, playtimes are a social necessity where behaviour problems can occur. It is suggested that, as a field of study, playgrounds are full of potential and have been neglected by researchers. In 2005; 22 Pellegrini reiterates this,

The school recess period has not been studied systematically. The dearth of research interest probably reflects the perceived importance of recess to the academic community and educators. The relatively low status of the study of children's play, games and recess in child psychology and education is reflected in the lack of scholarly attention paid to these topics.

Blatchford (1989) suggests that playtimes could lay claim to being the forgotten part of the school day. His research gave some overall perspectives on behaviour in the playground for the most part based on interviews with head teachers and staff. These gave a view that the quality of play in the playground at that time was not high and consequently lead to unnecessary aggressive and anti-social behaviour such as bullying and racial harassment. He concluded that staff, parents and governors needed to devise a consistent policy for managing break times, just as they do for the classroom. Blatchford (1989) found that play in his study was mostly physical (especially from boys); jumping on backs, chasing, fighting, and often acting out scenes from television programmes. There was frequent idling around without a purpose; lethargy, not knowing what to do with themselves, name calling, verbal abuse, verbal intimidation, spoiling the games of others and complaining to their peers or the adults on duty. There was also much belligerent behaviour, petty squabbling and even biting and scratching. It was suggested by the staff that certain children in school could be the cause of much disruption. In fact one head recorded that two boys

from the same family were persistently in trouble at playtimes, incapable of anything but abusive behaviour (1989:28). Another Head-teacher labelled the first fifteen minutes after lunchtime, as conflict resolution time (1989:12) and declared that it spoiled the quality of teaching for the afternoon session.

Studying conflict resolution to expand my research about improving behaviour on the school playground was considered. Pellegrini (2005:118) describes how children in the course of interactions in their playground games can disagree and in order to move forward, they need to consider their own perspective in relation to others. He believes that resolving conflict in this way can effectively foster children's cognitive development. Betts (2002) studied conflict resolution for her M.Ed. dissertation over a period of twelve months in a state primary school from which she reiterates that if the issues arising from playtime are unresolved they can have a negative effect which in turn affects teaching and learning. She believes teachers cannot teach and children cannot learn, unless, there is peace and order in the classroom and on the playground (2002:08). More recently, in California an organization called Sports4Kids has been working in twelve elementary schools to improve learning in the environment by using a specific model for reducing conflict during recess. Teachers in the study identified that in their school most negative behaviour occurred during recess. The programme placed trained adults on the playground to teach useful tools for resolving conflicts and after just a few weeks of encouragement and game instruction, school officials saw significant changes in the behaviour of the children on and off the playground (Hammer and Violet, 2008).

Received wisdom in the staff room states that seasons and the weather, especially windy days are a notorious cause of bad behaviour at playtimes especially on wet and cold windy days or when the children are feeling grumpy and cold because of inadequate clothing. Blatchford (1989) found that playground behaviour was worse during the longer dinner break than at morning or afternoon playtime. It was widely reported that it was not only the length of lunchtime break which endorsed this negative behaviour but the quality of supervision which caused the problems. The short afternoon break was seen to disrupt the continuity of the classroom activities and because of this some of the schools in the study abandoned their afternoon playtime. Blatchford's suggestions for further research were that far more observations were required in order to make clear in a systematic way, issues which affect playground behaviour. From this, it is clear that observations are a helpful tool for my research to identify issues which affect behaviour at playtimes in my school. It is interesting to compare the types of playground behaviours observed by Blatchford in the primary school over time and identify if these are still evident today. More recently; (April 2008), the teacher's union; NASUWT held a teacher experience survey also in primary schools to identify the types of pupil behaviour experienced in school on a particular day. The NASUWT survey (Derrington, 2008) is believed to be the largest ever survey focusing specifically on primary school teachers' experiences of and perceptions about school behaviour. This added swearing, physical intimidation, physical assault, sexual harassment and verbal and non verbal defiance to Blatchford's list of observed behaviours. Social change may have affected the type of games the children play. According to a University of Michigan study, most American children spend 6.5 hours a day with electronic media (Brown, 2009). Playground games of acting out scenes from television programmes in 1989 may have been replaced at the present

time, by acting out scenes from new television programmes, copying characters from the media, computer games or internet access.

Subsequent research by Blatchford into children's playground conduct shows how understanding the playground environment can be used to develop positive behaviour (Blatchford, 1994; Blatchford and Baines, 2006; Blatchford and Sharp, 1994 and Smith and Sharp, 1994). Surveys indicated that break times play an important part in social development, nurturing friendship bonds, letting off steam, a location where children are free from adult attention and the structure which they encounter in class, a place to develop inter-group relationships and the management of conflict and aggression.

It is a time when pupils find freedom and a social life, independent of the classroom, the rules of conduct are more that their own and where activities start from their own initiative (Blatchford, 1998b:1)

Some surveys (Smith and Sharp, 1994) also present a negative side to school playtimes with regard to victims of bullying, intimidation and violence in schools in Sheffield. In the study, interviews identified the children's own stress caused by the unacceptable behaviour of peers with regard to teasing, which occurred in interactions with others throughout school life and another study highlighted fighting which reflected power and dominance in school peer culture (Blatchford, 1998b:161). This led to the introduction of more purposeful supervision and management of playtime sessions in schools and a reduction in the length of playtime itself. In Britain from 1990 to 1995, Blatchford (1998a:59) reports a reduction of 56% in lunchtime play duration in primary schools and the abolition of afternoon break to create more teaching time and lessen behaviour problems. Also in America, Pellegrini (1995) notes a reduction in the time

allocated for recess. Blatchford and Sumpner (1998) found from a national survey with a 61% uptake that break times were often seen as a problem so the time allocated to them was reduced and more closely supervised. Blatchford (1998b:55) highlights the fact that teachers viewed playtimes as a dilemma. There had been restriction of their duration in order to manage negative behaviour more effectively; however the less time at play presented barriers against the pupil's social development. Smith and Sharp (1994:46) suggest that whatever the problems with playtimes and their management it would be a retrograde step to abolish them as they provide such a quality opportunity for social, physical and active behaviours to be developed. Blatchford and Baines (2006), report that there has been further reductions in the length of time allocated to playtimes in primary and secondary schools since a previous national survey of school breaktime in 1995 (Blatchford and Sumpner, 1998). This is because there is a greater need of time in school to cover the curriculum and also the behaviour of some pupils is so poor at playtimes that teaching time is lost calming pupils down after they have returned from breaktime. More recently, in America (Anon, 2010) reported from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that, over the last thirty years, the time allocated for recess has been reduced to an average of about twenty minutes per day. There is a supposition here that we may not be moving in the right direction by taking away playtime when much literature, previously mentioned, shows that unstructured free play can be a significant element for developing and improving a child's social behaviour.

Another notion that emanates from Blatchford's research review on behaviour in school playgrounds is that the interventionist view of playtimes, where playground games are organised by staff in order to control behaviour, is gaining dominance (Blatchford, cited in Blatchford and Sharp, 1994:19). It is debatable that outside, at play, there are no aims and objectives as there are in a National Curriculum planned PE lesson (DFEE, 1999). The Government Legislation (DfES,

2003a) that 85% of all 5-16 year olds spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport is driving playtime to be structured curriculum time, in order to meet this objective. Blatchford's studies (1998a:65) present the stance of polar views; control of play or independent play at playtimes? He names independent play „the romantic view“ where the children embrace their own playground culture through their games which adults need to be cautious about overruling and the second view, „the problem view“ where the focus is on the problems that arise at playtimes (cited in Blatchford and Sharp, 1994:17). The two views have different implications for the management of playtimes in school. Pellegrini et al (2004) view break as the only time of day when pupils can relate to peers on their own terms. This criticises the view of the structured playground from which springs the “get active” approach which supports prescribed focused activities at playtimes.

An important part of management's position in school regarding this tension between control and independence at break time and its overall effect on the school hinges on the stance taken with regard to the romantic or problematic concept of playtime by senior staff who write the policies and the school council whose voice should play a major part in the school decision making process. Do they choose pupil independence or pupil control? Each stance leads to a different response to behaviour in the playground. This is an issue which I address in my research.

In 2003 the then Prime Minister, Tony Blair officially launched the PE School Sport and Club Links (PESSCL) Strategy, (DfES, 2003a) and one strand of this national strategy; the QCA/PESS project, concerned with physical activity in school. The projects ran from 2000-08 with the overall objective to meet the Government's aforementioned target of ensuring that pupils spend a

minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport. This target was achieved nationally a year early, as the National 2007 School Physical Education and Sport Strategy for Young People (PESSYP) Survey, (Previously called PESSCL) found that 86% of young people were taking part in a minimum of two hours per week. One outcome of this strategy is that there is at present time a plethora of documented school QCA/ PESS projects available, from schools in Britain, describing investigations which support the notion of improved pupil behaviour on the playground, as a result of organised, “getting active” with physical activities (QCA, 2006; 2008) which is enlightening as historically, Blatchford (cited in Blatchford and Sharp, 1994: 33) states,

Further study of staff-pupil relations in playground settings should help in developing playground management schemes as we have very little knowledge as how and why schools differ from one and another, in children’s playground activities.

Research in America, (Mahoney et al, 2005) also demonstrates that participation in organised sports activities and sport’s clubs is associated with lower rates of school failure and higher school achievement including better grades. There is a good deal of evidence to provide substantiation for the interventionist view of playtimes, with their prescribed activities, being dominant. The positive relations however, between achievements, school conduct and physical activity participation was not unanimously accepted by a study undertaken with 333 Hong Kong Chinese primary school children between the ages of 8 and 12 years using questionnaires to gather data. (Yu et al, 2006), though the study did make it clear that academic achievement correlates positively with pupil self esteem and positive school behaviour.

The literature is also clear about the impact of high quality school sports developing personal qualities, such as; good levels of positive behaviour with increased value of fair play, team work, discipline and politeness which should then affect young people's attitudes to school and learning and consequently influence the whole school ethos, leading to school improvement (QCA, 2006; 2008). Blatchford and Baines (2006), report that 81% of primary school in their study thought that the main value of playtime is to have physical exercise and socialise. Although it is suggested that the stance of a prescriptive playtime is currently dominant because of the many citations about organised physical activities (QCA, 2006; 2008), I personally feel, this predominately qualitative research is not robust enough to demonstrate that children's attitude to behaviour is being raised by increased physical activity alone and that some quantitative measures would add greater validity and rigour to the notion that prescriptive playtimes can produce a change in behaviour.

The second cycle of my own research about behaviour in school and on the playground is in a similar vein to the aforementioned QCA/PESS projects. My research examines behaviour on the playground by means of a get active through sport at playtime approach. Casbon and Walters (2004) explain that PESS project was developed with QCA to explore the link between school effectiveness and school sport. A PAR model was used by all participating schools so that they were all undertaking a similar approach. Critically the justification for introducing the investigation process was that schools could make precise decisions about what aspect of school improvement they wanted to focus on. Many schools involved in the project chose to focus on improving behaviour through PE and school sport. Every school that contributed observed a significant increase in positive behaviour and reduction in negative behaviour and the

investigations are clear about this point. There are many reports documented, for example, in some schools there was a decrease in the number of pupils in detention and in others the number of aggressive incidents reported.

Many of the disseminated QCA/PESS investigations present with qualitative data and a few have quantitative evidence, like, the Deepdale school in Preston (QCA, 2006:7), who recorded a decrease in the number of negative incidents logged in their lunchtime behaviour book from 118 for the term prior to structuring the playground into play zones to 59 logged over two terms after. A documented study of improved behaviour and attitude to learning in a primary school in Liverpool states that the staff saw a clear difference in pupils' behaviour at the end of lunchtime through taking part in structured activities. Pupils also walked quietly to the line and without pushing or arguing returned calmly to their classrooms, ready to start work. Staff also commented on pupils' greater alertness, willingness to participate and ask questions and there was much improved behaviour in lessons (QCA, 2006:4). Likewise at the Abbey Park Middle School, catering for 220 pupils, with 26% on the special needs register in Worcestershire, who provided a rolling programme of PE and school sport projects which had a remarkable impact on pupils' involvement in healthy and active life styles, self esteem and behaviour. Since 2001 the school has centred on purposeful, constructive play, appointed a supervisor to plan playground activities and defuse arguments when pupils became over competitive. The transformation in pupils' levels of activity manifested itself in greater tolerance on the playground which halved the number of instances of negative behaviour. Staff were delighted by increased levels of cooperation observed between pupils (QCA, 2008:6). A school in Newcastle which caters for SEN joined the PESS investigation in 2001 with many of their listed objectives matching those of Hay school during

my study, for example the games skills improved from the introduction of a range of games related playground activities at break times from which playground behaviour became more positive. (QCA, 2006:9).

The Steer Report (DfES, 2005b) gives practical advice and recommendations aimed at improving behaviour in school, noting the work done by Living for Sport, a programme run by the Youth Sport Trust, which uses the power of sport to engage young people who are disengaged in school, through a structured programme of new activities. It helps pupils take responsibility for the organisation of sporting events, developing in them self discipline and confidence. Research into the Living for Sport programme identified that, in two thirds of the schools involved, there was a decline in the number of recorded referrals for poor behaviour. Dame Kelly Holmes (2007:46) has worked with the Youth Sport Trust, DfES and Nike to zone off playgrounds in such a way as to improve activity levels. This is called Zoneparc and since 2001, over 330 schools are using the Zoneparc concept in their playgrounds. Holmes believes that the schemes solve a lot of problems because kids are too busy enjoying themselves with the equipment, activities and games to get into arguments. Examining the physical environment has helped with behaviour management on the playground in the schools. Zones can be arranged into three types of areas. Firstly, multi-activity zone; including playground marking games and a stage area to encourage creative and imaginative play. The second type of zone is a sports zone; including some ball-specific play area and lastly a quiet zone for chatting together, reading and quiet games like snakes and ladders and chess. Pupils can be involved in the design of the zones and assist in the choosing of the play equipment. A primary school in North London has used Zoneparc and claims that it reduced the number of negative incidents dramatically on the playground (QCA, 2008:3). In America,

Peaceful Playgrounds is the creation of Dr. Bossenmeyer, a professor at California State University. She has designed this multi-activity playground programme to encourage children to be involved in physical activity using games they have learned in physical education lessons. Staff in the Peaceful Playground schools observed enhanced pupil playground cooperation where previously there were issues at recess with student conflict and aggressive behaviour (Houston County News, 2010). In Bristol, a headteacher claims that, his involvement in monitoring and evaluating behaviour on the playground, coupled with “the ample evidence of his own eyes” showed dramatic improvements in attendance and behaviour after structured activities were introduced (QCA, 2008:9).

This Government data, in line with the politics of the day, give a somewhat rose tinted impression of behaviour during playtimes. The document Celebrating PESS 2000-2007 (QCA, 2008) states that some schools provided pupils with structured opportunities for focused play at break times which reduced the incidence of negative behaviour although it offers little significant, reliable evidence to substantiate the claim. A report to the Nuffield Foundation (Blatchford and Baines, 2006) was follow up of a national survey conducted by Blatchford 10 years previously and examined the nature and changes to break times. It showed that from responses to questionnaires, 43% of the primary schools said behaviour had improved over the last five years, however 70% still had concerns about the poor behaviour of individual pupils at playtimes. Many of the documented schools in the PESS projects describe the behaviour on their playground prior to the project in terms of the „worst case“ scenario of playtime incidents, for example „a problematic group of year six pupils who had challenging issues (2008:8)“, „unstructured break times added to the chaotic atmosphere, (2008:12)“ and „behaviour was often

a problem in the playground and in lessons after lunch (2008:22)”. The evidence presented in the documentation does suggest that the interventionist, controlled approach to playtimes can improve behaviour, but the use of quantitative data to evaluate the impact of these sport programmes on standards is generally weak and biased. As an example I reiterate on the previously mentioned statement that „the ample evidence of the head teacher’s own eyes showed him that he was on the right track (2008:9)”. The Government could have an interest in demonstrating the PESS project’s success because it supports their objective of targeting two hours high quality PE and school sport each week. Independent research, other than DfES, concerning the subject of playground initiatives, needs to be examined.

Researchers of a study which focused on play of disabled children in six schools in Yorkshire using observations and staff interviews acknowledged the limitations of their qualitative study. They recommended that decisions about play on the playground should be based upon a dialogue between the pupils, parents and staff, adding that little attention had been paid to the disabled children’s own accounts of their experiences on the primary school playground. They suggested teachers used PE lessons as an opportunity to develop skills which could be helpful on the playground. These recommendations suggest independent play and negotiation with all concerned to help the pupils to take responsibility for their playtime culture. (Woolley et al, 2006). Furthermore, Cherney’s (2009) findings from laboratory observations of children at play in America have show that children’s socialisation is best assisted when the play is not scripted or organised by an adult. Her definition of not scripted play comprised of going outside to play with other kids in spontaneous, child-directed play rather than adult-organised games or activities. This critiques the interventionist view of planned activities at playtimes and validates the need for

the non interventionist stance which gives pupils the freedom to plan for play and also gives them time to develop socially. The Government, themselves issued their concern about prescribed play, stating that despite a general understanding of the importance of free play for school children, the Children's Play Council is aware that in some schools structured play activities are preferred over free play (Sheerman, 2005). The Norton Hill Secondary School and Bath NHS produced a DVD, (Bath NHS Trust, 2008) „Thinking outside the PE box“ as a vehicle to promote their achievements from a whole school based programme of physical activities. The school carried out an audit of the core themes and established that they needed to improve physical activity in their curriculum. They introduced fun based twenty minute get active sessions as requested by pupils, including yoga, skipping and dance for all and found that although the healthy lifestyle was the main objective of their project, better friendships and relationships were noted. The head teacher also commented on signs of improved behaviour in school in the afternoon. Although the pupils and staff liaised about the activities they wanted to offer they also produced a structured pack of instructions for all to follow, which would suggest that their success for improved behaviour was due to a controlled approach.

Behaviour on the Playground and ASC

The third part of the key literature moves on to examine recent literature relating to behaviour on the Playground and ASC. In order to examine behaviour on the playground further in the school in my study it was important to take a look at the characteristics of children with ASC (as diagnosed on their statement of SEN) at playtimes. My observations showed that these children do not always join in with activities on the playground like their peers, and they were often in trouble with the teacher on playground duty for behaviour which was perceived as negative. Subsequently, if I am able to generate some new knowledge about children with ASC and their playground behaviour through my research, it may lead to developing new ways of helping them to interact more successfully.

A choice of theories has been projected to explain ASC and how the behaviour of the child diagnosed with ASC is different, at times compared to the predominant neuro typical (NT) child's behaviour (NT is a term suggested by the autistic society as a label for people who do not have ASC and also described by Sainsbury, 2000). Plimley and Bowen (2006) and Breakey (2009) clearly define the current terminology as autistic or autism spectrum condition and explain that this term traditionally denotes the three main areas of development where people on the autistic spectrum manifest differences in behaviour from the NT person. This is known as the triad of impairments (Wing and Gould, 1979). These areas are; social interaction; both verbal and non verbal, and also social imagination which is about social communication and rigidity of behaviour patterns and thought. The triad theory could be a useful guide to explain some aspects of pupils in my study with ASC but appears to be a deficit model compared to NT norms.

In addition to the triad, it appears that repetitive behaviour patterns and a resistance to a change in routine can be a notable feature of the condition. Children with ASC, have been documented with an aptitude to line up toys; objects like buttons or cars or physically walk or run themselves along straight lines as a pervasive type of game (Baron-Cohen et al, 1993), (Frith, 2003), (Howlin, 1998), (Williams, 1992). Brill (2007:23) reiterates this;

Children may spend hours lining up cars a special way, instead of more realistic pretend play.

Baron-Cohen et al (1993), Frith (2003), and Simpson et al (2005), recognised stereotype and repetitive motor movements involving hand and finger flapping or twisting and complex whole body movements as a trait of autism. Observations show that ASC can affect the way that pupils use their bodies and how they physically have hyper-sensitive sensory conditions, for example, loud noise (a feature of playtimes) can be stressful for the pupil which puts stress on their sensory system and results in anxiety for them. Sensitivity to touch and sound was observed by Wolfberg (2003) and Baron-Cohen and Bolton (1993) who noted preoccupations with non functional elements of play, such as the feel or smell of a play object's surface. During play sessions such pupils can be easily distracted from the task in hand by external stimuli. A case study of Gary, a thirteen year old boy with ASC, containing some functional analysis, indicated that he had not been able to make sense of what was being said to him because of the amount of background noise on the playground. This lead Gary to be stressed by the noise overload and he physically „shut down“ because he felt threatened by the situation and had no strategies to cope with it. In turn this made him tactile sensitive from which he could act in a negative way and present with challenging behaviour which caused problems for staff at playtimes. As a positive intervention, structures and routines like red and green cards (similar to traffic lights) to visually show when

noises were getting too much for him were planned into Gary's school day to help him to manage the playground environment, (Plimley and Bowen, 2006:30).

Children with ASC can also play on the playground undertaking lone ritualistic activities and sometimes they use play objects in a repetitive way like six year old Jamie who was studied by Wolfberg (2003). He never approached his peers of his own accord although he sometimes watched them from a distance. On the playground he had a playtime ritual of surrounding himself with his own chalk drawings which resembled the clocks painted by Salvador Dali; an artist Jamie was interested in because he had an obsessive passion for clocks. Frith's research (2003:115) also acknowledges that some individuals with autism are happy and contented to be left alone to indulge in their solitary activities and do not spontaneously seek out social contact. Children with ASC do sometimes appear to live in a world where their thinking is ordered in a systematic way (Baron-Cohen et al, 1993 and Plimley and Bowen, 2006). Their interpretations of language can often be literal and linguistically accurate (Frith, 2003:03). Idiomatic expressions, such as "Don't play with fire", "I've got butterflies in my stomach," or "I am going to blow my top," can be difficult to understand for some pupils because of their literal interpretations, which do conjure up pictures of unusual happenings. The underlying meaning of such phrases and sayings cannot always be predicted from the words which form them but the child with ASC will put logical meaning behind those words and make their decisions about the dialogue based on this reasoning. Their interpretation does not always take into account what the speaker is meaning which can lead to confusion and disruption.

Children with ASC happen to exist in a world of predominant NTs where not everyone thinks in such an ordered way; other examples of this, observed by the researcher in a special need's school setting are pupils eating mashed potatoes and mushy peas with a spoon because it is more functional than eating them with a fork or eating a burger with their hands because that is what they do at McDonalds fast food outlets. Unfortunately, sometimes this behaviour caused a problem as, the school in the study had a mid day meal which was always a knife and fork meal. Pupils have to cooperate with others who might not apply the same logical, rational thought processes as them. This often causes anxiety in children with ASC which can manifest as challenging behaviour or social inadequacy.

Further cognitive explanations of behaviour differences are, Theory of the Mind, Executive Functioning Theory and Central Coherence Theory. These are ways of explaining behaviour. Theory of Mind suggests a lack of ability to predict what someone else is thinking or intending to do. It also suggests a lack empathy and failure to see if they have been rude or offensive, (Baron-Cohen et al, 1993; Beardon, 2009; Breakey, 2009 and Frith, 2003). This theory offers some explanation of the social and communication differences which pupils with ASC present with. These problems are often evident on the playground when a child with ASC may be involved in an incident concerning them being aggressive because they could not understand that the other child involved in the negative incident did not mean to cause any harm. An explanation for their aggressive behaviour will probably be that the child pushed them with intent, so they kicked them back. Often the pupil with ASC fails to recognise the first push as an incidental clash of bodies in the vast space of the playground. There are implications for playtime behaviours here, in that the child with ASC may find it difficult to join in with a team game, they may have a problem

making friends and they may become isolated on the playground because their autism impairs the natural instinct to relate to others.

Central Coherence Theory, (Beardon, 2009 and Frith, 2003) is about being able to put various clues together in order to understand the big picture of events. The child with ASC may focus on one small aspect of an item or event without taking in the global account. As Frith (2003) explains, it is like the pupil with ASC cannot see the wood for the trees. Implications for playtime behaviours include the child with ASC not asking to join in with games because they do not notice all the activities that are on offer on the playground.

It is also suggested that having ASC impairs executive functions (Frith, 2003). This is a cognitive ability which can control and regulate behaviours. It is about changing the behaviour to suit the context, and adapting to new situations with suitable behaviours. Children with ASC who lack executive functioning are likely to say and do things without inhibitions. Increased rigidity of habits and routines is another indication of deficiency in executive functioning, giving indications of a more rigid social stance with a lack of social intuition which can lead to social disasters, for example, unintended rudeness. This kind of rudeness often causes problems with the staff on duty at playtimes.

Another notion could be considered here, which is to put ASC within a humanist approach (Rogers, 1951). This means giving pupils with ASC our unconditional positive regard. We could accept that they are pupils who have their own distinct diverse identity which is out there on the playground to be studied. We could surmise that there is no such thing as autistic behaviour

patterns and then we would have to ask ourselves what is the issue with autism anyway?

Children with ASC are individual and not all of them are unsociable, so, it is difficult and unfair to make assumptions, generalise or extrapolate the theories of behaviour to all children with the condition. However, some patterns of behaviour which do not always come naturally to pupils with ASC can be learned. Such pupils may not understand the reason for some behaviour but they can be trained to adhere to them for example by being prompt dependent. In such instances, a direct behaviouristic learning approach to the training could be helpful. Plimley and Bowen (2006) and Wolfberg (2003) state that pupils with ASC do have a problem with peer tolerance, demonstrating an inability to share, communicate with others, take turns and show some inappropriate play or social behaviours. Considering this inability alongside the Theory of the Mind would suggest that relating to others through play is tricky because these pupils would not be aware of others' thoughts thus creating further barriers towards developing their ability to relate with peers. A study in primary and lower secondary schools in Norway (Frostad and Pijl, 2007) showed that children with SEN, included in mainstream schools, especially those with ASC and behaviour difficulties could have problems building relationships and playing with peers which could result in isolation for them.

If the child with ASC lacks the social skills to play interactively, their developmental attainment in school will be delayed, placing such children at a disadvantage in the school's achievement regime as well as impairing their ability to develop friendships with peers because of their unconventional attempts at playground interactions.

As Wolfberg, (2003:14) states

Children with autism make fewer overt initiations to peers. When they do attempt to socialise their initiations tend to be subtle, obscure or poorly timed.

The literature clearly points out that children with ASC's attempts to socialise with others are regularly perceived as a sign of deviance, (Wolfberg and Schuler, cited in Charman and Stone, 2006: 190). Although well researched, many of the statements about play and pupils with ASC can be broad. Presumably, this is not true of all children with ASC all of the time. Also, the DCMS (2004) play review considers the emotional well-being of children at playtimes and suggests some children may need support to get the best out of their play. The review highlights the fact that teachers need to understand how the individual child is affected by their autism especially when they are playing on the playground otherwise they can be perceived by others as lazy or non compliant.

Bond (1990:13) and White (2006:9) suggest that playing games together is the primary route to social inclusion. An interactive game like oranges and lemons can encourage the participation of less expressive or less dominant pupils because characteristically everyone has a role to play in the game within a structure and framework. As teachers, do we have a duty to introduce new games to the children because as White (2006:10) implies, all children have a right to the knowledge, skills, opportunities and experiences that lead to social competence?

Real life examples from the literature

In Sainsbury's (2000:78) accounts of playtimes at school for pupils with Asperger's syndrome Sarah explains that she had trouble learning the rules of the games which the other children played and she often played them in the wrong way which resulted in children avoiding or ridiculing her. Also, Williams (1992:49) hated being in teams, taking sides or being told what to do. She explains how she could not mentally cope with the many rules for each specific situation. Further personal written accounts from pupils with similar diagnosis suggest that their lack of social skills on the playground caused them much distress from which they desired escape. Fred (Sainsbury, 2000:71) wrote that the school playing field at the side of the playground was his partial escape from the sea of noise, people and flying balls. Consequently this created problems on the school playground as school rules at that time did not allow him to go onto the field. Williams (1992:29) recalls that she did not know how to make friends. She wrote about calling-out rude names to a girl she wanted to be friends with from afar which was perceived as bad behaviour by the other girl. Williams had some collectable play cards which the children would swap for fun at playtimes. Williams described how she simply gave her cards away because she thought this was another way to attract friends. Sainsbury (2000) and Williams (2003) explain how unstructured break times were a time of exposure anxiety with pupils coming towards them from all directions, resulting in confusion, insecurity and stress for themselves and others which they coped with by solitary ritualistic activities, such as arms flapping and rocking usually undertaken in the corner of the playground. In particular, Sarah (2000:71) spent recesses alone watching the other kids play, she did not have a friend though she did not desire one either. A recent project (Wittemeyer et al, 2011:40) examining current educational targets and assessments used for pupils with ASC in schools in England and how they relate to outcomes in

life, held some interviews with adults with ASC to gather more detailed information about their time at school. One interviewee talked about the debilitating effects of not understanding what was going on around at playtimes and felt like a misfit, stating that in the playground during break times, they chose to stand and face the school wall. Consequently, their behaviour was perceived as different by others who often bullied them.

To obtain further background information the researcher spoke with two adults diagnosed with ASC and asked about their behaviour on the playground. From informal discussions with Williams (2009) I asked her to recall her time at school and she was able to give me her own accounts about what it was like at playtimes for a pupil with ASC. This has given personal insight into the world of a child with ASC at playtimes, which has assisted in my study. Williams told me that she felt like she had friends because pupils were always there alongside and near her, almost like parallel play. It was only when she was older that she realised she played on the periphery and was not socialising at all. She described the feeling of moving her body at playtimes which was like freeing up her expression of emotion. Williams added that because of her anxiety at playtimes she also made repetitive noises, with objects or with her mouth or fingers, which she called “riks”. The sound they made, for example like the sound of running finger-nails along a metal tooth comb annoyed the children and adults around her. She also enjoyed solitary spinning and rocking. Hoy (2011), who is now 23 years old and was diagnosed with autism at an early age told me during another informal chat that he felt he was quiet, nervous and insecure at school because he had no friends. Sitting alone in the corner was a salient feature of his playtime behaviour. He stated that people came at him in all directions out there, so as he was sitting he would rock, hum and flap his arms. He felt that his teaching assistants (TA) could

have been helpful with their support to cater for the autistic aspects of himself. These personal accounts from personal experiences illuminate mostly about culture not disability and make it possible to test theory against practice. This can help to explain some of the actions of children on the playground in my study.

The Incredible 5-Point Scale

This is a strategy designed to help pupils with ASC to manage their emotions and their behaviour in a variety of different situations and it may be helpful in my study. Students can rate their emotions or how they feel in a specific situation. Buron and Curtis (2003) describe their work with Ned, a five year old boy with Asperger's Condition who always used a loud voice when speaking. Together, they taught him to equate his voice with a number scale. Over time, he learned that being quiet was a "1" and that using a "2 or 3" level voice was more appropriate, but using a "5" was screaming. The 1-5 scale is a detailed measure to show children with ASC how to deal with feelings such as anxiety and anger when they feel challenged in a certain situations. The scale is simple and also workable by providing information for the pupil from the teacher by holding up the correct number of fingers it will give the child a cue to the level that they are operating at, for example number 1 and 2: happy and number 5: outraged, not acceptable.

Social stories

Howley (2001) has conducted a small scale investigation of a qualitative nature into the impact of social stories on the behaviour and social understanding of four pupils in a primary school; all

diagnosed with ASC and have specific difficulties with aspects of social functioning. During her study she wrote individual social stories for each child adhering to Gray's (1998) guidelines for producing social stories. They are about an adult structuring a child's behaviour through a story by sharing relevant information. This includes where and when a situation takes place, who is involved, what is occurring and why and possibly include some visual information. The story gives the pupil specific guidelines about a situation and the aim is to teach social understanding with clear and concise explanations. Other people's thoughts or reactions are also explicitly explained. In social stories the written word appears to be more powerful than the spoken and this helps to abandon all assumptions about the event for the pupils (Gray and Garand, 1993).

In Howley's study (2001), one boy, Max presented with anxiety difficulties at break times, behaviours similar to Ian and Adie in my study. Max had no idea how to play with any of the available resources. His social story was written to encourage him to clearly understand the rules of playtime and where and what they can play. The story was as follows

My name is _____.

I am in class at _____ School.

Usually all the children go out to play at lunchtime.

When the grass is dry some people play ballgames together on the playground, some children play on the field.

When it is a dry day, Mrs. _____, or a teacher, will tell me when it is my turn to play on the playground.

When it is my turn to play on the field, I can ask a dinner lady if I can play with a piece of equipment out of her bag.

Sometimes she has hoops, skipping ropes, stilts and other things.

It is important to stay on the field when it is my turn to be on the field.

I will have a turn on the playground another time.

On days when the grass is wet, everyone plays on the playground.

This story was read to Max daily, ten minutes before playtime. He was also allowed to read it himself if he desired. All the staff involved with Max had a copy of the social story as they needed to have knowledge of the information in it. Following the use of the social story, Max began to follow the rules of playtime, play with the apparatus and his anxiety was diminished. Analysis by Howley demonstrated a gradual and progressive change in Max's behaviour. He was observed participating in the playtime activities only two weeks after the initial reading of his story.

Baker (2001; 85) also presents social stories which have helped with play related skills. He presents information in photographic form with suggestions for pupils about how to ask to play with others, take turns in play, play a game and deal with losing. They are for pupils who need extra help to learn appropriate social skills. His social story for playing a game is clearly described (Baker, 2001:119).

You say "How do you play this game?"

Decide who will go first.

To let the other person go first say "You can go first".

If there are more than two people you can roll a dice to decide who goes first.

The person with the highest roll of the dice gets to go first.

With two people you can throw a dice or flip a coin.

Or you can play odds and evens.

You need to take turns.

Summary of the literature review

The literature review has formed my account of the theories of behaviour, behaviour in my school and on the playground, especially for pupils with ASC. This underpins the basis of my research. On a theoretical level, I have considered my understanding of learning with regard to different theories and I have presented several perspectives briefly describing how some of the models of learning have impacted on education as a whole. I have discussed behaviour on the playground noting that Blatchford in Britain and Pellegrini in America are at the forefront of research into playground behaviour. I have revealed that there is disparity and a tension with regard to the stance of playground behaviour; the proactive approach to the environment allowing pupils to be elective and self-organised whilst at play and the structured playground stance from which springs the “get active” approach which flags up prescribed activities at playtimes. Many PESS projects have been discussed with specific aims to engage with the pupils through activities which encourage positive and healthy behaviour. This helps them to interact constructively with each other whilst having fun. In general, they are indicative of prescribed activities at playtimes. I believe that the Government has a significant interest in the PESS project revealing success because it supports their objective of ensuring that pupils spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport.

Finally, I looked at the characteristics of children with ASC, at playtimes, because my observations showed that these children did not always join in with activities on the playground like their predominant NT peers, and they were often in trouble with the teacher on playground duty for behaviour which was perceived as negative. Reading about these topics has led me to focus more on the behaviour of pupils with ASC at playtimes in school. This is where my interest lies and where I feel that I can gain some new knowledge as the behaviour of children with ASC is of particular significance to me.

My research question now becomes;

“How can I improve behaviour in my school, in particular, for children with ASC on the playground?”

I feel there now is a greater emphasis is on the behaviour of children with ASC at playtimes.

I have presented my literature review. My next step therefore is to explain my methodology. To demonstrate how my practice is research based I need to show the steps involved in my research. McNiff and Whitehead (2010) have led me to believe that my classroom practice remains just as it is, however, when I describe why and how I changed the way that I operate, my practice then it becomes research based.

S. Endicott
XXXXXX

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY 1

Research questions;

I needed to design an appropriate framework to find the answers to my research questions which resonated with the procedures usually associated with PAR. It appeared that open ended research questions were more suitable for my research because they instigated the gathering of factual knowledge, reasons, relationships and explanations. As Denscombe (2003:156) states;

The advantage of open questions is that the information gathered by way of responses is more likely to reflect the full richness and complexity of the views held by the respondent.

I developed some research questions based on my curiosity about teaching and learning which were supported by reading about behaviour theories and therefore I hoped that my questions were concise and manageable. At the beginning of my study they did not include my thoughts about all areas of the project, however, the first questions led to further questions which gave me a deeper and more meaningful understanding of the field.

The research questions were;

- How can I improve the management of behaviour in my school?
- Could any changes in the management of behaviour in Hay school and at breaktimes be underpinned by theories of learning?
- Could playtimes and lunchtime behaviour be positioned into the context of the whole school behaviour policy?
- Can structured sports activities help with the management of behaviour at playtimes?

- Can structured sports activities help with the behaviour management of children with a SEN statement for ASC at playtimes?
- How can I measure any intervention from my studies against behaviour in my school?
- How can I interpret the overall impact that my research project has had on changes in my school?

As my research and the action research cycles evolved my main research question became, “How can I improve behaviour in my school, in particular, for children with ASC on the playground?”

I felt that, over time, there became a greater emphasis, in my research, on the behaviour of children with ASC at playtimes.

Cycles of Research

I used the action research cycle of planning as a tool to collect data. These steps were repeated in each of the three cycles in my study. Denscombe (2003) and Robson (2004) describe the critical points about the cycle of enquiry being that the research directly feeds back into practice whilst the practice is ongoing within the cyclical process. This was another bonus for me, the researcher of a PAR approach because I felt that my practice was much improved by my reflection. There were three cycles which made my research multi-layered, as described by McNiff and Whitehead (2010). Each layer was about improving the quality of practice in my workplace and a change was made after each of the three cycles. Thomas (2009) has an equivalent when he describes the cycles as a coil, where you move forward up the coil by reflecting on your actions and changes. McNiff and Whitehead (2010:193) state that turning your project into several cycles can make

research easier to handle because one cycle can contain the beginnings of the next cycle as new questions emerge during the course of the enquiry. My cycles moved from the first cycle of investigating behaviour management processes in school to the second cycle which was about the behaviour on the playground with an active approach to playtimes, and then finally, the third cycle was about the behaviour of four children on the playground. Rose (2001:14) does say that it is not always easy to anticipate how many times the cycle will need to be undertaken until a satisfactory outcome is achieved. As the project evolved and as I read more I believe that the objective became clearer to me. I considered comparing behaviour on the playground to that of another school which had a similar population of pupils, for example, the new school in which I am currently working. Could that kind of study have become another cycle of action research or would it have been invalid because my present school is a new school in a different setting? However, I became so engrossed in the study of pupils with ASC on the playground that the research in my school, Hay, was big enough for me to handle and the closure of the school in 2008 by the Local Authority became a natural closure point of collecting data.

First cycle methods

I examined the management of behaviour at Hay and needed to find out what could be done to improve it. I was part of a behaviour management group which identified behaviour in school. Being part of a management group was ideal for me as it was a most appropriate objective model for the evaluation of my research questions. This was because it focused on the whole school and the group could work together to refine the purposes of the research and evaluate relevant questions with me. We needed to audit behaviour itself in school and find the difficulties as observed by school staff and pupils. However, as I was doing the research and also being

involved with the group, this could have caused a validity problem. As Robson (2004) explains the advantage of researching from within means that you are on hand to conduct the research and you already know the politics of the institution in which you are researching. However, problems could arise when adding the role of a researcher to the role of colleague which may be difficult for those around. It could also be tricky to maintain objectivity in the research because of the prior knowledge and close contact there has previously been with colleagues.

As a starting point, the group considered the student discipline measures as presented by Luiselli et al (2005). This was current research from America about improving behaviour management in school and gave some ideas of any similar issues which needed to be addressed at Hay school. I needed to formulate and consider the statistics from my school's behaviour database; this was the local authority attendance behaviour database which was used in school as a computer management database. These formed my baseline statistics about behavioural problems in school. It was also necessary to map the activities that led to changes in management of behaviour at Hay school and a chronological diary of events was collated during the first cycle of research (Appendix 1). Questionnaires were devised by the group for pupils/staff and parents to fill in about behaviour in school.

Second cycle methods

In the second cycle, behaviour on the playground was considered. Prior to this cycle, staff and children at school were trained by the local authority trainers to be playground leaders. This was introduced to my school as a structured physical activity on the playground to use as a tool to improve behaviour. In line with the outcomes of the Healthy School Agenda (DfES, 2005) and

Every Child Matters (DfES, 2003) to be healthy and to increase physical activity in school, the active playground scheme was used effectively as it promoted pupils undertaking extra exercise in school. This scheme was a tool to improve behaviour and there were some comparisons to similar PESS schemes. I hoped that the personal experience gained from this research would enable my professional knowledge of playground interventions to be enhanced and broadened. A study in this particular field would enable me to have a professional specialism about playtimes within the special need setting which I could subsequently share with other practitioners.

Some statistics, from the local authority behaviour database and the children's involvement and attendance registers for the school, "Get active scheme," were examined. I collated statistics from the behaviour data base used in school to assess the use of sanctions. The play scheme registers were kept about pupil attendance at play activities on the playground. I also made an analysis of behaviour on the playground, through diarised observations (Appendix 2) and a questionnaire for staff about the difficulties created by negative behaviour at playtimes.

Third cycle; Case Study methods

In this part of my research, under the action research umbrella, I conducted a case study. I chose to use a case study within PAR because this type of research is intended to improve knowledge about a specific situation which is unique to the people in the situation (McNiff and Whitehead, 2010). The case study of four pupils, in the context of the school playground, was an appropriate and useful exploratory tool to help my main action research question about the pupil's behaviour at playtimes. A case study is the most inspirational and vivid analysis (Thomas, 2011) and this one in particular offered a situational analysis with some interesting insights into young people

with ASC at playtimes. It was an excellent method of research for providing an in-depth study of the children and helped to discover why the participants behaved in the way they did at playtimes. It was also to find out if there were any antecedents or consequences to the kind of behaviour the children displayed. I was conscious of the need to preserve objectivity as I would be researching and working in the same school with children who I knew well. I believed that the case study approach was the right option to fulfil this need as it was based on diarised objective observations over a sustained time period. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) and Rose (2001) suggest that the case study is concerned with an investigation over a period of time into a collection of individuals who have similar attributes.

The third cycle of research became a time consuming, longitudinal venture. In order to conduct this evaluative research I identified and studied 4 pupils, all with ASC, who did not participate regularly in “Get active” activities in school at playtime. I collated and examined the data from “Get active on the playground” registers for the school year 2006-2007 and identified one girl and three boys who had not joined in with the playground activities as often as their peers. I embarked on the case study of the four children who exhibited particular behaviours on the playground in order to demonstrate that participating in planned activities can increase positive behaviour at playtimes. Patton (2002:179) stresses that problem solving and learning orientated processes often use qualitative enquiry and case study approaches to help a group of people reflect on ways of improving what they are doing or understand it in new ways.

This case study was my attempt to make sense of the behaviour of the chosen children with ASC when they were on the playground. This was integral to my wider field of research about

improving behaviour in the school in which I was working. It was quite a challenge to measure play as well as behaviour through “Get active on the playground,” activities. I consider that focused physical activity does assist behaviour management in a positive way. I believe that I gained increased understanding in this general contextualised playground situation by using a systematic case study approach and including the use of some quantitative data from the registers. Overall, I was asking myself the kind of questions related to conducting a case study as described by Thomas (2011:35); what is the situation and what is going on there, what happens there and what is related to what. It may be that the third cycle provides knowledge and enrichment for the reader rather than suggesting any change in school policy.

Critics of the use of a case study method may be suspicious of only a small sample offering justification for establishing reliability or generality of findings. Thomas (2011) emphasises that clear questions which are relevant to the study and the methods used to answer them assists in ascertaining reliability and validity. I believe that my investigation added strength to what I had already learned about behaviour on the playground through my previous research cycles because my observations gave some valuable insights about the behaviour of young people involved.

The case study involved collecting diarised observations of the four pupils during playtime during the year 2007-2008 (Appendix 3). The participants were interviewed individually at the beginning and end of the year and asked questions about their playground behaviour. Finally they were asked to draw a picture of themselves on the playground. My case study was undertaken using a variety of data collection methods. The qualitative methods I used were primarily diarised

observations which were supplemented with the completion of a questionnaire during interviews and making visual drawings (Appendix 4-11).

Quantitative methods involved the examination of statistics from the behaviour database and the “Get active on the playground” registers. In accordance with my main study the methodologies were designed to find out about the children’s actions on the playground. My case study has elements of a descriptive case study because it narrates observations of the pupil’s behaviour on the playground in a diary style document but is fundamentally evaluative. I felt that the best way to access the pupil’s thoughts and feelings about playtime was to be present on the playground beside them during their play where I could observe and record. I played alongside the pupils and opened up vital communication lines which enriched my study. The children all had statements for SEN and because of this they may not have fully realised my intention to make observations. I was their teacher and I believe that they were not suspicious of my being there at playtimes because I told them that I was going to watch and play with them. If they had been suspicious of my presence it could have made them anxious which could have compromised the validity of my observations. Cohen et al (2000:52) suggests that giving the children some explanation of your actions might be a sufficient measure of informed consent consistent with their understanding. I reflected on what I had learned from my participant observations and shared this with colleagues in order to be able to support the children in the best way possible and to improve conduct for pupils with ASC.

Constraints

Overall, throughout the three cycles, I felt that a collaborative type of approach to design was powerful in supporting my research because I had foreseen some constraints from issues which I raise below.

Lack of support.

Senior management may have thought that I was being distracted from school teaching and learning work because I was undertaking my research, “in situ?” During the first cycle I was part of the management group which was very supportive but cycles two and three did not directly involve senior management as much as cycle one. The TAs who were undertaking foundation degrees themselves were interested in playtime activities and were helpful. There could have been misunderstandings with other staff, which could have affected my research. I hoped the chosen approach to my project of PAR was the appropriate choice and this case study did not detract too much from the job which I was engaged to do at school.

Lack of knowledge

There may have been a lack of knowledge about the rules for good behaviour from some staff, therefore good communication needed to take place about this. Considering my perceived constraints accurately I needed school staff working with me on the project to ensure that they understood what was required by way of making changes to behaviour practices in school and on the playground.

Sabotage

There could also have been sabotage from children or staff. It could have been that all the staff did not collaborate positively about the introduction of active playgrounds. I could have been

walking on eggshells because I was undertaking my research in context. Swetnam (2003:18) suggests that whilst some employers are helpful and cooperative, others can be jealous and obstructive of the work because it may reveal some defects in the existing system. I needed to secure this research as a whole school priority as there could have been a tension created between professionals who had a different perspective on pupil's behaviour and learning.

Suspicious

Outside on the playground if I was not supervising the children (my usual playground role), in turn, the pupils could have been suspicious of what I was actually doing there and because of their lack of knowledge about the objective of my research; this may have affected their behaviour. Blatchford does state that it is difficult to research playground life, as the pupils are often suspicious of what you are doing there and may not behave in their usual mode (Blatchford & Sharp, 1994). Acquiring any funding for training and equipment to undertake playground leader's schemes could have been problematic. Time management was tight because the school was approaching closure; I could have run out of time, the details of which have been described previously.

Generalisation

Critics point out the lack of scientific rigour in PAR and say it seldom produces results which are easily generalisable (Rose, 2001). Thomas (2011) agrees that you cannot generalise from a single case study as this method is a kind of research that concentrates on the one thing in particular that you are interested in, you are looking at it in detail, connecting ideas, suggesting from experience

and not seeking to generalise from it. My research focused on my place of work which had a specific population and it would be difficult to generalise the findings to another school which had the same limits imposed in my study; which involved children aged seven to twelve years old with a diversity of statements of SEN, such as, SEBD, MLD, ASC. This kind of cohort would be difficult to replicate. Rose (2001:10) adds that action research itself does provoke discussion, generate ideas and can provide a possible basis for undertaking further enquiry which could be conducted in other schools. I considered comparing the behaviour on the playground of our school to that of another school which has a similar population of pupils. If I researched across schools by comparing schools having similar behaviour problems or management intervention on the playground, how would that fit into my methodology? Would this be another cycle of research? Ultimately, the purpose of my research is to improve practice in my workplace, rather than to find a particular truth about behaviour. It maybe, therefore, that there is no one truth about behaviour management in schools but some general ideals to consider about conduct in school and at playtimes from the presented evidence.

Validity

Validity, as Thomas (2011) suggests, is about the facts which makes the research valid, therefore, I ask myself and quote from my research diary entry in 2008,

What can I present to the reader to show that my work is valid and what I am stating is relevant and true? How does the reader know that the outcomes claimed have been achieved? How can I show that behaviour at my school, particularly for pupils with ASC on the playground is improved and what does this claim mean to me and my school? Having gone through a careful action research process of improvement will there be any claims to add to knowledge itself so can I develop my epistemology?

Such claims may be criticised by others so firm substantiation needs to be provided to justify my claims. There needs to be triangulation in my work and as Thomas (2009) reiterates; it is important to note that the more evidence available, each piece corroborating the other, the surer the validity will be. I anticipate, my methodology description elucidates on how I chose and collated the data which showed that practice was improved. McNiff and Whitehead (2010:13) clarify this further:

Action research stories explain the procedures involved in making a knowledge claim, in terms of what you did and what you learned; what was involved in testing the validity of the claim about how you gathered data and generated evidence to show why people should believe you when you say you have improved your practice and how you have explained the significance of your claim.

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CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY 2

Background.

Hay school, catered for 135 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. It was situated on a split site: upper school (85 pupils) and lower school (50 pupils). The study took place in lower school, over three years, with pupils in years one to seven. During the years 2004-2005 changes in leadership impacted on the stability of behaviour management within the school and this was highlighted as a concern on inspection reports (DMBC, 2004). A new headteacher was appointed who made inroads into improving behaviour management in the school by forming a behaviour management group, which I joined. By joining the group I hoped to expand my knowledge and support any developments in school. This was the starting point of my study and the first cycle of action research.

Participatory Action Research theory

PAR was the chosen methodology for this piece of research. Reasons for selecting PAR will be discussed and explained further in this chapter. At one point in time, however, I did consider a practitioner led enquiry because this approach can combine academic and professional interest by focusing on a practice based research project as a means of personal development which can ultimately help school improvement. Thomas (2009:112) explains that historically, Lewin; the social psychologist described action research as research with continual reflection which leads to social change. Within participatory action research there is some collaboration with others. This

research moves forward in cycles or spirals using the plan, action, change and refinement approach. Another documented model for PAR is self reflection, which follows a cycle of: planning; action; observations and modification (Rose, 2001) and involves critical inquiry into practice which is examined and reflected on. McNiff (06:34) describes an action researcher as a practitioner who is committed to improving learning; someone who offers explanations about how and why they are doing so. Hitchcock (1995:6) confirms that PAR is a good model for teacher researchers to adopt because it can be described as an inquiry into a chosen issue or problem of current concern, usually undertaken by those directly involved, with the aim of implementing a change in the situation. McNiff and Whitehead (2010:14) state that action is taken with educational intent and as Thomas (2009) implies interpretive research helps to influence the researcher's developing practice, therefore, I aimed for my actions and practice to influence and enhance my praxis and those of others. Swetnam (2003) comments that the researcher can become over involved and attached to the participants. This may affect decisions therefore the role of the teacher/researcher had to be addressed.

Participatory Action Research Findings

My job at Hay was very demanding so I needed a methodology which allowed me to undertake my work and from which I could gain some knowledge. PAR bridges the gap between research and practice; therefore it was an appealing, relevant and accessible methodology for me. I could reflect on and evaluate the varied experiences, learn from them and apply the new learning to improve practice. PAR assisted me to be an active teacher researching practice and this is the methodology that I was able to undertake taking into account the hectic and diverse life of a class teacher in a school catering for children with MLD, ASC and challenging behaviour.

The collection of data for the study was made over a three year time framework, from May 2005, to July 2008, when, due to the Local Authority reorganisation, the school closed. The research data was totally collected by that time. For my first cycle of research, I examined the management of behaviour in school. During the second cycle, I studied children's behaviour on the playground. For the third cycle I studied four pupils at playtimes, who all had a statement of SEN for additional communication difficulties and ASC.

I was the action researcher, the insider and a manager of people. At times, the process was concerned with others, as I had some TAs who wished to be involved with the project of improving behaviour on the playground. They were themselves students on various courses who, like me, enjoy linking theory with practice. I aimed to involve these staff as much as possible in a positive way by setting up the structure of playground activities in the second and third cycle. I devised a system which enabled the TAs to collect attendance data for me and my class TA fed all this information back to me. This collaboration empowered the students because they felt included and part of a team. The positive relationships helped to build confidence in the research. Poor liaisons could have affected the work. Rose (2001:15) implies that suitable time spent on making sure that everyone is working to the same definitions usually pays good dividends. Also, having a clear understanding of expectations with regard to conduct and data collection methods to be used for the project was beneficial. Swetnam (2003: 61) reminds me about the fine line of acceptance from staff at school, as I became the enthusiastic teacher/researcher,

Remember that the research, so dear to you, may be irritant to others and is, at best, an intrusion of their time. Fortunately, most people are kind and helpful, if approached correctly.

These colleagues helped me to maintain motivation with other staff as together there was a sense of overall purpose. They felt inspired to undertake their individual work based tasks about playtime activities for their Foundation degree courses using the structures of research that I had set up like diaries and registers. For their courses, one TA studied the behaviour of one pupil with challenging behaviour on the playground and another TA studied the dilemma of structured play versus free play. However, above all of this, I provided clear guidance with clear explanations to all staff in school to ensure continuity and consistency of interpretation of the aims of my research and data analysis and any new procedures after reflection.

In the first cycle of research there were class teachers and senior management who were working together as a group looking at behaviour management. Other staff in school were involved and were consulted through discussions about working practices and procedures for data collection. Data was collectively sourced, however it was my responsibility to analyse the data and draw conclusions from it. Analysis and conclusions are discussed in the appropriate chapter.

I am grateful to the behaviour working party for their involvement with the development of new behaviour practices at Hay school during the first cycle of PAR. The research is however ultimately my work. The second and third cycles were independent research and there was no direct involvement from the management group. I made every effort to commit to the research. It is a personal achievement for me which includes acceptance of being a teacher researcher in my workplace, the training of my mind in the art of research methods and the ability to think critically. Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) however, could dispute this personal ability, giving, at times in their writing, a nuance of teachers as teachers, who have too little distance from the

subject of their research. Therefore they lack the appropriate objectivity and neutrality of a professional academic researcher. However, to substantiate my status as a teacher/researcher I quote McNiff and Whitehead (2010:16), who state that,

It is now widely accepted that practitioners can and should research their practice and demonstrate their professional accountability.

I hoped that together, in our effort, with good, quality, communication and clear explanations, we were able to question existing practices in school and have more control over our work in context avoiding sabotage from any outsiders of the project for example, staff reluctant to change their practice. Colleagues who were not studying could have found it difficult to accept me in my researching role. Patton (2002:213) explains that purpose is the controlling force of research. The overall aim to improve behaviour was clearly the catalyst which drove my research. It was conducted in the interpretive/constructivist research paradigm of the interactionist tradition, mostly with qualitative data. There is however, some statistical illustration.

I wanted my research to assist the school development, although, I also hoped that I could produce research which matched Education Doctorate standards and was sound enough to result in effective change. As McNiff and Whitehead (2010) explain, in order to get recognition for your work you need to produce a piece of research which will meet the criteria of the establishment and display personal confidence in your writing. PAR provided an important vehicle for my personal and practical development whilst also working at the same time. I agree with Swetnam (2003:13) who states that any research needs „academic integrity“ which is the capacity to recognise weaknesses in the approach alongside the ability to acknowledge the work

of others. Attending the taught subject modules, support from my tutorials and the discussions with fellow students at the university helped to broaden my confidence to advance my ideas and develop my research questions further. My methodology choice was PAR rather than practitioner led enquiry. During practitioner led enquiry assessable reports are submitted for academic credits leading to the awarding of degrees, certificates and diplomas from universities (Murray, 2000:10). There was no academic expectation of me at my school to undertake research. There was more of a personal agenda. My professional development was obviously enhanced from undertaking the research. It was my personal choice to embark on this study to develop my epistemology, rather than a professional expectation. I wanted my research to assist school improvement therefore benefitting both me and the school.

Research and the Researcher

In order to understand my school situation in relation to the research, I had to take on this new role of a researcher. I had to stand outside my normal function of a class teacher and look at the regular school world in a detached way which, at times, dislocated me, from the day to day workings of school. I needed to establish my own learner identity. As a researcher I was moving out of the comfort zone of my usual teaching and learning mode to undertake learning which would be scrutinised critically by others. This made me feel quite vulnerable. At the university, I actively engaged in learning new skills and knowledge about research, which helped me to change my identity and I adjusted my positionality through the input of new knowledge during the development of my research. PAR requires repositioning and reflection at the end of each cycle. I found that this could create a certain amount of tension because throughout the period of

my research I remained in the same workplace, doing the same job but some practices were changing with each research cycle.

Brydon Miller (2003:19) states

In our roles as academics or facilitators, many of us have found that the road to action research also required changes in our teaching practices.

Hitchcock (1995) suggests that being a reflective practitioner involves moving beyond commonsense routine and habitual action to action which is characterised by self-appraisal, flexibility, creativity, social, cultural and political awareness. These are precisely the kinds of skills and attitudes in which engagement with the research developed. I was organising my teaching and continually looking for new ideas for improvement using the above skills and becoming more politically aware especially about trends and creativity at playtimes. I found that the blueprint of a reflective practitioner, suited my style of teaching and learning as I am fundamentally a multi-sensory teacher who works better when I am situated within the learning setting where there is lots of planned action, assessment and reflection and which can have a constructive impact upon practice and pupils whilst also being a successful agent for a positive change in my pedagogy.

Methods

PAR was advantageous for me because it allowed me to incorporate a number of different methods for data collection. I used mixed contrasting methods which were diaries of observations, questionnaires, interviews, case study and drawings. There was qualitative data in

the form of diaries of observations, semi structured interviews, drawings and quantitative data in the form of questionnaires, statistics from the behaviour data base and the “get active” registers, which showed pupil’s interaction in activities on the playground.

A balance of quantitative and qualitative data from the research helped me to interpret and understand the learning environment rather than just a pure, scientific approach to the research. Together these approaches gave evidence towards the focus of improving behaviour in my school, in particular, on the playground. The data collection and subsequent analysis allowed me to determine sub themes, patterns and ideas about the behaviour in school and on the playground, rather than putting forward my preconceived ideas of what I thought the types of themes would emerge from the research could be.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires can be used to gather appropriate data about people’s attitudes and their interpretation of things which can subsequently be used as data for analysis. They are easy to administer and can also help to refine the focus of the research (Campbell et al, 2006; Denscombe, 2003; Elliott, 1991 and Swetnam, 2003). Gillham (2008) states that questioning is one of a range of ways of getting information from people quickly but a weakness in that they get the answers purely to the questions that are asked, generally without elaboration. Cohen et al (2000) and Patton (2006) state that open questions allow respondents to add their own remarks and points of view to explain any answers they have given, however, they are more difficult to classify than closed questions and can cause a problem for the researcher who has to collate the responses in a way that provides clear informative data for the reader.

The questionnaires in the first cycle

In the first cycle in 2005-2006 three questionnaires were created; one for pupils, one for staff and one for parents. Each questionnaire consisted of ten questions and they were carried out in a set order of pupils first then staff and then parents. A time schedule was laid down for the undertaking and analysis of the questionnaires. The pupil and staff questionnaires were undertaken in the presence of the researcher and this ensured 100% return and means that all pupil and staff opinions were taken into account. This made the pupil and staff responses more valid than the parent questionnaire which was a postal questionnaire with only 75% returned. Questionnaires were a good choice as they were easy to manage within the heavy work load of a teacher with senior responsibilities. I was also able to control the sample of the pupils and staff; however it was more difficult to do the same with the parent's sample because it was postal therefore reliant upon returns.

Pupil questionnaire

The problem in school at that time was that in the absence of the headteacher there had been an increase in the number of recorded behaviour incidents. The behaviour management group which included two pupils who were school council members devised a questionnaire for pupils based upon the school's areas of concern about unacceptable behaviour. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out pupils perceptions of behaviour in school. The questionnaire needed to be user friendly, unambiguous and straightforward because the cohort of pupils in Hay school had statements of SEN for MLD and ASC. The decision to use open and closed questions allowed for more freedom of answers and to reduce bias. In November 2005, the sample; which consisted of every pupil in Hay lower school, completed a questionnaire with the help of an adult for the

reading and possibly writing. The completed questionnaires were collected by the management group and systematically analysed in order to establish any patterns or themes in the given responses. The analysis of the pupil questionnaires is discussed in more detail in the first cycle of research chapter (page 97).

Staff questionnaire

The aim of the staff questionnaire was to find out their perceptions of behaviour in school. The questions were designed using the pupil questionnaire and responses as a basis and for targeting the areas of concern of the staff. For example, Question 10 in the pupil questionnaire was “What do you think teachers should do to make our school a happy place?” This led to the creation of Question 10 on the staff questionnaire of “How do you promote positive learning and behaviour?” This was intended to encourage the staff to reflect on their own practices and ethos in the classroom. The staff questionnaires were undertaken in the presence of the researcher to ensure 100% return which increased their validity. Completed staff questionnaires were examined by the behaviour management group in meetings after school. They were analysed in order to highlight any patterns or particular concerns in the given responses. The analysis of the staff questionnaires is discussed in more detail in the first cycle of research chapter (page 102).

Parent questionnaire

Although the questions in the parent’s postal questionnaire had similar vocabulary to those in the staff questionnaire, consideration needed to be given to the fact that some parents had difficulties with literacy. Consequently, this questionnaire needed to be easy to read and understand and also unambiguous because it was known that a few of the parents in Hay school had attended the

school previously as pupils themselves. There were nine direct questions and the tenth was open for parent comment. The majority of the questions related to social issues around safety and behaviour in school. One question asked about their child's success in school. The completed parent questionnaires were analysed by the behaviour management group and examined in order to identify any particular concerns in their given responses. The analysis of the parent questionnaires is discussed in more detail in the first cycle of research chapter (page 104).

Second cycle, the playground questionnaire

A questionnaire was created at the beginning of the second cycle to allow staff to answer questions about different types of observed negative behaviour on the playground. The researcher conducted a personal interview with each member of the teaching and non teaching staff during which time the questionnaires were undertaken. The responses were analysed by the researcher and 2 TAs using a highlighted coding system which allowed for identification of trends and emerging themes. The purpose of the questionnaire was to establish information about the various playground behaviours and discover if there was any particular type of behaviour which, in the researcher's experience of generally observing on the playground, had not been witnessed before. As Blatchford (1998b:22) states, asking questions about pupil behaviour during breaktimes, at a primary level, presents with particular difficulties because the respondents may have biased answers depending on their perceptions, for example relating to things like the rules of the game and the difference between play and real fighting. What one person views as acceptable behaviour could be seen as unacceptable by others.

According to Cohen et al (2000) personal interview encourages honesty and ensures greater reliability. During the interview any misinterpretations of the questions could be addressed. From the literature search, the categories of behaviour established to use in the questionnaire were based on Blatchford's (1989) observations of negative behaviour at playtimes. Later, on behaviours from the NASUWT survey (Derrington, 2008) were considered. This survey has been described previously.

The categories of types of negative behaviours on the playground are described below;

- Aggression
- Anti-social behaviour such as bullying and racism.
- Physical play (especially from boys or girls or both);
- Jumping on backs,
- Chasing and pulling,
- Fighting,
- Intimidation
- Acting out aggressive scenes from television programmes or other, please specify.
- Idling about without a purpose, that is, lethargic, not knowing what to do with themselves.
- Deliberately spoiling the games of others
- Name calling,
- Verbal abuse,
- Continually complaining to peers or adults on duty.
- Petty squabbling
- Biting and scratching.

Considered later from the NASUWT survey

- Swearing
- Physical intimidation
- Physical assault
- Sexual harassment
- Verbal and non verbal defiance

From collating the information about the categories of negative behaviour, and reading Blatchford's study (1989), a vision evolved for me of the questions I wanted to ask in order to address the behaviour issues at playtimes. Firstly, the data collected was used to identify the behaviours which were low on disruption and then those which were unacceptable in school. This formed the basis for discussions with staff and children, especially, in the school council meeting where it was discussed what unacceptable school behaviour is. The questionnaire will be discussed in more detail later in the second cycle of research chapter (page 120).

Third cycle; Interviews of pupils with ASC using a questionnaire

I interviewed the four children in the third cycle of research twice, once at the beginning and one at the end of the school year, 2007-2008 using the same questions. This helped to identify any significant changes in behaviour of the pupils on the playground. During the interview any misinterpretations of the questions could be addressed. The mostly open questions the children were asked individually during the informal interviews were adapted from DES Professional Development Programme (DFES; 2007b; Resource 10b). The programme is part of the national

programme for PESS (QCA, 2006; 2008). The Government invested in this programme to assist schools in achieving their target of all pupils taking part in two hours of high quality P.E and School Sport each week within and beyond the National Curriculum by 2008. The questions asked in this cycle are listed in the table below.

1. Have you had a white slip for negative behaviour on the playground? If so why?
2. Do you take part in physical activity at playtimes (like joining in with organised games, skipping or playing football)?
3. If you do not take part in physical activity at playtimes please explain why?
4. What activities do you like to do at playtimes?
5. Do you think that you should become more active at school at playtimes?
6. What can help you to become more active?

Table 1 – Third Cycle Questionnaire

I performed the pupil interviews in a calm relaxed manner speaking at the children's level and encouraging them to answer the questions in order to develop the communication between us. I attempted to have a positive connection with the pupils during the interviews to gain the most comprehensive answers. I did not use any visual or verbal prompts although my body language and facial expressions may have compromised the validity of the responses. As a teacher of pupils with SEN I recognised that they easily became distracted and often have communication difficulties and therefore I am used to using body language and facial expressions as a teaching strategy. The children already knew me and were comfortable to speak out as clearly as they could. There could however have been a problem with this technique because the pupils may have given me the answers which they thought I wanted to hear. The analysis of the pupil interviews using a questionnaire is discussed in more detail in the third cycle of research, chapter seven (Page 137).

Visual drawings method.

At the same time as the interviews of the pupils in the study, a secondary qualitative analysis was undertaken, using visual drawings of playground behaviour and activities. The researcher felt that drawing could help the pupils who were less verbose, to express themselves and give greater acuity in relation to how they felt about activities on the playground. The pupils were each given a black pen and paper and asked to draw themselves doing what they liked to do to be active and involved on the playground. They each were asked to complete the exercise twice – once at the beginning and once at the end of the school year 2007-2008. The two drawings were then compared and contrasted. As Hitchcock (95:310) suggests, visual documents might be regarded in exactly the same way as written texts; they need to be interrogated and interpreted to reveal the meanings within them. Prosser (2001:4) also emphasises the significance of starting where the child is at developmentally and the importance of using drawings and words to help adults understand children's perceptions of a topic. The four children in the study all had communication problems which can be associated with ASC (Baron-Cohen et al, 1993 and Frith, 2007) and found it difficult to use language effectively. Visual drawings were an excellent way of demonstrating their voice because they were able to delineate with detail. This helped the pupils to communicate without the barrier of language. It was hoped that this would give the children empowerment about "Get Active", through their eyes, rather like looking at the playground activities, with their glasses on.

Watkins et al (2007) reiterates that a powerful way to explore pupils' understanding of knowledge is to ask them to draw their learning, suggesting that this is a valuable opportunity for educationalists to consider and understand what their images represent. The meanings can give an

insight into what the pupils are thinking and understanding. During a small research project undertaken in a London primary school, Lodge (2007) asked pupils to draw their learning in the classroom. She suggested that visual imagery was framed by pupil's conceptions of learning and that drawings need to be translated to understand the pupil knowledge that has informed them. Berger's (2008) study of paintings postulates that seeing things comes before saying words. He adds that the interpretation of what is seen is affected by what is known or what is believed which is based on previous experiences. The image is a sight that has been replicated and shows how the artist represents a certain event or activity at a certain time. Drawn images also remain as a record of how a past event was interpreted. So, in the case of this research, the second and later image of the playtime behaviour gave an update on the artist's previous thinking in relation to their playground activities. The analysis of the pupil visual drawings is discussed in more detail in the third cycle of research chapter seven (page 139).

Registers

I examined data from the registers for the "Get Active on the playground" attendance; which I had collated over two years, 2006-2008. I also used the local authority attendance and behaviour database for my analysis. The daily attendance registers were kept showing pupil's involvement with activities at break times. These were manually recorded by the TAs on duty on the day and I collated them at a later date. I was interested to explore why children diagnosed with ASC did not interact with the planned activities at playtimes as often as the other pupils who were diagnosed with SEN in school. At the same time, behaviour in school was documented on the local authority electronic database. Behaviour was recorded on white sheets (Appendix 12) for

negative behaviour and pink sheets for positive behaviour (Appendix 13). During the period of study, information from the pink and white sheets was collated and put onto the electronic system on a weekly basis by the school office staff. Data about the four pupils in the third cycle of the study was examined by the researcher from the electronic database. It was more constructive to use the quantitative data from “Get Active on the playground,” registers to examine involvement with the different activities rather than just describing a pure and simple manifestation of behaviour during playtime activities in my particular location. The analysis of the registers in the second cycle is discussed in chapter six (page 126).

Diaries.

I had a chronological diary in the first cycle (Appendix 1) and the diary of observations on the playground in the second and third cycles (Appendix 2 and 3). Some recorded qualitative data in the diaries is descriptive and is not intended to detail behaviour improvement. Patton (2002:145) says such methods as interviews, observations and analysing documents, like diaries, do assist in finding out and reflecting on what people know, feel, do and think. The first cycle’s diary was kept from 2005-2006 and was a pure chronological log of events. The second cycle, kept from 2006-2007 and the third cycle kept from 2007-2008 consisted of logging events and some of my reflections about them which I was able to consider in my analysis of the third cycle. I was able to observe the children on the playground for some part of each school day during the time of the study. The observations were informal and relevant field study notes and were my views only. I kept the diaries by writing them up as soon after the event as possible and they were used as a

descriptive tool to assist the research. It is important to note that I was aware that time elapsed between my playtime observations and the writing of my entries and therefore this could have brought into question the reliability and validity of the completed diary entries. See analysis of the participants in the third cycle using the diary entries (page144).

Ethical Issues

The University of Birmingham is committed to ensuring that high standards of ethical care are followed in the conduct of research by students. I therefore studied the online „code of conduct for researchers“ which, as a student, I should be familiar with. Also remembering to ensure good ethics within the research process, some issues included; informed consent, permission to participate, permission to make observations and to ask questions, all of which were addressed. It was important to get formal permission from all parents /carers of the children who were studied. The British Educational Research Association (Bera, 2011:6) states that the best interests of the child must be the primary consideration. I undertook the interviews for the questionnaires personally in the first and third cycle and consequently a 100% were returned. Ethically, the participants needed to know that they had the right to withdraw from the research if they felt that it was necessary to do so. I needed to assure them of anonymity, especially when I wrote up my research. In order for me to undertake the research and collect the evidence to support it, I obtained consent from the head teacher of the school. I also received a letter from the governors who assured me of their continued support (Appendix 14).

People who know me personally appreciate that I have much integrity; however, I needed to build up the trust of all participants so that they knew I could maintain confidentiality and

neutrality. I needed to negotiate the terms of their involvement, relative status relationships, data ownership, who would have access to the data and where would the data be stored? The school was due to close and we were to move to a new building. There was a point in time when school data was transferred from the school computers to the new school's resources. In order to safeguard that data I personally took responsibility for any data that was required for my study.

I had to consider however, that others may have wanted to become the gatekeepers of my research project. This was an issue which I needed to discuss with the governors of the school in which I was working. I quote from Rose (2001:14) who describes how action research projects demand good leadership and effective organisational skills in order to see them through to completion. I thanked the governors of the school in my study for their excellent leadership and enthusiasm to spur me on to complete a piece of research which positively dealt with an important school issue whilst reminding them that although they were stakeholders in the project, the end product would be my work. I had a moral responsibility to maintain a high standard of conduct and practice myself whilst being as transparent and objective as possible and ensuring that any participants in the research were not adversely affected by the research itself.

There were also some ethical considerations concerning the dichotomy of my dual role as teacher/ researcher. This was with regard to how the other staff in school perceived me in my new role of the researcher. I did not want my researcher role to compromise my demanding teaching role. I aimed for the process to be collaborative with other staff, as there were some who wanted to be involved in the project because they were also studying on various courses. Fortunately for me, all involved recognised my dual role and appreciated that any positive

outcomes of the research and subsequent changes could affect the management of behaviour in school and would be helpful to them in the future.

The children in the third cycle allowed me to observe and interview them, however, considering their young age and limited understanding I am not sure that they totally perceived that I was interpreting and attempting to make sense of their behaviour on the playground. They were a vulnerable cohort due to their young age and ASC condition. I outlined my proposal to all the adults concerned in order to gain their support and acceptance. Cohen et al (2000) says that seeking informed consent from minors does involve two stages. Firstly, the adults responsible for the children in the study needed to have the purpose of the study explained to them before they gave permission for the researcher to proceed and the second stage is to ask the pupils themselves for permission. I did not think it necessary for the children to be accompanied during their interviews because I was their class teacher and they knew me well enough although their responses to my questions could have been affected by this familiarity.

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CHAPTER 5

THE FIRST CYCLE

In this part of the study which was undertaken during the academic year 2005-2006, the researcher wanted to find out how the management of behaviour in school could be improved and also discover what theories of learning could underpin those behaviour management changes. This cycle discusses how a behaviour management group was formed in the school to create a more positive learning environment. A chronological diary of events was kept, data about behaviour management sheets was collated and questionnaires were undertaken. This was the first cycle of research in a PAR approach of plan do and review.

The number on roll in school was declining during the time of the study as the local authority was reviewing its provision for SEN and intended to close the school at some future date. Due to variations in leadership, the school had been through a period of unrest. These changes had a huge impact on many aspects of the school's work, notably, achieving consistency in behaviour management, agreeing on set methods for handling pupil behaviour and managing a rising number of recorded negative behaviours dealt with by staff. All behaviours recorded were of a more serious nature, enough to warrant completion of a white behaviour sheet. Information about such behaviour was then collated on the local authority behaviour database.

Year	White sheets
2002-2003	833
2003-2004	910
2004-2005	683
2005-2006	423
2006-2007	311

Table 2 - Total figures of completed white behaviour sheets

Concern about behaviour management in school was highlighted in the local authority review of Hay school in December 2004. Apprehension was also shown about the impact of the long term absence and subsequent retirement of the head teacher and the well being of the staff and pupils. As the figures above show, there had been a significant increase in the number of incidents of negative behaviour between 2003 and 2004. Attention had deflected from improving the curriculum and pupils' achievement because the need to maintain order had become increasingly more demanding. Management systems were ineffective with little consistency of expectations and application of policy. Systems and procedures were not well established and poor behaviour continued to present barriers to learning. The review concluded that the school should be placed in Moderated School Self Review (MSSR) category 5 in line with the local authority's MSSR service. A key role of the MSSR service from the local authority is to ensure that the school is assisted to improve. The cornerstone of this is through moderated self-review. Furthermore, it was suggested that a functioning management team should be formed and staff should be given development opportunities to help to improve overall behaviour management.

In May 2005, a new headteacher to the school set about improving behaviour management. This was a critical point as she started to restructure the behaviour management procedures and strategies used in school, working alongside the staff with joint and collaborative team meetings about appropriate behaviour management. She began to change policy which emphasised rewards rather than sanctions. The total number of completed behaviour sheets for the year 2004-2005, began to decrease, totalling 683 compared to 910 entries for the previous year which is a 25% reduction. A behaviour management team was formed in November 2005 and procedures and

strategies used in school were restructured. A chronological diary, during the year 2005-2006, details the activities that led to changes in management of behaviour at Hay school (Appendix 1).

I joined the behaviour management group as a representative for the lower school. During the group meetings members discussed progress, reviewed data, considered plan modifications and undertook training in behaviour management. The newly acquired learning within this organisation helped me to identify the following research questions, which were also addressed by me during the first cycle.

These were;

- Can the changes in management of behaviour at Hay school be mapped to theories of learning?
- Would new learning in the group bring about positive changes in management of behaviour, which would then benefit the pupils?
- Who is learning and what are the outcomes?
- What are the learning mechanisms?

The Keeping Pupils Safe Project

The behaviour working party was set up and consisted of a cross section of school's staff and two pupils from the school council. The scheme was called "the keeping pupils safe project" and some aims were defined. These were;

- To ensure that all pupils were safe from bullying and discrimination.
- To ensure that all pupils were safe from injury

- To provide stability, security and a feeling of being cared for.
- To enable all pupils to learn self respect and become responsible adults.

To set about making a change the group stated that discussions with the head teacher and all the school staff would be held, where appropriate, in order to make agreements about amending or altering the present systems, The opinions of all the pupils throughout the school about behaviour and the views of all the staff and parents regarding the present systems in school would be taken into account through questionnaires.

The study of Luiselli et al (2005)

As a starting point, the management group considered the then recently published article which documented the work of Luiselli et al (2005) in America which had similarities, relevant to the work of Hay school's "keeping pupils safe project". This research explained how the staff had developed a model to ensure a safe learning environment using a whole school positive behaviour support programme. It examined discipline problems like classroom disruption and negative behaviour such as bullying and violence. Researchers found that establishing effective discipline practices was critical to ensuring academic success and providing a safe environment. Student discipline measures were recorded in the study. The rules had been established by the school before the intervention was put into place and defined respectful and safe behaviours as stated by the pupils. Discipline referral sheets had been issued by teachers when students displayed behaviours that were rule violations and every referral was entered onto a school database in the school office. Referral slips which specified the behaviour and place of the incident were

completed for any pupil who broke the rules. These categories of behaviours were fighting with peers, threat or assault towards staff, disruption in class, problems on school buses, defiance and vandalism.

Such categories were a helpful tool to use as a baseline for exploring negative behaviours at Hay. On examination of the list of negative behaviours on Hay school's existing behaviour referral, "white sheet" the management group discovered that all these types of behaviours were already included; in fact, they were recorded in more detail than in the Luiselli study. The presented categories on the white sheet were relevant and specific to meet the needs of Hay school and had further groupings about the time of incident, the location of the incident and the school action which would follow. The classifications on the school's white negative behaviour sheet were helpful to the behaviour management group in collecting relevant data about negative incidents in Hay school and this was suitable data to substantiate any future transition in policy.

Some comparisons from the previous year's white sheets were made during the year of study and this indicated the quantity of negative behaviour sheets dealt with by the staff at the lower school. These are shown on the table below.

Academic Year	Number of negative behaviour sheets
2004-2005	683
2005-2006	423
2006-2007	311

Table 3 – White behaviour sheet comparison

At lower school during the year 2005-2006, the year of this cycle, 84% of the sheets were from males and 16% from female pupils. There was a greater percentage of males in Hay, in fact a

higher percentage of male pupils have been the case throughout my teaching within special education. The majority of negative incidents recorded related to, defiance, (32%) disruption, (15%) and assault (13%). The incidents had been reduced significantly over the year 2005-2006 as a result of the consistency in senior management, the work of the behaviour group and subsequent new procedures including a tangible reward system in place. 38% of the behaviour sheets were given for playground behaviour which was a time when more freedom of choice was allowed in Hay school. 23% of the incidents occurred at lunchtime and 15% during morning breaks. I reiterate from the literature search that without clear organisation structures and caring supervision, playgrounds can become unruly places where bullying and other manifestations of unease can fester and grow (DfES; 2005a).

General actions taken to reduce these incidences were by the staff monitoring behaviour in the classroom and playground. There were meetings on a regular basis with dinnertime supervisors to discuss behaviour issues. All staff were asked to use positive reinforcement, give requests rather than instructions to pupils and to continually reaffirm the behaviour expectations of all the staff. Targeted pupils, who had been given a greater number of negative sheets worked with the school learning mentor who discussed their behaviour and gave them weekly achievable behaviour targets. Behaviour issues and rules were also discussed in circle time in class, on a regular basis.

At morning and lunchtime playtimes there was extra staff on duty. Training for dinnertime supervisors was given about playtime pastimes and consequently the activities during break times were more organised with games and clubs. Alongside this rewards of certificates and small prizes were given for positive behaviour at playtimes. Any break time incidences were dealt with

straight away and reported to class staff. This was to avoid the escalation of negative behaviour on pupils' return to the classroom base. Again as suggested in the literature, when situations are allowed to develop, then, valuable teaching time is lost as teachers try to sort out the problems of frayed emotions and bruised self-esteem that playtimes and lunchtime break have provoked (DfES, 2005a).

It was noted that the highest percentage of pupils with challenging behaviour was in years 5 and 7. Individuals were identified from the database statistics and pupil questionnaires and they were placed on programmes with behaviour target books which were used between school and home. Staff worked closely with the parents of these pupils to help modify their behaviour. Wednesday afternoon had incidences of increased negative behaviour. During that time, three classes went to the local pool for swimming lessons. This may have contributed to the increase in negative behaviour sheets as the swimming sessions were less structured than class lessons. Staff were asked to go in the water at the pool to supervise and some volunteered to do so and therefore, overall more staff were allocated to go to the swimming lessons. From the analysis made from the behaviour database, the changes that were made by the end of the school year July 2006 were;

- To monitor behaviour management more regularly both in class and on the playground.
- Senior staff to meet regularly with the other staff and midday supervisors to discuss behavioural issues.
- To work closely with parents regarding behaviour issues.
- To ensure positive behaviour rewards in place.

- To target individual pupils for additional support from the learning mentor.
- To set up and organise more break time activities in the next school year.
- To annually review the behaviour policy.
- To further reduce the negative behaviour in school by 25% in the next school year, 2006-2007.

The above suggested actions took place in school during the process of my first cycle of research. This may have helped to decrease the number of recorded negative behaviours in school.

Positive behaviour

As a means of increasing positive behaviour at Hay school, the positive behaviour “pink sheet” was introduced in November 2005 to measure positive behaviour in school and in opposition to only recording negative behaviours on a white sheet. The pink sheets had actions stated on them with further positive rewards for the pupils like the bronze, silver and gold cards, which were given out in achievement assembly and could be cashed in for prizes in the school shop after the assembly. The principles of behaviourism came to mind, particularly, operant conditioning when the school in my study implemented this pre-emptive positive behaviour modification system with its token economy of rewards and sanctions. It was established by the behaviour group as a positive way to manage and modify pupil behaviour. Alongside this, class treats, like a trip to the cinema, could be claimed if a certain number of pink sheets were achieved by an individual in the class and a school budget was set up to cater for this.

The local authority database recorded both negative and positive behaviour onto their system.

This was a strategy used as a reinforcement to remind pupils of expectations of behaviour and it

is therefore arguable that there could be a weakness in this system. On occasions, during the first cycle of my research, I observed a Year 7 pupil showing great admiration for an associate who had just received a white sheet. Did this then influence the pupil's thinking to believe that among peers the white sheet was a trophy which heightened their standing within the peer group? The system of giving sheets, as a behaviour management strategy could promote the opposite effect on behaviour supervision and is therefore worth some consideration. In the same way, Muijs and Reynolds (2005) comment that sending a child to the head teacher can be a punishment for most children but for some it may enhance their desired status as a rebel and therefore be a reinforcer of unwanted behaviour.

Pupil questionnaire

In November 2005 the behaviour management group presented a questionnaire for pupils to establish pupil opinion about behaviour in school. By December 2005 the analysis of information obtained from the pupil questionnaire was available and a relevant selection of findings from various respondents is presented in the table below.

Question	Answers.
1. Do you like school?	1. 85% yes. 15% no.
2. Do you feel safe in school? If no, why not?	2. 95% yes. 5% no
3. Do you feel safe in the classroom? If no, why not?	3. 93% yes. 7% no
4. Do you feel safe in playground? If no, why not?	4. 86% yes. 14% no
5. Do you know the school rules?	5. 98% yes. 2% no
6. What happens if you do not behave in the classroom?	6. Name on the board, white slip, sent out, detention, get punished, get told off, excluded, tick on the board, taken home, warning given, sent to head teacher, lose a star, sent to

	quiet room, no treats.
7. What happens if you do not behave in the playground?	7. Get in trouble, miss next playtime, sent to stand by the wall, get told off, warning given about a white slip, head teacher sorts it out, told to stop, stand in the corner, sent to head teacher and have a punishment, sent in to think about what you have done, put in the quiet room and sent in to write lines
8. Do any pupils make you feel frightened?	8. 66% said that some individuals frightened them and 34% said that they were not frightened by others.
9. What do you think should happen to these pupils?	9. Should be reported, go home, lose free time, get punished, don't know, sent to the head teacher, sent home for two days, white sheet, expelled, excluded from class, do lines, put in the quiet room away from other pupils, not allowed to come back in school and lose dinner break time.
10. What do you think teachers should do to make our school happy and safe?	10. Stop them bullying, kick idiots out of school, make a better environment, don't know, make more rules, tell them not to fight, speak to the bad people and if they still misbehave then send them home, be kind, be helpful, be fair, help people to be good, always follow the rules, stop kids being naughty, read them stories, tell parents, make the school nicer, listen to the kids and help them more, smile more, decorate the classroom nicely, and make our school nice and calm.

Table 4 - Selected pupil questionnaire responses

Analysis of the pupil questionnaire

In question 1, 15% of pupils answered, “No, I do not like school”. Some of their comments were concerning such as, “I do not like having to behave, the kids bully me, the work is not challenging me and because people pick on me”. The fact that 15% of pupils answered “No”, could suggest that there may be underlying problems in the classroom. As previously mentioned, the Steer report (DfES, 2005b) reiterates the belief that good teaching is directly linked to effective learning. The quality of lessons at Hay therefore needed to be monitored further to establish whether or not the teaching and learning was challenging enough for the pupils. On further examination of the names of the pupils who answered “No”, to this question, it was noted

that a high percentage of these respondents had a statement for ASC. The four pupils in the third cycle of my study were four of these respondents. The fact that pupils with ASC can fail to take coherence from events could have affected their ability to answer due to the Central Coherence Theory, (Frith, 2003 and Beardon, 2009).

Questions 2, 3 and 4 asked if they felt safe in school, the classroom and on the playground. Some of the pupil's "No" responses to this were accompanied by them naming individual peers as being the reason they did not feel safe in school, class or on the playground. These named pupils behaviour may have been the reason why several pupils do not like school and this was noted by the management group.

Moving on to question 8 asking if any pupils made them feel frightened relates to the above questions 2,3and 4. The responses to question 8 showed that 66% of pupils were in fact frightened by others. Following the scrutiny of the questionnaire there was some discussion with the named children highlighted in question 8 as possible intimidators of others. This corresponds with the previously mentioned report of Blatchford and Baines (2006) suggesting 70% of primary schools in the study had concerns about the poor behaviour of individual pupils at playtimes. It appeared that a nucleus of persistent offenders was making vulnerable pupils feel insecure and there was also a pecking order within this offending group. Perceptions of what "feeling frightened" means needed addressing and perhaps should have been clarified further on the questionnaire and as Gillham (2008) suggests question wording can have a major influence on answers which could possibly affect the validity of these responses. For example did question 8 give the pupils a mindset of negativity by using the word frightened? As a result of the

questionnaire, all of the children at Hay who had been named as intimidators of others at playtimes had positive support offered to them from the learning mentor in order for them to understand the effects of their behaviour on others and to talk about reasons for such behaviour.

Question 5 showed that 98% of pupils knew the school rules; however, from the number of white sheets given out at that time for negative behaviour it showed that although they knew the rules some chose to break them. The diversity of answers to question 6 and 7 reflected the individual punishments given to offenders from individual staff. They highlighted the fact that there was no consistency of consequence or set agenda for teachers to adhere to. It seemed that every member of staff had their own tolerance level and their willingness to carry a consequential action through could be compromised, especially when their jobs were affected by other constraints such as time limits. It appeared that it would be helpful to hand over the child with disruptive, negative behaviour to a named member of staff after playtime rather than discussing their playground behaviour in class and disrupting the lesson. There should be a set school procedure to follow so that the child understands that there are consequences to their actions. If a pupil knows that there is no deterrent or that a procedure will not be followed through there may be more likelihood that future negative behaviours will reoccur. The answers given could reflect the pupil's perceptions of punishments for negative behaviour or the consequences they had observed in class.

The range of pupil answers given to question 9, related to what should happen to pupils displaying negative behaviour. Responses included losing free time, being sent to the head teacher, being sent home for two days, being given a white behaviour sheet, excluded from class

and being put in the quiet room away from other pupils. This shows that there are many consequences available when dealing with negative behaviour.

Question 10 asked pupils what teachers should do to make school happy and safe, like making the school a better environment. There were a number of ideas with tenets of learning from personal, social and health education (PSHE) teaching and circle time discussions about making rules and being kind and fair. This shows therefore that we have a lot to learn from listening to our pupils. The pupil questionnaire showed that by taking into account the Every Child Matters agenda (DfES, 2003), Healthy Schools agenda; emotional wellbeing (DfES, 2005), the focus was giving pupils a voice and also demonstrating that their views were important.

The management group did in fact act on the aforementioned responses. By March 2006 there had been exchange of ideas relating to building positive classroom environments for all staff and children. Money was also made available to spend in enriching the classroom environments in ways, which reflected the positive ethos of the school. New behaviour management strategies were also trialled in school which led to changes being made to the behaviour policy which took into account the theories of learning previously described in my literature review.

Staff questionnaire

In February 2006, the behaviour management group presented a questionnaire for staff. The questionnaire was designed to collate staff opinions about behaviour in school. By March 2006, the analysis of information obtained from staff questionnaire was available and some findings are presented in the table below to help to clarify staff opinions.

Questions	Answers
1. What behaviours do you see as the most difficult to manage?	1. Aggressive behaviour; violence to peers and staff. Defiance, total refusal to cooperate. Bad language. Bullying, name calling. Disruption to learning. Out of control, throwing objects around the classroom.
2. Which behaviours do you regard as less problematic?	2. Rudeness, disrespect, insolence, shouting, calling out, disrupting lessons, chewing, fidgeting, lack of concentration, lack of punctuality, falling out on the playground and petty squabbling.
3. Are you aware of the procedures in place for dealing with negative behaviour?	3. 100% yes.
4. Do you feel that they are effective for dealing with pupils with challenging behaviour?	4. 53% yes, 10% no, 37% sometimes/not always. Up to a point, they are not consistently applied, it depends on the situation and they need to be modified for individuals. The procedures are not always consistently applied.
5. If not can you suggest what may be more appropriate?	5. All staff needs to follow the procedures exactly as stated. Staff need to talk calmly to pupils and not shout. If the pupils are taken out of class they need to return when they are compliant. Restraint only needs to be used as a last resort. All staff should be aware of the triggers for individual pupils. Senior management needs to be involved immediately with the most disruptive, defiant or aggressive behavioural
6. What support is given by senior management?	6. They are good when they are available. The deputy is always available. Appropriate support is given when needed. Negligible as there is insufficient staff. There is a good response but it is not always consistent. They supervise and intervene only when all else fails.
7. What do you do if a pupil persistently disrupts a lesson?	7. After the final warning, ask them to leave the lesson and a TA informs the head teacher. Give a white slip. Warn before the lesson and go through the procedures. Give them a chance to make the right choice. Start anew after the right choice has been made. The

	teaching assistant takes the pupil out of class.
8. What do you do if a pupil persistently causes problems on the playground?	8. Report to the management, send the pupils in, try to encourage pupils to take part in activities, remove their break, give a warning and then time out and then send them in, discuss with the pupil and try to distract them, give them choices.
9. How does your teaching assistant/teacher support you in dealing with pupils displaying difficult behaviour?	9. They back up everything I say and do. Give talk and encouragement. Sit with the difficult pupil and remove them from class if necessary. Class teacher guides and supports me through difficult situations. Provide an excellent role model; treating pupils with respect. We communicate with each other. Consistency with procedures. Some teachers expect the TAs to take control of difficult pupils and leave them to it especially if it is a supply teacher.
10. How do you promote a positive attitude to learning and behaviour?	10. Interesting lessons, it can be fun to learn. Calm atmosphere. Firm and fair attitude with ground rules. Language of persuasion; good treats. Praise. Positive and consistent. Promote liking the pupil but not the behaviour. Organisation. Good examples, show respect and encourage pupils to work hard and enjoy school. Display good work. Show them you care. Rewards for good behaviour. Self evaluation and evaluation of others. Continually reinforcing expectations. Encourage pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and to understand the consequences of bad behaviour. Ensure that pupils feel valued. Be a good role model. Well planned lessons. Meet and greet pupils.

Table 5 - Selected staff questionnaire responses

Analysis of the staff questionnaire

In question 3, 100% of the teaching staff said that they were aware of the procedures in place for dealing with negative behaviour, however, perceptions of procedures differed and this was highlighted on question 9 with the TA/teacher support. When dealing with pupils displaying difficult behaviour some TA s were expected to take control of the challenging behaviour whilst

others were guided by their class teacher through any difficult situations. Also identified was the need to communicate with supply staff regarding pupils with challenging behaviour. Question 5 answers revealed that it is necessary to share any knowledge of particular behaviours which staff recognises in some pupils, as sometimes these signalled the onset of an aggressive outburst. Responses to question 10 about promoting positive relationships showed that many of the staff appreciated that pupils needed the security of firm boundaries with fair attitudes and ground rules. I believe that mutual respect can be developed through this, leading to positive relationships.

After the analysis made by the behaviour management group it was recommended that unacceptable and acceptable behaviour needed clarifying for the pupils and the staff. Clear and precise expectations of all pupils also needed to be reinforced on a regular basis. The procedures for handling challenging behaviour needed to be reviewed as it was clear from the answers that a consistent approach by all staff should be developed. 37% of staff did not always feel that they were effective in dealing with pupils with challenging behaviour. The role of the TA in behaviour management needed to be determined.

Parent questionnaire

In March 2006, the behaviour management group had devised a questionnaire for parents. The questionnaire was designed to collate parent opinions about the management of behaviour in school. By April 2006, the analysis of information obtained from parent questionnaire was available and some findings are presented in the following table to help to clarify parent opinions.

Question	Answer
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1. When you visit school, do you feel safe? If not, why not?	1. 93% yes. 7% no
2. Does your child feel safe in school? If not, why not?	2. 90% yes. 10% no.
3. Does your child feel safe at break or lunchtimes? If not, why not?	3. 87% yes. 13% no. Concerns around bullying, hitting and pushing.
4. Are you aware of any behaviour in school that cause you concern?	4. 64% no concerns. 36% had concerns. Concerns around bullying, swearing, verbal abuse, tormenting, throwing objects.
5. Are you aware of the behaviour expected of your child in school?	5. Parents were aware of the behaviour expected of their child in school.
6. Are you informed when your child misbehaves? How could this improve?	6. 84% yes satisfied. 16% suggest improvements; more discussion and phone calls.
7. Are you informed of your child's success? How could this be improved?	7. 80% yes satisfied. 20% suggest improvements like, letters sent on a regular basis; some requested an explanation of the merit system and preferred more positive reports.
8. Do you feel supported by school?	8. 94% yes supported. 6% not
9. How could this be improved?	9. Parents suggest more home/school communication.
10. Any other comments?	10. Very nice school and the teachers are cooperative. Teachers are 100% committed to doing their best. The school is a safe environment as the entire staff does all they can to keep my child safe. Parents could be informed of rules, unacceptable behaviours, the award system and procedures for dealing with challenging behaviour.

Table 6 - Selected parent questionnaire responses

Analysis of the parent questionnaire

Question 1 showed 7% of parents did not feel safe when they visited school. This is disturbing and could possibly be explained by the fact that some parents had been pupils at the school previously and could have a negative perception of school life from their own school experiences.

Some parents may not however have special needs but could have sensitivity about school issues. Perceptions of what “feeling safe” means needed addressing and perhaps should have been clarified further on the questionnaire. From question 2, 10% of parents stated that their children did not feel safe in school and this was double the 5% of pupils who had answered for themselves in the pupil questionnaire that they did not feel safe in school. The parent’s perceptions of this are interesting to note and these appeared to be rooted in bullying, swearing and verbal abuse. Their responses could have been based on stories from their children travelling to school independently on private transport. This was often a source of concern in school and should possibly have been mentioned in the questionnaires. Question 7, 8, 9 and 10 showed that the parents generally felt informed, supported and had a positive opinion of the school however there was still a need for more home/school communication. The parent questionnaire was more impersonal than the pupil and staff ones and could have been more valid if undertaken face to face with the parents. This would have allowed for opportunities to clarify any responses. It would have also reduced any researcher concerns about their reliability. This questionnaire was based on researcher trust of the participants actually completing the questionnaires independently.

New procedures for behaviour management

Towards the end of the school year, Hay School behaviour management group presented new procedures for behaviour management which were written into a new behaviour policy. Through consultation with staff and pupils at the school council meeting, it was decided what constituted acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in school. This was that acceptable behaviour is compliance with the school rules and unacceptable behaviour is physical and verbal aggression and defiance. If pupils brought unacceptable items into school on a regular basis, then these items

would be confiscated and parents requested to collect them. In addition the staff needed to ensure that, as their job description dictated, they take full responsibility for the procedures set out below with regard to unacceptable behaviour;

- To remind pupils of appropriate behaviour.
- To give verbal warnings.
- To write the pupil's initials on the blackboard in class and add up to three ticks against their name with each inappropriate behaviour.
- To remind pupils that any work missed through inappropriate behaviour would be made up at a later date.
- To put on a three minute timer and ask the pupil to make the right choice before the three minute timer ran out.
- To produce a white behaviour sheet and send a reliable pupil for the senior member of staff who was on duty to help.

The senior member of staff would then discuss the issue with the pupil and take them to a quiet room where they could complete their work, supervised by a TA. The issue needed to be resolved with the teacher as soon as possible after the event. If these actions did not resolve the matter then the pupil was referred to the headteacher who took the pupil to her office for a chat about the rules and as a final procedure contacted the pupil's parents to come to school and chat about the behaviour. In the event of three white sheets being issued in a week then the pupils missed the popular Friday afternoon free-time treat.

Conclusion of the first cycle

The management group worked together to change behaviour management strategies. These strategies affected children's learning, rather than the children themselves learning directly to behave in a more positive way. Moving the changes from micro to macro level in the school could have created tensions in the teacher/ learner relationship as the pupils may have resisted the new rules. In response to the research question of "Would new learning in the group bring about positive changes in management of behaviour, which would then benefit the pupils?" I believe that learning has in fact taken place. It appears that there have been some good management practices in Hay school. To add to this, the statistics about negative behaviour recorded in school showed that incidents of unacceptable behaviour had reduced significantly over the year of the first cycle of study.

Inspections by the Ofsted inspectors (2006) identified significant improvements in incidences of negative behaviour which resulted in the school moving from MSSR5, to satisfactory and improving. The Ofsted report stated that Hay school was now a satisfactory and improving school where the negative behaviour of others was no longer allowed to disrupt the education of pupils there. Responding to the research question of positive changes in management of behaviour benefitting the pupils, the inspectors noted that the behaviour had improved to a point where pupils were ready to take more responsibility for their own learning and make a greater contribution to the school community.

At a staffing level, as a learning exercise, the behaviour management group in school had a successful outcome but who exactly had been learning? The previously mentioned objectives of the “Keeping pupils safe,” project stated that the opinions of all pupils, staff and parents would be sought. In theory, all the named groups of people received a questionnaire but there was no other professional representation on the working party and the pupil representation was limited to two members of the school council. The researcher feels that the whole community did not participate in the development of the system. The pupils needed to be actively engaged as learners about the establishment of rules but they were only asked to fill in a questionnaire about school behaviour. Also, it would have been more effective if the dinnertime, transport and administration staff had been represented in the group, because the researcher believes that they have their own points of view and could make valid judgements to add to the system.

There are ways of acting in a school community, which is picked up incidentally. Learners in a sociocultural pedagogy acquire ways of interpreting and responding to their new environment. They consider the relationship between human actions and the cultural institution. The pupils may have felt that the new behaviour management classroom procedures were a didactic top down instruction from the head, a hierarchical management system where emphasis was on discipline, sanctions, positive outcomes and rewards with a “*sage on the stage*” in their classroom controlling their learning. From a management point of view, the learning about behaviour management was possibly easier to control using a top to bottom, autocratic approach. Most of the behaviour management changes were dependent on school based decisions made by the behaviour management group. A review of the leadership in special schools literature (Ainscow et al, 2003) observed that there is a need for cooperative and effective managerial

teams with parents and professionals from different disciplines who encourage an experimental and collective problem solving culture.

Many pupils at Hay have challenging behaviour and learning difficulties, identified on their statement of SEN and they may have felt suppressed by the enforcement of new behavioural rules. They could also have become emotionally unstable and difficult as many of those pupils were uneasy about change. Therefore, new learning for the pupils could have resulted in them not feeling valued as human beings and they could have resisted the new learning. In opposition to this view, the humanist theory of teaching sees the pupil as being worthy of dignity, where teachers need to develop the qualities of worth and self esteem in the pupil, so that they can reach their best potential. At the top of the hierarchy, Maslow places the need for self-actualisation and the need to fulfil one's potentialities, a musician must make music and an artist must paint, (Lovell 89:111). It appears from observations that a child with challenging behaviour, at times, needs to break free from the chains that rules impose on them. The researcher believes that the pupils at Hay needed to understand the new rules and be allowed the time to adjust to any new learning mechanisms because the school's new behaviour policies had turned the ethos of Hay school into a token economy. This was based on merits and rewards which are born out of the principles of behaviourism. This is a positivistic learning theory; transparent and measurable. Skinnerian behaviour is observable and staff can directly shape behaviour in the way they want by imposing time out strategies coupled with their dialogue of persuasion (Gray, 2002). This does not take into account the underlying emotional issues that affect the children's behaviour.

As previously stated in the literature review, the researcher accepts the constructivist position therefore pedagogy must provide learners with opportunities to construct their own learning. So, theoretically this helps them to understand the world around them; however, this approach is not considered when managing negative behaviour, which is disrupting a class and then the focus is on behaviour management rather than teaching. The need is to continue with the lesson as soon as possible with minimal distraction, so, immediately the behaviourist stance is taken. This is only concerned with external behaviour. As Edwards et al (2002) indicate, the capacity for teachers to enter the ZPD with learners is more likely to be found in schools where teachers are expected to allow freedom of action in social situations rather than just deliver the curriculum (including behaviour management as the hidden curriculum). I now realise that I have not been leading my pupils to ZPD by imposing a behaviouristic management strategy which instructs them about what will happen if they behave in a certain way.

If the teacher consistently uses controlled behaviour techniques they will be acting towards their pupils without any humanity. Teachers in Hay school were constantly under pressure to show improvements in pupil's attainments. In order to do this, behaviour management needed to be rigidly adhered to in class so that the curriculum could be delivered effectively, with no disruption, which was usually in a controlled sit down and listen way. To have expected attainment in my class, it was easier for me if I maintained the control, pace and content of the lesson. This restricted my belief in active teaching and learning as there were tenets of cognitive/behaviourist principles when I was in control. Again I became the sage on stage, with my direct and formal instructional teaching. I did not always allow my pupils to be proactive and could not give them space to plan and reflect on their own ideas about behaviour in school.

In class, there was a dilemma because when life there was calmer I tended to practise within the humanistic approach (Rogers, 1967). I encouraged pupils to recognise for themselves that they could be self motivated to be rewarded and have a sense of pride for their achievement. Atkinson (2002) considers that feeling good; understanding their strengths and weaknesses is encouraged in order to develop self confidence.

The values and culture at Hay school could be affected by the new rules for behavioural management, therefore class teachers needed to be skilful social constructivists with knowledgeable cues and guided participation to lead their pupils into the ZPD in order to accept the new learning about behaviour procedures. This was not an easy task because of the presence of developmental delay and challenging behaviour in pupils. The children needed more leading to learn. It was documented on Hay school's teaching post contract that the teacher who works with learners with challenging behaviour is expected to be able to develop particular practical skills of implementing behaviourally oriented interventions. We assume that behaviour management strategies and reward schemes are firmly in place from the behavioural improvements as revealed on the recent Ofsted inspection and are steadfastly followed, but, at times, I agree with O'Brian, (cited in Lewis, 2005:169) who argues that behaviour management in class, is based on a quick fix approach of thinking on your feet rather than analysing constructions of learning pedagogy. I felt that I obviated the situation by reverting to a behaviouristic approach.

It may be interesting to distinguish here between reflection in practice and reflection on practice. If I was involved in a challenging behaviour incident much of my action appeared to be an automatic unconscious skill. However, what I did outside of practice, in debriefing, for example,

involved unlearning and relearning different skills to apply in the next situation. In this way, time to reflect on practice with a view to modification might have also been good for the staff and pupils. This kind of reflection may have been explored with the few pupils selected after the questionnaires, when the learning mentor hosted discussion groups about behaviour expectations with them.

In answer to the research question posed earlier about the learning culture of Hay school and is any practice in line with theory? This discussion has shown that there are several theoretical approaches to learning, which have been described, to assist the children to internalise knowledge. At times, however the approaches work in opposition and alongside each other with regard to behavioural management in class.

For the pupils and teachers at school there are tenets of models of learning contributing to the system all the time therefore, the learning culture of Hay school is that of many perspectives of learning and the practice in school which is in line with some theories. Some practice was about the hidden curriculum of the behaviour management system which included all of the values, attitudes and covert rules that do not form part of the formal school system. In order to address this hidden curriculum with the pupils I felt that social constructivist methods in class needed to be developed alongside the behaviour management strategies, although discussion has in fact shown that it is often easier for teachers to adopt an instructional model of learning. To develop this further, involvements are needed with more experienced people and there appears to be a need for more humanist/cognitive approach to learning. The pupils need access to talking therapies with trained staff concerning their thinking and how it affects their behaviour.

Underlying emotional issues can also be addressed which in turn should help them to tackle distress and change their thoughts and actions, which can cause the problems in their learning. Already, to help with this issue circle time teaching is well established in the school. There could however be a higher priority to emotional literacy, counselling and restorative justice for resolving conflict situations. The Department of Health had plans for a major expansion of Cognitive/Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Labour Peer; Lord Layard (Mental Health Policy Group; 2006) advocated the training of 10,000 extra CBT therapists to be commissioned in every part of the country by 2013, who would work from a network of psychological centres and schools. However, a recent report by the Mental Health Policy Group (2012) states that at present the Department of Health is cutting expenditure when it should be expanding. Also, many local commissioners are not using their budgets for the intended purpose of training extra therapists. From the outset of the “Every Child Matters,” agenda (DfES, 2003), it was essential that universal services were implemented so that health and education could work together for the good of the children. The researcher believes that a multi-agency approach can have an incredible impact on pupil’s behaviour and thinking.

To summarise this cycle of research, I conclude that the management of behaviour in Hay school was improved and the research questions posed at the beginning of the cycle have been addressed. The diary of events recorded what was happening during the research year in a systematic way and statistics from the school behaviour database were formulated and analysed. The research method of questionnaires successfully highlighted areas of concern leading to school improvement and the overall style of this method suited the researcher who believes that she worked hard to fit in with the social working community at school throughout the period

during which the research was undertaken. The dual identity of teacher/researcher was sometimes problematic as there were other work demands in school. Perceptions of self needed to be modified according to this twin role, although PAR approach did cater for this dilemma with its spiral style of plan, monitor and change over a period of time. It appeared that there was a need for more monitoring of behaviour on the playground and in the next cycle the organisation of structured activities on the playground will be addressed.

CHAPTER 6

THE SECOND CYCLE

Motivation for the second cycle of research during the school year 2006-2007 was relevant and justifiable. At the end of the first cycle of research a recommendation was made to regularly monitor behaviour on the playground at Hay school and to set up and organise more structured break time activities. In this cycle the researcher attempts to answer the research question, “Can structured sports activities help with the management of behaviour at playtimes?” A chronological diary was kept. This consisted of logging events and some reflections about them which were considered in the analysis. The local authority attendance and behaviour database for this school year was also analysed. Daily playtime attendance registers were collected and this showed pupil’s involvement with activities at breaktimes. A questionnaire was created in this cycle to allow staff to answer questions about different types of observed negative behaviour on the playground. The purpose of the questionnaire was to establish information about the varied

playground behaviours. This was the second cycle of research in a PAR approach of plan do and review.

There were strong and valid reasons which lead to research of this area of behaviour improvement being researched in this cycle. During the previous cycle of action research, behaviour in school was monitored and negative behaviours were recorded on white sheets. Negative behaviour incidents were noted during the time of the first study with 38% of the white sheets given to pupils for negative behaviour at playtimes which were then sent to the school office to be collated onto the local authority behaviour database. This negative behaviour at playtimes generally occurred within unstructured situations. By the end of the first cycle, some training had been undertaken by staff about active playtimes and was assisting the pupils in organising activities on the playground. During this time, the recorded number of negative behaviour incidents decreased. It was anticipated that they could be decreased by 25% during the next school year, by further involvement in activities at playtimes during this second cycle of research, thus, producing a significant decrease in the number of recorded negative incidents.

The decline of incidences of negative behaviour appeared to be relative to the amount of hours the pupils participated in sports and physical activities at playtimes. This claim was upheld by scrutiny of playground attendance registers which were collated daily and then compared to the number of white sheets given out for negative behaviour at playtimes. Pellegrini et al study (2004) legitimates this position by providing substantial evidence that games at playtime coalesce together to produce positive social interaction with peers.

A tension between the control and independence of pupils at break times has been documented previously and the overall effect on the school playtime behaviour hinges on the stance taken about free or directed play. It was believed that if a structured programme of play was implemented then over time it could be beneficial in the management of playtime behaviour. Many pupils at Hay found it difficult to socialise and interact with their peers, especially in the playground situation. To facilitate overcoming these difficulties and encourage relationship building, pupils were given the opportunity to participate in “Get active,” activities at playtimes. In some schools pupils had been given the autonomy to organise the get active scheme activities, rather than the teachers and TAs. Prior to the second cycle of my study, Hay school gave the pupils a chance to be the leaders of the scheme. They were responsible for setting up playground equipment, leading the activities and ensuring that registers of participants were updated. Through earlier informal observations, monitoring and analysis of the scheme in place, it was decided by staff and myself, that modifications needed to be made. This system was causing a great deal of conflict between the pupils and at times some pupils refused to accept directions from their peers. The children with challenging behaviour and ASC generally did not have the social skills to organise activities without adult support and tended to argue amongst themselves. I reiterate from the literature search, as Plimley and Bowen (2006) and Wolfberg, (2003) state, some pupils with ASC do have a problem with peer tolerance, and exhibit an inability to share, communicate with others, take turns and show some inappropriate play or social behaviours. In order to cater for the needs of the SEN children in my school, the get active model as sponsored by the local education authority was redesigned and reintroduced as a modified one, called the “Get active on the playground scheme,” with adults leading it. This notion concurs with Pellegrini (2005) and DfES (2005) who suggest that creating structure within playtimes, can

improve pupil behaviour and social skills. The implementation of this type of focused active playground as suggested by PESS (QCA, 2006; 2008) promotes organised physical activities at playtimes and supports a dominance of the structured, interventionist stance at playtime. It could be argued that the pupils would not learn appropriate behaviours at playtimes if they were not exposed to situations with adult support during which times they would be encouraged to interact and achieve. As mentioned in the literature review about developing playground schemes in school, it is important to consider all the children's learning needs. Bruner's scaffolding theory is recognised (Mukherji, 2001 and Pritchard, 2005) to enable some pupils with SEN to reach their ZPD (Vygotsky, 1962) which could help them to achieve at playtimes.

Physical activities varied on a daily basis, for example some choices available were organised games, skipping, dance class, multi skills, hula hoops, football and basketball. There were also some external coaches employed to organise activities on the playground. Playtime clubs demonstrated a strong link to the reward strategies used by staff within Hay school. Pupil participation in clubs was widely encouraged; however such attendance was seen as a privilege for those with good behaviour. Not allowing a pupil to attend a playtime club due to negative behaviour was acknowledged as imposing a sanction. As described earlier, for the class rebels this could be seen as enhancing their desired status as a rebel and could therefore be a reinforcer of unwanted behaviour. For the majority of pupils however this would be seen as a punishment, so that they would have good behaviour to ensure that they could join in. I was mindful of this method and felt that some of the children did not interpret such rules as positive reinforcement of desired behaviour. Effectively, such a rule about participation in activities could in fact support more undesirable behaviour.

Staff at school were trained as playground leaders by the local authority trainers during a six hour training course and consequently more structured activities were introduced. In my local authority during the year of the second cycle of research, 2006-07, 43% of schools were operating the active playground scheme with over 800 staff and pupils trained to design and deliver their own sessions. The scheme was designed to generate improvements in a number of key areas, notably behaviour, alertness, attitude and leadership skills. The scheme also generated further significant benefits like helping to reduce the levels of different types of anti social behaviour. Such benefits in the local authority were documented by case studies (DMBC, 2007). One local primary school in the study, who issued behaviour sheets for negative behaviour, like Hay school had an unacceptable level of poor behaviour from a number of pupils and as a result of this staff spent inappropriate levels of time during and after lunch time playtime, dealing with behaviour issues. The success of the get active programme, in this particular school, was recorded by staff and demonstrated by a decreasing number of behaviour sheets handed out at lunchtimes; 2005=1087; 2006=677 and 2007=420. The analysis also revealed that a trend towards improved behaviour had been maintained. The sport's scheme had been developed in my local authority by the local School Sports Co-ordinator Partnership (DMBC, 2006) and was backed by the Governments Healthy Schools agenda (DfES, 2005). My aims for the scheme in Hay school reflected the aims of the local authority initiative, which were; to increase participation in high quality informal physical activity, to increase the fitness levels of the pupils, to improve attitude, attendance and good behaviour during physical activity and to also improve behaviour on the playground, where there were many pupils who presented with challenging behaviour.

The scheme at Hay school was a tool to improve behaviour and there were some comparisons to similar PESS schemes which have been described in the literature search (QCA; 2006, 2008) and were concerned with physical activity in school. Many schools studied in the PESS reports provided pupils with structured sessions for focused physical activity at break times which reduced the incidences of negative behaviour. The PESS projects ran from 2000-08 and proposed that the impact of such high quality PE and school sport developed personal qualities such as good levels of positive behaviour like the value of fair play, the importance of team work, control, courtesy and co-operation which in turn should then affect young people's attitudes to school and learning thus influencing the whole school and leading to general school improvement.

The numerous PESS projects discussed previously were generally about engaging pupils through activities which encouraged positive behaviour and were indicative of prescribed activities at playtimes; mostly measured with qualitative data. It is my continued belief that the Government had a significant interest in promoting success of the PESS project because it supported their own objective of pupils spending a minimum of two hours each week on creditable PE and school sport. More recently, with the influence of the London 2012 Olympics as a drive, the aim was for all children in England to access five hours a week of high quality sport and physical education at clubs and at school. The benefits for the child were felt to be, becoming more active and healthy, developing confidence and self-esteem and developing team working and personal skills (PESSYP, 2008). However, Vasagar (2012) criticises recent government cuts, especially the loss of money for school sport's partnerships which has had a knock on effect in the hours children spend on physical activity and school sport. Sadly, the Olympics were supposed to give

competitive sport in schools a huge boost but children are now doing less time than the suggested 5 hours.

The playground questionnaire

A questionnaire was given to staff at the beginning of the second cycle. It was devised for staff to answer questions about types of observed negative behaviour on the playground. Their responses were then analysed by me with the support of colleagues who were carrying out research in similar areas for themselves. A highlighted coding system was devised and used. This allowed for identification of emerging themes. The questionnaire was designed specifically to establish the needs relating to playground behaviour. From my literature search, the categories of negative behaviours on the playground used in the questionnaire were identified based on Blatchford's (1989) observations of negative behaviour on the playground. When analysing the answers the categories from the NASUWT survey (Derrington, 2008) were also considered. These have been described previously. 20 questionnaires were given to teachers, TAs, and sport's coaches who worked at Hay lower school. There were 20 responses for consideration which was 100% returned. The twenty questions were related to observed behaviour and asked participants to make comments about the types of behaviour they had observed at playtimes. The first fifteen questions were about the observed behaviours from Blatchford's study (1989). I have documented several of the relevant staff responses to the numbered questions for further discussion and these findings are presented in the table below.

Questions	Answers from various respondents
1. Have you observed aggression?	Yes. Some children do exhibit aggression but calm down if it is handled appropriately. There are certain pupils who are often

	fighting. Observed at times. Some children pass others with aggressive movements. Mostly between the boys. Some children bring their bad mood from home, from yesterday or from the class to the playground.
2. Have you observed anti-social behaviour such as bullying and racism?	Yes. Often. Usually from boys. Some bullying. Calling names to bully others like "fatty" Rarely seen racism. Bullying is often due to a misunderstanding. Threatening others. Parents should be informed.
3. Have you observed physical play (especially from boys or girls or both)?	Most of the pupils play physically during playtimes. Always observe this.
4. Have you observed jumping on backs?	Yes, a variety of ages. Not often. When I see this I stop it and explain why, as I consider it to be dangerous. The children do not see this as aggression. The older boys.
5. Have you observed chasing and pulling?	Yes. Sometimes, chasing as part of the game. This is not seen as aggressive by the pursuer. Pulling of coats and hair.
6. Have you observed fighting?	Certain pupils. Rarely. Goading others.
7. Have you observed intimidation?	By a few pupils. Stalking. Rarely
8. Have you observed acting out aggressive scenes from television programmes or other? Please specify	Dr Who. Transformers. Torch wood. There is more play fighting when violent films have been watched. Wrestling and enacting it. They like to play the child catcher or the police and it causes problems with pushing and pulling. Around guns.
9. Have you observed idling about without a purpose? That is, lethargic, not knowing what to do with themselves.	Some pupils do this. Rarely. Wandering into school. Yes if there are no activities then the pupils walk around looking for someone to torment. No as all children are encouraged to join in with games. Some children find it hard to ask to join in. At the start of the year before relationships are established or rekindled.
10. Have you observed deliberately spoiling the games of others?	The older pupils usually take objects like footballs away from the younger children. Usually children spoil cricket. Certain known individuals. If they think they can get away with it. Minimal. Often by pupils who are not good at sport but would like to be. The older ones spoil the younger one's games.
11. Have you observed name calling?	Certain pupils. Certain known individuals. Every day. No. "Fat, pig wuss" Particular children are

	always the victims of this. They do it to wind up others but it should not be ignored by adults.
12. Have you observed verbal abuse?	Certain pupils. Pupil to pupil and pupil to staff. This occurs after collisions and shows a lack of social skills. 3 named pupils. Telling pupils they are going to get them. Only if the child is angry. I always give the pupil the chance to put things right.
13. Have you observed continually complaining to peers or adults on duty?	Occasionally. Sometimes. No. Pupils are more likely to complain to their class teacher after playtime. Both boys and girls about petty things or something that an adult has already dealt with.
14. Have you observed petty squabbling?	Yes. Certain pupils. Mostly girls as the boys seem to sort out their differences in a physical way. Both boys and girls, over petty things. Over equipment because some pupils do not know what to do with it.
15. Have you observed biting and scratching?	This has been reported to me. No. Very rare. Not at all. Never
16. Have you observed any other types of behaviour on the playground?	Some children group together and try to coax the younger children to do things that they should not do. Inappropriate sexual behaviour from boy/boy and boy/girl. Kissing and hugging in concealed corners. Being rude to staff and swearing. Not listening.
17. Do you feel that certain children in school could be the cause of much disruption?	Definitely yes. The usual culprits. Without a doubt. To some extent. The oppressors are always the same pupils. They need much close supervision.
18. Do you find that playground behaviour is worse during the longer dinner break than at morning or afternoon playtime?	Yes. /No. Some pupils can only sustain good behaviour for a short time. It varies. Sometimes. There are more activities to participate in. Not since we have lots of activities.
19. Do you believe it is not only the length of break which endorsed this negative behaviour but the quality of supervision which caused the problems?	Yes. Possibly. I think that confrontation never works. 50/50. I think the children do not listen to the TAs as much as the teachers. Also, some pupils are inadequately dressed and are cold and grumpy so we keep spare clothes in school. Some pupils chose to go out without their coat and then moan. Hunger

	makes them grumpy due to lack of breakfast.
20. Do you think the weather is a notorious cause of bad behaviour in school?	Yes. No. Sometimes. Wind and rain appear to cause silly behaviour and bad tempers. Better on sunny days. Wet weather stops field play and then there is no football which causes bad moods. Hot days cause tension. When it is wet they watch a DVD and some pupils get bored and cause a problem, there can be friction. When it is wet playtime and they are indoors they seem to want to run some energy off. They need physical exercise because they tend to hit each other. In winter the children do not want to go out because it is too cold. In summer the children tend to go on the grass and if it has been cut they throw it which is a problem

Table7-Responses to the staff playground questionnaire

Analysing the playground questionnaire

The data identified those behaviours which were low on disruption, like biting and scratching with comments like “Not at all” suggesting that it was a very rare behaviour. Other unacceptable behaviour in school, such as bullying, had been observed regularly. Staff commented on all the suggested behaviours that were from Blatchford’s study (1989) and these were still evident in 2006 at Hay school. There was notable inconsistency in the answers, for example in question 13, „Do pupils continually complain to peers or adults on duty?“ It is hard to believe that the respondents were talking about the same playground as some respondents replied, “No” and others replied, “Yes”. Again in question 20, „Do you think the weather is a notorious cause of bad behaviour in school?“ some staff answered “yes” and some answered “no”. Staff may be dissimilar in their perceptions and tolerance levels and this needed to be taken into account. One teacher noted that the questions were interesting and some of the problems were solvable. Another teacher commented that there needs to be a positive behaviour policy to adhere to and in

her opinion, anti social behaviour could be prevented with clear boundaries and the correct level of adult intervention and supervision if required. The policy at Hay had been amended after the first cycle of research and as DfES (2005a) point out there needs to be connection between procedures for the classroom and playground. Another teacher commented on question 18, “Do you find that playground behaviour is worse during the longer dinner break than at morning or afternoon playtime?” assumed the answer to the previous question that some pupils could only sustain good behaviour for a short time and therefore answered to question 19 that it was the length of break which endorsed the negative behaviour. This question needed further reflection as it could have been open to misinterpretation because the previous question could have led the respondent to believe that some pupils could only sustain good behaviour for a short time. However it could be true to say that the pupils behaved in a different way for different members of staff.

The responses about pupils having inadequate clothing and the feeling of hunger making them have grumpy behaviour needed some addressing. Responses to question 16 about inappropriate sexual behaviour from boy/boy and boy/girl and kissing and hugging in concealed corners demonstrated that the behaviours named in the NASUWT study; sexual harassment were evident and being rude to staff and swearing pointed towards the verbal defiance category.

Some of the responses to the questionnaire formed the basis for discussions with staff and children, especially, in the school council meeting, which asked what unacceptable school behaviour is and what ways are there for of dealing with undesirable behaviour? This generally created a more open dialogue in the school about behaviour on the playground and identified

behaviours which were unacceptable and the research could respond to. Findings of the questionnaire suggested that a high level of supervision would help to clarify behaviour expectations as many referred to the pupils needing much close supervision. Children needing physical activity resonated throughout and two staff commented that lunchtime behaviour had improved since there had been more activities on offer. It was evident from the answers that many significantly difficult behaviour incidences observed at playtimes had been caused by a minority of known pupils. To improve behaviour it was necessary to engage these children further.

The playground questionnaire was successful in highlighting staff views of unacceptable and acceptable behaviour. On reflection it would have been more valid if the views of the mid day supervisors had been taken into account. The researcher found it difficult to access this group of staff during the working day because of time constraints.

Data from registers; 2006-2007

Statistics, from the local authority's behaviour database and the schools, "Get active on the playground," scheme registers were examined. Statistics from the behaviour database were used in school to assess the use of the "white sheet," sanction. The play scheme registers were introduced in September 2006 which showed pupil attendance and preference of play activities on the playground. These were measured by ticks in boxes and tallied. Fifteen minutes of involvement equated to one tick on the chart. It was crucial to capture critical details like who the participants were and what activity was attended. Pupils were given "Get Active," certificates in assembly to recognise their total attendance time which varied from pupil to pupil. During this cycle of research there was some staff in school who wished to be involved with the project. I

involved these staff as much as possible and found their collaboration supportive to me in my research as these colleagues also helped me to check data and maintain motivation. Together there was a sense of overall purpose. We raised new questions about the project like what activities to offer the minority pupils who persistently caused trouble. Such decisions would not have been as creative with just one person.

Scrutiny and analysis of the data from the playground register of activities showed that the children in class 2 in Hay school consistently joined in with the activities on offer at playtimes which was more than other classes. The data showed that from the outset and setting up of the registers in September 2006 to February half term 2007, Class 2 pupils undertook on average 25 hours extra activity each on the playground, during that time, compared to Class 1 and Class 3 who undertook an average of 10 hours extra each, during that time. Class 4, which had the oldest pupils in school, did not participate well at all over the suggested period of time, averaging only nine hours. The keenest participants however in class 4 were girls. The most popular activities during this time were games called “train stations” and “What time is it Mr. Wolf?” parachute games and a keep fit DVD. In January 2007, parachute games, plastic stilts and work out DVDs had been added to the playtime activities and were proving to be quite popular as almost 50% of the pupils joined in with these activities when they were offered. Scrutinising the attendance registers shows that there was no particular age preference for these activities as a cross section of pupils from the school attended them. It is interesting to note, without generalisation, that the parachute games which were intensely adult led and structured were very popular with 16 participants on 8/01/07. With support from a TA some children were able to keep compilation charts of their involvement in the activities which highlighted the most popular games at that

time. The example (Appendix 15) shows that the children in class 2 joined in with games much more than the rest of the school. It is interesting to note that the TAs collating the involvement with the activities were the TA in class 2. This could suggest that they led their class to the activities more than pupils from the other classes or it could be that they had a good relationship with these pupils therefore encouraging them to join in. Also these TAs were able to promote and involve the pupils further in class about the activities because they were more knowledgeable about what was going off.

On average, over the whole year of the research cycle, 2006-07, pupils in school attended approximately seven hours each in total “Get Active” activities at playtime which was beyond the two hours curriculum time expectation per week for PE in schools. Overall, the children were achieving more positive behaviour at playtimes; however as the behaviour data base showed that there were still a handful of pupils who negated this position.

In class 1 there were 3 boys and one girl who did not participate regularly in the “Get active on the playground scheme” or undertake interactive activities in school at playtime. These four pupils had a statement of SEN for ASC and were therefore worthy of further consideration. It was documented that on 18/05/07 the member of staff on duty had organised a game of tiggy. One of these pupils with ASC walked in the middle of this game talking some script in an American voice. He appeared to be totally oblivious to the events around him. On 23/11/06 another of these pupils was encouraged to join in with a ball game and looked facially unhappy. She stood back from the ball; put her hands over her head and turned her back when the ball came near to her. Class 3 had ten male pupils who tended to play a self initiated, organised game of football at break times on a separate area of the playground. The pupil’s involvement in this activity was not

documented on the registers. By January 2007 they were included in order to be collated into the overall data. A football coach came into school twice a week to work with the pupils at lunch time to organise football skills and a game. Over time, this kind of activity became popular with the older boys but this organised activity had limited coverage in the scheme. Staff actively encouraged older pupils to attend. On the 7/02/07 eight younger pupils attended football coaching compared to twelve older pupils on 21/06/07/. After discussion about some of the older boys, who did not always participate in organised activities and were persistently in trouble with staff, some cricket and rugby coaches from a local club were invited into school to work with the targeted pupils. This culminated in a cricket and rugby tournament with other schools at the club's home ground. A circus skill's coach from a local circus school, who had been working with disaffected pupils, was also invited to work with children at lunch time break to try to increase their involvement in physical activity and improve their skills. A circus style assembly was built into this programme for the pupils to showcase their newly acquired skills. Later, a Tae Kwando coach also held classes at lunchtimes. The playground scheme coaches were successfully introduced with support and the proficiency of the School Sports Co-ordinator Partnership (DMBC, 2006) in my local authority, however, this type of support has currently stopped due to the Government's reduction in budgets.

Conclusion of the second cycle

"Active Playgrounds" was introduced to Hay school with the intention of school improvement. In order to demonstrate the change, the activities had to be monitored in a robust way. Blatchford and Sharp (1994) suggest that the monitoring processes should be integral to each stage of the playground development. The scheme can then be reviewed and action taken, if needed, in order

for the scheme to stand a greater chance of success. At Hay, daily registers were upheld, recording the activities and names of pupils" participating in them. This data was then analysed and collated to identify how many extra hours of physical activities were being carried out by each pupil. It also enlightened team members about which activities were least/most popular, which pupils participated most frequently and which pupils who did not participate. This was then compared to the number of "white sheets" given out and collated for negative behaviour. This was able to confirm if an improvement had been made in pupil behaviour on the playground. Observations during the second cycle of research recognised that many of the pupils with ASC opted out of the activities and chose to spend time alone at playtimes. Observations made in April 2007 recognised that two pupils with ASC were both playing on their own within the hubbub of the playground. One was lining up about 6 cars and relining them over and over again and the other was running around the playground alone. He had his coat on like a cape and was making a brrrrrrrr sound as he went along. These pupils needed an adult to direct them to make choices about activities available to them. When developing such schemes in school, it is important to consider all the children's learning needs within the programmes. In this instance, Bruner's scaffolding theory is recognised again (Mukherji, 2001 and Pritchard, 2005). Another view also prevails which appears to support the role of adult intervention. This takes basis from the Elton Committee's (DES, 1989) proposals of schemes at playtime to combat bullying and encompasses the intervention and supervision which is required to effectively overcome this threat on the playground. Conversely, Cherney's (2009) findings from observations of children at play showed that children's socialisation is best assisted when the play is child directed and not organised by an adult. This would appear to critique the structured practice of "Get active on the playground"

Whilst analysing the questionnaire, the issue of pupils requiring a free choice in play was argued to the researcher by two members of staff who were themselves studying for a foundation degree course. They would have liked the pupils to be able choose the activities on offer rather than the adults doing so. During a follow up conversation with those staff members; they explained their feelings on this. Their vision of playtimes for pupils was one similar to how they considered breaktimes were relaxing for adults. They saw playtimes as an opportunity for staff and pupils to have some free, unstructured time simultaneously to unwind and do as they please, within certain boundaries. The staff perceived this as the pupil's work/life balance when they could relate to their peers on their level if they wished to do so. This created an ambivalent situation for me as I was researching the effect of structured activities on behaviour but staff were suggesting to me that they observed playtimes as an opportunity for pupils to have unstructured time. Whilst agreeing with the sentiment of choice it is arguable that some pupils, especially some statemented with challenging behaviour have a difficulty constructively occupying themselves at playtimes in a creative way to release any tension or anxiety. The inclusion of sport coaching sessions at lunchtime helped to engage these pupils. Some other pupils who were statemented with ASC may have welcomed life/work balance time because as the Central Coherence Theory, (Frith, 2003 and Beardon, 2009) suggests they can fail to take coherence from the activities, especially the sport's activities on offer. Such pupils were not always seeing the big picture of planned events at playtime as suitable for themselves. This tended to result in confusion about the function of playtime activities, so, they needed some staff to point out the activities on offer and often guide and support them through the games. Blatchford (1998) however argues that the social development of pupils is being restricted by structured adult intervention, in order to manage behaviour. Blatchford & Sharp (1994) have suggested that because of the lack of research into

the area of adult supervision, there is a good degree of uncertainty about how adults should behave at playtimes and what their appropriate role should be. They suggest that many adults experience apprehension about their role. Are they teachers, facilitators, supervisors or all these things?

Overall, the impact of the “Get active” scheme on the majority of pupils was positive (See photos Appendix 16 which shows some of the games at Hay school in action). The children liked the games and equipment on the playground and attendance was encouraging. A valid issue raised by one pupil was that they only took part in “Get active on the playground scheme” to receive certificates for participating. This refers back to the token economy at Hay school discussed in the literature review under the auspices of behaviourism. This was established to encourage positive behaviour in school but begs the question of whether some pupils may participate just because they wanted the reward of a certificate. I do in fact support the scheme in terms of managing behaviour on the playground and helping pupils to acquire the skills to play appropriately. The combination of qualitative and quantitative method analysis of the data has led to the development of certain themes. The themes include social behaviours and clear numerical statistics from the registers. These have complemented each other to give an informative picture of life on the playground at Hay school and some are commendable for further contention, notably to monitor the behaviour of pupils on the playground who are statemented with ASC.

In order to guide this discussion to a conclusion, I believe that this second cycle of research has accomplished what it was set out to do and has assisted me to reach a deeper understanding of my research assumptions. The study was successful in providing evidence which explicitly attempted

to answer the research question “Can structured sport’s activities help with the management of behaviour at playtimes?” My aim was to understand and detail how “Get active on the playground” activities could benefit behaviour at playtimes and my cycle of research presented a similar view to PESS projects, concerning physical activity in school (QCA; 2006, 2008). It has also addressed some educational agendas (DfES, 2003; 2003a and 2005). The cycle has made me reflect on my current thinking about playtimes. I believe the prescribed behaviouristic view is effective for improving behaviour because as Bruner (1960) suggests adults, help children to learn by scaffolding their learning. On the playground at Hay activities are structured. This offers the scaffolding for children to make positive choices and achieve social success. I consider that some pupil’s imaginative development would benefit from an unstructured situation which allows for free play although in this context, the adult support which was direct and instructional, has shown it did promote development.

This cycle of research has been about increasing the amount of physical activity undertaken by pupils at playtimes and whilst providing more structure, also reducing the levels of school based anti-social behaviours. The total number of completed behaviour sheets for the year 2006-2007 continued to decrease, from totalling 311 compared to 423 entries for the previous year which was a 26% reduction, and it had been predicted at the end of the first cycle that there would be a further 25% reduction. The playground scheme continued into the next school academic year with staff who were quite proficient in their delivery. The change in focus at playtimes was shifted to pupils with ASC.

S. Endicott
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CHAPTER 7

THE THIRD CYCLE

At the end of the second cycle of research a recommendation was made to regularly monitor pupils who were statemented with ASC, at Hay school and to set up and organise inclusive break time activities for them on the playground. In this part of the study which was undertaken during the academic year 2007-2008, the researcher wanted to find out how behaviour could be improved on the playground especially for the pupils statemented with ASC. “Get Active on the playground” activities were offered in school with the knowledge that studies, such as DCMS (2004), Stahmer et al (2003) have recognised the contribution that play can make in reducing

anti-social behaviour. A case study approach was used. The four chosen key stage two pupils were observed at playtimes during the year and diarised observations were kept. Alongside this the pupils were interviewed using a questionnaire at the beginning and the end of the school year and finally they were asked to draw a picture of themselves on the playground. This was the third cycle of research in a PAR approach of plan do and review. The pupils were Jay, aged eight years, Adie aged nine years, Ian aged nine years, and a girl, Lou aged ten years.

Commonality

- The four children were documented as presenting with some kind of negative behaviour on the playground.
- The chosen children had a common link in that they were all in the same class, class 1, in key stage 2, which catered for the youngest children in school.
- The children also presented with similar anxieties at break times.
- The four pupils all had a statement of SEN for ASC.
- The four children all had individual speech and communication problems, for which, they received ongoing speech therapy at school.
- Throughout the study, the four children were taught by me during their Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) lessons using approaches suggested in the Social Emotional Aspects of Learning programme (SEAL) (DFES,2005).

SEAL can help the children to acquire new social skills, such as self awareness and anger management, which could encourage them to develop better behaviour on the playground especially, over the period of time studied. SEAL and similar personal development frameworks

are designed to contribute to personal well-being which could impact on effective learning and the pupil's behaviour (QCA, 2007).

Statistics from my "Get active on the playground" attendance registers showed that over the year 2006-07, pupils in school attended an average of seven hours each of "Get Active" activities at playtimes beyond the two hours curriculum time expectation for PE in schools. The four targeted pupils achieved, on average just two extra hours each, for that year. During the following year 2007-2008, the four children in the study were observed on the playground and were encouraged to join in with planned activities by staff and with the help of social stories, which have been described previously. The average activity attendance for that year was twelve hours per child beyond the expected two hours a week. The four targeted pupils had an average attendance of thirteen hours in that year, so they had increased their involvement in activities on the playground by eleven hours per child for that year. The data on the local authority data base showed that two of the chosen boys had each received one white negative behaviour slip each in the year 2006-2007 one was for defiance at dinnertime and the other for disobedience at playtime. This was during the period of my research.

Interviews using a questionnaire.

At the beginning and towards the end of this cycle, I carried out informal interviews with each of the four children individually. In a relaxed manner I asked about their physical activity in school at playtimes adapting and using questions suggested in resources from the National PESS Professional Development Programme (DFES, 2007b; Resource 10b). One of the programme's

aims was to improve staff's understanding about how high quality sport could be used as a tool for school improvement, particularly in terms of attendance, behaviour management and attainment. The programme suggests barriers which can affect participation in physical activity which could be; general lethargy, lack of motivation, or preferences for other activities. There are also emotional barriers such as lack of confidence which can manifest as self-consciousness, being influenced by peers to do other activities, embarrassment and fear of exposure or failure in front of others. Some of these behaviours were observed in the children in my study. For example, my diary entries showed that Adie was often looking towards the adults on the playground for approval during playtime.

In their own way, after being interviewed individually, four of the children were all able to give me simple yes/no answers to some questions and also reasons for their non participation in physical activity in school at playtime. Some answers were "I like to play at robbers," "I don't like skipping," "I like to sit". "I want to play with my friends". These answers were commensurate with the suggested barriers to physical activity from the Professional Development Programme (DFES, 2007b) such as general lethargy and lack of motivation, as demonstrated by their responses "I don't like skipping," "I like to sit," and preferences for other activities; "I like to play at robbers," and. "I want to play with my friends".

Throughout his interview, Jay's understanding of language was at the here and now level. He needed to be given time before he could produce even simple one word responses but at least he was able to make replies to the simplest type of basic conversational questions. He gave monosyllabic answers during the first and second questionnaires (Appendix 4 and 5), even

though I attempted to engage him in conversation. There were no clear explanations about his playground behaviour, not even when I encouraged him to give pictorial suggestions, he did not verbalise about his drawing. He remained passive and distant throughout, although he drew a child and a football to demonstrate his preferred activity on the playground. I believe he had his reasons why he did not take part in physical activity at playtime, but he was not developmentally able to verbalise his reason. As Long (2002:102) suggests

There are always compelling reasons that explain the behavioural difficulties that some children present in school, even passive withdrawal and hopelessness can be understood as a child's learned way of coping with adverse circumstances.

When I commenced Lou's interview she made simple errors by giving the incorrect type of answers to my questions (Appendix 6 and 7). This is a typical response which I have noticed of a child on the autism spectrum because they may not understand the semantics of the question. Lou tended to answer using simple sentence structure rather than being able to modify her answers for the listener but with a positive approach, encouragement and clear explanations, we were able to make sense of the interview. All of the children answered "Yes" to the question; "Do you take part in physical activity at playtimes?" Jay and Lou found it difficult to relate questions about events in their recent past with any degree of consistency. None of the children were able to explain to me what could help them to become more active. I tried to scaffold their language using verbal prompts, but still no clear suggestions were offered about what could help them to become more active at playtimes. Lou and Adie said that they liked dancing and music (Appendix 7 and 9) and this could be offered as a solution in helping them to become more active at playtimes. Adie and Ian (Appendix 8 and 10) recognised that they had received a white slip for

negative behaviour at playtime, but were not sure of the reason why or when they had received it. This could be indicative of their lack of understanding about the white sheet behaviour system in school; or its significance within the system. There are many methods that researchers can try to find the answers to questions. Each child was interviewed then asked to draw a picture of themselves getting active at playtimes. The researcher found that the personal drawings were a useful alternative record of the pupils' playtime behaviour because the expressive language of the children, especially Jay, was limited.

Visual drawings findings

All the drawings reflected and further complemented the children's verbal responses to the researcher's questions. This affirmed that drawing was an appropriate method of communication for confirming and expanding on information they had provided verbally. All the second drawings were indicative of individual change in self concept and overall there were few indications that the pupils shared common interests or a common view of life on the playground.

On the first drawings (Appendix 6), Lou drew herself playing with hula-hoops, playing basketball and skipping. Jay drew himself playing alone with a football (Appendix 4). Adie drew himself skipping (Appendix 8) and Ian drew himself doing exercises (Appendix 10) which was a planned activity, using a work-out DVD in the classroom at playtime. At the end of the year 07-08, the children were asked to draw a picture of themselves again getting active at playtimes (Appendix 5, 7, 9 and 11). The drawings were much busier and more detailed than at the beginning of the year and contained pictures of the children getting active in different ways. The drawings from

the second sample, undertaken at the end of 2008 showed that the children were engaging more in planned activities at playtimes. The activities they drew at the end of the school year reflected activities they had been observed undertaking, as noted in the diary of observations (Appendix 3). The activities included were skipping, exercises, dance, football, hula hoops, basketball, games, running races, cheer leading, tae kwando and parachute games. The earlier drawings featured fewer activities in comparison, showing only skipping, exercises, football, hula-hoops and basketball. The drawings indicated that the pupils were aware of a wider variety of activities being on offer at playtimes, and that they had engaged with them. Lou and Adie drew themselves dancing which, both suggested in their second interview, could improve their physical activity at playtimes. Children also represented themselves as more contented, facially, in the second sample of drawings. This could indicate a more positive attitude to their general behaviour and demeanour at playtimes. Perhaps, undertaking organised activities on the playground during the study, had made these particular participants feel more optimistic about their performance during the planned games which in turn, promoted positive behaviour. Drawings can provide an expressive activity for pupils to transform their experiences into learning as Watkins et al (2007) state, pupils need to reflect on their experiences and make sense of them for active learning to be part of effective learning.

Berger (2008) suggests that the image can outlast what it represents and continues to inform about what it represented in the first place. The second drawings were comparable to the first because they showed how the four pupils had extended their learning about life on the playground during the research year. The drawings did not show explicitly if the pupils had chosen to draw what they drew because they enjoyed those activities. The researcher chose to ask

for visual drawings to supplement the lack of language from the participants. The same question was asked of each pupil before the first and second drawing session, “Can you draw me a picture of what you do on the playground?” Perhaps there would have been more information from the child if they had been prompted to respond further to questions. This could have helped to extract further information, as they may have drawn more activities, although this could have been interpreted as researcher bias brought about by directing or leading. Striking a balance in this respect was an inherent difficulty with this research method.

Jay illustrated the activities of basketball, dance and hoops in his second drawing (Appendix 5), as opposed to just the one ball activity drawn previously shown (Appendix 4). He indicated that the key figure in his first drawing was him. In the second drawing, where there are two figures, Jay did not indicate who was who. It could be that one figure represents him playing with the ball whilst the other represents him playing with the basketball. Or, it could be that the second figure shows Jay’s awareness of a peer alongside him on the playground. The latter could be interpreted as positive development as Jay is usually a self contained pupil who does not appreciate the need to engage with others. The figures and equipment in the second drawing have better defined shapes, graphically, which could indicate confidence and pleasure. The resources depicted in the drawings are all from activities which were offered to Jay on the playground and showed he had participated in them.

On their first drawing Adie (Appendix 8) and Ian (Appendix 10) are encircled and insular, in their own space, their bubble. Frith (2003), Wolfberg (2003) and Plimley and Bowen (2006) acknowledge that some individuals with ASC are content to be left alone in their solitary activities and do not seek out social contact with peers of their own accord. Or could this be an

enclosing schema? Patterns of repeated behaviour; schemas could be an additional way of considering the child's development. Putting borders and making enclosures is a common type of graphic schema seen as the circular enclosure (Nutbrown, 2011, Louis et al, 2009 and Mairs, 2013). Nutbrown's interpretation is that children often draw what they have paid attention to or their schema matches their developmental concerns. Surely if these boys were interested in a circular schema at this time then their attentions should have been directed to other circular activities which could then have extended their learning.

The second drawing from Lou (Appendix 7) highlights her music, dance, running, hoops and basketball. Compared to her first drawing (Appendix 6) which showed just basketball, skipping and hoops. This could be evidence of thinking on her part, more confidence about the playground which could be construed as more expression in her drawing. Could this be due to her maturity, or heightened awareness of activities around her? There are six people drawn and these could represent Lou and five others or Lou six times on different activities. There could be a awareness of being around different people, a newly developed wakefulness of others. This could be commensurate with the Central Coherence Theory, (Beardon, 2009 and Frith, 2003) which is about understanding the big picture of events and taking in the global account. The child with ASC may not ask to join in with games because they do not notice all the activities on offer on the playground but hopefully the input by adults during the research has helped pupils like Lou to understand more about the activities which are available during playtimes. Ideally the researcher needs to be in situ to discuss the drawing. It is therefore difficult to be objective because the visual picture is not accompanied with appropriate communication and what is seen is mainly all

that can be discussed. It is evident however that there has been some input to develop the pupils' activities on the playground and this is represented in all the second drawings.

In his first drawing Adie has drawn himself on the playground enclosed (Appendix 8) and on the second the dance activities are not enclosed (Appendix 9) possibly because these activities are not held on the playground, they are in the school hall inside and so are not enclosed. The second picture has two people who are also not enclosed. Is it Adie or two people? This could signify that emotionally Adie had opened up the space on the playground and did not feel so isolated there. Adie appears to be socially actively engaged and collaborating with others.

The second picture is more detailed and lively. There is a big smile on his face and more equipment on show. It is colourful in a sense of a lively drawing of the playground. There is also a clock which could indicate some awareness of time. Is the clock significant? Is playtime constrained by time and Adie has developed a sense of this? Does it show that Adie has the time to do what he likes or is it a time he dislikes? Berger's (2008) does suggest that the image captures the artist's thoughts at that time. The analysis is generally subjective as it is only saying what is seen in the drawings without knowing if there are hidden meanings.

Ian's first drawing clearly shows that he has focused on himself. He depicted himself smiling although choice was limited for him. The picture shows there are exercises and basket ball with a net. It could be asked why the net is not enclosed? Perhaps Ian would have liked to play with the net but thinks he is not allowed.

In Ian's second drawing there is lots more detail and it is a livelier squiggly picture showing more play activities. It shows the playground as a bigger active space with the movement of the

parachute game clearly revealed. Is Ian simply at that developmental stage of drawing which Sheridan (1994) says is developmentally around the age of five years and contains many items which can be indicative of their environment (Ian has a statement of SEN and this is below average for his age of nine years), or as Mair (2013) suggests Ian could be generalising some of his new learning about life on the playground by representing this with his busy graphic representation.

Analysis of the Participants

Jay achieved three hours in total of participation in “Get Active” activities, during playtimes in school for the whole of the school year 2006-2007. He spent the longest time on extra activities compared to the other three chosen children. With adult guidance he achieved twelve hours of extra activity time during playtimes in school for the year 2007-2008, which is a nine hours increase compared to the previous year. Originally, Jay was encouraged by staff to join in with “Get Active” activities, particularly football but he was ambivalent about taking part, showing no emotion either way. Jay is an eight year old boy who is developmentally challenging compared to his NT peers. He has a communication problem and therefore does not easily verbalise his needs and wants. Observations of Jay on the playground showed that he is a child who can be very insular at times although he appeared to be very contented with his own company. Jay showed no negative behaviour problems, his main problems were social communication difficulties consistent with an ASC diagnosis. Jay happily occupied himself by running along the playground markings, or playing alone with toy cars, when he liked to put them in lines. Lining things up

such as cars, gives pupils an opportunity to develop their motor skills and play creatively. Generally, school needs to be a place of order so that it can function effectively and there are many activities which encourage lining up. In October 2007 it is documented in my diary that Jay was running along the lines again which was something safe for him whilst the rest of the playground was a hectic place with ball games and a game of tiggy going on. Jay did not appreciate the need to engage in communication with others and he appeared to be blissfully self contained and not interested in seeking out interaction. Observing Jay at great length in his detached state, he gave off an aura of calm, enticing the observer to listen to his voice and to understand how he felt in order to appreciate his playtime needs. I observed that Jay, like all the children in the study had limited play skills.

Jay seemed to invite the observer to accept how he was and to respect and value him like this which enabled him to be more at ease with himself. Would encouraging him to join in with planned activities deny him his individuality and impede development of his self esteem? Field (2008:122) suggests that we are all a one off, utterly unique and totally original. She believes that some of our originality is tamed out of us, often in childhood, by the socialisation process dampening our spirits and smoothing out our unacceptable creases. Was I taking Jay's individuality away by pressurising him to join in with "Get Active?" activities? Was I questioning his conditions of worth? Letting Jay play at his own pace may not be detrimental to him as NT children can develop well enough from unstructured play. Cherney's (2009) findings from laboratory observations of children at play have shown that children's socialisation is best assisted when the play is child led and not organised by an adult. How could Jay expand his intrinsic uniqueness of self if he had to follow a prescribed playtime? Was the Government's

prescriptive policy placing conditions on Jay's script by asking him and in fact all pupils to achieve their physical activity target in schools? Jay did not resist any attempts made by others to interact with him, however, he did not seem to understand his interactive role in the communication process or appreciate the purpose of it. Jay had a right to have time and space to play alone during the fifteen minutes morning break and thirty minute break at lunchtime which were allocated for playtimes. He should have been allowed to do what he wanted as it is his entitlement. Was playtime Jay's physical and mental rest from the interactive communication and socialisation of the classroom? Was this quiet time alone on the playground his stress buster? From listening to and reading about the personal accounts of others with ASC at playtimes (Hoy, 2011; Sainsbury, 2000 and Williams, 1992; 2009) explain that they did not understand what was going on around them on the playground. It could be said that Jay's quiet solitary period could be used as his healthy work life balance. Playtime at school is an important part of the school day and free choice is appropriate for every child, whether they have autistic spectrum condition or not. It is vital for the pupil's fun and relaxation as well as their well being and physical health. Diary entries in December 2007 state that Jay was running the lines. Two more boys and I joined him. I tried to chat to him about his direction on the line but he paid no attention at all. Was this because of the social impairment associated with ASC or was this his solitary culture? Planned playtime activities did not always meet Jay's social needs as longitudinal observations of him showed me that he preferred to be alone. Life on the playground can be a multi-track event but it seemed that Jay preferred a mono track. He was not choosing solitary confinement as he sometimes observed events from afar. Diary recordings in February 2008 show that Jay was walking around the lines of the concrete slabs. There was a parachute game nearby and he was looking over towards it. His running along the playground markings as his playtime activity,

could have been developed by encouraging other children to follow him, thus creating a game of „follow my leader“. I feel however that this is playing lip service to the concept of social interaction at playtime and denying Jay his desire to play alone. The extent to which the curriculum meets individual needs has to be considered when assessing the quality of provision in school (DfES, 2007a). If Jay was undertaking emotional learning whilst he was running the lines then so be it. This could have been his quiet emotional aspect of learning. By offering “Get Active” activities, during playtimes in school, which were organised, measured and accounted for, were we becoming too prescriptive, too direct and authoritarian when teaching the children that they had got to participate? The Government’s “Get Active” initiative was placing conditions of worth on Jay. This young boy appeared to be content and self contained at playtimes, pleasant and passive with no major behaviour problems and this was his own playground culture, his persona.

Previously mentioned real life personal accounts (Hoy 2011; Sainsbury, 2000 and Williams, 1992; 2009) tell us explicitly that these authors were stuck in the social place of not understanding what was going on around at playtimes. Jay could have become anxious if I had taken him out of the social place, the zone in which he felt comfortable to join in with planned playground activities. Jay had interacted more during the third cycle of the study because staff had encouraged him to do so and he appeared to accept this. He simply needed the gentle assistance and encouragement of an adult to help him to relate socially with his peer group using small steps, in a bid to develop his social behaviour. I now believe that he had a right to spend playtimes on his own.

Adie is a 9 year old child with a statement of SEN for ASC. He is a good communicator but sometimes lacked the confidence to speak out, interact appropriately and participate with others. Observations of Adie at playtime showed me that he could become very lethargic and seemed to lack motivation. He played on the periphery reciting scripts from the Walt Disney videos and others that he had watched at home, sometimes this was accompanied by many gross motor movements. Learning about language through DVDs meant that he sometimes spoke in different accents, which at times, presented as an odd behaviour, although for Adie, watching his chosen DVDs was a form of observational learning. It was clear from my own interpretations that, like every child, those with ASC have their own individual behaviours. I observed, however, that their behaviours have some commonalities. Many of the pupils I have met over the years of working in school have often liked recite dialogues from the DVDs or television programmes which they have enjoyed watching.

Diarised observations in September 2007 showed that he appeared to be looking for adult approval for his conduct as he shouted out to a TA whilst swinging a cricket bat around. Again in May 2008 Adie was playing alone with a ball alone in the corner of the playground. A TA encouraged him to play catch and throw. He was looking towards the other adults for approval during this game and missed catching the ball on his turn. For a number of the aforementioned „suggested barriers to participation“, the children in my study did not achieve the Government’s target of all pupils taking part in at least two hours of high quality P.E and School Sport each week. A dichotomy was created here because my school was expected to achieve this target via

the Government's league tables but my collated "Get Active" figures showed that children with ASC often negated this position. Hopefully this case study explains some reasons why.

Observations show that Adie appeared to spend an enormous amount of time making a quiet corner of the playground a solitary place for himself to recite his dialogues, which unfortunately limited his involvement with the other activities on offer at playtime. In November 2007, Adie was on the periphery of the playtime game. He was reciting the dialogue from „Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, which he often did and there were lots of accompanying motor movements; flapping and giggling. Generally, Adie was very interested in live entertainment shows and his parents often took him to the theatre. When talking about shows that he liked he appeared to be lively and motivated. During some playtimes he tried to engage staff or pupils in relentless conversations about shows. At such times he behaved in the typically documented autistic way of finger flapping and twirling his hands, sometimes looking at them out of the corner of his eye and giggling. Adie played games which he called, "The Child Catcher," or "The Cruella De Ville," game from the film 101 Dalmatians. Both of these games involved chasing another pupil who was usually Lore, a girl statemented for ASC. The game usually involved by lots of hand flapping and giggling. At times, this was perceived by staff as inappropriate behaviour by Adie towards others and because of this he had received a white slip for inappropriate behaviour on the playground in the year 2006-2007. It was important to recognise how critical it was that all staff involved in the teaching of children with ASC recognised and had an understanding of autistic behaviours so that they did not misinterpret them as being rude or ill-mannered. Some of those behaviours may have presented as socially inappropriate, impolite or disruptive but there was usually an underlying reason for such behaviour. In Adie's case his recitations from the musicals

gave him pleasure. Williams (2005), speaking from her own experience said she encourages and empowers families to examine what they can positively do to address an autistic child's anxiety by using their obsession in a positive way and this inspired me to use the obsessions of a child with this condition to help them to achieve more positive behaviour through physical activity. I began to consider how I could help Adie by using his love of musicals in a positive way to encourage him to achieve "Get Active" activities. During the informal interviews, he had mentioned dancing and music. Ofsted (2005/8) carried out a survey of PE in schools from September 2005 to July 2008 and found that creative approaches to planned activities such as mountain biking, dance, martial arts and yoga encouraged pupils who were not keen on traditional team activities and this reduced disaffection whilst improving engagement.

I collaborated with a TA who is a dance teacher and appealed for her help. Twice a week at lunchtime she was able to introduce dancing from the shows as an activity, doing routines and workouts to Showtime music, which was Adie's current interest. His attendance to the club increased his physical activity in the school year 2007-2008, compared to that of the previous year. He only achieved two hours in total "Get Active" activities, during playtimes in school for the whole of the school year 2006-07, yet for the year 2007-2008 he achieved twelve hours extra physical activity time during playtimes in school, which is a ten hours increase over the year compared to the previous one. This was physical activity beyond the National Curriculum PE requirement. By tapping into the expertise which was available around us, Adie's curriculum had been realistically and affordably enriched and his behaviour and physical activity at playtimes had improved. Adie received no white behaviour sheets for the year 2007-2008. Also, during the study period, there were no complaints from dinnertime staff about negative behaviour from Adie

during break times, which I had received previously. It appears that the dance activities from the shows suited Adie and as White (2006; 67) says, the best way to practice skills at this early stage of social play is for the pupil to join a club that focuses on their special interest. By the end of the school year however, Adie became selective about which lunchtime dance class he wanted to attend. He would only attend the class when music from the musical “Chitty, Chitty Bang Bang,” had been selected for the dance club that day. When back on the playground he lapsed into his hand twirling, waving and flapping. It is worth noting suggestions from Breakey (2009) that neuro typical people also flap and use such behaviours sometimes in particular contexts and her example was when they were given a surprise or gift, hands can clap and flap as a sign of pleasure. We all have a meltdown behaviour response to too much excitement or stress. In school, Adie may not have been flapping due to his autism but as a physical way to sooth his anxiety about sensory overload because of activities on the playground. Another strategy to reduce Adie’s anxiety at playtimes was giving him an iPod to listen to with songs he had chosen from the musicals playing on it. This appeared to calm him when he was becoming too excited.

Lou was a 10 year old child who had a statement of SEN for ASC. She had poor communication skills and some semantic pragmatic difficulties. Her conversational attempts were very one sided. Sometimes she had a problem making others understand what she wanted because she did not fully understand the needs of the listener. Lou had difficulty with word selection and therefore often used jargon as a vocal attempt to make herself understood. I observed that this inability to make her needs clear and to express her desires resulted in her becoming anxious and weeping a lot at playtimes, if her needs were not met. This was seen by others as inappropriate behaviour from Lou. In October 2007 diary observations show that Lou came onto the playground and she

was laughing inappropriately. A TA encouraged her to play “The farmers in his den” game and she joined in. She continued to laugh. Lou did not get chosen by another child for the centre of the game and was anxious and started to cry. A TA consoled her. The game was disrupted and consequently Lou was given “time out” of the situation until she was calm.

Based on personal experience Williams (2003) talks about the anxieties which some children which ASC can go through. She has shown how people with autism can be taught to emerge from their exposure anxiety and develop their individuality. Lou’s anxieties caused a problem for others around her, and this sometimes resulted in Lou being given „time out“ of the situation until she was calm. She wanted to say things but they did not seem to come out linguistically correct for her. Her words lacked meaning; therefore it was difficult to find out her preferences for physical activity although comments from staff showed that she was a competitive child who visually showed pleasure when she was achieving during sporting activities.

Lou only achieved 1 hour in total “Get Active” activities, during playtimes during the school year 2006-2007, however she achieved over sixteen hours “Get Active” activities during playtimes in school for year 2007-2008. This is a fifteen hour increase achieved over the year compared to the previous year. This increase was partly due to staff using visual drawings to explain the situation to Lou so that she could understand. Staff had a paper and pencil at hand and drew stick people pictures with 2 word vocabularies. Like Adie, Lou also started to attend the dance club, which increased her physical activity and decreased her relentless anxiety weeping because she was happily engaged. I also appealed for the mid-day supervisors help with Lou on the playground. I asked them to use over exaggerated body language and explanations to encourage her to use hula-hoops or join in with skipping or other games such as basketball and parachute which would

greatly improved her motor skills. The supervisors were happy to do this as they had begun to organise playground games and engage pupils in activities rather than just undertaking general supervisory duties and intervening with pupils to resolve disputes of negative behaviour.

Ian was a 9 year old child who had a statement of SEN for ASC. He could communicate his wants and needs but lacked the confidence to speak out for himself or participate with others appropriately in order to develop any social reciprocity. At times, he tried hard to connect during conversation, but did not always fully understand the social perspective or specific need of the listener in accordance with the Theory of the Mind (Baron-Cohen et al, 1993; Breakey, 2009 and Frith, 2003). During my study, if Ian was challenged about any inappropriate behaviour like shouting out or pushing his peers he became very anxious, rigid in his thinking and argumentative. He made a commotion to the point where he would use unsuitable utterances, which, in turn was seen as inappropriate behaviour from him. After such outbursts he lacked any motivation to interact at all and became quite negative in his attitude. During the year 2006-2007 he received a white slip for negative behaviour when shouting loudly at the staff. He only achieved two hours in total "Get Active" activities, during playtimes in school for the whole of the school year 2006-2007.

During the school year 2007-2008 Ian achieved twelve hours of activities at playtimes which is a ten hours increase achieved over the year compared to the previous year. He had no white sheets recorded in the school year 2007-08 and as his class teacher; I was not informed verbally by colleagues, of any inappropriate behaviour at playtimes from Ian. His increase in physical activity was mainly due to staff encouraging him to attend the activities on offer at playtimes and

explaining the situation to him so that he could see the whole picture of events. In March 2008 diary recordings state that Ian was on the playground, where he picked up a skipping rope and he ran around trailing the rope. A TA approached him and tried to get him to skip but he did not want this and started to shout at the TA. She tried to distract Ian and asked him to join in with the parachute game which was going on. Ian accepted and joined in the game with her. The staff also used the same visual drawing technique which has been described with Lou. In November 2007, it is documented in my recording diary that the Deputy Headteacher used the visual drawing explanations with Ian to calm him and explain his negative behaviours.

During the second year the “Get Active” registers show that Ian often engaged in cooperative games like football, tiggy and basketball. I introduced social stories and the incredible 5-Point Scale to Ian and the other three children. These explained about playtime activities and managing emotions and clearly helped the children to understand what was happening around them. Along with his social story, the strategy of the incredible 5 point scale and TA assistance could also have been helpful for Ian.

During 2008, I collaborated with the TAs involved with the children in the study and we wrote the following social story for the four pupils.

My name is _____.

I am 8 years old.

At break times we go out to play on the playground.

If it is wet we stay inside.

Sometimes the teachers play games with children on the playground I can join in.

If I join in I will get more fit and healthy.

If I join in I will get a tick on the “Get active on the playground” chart.

When I have got a lot of ticks I will get a certificate in assembly.

This story was read to the children daily, ten minutes before playtime. They were also allowed to read it themselves if desired. All the staff involved had a copy of the social story. Following the introduction of social stories the weekly charts collated as a register for attendance of “Get active” activities showed that all four children had a greater involvement in the activities especially Ian, compared with their previous attendance to “Get active”. By developing, “Get active” activities to improve behaviour during playtimes in school, the amount of time participating in at least two hours of PE and school sport also increased. By increasing the hours of participation in prescribed activities it could be suggested that playtime was being turned into PE Curriculum time as there were not enough hours in the special school day to accommodate the Government’s expectations for hours of physical activities undertaken in school each week during the time of my study. In my school the children could not supplement their time for active activities with after school clubs as they were all transported to school by private hire companies from all over the local authority, often travelling many miles at the end of the school day. It was therefore difficult to organise after school clubs to increase participation in physical activities because in the main, parents were either not prepared to or were unable to travel to school in their own cars, after school to pick up their children from after school clubs. It was the activities at playtimes that were helping the pupils at Hay to achieve Government expectations.

Conclusion of the third cycle

My study has shown that children with ASC did not always readily join in with playground activities and when they did their efforts were often misinterpreted. My observations, particularly of Jay, showed that children with ASC can be insular; contented with their own company and happy in their isolation at playtimes. This correlates with the work of Frith (2003) who explains that many children with ASC present with behaviour which does not fit into „normal“ perceptions of behaviour because their unusual efforts to play and socialise with others are mistaken as signs of deviance. An example of this previously described in the real life examples in my study by Williams (2009) who did not know how to make friends so she called out rude names to a pupil she wanted to be friends with. This was perceived as bad behaviour by others. Some pupils have tendencies to go into sensory overload and „spin“, „twiddle“ and „flap“ when the playground is too chaotic and causing them anxiety. Other pupils, like Adie, with his favourite DVD repetitive dialogues, mostly coped with this by undertaking lone ritualistic activities in a quiet corner of the playground

Autonomy in a large open space like the playground could make the children feel emotionally insecure which could then manifest itself as a change in behaviour. Facilitators can support prescriptive playtimes with structured activities to promote social development or give pupils the freedom to do what they want to do. If the active involvement at playtime is going to empower the pupils with ASC, there is always the danger that compliance will dehumanise them and take away any individuality and interesting aspects of personality which they may develop on their own at playtime.

All the four children studied had previously caused some concern with some kind of negative behaviour which they had presented on the playground. Adie and Ian“s anxieties could have been

misinterpreted as disruption. Lou showed relentless anxiety and weeping in a bid to get her own way and Jay had problems with social interaction. Observations in May 2008 show that Adie was given an iPod with music to listen to when he was anxious at playtime and in December 2007 Lou was standing back from a game of ball. Her face was unhappy and she looked scared of the ball and cried when spoken to by a TA. She moved away from the game and walked round alone; she muttered to herself and looked anxious. Overall, during the school year 2007/2008 these children generally appeared to be supported by staff and contented during playtimes and did not receive any white sheets for negative behaviour. Throughout the case study I supported the notion of prescribed, pre-planned activities at playtimes by presenting a wide range of appropriate activities for the pupils to participate in. Such structured activities support the notion that behaviourism underpins the research (Skinner, 1953).

On the supposition that the child with ASC thinks in a structured way then such thinking could be in conflict with the agency. In school, rules like joining in with activities at playtimes are created to encourage children to conform to social expectations. This could create a management versus pupil situation. Pupils with ASC might not succeed in school because of the social conditions imposed upon them by their establishment impacting on their rigid way of thinking or logical interpretations. This could result in perceived deviation as they appear to be challenging authority, however, does the child with autism have a deficit or is this just different behaviour? Such pupils can often focus on their own behaviour rather than what is happening around them. Some pupils pay painstaking attention to a topic they are interested in, for example, Dr Who, dinosaurs or trains, to the exclusion of everything else going on around them. This can make them appear to be not engaging in lessons because they want to talk obsessively about the topic

they are attracted to. Children with ASC often face problems in school or face a crisis because they are sometimes perceived as being challenging children who present with challenging behaviour. It is critical therefore, that staff working with such pupils are aware of the ASC child's way of thinking and understand their perceptions of a classroom or playground situation, so that they can recognise that there may be a reason for any disruptive behaviour and be able to support the pupil through it.

In answer to my research question about how I can improve behaviour on the playground for children with ASC. I have studied four children with ASC at playtimes during this cycle of research. Prescriptive playgrounds with sport's activities on offer have helped children with ASC to have better behaviour as they do appear to like having structure and routines at playtimes which can reduce their anxiety. They may however need some free time to spend alone when they can quell any anxieties which they may have about being on the large open space of the playground.

The purpose of my research was to improve behaviour on the playground through an active playground approach and it appears that there can be a tension with regard to the chosen stance of playtime activities taken in school. The children in my study benefited from both of the structures, the interactive and the free play system and therefore, it is necessary to take into account the pupils themselves and how they learn.

Overall it was necessary to let the children know that I had acknowledged what they had said about playtimes during the interviews. They needed to know that I had listened to their opinions

about what they preferred to do and had tried to act on them appropriately. Wilkinson (2006) has seen under brain imagery new neural pathways actually opening up when we are responded to. Children's voices are an important part of current educational development. The „Achievement for All“ document (DfES, 2009) has the aims to improve outcomes for young people with SEN in developing positive relationships with others and improving behaviour. This gives the pupil a voice and promotes every child to make a positive contribution. My enquiry was not just for the teacher's knowledge but also about empowering pupils. This was why it was appropriate to interview the children and act on their responses. If our plans for learning encompass the child's wishes, then there may be some behaviour changes because we have communicated together more effectively. The dance to the shows class developed with Adie in mind was an example of acting on pupil voice.

The case study has helped me to develop a greater understanding and broaden my thinking about behaviour on the playground. Playtimes can be hotspots for negative behaviour issues but they can also be potential places where play can be developed and social, emotional and behavioural skills can also be practised, built on and improved for both the staff on duty and individual pupils. Such development is fundamental to school improvement. This case study showed that the pupils considerably increased their awareness of activities on offer at playtimes and with adult help and the use of visual aids improved their time when participating in those activities. The increased play activity decreased their negative behaviours and therefore they received fewer white sheets for negative behaviour. The decrease may only be small as the local authority attendance and behaviour database showed but nonetheless some improvement had been identified. Ultimately,

it was possible to say that the school was more knowledgeable about the behaviour at playtimes, particularly of children diagnosed with ASC on their statement of SEN, because of this small scale piece of research.

To be effective, the active playground approach needed to be constantly on offer to the children with set routines and behaviour principles laid down so that the children with ASC began to grasp the whole concept, the whole picture, as suggested with Central Coherence Theory (Frith; 2003). The use of a social story, visual communication pictures or photographs may have improved understanding of initiatives happening in school which the children could choose to participate in, especially for children with ASC.

The SEAL programme (DFES; 2005) which the children were taught during PSHE lessons may also have helped them to acquire new social skills which could have encouraged them to join in appropriately with activities on the playground and improve their behaviour. The TAs involved with the children needed to be informed about what was happening with them by the teachers, particularly on the playground. Children diagnosed with ASC do need to be given the chance to have their own time and space during playtimes rather than being expected to join in with “Get active on the Playground” activities. Some of these children appear to welcome solitary play (Frith; 2003) whether or not this leads to a positive outcome.

Some of the strategies which have helped to develop inclusion for pupils with ASC through “Get active on the playground” which improved their behaviour were undertaken within the realms of behaviourism (Skinner, 1953); positive reinforcement of expected behaviour and familiar play routines. They required good organisation, repetition and use of simplified language so that the

children knew what was expected of them. The use of visual aids including using notice boards in school which showed the daily and weekly programme for “Get active” events was helpful.

Modelling and shaping how to play the games helped children to understand the rules and using what the children liked also encouraged inclusion into the activities. Training for staff about ASC and playground activities was vital in understanding the children’s needs as was small positive steps which could be consolidated and then developed. Finally, allowing the children to have solitary play as well as inclusive play would enable them to have a balance in their lives.

Topology of behaviours which could affect conduct on the playground

This study has led me to identify a topology of behaviours which could affect conduct on the playground. I considered the best way to share the knowledge that I have gained from this cycle of research was to present the work as a topology. This topology, supplements the work done by White (2006) who observed the common characteristics which may affect the social play and behaviour at playtimes of children with an ASC diagnosis and Plimley and Bowen (2006) who looked at common sensory differences in children with ASC. I have generated some ideals about conduct at playtimes which are presented from the research evidence for consideration. They are by no means sacrosanct. Some ideas may be contentious; however they have helped with some pupils I have worked with in my study and may indeed continue to help others in the future.

Traits which may affect social play and behaviour on the playground have been noted. There are some strategies for developing inclusion which I recommend for positive work around the particular named playtime behaviour. Identifying behaviours and developing helpful strategies can be varied as not all children with ASC show all the named features. These range from

children for whom one of the suggested areas of behaviour presented them with a dilemma, to those who are challenged by many of the suggested characteristics.

1: Children have limited play skills.

Research has shown the essential importance of play as a tool for teaching and learning with the children's skills often giving a good indication of their social development (Moyles, 2005; Wolfberg, 2003 and Nutbrown, 2006). It is therefore beneficial to develop these skills. As previously described children with ASC can have limited play skills because they do not always learn by imitation or follow conventional social cues. Ian in my study sometimes pushed his peers in a bid to play with them which resulted in pupils falling and getting hurt and Ian then receiving a reprimand for his negative behaviour. Some pupils did not conform to the usual "rules" of reciprocal social play. In order to learn they needed to be guided through the routine of the game, over and over again by the teacher, TA or an older pupil, especially during planned playground games. In Howley's study (2001), Max had a social story read to him by staff to assist him in clearly understanding the rules of playtime and where and what to play.

2: Children prefer individual activities.

Some autistic children preferred not to socialise and play games but chose to focus their attention on their own interests which could be an action like running along the playground markings. At playtimes, Jay in this study regularly chose to run alone along the playground markings which marked out the football pitch. In my study I did not observe much interactive play from the four pupils, so the children were excluding themselves from developing important social skills like nurturing friendships and tolerating the company of others. I observed that two of the boys and one girl preferred their own individual activities at playtimes and this would concur with the

Theory of Mind, (Baron-Cohen et al, 1993; Breakey, 2009 and Frith, 2003), suggesting that these pupils cannot make accurate guesses about what other people are thinking and therefore take hold of the wrong social response, which can create difficulties on the playground. Also at the level of Central Coherence Theory, (Beardon, 2009 and Frith, 2003) which considers that pupils fail to derive coherence from the information they receive and are not successful in seeing the big picture of planned activities at playtime for themselves or the role of their peers in the activities. If only a fragment of meaning is known to the pupils, confusion could be a consequence, so, they may need some teaching staff to point out the activities on offer. Playing together is the primary route to social inclusion (Bond, 1990 and White, 2006) therefore encouraging a group ring game like „The Farmer’s in his Den“ can help less expressive or quieter pupils to take part as there is a role for everyone built into these games, such as ; the farmer, the wife, the nurse, child and dog. The framework of the game can level the social playing-field on the playground. Children with ASC need the adult support to encourage them to participate. For example, an early warning of what will be happening along with a detailed explanation about the game and with visual prompt cards, using photos or drawings and added TA support would help them to join in with a game and to make the transition from one activity to another.

3: Children may prefer to play a touching game.

Ian, in the study, was doing a lot of inappropriate touching but it seemed that he was not compelled to touch and was only making attempts at play fighting but at times he went too far and was perceived as presenting with aggressive behaviour. When some children with ASC are touched, they feel compelled to return the touch as they perceive this as a way of communicating (Plimley and Bowen; 2006). I have observed children trying to make contact with significant

others by aggressively hitting them which is also often perceived as negative behaviour. In this case it was a good idea to teach them how to play a game like *tiggy*, where touching is used for a purpose or adapt some games to match the need.

4: Children may resist touch.

As I observed, none of the chosen children in the study resisted touch. Telling a social story about behaviour can also help to clarify ideas for children about their personal space. Plimley and Bowen (2006: 26) suggest trying sensory desensitisation to build up pupil's tolerance levels. Discover ways in which close proximity may be needed in other activities. If there is a problem with this it would be appropriate to teach games which do not require touching like tag rugby type games where the equipment is touched and not the pupil.

5: Children have limited peer tolerance.

Depending on the individual child, a pupil may seek to shut off from their peers because they find it too stressful to interact all playtime and therefore they tend to play on the fringe so they can have quiet time alone. I observed that all the children in the study displayed signs of these characteristic, in particular, Jay. Such children needed to be introduced to playground activities for a just a short part of their breaktime. White (2006) states that all children have a right to the opportunities and experiences that lead to social competence. So as carers, we have a duty to introduce new experiences to the children. Teachers need to adapt play opportunities to enable successful inclusion to take place especially for the pupils who have problems with social interaction. Strategically, in my study about five minutes of contact out of the thirty minutes of playtime was introduced. It was felt that this was not demanding too much of the children who

were concerned about the games they were being encouraged to join in with. The whole activity needed breaking down into small achievable steps (Jennings, 1988 and White, 2006). Small steps, as in the Portage educational system, help to plan the transition from one stage to the next and this clarifies what the teachers need to work on towards achieving the next stage. The children with ASC also needed to be allowed to have some quiet time alone as too much interaction with peers may cause them stress and anxiety. Problems can be pre-empted by arranging time out for the pupil. This is accommodating their needs.

6: Children have a difficulty with social relationships.

The problems for pupils with ASC who have a difficulty with social relationships is that they can appear to be aloof and indifferent to others. This is an observation which I made of the children in the study as it was sometimes as if I was not there. This trait is also described by Williams (1992, 2005) as a common type of autistic behaviour. She did not know how to make friends and her attempts to do so, like shouting rude names to a girl, were often seen as bad behaviour. All the children in my study, except Adie who sometimes played with Lore, tended to play alone and did not appear to have any friends in school. Sometimes Adie would recite his favourite DVD repetitive dialogues with Lore who also knew the same scripts and this appeared to be parallel play. In the case of problems with social relationships, teachers and TAs could be the mediators who introduced games and played alongside pairs or groups of individual children where they could model correct behaviour or steer behaviour to the next appropriate place.

7: Children have no shared enjoyment of social situations.

Children with ASC may not appreciate the function of a game and therefore get no pleasure from playing it. Lou, in this study often displayed endless giggling or weeping which disturbed the rest of the children and disrupted organised games on the playground. She wanted to join in with the games but would move between giggling and crying during the proceedings. This behaviour came without any explanation from Lou. From personal experience Williams (1992) recalls how endless giggling can denote a release of fear, tension and anxiety. Lou was unable to voice her reasons for the giggling or crying but her drawings about playtime always portrayed a happy Lou. A staff member can be helpful in such situations on a one to one basis to calmly talk the pupils through the activity or show them visual cue cards. Redirecting pupils can also reduce anxieties.

8: Children understand some basic instructions.

All of the children in the study had a problem with this characteristic because they all had speech and language problems for which they received ongoing speech and language therapy at school. A pupil may have trouble retaining all the instructions or processing the language itself. Instructional sentences needed to be short and simple as the pupil may have had a receptive language level of understanding only a few words. The use of picture schedules and visual communication images can be useful for helping children with ASC to understand the sequencing of instructions. The visual teaching method may help with the language differences.

9: Children find difficulty with social games which may involve turn taking and winning.

Some children with ASC may be fixed in the egocentric stage of development and only able to see their own point of view. Lou in my study sometimes had a problem with this trait. She wanted to join in with organised games but stood alone and aloof. She had an inability to see the

playtime world as others did and had trouble adapting to it. This is commensurate with central coherence construct (Frith;2003), suggesting that Lou did not have the ability to see the big picture of what was happening in the game and she needed some adults to explain in plain words or visual pictures about the rules and systems. In cases like this early intervention programmes can be crucial for children with ASC because whereas skills, like turn-taking, which may come naturally to other children, have to be taught and consolidated in small steps. Most children can be taught to take turns, join-in and be flexible during play. Once the children get used to playing games they may take some pleasure from them and expand their experience. Teaching in the early years can pay dividends in later life. From the literature review in Sainsbury's (2000), accounts of playtimes, Sarah explains that she had trouble learning the rules of the games which the other children played and often played them in the wrong way, consequently, the other children in school avoided or laughed at her.

10: Children may use stereotyped play activities

Because of their rigidity of thinking some pupils appear to be unable to play creatively and like Adie in the study, they may repeatedly enact scenes from television programmes or DVDs. They find it difficult to understand the overall picture and may focus only on small details during play, like the spinning of the car's wheels rather than visualising the whole car moving along. Adie's flow of play was often impeded by him focusing on some fine detail. This was usually associated with the adult who was trying to help him. He looked intensely at their faces and made comments like "You have got brown eyes" and "You've got lipstick on" which distracted Adie and the member of staff from the task in hand. It may be helpful to take the pupil to a quieter area to talk about their play where there are fewer distractions.

11. The children may like to use a complex order of play.

In a way, children who choose to use a complex order of play become in charge of the situation as they have created their own higher order which no-one else is privy to. At times, Adie in the study used a complex order of play about shows and videos he had seen. He created his own exclusive play world, in which he felt safe and successful. At times, I allowed the children in my study to exclusively use their own order of play as too much adult interaction could cause them anxiety.

12: The children may lack respect for other people's personal space by getting too close.

Children with ASC may believe that the person they are getting close to can fulfil some need for them. The child's proprioception may affect their awareness of their own body in space in relation to other children around them. In order to help them to define their own space more clearly, cues need to be created for them so they know where they need to be situated to match the location which they are in. For example; the child may require visual prompts such as marker tape or child friendly rubber markers on the floor to indicate where they need to stand and where their space is. Mesibov and Howley's work (2003) describes how Leila followed visual instructions in PE lessons to help her to achieve in her gymnastic studies. Generally, as pupils in the study became familiar with the visual cues, their learning became extended to incorporate choice and encourage creative thinking. A social story, showing red and yellow cards, comic strip conversations, photographs or the five point scale could also help to clarify ideas for children with ASC about their space on the playground and about the feelings of other pupils. Of the four children in the study, Adie had the greatest problem in defining his personal space. The visual

prompt cards were shown to him by a member of staff and helped to clarify matters. The „communicate in print“ programme was used for making the visual prompt cards. The „communicate in print“ is a computer programme which was purchased by school to assist in the making of pictorial symbols and timetables to use for learning and communication.

13: Some children have sensory sensitiveness.

The sensory input of children with ASC can be affected by external influences. A pupil may not be able to make sense of what is being said to them because of distracting background noise on the playground. Noise overload can lead to stress and subsequent physical „shut down“ because of feelings of threat and a lack of coping strategies. Routines, like them using visual cards to show when noises are “getting too loud”, can help a child cope better with the playground environment. Plimley and Bowen, (2006), showed how structures and routines like showing red and green cards when noises were getting too much for him were planned into Gary’s school day to help him to manage the playground environment. Also the Incredible 5-Point Scale strategy (Buron and Curtis; 2003) could help in this situation when students could rate their level of sensitivity. At times, Adie, in my case study was given an iPod to listen to with songs he had chosen to listen to mainly from the musicals, which calmed him when he was being too giddy on the playground.

S. Endicott
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CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

As a requisite of research it is now necessary for me to draw this study to a conclusion and examine the pertinent factors, for example, have the aims of the research been met? The research was successful in providing evidence which explicitly attempts to answer the research questions. The purpose of my research was to find out how behaviour management could be improved. During my study the issue of white sheets for negative behaviour had reduced significantly. The number of white sheets had been reduced by over 50%; 311 sheets documented for the year 2006-2007 from 683 documented sheets for the year 2004-2005. Improved behaviour was identified by the Ofsted inspection (2006) which resulted in the school progressing from being

assessed as MSSR5, to satisfactory and improving. Ofsted also acknowledged that there was some good management practice in Hay school. Most of the behaviour management changes, however, came from decisions made by the behaviour management group which was a didactic approach, but for this to be entirely successful, the whole school community should have participated in the consultations about change.

The intention of the research was to discover what theories of learning underpinned behaviour management changes in my school. It would appear that behaviourism played a major part in directing the new behaviour policy at Hay school turning the learning culture into a token economy based on rewards and sanctions (Skinner, 1953; Robertson, 1996; Cowley, 2006 and Hough, 2006). This did not however take into account the underlying emotional issues that affect pupil behaviour (Cooper et al, 1994). It has been suggested the underlying issues could be addressed with emotional literacy teaching (Layard, 2006) including talking therapies which would be based on a cognitive and humanist stance. The behaviourist approach worked because it was structured and scaffolded the play and development (Bruner, 1960). This enabled some pupils with SEN to reach their ZPD (Vygotsky, 1962). By planning structured play, social development was encouraged which in turn promoted the growth of the PSHCE curriculum. This can be about interacting with others and establishing effective relationships in a small group. There were also benefits for the children with ASC who have been documented as isolated in their play at times, undertaking lone ritualistic activities (Frith, 2003 and Wolfberg, 2003).

A further research intent was to discover whether structured sports activities helped with the management of behaviour at playtimes. Statistics about attendance and the issuing of white

behaviour sheets showed that the prescribed behaviouristic view at playtimes was effective for improving the management of behaviour. I consider however, that some pupils' imaginative development would benefit from free play at playtimes (Pellegrini et al, 2004; Sheerman, 2005 and Cherney, 2009). In the context of a school for pupils with SEN and ASC some adult support and interaction could be beneficial because some pupils appeared to gain from direct intervention and would not otherwise have made a choice for themselves. Statistics have shown that the pupils in class 2 in Hay school were more involved in the activities on the playground. The TAs who were assisting with the collection of data in cycle two were also working in that class. It is believed that they were able to promote and involve the pupils further in the activities because they were more knowledgeable about what was happening at playtimes. These TAs were motivated to encourage the pupils to participate because of their keen interest in this field of study.

Finally, to answer whether structured sports activities helped with the behaviour management of children, I stated ASC at playtimes. From studying the four children with ASC at playtimes I have found that prescriptive playtimes with sport's activities on offer have helped these individuals to improve behaviour. These structures and routines can reduce anxiety but there are also times when some solitary free time would be welcomed to practice skills, develop choices and reduce anxieties further (Wolfberg, 2003). This could however negate the Government directive of all 5-16 year olds spending a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport of which playground activities can be part of. The intrinsic rewards for the child of this initiative were felt to be developing confidence and self-esteem, team work and personal skills (PESSYP, 2008). However, Vasagar (2012) criticises recent Government cuts including the loss of funding for school sport's partnerships. This has had a knock on effect in the hours

children spend on physical activity and school sport. Although the researcher perceives prescribed programmes of activity at playtimes to be effective, there is still a concern about whether structure and organisation suppresses children's creativity in play (Blatchford, 1989; DCMS, 2004; Nutbrown, 2006; Cherney, 2009 and Brown and Vaughan, 2010).

Some children, like those in the study, have shown difficulty with lack of autonomy. Taking into account the evidence of reduced negative behaviour from the data it appears that structured programmes scaffold social development. It could be a possibility at some stage to offer children a mix of structured and free play at playtimes in order to meet differing needs and interests (White, 2006 and Brown and Vaughan, 2010).

Undertaking this research has shown me that school staff need to develop their understanding of pupils and especially those statemented with ASC, in order to enhance inclusion in school life. School practice needs to be adjusted accordingly to make organised schemes reachable for all students. If you know the pupil then you know how they are going to respond to initiatives like "Get active on the playground". When it appears that there is only one way to effectively teach an activity, as teachers, we need to rethink, maybe „outside the box“ and present pupils with an innovative range of activities to suit everyone. It has been shown how a TA undertook lessons relating to dances from the shows to assist Adie, in the study to participate in physical exercise. Ultimately, different options need to be put together in an approach which is workable for all the pupils but in particular those pupils who have characteristics which have been described previously like limited social interaction and communication skills and of behaviour and thought

(Frith, 2003). Everybody concerned with the pupils need to be working together and towards the same goals.

The research has supported colleagues who were undertaking foundation degrees themselves and were interested in playtime activities. This collaboration empowered them to have the confidence and knowledge to undertake their own research. My research there could have made a contribution to knowledge about handling behaviour efficiently in school and on the playground within a school catering for children with SEN and in particular, ASC and MLD. The researcher has already shared her knowledge about ASC pupils at playtime in an article published in the Primary PE Matters Journal in Autumn 2010, which discusses autism and physical activity.

During the final cycle of research the school closed and I had to prematurely finish the collection of data, before the validity became compromised. I was unable to continue the collection in the next school I worked in because many of the variables in my research had changed. The computer data base system closed and I was unable to collate the final number of white behaviour sheets for the final cycle in the year 2007-2008. This piece of PAR may have only changed the situation where the research took place. The knowledge gained from the research was carried forward by the researcher to next school and has benefited children in the new setting where, currently, half the pupils there have a statement of SEN for ASC (See photos, appendix 17)

Throughout the research period my philosophy of children's playtimes has developed considerably. Currently, the implication of this is that it has made me reflect on my views and use this knowledge in my new setting. The researcher, in consultation with some of the ASC pupils at the school, designed a sensory playground, within the existing playground (See photos, appendix

17). The children can play with specially designed „sensory panels“, spin, balance, twiddle, turn and can be alone in confidence. For the pupils with ASC it can be a sort of work life balance area; a place to satisfy their needs and where they are free to do whatever they choose. The sensory playground allows their physical movement to be non-threatening. The playground won an award for „inspiring the non-engaging in PE and sport“ from the Doncaster School Sports Co-ordinator Partnership in 2010 (See the award photo where colleagues and myself receive a trophy, Appendix 17).

It is important to note that I was aware that time elapsed between my playtime observations and the writing of my entries. This could have brought into question the reliability and validity of the completed diary entries. Some of the wording in the questions of the playground questionnaire needed further reflection as it became evident that they could have been open to misinterpretation. My body language and facial expressions may also have compromised the validity of the pupil responses to questionnaires during the interviews with them. Unfortunately, body language and facial expressions, especially when working with pupils with SEN are part of my pedagogy. The advantage of conducting the interviews myself was that I was able to clarify any responses to ensure greater reliability. The researcher found that asking the children to create visual drawing as a method to supplement the lack of language from the participants was enjoyable for myself and successful for the participants. The research focused on just Hay school which had a specific population and it would therefore not be easy to generalise the overall findings or compare with another school within the same confines as in my study.

Another problem that could have affected my research was combining my role as a researcher to the role of class teacher. This could also have been difficult for those colleagues around. Added to this it could also have been considered difficult for me to maintain objectivity in the research because of the prior knowledge and close contact there had previously been with children involved. PAR is a good methodology for a teacher who is a researcher. Brydon Miller (2003) says you have got to be personable in PAR and work collaboratively with others which can lead not only to organisational changes, but also to personal changes in the action researcher. I agree with this statement as I felt that I had to get staff involved in what I did in every cycle of the research. I was supportive, honest, enthusiastic and instrumental in leading and sharing the activities. I believe that this was beneficial to the success of the research and assisted me in becoming a more confident teacher/ researcher. I wrote the following statement in my personal research diary on the completion of my research;

I have related the story of my action research study in the best way possible. I have presented this to the reader to show that my work is valid and that what I have stated is relevant to my research and true. I consider that I worked collaboratively with the staff. I was honest, enthusiastic, supportive and instrumental in leading and sharing the research investigation and findings. Such personal qualities were developed during the time of the study and helped me to become a confident teacher/researcher.

I have attempted to present much evidence to ensure that each piece is related to the next, to ensure greater vigour. I endeavoured to demonstrate that children's attitudes to behaviour were being raised with increased physical activity by presenting some quantitative measures alongside the qualitative data. I believe that these factors added greater validity and rigour to the notion that prescriptive playtimes can produce a change in behaviour.

In summary, the chosen methodology to structure my research design was a PAR approach. This is the way in which I conducted my study and the connections between me the researcher and the research have been critically considered. I feel that this relationship had a major influence on the chosen design of the study. PAR was a quality process in which I was involved in with those around me and this was an appropriate way to instigate change in my workplace. It is a living inquiry to find out how to reflect on and improve practice in school. This method suited my work situation where some adjustments to behaviour management were needed. This was achieved and reflected on. Brydon-Miller (2002) summarises my rationale for PAR,

So, the simplest and most honest answer to the question, why do I do participatory action research is because I couldn't do it any other way. Because I too want to make a difference and for me this is the most compelling, most fulfilling way I have found to do so.

APPENDIX 1

2005-2006. 1st Cycle; Behaviour management group, chronological diary of events

2004. Pupil recorded negative behaviours dealt with by staff rose to a n alarming level

Dec. 2004. Local authority review of the school

Dec. 2004. Acting headteacher appointed with support from the local authority.

May 2005. Head teacher permanently appointed.

July 2005. Summer recess.

September 2005. Setting up of a behaviour working party consisting of a cross section of school's staff and pupils.

Nov 05. Behaviour working party formed and started consultations.

Action plan agreed and governor's informed. The project was called "The Keeping Pupils Safe Project".

Questionnaire devised for pupils

Start of teacher peer observations in lessons with regards to management of pupil behaviour.

The positive behaviour "pink" sheet, was introduced to measure positive behaviour in school, in opposition to just recording negative behaviours on white sheets

Dec 05. Analysis of information obtained from pupil questionnaire.

Discussion with children highlighted as possible intimidators of others from pupil questionnaire and positive support offered to them from the Learning Mentor.

Monitoring of playground behaviour.

Jan 06. Analysis of information from classroom / teacher peer observations and a full staff meeting to discuss and share information about this.

Consultation with staff and pupils at the school council meeting, it was decided what constituted acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in school and begin to document what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

Feb 06. The outcomes from behaviour observations in class discussed with all staff at a staff meeting.

Information regarding effective classroom management and strategies distributed to all staff.

Staff questionnaire devised and distributed.

Parent's questionnaire devised and distributed.

March 06. Procedures for handling challenging behaviour reviewed.

Letters distributed to parents with information of the aims of a new project and a questionnaire.

Discussion of classroom environments with all staff and money made available to spend to enrich classroom environments in a way, which reflects the positive ethos of the school.

Analysis of staff questionnaire available,

April 06. Analysis of parent questionnaire available,

In response to the recent questionnaires set procedures were agreed, distributed and implemented immediately.

May 06, Analysis of data from school's behaviour database available to all staff. Sharing of information regarding school merit system.

Classroom procedures regarding behaviour shared with all staff at a staff meeting.

School policy for behaviour management and anti bullying reviewed.

July 06. Behaviour Information packs, consisting of policies and procedures, mailed to all parents. The revised school behavioural policy informed parents of the aims of the school in relation to expected behaviour and the expectations required from the staff and pupils.

These procedures to be followed by all staff to ensure a consistent approach to behaviour, which reinforces unity from staff to pupils.

The policy outlines the merit system of awarding trophies and sanctions within school but it does not go into detail as to how negative behaviour is dealt with within the classroom.

Positive improvement in pupil's behaviour highlighted on an Ofsted report (Ofsted, 2006).

APPENDIX 2

2006-2007, 2nd cycle - Diary of observations on the playground.

The play scheme registers were introduced in September 2006 and kept to show pupil attendance to play activities on the playground. At first, the type of activity was not included on the charts but as time passed the activity was included in order to find out which games and activities were popular. The collation charts were changed in mid November in order to show the different activities.

November 2006

Some pupils appear to need adult help to get the best out of their play. There is too much distraction with equipment on offer such as hoops, skipping ropes, balls and bats. The children are playing their own games. Some are just ignoring the equipment.

There is one boy with a hoop around himself. He is running along the playground lines and making train noises. One boy is pulling another boy with a hoop and shouting “wooooo!!!!” as he is attempting to play trains with it.

A TA is organising a game of throw and catch. Lou is encouraged to join in with the ball game but she begins to cry. She stands back from the ball, puts her hands over her head and turns away when the ball is thrown to her.

Could we have a basket available with equipment for free play rather than it just being scattered all over the playground? Or perhaps arrange some kind of loan system with an adult in charge. Maybe this could work better? Class 3 has ten male pupils who tend to play a self initiated, organised game of football at break times on a separate area of the playground. The pupil’s involvement in this activity is not documented on the registers.

Jay is alone and he is markedly running round the lines of the football pitch which is painted on the playground. He is not running fast. A TA approaches him. I move in to listen what she says. She is asking him if he wants to play bat and ball. She offers him a bat and tries to play the game with him. He has not got the hand and eye coordination to bat back. The ball goes by him. He makes no attempt to retrieve it and he looks unhappy. The TA goes for the ball and tries to start the game again.

On 27/11/06 a TA organises the “Bean game” and “What time is it Mr. Wolf?” These games are well attended by 50% of the pupils on the playground from all of the classes.

Other games this month include, Tag Rugby, Train Stations, Fish and Net and Catch, don’t Catch. Tag rugby rules are amended to cater for the different abilities of the SEN pupils.

December 2006

“What time is it Mr. Wolf?” is a popular organised game this month. There is also the train game, the farmers in his den, parachute, keep fit DVD and tag rugby. Not all the playtimes are recorded due to indoor play because of inclement weather conditions. Inside play consists of watching a DVD in the hall and four pupils are chosen to play snooker with a TA. These are generally calm playtimes as most of the pupils enjoy watching DVDs.

Some year four boys are playing together on the playground. One boy (AH) appears to be leading their play and says, “Let’s play a game?” He then asks the others, “Why don’t we have two teams. One can be Dr Who and the other the aliens and we can pretend to fight!” “Right ok then” replies one of the boys. They spend the next five minutes trying to sort out who is going to be Dr Who. The leader approaches me, “We’re trying to play this game but we can’t decide who is going to be Dr Who, could you help us?” “Yes I say who wants to be Dr Who?” They all want to be him. “Well let’s take turns to be Dr Who; I think that’s fair don’t you?” I reply. “If the game goes well you could always play it again tomorrow and swap who is Dr Who. I then organise the boys into Dr Who and the aliens and let them to play their game and carry on observing. It only lasts for a minute as one of the aliens hits Dr Who and the game collapses into a fracas. A member of staff goes to sort it out. The bell goes for end of play and the pupils go to line up. I do not observe this game again.

Adie is in a corner on his own. I approach and listen to him. He is reciting some words from “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.” He comes near to me and asks if I know this DVD? He recites the words again to me. We strike up a conversation about “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang” Adie asks the same questions over and over again about the DVD; “Chitty Chitty Bang Bang”. He asks me to play at Cruella De Ville with him and then he looks at me and says “You have got a hair on your face!” and starts to play with my hair.

January 2007

Again, not all the playtimes are recorded due to inside play because of inclement weather conditions. Keep fit DVD, tag rugby; plastic stilts, hula hoops and the football coaching are on offer as organised activities this month.

I start to include boys from class 3 playing their own game of football at break time in the registers so that in their time can be collated into the overall data on the playground registers. I give out some certificates in assembly to pupils who have done 2 hours extra for play time activities for increased physical activity levels and some for good sportsmanship for those who have been nominated by the TAs.

I purchased a basket and make it available with equipment for free play rather than equipment just being scattered all over the playground. It is to be kept in class 4 and the pupils have been instructed to just take one piece of equipment at a time and return it if they want to swap the equipment then they can.

February 2007

At morning break a TA plays “train stations” followed by a game called, “What time is it Mr. Wolf?” Both games are well attended. At lunchtime the mid day supervisor plays parachute games with the pupils and a keep fit DVD is indoors with a TA. This DVD activity is attended by only females.

On the 7/02/07 eight younger pupils attend football coaching which is surprising as most of the older pupils play football at break times but chose not to go to the coaching.

Ian is playing bat and ball alone. Someone takes his ball. He shouts and hits himself with the bat.

I intervene to calm Ian and resolve the situation by getting the ball back for him to play with. I chat to him about the ball game and he says to me that he likes to play at robbers. I say that

maybe we could find someone for him to play robbers with and he declines from the suggestion and runs off.

A circus skill's coach from a local circus school, who had been working with disaffected pupils, is invited to work with the children at lunch time break to increase their involvement in physical activity and improve their skills. There were 50% of pupils attending this activity at lunchtime on 20/02/07 and again on 27/02/07. With over half of the pupils at this activity in the hall it means that the play ground itself is very calm during dinner time play. A circus style assembly is built into this programme for the pupils to showcase their newly acquired skills.

A TA introduces a new game called "Raisins and Raspberries" on 23/02/07 and a game called "Seaweed" on 26/02/07.

March 2007

A TA introduced a new game called "Duck, Duck, Goose" on 2/03/07 and "Hot Potatoes" on 16/03/07 and "Tinker Taylor" on 30/03/07. During such activities there are only two girls from class one who join in. The rest of the class rarely joins in any activities. This needs to be observed further. It is interesting to note that during some playtimes now the TAs will run 2 activities simultaneously. For example on 26/03/07 there were hula hoops organised by one TA and football organised by another. The TA who organises football appears to facilitate this whenever she is on duty. This TA does have football as one of her personal hobbies; therefore this is worthy of note for future reference. At the beginning of the month the circus skills was as well attended as in February but by the end of March the numbers attending dropped to 25%. There appeared to be no pattern to the pupils attending the circus skills class. The football coach was still coaching in March with similar attendance to February; mostly older pupils.

April 2007

25/04/07 at lunchtime, there is skipping, dance class with the dance teacher, hoola hoops and football with the football coach. Adie, Lou and Rebecca go off to the dance class. The majority of class 3 boys are joining in with the football coach and there are some from the other classes. Two girls attend football coaching. In total 13 pupils are at football. 3 at are dance. Some are skipping intermittently. That is 50% of pupils on organised activities. Ian and Jay are both playing on their own within the hubbub of the playground. Jay is lining up about 6 cars and relining them over and over again. He is absorbed in this activity. Ian is running around the playground alone. He has his coat on like a cape and is making a brrrrrrrr sound as he goes. I do not ask him what he is playing as I do not want to spoil his game.

Some days the weather is sunny. On 26/04/07 a TA organises some sack races on the school field.

May 2007

One pupil is in the middle of this busy game of *tiggy* talking some script in an American voice. He appears to be oblivious to the events around him.

The weather is improving. The TAs have introduced rounders, outdoor athletic activities like the javelin and races at lunch time play on the school field.

A TA introduces a new game called "May I cross your bridge?" on 04/05/07.

The football and circus skills coach are still attending each week.

Some pupils have been given certificates in assembly. They have collected 10 hours extra for play time activities for increased physical activity levels and some for good sportsmanship who have been nominated by the TAs. I am increasingly noticing pupils from class one who do not

interact at play times. Is this because they are younger or could there be another reason? There are 4 children who do not interact. I have asked the TAs to guide them to activities.

June 2007

Twelve older pupils attend coaching football on 21/06/07. Their behaviour is good during such organised activity. After discussion about some of the older boys, who do not always participate in organised activities and who are persistently in trouble with staff, some cricket and rugby coaches from a local club are invited into school to work with the targeted pupils. Also for 6 weeks a Tae Kwando coach holds classes at lunchtimes financed by the School Sport's Coordinator. This is attended mainly by the older boys.

There are four younger pupils, who do not interact at playtimes as much as the other pupils. All have a diagnosis for autism. Staff have been trying to encourage them to interact with the games, especially to encourage Adie to go to the dance class. They appear to fail to take coherence from the activities, especially the sport's activities on offer. I believe that these pupils are not always seeing the big picture of planned events at playtime for themselves. This tends to result in confusion about the function of playtime activities, so, staff need to point out the activities on offer and often guide and support them through the games; For example; Lou is busy with a hula-hoop, she is quite skilful at this task and proud of her achievement. A TA chats to her and offers some ideas. Lou is smiling. The TA tries to get some more girls involved with Lou and the task. This falls on stony ground as Lou is insular in her game and appears to be happy with her own company.

APPENDIX 3

2007-2008, 3rd cycle - Diary of observations of four pupils on the playground.

Sept 2007

For the first two weeks back at school after the summer holidays, there are organised games like football and tag rugby and many ring games. The four pupils in the study do not join in with any activities for these two weeks.

Adie is standing by the wall alone. He appears to be observing the other pupils around him.

He flaps his arms and runs around the yard making a cackling noise. There are children skipping nearby. He does not interact with this activity at all. He is told to move away from the skipping.

Adie is playing with a ball alone in the corner of the playground. A TA encourages him to play catch and throw. He is looking towards the other adults on the playground during this game and misses catching the ball on his turn. He appears to be looking for adult approval for his conduct.

Jay is sitting on the playground. He is playing alone with toy cars. Close observations show me that he is spinning the wheels and then lining the cars. He is absorbed and happy in this game.

Lou has no interaction with the TA who is organising hula-hoops. She switches between happy and unhappy facial expressions. She is skilful with the hoop. A TA walks by and she shouts to her "Look at me" repeatedly. The TA tries to show Lou a game with the hoop. Lou starts to cry. The TA says "Happy, Happy" and Lou resumes her solo hula hoop.

Lou walks around the yard alone. Her head is down. There is no interaction with anyone.

Ian is wondering around alone. He picks up a hoop and throws it aggressively. He has a ball game with himself demonstrating good hand/eye coordination. He throws the ball at some pupils and is told off by a TA.

There is a game of basket ball on the 21st September and Lou joins in. She is quite skilful when she gets the ball and shoots. She does not interact with the other players and cannot pass the ball to them. There is a basketball coach. He encourages Lou to pass the ball. Lou looks really happy. On the 27th a TA organises a target game with Velcro darts thrown to a dartboard and the pupils are keen to play this. The TA encourages Adie to join in and he does. He is smiling. His hand/eye coordination skills are low but he enjoys this game.

Oct 2007

I have asked a TA who is a dance teacher to take lessons relating to dances from the shows as this is Adie's passion at the moment. If he can dance to his favourite musicals then it may encourage him to do physical exercise. The first lesson is at the end of September and the 2nd lesson on the 1st October. Adie goes to both lessons. The TA says that Adie joins in well and sings his songs more than dancing.

Lou has come onto the play ground. She is laughing inappropriately. A TA encourages Lou to play “The farmers in his den” and she joins in. She continues to laugh. She does not get chosen by another child for the centre of the game. Lou is anxious and starts to cry. A TA consoles Lou. This disrupts the game and consequently Lou is given „time out“ of the situation until she is calm. I appeal for the mid-day supervisors to help with Lou on the playground to encourage her by using their over exaggerated body language and explanations to use hoola-hoops and join in with skipping and other games such as basketball and parachute from which she may improve her motor skills.

A TA encourages Jay to play “The farmers in his den” and he joins in. There is no expression on his face. I do not know if he is enjoying this or not enjoying it. Jay is passive. It is like I am not there with him as he makes no attempt to communicate.

Adie is reciting a witches” dialogue by the wall, he is flapping his arms, clapping excitedly and jumping on the spot. He joins in some dialogue with a girl, Lore. They echo each other in American accents. A TA tells them to calm down. They run away together laughing. There is a game of basketball and they run through middle of the game oblivious to what is happening. The coach tells them to stop running through his game of basketball and they laugh.

Jay and Ian are running along the lines which are painted on the playground. There is no interaction between them or with others. There is a game which Ian joins in with, chasing the other children but he is not aware of the rules of the game around him. He laughs to himself incessantly as he runs. Although Ian is 9 years old it appears to be at the stage of parallel play with his peers

Jay is running along the lines again whilst the playground around him is a hectic place with ball games and a game of tiggy going on.

S. Endicott
XXXXXX

Adie makes no attempt to interact with others. As he stands there he twists his hands behind his back. A TA asks him to go to the dance class and he goes indoors to the class.

On 26/10/07 Jay is encouraged to join in with the basketball coaching at lunchtime. He is passive throughout but does not resist attending the class. The coach is very kind to Jay and encourages him to have the ball as often as possible.

This month there have been games on offer alongside basketball, football, dance and movement and parachute. Lou is joining in well due to the TAs encouraging her and Adie has some involvement with physical activity when he is attending the dance classes.

Due to the dance class and TAs encouraging pupils to be involved, Lou and Adie have received certificates in assembly for four hours extra physical activity.

Nov 2007

There has been skipping, hula hoop, football, basketball, dance and parachute on offer.

Lou is joining in with a ball game. She stands back unhappily. She appears to be frightened of the ball and mutters a lot to herself. She is very anxious.

Adie is on the periphery of a game. He is reciting words from some Walt Disney DVDs which I believe he has relentlessly watched at home. There are lots of accompanying motor movements such as flapping and jumping up and down.

Once again, Adie is on the periphery of the playtime game. He is reciting the dialogue from „Chitty Chitty Bang Bang,“ which he often does. There are lots of accompanying motor movements; flapping and giggling. A TA moves in to interact with him. He giggles in a silly manner and the TA loses her calm manner because Adie is not listening to her and giggling relentlessly in a silly way. Later she tells me that Adie has been rude during lunch time play. I ask

her why? She tells me he was impolite and would not do as she asked. I explain that Adie was reciting his DVD dialogue and that is what he does, and how he also becomes anxious about being on the playground.

Jay does not resist any attempts by the TA to interact with him with a bat and ball; however, he does not seem to understand his interactive role with her.

Ian is shouting at some girls because they will not give him a ball and in temper, he attempts to push one of the girls. The pupils are playing a game with the ball and Ian is challenged by a TA about his inappropriate shouting out and pushing. He become very anxious, rigid in his thinking and argumentative, making a commotion as he is using swear words. This is seen as inappropriate behaviour from Ian and he is sent, still protesting, indoors to see the deputy head who will deal with the matter. She told me later that she had used the visual drawing explanation technique with Ian to calm him and explain behaviours.

Adie has attended the dance classes with the help of a TA. Lou has joined in with dance as well.

Dec. 2007

Lou is standing back from a game of ball. Her face is unhappy. She looks scared of the ball. She cries and is spoken to by a TA. She moves away from the game and walks round alone. She mutters to herself and looks anxious. A TA asks Lou to join her at the cheer leaders group. She switches to a smile and goes to the class with the TA.

Ian is standing alone on the playground. He shows no awareness of the game of tiggy which is happening around him. He moves on to walk around the perimeter of the playground. I point out where he is to a TA and she goes to him and entices him into the game of tiggy.

Adie is in a corner of the yard dancing and flapping. He has his arms knotted behind his back with his fingers intertwined and knotted. He looks in a classroom window. I move in to observe him closer. He is talking to his reflection in the window in an American accent.

Adie is playing with Lore in a corner of the playground. He says he is the child catcher and grabs her arm aggressively. She laughs out loud. He turns his voice to an American accent. He says “I am the child catcher and I have got you” He jumps on the spot flapping his arms. He runs after Lore and grabs her again. She just giggles and he flaps again. A teacher approaches to stop the grabbing and Adie says to her that she has got lipstick on and then becomes preoccupied with the lipstick.

Jay is running along the lines. I follow him with Adie and Ian and have some dialogue with them about directions. The boys laugh but Jay shows no emotion. The lines pass by the football game but the boys pay no attention to that.

Adie has attended some dance classes but appears to be losing interest.

Jay has attended basketball training.

Lou continues to hula hoop and skip.

Ian continues to attend no clubs and needs much help from a TA to join in any games.

There is indoor play due to inclement weather. Behaviour is usually positive during indoor play.

Jan 2008

Adie is standing near to the staff and looking at them. He sees Lore. He goes over to her and says something. He starts chasing her around the playground. They are laughing incessantly.

Lou walks around the playground alone. She is flapping her hands.

Lou comes out onto morning play; she is happy and gets a hula hoop and spins. She is skilful and is happy that staff praises her.

Adie is in the corner making a loud cackling noise like a witch. He is looking into the classroom window which I believe is looking at his reflection. He has no interaction with peers. He keeps looking at me. I ask him what he is doing. He proceeds to tell me about Captain Hook.

Ian tries to take a ball from Jay. Jay just gives it to him with no comment. He shows no emotion.

Ian runs off laughing. A TA tells Ian to give the ball back. He starts shouting. The TA comes closer and Ian shouts louder. He is swearing. The TA tells him to stop or he will be sent indoors. He stops but starts to mutter. The TA takes the ball and moves away.

Jay is playing with the basket ball during basketball coaching. He holds the ball and he bounces the ball. As the skills part of the lesson turns to a match, Jay has no interest and shows no emotion.

The Tae Kwondo coach takes some lessons at lunchtime.

Ian attends a game called “Crocodile” The game is a bit like follow my leader. Ian is enjoying the game and laughing but I feel that he has no idea about the rules or objective of the game.

Feb 2008

Adie is running round the playground with a strange gait. He is flapping his arms and laughing. He is looking my way as he goes along. Adie goes up to Lore and asks her if she wants to play cats. They begin to meow and giggle. I go up to them and ask them how you play cats. They say you meow and laugh more. Adie has attended some dance classes but still appears to be losing interest. Jay has attended basketball training again. Jay walks around the lines of the concrete slabs. There is a parachute game nearby and he is looking over to it. Could he be observing the game? Lou attends many games and classes like basketball and dance; she appears to take some enjoyment from this but does not interact with the other pupils at the clubs. The weather is quite sunny and Ian attends some sack races games. He enjoys the race although he is not competitive.

A TA praises him for doing well. He appears to like this and laughs out loud. There are some obstacle course games and javelin practice due to the nice weather. None of the 4 observed children join in.

March 2008

On 6th March Ian is going up to pupils and pushing them on the playground. There is a game of tag rugby but the pushing has nothing to do with that. I ask Ian to stop pushing. He runs off to the field shouting at me.

On the 7th March Jay is encouraged by a TA to join in with a game of “In and out the dusty blue bells”. He has a smile on his face. He does not sing the rhyme although he appears to follow the rules of the game.

Ian is on the playground. He has picked up a skipping rope; he is running around trailing the rope. A TA approaches him and tries to get him to skip. He does not want this and starts to shout at the TA. She tries to distract Ian and asks him to join in with the parachute game which is going on. Ian accepts and joins in the game with her.

Adie is in a corner of the playground. He is talking to himself, looking in the school window at his reflection. I go up to him and ask if I can join in his game. He says yes and I ask how we play? He starts to ask me if I am getting an Easter egg. This seems to be totally out of context.

On 14th March a TA introduces a planned walk in the school grounds. This activity is attended by Jay, Ian and Lou during which they are walking with the other pupils in a calm manner.

Adie is standing by the wall with Lore. They are talking about boyfriends and girlfriends and laughing out loud a lot. They talk about having a wedding and tend to get silly. They are really giddy. Adie starts to flap and have his hands behind his back. Lore is jumping up and down.

Lou is playing with hula hoops. She is happy and wants me to count the number of circles she rotates. She tries to ask me to count and I understand that but her words are quite jumbled up.

On 14th March all the observed pupils attend the dance class and are happy to join in with the structured dance activities. Their involvement with activities appears to be on the increase which is pleasing.

Jay is joining in with a planned circle game. A TA is guiding him. I am not sure that he understands the rules of the game. He shows no emotion.

Jay and Ian have received their first certificates for two extra hours of activity during March.

April 2008

A multi skills coach joins us to extend the lunch time club activities. This is paid for by the sport's partnership.

It is a nice day. Adie and Lore are playing on the grass. They are crawling using feet and hands. They are giggling and talking about batman. Lore shouts, "Look at me I am Batwoman". Adie dances on the spot in excitement.

Ian goes to Tae Kwondo. He is sent out for not following instructions.

The four children statemented with ASC do like to switch off at playtime; however, they are now joining in with activities on a more regular basis. On 10/04/08 the four pupils are encouraged by TAs and join in with a game called "What time is it Mr Wolf?" Adie and Ian are giddy but manage to stay in the game. They run around a little bit like head less chickens and I do not feel that they understand the rules. The same happens again on the 14/04/08 when there is a new game called "Mrs. Barclay." All 4 children in the study do join in with this new game and appear to get some enjoyment out of it. Adie is still flapping and Jay is passive.

Two TAs are turning a skipping rope and Lou is skipping skilfully. She is counting her skips and then it goes wrong as she stumbles on the rope. She is crying and anxious. The TA says “Happy now, Happy now Lou”. This does not work and Lou continues to weep. The TA takes a note book out of her overall pocket and draws the situation for Lou using stick men. Lou smiles and appears to accept that it is an accident and recommences her skipping.

May 2008

Once again, Ian goes to Tae Kwondo training for a few sessions during this month.

The local cricket clubs coaches are visiting to coach quick cricket. All 4 children in the study do join in with the training. They appear to understand the skills part more than the actual game where all of them require extra support from a TA. Adie is shouting to me to look at him as he swings a cricket bat around. He seems to be looking for approval.

There is also football and basketball on offer but the study children do not join in with these games so much.

When Adie becomes anxious at playtimes he is given an iPod to listen to with songs from the musicals playing on it. This appears to calm him when he is being too excitable on the playground.

On 14th May a TA undertakes a planned walk in the school grounds. This activity is attended by Jay, Adie, Ian and Lou during which they are walking with the TAs in a calm manner and they are chatting as they go. Again Adie is looking for approval.

There are some games happening on the grass associated with summer sports, like, sack races, obstacle course multi skills and rounders. Some of the observed pupils join in with some of the sports. Adie cannot grasp the rules of the game of rounders. It is quite amusing to watch his antics. He is laughing to himself but I think it is the anxiety which is making him do this.

June 2008

Ian goes to Tae Kwondo training. He is sent out for shouting. A TA takes a notebook and draws the situation using stick men. Ian is happy with this as stops his shouting. This is a good thing as he would normally receive a white slip for this kind of disruptive behaviour.

There are the usual activities on offer and by this time of the year no new activities are introduced.

The four children statemented with ASC are now joining in with activities on a more regular basis. They do not choose to join in by their choice; usually they are lead to the activity by a TA. These planned playtime activities do not always appear to meet Jay's social needs as observations show me that he prefers to be alone and is comfortable running on the lines. He stops and smiles as I observe him. His gait is awkward as he runs. If another pupils crosses his path it does not make any difference to his passive attitude. He stops but does not show any signs of interaction.

Appendix 4

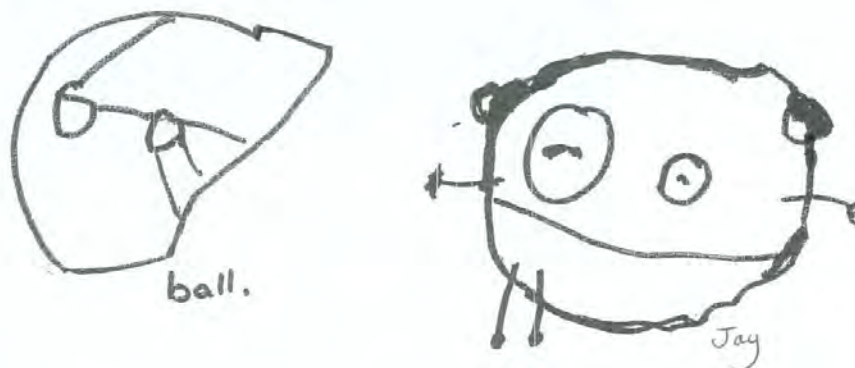
Name Jay

First questionnaire, September 2007.

Question	Response
Have you had a white slip for negative behaviour on the playground? If so why?	No
Do you take part in activities at playtimes?	Yes what? Football who with? Dan anything else? Hoola hoops.
If you do not take part in physical activity at playtimes please tell me why?	Sit
What activities do you like to do at playtimes?	Kicking
Do you think that you should become more	Yes

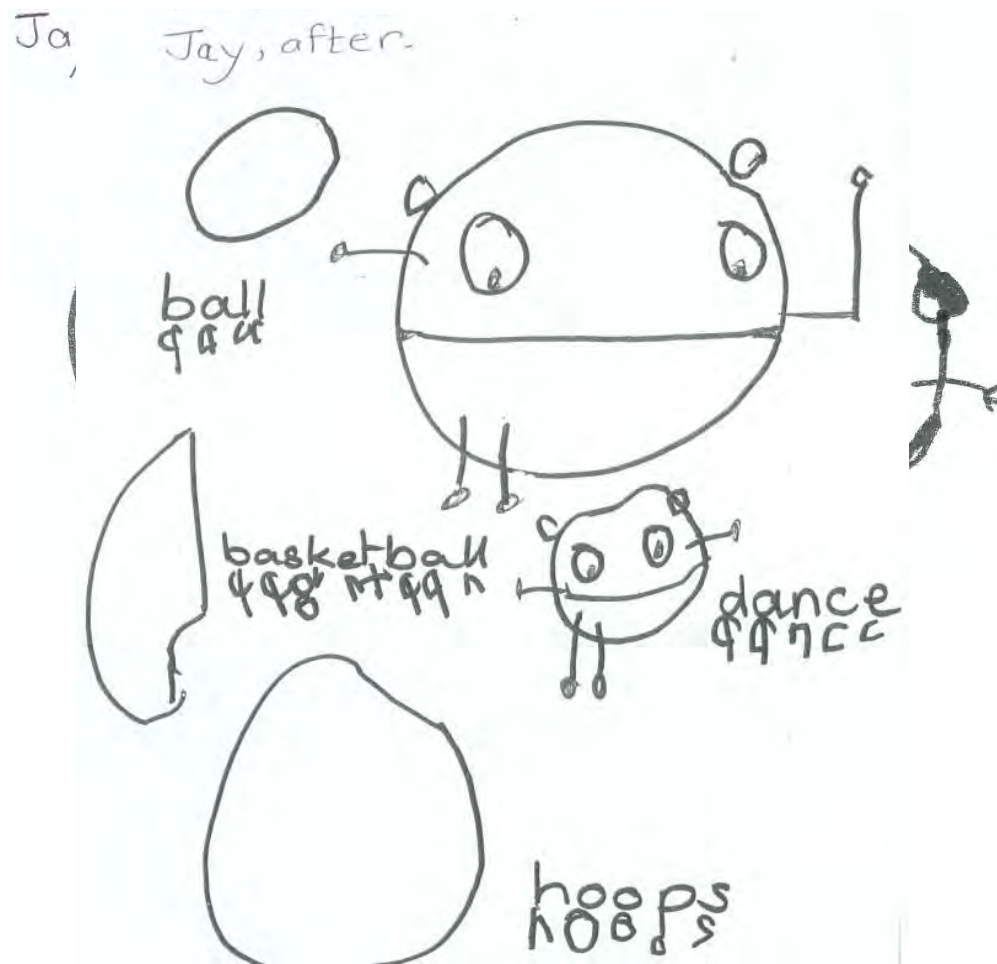
active at school at playtimes?	
What can help you to become more active?	No answer

Can you draw me a picture of you doing activities on the playground?



Contrasting

drawings; Appendix 4 and Appendix 5



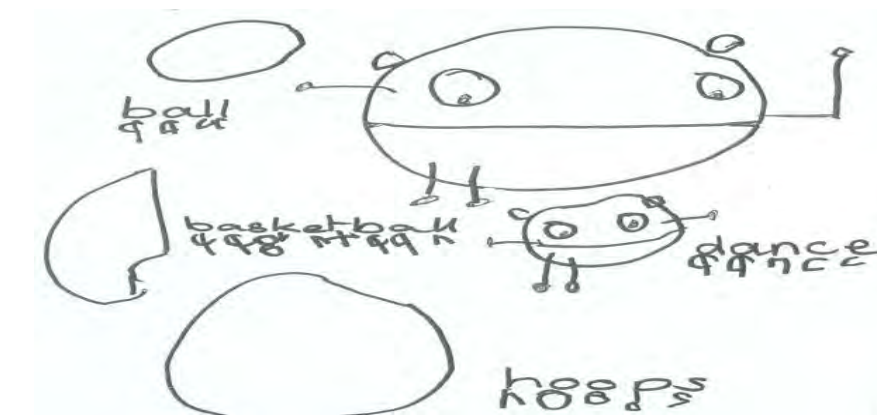
Appendix 5

Name Jay

Second questionnaire, July 2008.

Question	Response
Have you had a white slip for negative behaviour on the playground? If so why?	No
Do you take part in activities at playtimes?	Yes
If you do not take part in physical activity at playtimes please tell me why?	Play
What activities do you like to do at playtimes?	Balls cars hoops dance
Do you think that you should become more active at school at playtimes?	No answer
What can help you to become more active?	No answer

Can you draw me a picture of you doing activities on the playground?



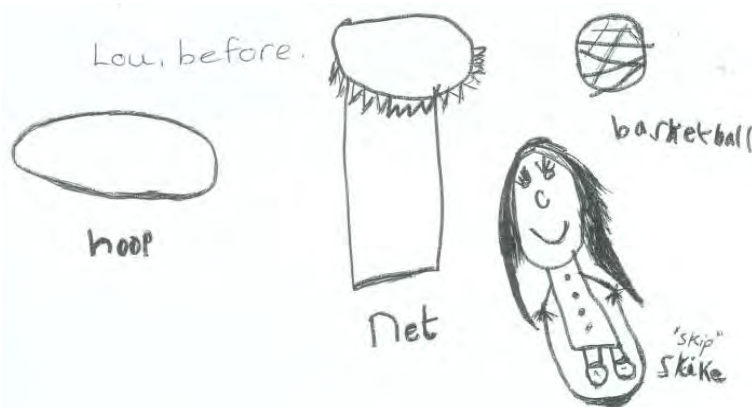
Appendix 6

Name Lou

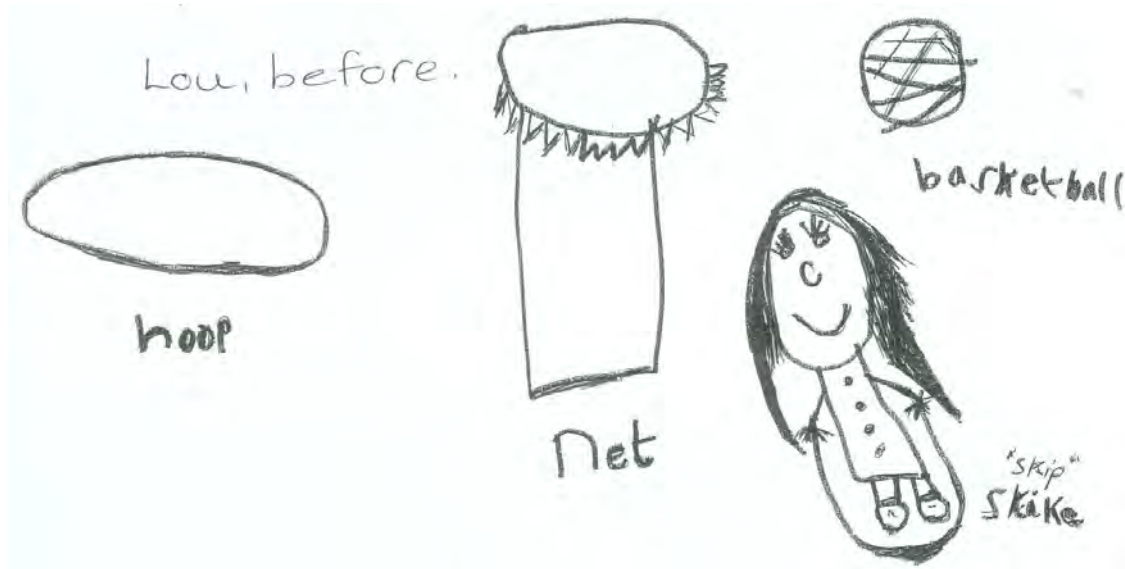
First questionnaire, September 2007.

Question	Response
Have you had a white slip for negative behaviour on the playground? If so why?	No
Do you take part in activities at playtimes?	Yes. Hoola hoops, skipping.
If you do not take part in physical activity at playtimes please tell me why?	No
What activities do you like to do at playtimes?	Hoola hoops, skipping. Basketball.
Do you think that you should become more active at school at playtimes?	DANCING
What can help you to become more active?	No

Can you draw me a picture of you doing activities on the playground?



Contrasting drawings: Appendix 6 and Appendix 7



Low, after



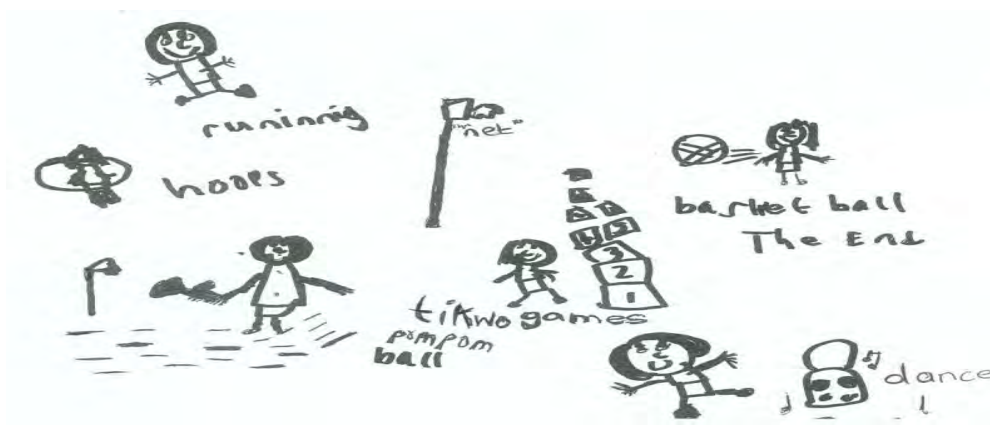
Appendix 7

Name Lou.

Second questionnaire, July 2008.

Question	Response
Have you had a white slip for negative behaviour on the playground? If so why?	No.
Do you take part in activities at playtimes?	Yes; hula-hoops, skipping, basketball, games, dancing.
If you do not take part in physical activity at playtimes please tell me why?	No
What activities do you like to do at playtimes?	Dancing
Do you think that you should become more active at school at playtimes?	Yes.
What can help you to become more active?	No answer.

Can you draw me a picture of you doing activities on the playground?



Appendix 8

Name Adie

First questionnaire, September 2007.

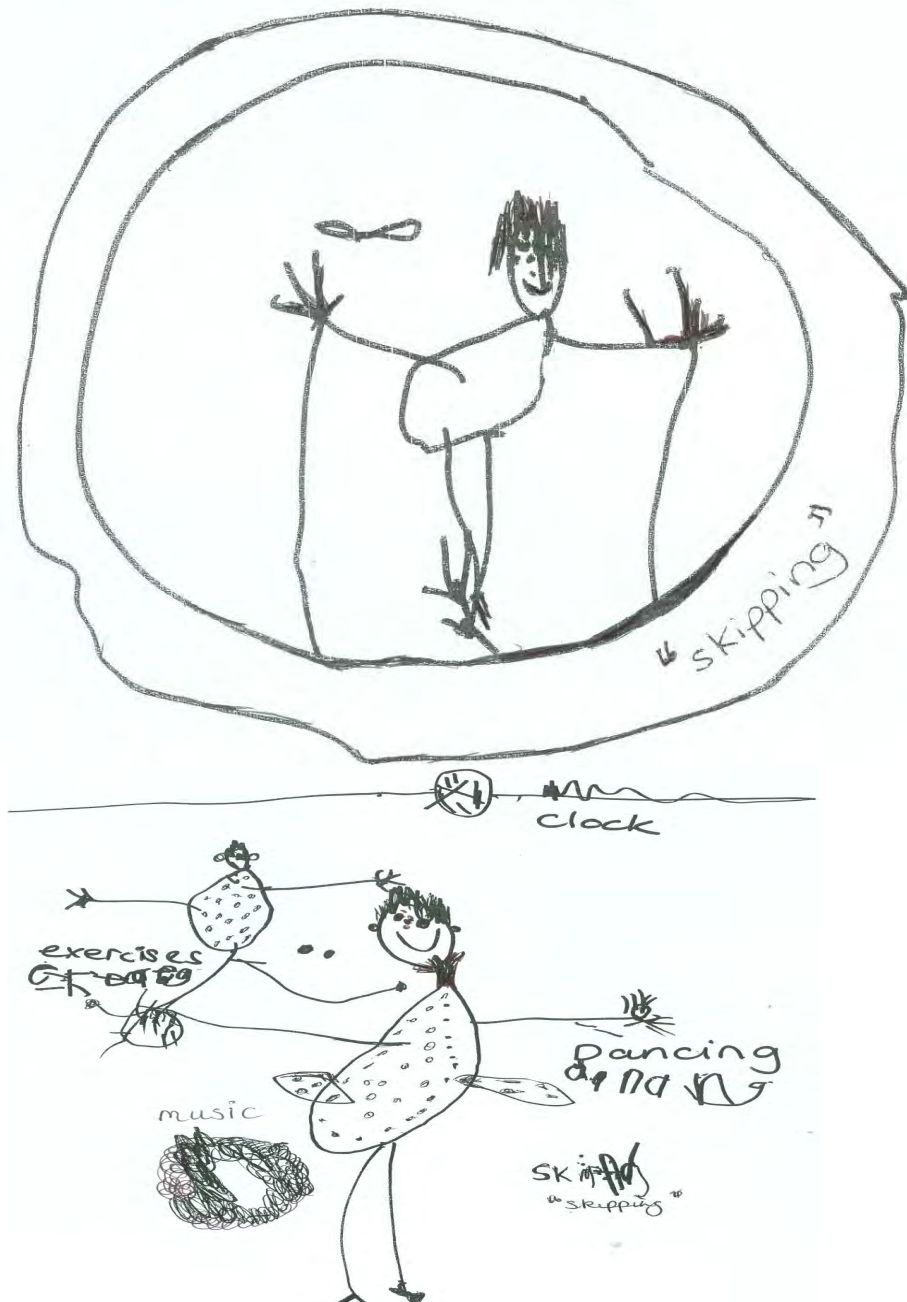
Question	Response
Have you had a white slip for negative behaviour on the playground? If so why?	Yes, I don't know why.
Do you take part in activities at playtimes?	Yes. Skipping.
If you do not take part in physical activity at playtimes please tell me why?	I want to play with my friends.
What activities do you like to do at playtimes?	I like to play snow White and the Wicked Queen with my friends
Do you think that you should become more active at school at playtimes?	Yes
What can help you to become more active?	Skipping

Can you draw me a picture of you doing activities on the playground?



Contrasting drawings: Appendix 8 and Appendix 9

Adie, before .

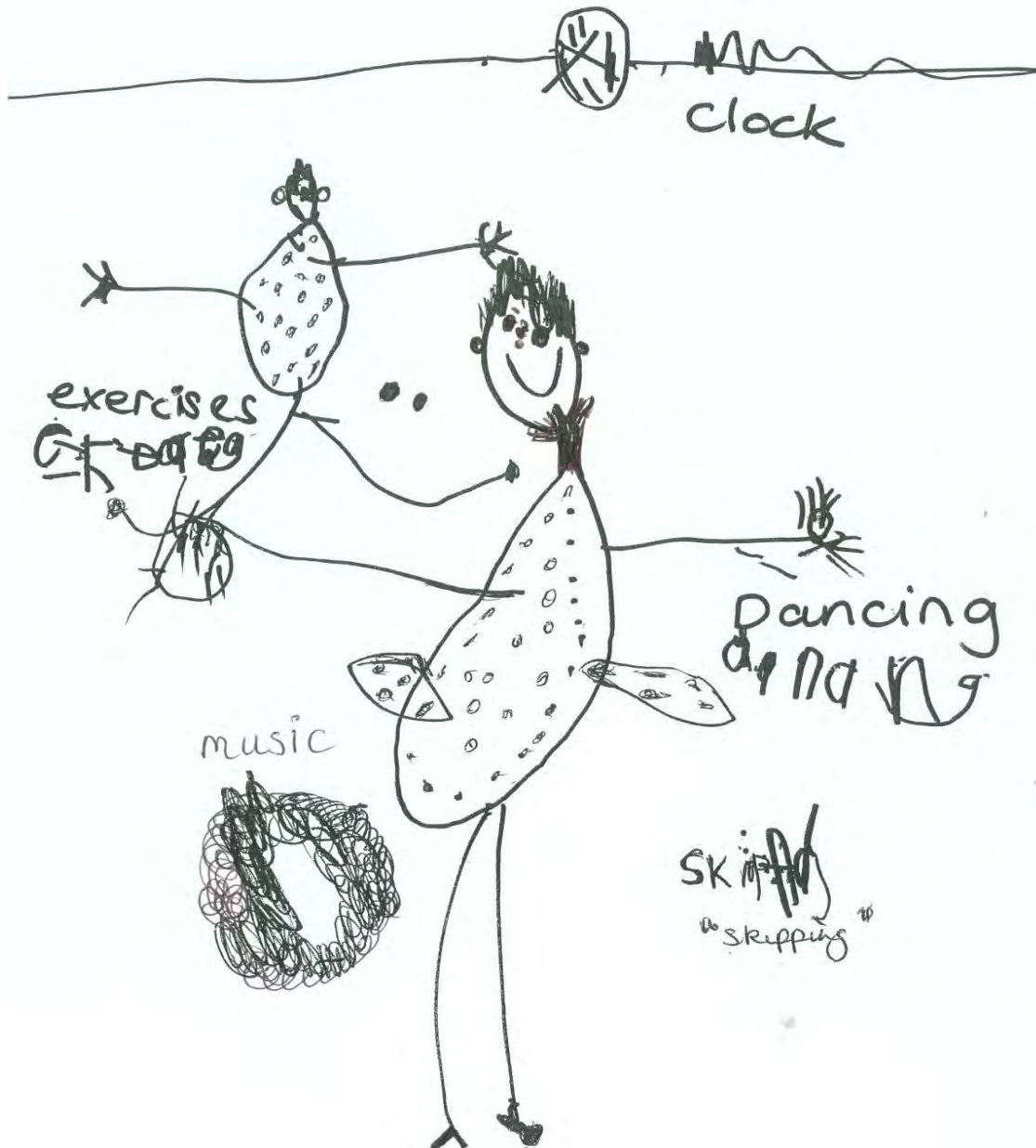


Appendix 9

Name Ailie.

Second questionnaire, July 2008

Ailie, after.



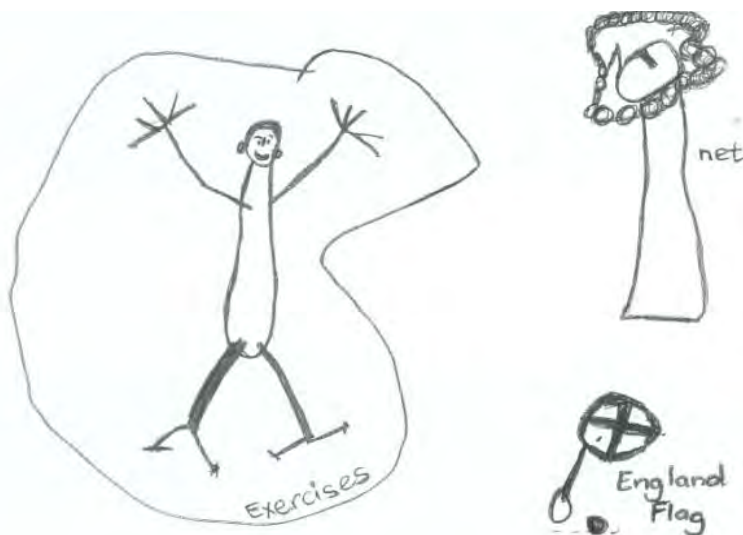
Appendix 10

Name Ian

First questionnaire, September 2007.

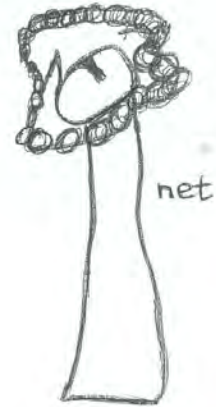
Question	Response
Have you had a white slip for negative behaviour on the playground? If so why?	Yes don't know why
Do you take part in activities at playtimes?	Yes exercises
If you do not take part in physical activity at playtimes please tell me why?	I like to play robbers. I don't like skipping.
What activities do you like to do at playtimes?	Exercises DVD and skipping.
Do you think that you should become more active at school at playtimes?	No
What can help you to become more active?	I don't know.

Can you draw me a picture of you doing activities on the playground?



Contrasting drawings; Appendix 10 and Appendix 11

Ian, before



Ian, after



Appendix 11

Name Ian.

Second questionnaire, July 2008

Question	Response
Have you had a white slip for negative behaviour on the playground? If so why?	Yes. Don't know why.
Do you take part in activities at playtimes?	Yes.
If you do not take part in physical activity at playtimes please tell me why?	Can't
What activities do you like to do at playtimes?	Racing, parachute and kicking
Do you think that you should become more active at school at playtimes?	Yes.
What can help you to become more active?	Yes, got to join in.

Can you draw me a picture of you doing activities on the playground?



APPENDIX 12

NEGATIVE REPORT FORM	Date _____	School - CURRENT DATA Project Behaviour Database	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> FOR OFFICE USE ONLY Date Entered _____ Log No _____ Initials _____ </div>																																																																																			
Name of Pupil _____ Form _____ Member of staff making report: _____																																																																																						
REPORT DETAILS: <i>Please tick ONE category from each of the behaviour, time and location columns and up to TWO from the action column :</i>																																																																																						
<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th>Type of Behaviour</th></tr> <tr><td>Assault - Pupil</td></tr> <tr><td>Assault - Staff</td></tr> <tr><td>Bullying</td></tr> <tr><td>Damage - Property</td></tr> <tr><td>Defiance</td></tr> <tr><td>Disruption</td></tr> <tr><td>Fighting</td></tr> <tr><td>Inappropriate Behaviour</td></tr> <tr><td>Inappropriate Language</td></tr> <tr><td>Insolence - Staff</td></tr> <tr><td>Leaving Classroom W/Out Per</td></tr> <tr><td>Leaving Premises W/Out Permi</td></tr> <tr><td>Punctuality to Lesson</td></tr> <tr><td>Smoking</td></tr> <tr><td>Theft</td></tr> <tr><td>Truancy</td></tr> <tr><td>Verbal Abuse - Staff</td></tr> <tr><td>Verbal Abuse - Student</td></tr> </table>	Type of Behaviour	Assault - Pupil	Assault - Staff	Bullying	Damage - Property	Defiance	Disruption	Fighting	Inappropriate Behaviour	Inappropriate Language	Insolence - Staff	Leaving Classroom W/Out Per	Leaving Premises W/Out Permi	Punctuality to Lesson	Smoking	Theft	Truancy	Verbal Abuse - Staff	Verbal Abuse - Student	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th>Time</th></tr> <tr><td>AM Registration</td></tr> <tr><td>Before School Hours</td></tr> <tr><td>Between Lessons</td></tr> <tr><td>Break AM</td></tr> <tr><td>Dinner Break</td></tr> <tr><td>End of School</td></tr> <tr><td>Lesson1</td></tr> <tr><td>Lesson2</td></tr> <tr><td>Lesson3</td></tr> <tr><td>Lesson4</td></tr> <tr><td>Lesson5</td></tr> <tr><td>Lesson6</td></tr> <tr><td>Lunch Time</td></tr> <tr><td>Transport AM</td></tr> <tr><td>Transport PM</td></tr> </table>	Time	AM Registration	Before School Hours	Between Lessons	Break AM	Dinner Break	End of School	Lesson1	Lesson2	Lesson3	Lesson4	Lesson5	Lesson6	Lunch Time	Transport AM	Transport PM	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th>Location</th></tr> <tr><td>Art</td></tr> <tr><td>Assembly</td></tr> <tr><td>Deputies Office</td></tr> <tr><td>Dinner Hall</td></tr> <tr><td>Drama</td></tr> <tr><td>English</td></tr> <tr><td>Environmental Area</td></tr> <tr><td>French</td></tr> <tr><td>FT Room</td></tr> <tr><td>Games/P.E.</td></tr> <tr><td>Geography</td></tr> <tr><td>Head's Office</td></tr> <tr><td>History</td></tr> <tr><td>I.T.</td></tr> <tr><td>In Corridor</td></tr> <tr><td>Library</td></tr> <tr><td>Lounge</td></tr> <tr><td>Maths</td></tr> <tr><td>Music</td></tr> <tr><td>Playground</td></tr> <tr><td>PSHCE</td></tr> <tr><td>R.E.</td></tr> <tr><td>School Drive</td></tr> <tr><td>School Grounds</td></tr> <tr><td>School Visit</td></tr> <tr><td>Science</td></tr> <tr><td>Swimming</td></tr> <tr><td>Technology</td></tr> <tr><td>Toilets</td></tr> <tr><td>Transport</td></tr> <tr><td>Tutor Base</td></tr> </table>	Location	Art	Assembly	Deputies Office	Dinner Hall	Drama	English	Environmental Area	French	FT Room	Games/P.E.	Geography	Head's Office	History	I.T.	In Corridor	Library	Lounge	Maths	Music	Playground	PSHCE	R.E.	School Drive	School Grounds	School Visit	Science	Swimming	Technology	Toilets	Transport	Tutor Base	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr><th>Action</th></tr> <tr><td>Break Removed</td></tr> <tr><td>Counselling</td></tr> <tr><td>Discussed With Pupil</td></tr> <tr><td>Exclusion</td></tr> <tr><td>Letter Home</td></tr> <tr><td>Loss of Privileges</td></tr> <tr><td>Loss of Visits/Trips</td></tr> <tr><td>Parents informed - Phone</td></tr> <tr><td>Referral to Headteacher</td></tr> <tr><td>Referral to Senior Staff</td></tr> <tr><td>Report Book</td></tr> <tr><td>Reprimand Given</td></tr> <tr><td>Taken Home</td></tr> <tr><td>Withdrawal from Group - Long</td></tr> <tr><td>Withdrawal from Group - Short</td></tr> </table>	Action	Break Removed	Counselling	Discussed With Pupil	Exclusion	Letter Home	Loss of Privileges	Loss of Visits/Trips	Parents informed - Phone	Referral to Headteacher	Referral to Senior Staff	Report Book	Reprimand Given	Taken Home	Withdrawal from Group - Long	Withdrawal from Group - Short
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White behaviour sheet

APPENDIX 13

Pink behaviour sheet

POSITIVE REPORT FORM

Date _____ School - CURRENT DATA _____
Behaviour Database _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
Date Entered _____ Log No _____ Initials _____

Name of Pupil _____ Form _____ Member of staff making report: _____

REPORT DETAILS: Please tick ONE category from each of the behaviour, time and location columns and up to TWO from the action column :

Type of Behaviour	Time	Location	Action
100% Attendance - Term	AM Registration	Art	
100% Attendance - Week	Before School Hours	Assembly	
100% Attendance - Year	Between Lessons	Deputies Office	Academic Trophy
A Bronze Card	Break AM	Dinner Hall	Academic Trophy - Runner Up
B Silver Card	Dinner Break	Drama	Attendance Certificate
Behaviour Award	End of School	English	Bronze Award
C Gold Card	Lesson1	Environmental Area	Certificate
Good Behaviour in Class	Lesson2	French	Class Teachers Award
Good Behaviour in Dining Hall	Lesson3	FT Room	Congratulations Letter
Good Behaviour on Transport	Lesson4	Games/P.E.	Environmental Award
Good Deed	Lesson5	Geography	Gold Award
Good Residential	Lesson6	Head's Office	Headteachers Special Award
Good Work Experience	Lunch Time	History	High Achiever Award
Good Work in Class	Transport AM	I.T.	Kindness Award
High Achiever Green	Transport PM	In Corridor	Letter Home
High Achiever Orange		Library	Mrs _____ Award
High Achiever Pink		Lounge	Ms _____ Award
High Achiever Purple		Maths	Silver Award
High Achiever Red		Music	Special Award
Much Improved		Playground	Special Person Award
Points		PSHCE	Special Person Runner Up Award
Special Report		R.E.	Sports Award
Sports Person		School Drive	Swimming Award
Student of the Week		School Grounds	
Swimmer of the Week		School Visit	
		Science	
		Swimming	
		Technology	
		Toilets	
		Transport	
		Tutor Room	

Member of staff to whom report is being referred (if applicable): _____

APPENDIX 14

Letter to governors

May 2008.

Dear Governors.

I have already spoken to some of the Governors previously about my Doctorate course at Birmingham University which I have been undertaking for five years now. As the school is closing this year I will not be able to collect data for my study any more as doing so would be impossible but also render the study invalid.

Fortunately, I am approaching the time when I need to write the study up and would like to reassure you all that it will be completely ethically checked with anonymity for the school. Should any child be referred in the study their names will be changed and descriptions muted to ensure privacy.

Of course, I will be asking permission to use any observations of any child from their parents.

I have developed and collected registers for 2 years of **Get active** activities on the playground at lower school. This has enhanced P.E. at lower school with many sporting activities on offer for the pupils. Our school has been successful on the **pessc**el (P.E. and school sport) survey which shows involvement with school sport and physical activities because of this. Behaviour on the playground has improved also as the children are involved and active in different ways.

Some of the Teaching Assistants have collaborated with me in this development and have been able to use this work for their own writing on the various courses which they attend thanks to your support.

The Government expects schools to achieve their target of all pupils taking part in two hours of high quality P.E and two hours of high quality School Sport each week which will be raised even higher as we head towards the Olympics in 2012.

I hope that you will continue as a Governing Board to support my research.

Yours sincerely

Sue Endicott

Sue Endicott.

Govs & Parents assure Sue of
their continuing support. All is
much appreciated.



APPENDIX 15

Compilation charts of the involvement in activities

Game	Date	Group 1 pupils	Group 2 pupils	Group 3 pupils	Group 4 pupils	Total who participated
What time is it Mr Wolf?	08/11/06	1	5	0	0	6
Train stations	10/11/06	2	8	5	4	19
Fishing Game	17/11/06	3	6	2	1	12
Tag rugby	20/11/06	0	5	3	3	11
Catch/don't catch	24/11/06	0	3	1	0	4
What time is it Mr Wolf?	27/11/06	2	1	4	2	9
Train stations	01/12/06	1	7	2	0	10
Parachute	08/01/07	4	5	2	5	316
Train game	12/01/07	0	4	0	2	6
Farmer's in his den	15/01/07	1	6	1	0	8
Keep fit DVD	18/01/07	5	3	0	2	10
Tag Rugby	19/01/07	1	5	4	0	10
What time is it Mr Wolf?	22/01/07	4	7	3	0	14
Plastic walking stilts	29/01/07	3	7	0	3	13
Keep fit DVD	01/02/07	1	7	1	6	15
Total number of pupils from each group who participated in planned activities.		28	79	28	28	

APPENDIX 16
A Selection of photographs from the study

APPENDIX 16
A Selection of photographs from the study

S. Endicott
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S. Endicott
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APPENDIX 17

A selection of photographs to show how my practice has been incorporated into my new school.

S. Endicott
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A selection of photographs to show how my practice has been incorporated into my new school.

S. Endicott
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