‘IT’S TIME TO GROW UP’: AN EXPLORATION OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF TRANSITION TO SECONDARY SCHOOL FOR CHILDREN WHO ARE SUBJECT TO CHILD IN NEED AND CHILD PROTECTION PLANS

By

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ABSTRACT

The transition from primary to secondary school marks a significant milestone in a child's life and educational career (West et al., 2010). It is recognised as a potentially difficult time, with the negative academic, social and emotional effects of an unsuccessful transition being widely documented.

Children subject to a Child in Need Plan (CINP) or Child Protection Plan (CPP) are said to experience poorer educational outcomes than most of their peers (DfE, 2019b). However, previous research has failed to explore the lived experiences of primary-secondary school transition, and wider education, from the perspective of these children. Thus, the present study seeks to make a unique contribution to the field, and increase the visibility of this group of children in research, by addressing this gap in transition literature.

The aim of this research was to explore the lived experiences of primary-secondary school transition for five children subject to a CINP or CPP. Semi-structured interviews were conducted and analysed, using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), to explore the children's experiences. Findings suggest that the transition experiences of children on a CINP or CPP are unique, complex and defined by risk, opportunity and challenge. The findings are discussed in relation to the Process-Person-Context-Time model (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) and used to inform suggestions for professional practice and future research.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experience
BPS	British Psychological Society
CINP	Child in Need Plan
CPP	Child Protection Plan
CYP	Children and Young People
DfE	Department of Education
DSL	Designated Safeguarding Lead
EP	Educational Psychologist
FSM	Free School Meals
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LA	Local Authority
CiC	Children in Care
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SES	Social Economic Status
SoB	Sense of Belonging
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Chapter Overview

The research presented is the first volume of a two-part thesis completed as part of the Doctorate in Applied Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Birmingham. This small-scale study uses an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Smith et al., 2009) methodology to explore the experiences of transition from primary to secondary school for five Year 7 students, categorised as 'in need of help and protection' and therefore subject to either a Child in Need Plan (CINP) or Child Protection Plan (CPP).

The aim of this introductory chapter is to offer an overview of the key terminology and research context, followed by the rationale and research aims to establish why this research is important, timely, and relevant.

1.2 Defining Key Terminology

1.2.1 Child in Need and Child Protection

In England, local authority (LA) children's social care teams have a statutory duty to complete assessments of children 'in need of help and protection'. This purpose of the assessment is to determine the nature and extent of possible risk and harm suffered by the child and how the referral should be best responded to. The decision is made based on two categories - whether a child is 'in need of support' (as per Section 17, Children's Act, 1989) or whether a child is 'in need of protection' (as per

Section 47, Children's Act, 1989). These categories are used in guidance specific to England and Wales to refer to a vulnerable group of children and young people (CYP), of which both central, and local, governments have a safeguarding responsibility.

Assessments under the Children's Act (1989) should not only decide whether the CYP is 'in need', but also identify the appropriate services, and additional specialist assessments, that are required. This is a specific requirement outlined within the act and will aid the decision making of social care on the appropriate course of action.

Children on a CINP or CPP could be recognised as a homogenous group, as they share similarities in the categorisation of need. However, children can become subject to these plans for many reasons including (due to) neglect, abuse, domestic violence (DV) and mental health (Department for Education [DFE], 2018). Box 1 offers an overview of definitions for CINP and CPP, as provided within The Children's Act (1989), alongside the statutory and non-statutory roles of LA services.

Box 1: Overview of characteristics of Child in Need and Child Protection Plans

Child in Need Plan (CINP)

As stated in Section 17(1) of The Children's Act (1989), *"it is the general duty of every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within their area who are in need; and so far as is consistent with that duty, to promote the upbringing of such children by their families."* This is achieved by delivering a range and level of services appropriate to the needs of each individual child 'in need' in the area. A CYP is considered 'in need' under the Children's Act 1989 if:

- *"he/she is unlikely to achieve or maintain, or to have the opportunity of*

achieving or maintaining, a reasonable standard of health or development without the provision for him of services by a local authority under this Part;

- *(b) his/her health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision for him of such services; or*
- *(c) he/she is disabled."*

(Section 17(10), Children's Act, 1989)

A CINP is a voluntary process for families and offers CYP and families with additional support beyond what is 'typical' to aid with healthy development. A social worker leads the 'child in need' assessment under The Children's Act (1989) with the aim to identify the needs of the CYP and the parents'/carers' capacity to meet these needs within the context of the wider family and community. In doing so, it is the duty of the LA to seek access to the CYP's wishes and feelings. These must then be considered when planning the appropriate provision of services. The information obtained is used to ensure that the CYP and family are provided with appropriate support to enable them to safeguard and promote the CYP's welfare. The threshold for accessing services on a CINP is lower than a CPP and there is no statutory framework for timescales of identified intervention.

Child Protection Plan (CPP)

A child protection plan (CPP) operates under Section 47 of The Children's Act (189). A Section 46 Enquiry is undertaken with immediate effect when the LA:

- *"(a)are informed that a child who lives, or is found, in their area—*
  - *(i) is the subject of an emergency protection order; or*
  - *(ii) is in police protection;*
- *(b) have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who lives, or is found, in their area is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm"*

(Section 47(1), Children's Act, 1989)

When this is the case, LA enquiries are made to determine whether further action is necessary in order to *"safeguard and promote the child's welfare"* (Section 47(1),

Children's Act, 1989). CPP is a non-voluntary service for CYP and their families. All procedures are outlined using clear and accessible frameworks, which have been set out in statutory guidance and must be followed. Support provided is often intensive.

An initial child protection conference is undertaken whereby professionals collaboratively decide whether the child meets the threshold of Section 47 and requires a CPP. Core group meetings are scheduled every four weeks to discuss progress and the on-going safety of the child, alongside the review of child protection conferences. These conferences are designed to address the relevant information within the current context to determine how best to safeguard the child and promote their welfare.

1.2.2 Transition

Transition in the present context refers to a process that lasts approximately one year in the UK, between the summer terms of Year 6 (Key Stage 2) and Year 7 (Key Stage 3). The majority of children aged 10 or 11 years old leave their primary schools and move to new secondary school environments (Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006). There does not appear to be a universally accepted term to conceptualise the process of moving from primary to secondary school in the literature, with the terms 'transition' and 'transfer' often used interchangeably.

This research does not aim to offer a universal definition of transition, as to do so would run counter to the philosophical foundations of IPA. Rather, it is my belief that there are multiple socially constructed and subjective realities in the way in which children experience primary-secondary school transition. However, for the purposes of the present study, the term 'transition' will refer to the process of change that

occurs when moving from primary to secondary school. The term is not used to describe a ‘one-off event’ or a specific time elapsed, rather the period of transition is viewed subjectively and varies between each individual and context.

1.3. Research Context

1.3.1 National Context

Primary-secondary school transition is said to be one of the most difficult in a child’s educational career (Zeedyk et al., 2003). Across transitions, children are faced with changes in relationships and academic expectations (Anderson et al., 2000). A period of anxiety and apprehension during this time is said to be a normative response. However, these changes can result in a loss of enjoyment and fall in motivation for some children (Sancho and Cline, 2012). In addition, it has been shown that more difficult transitions can lead to negative long-term consequences on mental health (Waters et al., 2012a). It is these transitions that have attracted the attention of educators, researchers and policy makers, across decades, in an attempt to better understand the difficulties children experience and how best to support children through this process.

Previous research has continually stressed the importance of ‘successful transition’ (van Rens et al., 2018; Rice et al., 2011; Evangelou et al., 2008). More specifically, emphasis has been placed on the need for individualised support to enable successful transition, particularly for those considered ‘vulnerable’ (McGee et al., 2003). As a result, extensive efforts have been made to understand the experiences of ‘vulnerable’ children during transition, including children with SEN (McCoy et al.,

2019), children in care (CiC) (Brewin and Statham, 2011) and from socio-economic deprivation (Anderson et al., 2000). Less is known about how children who are subject to a CINP or CPP experience this transition.

Over the last ten years the local, and national, prevalence rates of CYP subject to CINP and CPP have risen (DfE, 2019a; Crenna-Jennings, 2018). However, there is a paucity of research into their educational experiences. The Government acknowledged this deficiency in 2018, and demonstrated their commitment to review the support available for children 'in need'. From this, the DfE (2019b) provided evidence to suggest that these CYP are 'vulnerable' and are more likely to experience poorer educational outcomes throughout school when compared to their peers. Findings also indicated that CYP on a CINP or CPP experience greater disruptions to their education, including more moves between schools than their peers (DfE, 2018a), and are hugely over-represented in school exclusion data (DfE, 2019c).

Whilst it cannot be assumed that all children on a CINP or CPP are 'at risk' during transition, DfE statistics focusing on overall educational experiences indicate that they have an increased susceptibility to risk factors and so may be more 'at risk' during transition than their peers. These risks are also likely to be exacerbated by the process of transition. For example, psychosocial adversity and other known difficulties (i.e. SEN) experienced by a high proportion of these children relate to risk factors and predictors of poorer adjustment to secondary school (Bailey and Baines, 2012; Reyes et al., 2000). Furthermore, based on many of their home experiences, they are also less likely to form trusting relationships with adults and peers, an

essential factor in achieving a secure attachment and SoB in school, thus enabling a successful transition (Stringer and Dunsmuir, 2012). To this end, the importance of smooth and effective transition between phases of education has been stressed (DFE, 2018b).

1.3.2 Local Context

According to the DfE (2019e), the LA in which this research took place had just over 2,100 CYP reported as 'in need of help or protection' (as of 31 March 2019). These figures highlight that there are a high proportion of CYP in the LA who are classified as 'in need' and highly vulnerable. With this in mind, in the LA there is an on-going focus on reducing exclusion and improving outcomes for CYP, with particular attention on 'vulnerable' individuals. As part of this, a multi-disciplinary team has been launched to aid in the prevention of 'at risk' CYP entering the care system, namely those on a CINP or CPP. This service has increased the visibility of these children, enabled a coordinated response to support and focused on removing barriers to positive outcomes within the home and school. The current target group are secondary school students.

1.4. Thesis Rationale

The current research was negotiated between the principal educational psychologist (PEP) within the focus LA and me (as the researcher and TEP). The transition from primary to secondary school has always been of interest to me personally, and professionally. As for many, transition was difficult for me, whereby I experienced an equal combination of anxiety, fear and excitement. Since starting my year two

placement as a TEP, transition became increasingly prevalent to me, particularly amongst vulnerable groups. This exposure has encouraged me to reflect on my own experiences of transition and how influential this period of time was for myself and for many others.

During my placements, I have often identified feelings of anxiety and apprehension in children, staff, and parents/carers, in relation to the child's transition to secondary school. This appeared particularly the case for children known to social care, which interested me further. As I began to explore this during an initial literature search I realised that our understanding of what this experience is like for a child on a CINP or CPP is limited. It appears that much of our understanding of their transition experiences is based on anecdotal evidence, theory and government statistics that suggest primary-secondary transition to be a time of significant challenge.

What also resonated with me was the little acknowledgement and awareness school staff had on children's social care statuses, and their possible implications. Despite this being an unsurprising revelation, given the lack of research into their educational experiences, it made me feel uneasy. This experience led me to question: how can such a significant proportion of children be identified as 'in need' and considered 'vulnerable', yet there has been no research conducted about a significant transition in their life?

This exploratory study sets out to build on the current body of research related to primary-secondary school transition and, crucially recognise and respond to

government-generated statistics into high prevalence rates and negative outcomes of children on a CINP and CPP. As discussed by Rice et al., (2011), it is imperative to address issues surrounding school transition, due to the potential impact a problematic transition may have on a child's longer-term ability to positively adapt to, and succeed at, secondary school.

The primary aim of this research is to gain insight into the experiences of children, and therefore provide a voice for those who have been marginalised in research to date. This research works alongside the priorities outlined in the LA's service development plan, and government agenda to increase the visibility of children on a CINP or CPP. This is the first necessary step to enhancing support and, ultimately, promoting the successful transition and inclusion of children on CINP or CPP.

1.5 Structure of Thesis

Chapter Two offers a critical review of the existing literature relating to primary-secondary transition, and CINP and CPP, in relation to educational experiences and outcomes. Chapter Three outlines the rationale for chosen methodology, research questions and details of the research procedures. Chapter Four contains a critical discussion of the findings addressing each research question, with previous literature provided. Finally, Chapter Five offers conclusions of the research, and implications for future research and practice.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction to the Literature Review

This chapter provides the reader with an overview of current literature relevant to the research context. In the absence of published empirical research examining transition for children subject to a CINP or CPP, a broader critique of the literature is provided. Part One begins by exploring the key areas of primary-secondary transition. As this study involves the exploration of children's experiences, particular focus is given to existing research addressing this theme. Section 2.3.6 will reflect on pupils who are considered, within the literature base, as 'vulnerable' during transition.

Part Two of this chapter will consider existing literature on CINP and CPP, giving consideration to relevant government drives and initiatives, as well as addressing risk factors associated with children on a CINP or CPP and primary-secondary transition. Finally, a chapter summary is provided, concluding with a justification for conducting this research.

2.2 Literature Search Strategy

A search of a range of databases (EBSCO Educational Databases, ProQuest, PsycINFO, Google Scholar) was conducted to identify pertinent research papers, alongside an exploration of key government and policy papers. The University of Birmingham online library facility was utilised iteratively from October 2018 to March 2020 in order to conduct these searches. The 'snowballing' method (Creswell, 2003) and citation searches were also used to identify relevant literature.

The search strategy was broken down into two separate searches. The first search focused on wider primary to secondary school transition literature in an attempt to address the following questions:

- What are the key factors and challenges associated with moving from primary to secondary school?
- What are the experiences of children moving from primary to secondary school?
- What are the wider factors that may contribute to children's experiences of transition?
- What children are most vulnerable during the move from primary to secondary school?

The second search focused on the experiences of transition specifically for children on a CINP or CPP. Broader search terms shown in Table 1 were utilised and these were searched for in the topic of the paper.

Table 1: Expanded search terms

Search Name	**Search Terms**
Primary to secondary school transition	'Primary to secondary school transition', 'secondary school transition', 'primary to secondary school transfer'
Vulnerable groups	'Vulnerab*' 'vulnerable group*', 'at risk'
CINP and CPP	'Child in need', 'child protection', 'CIN*', 'CP*', 'maltreatment', 'ACE*', 'adverse childhood experience*', 'trauma'

An initial search using terms 'child in need', 'child protection', 'CIN*', 'CP*' alongside primary to secondary school transition search terms highlighted in Table 1, yielded no relevant papers. It is possible that this is partly due to CINP and CPP being terms used specifically within the social care system in England and Wales. It is also likely

to be related to the variations in the way in which experiences associated with being subject to a CINP or CPP are defined and conceptualised. With this in mind, to develop the scope of the review, search terms were extended to include adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), trauma and maltreatment. These search terms were chosen following an initial review of findings outlined by the DfE Child in Need Review (DfE, 2019b). As mentioned in Section 1.2.1, government guidance states that children on a CINP or CPP are often subjected to forms of developmental trauma (i.e. neglect, DV, abuse), which can be conceptualised in research in a variety of ways. Therefore, it is likely that defining characteristics of children on a CINP or CPP will overlap with other groups of children such as ACEs. Although it is possible that there are some distinctions between the focus population of children and other groups included (i.e. children exposed to ACEs), a selected number of papers have been included in this chapter as it was understood that the generic issues identified might also have been relevant and transferable to the current context of children on a CINP or CPP transitioning to secondary school in England.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria were identified prior to beginning both searches, but were adapted during the initial phase of the literature review according to the number and relevance of articles generated. Given that transition is an under-researched area in relation to CINP and CPP, international research was included in the literature search. Although I am aware that pupils' experiences of transition to secondary school vary from country to country, it was felt that key international research offered breadth and greater context to an under-researched area.

In a further attempt to contextualise research literature, the decision was made to discard research that was conducted prior to 2000. This was to offer a detailed review of contemporary literature that is more reflective of current policy and practice. Papers were selected for review if they were original articles, peer reviewed and written in English. Research was filtered for relevance of data derived from both quantitative and qualitative studies.

2.3 Part One: Primary to Secondary Transition

The transition from primary to secondary school has been a well-researched area in education both internationally, (for example, Waters et al., 2014a; McGee et al., 2003) and specifically in the United Kingdom (UK) (for example, West et al., 2010; Evangelou et al., 2008). Despite variance in schooling systems and age at transition across countries, similar findings have been consistently reported across international studies.

2.3.1 The Importance of a Successful Transition

Any school transition poses educational and psychological challenges and opportunities (Coffey, 2013). However, primary-secondary transition is recognised as a significant marker in a child's school career (West et al., 2010). For many, it is a smooth process, and a time of new experiences and widening horizons (Cox and Kennedy, 2008), though for others it can be a time of challenge, distress, and confusion (Rae, 2014). Research into the negative effects of transition is extensive and long-standing (Anderson et al., 2000; Galton et al., 1999). Negative transition is said to mark a decline in success, with lasting ramifications on academic attainment,

student engagement, and psychological wellbeing (Rae, 2014; West et al., 2010). In contrast, a positive transition can be a valuable learning experience, supporting children to become more adaptable, confident and resilient when facing future challenges (Crafter and Maunder, 2012). Therefore, with potential for positive or negative outcomes, primary-secondary school transition represents *"an important crossroad for development"* (Aikins et al., 2005, p.42). Thus, it is fundamental that the appropriate support is offered to children during this period to support successful transition.

2.3.1.1 Conceptualising Successful Transition

Existing literature emphasises the psychosocial processes associated with transition, particularly how changes during this process influence a child's resilience, self-esteem and anxiety (Hanewald, 2013; Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008). Research defines a successful transition in a variety of ways, resulting in the absence of a universal definition (Van Rens et al., 2018).

This lack of a clear definition resulted in a large-scale national project entitled 'What Makes a Successful Transition from Primary to Secondary School'. As part of this longitudinal study, Evangelou et al. (2008) adopted a mixed methods design to examine effective practice and highlight risk and protective factors to a successful transition. A factor analysis was conducted on questionnaire data of more than 500 children and families, resulting in the identification of five factors associated with 'successful' transition, outlined in Box 2. It should be noted that the findings reflect the experiences of a sample of children who transitioned to secondary school fifteen years ago. Given the ever-changing educational context within the UK, it is likely the

experiences of children transitioning to secondary school today may differ. However, given the large, representative sample, the triangulation of data across both participant groups and time points, and the use of mixed methods design whereby the qualitative data built upon the quantitative, this study offers a valuable insight into the experiences of transition, and what factors support children to transition successfully.

Box 2: Five factors associated with 'successful transition' (Evangelou et al., 2008, p. ii)

- *Developing new friendships and improving their self esteem and confidence*
- *Having settled in school life that they caused no concerns to their parents*
- *Showing an increasing interest in school and school work*
- *Getting used to their new routines and school organisation with great ease*
- *Experiencing curriculum continuity.*

Evangelou et al. (2008) concluded that transition is understood to be successful when strong communication links exist between schools, children feel supported in their secondary schools, and there is a clear focus on the individual's experience. Jindal-Snape and Miller (2008) echo these findings by reporting how the child's internal attributes, a cohesive and supportive family and support from school, peers and the wider community all have a part to play in successful transition. More recently, Stringer and Dunsmuir (2012) offered a succinct account of findings from existing research and stated that successful transition is promoted by high emotional intelligence, resilience to cope with major stressors, secure attachments, and a sense of belonging (SoB).

2.3.2 Establishing a Sense of Belonging

The majority of researchers agree that successful transition often exists when a child experiences a SoB in their new school (Mowat, 2019; Crafter and Maunder, 2012; Sancho and Cline, 2012; Tobbell, 2003; Anderson et al., 2000). Establishing a SoB is a vital part in supporting students to feel socially and emotionally secure in their new schools (Pratt and George, 2005). When this need is not addressed, the wellbeing of the child can be affected, which may subsequently contribute to poorer academic enjoyment and achievement (Mays et al., 2018).

All humans are said to have a primary psychological need to belong (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), and by meeting this need for belonging, positive social, behavioural and psychological experiences will occur. However, belonging, as a psychological construct, is not well defined within the literature. Equally, there are a number of theoretical models utilised to conceptualise belonging. The quantity of competing, and sometimes complimentary, theoretical models of belongingness could not be fully documented due to the limits of this study. However, a meta-analysis conducted by Allen et al. (2018) found that belonging is most consistently defined within the school context as feeling *"personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the social environment"* (Goodenow and Grady, 1993, p.80). This definition will be used for the purpose of the current research, as it emphasises the various characteristics of school belonging and the influence of wider socio-ecological context within school.

Although differences occur across frameworks when considering factors contributing to a SoB, there is agreement that the need for belonging is constant, and relies on the maintenance of mutually reciprocal relationships. An IPA study by Sancho and Cline (2012) affirmed the fundamental importance of establishing a SoB during transition and argued that teacher and peer support was vital to sustaining this. Trusting and affirmative teacher-child relationships have been recognised in research as a protective factor in fostering a SoB and resilience (Mowat, 2019; Tobbell and O'Donnell, 2013; Rice et al., 2011), whilst positive peer relationships and social networks provide support and connectedness whilst adapting to secondary school (Bagnall et al., 2019; Symonds and Galton, 2014; Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008; Pratt and George, 2005).

Given that a SoB is referred to in much of the transitional literature, it can be assumed that this is a potentially integral feature to any transition package, with the aim of facilitating a smooth transition for students. Belonging will be discussed further in section 2.4.6.3.

2.3.3 Theoretical Framework for Understanding Transition

The aetiology of negative transition for children is likely to be multifaceted and the result of a combination of varying factors. Therefore, no single 'gold standard transition package' can be designed to suit every child. So, acknowledgment of the multiple influences that coincide with a child's attributes is fundamental in ensuring that they receive appropriate support to facilitate a successful transition (Tobbell, 2003).

A number of psychological theories and frameworks have been utilised in existing literature to best conceptualise transition and the factors contributing to an individual's transitional experience. Predominantly, Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Framework and Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural model are most frequently cited within literature as offering a theoretical framework to support with conceptualising the transition process and individual experience (see example, Tobbell, 2003). In addition to this, there is also an acknowledgement of the relevance of change theories on the transition process, such as the Model of Personal Change (Fisher, 2012; Fisher and Savage, 1999).

Although Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural model considers the importance of understanding transition within the broader social and cultural context (Crafter and Maunder, 2012), there is little acknowledgment of how the individual influences the systems within which they are placed. Rather, Bronfenbrenner's bioecological model provides a multi-dimensional approach to understanding individual experience of transition through interactions with the nested layers of their environment, as well as taking into account personal, interpersonal and environmental factors. This approach can help map unique factors that enable some children to thrive during transition, while others experience greater challenges.

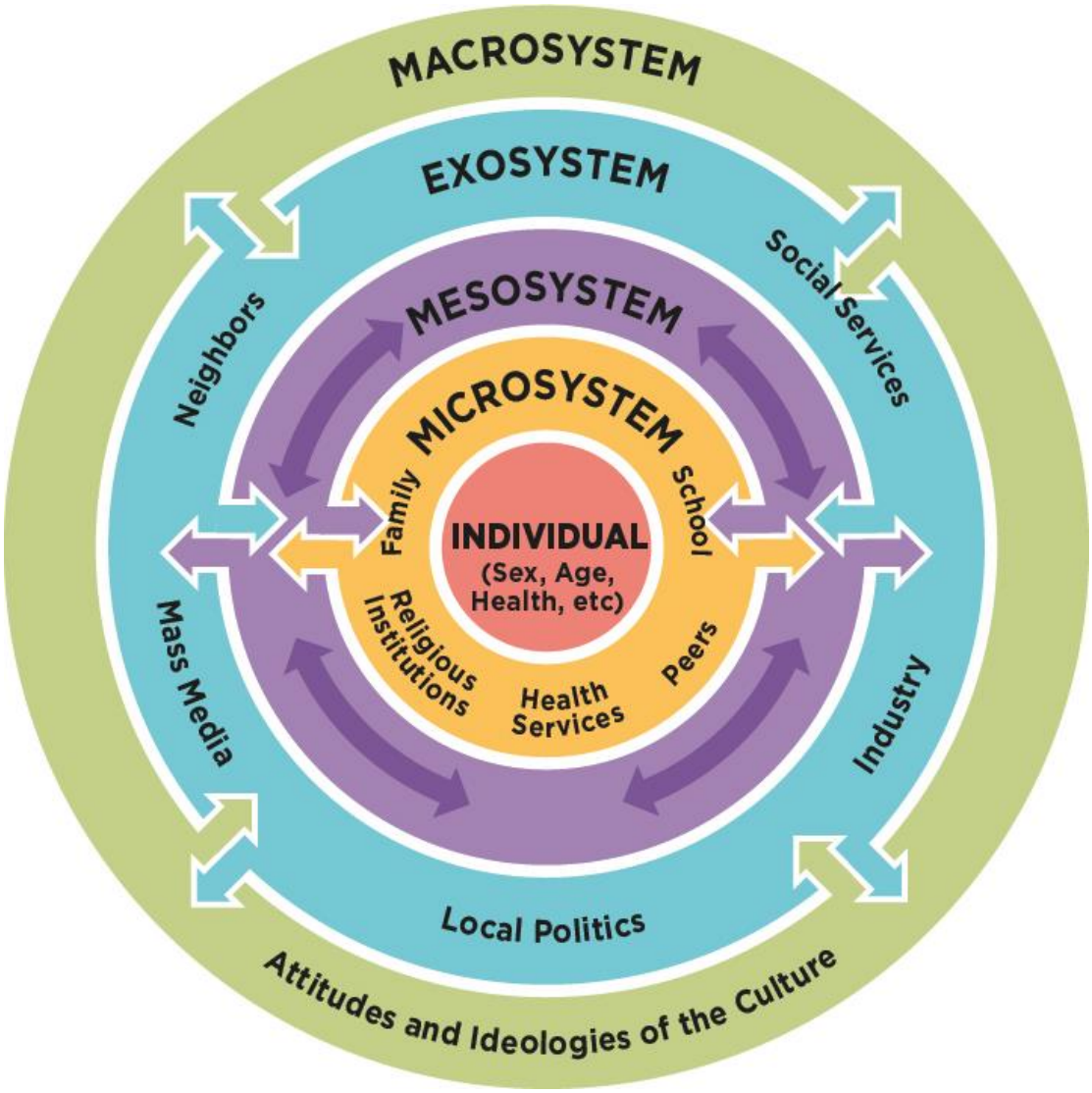
In summary, although other frameworks can be used interchangeably, it was decided that Bronfenbrenner's (2005) Process-Person-Context-Time (PPCT) model of development was best suited within the context of the current research. It offers a clear and holistic way for considering the interaction between individual

characteristics and wider systemic factors during the transition process, whilst complementing the exploratory nature of the research.

2.3.3.1 PPCT Model

The ecological systems model, first proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1979), presents a child's development within the context of relationship systems that exist in their environment. Within this theoretical framework, transition is viewed as an ecological concept comprising of nested structures, with the child sitting at the heart of interacting and interrelated systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) (Figure 1). Each level is thought to contain risk and protective factors that both directly (child's relationship with their parents, teachers, peers) and indirectly (educational policies and practices) influence the child's experience of transition. These are known as proximal and distal factors. It is understood that any exploration of a child's transition experience should consider the influence of varying multi-level systems (Tilleczek and Ferguson, 2007).

Figure 1: Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model of Development (1979)



The systems are defined as:

- The *microsystem* is the layer immediately surrounding the child, and encompasses the relationships that exist within the child's immediate environment i.e. family in the home, and peers/teachers in school.
- The *mesosystem* refers to the connections that occur within two or more microsystems i.e. the relationship between a child's school and their parents. As with any ecological transition, there are disruptions to the child's microsystems and the network of relationships that exist amongst them when a

child transitions to secondary school.

- The *exosystem* describes the external environments that affect and influence the individual child indirectly. For example, changes to social care services, parents' socioeconomic status, and the wider school context.
- The *macrosystem* refers to the influences of wider societal and cultural factors on a CYP's life. For example, cultural patterns and values, and political and economic systems. Changes within this system will influence interactions in the other layers.

Bronfenbrenner's theory evolved, after his early model was criticised for overlooking the individual's influence in his/her own development, and an over-emphasis placed on context (Bronfenbrenner, 1989). The chronosystem was proposed later by Bronfenbrenner (1986), which acknowledges the significance of the timing of events and the influences of changes that occur over time in a CYP's life. When applying the dimension of time to transition, these events can be external (environmental) changes, such as the move from primary to secondary school, or internal, physiological changes associated with progressing into adolescence. Bronfenbrenner further revised his model, with the most up-to-date being referred to as the PPCT model of human development (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

The PPCT model further emphasised the influential nature of a variety of factors in shaping human development. These include the attributes of the active developing CYP, the proximal relationships that exist within the CYP's immediate environment, factors in the CYP's distal environment and the spatial and temporal broader context. Key features of the PPCT model are outlined in Box 3. When adopting the PPCT

model, there must be a clear focus on 'proximal processes', considering the influence of individual characteristics, and the context in which they occur (Tudge et al., 2009).

Box 3: Key elements of the PPCT model of human development

Process: A key principle of the PPCT model is that children develop through the reciprocal interactions that exist between the child and a *"person, objects or symbols in its immediate external environment"* (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, p. 620). In simpler terms, these are known as 'proximal processes'. It was Bronfenbrenner's belief that these 'proximal processes' are *"the engines of development"* (Bronfenbrenner and Evans, 2000, p. 118). It is the microsystem that gives prominence to the 'proximal processes' in the child's immediate environment. The influence of these processes on developmental outcomes is said to depend on the characteristics of each *person,* the environmental *contexts*, and the *time* that these processes take place (Bronfenbrenner and Evans, 2000). However, Bronfenbrenner argued that in order to be effective, these interactions must occur frequently over an extensive period of time (Bronfenbrenner, 1995). Parent-child, teacher-child or peer interactions are examples of proximal processes for children during the period of transition. These defining properties will now be discussed in turn.

Person: This considers how individual characteristics influence proximal processes and interactions. Therefore, in contrast to Bronfenbrenner's original ecological model (1979), each CYP is recognised as an active participant who has the ability to influence his/her own development. Three types of *person* characteristics were highlighted as most influential to proximal processes, and thus future development (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006):

- *Resources:* Resources that allow for the effective functioning of 'proximal processes' such as ability, experience, knowledge, and skill.
- *Demand:* Characteristics that are immediately recognisable to another person. For example, age, gender and physical appearance, all of which inevitably influence initial interactions due to the preconceptions, expectations and attitudes held by individuals.

- *Dispositions:* Differences in motivation, temperament and persistence, all of which can be influential to the operation of 'proximal processes'. *Developmentally generative characteristics* include curiosity; tendency to initiate and engage in activity independently or with others; and *"readiness to defer immediate gratification to pursue long-term goals"* (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006, pp. 810). Contrastingly, *developmentally disruptive dispositions* include impulsivity; aggression; difficulties with emotional regulation; feelings of insecurity; withdrawal; and apathy.

Context: The context of human development, as depicted in Figure 1, is based on the interrelated systems outlined in Bronfenbrenner's original ecological models. In the meso-, exo- and macro- systems, factors exist which can support, or hinder, the development of 'proximal processes' in the child's microsystem. It is also believed that 'proximal processes' mediate contextual influences. Central to this concept is that the individual exists within and across complex interrelated and interconnected systems, in which 'proximal processes' take place. Therefore, this dimension highlights the necessity to investigate which environmental conditions are supportive to CYP.

Time: The dimension of 'time' relates to the changes that occur over time and relate directly to both the *person* and *context*. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) indicate that the nature of 'proximal processes' is strongly influenced by the *"social continuities and changes occurring over time through the life course and the historical period during which the person has lived"* (ibid, p. 798). The dimension of time is prominent at three levels of the bioecological model:

- *Micro-time:* the continuity versus discontinuity of relationships within the microsystem. During transition this could refer to the disruption of relationships with primary school staff and peers as the child moves to their new school;
- *Meso-time:* extent to which interactions occur consistently (across broader intervals, such as days/weeks); and
- *Macro-time:* similar to the chronosystem, focusing on the influence on

the changing expectations and events in society both within and across generations.

This theoretical model has been used to frame educational transition and better understand the factors that contribute to a negative transition (Mowat, 2019; Brewin and Statham, 2011; Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006). By adopting a bioecological lens, recognition is placed on the importance of relationships (proximal processes), which has been emphasised as a crucial protective factor to supporting transition (Mowat, 2019). Children, their families and schools, are all also recognised as active collaborators in the transition process. This holistic approach removes sole emphasis from the school setting, and allows each collaborative partner to identify their influence and gain further insight into factors that influence experiences of transition. In doing so, specific guidance can be produced, detailing how partners can support children during transition.

2.3.4 Challenges Faced During Transition

Despite many children experiencing a successful transition, a UK large scale, longitudinal study conducted by West et al. (2010) found that a quarter of children reported the transition experience as very difficult to cope with. Identifying what causes these challenges can be difficult, due to the complexity of the issues. However, difficulties that are likely to inhibit successful transition may be due to a number of coinciding changes that are seemingly out of the child's control (Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008). Transition is often seen as a developmental process, involving changes in the school context and social environment (Van Rens et al.,

2019; Sirsch, 2003). The major ecological shift places demands on a child's social, intellectual and organisational capacities (Bunn and Boesley, 2019; Coffey, 2013).

Exposure to changing academic structures and expectations, in a larger school environment, relies upon children's ability to quickly adjust and learn how to act and respond appropriately (Coffey, 2013; Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008). Greater academic challenges, as well as an increase in numbers of teachers and workload, have also been cited by Coffey (2013) and Jindal-Snape and Foggie (2008) as creating discontinuity and less predictability for students. The greater the discontinuity, the greater the challenge for children to successfully adjust, leading to higher levels of support needed to aid a positive transition (Anderson et al., 2000). In addition, fewer personal relationships with teaching staff and greater diversity of the student population are said to contribute to complex challenges with social relationships (Tobbell, 2003). The following adjustments coincide with a time when children must cope with the loss of familiar teachers and peers, and establish new relationships (Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008). Thus, the process of change incorporates both loss and gain (Stringer and Dunsmuir, 2012).

These challenges can lead to a decline in children's academic attainment and motivation (West et al., 2010; Evangelou et al., 2008). A number of possible assumptions for this 'Year 7 dip' have been referenced in the current literature, though a causal link between transition and the initial 'dip' is not yet established (West et al., 2010). For example, Tobbell (2003) questions how conducive the structure and organisation of secondary school environments are for forming

effective learning relationships. Additionally, the differences between primary and secondary learning styles may also be accountable for some academic challenges faced during transition (Coffey, 2013; Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006; Anderson et al., 2000).

Similar to Evangelou et al. (2008), consideration should be given to the time that has surpassed from when data was first collected in West et al.'s (2010) study. Data included in this study derived from the *West of Scotland 11 to 16 Study*, a longitudinal study of children who transitioned to secondary school in Glasgow over 25 years ago. However, the findings were discussed in relation to more contemporary research that had reported similar experiences and challenges faced by children, with the updated research paper published in 2010. Furthermore, given the reliability of the measures and the representative sample, this study offers a detailed example of how children experience primary-secondary school transition and the long-term effects this experience can have upon their well-being and attainment.

2.3.5 Children's Experiences of Transition

Research consistently indicates that the majority of pupils making the transition to secondary school experience some degree of anxiety (West et al., 2010). Despite pre-transition anxieties, most children are able to adjust relatively quickly and experience few negative consequences, with their anxieties dissipating during the first term of Year 7 (Bloyce and Fredrickson, 2012; Rice et al., 2011). However, for those who feel anxious and overwhelmed by transition, it is possible that this

experience may have detrimental long-term consequences to their psychological, social, emotional and cognitive development (West et al., 2010; Ashton, 2008). For example, Rice et al. (2011) found that children presenting with high levels of anxiety prior to transition reported a lack of trust and respect for their new teachers, and overall reduced liking of secondary school.

Literature exploring the anxieties of children prior to transition highlights concerns, which are reflective of the contextual and social shifts identified above. Children can view transition as both a challenge and a threat (Sirsch, 2003), and report mixed feelings regarding the move. For example, they can look forward to meeting new people and making new friends whilst feeling worried at the prospect of bullying (Zeedyk et al., 2003), older peers (Rice et al., 2011), or getting lost in a large and unfamiliar building (Ashton, 2008; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008; Pratt and George, 2005).

Discrepancies in children's reported anxieties and experiences of transition have been acknowledged, possibly due to methodological inconsistencies across studies. However, bullying, worry about getting lost, homework and management of workload have all been found in existing literature to be of significant concern for children both pre and post transition (Rice et al., 2015; West et al., 2010; Ashton, 2008; Evangelou et al., 2008; Zeedyk et al., 2003). It has also been reported in research that children's concerns and view of their experience alter at the different points of the transition process (Zeedyk et al., 2003), with these findings remaining consistent across decades (Mellor and Delamont, 2011).

Primary-secondary transition coincides with developmental changes, including both biological and hormonal, that occur as a child begins puberty and develops into adolescence (Hanewald, 2013; Blakemore and Frith, 2005). When considering transition in relation to development, fostering a SoB and connectedness is fundamental during adolescence when children are faced with challenges related to identity, competence, self-esteem and social support (Symonds, 2015). At a time when children are longing for independence from their parents, peer relationships often take precedence (Coffey, 2013; Topping, 2011). It is therefore unsurprising that 'fitting in,' and making new friends are consistently prioritised by children prior to, during and after transition (Strand, 2019; Zeedyk et al., 2003). Evangelou et al. (2008) and Ashton (2008) cited worrying about making new friends to be associated with a negative transition experience, whilst concerns regarding bullying appear to outweigh any academic concerns in children both prior to and after transition (Symonds, 2015; Topping, 2011; West et al., 2010).

Transition can create ruptures in existing 'proximal processes' (e.g., friendships) as children move to different schools and/or classes, or even form new interests and identities (Weller, 2007). This is likely to elicit a sense of loss in many children, as they leave friends behind and begin to establish new social circles (Bagnall et al., 2019). Missing old friends, making new friends and not feeling part of a social group are said to be factors that elicit stress and anxiety in children (Topping, 2011; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008). Therefore, transition is said to be more successful when a child adjusts well socially and can form positive, high quality friendships quickly (Curson et al., 2019; Strand, 2019; Sirsch, 2003). These relationships also act as a

predictor of increased confidence and positive wellbeing (Brewin and Statham, 2011), though often overlooked and underestimated as a protective factor by school staff (Ashton, 2008). Equally, having a sibling or friend attend their secondary school significantly aided in reducing children's anxiety pre-transition and ability to adjust post-transition (Bagnall et al., 2019; Curson et al., 2019; Topping, 2011; West et al., 2010). Despite prominent concerns related to maintaining friendships frequently raised prior and during transition, children often rely on peer relationships as a support mechanism to aid with school adjustment (Weller, 2007).

Threats to status and identity can emerge when relationships are disrupted during transition (Mowat, 2019; Coffey, 2013; Topping, 2011). When a child transitions to secondary school and becomes part of a new context, new role expectations are placed on them, which brings with it changes to a child's identity and agency (Osborn et al., 2006; Lucey and Reay, 2000). Many researchers draw attention to the shift that occurs in a child's social position during transition, which appears to create confusion for children who feel they have outgrown their primary schools and are ready to move on (Mellor and Delamont, 2011; Graham and Hill, 2003), though report feeling overwhelmed by the increased responsibility and expectations of the secondary school environment (Tobbell, 2003).

2.3.5.1 Methodological Issues with Existing Literature

As previously highlighted, although there are some similarities in findings across existing international research, many authors have raised methodological limitations due to the lack of consistency with regards to children's experiences of transition

(see Bagnall et al., 2019; West et al., 2010). Small sample sizes and lack of longitudinal follow up have been suggested as possible reasons for a lack of consistency in research outcomes (West et al., 2010; Galton et al., 2000). Therefore, the findings of existing studies should be considered with caution in light of the variance in sample sizes across different pupil population, research methodologies used, data collection points, and the way in which school adjustment is conceptualised, measured and understood.

A significant proportion of the existing research appears to be positioned within a positivist epistemological paradigm, with a general reliance on quantitative survey-based designs (for example, Rice et al., 2015; Zeedyk et al., 2003). Other positivist designs, whereby participants are allocated to a control or a 'treatment' group, using a repeated measures methodology are also frequently adopted in transition research (for example, Bloyce and Frederickson, 2012; Rice et al., 2011). Whilst the general reliance on quantitative methods is not necessarily considered a limitation of the existing literature, the use of qualitative methods allows for a more in-depth insight into each individual's experiences of transition, which is imperative when school adjustment is recognised to be dependent on individual and environmental characteristics. As highlighted in the limitations of Zeedyk et al.'s (2003) study, this cannot be obtained when studies are solely reliant on quantitative data, ascertained through surveys or questionnaires.

However, also worthy of consideration is that Curson et al. (2019) and Sancho and Cline (2012) studies, whilst in-depth and informative, were based on a small sample

size (n=9 and n=10 respectively) and therefore the unique experience of participants may not be generalizable. Coffey (2013) was also vague with regard to reporting the number of participants who took part in the interviews following data collected via surveys. This means that the sample size for the qualitative data is unclear, and makes it difficult for any conclusions to be drawn with confidence.

Rather than adopting focus groups or interviews as their data collection method, Ashton (2008) chose to use unstructured and non-standardised classroom activities to collect data, which is likely to negatively affect the reliability of the findings. Additionally, the qualitative data was collected prior to transition (summer term of Year 6) and as a result, could not have captured the experience of transition in its entirety.

Finally, limitations were also considered in relation to other influential studies such as Evangelou et al. (2008), who employed biased participant selection within their longitudinal research, whereby participants were only asked to participate in the interviews if they had reported a positive transition experience in their survey data. This means that the data cannot be generalised to all children transitioning to secondary school.

2.3.6 Transition and 'Vulnerable Groups'

It is consistently acknowledged throughout the literature that some children are more vulnerable than others during transition (Symonds, 2015; Bloyce and Frederickson, 2012; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008). For 'vulnerable students,' navigating this

experience is likely to pose a greater risk and additional challenges for a variety of reasons related to their vulnerabilities. Socio-demographic and environmental factors are said to create challenges for children during this time. Children who are eligible for free school meals (FSM) (Bloyce and Frederickson, 2012), ethnic minority students (Symonds, 2015) and those from one-parent families (West et al., 2010) are all recognised as likely to be vulnerable during transition. An association between children from families with low socio-economic status (SES) and negative primary-secondary transition has also been reported (West et al., 2010; Evangelou et al., 2008; Anderson et al., 2000).

Other groups that have been identified as 'vulnerable' in research are those with Special Educational Needs (SEN) (i.e. McCoy et al., 2019; Bailey and Baines, 2012; West et al., 2010); specifically those with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC) (Makin et al., 2017; Dann, 2011); and children in care (CiC) (Brewin and Statham, 2011). However, findings from Brewin and Statham (2011) indicate that there are no single factors identified as supporting or hindering CiC during transition. Rather, multiple factors play a key role in supporting CiC.

Bailey and Baines (2012) describe vulnerability during transition as a *"complex phenomenon"* (p.61) so, when categorising children into vulnerable groups, sufficient account must be taken of how each individual experiences and interprets the world, with consideration of risk and protective factors and how they interact and mediate their experiences (Mowat, 2015). Factors influencing vulnerability often include the child's internal attributes and existing personal resources, as well as family, peer and

schools systems and support (Tilleczek and Ferguson, 2007; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008), further supporting the decision to utilise Bronfenbrenner's (2005) PPCT framework. Risk and protective factors associated with transition have been referenced throughout this chapter.

In addition to the methodological issues noted in Section 2.3.5.1, it is important to note that despite a significant focus within the existing research literature on school transition, less attention has been paid to specific pupil sub-groups. Rather, the existing literature adopts a broader approach, focusing primarily on the general population of pupils transitioning to secondary school (Barnes-Holmes et al., 2013). As a result, West et al. (2008) and McGee et al. (2003) concluded that it is difficult to draw systematic comparisons across pupil sub-groups, resulting in the existing evidence base remaining incomplete. There therefore appears to be a justifiable rationale for conducting research which focuses upon, and illuminates the lived experiences of vulnerable sub-groups of children during their transition to secondary school.

As presented, the small proportion of existing research focusing on pupil sub-groups has identified difficulties and barriers to successful transition. However, there were methodological limitations to these studies. Brewin and Statham (2011) considered that the strength of their study derived from its triangulation of data from key stakeholders (children, key staff in school, carers). However, including so many voices across two data collection points may have resulted an in depth analysis for each group being sacrificed for breadth of data. Not only this, there appear to be a

lack of clarity in relation to the epistemological position of the research and the analytic process. Despite this, the research offers a unique perspective of transition for CiC, with implications for practice clearly outlined.

2.3.7 Support: What Works?

Evidence-based guidance into best practice for transition has been offered in research over the years, to minimise challenges and improve the transition experiences of children. These often combine high levels of family, teacher and peer support as sources of resilience, to shield children from potential unfavourable effects of a negative transition (Curson et al., 2019; Symonds, 2015; Waters et al., 2014b; Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008). The main aim of universal approaches is to reduce anxiety and avoid a 'dip' in academic attainment (Galton et al., 2000).

Despite significant attention in the literature, there remains a paucity of national statutory guidance and legislation as to the expectation of schools to facilitate positive transition experiences for pupils. As a result, the challenges associated with transition in the UK remain similar to those discussed over the last 50 years (Galton and McLellan, 2018; Mellor and Delamont, 2011). An Ofsted report published in 2015 titled 'Key Stage 3: the wasted years?' criticises the work of secondary schools and their 'poor handling' of transition, with particular reference to their lack of communication with partner primary schools. Claims were also made that secondary schools were placing too much emphasis on boosting student attainment at KS4, at the detriment of quality teaching and learning in KS3. Therefore, understanding children's experiences of transition, whilst considering the broader context of home

and school environments, is essential to ensuring the coordination of appropriate transitional support, particularly for those considered ‘at risk’ or ‘vulnerable’.

2.3.8 Importance of Pupil Voice in Transition Research

The importance of providing children with the opportunity to voice and share their views is consistently highlighted throughout current policy and practice, particularly the Children’s Act 1989, and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UN, 1989). The SEND Code of Practice (CoP) (2015) and the Children and Families Act (CFA) (2014) further reinforce these principles by placing CYP in the centre of provision, whilst promoting their participation in the development of their own educational provision.

Despite a large body of research existing in the area of primary-secondary transition, a focus on children’s experiences of transition makes up a surprisingly small quantity (McLellan and Galton, 2015). Equally, the majority of research adopts a quantitative approach to data collection and analysis. Qualitative approaches enable the researcher to access the child’s voice and understand their experiences of transition from their own perspective (Creswell, 2003). In their systematic review, Van Rens et al. (2018) highlighted the absence of direct consultation with children as a deficit in the field, and emphasised the benefits of using children’s testimonies to develop strategies relevant to their transition processes. A year later, Van Rens et al. (2019) further emphasised this point by stating that in transition literature, “*conclusions appear to be based predominantly on reports about children, rather than on what children themselves say about their individual experiences”* (p.107).

In practice, Ofsted (2010) emphasised the importance of listening to the views of children in relation to their transition to appropriately inform supporting professionals and develop individualised intervention plans. A DCSF (2008) report found that children had different experiences of primary school support during transition than stakeholders expected (Evangelou et al., 2008). To this end, it is important to explore children's experiences and perceptions of support they receive during transition to ensure that it is appropriate and useful.

2.3.9 Section Summary

This section has outlined some of the key literature pertaining to primary-secondary school transition. Consideration was given to the reasons why transition is considered to be significant, whilst addressing the various challenges faced by children as they navigate through the transition process. The importance of considering risk and protective factors has been illuminated and Bronfenbrenner's PPCT model of development (2005) was discussed as an overarching theoretical framework to draw upon to support with the identification of factors. An exploration of children's experiences of transition highlighted the importance of eliciting pupil voice in general transition literature providing a justifiable rationale for employing an IPA methodology to the current research.

2.4 Part Two: Child in Need and Child Protection

According to figures produced by the DfE, at least 1.6 million CYP nationally required access and support from a social worker at some point between 2012-2018 (DfE, 2019b). This is equivalent to around one in ten children in England (DfE, 2019d). The majority of these children are not classified as 'CiC', but rather considered to be facing adversity in families, lacking the safety and stability that most experience. These children, who can also be referred to as children 'on the edge of care', are on a CINP or a CPP.

As detailed in Chapter One, within The Children's Act (1989), Child in Need (section 17) and Child Protection (section 47) are categories used for CYP who are deemed unlikely to achieve or maintain reasonable health or development without the provision of LA services. As such, they receive statutory social care involvement, in the form of a designated social worker. A number of agencies are involved to support with the coordination of a collaboratively designed plan, with the aim of identifying services to minimize harm and provide appropriate intervention when harm has occurred.

2.4.1 Prevalence of Children on a CINP and CPP

According to figures in 2019, 399,500 children were classified as a child in need and 52,260 children were subject to CPP in England (DfE, 2019a). The reasons for these high prevalence rates remain unclear, due to the sparsity of specific research conducted for these groups. However, it is likely that these prevalence rates are related to the way children are identified as 'in need' and the threshold/criteria for the implementation of these plans. In practice, a child is classified as 'in need' when it

has been deemed necessary for social care support to be provided (Emmott et al., 2019). However, due to its broad legal definition, determining whether a child is 'in need' is somewhat arbitrary, requires discretion, and is open to interpretation (Emmott et al., 2019). This results in varying thresholds being set by LA children's services.

Longitudinal data provided by the DfE (2019d) found that 16% of children on a CINP in 2017/18 had been on a CPP during the previous five years. In the same year (2017/18), 74% of children on a CPP had been on a CINP during the previous five years. These statistics demonstrate the fluidity in categories, and the frequency in which children move between CINP and CPP classifications. Therefore, to focus on one part of the system would not sufficiently reflect their experiences.

It is important to note that these measures of CINP and CPP are not reflective of all CYP who are 'in need' of help and protection, only those who have been identified by LA services. A Vulnerability Report produced in July 2019, stated that 829,000 vulnerable children are 'invisible' (not known to social care services) (Children's Commissioner, 2019). However, CINP and CPP is the term used to identify and categorise a highly disadvantaged and vulnerable group of children, within both education and social care systems in England. To this end, is the chosen method for defining children within this research.

2.4.2 Adverse Childhood Experiences

Bellis et al. (2015) defined ACEs to be, "*stressful experiences occurring during childhood that directly harm a child or affect the environment in which they live"* (p.4). Examples of ACEs include childhood experiences of abuse, neglect, exposure to DV and substance misuse. ACEs also include living with someone with mental health difficulties and parental separation (Bellis et al., 2015). A significant amount of research has been conducted in the area of ACEs, the first being (Felliti et al., 1998) a large-scale investigation aimed at assessing the association between childhood maltreatment and later health and wellbeing. Felitti et al. (1998) found a direct link between ACEs and the onset of chronic disease in later life, including mental health difficulties. The original ACE study has since been replicated internationally, including England (Bellis et al., 2014) and Wales (Bellis et al., 2015), yielding similar findings.

Whilst the author acknowledges the ACEs research, due to its deterministic nature and deficit driven model, it was decided that it would not be discussed in detail in relation to the current research. However, the term ACEs will be used throughout the current research to provide an umbrella term for the areas of need for children on a CINP and CPP, and provide consistency for the reader. Though it is beyond the scope of this research to determine the usefulness of the term 'ACEs', given that many CYP who have experienced relational and developmental trauma, like some of those on a CINP or CPP, have also suffered interwoven forms of abuse, it can be difficult to disentangle effects due to co-occurring circumstances (Treisman, 2017).

2.4.2.1 Characteristics of Children on a CINP or CPP

A child can be classified as 'in need' or 'at risk' of significant harm for many reasons, as outlined in Chapter One, Section 1.2.1. More specifically, experiences of abuse and neglect made up 54.4% of the primary need of assessment for all children in need (including CiC) in 2019, with these individuals often experiencing more than one type of maltreatment (DfE, 2019a). This has implications for all areas of a child's development (Bellis et al., 2018; Veltman and Browne, 2001; Perry et al., 1995).

Table 2 offers an overview of factors of need identified for all children in need identified between 2014-15 and 2017-18. Data specific to children on a CPP has been provided in Table 3.

Table 2: Percentages of all 'children in need' assessed between 2014-15 and 2017-18 by assessment factor identified (DFE, 2019a)

Area of Need	**Percentage of CYP**
Domestic Violence (DV)	39%
Mental Health	34%
Emotional Abuse	23%
Neglect	20%
Drug Misuse	18%
Physical Abuse	18%

Table 3: Percentages of children who were subject to a CPP (as of 31st March 2019), by initial category of abuse (DFE, 2019a)

Area of Need	**Percentage of CYP**
Abuse or Neglect	54.4%
Family Dysfunction	14.8%
Family in Acute Stress	8.5%
Child's Disability or Illness	8.4%
Absent Parenting	3.8%

It is important to note that the trauma associated with the experience of ACEs does not occur in isolation. Rather, it is influenced by various systemic, relational and contextual factors (Treisman, 2017). Therefore, the consequences of the ACEs presented in Table 2 and 3, are likely to be on a continuum and shaped by a number of interplaying factors. Box 4 provides an overview of these factors as presented by Treisman (2017).

Box 4: Interplaying factors influencing the consequences of trauma and ACEs

1. The child's temperament and unique attributes, including biological and genetic factors
2. Previous life events and stressors
3. The severity and nature of the traumas
4. The frequency and duration of the traumas
5. The relationship with the person who carried out the abuse
6. The response of others around the abuse e.g. how it was managed and whether it was believed/validated
7. The sense-meaning-making and attributions made about the traumas
8. The age and stage of the developing child
9. The presence and/or absence of protective factors

10. The cultural and contextual relevance of the traumas

Treisman (2017, p.3)

It is possible that the figures presented in Table 2 and 3 are not entirely representative of a child's experiences, due to the complexity of overlapping problems. However, they offer an insight into the needs of children and families who require a social worker. The statistics also include the CiC population, alongside CINP and CPP. According to data collected in 2017/18, almost two-thirds of CiC had been on CINP in the previous 5 years and nearly 40% had been subject to a CPP (DfE, 2019a). This highlights a substantial overlap between some psychosocial adversities and risk factors associated with the pre-care experiences of CiC and those experienced by children on a CINP or CPP.

2.4.3 Policy and Government Guidance Surrounding CINP and CPP

A focus on child protection has been consistent in government policy and guidance for decades. Most recently, the document 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (DfE, 2018c) offers statutory guidance to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and states that it is everybody's responsibility to use a co-ordinated approach to safeguard children.

Despite this extended focus, improving the educational outcomes for these children seemed neglected in government focus until 2018, when this matter was given priority (DfE, 2019b). The 'Children in Need' review, conducted by the DfE, was a national first in providing longitudinal data of the experiences, interactions with

services, and outcomes of children 'in need'. The data and analysis produced has been influential in making these children visible and highlighting the injustice of their outcomes. Many barriers were identified, concluding that until now *"this group has been hidden, and not considered within the policies and practices that could help them to achieve better educational outcomes"* (DfE, 2019b, p. 13). The review emphasised the importance of conducting research to support children to overcome educational barriers, whilst addressing some systemic challenges to supporting vulnerable children in practice. It stated:

> *"That means supporting better information sharing, improving partnerships with local authorities, strengthening co-ordination of support, and working with schools to build and share the evidence of what interventions are most effective in improving these children's outcomes." (DfE, 2019d, p.5)*

Raising the visibility of these children in order to strive towards better recognition and representation in policy and practice is likely to be a long process (DfE, 2019b). However, promising progress has been made, with this group being referred to as 'disadvantaged' for the first time in Ofsted's new schools inspection handbook. A government-supported consultation was also launched in 2020 to review government guidance, dedicated to strengthening the role of designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) in schools and ensure greater focus on vulnerable children to 'achieve and attend.' The importance of visibility of children in need, setting high aspirations, tracking attendance and attainment data, develop the skills of school staff, and ensuring appropriate support is available for staff to support these children, were all deemed essential in facilitating positive outcomes.

2.4.4 Educational Outcomes for Children on a CINP and CPP

Children in need of a social worker experience poorer educational outcomes at every stage of education than their peers (DfE, 2019a; Sinclair et al., 2019; Sebba et al., 2015). However, research aimed at investigating outcomes for these children often focuses solely on CiC. In 2019, the DfE's Child in Need Review included children on a CINP, CPP and CiC in their data capture. Although it is possible to separate the needs of non-CiC children in certain parts of the review, the final review amalgamates some of the findings to encompass 'children in need'. This amplifies the significance of need and vulnerability of children on a CINP or CPP. The DfE reported stark findings that children living at home with family on a CINP or CPP are as likely to do poorly in education as CiC (DfE, 2019a).

Figures from the DfE on attainment show a discrepancy between the achievements of children on a CINP and CPP and their peers. In 2016, at the end of KS2, 25% of children on a CINP or a CPP attained the nationally expected standard in reading, writing and maths (compared to 54% of other pupils) (Table 4). This was the same percentage as CiC. These challenges persist with the attainment gap being the widest in KS4, with this group of children being around one third as likely to gain GCSEs in English and Maths (A* to C), as their peers, even if they are no longer 'in need'. Beyond compulsory education, these children are more likely to become NEET, compared to the general population (DfE, 2018a). This attainment gap also persists after accounting for FSM or SEN, suggesting there are additional barriers present when considering the academic progress of this group.

Table 4: Statistics representing educational outcomes for CINP and CPP across key stages, 2015/16 (DfE, 2018a)

	CINP	**CPP**	**CiC**	**All other pupils**
% of children reaching a good level of development in the early years foundation stage profile (EYFSP)	42%	42%	42%	70%
% of children who met the expected level at KS2	25%	25%	25%	54%
% of young people to achieve A* to C in English and Maths at the end of KS4	19%	19%	19%	63%

Analysis from the Exclusions Review highlighted the high and disproportionate exclusion rates of children on a CINP and CPP. It was recorded that children on a CINP are four times more likely, and children on a CPP 3.5 times more likely, to receive a permanent exclusion than their peers who do not receive social care involvement (DFE, 2019c). Similarly, CiC are 2.3 times more likely to be permanently excluded. When compared to typically developing peers, children with a CINP or a CPP are ten times more likely to be educated in pupil referral units or alternative provision settings, as well as three times more likely to be persistently absent (DfE, 2018a).

This instability is concerning, as education is often deemed a protective factor, offering a safe place for children to access support, develop resilience, build

aspirations and discover their potential (DfE, 2019d). Therefore, it is possible that a child subject to safeguarding concerns can become more susceptible to harm when absent from school and the support it offers. However, given that the challenging behaviour linked to exclusion is often the result of a complex inter-play of unmet needs (Coates, 2012) and adverse family circumstances (Ofsted, 2005), it is unsurprising that children on a CINP and CPP make up a significant proportion of children in exclusion data.

2.4.4.1 The Role of Resilience on Educational Success

There are many assumptions as to why children on a CINP or CPP are more susceptible to poorer educational experiences than their peers. It is consistently reported that there is no single cause as to why some children make good progress in school, whilst others experience significant challenges. Furthermore, despite likely exposure to risk and ACEs, negative outcomes are avoidable for this group. Many children go on to succeed and do not experience associated long-term problems (Masten, 2011; Rutter, 1985). These children are often referred to as 'resilient' as they have *"the ability to function reasonably well despite continued exposure to risk*" (Gilligan, 2000, p.37). This allows us to question which factors increase resilience and how these can be promoted in schools to reduce the impact of ACEs on educational outcomes (Bellis et al., 2015). Rae (2014) stresses how the transition between KS2 and KS3 is a vital period to develop resiliency in children.

2.4.5 Importance of Transition for Children on a CINP or CPP

Negative outcomes for children on a CINP or CPP can be reduced, if early intervention is in place, and the transition to secondary school is said to be a key intervention point (Rice et al., 2015). Gilligan (2000) advocates how supportive pathways and turning points in development are vital for children faced with multiple disadvantages. For children on a CINP or CPP, it has been reported that this transition is a potential contributor to children 'falling behind' in education (DfE, 2018b). Although transition can elicit worry and anxiety in children, the potential for a 'drop off' or delay in support is increased, resulting in a possible increase in difficulties at home and school (DfE, 2018b). This may put the stability of existing coping mechanisms and support systems at risk, as parents experience personal challenges in supporting their children through the change (Coffey, 2013). This raises important considerations, particularly if family systems and structures are not stable and robust to begin with.

Additionally, effective management of transition between schools can serve to diminish the likelihood of exclusion (Farouk, 2017), an outcome much more likely for children on a CINP or CPP. To this end, it has been advocated that effective support and intervention during transition, and into the first year of secondary school, has a positive influence on school adjustment and an increase in pupil competence and wellbeing (Rice et al., 2015).

2.4.6 Potential Risk Factors Associated with Transition

There are several indicators that suggest primary-secondary school transition as a significant challenge for children on CINP or CPP, though most of which is anecdotal due to the paucity of research. With that said, due to the complexity of many of their home situations and associated needs, there is evidence that this group of children are likely to be vulnerable during transition, as they experience increased exposure to risks within and across different levels. These risks are likely to elicit vulnerability and make the psychological and/or social adjustment required during transition a challenge. Table 5 offers an overview of risk factors associated with vulnerability during transition, and predisposing factors which children on a CINP or CPP are often exposed to. The risk factors include intrinsic child characteristics, family factors and wider systemic factors, all of which exist and interact within the child's ecological system (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Table 5: Risk factors presented in key transition literature

The Child	• Special educational needs (SEN) (Bailey and Baines, 2012; Bloyce and Frederickson, 2012; West et al., 2010; Anderson et al., 2000) • Low self-esteem (Rae, 2014; Bailey and Baines, 2012) • High levels of anxiety (Bailey and Baines, 2012; West et al., 2010) • Prior problem behaviour (Anderson et al., 2000; Berndt and Mekos, 1995) • Poor emotional regulation (Bailey and Baines, 2012) • Higher levels of aggression (Rice et al., 2011; West et al., 2010; Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006) • Difficulties forming positive relationships with peers (Symonds

	and Hargreaves, 2016) • Resilience (Bailey and Baines, 2012)
The Family	• Stable home environment (Hammond, 2016) • Limited parental support (Waters et al., 2014b; West et al., 2010; Anderson et al., 2000) • Responsive and engaged parents (Hammond, 2016) • Hostile and rejecting relationships (Rae, 2014) • Socio-economic disadvantage (Bailey and Baines, 2012; Evangelou et al., 2008; West et al., 2010; Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006; Anderson et al., 2000) • High levels of parental conflict (Rae, 2014)
The School	• School exclusion (Bloyce and Frederickson, 2012) • Bullying (West et al., 2010; Evangelou et al., 2008) • Poor attendance (Benner and Wang, 2014) • School refusal (Bloyce and Frederickson, 2012) • Disengagement from education (West et al., 2010) • Previous academic failure (Rae, 2014) • Previous school transitions, i.e. attending more than one primary school (West et al., 2010)

Three detailed examples of potential risk factors will now be discussed in relation to the literature cited in Table 5 to support the notion that children on CINP or CPP are likely to experience increased difficulties during transition. Although they are presented separately, these factors should not be considered in isolation. Rather, they are interrelated and interact in ways that may affect the overall risk of a negative transition.

It is important to note that, as discussed, there are many causal factors for children requiring a social worker. It would therefore be too simplistic and deterministic to

assume that being subject to a CINP or CPP leads to negative transition. Being subject to a CINP or CPP is characterised by heterogeneity, ambiguity in thresholds, and complex experiences. Many 'resilient' children will successfully transition with very few negative consequences, and it is therefore vital that the individual voices of children are heard, and their unique experiences shared.

2.4.6.1 Socio-cultural Factors and Family Support

Existing research proposes that factors existing outside of school could be more important than school factors during transitions (Waters et al., 2014b; Benner and Graham, 2009), with increasing focus on family relationships and interaction (Waters et al., 2014b). As presented in Table 5, various factors pertaining to family have been found to be significant in aiding a successful transition. Given that children on a CINP or CPP are more susceptible to these risk factors, assumptions could be made that their transition may present with greater challenges.

Research has consistently reported that children from families living in high levels of income deprivation are more likely to experience greater challenges during transition than their peers (McCoy et al., 2019; West et al., 2010; Evangelou et al., 2008; McGee et al., 2003; Anderson et al., 2000). School-aged children on CINP or CPP are more likely to live in income-deprived families, with 37% of children on CPP and 30% of children on CINP falling within the highest deprivation band. These children are also more likely than other children (with the exception of CiC) to be deemed eligible to claim FSM (46% on CINP and 65% on CPP), a proxy measure of socio-economic deprivation based on family earnings.

It is debatable why this distal factor is so influential. Research demonstrating the link between SES and low academic achievement is likely to result in a lack of school readiness, thus hindering transition (Anderson et al., 2000). Rae (2014) also reported that good housing, and access to a range of sport/leisure activities, are protective factors for developing resilience and supporting a child's wellbeing. The accessibility of these is significantly reduced for families in low SES areas.

Additionally, Anderson et al. (2000) associated living in low SES homes with limited parental support structures required for facilitating positive transition. A child's immediate family microsystem provides fundamental support to the developing child (Bronfenbrenner, 2000), providing a secure base (Bowlby, 1969) from which a child is able to explore the world safely. Having supportive parents with knowledge about the education system has also been linked to academic achievement, ultimately leading to better school adjustment (Topping, 2011; McGee et al., 2003). As children are faced with disruptions to their life and attempt to negotiate challenges during transition, the reliance on supportive relationships and readily available parental support is likely to be more pronounced, despite independence being sought in other ways (Anderson et al., 2000). However, it is possible that these wider systems, associated with SES within the child's exosystem can influence the parent-child relationship, and parental support and functioning within the child's microsystem.

Notably, parental support and capacity for active involvement in children's education is not restricted to SES, as demonstrated in Table 5. Jindal-Snape and Miller (2008)

conducted a study employing theoretical perspectives of risk and resilience and reported that although a cohesive and supportive family environment can promote resilience against risk factors, all parents can do more to support their children through transition.

Continuity and congruence is vital between home and school during transition, and effective communication between home, primary and secondary school are essential to enabling this (Coffey 2013). Children on a CINP or CPP, and their families, are often living in complex circumstances that can cause marginalisation from communities and intimidation by the structures and practices of schools (Dockett et al., 2011). These factors may contribute to limited home-school relationships and parental involvement in children's education, whilst making these families vulnerable, hard to reach and 'at risk'. Social workers and other education professionals (e.g. EPs) are well placed to bridge this gap between home and school (Miller, 2003), empower parents and facilitate the establishment of effective working relationships to support children during their move to secondary school.

2.4.6.2 SEN: Social, Emotional and Mental Health

Government figures show that children on a CINP or CPP are more likely than their peers to have SEN, with 25% of children on a CINP and 8% of children on a CPP having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) (DFE, 2018a), compared to 2% of the remainder of children. SEN can be hugely influential to attainment and outcomes and, as presented in section 2.3.6, research consistently regards transition as a challenging time for children with SEN. This is perhaps unsurprising given that

the exposure to trauma and ACEs are said to influence the social, emotional and cognitive development of CYP (Burke et al., 2011).

Given this, it is possible that many children 'in need' have few resources of their own to help manage their school transitions, thus creating vulnerability. Children with SEN are arguably more susceptible to low academic ability, low self-esteem, and problematic behaviours (McCoy et al., 2019; Banks et al., 2017). These are said to pose as risk factors during transition (West et al., 2010). McCauley (2010) also reported greater susceptibility to discontinuities in support, and the curriculum and pedagogy for children with SEN, which can create challenges with adjustment.

Following the CFA (2014), the SEN CoP (DFE, 2015) specified four broad areas of development to describe a CYP's needs: cognition and learning; communication and interaction; social, emotional and mental health (SEMH); and sensory and physical. It is noteworthy that the most common primary need of SEN for children on a CINP and CPP is SEMH (22% of children on CINP and 37% of children on CPP), compared to their peers with SEN (16%) (DfE, 2018a). Children with SEMH needs present a range of difficulties as highlighted in the CoP as:

> *"becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder"*
>
> (Section 6.32, p.98)

The DfE reported that these findings affirmed what schools have long known about high prevalence rates of SEMH needs for these children (DfE, 2019b), and are unremarkable given many of their complex family experiences, further discussed in Section 2.4.6.3.

Findings presented in research indicate that CYP with SEMH needs experience considerable challenges in school (McCoy and Banks, 2012). For example, the likelihood of receiving an exclusion is higher in children with SEMH needs (Jull, 2008), which may account for the disproportionate representation of children on a CINP and CPP in exclusion data. This is particularly the case during transition (Visser et al., 2005) as there is a steep incline in exclusions from primary to secondary school for all children (Mowat, 2019). Consequently, the importance of effective support during transition for children with SEMH needs, or those with greater susceptibility of developing these needs, has been stressed (Mowat, 2019).

Although not wholly attributable to children with SEMH needs, 'prior problem behaviour' (e.g., aggressive and challenging behaviour) has been recognised as a risk factor to successful transition, as highlighted in Table 5. Additionally, Lynn et al. (2013) noted that children with emotional and behavioural difficulties also experience significant difficulty in developing positive peer relationships. Furthermore, Barnes-Holmes et al. (2013) reported parental concerns regarding the lack of teacher understanding into the underlying causes of their child's 'trouble-making' behaviour. These factors could hinder a child's SoB, emotional wellbeing and social integration, all of which are considered predictors of successful transition.

This vulnerability further emphasises the importance of implementing effective strategies, that recognise individual needs and allow for strengths and resilience to be developed (Brooks and Goldstein, 2012). The SEN CoP (DfE, 2015) recognises the potential challenges faced by children with SEN and stresses the need for careful *"planning and preparing prior to school transitions"* (DfE, 2014, p. 88). This involves an individualised, child-centred approach to planning that includes efficient information sharing between schools, and effective collaborative working between parents and professionals. This ensures that the child's needs are appropriately addressed, leading to suitable provisions that can be reviewed accordingly. This conforms to a bioecological systems perspective of transition, discussed in section 2.3.3.1.

2.4.6.3 The Influence of ACEs on Attachment and Belonging

Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; 1973; 1980) can be utilised as a psychological perspective to better understand the challenges faced by children on a CINP or CPP during transition. This psychodynamic perspective recognises belonging as one of the strongest human motivational needs (Bowlby, 1982), paramount to emotional wellbeing and self-confidence (Bowlby, 1969), and emphasises the importance of responsive relationships between children and key adults. This is reflected during transition, where children who report positive relationships with parents and teachers had been found to express fewer internalising and externalising adjustment difficulties (Hanewald, 2013; Bailey and Baines, 2012).

The central premise of attachment theory is that a child needs to experience a secure attachment with their primary caregiver in order to form effective relationships with others (Bowlby, 1969). It is stated that when the primary caregiver is sensitive and responsive to the child's signals, the child is able to form 'an internal model' of others as trustworthy, and dependable. The primary reason for children being considered 'in need' is abuse and neglect (54.4%), which arguably have profound impacts on the development of secure parent-child attachments (Treisman, 2017; Howe, 2005). These insecure attachment styles are categorised by feelings of distress, uncertainty and distrust (Bergin and Bergin, 2009; Ainsworth et al., 1978). A child with insecure or disorganised attachment is arguably more susceptible to difficulties that can influence a child's social and academic development, such as forming trusting relationships (Geddes, 2006; Bowlby, 1969), and an increase in externalising and internalising problems (Groh et al., 2012; Fearon et al., 2010). Such susceptibilities are likely to have implications for the teacher-child relationship (Geddes, 2006), and consequently transition.

The difficulties highlighted are often communicated through what school staff may perceive to be 'challenging behaviour,' reflected in part, in the disproportionate figures of children excluded, absent from education and/or with SEMH needs. Adults often react in such situations with anxiety, rejection, criticism and punishment (Geddes, 2006). However, these responses can be counter-productive and rather reinforce the insecure attachment that the child is likely to display. This may be further exacerbated when secure attachments are inevitably severed, as a child moves from a secure base (primary school) to an unfamiliar environment (secondary school). Thus, a child's potential SoB and connectedness to their primary school is

often compromised during transition. These changes can be challenging for any child (Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008), though are likely more difficult for those who have experienced trauma and adversity due to challenges in forming trusting relationships (Bombèr, 2011; 2007 & Geddes, 2006). The nature of these experiences is likely to coincide with instability in the family home, and possible inconsistencies in relationships with primary caregivers. Therefore, stable relationships and attachments formed at school are of the utmost importance.

It is important that secondary schools replicate the security provided by primary schools by offering positive, attuned, responsive attachment relationships. Smyth et al. (2004) reported that when supportive relationships are not available for children at home, they might seek emotional support required during transition from teachers. A Scottish ACEs study (NHS, 2017) and The Minnesota Study of Risk and Adoption (Sroufe et al., 2005) identified that it takes just one adult in the school community to make a positive difference to a child who has experienced trauma and adversity. However, Mowat (2019) questioned how supportive universal interventions (e.g. induction days) are in supporting children to build positive relationships with adults. The nature of the secondary school environment makes forming and maintaining these relationships more difficult, from the increased number of teachers and reduced direct contact with teaching staff (Mackenzie et al., 2012; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008), to the focus on increasing independence in children (Coffey, 2013). These factors could act as a barrier for children forming attuned relationships, experiencing a SoB, and an ultimately successful transition.

When adopting a psychodynamic perspective, consideration must be given to the onset of ACEs, and the reason for a child being recognised as 'in need'. The assumption, when considering this perspective, is that children have experienced trauma that resulted in a disruption to the parent-child attachment. However, DfE data fails to capture information on early life and family characteristics and thus, caution must be taken when considering this perspective. Attachment theory has also been critiqued as providing a deterministic, within-child perspective to understanding the presentation of a child who has experienced trauma, limiting their capacity to change and adapt (Slater, 2007). Notwithstanding this, understanding the basic principles of attachment theory and how insecure attachment styles likely contribute to greater challenges during transition is important, to ensure that appropriate support is provided and help to provide children with a successful transition. Furthermore, the theory has been recognised as having relevance for understanding 'proximal processes' within the PPCT framework adopted in this study (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006).

2.4.7 Section Summary

Government figures show that CYP on a CINP or CPP are more susceptible to poorer educational experiences than the general population (DfE, 2019b), so improving these experiences is fundamental to avoid a negative trajectory. Primary-secondary transition has been identified as a key intervention point, though little is known about children's experiences of this life event. Potential risk factors associated with a negative transition, and specific to the experiences of children 'in need' have been presented, alongside theoretical assumptions. However, it is important that the

individual needs of each child are recognised, and that professionals offer support without making assumptions about a child's circumstances or abilities to successfully navigate this experience.

2.5 Summary of Literature Review Chapter

A review of the literature has highlighted a number of large-scale projects that have demonstrated the significant impact of transition on academic achievement, emotional wellbeing and school adjustment (West et al., 2010; Evangelou et al., 2008). However, little is known about how children on a CINP or CPP adjust to secondary school, despite the government prioritising the education of 'children in need'. When adopting a broader view, the educational experiences of children subject to CINP or CPP remain under-researched, with the DfE producing the first document outlining the educational experiences of these children (DfE, 2019b).

Previous research suggests that many children on a CINP or CPP experience trauma or adversity, the lasting impact of which creates barriers to education across attendance, learning, behaviour and wellbeing (DfE, 2019b; Sinclair et al., 2019). A review of the literature would assume that this group of children are at 'risk' and fall into many pre-existing vulnerable groups such as those from low SES homes, children with SEN (particularly SEMH needs), attachment difficulties and those who experienced disruptions to their education. The complexity of these challenges is likely to lead to difficulty establishing a SoB in new schools, thus leading to poorer transition. To this end, unique issues, in addition to issues experienced by the general school population, are likely to arise during transition.

Additionally, there is a gap in the extant literature surrounding primary-secondary transition, as pupil voice and experiences are often ignored. The current study aims to explore primary-secondary school transition experiences for a group of children, namely those on a CINP and CPP, who may be especially vulnerable during this period. In doing so, it will actively respond to suggestions made by the DfE in the Child In Need Review by increasing visibility and recognition of these children in education, work towards keeping children in education, and aiding in ensuring that they receive effective support in and around school.

Although findings cannot be generalised with the adopted approach, it is hoped that this exploratory study will support the development of professional reflection, whilst generating questions for future research related to primary-secondary school transition for this group. In doing so, it is a necessary step to mitigating or preventing a number of negative effects correlated with transition.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Chapter Overview

The aim of this chapter is to outline the approach to conducting this piece of research and the process by which this was completed. Firstly, an outline of my ontological and epistemological positioning is provided. An overview of IPA and its three core theoretical strands: phenomenology; hermeneutics; and idiography, is then offered, followed by a rationale for the decision to use IPA as the methodological approach to address the research aims. The method will also be discussed, with focus on sampling and recruitment, ethical considerations, participants, data collection and data analysis. An overview of how validity and quality assurance have been demonstrated will conclude this chapter.

My interest in students' individual experiences of transition led me to a phenomenological approach to research, with IPA (Smith, 1996) appearing the appropriate method, due to its commitment to exploring an individual's personal experiences. Also, from a qualitative perspective, IPA allows for 'epistemological openness' (Oxley, 2016), meaning a wide range of epistemological standpoints can be adopted. Table 6 offers an overview of the methodological decisions made in this study.

Table 6: Summary of Research Framework

Ontological Position	Relativism
Epistemological Position	Interpretivism/ Constructionism
Theoretical Perspectives	Phenomenology Hermeneutics Idiography
Methodology	Qualitative, IPA
Research Design	Nested case study
Data Collection	Semi-structured interviews
Participants	Five Year 7 students (aged between 11 and 12) who are subject to CINP or CPP

3.2 Research Aim and Questions

The research is exploratory in nature, with the primary aim of increasing our understanding of the lived experiences of primary-secondary school transition for children subject to CINP and CPP. To explore each individual's lived experience of transition and the personal meaning they ascribe to this, two exploratory research questions were selected.

1. How do children subject to a CINP or CPP experience their transition from primary to secondary school?
2. What factors influence the experiences of transition from primary to secondary school for children subject to a CINP or CPP?

To address the research aims, a nested case study design frame was adopted. By using a small number of participants situated within one LA and that met the inclusion criteria stipulated, the aim was to obtain a rich and detailed understanding through examining the data in depth.

3.3 Ontology and Epistemology

Ontology is defined as the awareness of how social reality is perceived and conceptualised, beliefs on the nature of reality and how knowledge exists (Gray, 2013). The position that individuals place themselves on a realist-to-relativist continuum is referred to as an ontological stance (Robson, 2011). Epistemology is theoretically related to ontology as it lies in the ontological philosophy it adheres to. It is concerned with the theory of knowledge, ultimately – how we come to know our reality, and the methods utilised to gain an understanding of social reality (Grix, 2004).

Aligned with IPA, it is my belief that reality cannot be seen as one unified and objectively knowable truth (Gray, 2014). Rather, my assumptions are based on the ontological belief that there are multiple socially constructed and subjective realities in the way in which children experience primary-secondary school transition (Neuman, 2000). As such, the research aligns itself with the ontological stance of relativism.

The research is conducted within an interpretivist paradigm and through reflexivity, I consider my own philosophical position and epistemological beliefs to subjectively adhere to social constructionism. It is my understanding that social, cultural and historical processes are central to our experiences, and the way we make sense of, and construct meaning, through these experiences (Eatough and Smith, 2008). Essentially, this stance views knowledge as socially created, whilst recognising the

multiple ways that individuals might acquire and interpret knowledge about the world and reality (Willig, 2008).

IPA is understood to be positioned at the 'light end of the social constructionist continuum' (Eatough and Smith, 2008, p.184), rather than a radical social constructionist approach. When adopting a radical social constructionist approach, the researcher is solely interested in the *"particular reality constructed for the purposes of a specific conversation"* (Willig, 2013, p.18). It is therefore, based on the assumption that there is nothing outside of the participants' world. Comparatively, my position aligns more closely with symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1969), which regards humans as *"creative agents who through their interpretative activity construct their social worlds"* (Eatough and Smith, 2008, p.184). This is based on the belief that linguistic and discursive construction alone cannot describe a person's lived experiences (Eatough and Smith, 2008). Rather, emphasis is placed on the subjective meaning of each individual, therefore adhering to an IPA methodology.

3.4 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

I have chosen to use IPA as the guiding approach to data collection and analysis as it aligns with the research aims and questions of the study, as well as my own philosophical beliefs. Originating from health psychology (Smith et al., 2009), IPA is concerned with getting as close as possible to the way that individuals ascribe meaning to, and make sense of, their world and their personal experiences within it, in a particular context, at a particular time (Willig, 2013; Smith, 2011). IPA allows for an awareness of the commonalities and diversities of participants' experiences,

whilst ensuring awareness of the researcher's own influence during data interpretation. IPA has been used to inform similar research into school transition, in published papers and doctoral theses (for example, Curson et al., 2019; Powell, 2017).

3.4.1 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach to the study of human experience and consciousness (Smith et al., 2009; Giorgi and Giorgi, 2008). First introduced by Philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and further developed by Heidegger (1962), phenomenology is recognised as a broad philosophical concept that has been studied and interpreted in different ways by different philosophers (including Merleau-Ponty and Sartre). This has resulted in a diverse understanding of how phenomenology should be applied in research, though the central premise is shared - an attempt to make sense of the nature of a phenomenon through the examination of lived experience (Smith et al., 2009).

Phenomenology is interested in the experiential reality of life, the meaning of things and others (Eatough and Smith, 2008). It is concerned with how knowledge of the world is experienced by human beings via perception, attention (awareness) and consciousness (Smith et al., 2009). Husserl was particularly interested in the nature of consciousness, which is the belief that whenever we are conscious, we are always conscious of something (Langdridge, 2007), also known as intentionality. He stressed the importance of being aware of how our understanding of the world is shaped through our experiences and conscious actions (Husserl, 1929).

Husserl also advocated for the importance of reflection to meaningfully engage and examine lived experiences as they are encountered (Husserl, 1929). It was from this belief that the idea of bracketing (also referred to as epochἐ) was introduced. Husserl (1929) believed that we must set aside (bracket) what is often taken for granted, and any pre-conceived beliefs, biases and assumptions we hold, in order to take a fresh perspective of the world, and understand it through the eyes of another (Smith et al., 2009). This reflexive concept of 'bracketing' is now recognised as a key principle in IPA research (Smith et al., 2009). I kept a reflective diary throughout all stages of data collection and analysis, to remain aware of my position within the research and 'bracket' off any preconceived beliefs that could influence the research. An example extract from my reflective diary has been provided in Box 5. Further extracts are provided in Appendix 1.

Box 5: Extract from reflective diary

Extract from reflective diary: **Difficulty in the practice of 'bracketing'**

N.B. *I am currently analysing George's data (This is the second data set to be analysed)*

This is more difficult than I first anticipated. Refraining from allowing my own beliefs and assumptions regarding transition to not influence my interpretations of each child's experiences took a lot of reflecting and self-awareness. What is also really hard is not to be influenced by the themes identified in Jayden's data. George and Jayden are very similar in lots of ways and have had disrupted experiences of schooling to date which is making it more difficult to 'bracket off' Jayden's interview and analysis, whilst focusing on George. I am going to take some time away from analysing and continue to focus on other areas of my write up for now to avoid any unintentional overlap of themes.

IPA embeds phenomenology as it is concerned with a ‘detailed examination’ of how individuals experience their world at different times and contexts, and how we make sense of these experiences (Smith et al., 2009; Eatough and Smith, 2008). It focuses on perceptions instead of seeking objective statements (Smith and Osborn, 2008) by endeavouring to understand and describe an individual’s experience of specific phenomena, from their unique perspective. In researching how children who are subject to CINP or CPP make sense of their lived experience of transitioning to secondary school, I am taking an interpretative stance in an attempt to understand their experience.

3.4.2 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics refers to the theory of interpretation, and is primarily attributed to the work of Heidegger. IPA attempts to understand phenomena by focusing on the way it has been experienced and made sense of by the individual (Eatough and Smith, 2008). Heidegger referred to this as the ‘hermeneutics of tactical life.’

Smith et al. (2009) proposed that when using IPA, lived experience is to be understood through the ‘lens of interpretation’. In order to achieve this, acknowledgement is placed on the pivotal role of the researcher in gaining access to an individual’s experiences, and that access to these experiences is dependent on what the individual chooses to share. The researcher is required to make sense of each participant’s account of the phenomena being discussed through a method of interpretation. By attempting to understand how the participant makes sense of their

world, the researcher is engaging in a ‘double hermeneutic’ process (Smith and Eatough, 2007). When conducting this research, I aimed to understand what it is like to transition to secondary school when subject to a CINP or CPP, from the viewpoint of each participant.

Additionally, the concept of a ‘hermeneutic circle’, offered by Smith et al. (2009), defines the dynamic, non-linear, thinking style when conceptualising the relationship between the part and the whole at a series of levels. To understand any given part, it must first be examined individually before looking at the whole; to understand the whole you look first at it individually and then examine the parts. To this end, the process undertaken during IPA is an iterative one, whereby the researcher is offered the flexibility to move in non-linear ways when analysing the data.

In summary, not only is IPA grounded in the lived experiences of participants provided through their personal accounts and interpretations, but also through the researcher’s interpretation, therefore fitting with the social constructionist stance taken in this study. Ultimately, interpretation, or hermeneutics, is essential in IPA research (Smith et al., 2009). Consequently, importance must be placed on the reflexivity of the researcher throughout this process, so the manner in which their own beliefs, experiences and assumptions may influence their interpretations is acknowledged. Bracketing is therefore essential during IPA, to support the researcher in avoiding preconceived views influencing the way in which participant’s experience is viewed.

3.4.3 Idiography

The final theoretical underpinning of IPA is idiography, which addresses the shift from the universal to the individual (Eatough and Smith, 2008). The idiographic element to IPA differs to most psychological approaches, as it adopts a nomothetic approach, concerned with making claims at the group level and establishing general laws of human behaviour (Smith et al., 2009). Rather, IPA is committed to obtaining a rich and detailed examination of each individual case, to ensure that an individual's lived experience is fully understood before exploring the convergence and divergence amongst identified themes (Smith, 2004).

No claims of generalisation are made in this research, as it attempts to interpret each individual's experiences in detail at the moment in time and space when they were interviewed (Smith et al., 2009). Therefore, it is hoped that the research will offer greater theoretical transferability about how children on a CINP or CPP view their primary-secondary transition, and whether their experiences can enable professionals to understand, and more effectively meet, their needs in future.

3.5 Rationale for choosing IPA

IPA was chosen as the method of data analysis for several reasons. Firstly, transition is experienced by each child on an individual and personal level (Tobbell, 2014) and should, therefore, be explored on this level. As previously stated, CYP on a CINP or CPP all have unique experiences that have contributed to their social care status and overall lived experiences. The idiographic element of IPA accounts for this by placing significance on the meaning each participant ascribes to his or her experience of the

phenomena (primary-secondary transition) at an individual level, before exploring similarities and differences in patterns across cases (Smith et al., 2009; Willig, 2001).

The aim of this research is to listen to and produce an account of the lived experiences of participants, including their thoughts, feelings and perceptions regarding primary-secondary transition, as opposed to testing hypotheses or developing new theories. IPA enables this by employing an inductive approach, whereby participants are free to share their accounts of their lived experiences however they choose, rather than being prescribed to pre-existing theoretical preconceptions or frameworks (Smith and Osborn, 2015). This 'participant orientated' approach in IPA shows respect and sensitivity to the lived experiences of participants, and gives a voice to an often marginalised group in research. However, this is often not 'straightforward' when conducting research with children (and will be later discussed in chapter five section 5.3), which is a potential limitation of using IPA.

Consideration was given to other qualitative methodologies and data analysis approaches including thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and grounded theory (Glaser, 1978), though these were dismissed. It was important to me that the research reflected the children's voices, and IPA's analysis grounded in the participant's narratives suited this, whilst embracing reflexivity. This is unlike data analysis approaches such as thematic analysis, which has been criticised for failing to fully address reflexivity (Brocki and Wearden, 2006). Additionally, from a pragmatic perspective, grounded theory requires a larger sample of the chosen population,

which is likely have made recruitment difficult, due to the lack of visibility of this group (DfE, 2019b). Discourse analysis was also considered, due to the emphasis on the importance of language when considering an individual's reality. However, this method was rejected as it focuses solely on language and does not acknowledge other components of an individual's experience.

3.5.1 Limitations of using IPA

As with all methodological approaches, there are limitations to the use of IPA. Firstly, IPA aims to gain an insider's perspective on experience and sense-making, achieved through listening to and analysing the language used by participants to describe their experiences. This therefore relies on the participants' ability to articulate, possibly complex, thoughts and feelings. Data is often collected using semi-structured interviews, which assumes a level of articulation. Willig (2013; 2001) argues that it is challenging to communicate the intricate details of experiences, especially when the participants are not accustomed to talking in such a way. This is an important consideration for the current study as the participants are all of in Year 6 (10-11 years old), and may have additional needs that could influence their linguistic capabilities (based on DfE, 2019b data).

Further criticisms arise when considering the reliance on, and role that language plays in accessing individual experience. IPA is centred on the assumption that language is capable of capturing an experience. However, critics of IPA have debated the role of language and whether it serves to construct reality, rather than describe it (Willig, 2008). When considering this belief, it is argued that through

language, we can only gain an understanding of how individuals talk about their experiences rather than an understanding of the actual experience (Willig, 2013). However, Smith and Osborn (2008) claim that a direct relationship exists between how we talk about our experiences and the thoughts and feelings we hold in relation to these. Smith et al. (2009) support this by stating that *"our interpretations of experience are always shaped, limited and enabled by language"* (p. 194), aligned with a symbolic interactionist approach adopted in this study.

Due to the active role the researcher plays in the analysis process, it has been argued that interpretations are constrained by the researcher's ability to interpret, reflect and make sense of the data (Brocki and Wearden, 2006). This assertion was a particular concern for me as a novice researcher. Larkin et al. (2006) added to this by stating the novice researchers tend to offer descriptive analysis rather *"properly explore, understand and communicate the experiences and viewpoints offered by its participants'"* (ibid, p. 103). However, Smith et al. (2009) offer a level of structure, particularly for novice researchers, which appears helpful in promoting accountability.

3.6 Method

3.6.1 Sampling and Recruitment

The sample identified for the study was a purposive, homogenous one. IPA research recommends undertaking purposive sampling to allow for homogeneity in the sample group for whom the research question will be meaningful (Smith and Osborn, 2015). The aim was to gain access to participants who fulfilled all of the inclusion criteria highlighted in Table 7.

Table 7: Inclusion criteria for participation

Inclusion Criteria	**Exclusion Criteria**
In a Year 7 cohort and transferred to secondary school at the end of Key Stage 2	Not in Year 7 and/or did not transition to secondary school at the end of KS2
Attending a mainstream secondary school	Attends a specialist provision
Subject to a CINP or CPP during their time of transition to secondary school	Now a child in care

It is recommended by Smith et al. (2009) that a homogenous sample be used within IPA research to allow for an individual focus, as well as enabling convergence and divergence to be identified between participants. Although the sample in this study was homogenous, as they were all children subject to CINP and CPP, it should be acknowledged that there was some diversity between participants. This is due to their differing social care experiences, reasons for being categorised on these plans and the level of support they may have received from practitioners. Equally, the severity of need differs, depending on the plan the child is subject to. The decision to focus the research on CINP and CPP is due to the fluidity of movement between the two social care categories. Many children move between the classifications, so to focus on one category would not be reflective of each individual experience.

In an attempt to aid homogeneity, the choice was made to only include children attending a mainstream secondary school. The majority of children attend mainstream settings and so, this appeared the most appropriate focus for this initial exploratory study.

Following ethical approval, I sought support with recruitment from the head teachers and DSLs of three schools in the LA in which I conducted this research. Detailed information of the study was shared with each key person (head teacher or DSL) and agreement was sought from the head teacher or DSL before continuing with the recruitment process. Once agreed, the key staff members facilitated recruitment by identifying a sample of young people who met the stipulated inclusion criteria. Schools were given verbal information, alongside parent and pupil information sheets about the study, to discuss with the child and their parents/carers. Seven pupils expressed their interest, and so were chosen, to take part in the research. Informed consent from the parents and children was gained for five participants within the stipulated time frame. These were the children included in the study.

I had a pre-existing relationship with all of the schools I approached during the recruitment phase of the research, due to my role as a TEP. However, I had no prior knowledge of the participants.

3.6.2 Ethics

3.6.2.1 Ethical Approval

The current study was approved through the University of Birmingham's Ethical Review Process. Guidelines put forward by the British Psychological Society, Code of Ethics and Conduct (BPS, 2018) and Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2014) were followed and adhered to throughout. Due to the nature of the research, there are a number of ethical considerations that are worthy of discussion. Ethical

considerations are central to the research process and have been raised and addressed throughout the formulation of this thesis.

A copy of the Application for Ethical Review can be found in the 'Appendices' section of this thesis (Appendix 2). This document provides a detailed account of the actions taken to address each ethical principle.

3.6.2.2 Informed Consent and Right to Withdraw

Information sheets and consent forms were sent out to parents of possible participants (Appendix 3), alongside an invitation letter to take part in the study, and an information sheet (Appendix 4). The parent and pupil information sheets included both mine, and my UoB supervisor's contact details, should they have any queries about the research. It also offered an explanation of the research, the key principles of voluntary participation, right to refuse or withdraw, and anonymity. Once parental consent was given, I met with the potential participants on an individual basis whilst they were in school. During this initial briefing session, I offered a full explanation of the study, covering points included in the 'Pupil Information Sheet'. Potential participants were then given the opportunity to ask questions.

The information sheets and consent forms provided to parents and children differed. The forms for parents outlined that the purpose of the research was to explore children's experiences of transitioning from primary to secondary school who are subject to CINP or CPP. The children's forms did not include information about social care involvement, and stated that they were consenting to participate in the 'moving forward project'. The reasons for withholding this information were three-fold:

1) To reduce the risk of the participants experiencing any negative thoughts or feelings as a result of taking part;
2) To safeguard participants who were not aware that they were subject to CINP or CPP;
3) To reduce the risk of participants being made identifiable as being on CINP or CPP within their class or school setting. This was further remedied by using the title “The Moving Forward Project” when referring to the research in schools.

It was stated on the ‘Parent/Carer Information Sheet’ that it would be their decision whether they wanted to share this information with their child. It is possible that some of the children knew that they were identified to participate in the research due to having social care involvement, through parents sharing this information. This could have impacted on how much or little they shared with me, though none of the participants discussed knowing this information.

3.6.3 Participants

Five children took part in the study from three mainstream secondary schools, in one LA. The participants were two boys and three girls aged between 11 and 12. Table 8 provides the participant information acquired. Pseudonyms have been assigned to each child to ensure anonymity and confidentiality were not compromised.

Three large urban secondary schools were chosen, all of which were ethnically and culturally diverse school communities. Two of the schools were academies, whilst the third was a LA maintained school.

In an attempt to further preserve anonymity, the decision was made not to request further detailed information into the precise reasons for the participants being subject to CINP and CPP. Equally, the primary reasons identified and recorded by social care teams do not adequately capture a child's overall experiences.

Table 8: Participant information

Name (pseudonym)	**Sex**	**Ethnic origin**	**Level of social care involvement**	**Additional Needs**
Jayden	Male	White and Black Caribbean	Child in Need Plan	SEN Support
George	Male	Black African	Child in Need Plan	SEN Support
Elle	Female	White British	Child Protection Plan	None
Summer	Female	White British	Child Protection Plan	None
Priya	Female	Indian	Child Protection Plan	None

3.6.4 Data Collection

Semi-structured interviews (SSIs) were chosen as the ideal method for generating data within the study. The phenomenological approach used in IPA requires rich, naturalistic accounts of experience (Langdridge, 2007). SSIs facilitate this by

providing a flexible way of collecting in-depth first-hand accounts of how participants understand and make sense of their experiences (Smith and Osborn, 2008). Smith (2015) adds that interviews allow the researcher to ‘hear the participants account’ and, in real time, decide ‘where and when to probe further’ (p. 645). Therefore, semi-structured interviews were used to support with understanding transitional experiences and encourage participants to tell their stories.

A semi-structured interview schedule was created to guide data collection (Appendix 5). Pre-identified themes in the literature were loosely incorporated into the schedule to aid with discussion (including curriculum continuity, participation in learning, autonomy in decision making and relationships). This was intended to act as a basis, and guide, for the conversation (Biggerstaff and Thompson, 2008). The interview schedule adhered to the principles of IPA by using open-ended descriptive, contract and narrative questions. This allowed for the elicitation of the students’ views, encouraged the expansion of answers and avoided making assumptions or leading participants (Smith et al., 2009).

One shortfall to using SSIs for data collection is that when a subject is significantly under-researched, such as the topic of this study, it can be difficult to determine whether the chosen questions address the areas from which fruitful data may be drawn. However, unlike data collection methods such as surveys or structured questionnaires, there is scope for the schedule to be flexible (Robson, 2002), allowing any emerging unanticipated areas to be further explored. Therefore, the interview schedule merely served as a guide.

There were 13 broad topics with subsequent questions in total. Each topic contained a main question, with possible follow up questions and prompts. Each interview began with an opening question, followed by questions aimed at ascertaining individual perspectives, facts, emotions and opportunities for reflection. Episodic questions were also utilised, to explore children's experiences of specific points of their transition. The key areas addressed in the interview schedule have been outlined below.

- Experiences of primary school (thoughts and feelings);
- Experiences of secondary school to date;
- Preparation for secondary school;
- Thoughts and feelings prior to primary-secondary transition;
- Thoughts and feelings during primary-secondary transition; and
- A focus on relationships and support systems around the child.

In line with IPA, each question was designed to elicit an in-depth understanding of each child's personal experiences.

Visual aids, in the form of timelines and drawings, were offered to support with participant's accounts of their experiences and offer greater chronological accuracy, due to interviews being completed two terms after transition. This was optional, and was discussed with each participant prior to his or her interview. Two participants chose to use visual aids during their interviews.

Each participant was interviewed in a quiet room in their school, and the interviews lasted between 45 minutes and one hour. Consent was obtained from participants

and parents for each interview to be audio recorded. This was to ensure descriptive validity, and allow for accurate verbatim transcripts of participants' accounts to be created for analysis. Prompt sheets also provided relevant notes and participant comments.

Interviews were carried out during the final term of the participant's first year at secondary school, to obtain a retrospective account of their experiences. This was crucial to the data collection as it allowed the students a chance to settle into their new schools and the opportunity to reflect upon their transition. It is likely that if interviewed prior to the summer term, the participants may still be adjusting to secondary school and so, may not be able to offer the reflection of their experiences required for IPA. Equally, in keeping with the definition used throughout the study, transition is not a 'one-off event' or a specific time period, but is subjective, and varies amongst individuals (Crafter and Maunder, 2012).

Following the interviews, each child was sent a letter to thank them for their participation (Appendix 6). Participants will also be sent a short summary of the findings once the research is completed.

3.7 Data Analysis

IPA data analysis is committed to an idiographic fine-grained approach. As IPA is intended to be flexible and multi-directional, there is no single prescribed method of analysis. However, as a novice researcher, analysis of the interview transcripts followed the step-by-step process recommended by Smith et al. (2009). The method

for data analysis adopted by IPA is cyclical, as the researcher proceeds through several iterative and inductive stages (Smith, 2004). Table 9 illustrates each step and the process followed. All transcripts were line coded and used wide margins to record initial notes. The transcripts were analysed in conjunction with the original recordings. To achieve anonymity, audio files were stored securely in accordance with the University of Birmingham's Data Protection procedures.

The level of transcription notation observed followed conventions as described by Smith et al. (2009). Specific, identifiable information was excluded from the transcripts and labelled as [secondary school] etc.

Table 9: Summary of the process used during data analysis (as suggested by Smith et al., 2009, p. 79-80)

Steps	**Description of the Process Followed**
Step 1 Reading and re-reading	Following transcription of the audio recordings, close line-by-line reading and re-reading of the transcript was essential to fully immerse and familiarise myself with the interview content. Whilst completing this first step, I repeatedly listened to the original audio recordings. I also made notes of my overall first impressions of each of the five interviews.
Step 2 Initial noting	Close line-by-line examination of the text is conducted, with semantic content and language examined at an exploratory level. Exploratory comments include: • *Descriptive:* These have a phenomenological focus, looking at the content of what the participant has said i.e. things that are important to the participant; • *Linguistic:* The specific language used (i.e. tone, laughter,

	pauses) and its impact on the meaning of what is being said; and • *Conceptual:* The possible interpretations of meaning by the researcher in an attempt to make sense of 'the patterns of meaning in their account.' More abstract concepts are identified. These comments were colour-coded in order to be easily identified (Appendix 7). Initial thoughts, observations and reflections can also be added. All notes were recorded in the right-hand margin of the transcripts. Each transcript was examined five times.
Step 3 Developing emergent themes	Emergent themes were identified from the exploratory comments made in the initial noting stage (step 2). Brief yet precise statements are generated which capture the key points and the interpretation of the initial comments made. These were recorded in the left-hand margin (Appendix 7).
Step 4 Searching for connections across emergent themes	Possible or likely connections between themes are explored and clustered together to identify patterns across the data set. This offers a structure to the analysis by relating the identified themes into 'clusters'. Super-ordinate categories are being identified through a variety of different processes: • *Abstraction:* the grouping of similar themes together • *Subsumption:* emergent themes become superordinate as they bring together themes • *Polarisation:* looking for any differences and identify opposing themes • *Contextualisation:* relating themes to key facts or life events • *Numeration:* taking into account the frequency of how often a theme is mentioned.

	I created a table of emergent themes for each participant, grouping all relevant extracts together, to ensure internal consistency and accuracy. Key quotations were also included in the tables. Post-it notes were used to support with the grouping and visualisation of themes (Appendix 8). Once emergent themes were grouped, I compiled a summary table to identify the emerging 'subordinate' themes and 'superordinate' themes. This information was compiled to allow for a graphic representation of themes (Appendix 9).
Step 5 Moving to the next case	The process (steps 1-4) is repeated on each individual transcript. It is important to 'bracket' off the previous case analyses and the ideas emerging from previous transcripts, in keeping with the idiographic approach of IPA (Willig, 2001). A reflective diary was used to record any reflections to aid with 'bracketing off' beliefs and expectations. Once steps 1-4 had been completed on all five interviews, a table providing an overview of individual superordinate and sub themes across all cases was produced (Appendix 10).
Step 6 Looking for patterns across cases	Once steps 1-5 completed on all transcripts, connections are made between and across interviews, whilst individual and shared meanings are identified (Appendix 11). This can lead to the reconfiguring and relabeling of themes. An examination of each participant's theme summary table was completed and connections were identified, across tables resulting in the compilation of a master table of superordinate themes, and table of recurring themes (Appendix 12).

3.8 Demonstrating Validity and Quality Assurance

Criteria used for judging validity and reliability of quantitative research seek objectivity, statistical generalisability and predictable causal relationships, all of which are not considered in qualitative research (Willig, 2008). To address the differences in research methodology, Yardley (2000) provides a comprehensive framework for measuring the validity of qualitative research, comprising four key components outlined in Table 10. Smith et al. (2009) favour these principles for conducting IPA research. Table 10 provides a brief overview of how each component has been acknowledged and addressed within the research, to ensure that the study meets criteria for a valid qualitative investigation.

Table 10: Yardley's (2000) four principles for assessing the quality of qualitative research

Yardley (2000) Guidelines	**How this was addressed**
Sensitivity to Context	Good quality qualitative research should demonstrate sensitivity to context. This has been considered and highlighted throughout all stages of the research process, both implicitly and explicitly. A sensitive awareness of relevant theory and literature has been shown throughout each chapter of this thesis. 'Chapter 2: Literature Review' offers an in-depth account of what is already known about transition to secondary school, and children who are subject to CINP and CPP within a wider context and more generally. Following this, it has been clearly highlighted how current literature has shaped the research. In 'Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion', the findings of the study are considered in relation to existing literature to situate this research within a

	meaningful context (Smith et al., 2009). Sensitivity has also been shown to each participant and their unique experiences. I have ensured that my interpretations, based on the participant's interviews, are transparent and highlighted in 'Chapter Four: Findings and Discussion', using direct quotations so the reader can verify them with the verbatim transcripts of the interviews (Smith et al., 2009).
Commitment and Rigour	This is described as "demonstrating strong engagement with a topic and competence in the research approach" (Yardley, 2000; p.246), and has been present throughout the study, beginning with careful planning and gaining ethical approval. The sample and research method were selected to answer the research question (Smith et al., 2009) and a transparent, coherent rationale for each was offered. An idiographic approach was maintained throughout data collection and analysis (Smith et al., 2009). Due to being a novel researcher, the analysis of data set adhered to the step-by-step process outlined by Smith et al. (2009). The 'Appendices' section of this thesis offers further evidence of the stages undertaken during data analysis.
Transparency and Coherence	As a researcher, I have been transparent and clearly reported all of the decisions I have made throughout the research process. My philosophical position has been reported, alongside a clear rationale for the chosen research design. Clear and comprehensive findings were also offered based on the participant's lived experiences. Original data has been provided through extracts in the 'Appendices' section, alongside quotations within 'Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion'. Existing literature is also drawn upon to

	link the body of work and support findings. Yardley (2000) advocates that reflexivity is an essential component of transparency in qualitative research. A reflective diary has been kept through all stages of data collection and analysis. I used this to capture my thoughts, feelings and reflections on developing the interview schedule, conducting the interviews, transcribing the interviews and the process of analysing the data set. This allowed me to reflect on, and understand, my own experiences throughout the research process.
Impact and Importance	This principle incorporates the need for research to be 'immediately useful for practitioners, policy makers, or the general community' (Yardley, 2000, p. 250). This exploratory research aims to offer an original contribution to the field of research, offering key information in an under-researched area. This has been explicitly addressed by offering consideration to the relevance of this research to educational psychology in 'Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion', and 'Chapter 5: Conclusion' chapters of this thesis.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the findings generated during the analysis of five interviews, using IPA, to answer the following research questions:

1. How do children subject to a CINP and CPP experience their transition from primary to secondary school?
2. What factors influence the experiences of transition from primary to secondary school for children subject to a CINP or CPP?

The findings are presented under each superordinate theme and their corresponding subordinate themes. In keeping with the 'phenomenological' element of IPA, direct quotations from the transcribed interviews are interwoven alongside analytic/ interpretative commentary. Extracts from the transcripts have been carefully chosen to provide a selection from each participant to ensure that each individual's voice and unique experience is heard and represented. It is hoped the presentation of findings will guide the reader through the research journey.

Findings are also discussed in relation to previous literature. Psychological perspectives and the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 will be drawn upon, alongside a selective sample of additional literature where necessary (Smith et al., 2009). This chapter concludes with a summary of the main findings.

4.2 Overview of Themes

The analysis elicited **four** superordinate themes, consisting of several subordinate themes, in relation to the way participants reflected their experiences of transition. Each superordinate theme was shared by all participants and formulated from several related subordinate themes presented in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Table illustrating superordinate and subordinate themes relating to how participants describe their experiences of primary-secondary transition

Superordinate Themes	**Subordinate Themes**
New Beginnings: Moving on and Letting Go	Saying Goodbye To Primary School
	Fear of the Unknown
	Making and Maintaining Friendships
	Negotiating a New Identity
Opportunities and Challenges: Adjusting to Change	Thrown in at the Deep End
	A Step up in Responsibility and Expectations
	Teaching and Learning
A Search for Belonging: Facing Challenges	'I Need More Time'
	Isolation and Exclusion
	Feeling Safe, Secure and Understood
Support	Peer Support
	Teacher Support
	Family Support

4.3 Overview of Individual Experience

Table 12 summarises each participant's experience, as discussed within the interview, to offer an overview of their stories.

Table 12: Pen portraits of each participant with an overview of their experiences

Participant	Unique Experience
Jayden	Jayden experienced a disrupted primary education and difficulties during his first year at secondary school. He was permanently excluded from primary school in Year 6 and spent the remainder of the year at a pupil referral unit (PRU) before transitioning to his local secondary school. Both Jayden and school staff stated that he would spend the last 3 weeks of the summer term in an alternative provision, with the aim of supporting his challenging behaviours and emotional difficulties. Jayden feared that he would, in time, be permanently excluded from school. Jayden gradually formed friendships in school, particularly with older students. However, his relationships with professional adults were strained. Jayden's favourite lesson in school was P.E. In some ways, Jayden is open and sincere in his accounts of school life, though he also gave the impression that nothing fazed him and showed a reluctance to explore any negative emotional experiences. It was also clear from his account that he had very little affinity to either school he attended. Jayden's behavioural presentation continued to be challenging for staff to manage in school. He was registered on SEN Support, with the primary area of need identified as 'SEMH'. I interpreted certain, at times, challenging behavioural responses to be linked to a natural response to adapting to a new environment, challenges in forming secure relationships with adults, the influence of older peers offering Jayden a sense of belonging when school did not, and the pressure to uphold his older brother's reputation.
George	George experienced some disruptions to his primary education and spent three months in a PRU in year 3 for assaulting a member of staff. He is registered on SEN Support, with the primary area of need identified as

	'SEMH'. George was slightly more reserved than the other participants during his interview. He appeared hesitant to share certain details of his transition experience. George initially found the transition to secondary school difficult and presented with a number of challenging behaviours. Support from external agencies was sought and both school staff and parents were happy with the progress that George made in school. He was beginning to appear much more settled and happier. George was a quiet student who experienced long-standing difficulties with emotional literacy and emotional regulation. He would often internalise unwanted feelings of anger and frustration until it became too difficult to manage, and would lead to violent outbursts at home and at school. He was also the only student to report experiences of bullying, and found it difficult to form trusting relationships with adults and peers following transition.
Elle	Elle described herself as a quiet student who 'kept herself to herself'. She had experienced some difficulties settling into school since transitioning in September, particularly with forming relationships with her peers and some teaching staff. Since then, Elle had a small friendship group at secondary school, though reported an on-going feeling of social isolation. She admitted that she didn't feel settled in school and that Year 7 wasn't long enough to experience a sense of belonging, comparable to what she experienced at primary school. She missed her primary school and repeatedly expressed her preference for her old school. Elle had been reluctant to share her feelings with key school staff and often internalised her emotions. Elle did not attend her induction day and transitioned without her primary school classmates. Her secondary school experience to date appeared to be defined by a lack of peer support and shared experience. Elle's

	secondary school was her first choice, and her sister had previously attended the same school. Elle's sister should still have been attending the school when Elle joined, though went on a managed move the term before Elle transitioned. Elle's favourite lesson was Food Technology.
Summer	Summer was a confident young lady who believed she had a strong circle of school friends. Since her transition to secondary school, Summer experienced a number of difficulties at home, which she spoke openly about. Summer presented with some low level disruptive behaviour, which was not considered a concern, at primary school. Summer appeared settled at secondary school and tried hard in lessons. However, school staff shared concerns that Summer has fabricated the truth on a number of occasions. Though Summer reported mixed feelings about her transition, her view was generally positive. She explained that, *"school is just pretty much school. Nothing that's going bad, nothing going really good, everything is just in the middle right now."* Summer formed a close group of friends and spoke about how she had a boyfriend. These relationships were Summer's key incentives for attending school. Summer appeared to be very self-aware and was able to provide a detailed and reflective account of her transition experiences. Summer's experiences in primary school were predominately negative; she spoke about having multiple supply teachers and felt as though she didn't learn much. She also explained how she sat on the 'bottom table' in primary school, indicating low ability. These previous experiences of education are likely contributors to Summer's view of secondary school. She was ready to transition from primary school and, naturally, secondary school was the next step.
Priya	Overall, Priya reported the most positive experience out of the participants. She described transition and

	secondary school as “exciting, complicated, and life changing.” Priya spoke very positively of her secondary school experiences and the transition process. Priya settled well into her secondary school and engaged positively with the available pastoral support. Priya had a large friendship group and was well liked. She was performing well across all subjects and no behavioural concerns were reported. Prior to her transition to secondary school, Priya attended a local mainstream primary school. Since starting secondary school, she experienced further disruptions to her home life, though these did not appear to impact her presentation in school or her approach to learning. Some of Priya’s individual themes differed from the other children, with a particular focus on acceptance, through her appearance. Priya presented with low self-esteem and consistently sought reassurance and acceptance from her peers. She spoke negatively about her physical appearance in primary school, and how transition to secondary school was the perfect time to change her appearance. Priya also discussed how children explore their sexuality in secondary school, “everyone is bi-sexual here” and how she had been introduced into the new, and, at times, uncomfortable world of dating.

4.4 Superordinate Theme: New Beginnings: Moving on and Letting Go

This first superordinate theme describes how transition consists of leaving familiarity behind, and moving on to the unknown and unfamiliar. For participants, transition was more than just starting a new school. It also involved a developmental process that consisted of redefining proximal relationships and reorienting their adolescent identity. A strong theme that derived from all participants' accounts was the belief that transition is the time to 'grow up'. Growing up was conceptualised differently amongst participants; generally the experience was described as exciting but was also marked by uncertainty and grief at certain points.

4.4.1 Subordinate Theme: Saying Goodbye To Primary School

With the exception of Jayden, the children's accounts depicted a strong sense of personal loss associated with leaving primary school, as they portrayed sadness as their main emotion during interviews. This is understood to be a typical response for children, leaving an environment where it is likely they experienced belonging and connectedness, to somewhere completely new (Pratt and George, 2005; Anderson et al., 2000):

> **George:** *"I was pretty sad cos we were leaving, so when we were leaving I had a little tear on my face"*

> **Priya:** *"There are definitely things that I miss about it."*

The psychological impact of leaving a safe and familiar environment was evident for most of the children. In their interviews, Elle and Summer described a loss of support, especially from peer relationships, as they physically moved on from primary

school. There is some sadness portrayed here and perhaps a sense of grief as the strong bonds formed in primary school have been severed (Coffey, 2013):

> **Summer:** *"It took me six years to build up everyone's friendship and now it's gone. So it's just not the same now."*

> **Elle:** *"It was more like sad, because obviously I had been there for ages so it was kind of sad to see people go in all different ways"*

There appeared to be a pattern in the children's accounts that primary school offered them a sense of familiarity and safety. They spoke fondly of their primary school experiences and although the majority of participants felt ready to move on, strong feelings of loss were still present. Shaw (1995) reported how the context of primary schools typifies a family ethos, in comparison to the nature of a large, complex secondary school organisation. Lucey and Reay (2000) view transition as a move from the 'family' ethos of primary school to 'an impersonal and fragmented' secondary school environment (p.195). When talking about her primary school, Elle repeatedly refers to the feeling of a 'family' culture:

> **Elle:** *"- you know it was more of a like, every time like we went up a year or something it felt like more of a like family because I had lots of friends there."*

Elle expanded on this point by stating, *"I knew lots of people there so I could just talk with them about stuff".* Summer also reflected on how it was '*hard'* leaving primary school and moving on, *"I knew every classroom, every single teacher, I knew everybody, I knew everybody's mum, everything."* These statements support the argument that the smaller environment of primary school fosters a greater sense of

safety, familiarity and belonging (West et al., 2010; Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006; Anderson et al., 2000).

It is important to note that for all children, this sense of loss is difficult to process (Bagnall et al., 2019). However, endings and 'goodbyes' can be even more challenging and have a detrimental impact for vulnerable children, if not managed effectively (Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008). Drawing upon attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969), it could be suggested that the relationships formed in primary school provided the children with a secure base through providing stability, as well as physical and emotional containment. These stable relationships are said to be vital for children who have experienced instability in the home (Berridge, 2012). Ultimately, for children on a CINP or CPP, schools have the potential to provide the security and consistency that the home environment may not (DfE, 2019). Therefore, losing this with no adequate replacement could be even more detrimental for these children than other groups.

4.4.2 Subordinate Theme: Fear of the Unknown

All participants experienced conflicting emotions including fear, anxiety, and excitement prior to starting their new schools. This uncertainty is recognised in wider literature as creating conflicting feelings for children (Rice et al., 2011; Mellor and Delamont, 2011; Lucey and Reay, 2000). It is a time of internal conflict for many of the children, as they are excited to be challenged and 'grow up', yet apprehensive of the future.

> **Summer:** *"I literally cried not to go and I stayed in my room and never came out for like a couple of hours."*

> **Priya:** *"The six weeks took forever to go fast. I was really excited but they took forever."*

This ambivalence appeared to be linked to the children anticipating and predicting what secondary school was going to be like. Fears and concerns were varied amongst participants, though centred upon questions about adjusting and fitting in at new schools. There is agreement in existing research that most children express some concern and worry about issues associated with both the formal school system and the social aspect of transition (i.e. making friends) (Graham and Hill, 2003; Anderson et al., 2000).

There was some uncertainty and confusion around what secondary school was going to be like. George shared the most unrealistic expectations of secondary school, recalling how he believed children would *be "all in their own clothes and stuff."* Therefore, his fears were perhaps partly attributed to a lack of information or clarity about secondary school. I interpreted this as George having very little preparatory support within his microsystem, particularly from his parents and primary school. This will be further explored later in this chapter under 'Superordinate Theme: Support'. Preparatory support from primary schools varied amongst participants, though, beyond induction days, support was limited. Interestingly, Elle did not attend any induction days and put this down to part of her apprehension, though Priya and Summer considered their induction days to be 'pointless'.

Jayden recalled how he thought it would be *"everyone just shouting at ya, out of nowhere and just giving you hard work."* However, he did not view attending a new school as *"a big deal"* as it was not the first time he had moved schools. He reflected how this resulted in him doing *"nothing"* to prepare for the transition.

> **Jayden:** *"I just felt the same innit, I didn't care. I had already been to two schools. That helped me, I knew what it was going to be like."*

Having interviewed Jayden, there was a sense that these statements derived from a combination of self-preservation and naivety. As the interview proceeded, Jayden opened up and shared how he felt unprepared for starting secondary school and that he had received little emotional support from his family. For Jayden, there was perhaps some anxiety present beneath the surface, which was downplayed in his narrative and therefore not strongly portrayed. However, his strategy was shown to be maladaptive and led to him experiencing a difficult first year at secondary school. The detrimental effect of repression is also reflected in findings by Bagnall et al. (2019).

The fear of being alone or left behind was prominent for Summer and Elle, primarily due to the lack of familiar faces transitioning with her from primary school. Throughout Elle's interview this fear served as a motivational tool to be sociable to make friends so that, *"I wouldn't be on my own".*

> **Summer:** *"Because no-one was going so I thought I was going to be alone again.."*

The use of the word ‘again’ suggests loneliness is a feeling that Summer remembers and not one she wishes to replicate. Although the reason for Summer being on a CPP was not shared, she talked about her home life being “chaotic”. Tentative links to attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) could be drawn that experiences of previous abandonment could lead to a child fearing a similar experience happening again. This could be amplified during transition, a time clouded by uncertainty and loss of connectedness (Symonds, 2015).

The fears shared amongst participants were mostly comparable to those reported by the general population of children experiencing transition in existing literature (West et al., 2010; Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006; Zeedyk et al., 2003). This suggests that fears regarding transition for children who are CINP or CPP are not necessarily attributable to their needs. However, it is possible that some challenges are amplified due to a lack of preparatory support, and home experiences.

4.4.3 Subordinate Theme: Making and Maintaining Friendships

Most of the participants spoke of worries about losing old friends and making new ones before they transitioned. Therefore, once at school, ‘fitting in’ by forming friendships whilst trying to maintain existing ones were reported as priorities and concerns. This mirrors findings in existing research (Strand, 2019; Coffey, 2013; Mellor and Delamont, 2011; Ashton, 2008). This was explicitly discussed in all of the girls’ interviews:

> **Priya:** *“I wanted to stay friends with everyone but I’ve realised it is hard to do that so my friendships have changed..”*

> **Summer:** *"If you have no friends then it is actually hard because you have got to try and make friends who cannot really like take over their [primary school friends] place but that can make you happy as well and not feel like they are being fake or nothing…"*

Although neither Jayden, nor George, said it directly, they appeared unsettled and vulnerable before forming friendships. Jayden shared how he was *"silent"* before his friends moved to the school, whilst George thought, *"ah, this school is going to be rubbish"* until he made friends. Anderson et al. (2000) argued that the development of peer relationships is more important for girls and therefore, they may find it more difficult to adjust to the disruption of friendship networks than boys. However, this was not the case in the current study, as all participants found the disruption of friendships difficult in some form, similar to the later work of Pratt and George (2005).

Research suggests that transition can be smoothened when children move with their existing friends from primary school (Curson et al., 2019; West et al., 2010; Pratt and George, 2005). George, Elle and Summer reported that the majority of their primary school peers went to different secondary schools. Elle associated this with feeling unsettled, and explained *"to be honest it's more of the people that I don't like as much."* She spoke of how she "*doesn't really like change*" and therefore, transitioning with familiar faces would have minimised the enormity of changes occurring simultaneously (Bagnall et al., 2019). Priya seemed more confident about making friends and spoke positively about having transitioned with most of her classmates, and being a self-confessed *"popular girl"* in her primary school. Priya utilised prior friendships to expand her social circle and establish a stable group of *"best friends".*

> **Priya:** *"I want to spend the rest of my life with the friends I've got now."*

Despite the weight of importance on building relationships, this was not a quick process for all but one of the participants. For Summer and Elle, making friends and spending time with unfamiliar people was a hurdle they had to overcome. Elle repeats the word *'awkward'* when referring to making friends, signifying how uncomfortable she felt without the comfort or security of familiar faces. The difficulty in forming friendships seemed to result in Elle and George feeling alone and isolated, further supporting the assumption that for the children to feel well adjusted and experience a SoB, positive friendships must be formed quickly (Curson et al., 2019; Strand, 2019; Sirsch, 2003).

> **Summer:** *"It was difficult for me to make friends because like primary school it was just quite easy like everyone spoke to me, I'm not the one to speak to people they are the one to speak to me.."*

Peer groups amongst participants gradually expanded over time. The need to make friends quickly, avoid the risk of social isolation and sustain social stability was particularly evident throughout the girls' accounts. There was a sense of urgency in their responses, as they spoke of clinging to certain peers. This is perhaps associated with meeting a primary psychological need, of safety and connectedness that comes from being part of a social group (Maslow, 1943). This, for many, appeared to be all the support they felt that they needed.

> **Elle:** *"I do have some friends that I hang around with but it's like, kind of hang around with them or hang around with no one."*

The way that Elle talks about her 'friends' in the above extract is a significant contrast to the way she described her peer relationships in primary school, referring to all of her classmates as 'friends' and that she had *"lots of closer friends and then not so close friends".* She spoke fondly of these friendships and has continued to maintain these connections, which was evident by her statement *"obviously we still have contact together."* Curson et al. (2019) presents similar findings from the wider population, though the difference lies in the challenges dissipating quickly. Unfortunately for Elle, this was not the case.

Similar to findings by Tobbell (2003), students highlighted how the structure and systems in secondary school hindered the maintenance of friendships. For example, Priya felt unable to maintain friendships with primary school friends who were *"on the other side of the year"* to her. Contrastingly, and in line with findings in Sancho and Cline's (2012) study, George credited the quantity of students with positivity, as *"there are more people to be friends with."* Overall, it is clear that a sense of connectedness to a peer group during transition acted as a protective factor for all participants (Lester and Cross, 2014; Brewin and Statham, 2011).

4.4.4 Subordinate Theme: Negotiating a New Identity

Four of the participants spoke about how their identity changed as they moved to secondary school. This change was influenced by several factors, including a shift in social positions, social relationships, older siblings, and adolescent development. Pratt and George (2005) and Tobbell (2003) stress the 'critical' nature of change to a child's identity, self-concept and wellbeing that occurs during transition. This was pertinent within all of the children's accounts. Divergence was drawn out of the

participants' responses when considering the influences for changes to identity.

Pratt and George (2005) refer to the 'key rite of passage' to reflect challenges associated with identity during transition. In addition to new educational demands placed on students, exposure to an increased number of students (primarily older), and associated peer groups and pressures pose fundamental challenges for new students. As children transition to secondary school, they shift from the 'protected top' of the social hierarchy to the bottom of a more complex one (Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006). Participants reflected on this loss of social standing during their interviews:

> **Jayden:** *"It makes me feel like I'm an ant yeah, and they are a spider or something. I just feel really small."*

Jayden's use of the 'ant-spider' metaphor to describe his inferiority could be reflective of how vulnerable he felt as an 'ant' amongst a commonly feared, and potentially dangerous, 'spider'. Interestingly, a range of authors draw attention to an idea known as the 'transfer paradox' (Mackenzie et al., 2012; Hallinan and Hallinan, 1992). This refers to how transition represents both a step up and a step down in terms of socially reflected maturity. Children feel a role reversal as they are the smallest, but also feel more grown up. This can create conflicting feelings for children, as reflected by Priya:

> **Priya:** *"It's like year 6 we were the oldest and then here we are the youngest and being the oldest we knew how to act, we thought we were all big and everything and in Year 7, we still think we are still big but we aren't because we are the youngest and the smallest. It's like I*

don't want to be the littlest though."

All participants refer to feeling more grown up since joining secondary school, with George even remarking that he *"felt like a different person."* He was also very matter of fact when discussing transition, which is likely a reflection of the way that adults spoke to him about the process, as he documented his mother telling him to *"just man up".* He perceived 'growing up' to be an automatic process, whereas others discussed personal growth throughout the school year:

George: *"It's time to grow up, you know? You just have to become a man and coming to secondary school does that."*

There was also reference to how the children had to find their place socially within the new, more complex school system, with a sense of vulnerability felt as they attempted to adapt and 'fit in' to their new school environments. This is discussed in Erikson's (1959) theory of psychosocial development, as he highlights that adolescents have a preoccupation with how others see them and are *"primarily concerned with attempts at consolidating their social roles"* (p.94). Both Summer and Priya discuss how their physical appearance changed since transitioning to secondary school, and for Priya, transition was the perfect time to create a new image for herself:

Priya: *"I really changed a lot because in primary if you saw a photo of me I would be a little bit more fat and I would have a ponytail and be really dark as well"*

The concept of a 'fresh start' is also reflected on in findings by Brewin and Statham (2011), which focused on CiC. For Priya, her appearance and view of self was a prominent theme throughout her account and influenced many of her views. The reforming of her identity seemed to be dominated by her need for acceptance, and low self-esteem. This is also fitting with Erikson's belief that during the 'identity vs. role confusion' stage of development, otherwise known as adolescence, peers and the social environment have a greater bearing on the development of their adolescent's identity and sense of self.

Jayden spoke of how he felt as though he lived in his older brother's shadow, who was *'kicked out'* of the school prior to Jayden's transition. As a result, challenges arose with both peers and teachers when negotiating his identity in his new school. Jayden's brother's reputation was seen as a positive amongst his peers, and provided him with some status amongst older students.

> **Jayden:** *"Some people know me and I don't even know them. I'm a bit well known in school, probably cos of my brother."*

It seemed that this popularity boosted his self-esteem and confidence, whilst helping him to form alliances with older peers, seen as a marker of esteem (Symonds and Hargreaves, 2016). However, it was more problematic for teachers:

> **Jayden:** *"Well, he was naughty right, so they probably think I'm the same cos we are brothers. It's like 'oh you are his little brother, must be bad.' He got kicked out, now I probably am so."*

Here, Jayden's identity is mediated through micro and meso-level factors (his brother and teachers) as well as the interaction between the two. Jayden's narrative was interpreted as fatalistic and reflective of a 'self-fulfilling prophecy', whereby he is living up to expectations partially created by his older brother's behaviour. Jayden seems to exhibit an external locus of control, which he may experience as a sense of hopelessness, as his reputation appears to have had an effect on his belief system, accepting the inevitable trajectory of becoming excluded again. When referring back to the protective function a 'fresh start' offers, from Jayden's perspective and further interpretation, he was seemingly robbed of this opportunity.

4.5 Superordinate Theme: Opportunities and Challenges: Adjusting to Change

This superordinate theme highlights the children's experiences as they attempted to adjust to their new physical and social environment. For all participants, transition was characterised by numerous changes taking place at the same time. 'Opportunities and Challenges' encapsulates the two ways that these changes were conceptualized and experienced. A disconnect between primary and secondary school was also drawn upon, as reflected in existing literature (Coffey, 2013). Many of the changes were experienced as a 'positive challenge', though some experienced as a 'difficult threat' (Sirsch, 2003).

4.5.1 Subordinate Theme: 'Thrown in at the Deep End'

The consensus amongst participants was once they were at secondary school their pre-transfer anxieties shifted to new ones. The feelings of being overwhelmed,

unprepared and out of their depth were shared by all children starting secondary school. These feelings were present regardless of whether the children viewed transition as a positive or negative experience. Although such feelings were mutual, differences were highlighted in intensity and duration.

> **Priya:** *"I was just like 'it's too new', it's just, I cant deal with everyone's face, there's just too many people and (pause) it's just really different"*

Jayden also reported that "*it felt so much different"* and going to secondary school was a *"big jump"*, whilst Elle explained*, "it's a lot of stress when you come to secondary school"* while referring to herself as "*just one little girl."* This phrase illustrates how Elle was overwhelmed by the discontinuities of transitioning.

Elle provided an evocative, powerful metaphor to liken the transition to drowning, which reflected a sense of overwhelming panic and helplessness:

> **Elle:** *"It was like we were just thrown in at the deep end, without anyone telling us how to swim..."*

Research conducted into the general population reports children feel overwhelmed in their new environment (Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006; Anderson et al., 2000). However, it is possible that these emotions are intensified for some children on a CINP or CPP, perhaps due to lower levels of self-efficacy associated with growing up in an inconsistent and unpredictable caregiving environment (Cole et al., 2005), and increased likelihood of SEN (DfE, 2019b). These difficulties are likely to influence how children perceive their ability to influence their world, which may contribute to

passivity as well as a sense of helplessness and hopelessness (Mowat, 2019; Cole et al., 2005), a notion also evident in Jayden's earlier account.

Elle's statement also illustrates the lack of information and support she felt that she was offered during the initial stages of transition. Graduated support was limited and it felt that she was expected to manage multiple changes with limited support, hence the feeling of vulnerability. She spoke of how her feelings may have changed if she was told *"things slowly and gradually instead of taking it out on us when we didn't remember."*

Summer reflected that the enormous task of transitioning to secondary school was often underestimated, whilst reflecting on the limited emotional support she received:

> **Summer:** *"It's almost like, because everyone has to go to secondary school that we should just get on with it, you know what I mean? Like it should be normal, but it is hard sometimes.*"

Humphrey and Ainscow (2006) discussed the contrasting features of primary and secondary school environments. Primary schools are typically smaller, with one set of classmates, and one teacher that often changes yearly. This offers familiarity and safety for many pupils. However, secondary schools can seem complex and intimidating as children experience the larger, busier, environment and encounter many teachers and peers. The number of changes influenced the children's feelings during this time often related to these formal structures in school. These include finding their way around school, the school size, changes to behaviour systems, and routines. These concerns are consistent with previous research (Rice et al., 2011;

Evangelou et al., 2008; Maras and Aveling, 2006), indicating that such challenges are not unique to those who are subject to a CINP or CPP.

As with much of the existing research into transition, many of these stressors dissipated fairly quickly as they grew accustomed to their new schools, particularly relating to orientation (Bloyce and Fredrickson, 2012; Gillson et al., 2008). For example, George spoke of how it took "*4-5 weeks"* to become familiar with finding his way to lessons independently. Priya stated, "*now I just feel like…oh I recognise every face*" and "*the school isn't even that big",* though it had *"taken ages to get to that point."* This further strengthens the idea that by the summer term of Year 7 (when the interviews took place) a process of assimilation had occurred and participants no longer viewed these as challenges.

Some participants admitted that they were surprised by the challenges they faced when starting secondary school, as they believed they were ready for change. Jayden felt particularly surprised, *"I thought I was prepared but I wasn't."* Jayden's experience was somewhat different to the other participants as he transitioned directly from a PRU to a mainstream secondary school. Therefore, it would be reasonable to assume that the changes to both the school environment and expectations was more drastic:

> **Jayden:** *"Well, when I was at the PRU there was like six people in my class, so that felt better and then I had to come here and have loads in my class, because like the normal classroom now is just more loud and more annoying cos some people are just too different like and I'm just not used to it after being at the PRU."*

For Jayden (and George) being registered on SEN support, transition can act as a critical period where support and continuity between primary and secondary schools are essential (McCoy et al., 2019). As previously discussed, the greater the discontinuity, the greater the challenge. So, it is therefore possible that these challenges contributed to a lack of school readiness for Jayden and George.

4.5.2 Subordinate Theme: A Step up In Responsibility and Expectations

Many of the children weighed up the pros and cons to the increased responsibility they inherited at secondary school. Previous research emphasises the change in expectations between primary and secondary schools, with staff holding different expectations of learning, behaviour management and social aspects of school life (Bloyce and Fredrickson, 2012; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008).

A direct link was interpreted between this subordinate theme and 'Subordinate theme: Negotiating a New Identity', with many participants reporting that they felt more grown up than before. Summer, Jayden and Priya described how they were treated like *'babies'* or *'toddlers'* in primary school. These terms suggest that many participants felt restricted and were longing for freedom.

> **Jayden:** *"Basically, in primary they treated you like you were a toddler. They just bring you everywhere. They may as well have just picked you up and carried you to the lesson. It's just annoying; they don't give you enough space. I'm just not used to that, at home or anywhere."*

> **Summer:** *"I'm not being treated like a baby, cos like they trust me so I have got to take on the role."*

The juxtaposition in the use of the terms *'baby'* and '*adult'* emphasises the significant change in the way adults treated the participants, and the increased expectations placed on them, regarding independence, freedom and responsibility. All participants, with the exception of George, discussed the newly found freedom offered at secondary school with positivity, as cited in previous literature (Strand, 2019; Symonds and Hargreaves, 2016). This is perhaps unsurprising given that children often strive for independence in adolescence (Blakemore and Frith, 2005).

Priya: *"You just are treated more like a grown up here.."*

However, George found this change particularly difficult. He spoke about his preference for primary school as he was treated "*like a kid".* There appeared to be a lack of readiness for the increased expectations placed on him, rather valuing dependency on adults. This could be linked to his unrealistic expectations of secondary school, as well as lack of preparatory support and emotional warmth provided by his parents (as discussed in Subordinate Theme: Parent Support). Jindal-Snape and Foggie (2008) offer an alternate view to these challenges by highlighting the contrast in expectations of independence between primary and secondary schools. They suggest that secondary schools have an expectation that children should be independent, though identify that primary schools often fail at developing this independence.

Notably, nearly all participants quickly learnt that new levels of responsibility accompany independence (Tobbell, 2003), leading some of the participants to feel

ambivalent. At times, they disliked the newly found freedom as it led to greater challenges. For example, a higher degree of self-organisation is suggested to be required amongst pupils (Humphrey and Ainscow, 2006), which was reflected in participant's narratives. Summer explains that there was *"lots to remember",* whilst Elle stated that there were *"big expectations to remember everything."* Elle went on to explain: *"if we forget something we get like detentions."* Although organisation and increased expectations is said to be a challenge for most children during transition (Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008; West et al., 2010), it is possible that children on a CINP or CPP will face greater challenges in adjusting due to the impact of trauma on impairments to executive functioning skills (Greig et al., 2008).

When considering this theme in relation to Erikson's (1959) developmental stages, transition appears to amplify an already confusing period of development for young people as they are expected to behave in a responsible manner but are still dependent upon the adults around them in school, and for George, his parents.

4.5.3 Subordinate Theme: Teaching and Learning

All participants discussed academic adjustments, albeit with significantly less frequency than the social adjustments that took place during transition. However, important points can be drawn from the data. Much of the findings align to those in previous studies that reflect the challenges many children are faced with when progressing into a new and more pressured academic environment (Coffey, 2013; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008).

The change in academic expectations and more demanding learning environments is also said to contribute to concerns and anxiety during the transition process (Strand, 2019; Smyth, 2017). Interestingly, none of the children spoke of concerns of an academic nature prior to transition. However, all participants referenced differences in teaching and learning styles between primary and secondary phases. These appeared to be influenced by the child's relationship with the teacher, grouping strategies adopted, support provided and behaviour management strategies utilised in the classroom. Though, these varied amongst participants.

Summer and Elle framed their understandings of the challenges by comparing their experiences of education in primary and secondary school:

> **Summer:** *"Harder than primary, like more challenging you've got to like analyse in English and we never really got taught how to analyse in primary it was more like read it, find what you need and go write it down…so it is better, just harder."*

> **Elle:** *"…it was mostly about like punctuation in primary in English and here is like metaphors and personification and alliteration…"*

These extracts highlight how secondary school is said to be 'more challenging'. Bafumo (2006) discusses how children miss the 'comfort level' of primary school learning after they transition, particularly the familiarity of their classmates and teachers. Most UK primary schools focus their teaching on a child-centred, experiential learning approach in a single teacher model, with a primary focus on the acquisition and fluency of basic literacy and numeracy skills (Galton, 2000). This focus differs to secondary schools that adopt a subject-specific, didactic approach,

with emphasis on the acquisition of knowledge and conceptual understanding across a range of subjects (Topping, 2011; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008). This lack of coherence in teaching and learning is likely to raise both pedagogical and curriculum discontinuities (Rae, 2014). Perhaps worthy of note was the divergence in Priya's positive account of teaching and learning in secondary school that counters Bafumo's (2006) assumption:

> **Priya:** *"I thought it would be harder, but the thing is you know more so like before when you were in year 6 so really when you go up you will realise that 'oh you are smart enough to do it'…so yeah it's not as hard as we think."*

Interestingly, many participants' accounts revealed how they did not always regard the challenge of secondary school curriculum with negativity. In fact, greater academic challenge coincided with greater opportunity and increased motivation for George, Summer and Elle. Elle spoke about the exposure to a broader and more diverse curriculum and how this sparked new interests and skills. In doing so, she appeared to find both enjoyment and mastery, boosting her self-concept as a learner (Strand, 2019). This reflects Coffey's (2013) argument that for many children, diversity in the curriculum is appreciated, and possibly increases positivity towards learning during early adolescence. In comparison, the disruptions to Jayden's education caused him to forget *"how to use anything",* including many skills he acquired at primary school. This led to Jayden feeling insecure about learning, resulting in a loss of motivation.

The expectations of teachers may differ, as will the nature of the teacher-child relationships. These findings support the views of Bergin and Bergin (2009) who

theorise that teacher-child relationships are central for a child to feel secure, safe and ready to learn, thus making educational progress.

Although George reported increased motivation with learning, he also stated "*the classes can be confusing"* and that teachers did not appear invested in supporting his learning:

> **George:** *"I don't think that the teachers are bothered here. It wasn't like that in primary school though. (Pause) Weird."*

This pause and use of the word '*weird'* highlights that this is an unusual concept to George. This could be a reflection in the continuity of support George received and teacher responsiveness to his needs. He spoke of how he was supported by a teaching assistant *("helper teacher")* at primary school whom he formed a close relationship with. This supports findings by McCauley (2010) who reported children with SEN experience greater susceptibility to discontinuities in support and guidance. Although secondary school comes with greater expectation to learn independently (Makin et al., 2017), for children identified with SEN, appropriate support should be identified in accordance with the SEN CoP (DfE, 2015).

4.6 Superordinate Theme: A Search for Belonging: Facing Challenges

This superordinate theme relates specifically to challenges and barriers participants faced in establishing a SoB in their new schools. Establishing a sense of school belonging is said to be vital in ensuring students are socially and emotionally secure (Pratt and George, 2005). Three children discussed how they did not feel integrated

in their new school environment and, thus, felt they did not belong almost a year after joining.

This superordinate theme attempts to capture the reasons behind this. Three subthemes are presented. The first solidifies the assumption that transition should be viewed as an on-going process, that varies amongst children. The second examines how isolation and exclusion is experienced by certain participants and shapes their transition experiences. The final theme focuses on the challenges with feeling safe, secure and understood, particularly by adults, and how teacher-child relationships are imperative to establishing a SoB.

4.6.1 Subordinate Theme: 'I Need More Time'

Transition was viewed as a gradual process with the need for time to adjust and feel settled, in the narratives of George, Elle and Jayden. Elle, in particular, repeatedly stated that feeling settled and well-adjusted, and therefore experiencing a SoB, was a gradual process that cannot happen within a year. Belonging was viewed as a positive attribute, something that the children hoped to achieve with time:

> **Elle:** *"Like the time I've been here [secondary school] hasn't been enough to feel like that comfortable yet."*
>
> **Researcher:** "Right –"
>
> **Elle:** *"I've only been here for a year or summat I wouldn't have known everybody as good but like I knew lots of people there [primary school] so I could just talk with them about stuff instead of going to the teachers but I could know which ones I should trust and which ones I shouldn't so."*

It is important to note that George made progress to feeling settled, reflected in his use of past tense in the below extract. However, this was still an on-going and gradual process:

> **George:** *"I just, I didn't really get the school first. It's just that people would just annoy me."*

This supports the position of the research that considers transition as a process that, for some children, may take the entirety of the first year (Crafter and Maunder, 2012; Zeedyk et al., 2003).

Given that much of the existing research suggests that initial anxiety dissipates quickly once children have settled into their new schools (Rice et al., 2011; Evangelou et al., 2008), these findings are indicative of some of the additional challenges faced by these children. Authors have illustrated how concerns and challenges remain for a small number of vulnerable children (Topping, 2011; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008; Stradling and MacNeil, 2000). These are important factors to consider as, for vulnerable pupils, the negative implications of a difficult transition can be significant and long lasting.

Although familiarity often emerges in existing research as a protective factor during transition (Evangelou et al., 2008), the children's familiarity with their new surroundings did not appear to be strongly associated with feeling settled and experiencing a SoB. For example, George explained how he adapted to navigating the school within weeks, though struggled forming peer relationships and so, felt as

though he was not a fully integrated member of the school community. George's narrative grew more positive as he connected with teachers and peers, which contributed to his SoB, further highlighting the positive power of relationships during transition.

> **George:** *"Urm, I'm starting to get to know some people well now so I feel more settled"*

Elle also felt comfortable with orientation after a short while but struggled with social adjustment, influencing her view of needing more time to settle. This reflects how the quality of a child's social network may influence their experiences of school belonging. It also supports the theoretical assumption that connectedness is vital to the experience of belonging (Baumeister and Leary, 1995).

> **Elle:** *"It's like we don't really even know each other so. I just don't really know everyone yet in school."*

These findings are not surprising, given that much of the transition packages are often focused on supporting children with institutional adjustments, whilst neglecting to address social and emotional factors (Galton and McLellan, 2018). These include building relationships, fostering a SoB and promoting emotional wellbeing, all of which can positively contribute to transition success (Van Rens et al., 2018; Bailey and Baines, 2012; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008).

This arguably led to George's apparent indifference regarding secondary school, frequently referring to school *as "ok I guess, just ish-ish".* Equally, Elle confidently reported, *"I prefer primary all the way, I just prefer it".* Jayden was much more implicit

with this, though his sincere account of the challenges he faced since joining secondary school suggest that he is not yet settled, nor felt he had been given the chance to be.

4.6.2 Subordinate Theme: Isolation and Exclusion

This subtheme refers to inclusion and exclusion in both a physical and social sense. Jayden and George were both excluded from their primary schools and attended PRUs. This is perhaps unsurprising given the overrepresentation of children on a CINP or CPP in exclusion data in England (DfE, 2019b). Jayden negatively viewed getting *'kicked out'* of primary school as a defining feature of his school experience, whilst George discussed his happiness at being able to return to his primary school.

Previous research highlights the link between prior disruptive behaviour at primary school and a less successful transition (Anderson et al., 2000; Berndt and Mekos, 1995). Prior school exclusion (Bloyce and Frederickson, 2012) and previous school transitions (West et al., 2010) are also understood to contribute to a child's vulnerability during transition. For Jayden, history appeared to repeat itself as he experienced an extremely unsettled first year at school:

> **Jayden:** *"So, I got kicked out, again. They went to put me on a managed move but I didn't go and ended up staying at home for like 3 months. And then they told me to come back and I just came and they put me in RTL (Ready to Learn)."*

Jayden's first response when asked about his secondary school experience to date was, *"It's good yeah, but I hate being in isolation."* This suggests that for Jayden,

secondary school is defined by spending time out of the classroom, "*I'm in RTL a lot"* (in Jayden's school, RTL was the term used for isolation rooms). Elle and George also discussed punitive approaches such as isolation, detentions and behaviour points that were frequently enacted in their new schools. This is in line with DfE guidance entitled 'Behaviour and Discipline in Schools' (DfE, 2016), which discusses an authoritarian response to behaviour management and the power teachers have to 'punish' and 'discipline' pupils for 'misbehaviour'.

These negative experiences and interactions with teachers created a vicious cycle for Jayden as he felt less of an affiliation with his school and presented an increase in challenging behaviour, mirroring findings by Jindal-Snape and Miller (2008). Given that a high percentage of children on a CINP or CPP experience SEMH needs, they are more likely to exhibit challenging behaviour in the classroom and around school, resulting in an increased likelihood of time in isolation or exclusion. Therefore, whilst this remains the case, many children on a CINP or CPP will continue to be disadvantaged and at the forefront of sanctioning procedures in schools. In the below extract, George reflects this, as he attempts to recall praise he had received from teaching staff. These limited opportunities to experience achievement and success are likely to contribute negatively to George's already weakened resilience (Rae, 2014).

> **George:** *"…apparently you get achievement points for getting +1s [behaviour point system] all the time but I don't know about that. I haven't really seen any achievement points come my way so I don't know."*

Methods of physical isolation in schools are often associated in the literature with feelings of rejection (Munn and Lloyd, 2005). For Jayden and George, feelings of rejection appeared prominent and are likely to be detrimental to their self-concept, motivation, relationships and SoB in school. This is concerning, given that transition is already considered a particularly vulnerable time when considering these factors (Bailey and Baines, 2012; Jindal-Snape and Miller, 2008). Unfortunately, at a macro level, much of the government guidance is not considerate and reflective of the influence behaviour management approaches and wider external influences can have on vulnerable children.

On a more cautionary note, despite Jayden reportedly *'hating'* isolation, he referred to school as being *"better than being at home."* This is a damning statement that carries an assumption that home, for Jayden, is not an enjoyable place to be. However, isolation may also reduce the number, and quality, of peer relationships formed as time spent with peers is significantly reduced. This is an important point to consider, as some participants experienced challenges with forming peer connections. Elle, George and Jayden all referred to feeling 'different' or socially marginalised from their peers: For Elle, the loneliness she felt was so acute that she wanted to move schools. These feelings can be detrimental to a child's self-concept, a factor considered easily malleable during the onset of puberty (Cole et al. 2001).

Jayden: *"Because right at the PRU yeah, it's like there are people just like me…they were just more like me, whereas here they ain't."*

Elle: *"Here, they don't know me and I don't know them."*

In describing the reasons behind feeling isolated, George spoke of feeling ‘angry’ and regularly getting into conflicts with his peers. Rather than attribute his challenges to external factors, George defined himself as *“an angry person*”. This had a significant bearing on George’s ability to foster peer relationships and integrate into daily school life. This is reminiscent of findings by Bailey and Baines (2012) and Anderson et al. (2000) who discuss how difficulties controlling emotions during transition would be a hindrance to forming positive relationships:

> **George:** *“I spend a lot of time on my own too because I get angry a lot.”*

These findings highlight how children on a CINP or CPP are more likely to be susceptible to feelings of isolation, loneliness and alienation during transition.

4.6.3 Subordinate Theme: Feeling Safe, Secure and Understood

This theme is strongly linked to the previous subordinate theme ‘Isolation and Exclusion’, as those who feel physically or socially isolated, or excluded, in school appeared to report feeling less safe, secure and understood by adults. However, safety and security were both implicitly and explicitly mentioned throughout all of the children’s accounts. The extent to which it influenced their SoB in school varied, though for some it was a key trend that ran through their interview.

Several authors have found that trusting and affirmative teacher-child relationships are important for facilitating a SoB for students, thus supporting a successful transition (Mowat, 2019, 2010; Tobbell and O’Donnell 2013). Knowing and trusting

teachers played a significant role in reported feelings of safety and security associated with primary school for Summer, Elle and George. Bailey and Baines (2012) found that when sources of trust, support and comfort were no longer available following transition, student's experienced greater difficulty with adjustment. This was also apparent in the current research. For most participants it took time for relationships to be formed and trust to be earned, therefore, for a period of time, many of the children felt alone. It is understood that when a child has experienced trauma, it can lead them to distrust adults, therefore creating barriers to forming interpersonal, trusting relationships with adults quickly (Wise, 2000):

> **Summer:** *"I never spoke to the teachers up until now because I never really trusted them."*

> **Elle:** *"I find it difficult to trust people. Doesn't matter if it's adults or other kids. It's something I have always struggled with, you just, like (pause) don't really ever know what people are up to. You know what I mean?"*

Jayden did not appear to experience these feelings as strongly in either school, likely due to his disruptive education. Unfortunately, Jayden felt like he transitioned from one negative school experience to another. However, although Jayden viewed his primary school teachers as *"unfair"*, he also stated *"they got me"* and reflected on how this made it easier for him to open up to his primary school teacher. Similarly, the most prominent feature of George's interview was his continual repetition that adults at secondary school *"don't get him"*. He views feeling misunderstood by teachers as a key cause of his difficulty adjusting to school:

> **George:** *"Some of the teachers here don't really get me. Some of them do, but more of them don't so it's harder."*

Comparably, George felt understood in primary school, and losing this significantly altered the way he viewed his transition to secondary school. The DfE (2019d) highlighted how many children on a CINP or CPP experience disruptions to their education, due to exclusions or attendance at alternative provisions, all of which are likely to contribute to challenges forming trusting relationships (Mowat, 2019, 2010). The theoretical literature also highlights that children who have experienced trauma and ACEs, like those on a CINP or CPP, may be some of the hardest to maintain positive relationships with, at least in part, because of their attachment history (Bombèr, 2011; 2007 & Geddes, 2006). The application of attachment theory is suggested to help adults empathise and understand children's needs (Gulliford and Miller, 2015). However, in order for adults to empathise, they must have an understanding of the child's situation. As children on a CINP and CPP have been branded an 'invisible group' by the DfE (2019b), it is possible that teachers are not aware of the more vulnerable students and are, therefore, unable to offer the required social and emotional support.

For some children, who might be experiencing complex home lives and ACEs, stable school relationships can act as vital resilience resources (Bellis et al., 2018; Hughes et al., 2018). However, existing research states that given the more complex and formal organisational structures in secondary schools (predominately the large number of pupils and teachers) secure attachments can be more difficult to form (West et al., 2010; Jindal-Snape and Foggie 2008). Elle, George and Jayden appear

to echo these feelings, as they all referred to how the quantity of teachers affected the opportunities for trusting relationships to be formed.

> **George:** *"I just have lots of teachers now. Too many. They can't all get me because they don't know me, like I don't know, sometimes I see them like only a bit a week."*

> **Elle:** *"I prefer primary all the way, I just prefer it, mainly the friends. Probably the teachers too, it's the same as friends to be honest, if you have had a teacher that you've known for seven year that would be more of, like comfortable and able to talk to them normally. Here it's a different teacher for every lesson and even in form, well we know her name but we don't know even what lesson she teaches. So we are slowly getting to know her but we still don't know a lot about her."*

The quotations above explain the disruptions Elle and George experienced due to changes in teachers, in contrast to the security which seeing a familiar face each day offered them (particularly George). The use of the phrase *"too many"* in George's description further solidifies this. Elle's quotation provides a striking account of her views regarding her SoB at secondary school, and how influential teachers are to securing this.

Jayden appears the most self-sufficient, focusing on relationships less than Elle and George. However, it is my belief that Jayden's relationships were the most problematic, leading to him believing that teachers have given up on him:

> **Jayden:** *"They want me gone now."*

This is an incredibly powerful and upsetting statement. Smyth (2017) described the critical importance of the day-to-day teacher-child interactions in facilitating a child's

continued engagement with their new school during transition. However, Jayden uses the term *"rude"* when referring to many of his teachers, insinuating that many interactions are negative. Negative interactions with teachers were viewed as contributing to a lack of a SoB (Sancho and Cline, 2012). It is possible that Jayden's view of teachers was based on his negative perception of adults, founded by exclusions and punitive approaches that he believed to be unjust. Not only did this appear to contribute to Jayden feeling powerless, but also led him to be more sensitive to teacher's responses to him. As advocated by Munn and Lloyd (2005), school exclusion is the ultimate form of rejection, and this rings true for Jayden.

These findings support those presented by Rice et al. (2011) who discussed how the establishment trust and respect with teachers contribute to students' enjoyment and reduced concerns about school. As promoted by Evangelou et al. (2008), when interventions aim to foster supportive and trusting relationships with key adults, a less problematic transition could be expected for vulnerable students.

4.7 Superordinate Theme: Support

Throughout the accounts, all participants made reference to the support (or lack of support) they received during transition. Although each told of their own unique experiences in the interviews, there were similarities. These are reflected under three areas of support within the children's microsystems; peers, teacher, and family support.

This theme draws on the importance of strong support mechanisms across the transition phase (Coffey, 2013). Support can be influential for preparations; reducing

anxiety once at school and throughout the first year. Children are said to be more vulnerable during transition when these support networks are not available (Tobbell, 2003).

4.7.1 Subordinate Theme: Peer Support

All participants spoke about the power of friendship when transitioning and settling into their new environments during their interviews. In fact, peer relationships were mentioned more than any other factor across the interviews. This has been continually reported within the literature over the years, highlighting the fundamental importance of peer relationships as valuable sources of social and academic support during transition (Bagnall et al., 2019; Curson et al., 2019; Bloyce and Frederickson, 2012; Crafter and Maunder, 2012; Evangelou et al., 2008). These findings also link to Erikson's (1959) stage of adolescence whereby there is a shift away from dependence on parents and other supporting adults and a move towards the influence and support of peers and friendships.

The central theme of Sancho and Cline's (2012) study was the importance of peer relationships for establishing a SoB in school. Much like in the current research, the turning point in feeling settled appeared to be when the child established themselves in a friendship group. Ultimately, peer relationships were fundamental sources of support, heavily contributing to a SoB, for all of the participants. Jayden stated, *"My friends helped me fit",* which led to him feeling happier at school.

George's peer connections also had a substantial influence on his SoB, *"I'm getting to know some people very well now so I feel more settled".* He implied that having a group of friends provided an element of safety, as they would *"stick up for you"*:

> **George:** *"We can make more friends and people can just not get bullied by other people because they would have more friends."*

Despite challenges in forming peer relationships cited by Elle, Summer and George, all participants purposefully used friendships and other peer relations to support their adjustment to school. This is consistent with findings by Weller (2007). Jayden spoke of how he relied on his peers support to navigate the school building:

> **Jayden:** *"Like when I first got here I was just following everyone, I didn't know my way."*

The role of older peers as a source of support was reported in George, Jayden and Summer's accounts. Previous research suggests that positive transition is promoted by the friendliness of older children at secondary school (Evangelou et al., 2008). Familiar older students can serve as a protective factor and offer a sense of security for children as they adapt to an unfamiliar environment (Coffey, 2013). It is clear that positive peer relationships were a motivational factor for school attendance and acted as a protective factor against negative effects of transition. Overall, social support helped the children to feel more secure and socially accepted during a time of heightened stress.

> **Summer:** *"I have more friends here now, so like it makes me more*

want to come to school than anything else."

4.7.2 Subordinate Theme: Family Support

This subtheme varied significantly amongst participants, in terms of what this support looked like and when it was received. Most of the participant's spoke of two forms of family support – the support of older siblings or family members, and parental support.

Having an older sibling in school has been found to be supportive in children adjusting to new schools (Bagnall et al., 2019; Curson et al., 2019; Jindal-Snape and Cantali, 2019). Jayden and Elle spoke about their older siblings previously attending their secondary schools and the security this offered them. Similar findings were reported by MacKenzie et al. (2012) who found that having an older sibling at the secondary school decreased social threat scores for students prior to transition.

Jayden: *"People just ain't going to fight me are they, because they know if they do then my brother will be after them."*

However, despite the siblings offering some level of security, this was not enough for Jayden or Elle to feel more settled in school, rejecting the assumption put forward by Curson et al. (2019) specific to the general population.

Parents are said to provide fundamental emotional and practical support to their child during transition (Curson et al., 2019; Jindal-Snape and Cantali, 2019), though the support provided by the participant's families in the current study appeared

predominantly practical in nature. George, Summer, Priya and Elle spoke about their parents buying their new uniforms. However, when asked what other ways they were supported by parents prior to transition, responses were limited. Priya stated, "*I don't think she [mother] did anything else",* whilst George reported, *"just my uniform. That's it really. We didn't talk about it or anything."* Once at secondary school, all participants found it difficult to recount times they were able to seek emotional support from their parents as they struggled to adjust to their new schools.

Summer discussed how she felt responsible for the financial pressures placed on her family during transition, which acted as an additional stressor. This was also interpreted as contributing to Summer not seeking emotional support from her parents. Rather she felt that she needed to manage her emotions about the impending transition on her own, to avoid further contributing to her family's stress levels:

> **Summer:** *"Everybody had to pay for my uniform and my mum she didn't really have enough money for it, so I felt bad about that because people had to spend money and stuff."*

Parental involvement is said to be a vital source of support for children transitioning to secondary school (Symonds and Galton., 2014; Waters et al., 2014). It is reported to be important for parents to have an understanding of school processes and form positive relationships with their child's teachers, with effective lines of communication (Coffey, 2013). However, for Jayden and George this was not the case:

> **Jayden:** *"They don't really know much about school and stuff. Like, they told me I need to go to another one but they don't know why, and*

like, I don't know, they never ask me really. So yeah."

George and Jayden had very few support structures to drawn upon in their families, which likely contributed to them feeling unprepared during the process as they experienced a lack of support within their microsystems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In the below extract, Summer recalls the challenges in her family that coincided with transition, illustrating that, for some children, additional stressors, such as those that exist within their family systems take precedence over their transition and may influence the support provided by families:

Summer: *"It was hard for me since like loads of stuff has happened in my family and then there was like me just going to high school."*

Previous research suggests that children who have caring parents who encourage autonomy are more likely to better adjust to their new schools (Evangelou et al., 2008; West et al., 2008; Anderson et al., 2000). Priya spoke of how her mother had high expectations on her to *"grow up",* whilst George's mother did not appear to help him manage his feelings of apprehension towards transition:

George: *"My mum just said that you have to man up, yeah."*

Although caution must be taken when interpreting this statement, George's account reveals a lack of parental awareness of socio-emotional aspects of transition. Instead of being a provider of reassurance, George's account implies that his mother took a matter-of-fact approach to supporting him. As reflected on previously, George's views of transition and the need to *"just grow up"* mirrored his mother's. This finding is in

line with Symonds (2015) who explained how children learn to cope with stressors by observing their parents' behaviour and, when their parents engage in negative forms of coping i.e. dismissal, avoidance or aggression, children may be at risk of mirroring these coping styles. This was detrimental for George, as he had little understanding of what 'growing up' meant and how he could successfully achieve this.

Despite the importance of continuity and congruence in the mesosystem between home and school consistently reported in the literature (Coffey, 2013), this was not discussed by any of the participants. However, this is not to say that this communication did not take place. Families living in complex circumstances may not have a strong sense of self-efficacy or agency in the school context, meaning that notions of collaboration and shared responsibility may be difficult to achieve. Contrastingly, parents may find that they have limited access to information about their children, as typical secondary schools inhibit parent involvement (Osborn et al., 2006). Therefore, parents must be supported to foster positive relationships with schools to aid the transition process for children.

Although reasons for social care involvement were not shared, as participants were on a CINP or CPP, it suggests that their lives outside of school were not always stable. Additionally, their parents may have been unable to offer the support presented by research as essential to transition, due to a lack of adequate resources. This highlights the disadvantage this group of children endure, and the need for external services to provide additional support to families during transition.

4.7.3 Subordinate Theme: Teacher Support

The children expressed value in teachers, past and present, who had helped them. The level of teacher support varied across participants, though the general consensus was that support from teachers was significantly different across primary and secondary school:

> **Elle:** *"Some of the [primary school] teachers were actually really nice, they helped me through so much stuff and it's a bit different now here."*

It is possible that what the children understand to be 'help' has reduced due to an increase in expectations for independence at secondary school, as reflected in 'Subordinate Theme: A Step Up in Expectations and Responsibilities'. The participants also found it easier to seek support from teachers at primary school, as teachers were understood to be more open, approachable, and available, which is in line with previous research (Bagnall et al., 2019). Nevertheless, these findings are concerning, as children who perceive adults as available, open to communication, and more importantly involved in their school life show superior adjustment (Duchesne and Ratelle, 2010).

There is a clear link between this subordinate theme and 'Subordinate Theme: Feeling Safe, Secure and Understood'. Namely, related to challenges with forming trusting relationships with adults that are likely to be influential to accessing teacher support. Jindal-Snape and Foggie (2008) draw upon attachment theory to emphasise the need for secondary schools to support vulnerable children to foster attachments with key members of staff who are attuned to their needs. This is also advocated by

Brewin and Statham (2011) for CiC, and by Mowat (2019) for children with SEMH needs. However, only Elle and Priya explicitly identified those members of staff, both of which were the DSLs in their schools. Although it has been reported that it takes just one adult in school to make a positive difference to the life of a child exposed to ACEs (Mowat, 2010), it is unlikely to be coincidental that this is the DSL. It is the DSL's lead responsibility to coordinate the safeguarding of children in their schools. So, they are more likely to be visible to pupils, as they have a clearer understanding of their needs. However, it is the responsibility of every adult in school to safeguard children and therefore, key information needs to be shared with all supporting staff. Arguably, this limited support could be due lack of understanding reflective of the wider national context in relation to the visibility of children on a CINP and CPP in schools (DfE, 2019b), as previously discussed.

Jayden discussed how the support teachers offered changed drastically following transition, further emphasising Coffey's (2013) belief that many teachers 'go easy' on pupils during the first term at secondary school. However, it is possible that teacher perceptions of Jayden shifted as he settled into school and his behaviour became more challenging, as he openly admitted. In the below extract, Jayden compares support offered during induction days to the reality of the current support provided:

> **Jayden:** *"[Teachers were] trying to act like it's good. Like helping you out with everything yeah and now you get here they throw a book on the table and expect you to be able to do everything that's in there."*

This discrepancy relates to research conducted by Symonds (2015) who found that induction days can often give a misleading and overly optimistic view of secondary

school, leading to a sense of disappointment when this does not subsequently transpire. Although there was variation in access to, and experience of, induction days, none of the participants mentioned accessing any other interventions during their transition, though this is not to say that these were not offered.

On a positive note, although Elle did not feel that the peer support at secondary school compared to the strong connections she had formed in primary, she spoke of teacher support as a promising improvement. Elle discusses how her secondary school has a "*whole middle floor for people that would want help."* Even if she didn't need it, she knew how to access support and believed that the school was a *"good school for like helping other people with issues and that."*

Interestingly, increasing staffing numbers offered Elle greater autonomy when deciding whom she felt comfortable confiding in. When asked how this made her feel, she responded– *"definitely more comfortable and like I can talk and open up more to them."* It seems that the teacher-child relationship provided security and a safe space for Elle to discuss her experiences. Thus, highlighting the importance of trusted adults in school for children on a CINP or CPP.

> **Elle:** *"I didn't really know the teachers on this middle floor to start with but I think if I did they would have been helpful. It was only when things were getting worse for me that I knew them, it was like my mum came into the school and I knew Miss and I could talk to her then which was really helpful."*

Elle's account seemed to reflect how teacher support would have been valuable at the start of Year 7, though prevented by a lack of clear communication about availability of support. This was also present in George's narrative, as although teacher support was present at the time he was interviewed, it took a significant period to time for George to begin to feel supported.

This theme has supported assumptions made in previous research, that supportive relationships with teachers have the potential to mitigate the risk of negative outcomes for 'vulnerable' children by providing emotional protection (Dann, 2011; Geddes, 2006), though consistency, trust and the adoption of a nurturing role are paramount (Bagnall et al., 2019; Bailey and Baines, 2012).

4.8 Integrating Conceptual Framework

As discussed in Chapter Two, there are a variety of theoretical frameworks that can be adopted to guide transition research, connect research to existing knowledge and to help make meaning from the participant's experiences. Applying the PPCT model of development (Bronfenbrenner, 2005) as a conceptual framework within this study, allows for the transition experiences of each child to be explored and understood as part of a wider context, with a clear acknowledgement of the 'proximal processes', as presented in Table 13. By positioning each child as the 'person', this model provides a useful explanatory framework within which to understand how each participant experienced their transition, and the factors that influenced this experience across the various systems.

Of note, caution must be taken when interpreting the influence of systems beyond the microsystem, as the findings are specific to the participant's own perceptions and experiences of wider systems. Considering complimentary theoretical perspectives such as attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) essentially offers further insight into the intricacies of these experiences for children on a CINP or CPP.

Table 13: Research findings presented in relation to the PPCT model framework

Process	Located at the core of the bioecological model, the microsystem gives prominence to proximal processes in the child's immediate environment. It has been highlighted that the 'process' element of the model supports children to overcome potential difficulties associated with 'person' and 'context' at this 'time'. The children emphasised the importance of peer relationships, as friendships appeared to support positive transition, whilst social isolation contributed to increased vulnerability. Equally, relationships with adults are highlighted, namely those with teachers. Generally, those who reported trusting and supportive relationships with adults in school reported more positive experiences of transition. Proximal processes were also crucial to the children experiencing a SoB in their new schools. Experiencing belonging, value and acceptance were integral in mediating the feelings of loneliness and isolation that some of the children reported. Parent-child relationships were also drawn upon by some of the children, though predominately when discussing tangible, practical support. The level of emotional warmth and challenge in teacher-child and parent-child interactions influenced the children's perceptions of transition, support received and their perceived resilience. Attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) was utilised to better understand the concept of 'process' and how other factors can influence these processes. More specifically, the challenges participants faced in forming trusting relationships, and moving on from their 'secure base' of primary school. Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) identified how attachment theory complements the PPCT model, and serves to provide insights into the proximal processes between children and their caregivers, further highlighting how transition experiences are unique to this group of children. The children's interpretations of transition experiences were heavily influenced by their interactions between

	different layers of 'context', as well as their individual characteristics (including his/her SEN). For example, barriers to forming proximal processes in their new schools were highlighted e.g. sanctioning procedures such as isolation (micro system), which are promoted in government guidance (macro system) (DfE, 2016). For some of the participants, the adults that they most frequently interacted with were those enforcing the sanctions. Therefore, these interactions were frequently defined by challenge, and perceived to be negative. This is likely to have further influenced the forming and maintenance of positive teacher-child relationships.
Person	The bioecological model recognises the child as an active agent and so, personal characteristics possessed by each of the children were viewed as influential to their individual experiences of transition. This is also fitting with the idiographic research methodology adopted, which values the individual experience (Smith et al., 2009). In these interpretations of their experiences, the children focused more on external influences than within-child factors. However, factors that were cited (both implicitly and explicitly) included difficulties with emotional regulation, low self-esteem, and difficulties forming trusting relationships. Jayden and George also presented with SEN needs (namely SEMH), which appeared influential in this process and affected their personal ability to effectively navigate through the changes associated with transition. Good self-awareness, effective social skills and academic motivation were also cited by some of the children. The changes associated with transition also appeared to influence individual-level constructs such as motivation, academic self-concept and SoB, in both positive and negative ways. Of note, although these are referred to as personal resources and characteristics, it is important to acknowledge that these factors do not operate in isolation of 'context'. In fact, many identified factors were highly dependent on the internalisation of experiences and relationships, as theorised in Chapter 2. Thus, there is a need to create optimal 'contexts' for positive experiences. An example of the bi-directional influence of interactions ('process') was

	evident when considering some of the participant's emotions when generally reflecting on transition and their new schools, as a direct response to how they were treated by adults. For example, Jayden felt angry and unmotivated due to adults 'rude' responses. It was Jayden's understanding that adults were 'rude' because they assumed that he was 'naughty', due to their experiences of teaching his permanently excluded brother. The use of Erikson's (1959) theory of psychosocial development is also useful when considering the developmental stage of children as they transition to secondary school and how this may influence their perceptions and feelings related to their experiences of transition. Adolescence or 'identity vs. role confusion' is considered by Erikson (1959) to be centred on the challenge of maintaining a balance between the constant and changing aspects of the self. The concept of identity was an important theme drawn out of the children's experiences of transition and Erikson (1959) highlighted the confusion that adolescents encounter when establishing their sense of self in their surroundings. Transitioning into a new social environment and establishing an identity or 'role' is recognised by Erikson as a particular challenge. Therefore, for adolescents, the development of the sense of self and the sense of belonging within social groups, especially within new communities, is crucial (Erikson, 1959). This is fitting with each of the participants' accounts of their transition experience.
Context	Tobbell and O'Donnell (2013) stated that research which fails to acknowledge context cannot fully explain transition. They reported, *"much transition research fails to acknowledge the contextual shifts in practice in which learning and relationships are embedded, the negotiation of which constitutes the major work of transition"* (ibid, p.3). Therefore, by utilising this model, acknowledgment is placed on the influence of the contexts in which transitions take place. Participants directly and indirectly attributed their transition experiences to influences across various systems:

	• *Microsystem and Mesosystem:* Disruptions to microsystems (both relationships and physical environment), peers and key adults in school (e.g. forming trusting relationships, feeling supported, limited preparatory support, influence and support from older peers), school (behaviour management policies in school, changing expectations across primary school and secondary school contexts, quantity of teachers and peers, isolation and exclusion, structure of classes, access to support), limited contact reported between home and school (from the child's perspective), and influence of the family systems (limited emotional support provided by parents, additional stressors within the family, and influence of older siblings). • *Exosystem and Macrosystem:* The findings presented link to wider systemic influences discussed in Chapter Two. It is important to note that although the children were not explicit in discussing exo- and macro- influences in their accounts, their influences could be interpreted based on reference to particular challenges. For example, their reports of exclusion and sanctions in primary and secondary school, and the influence this appeared to have on their experiences of transition, is likely to be related to LA policy on exclusion and wider government guidance on 'behaviour and discipline' and exclusions. Although it cannot be assumed that supporting adults in primary and secondary school were not aware of the child's social care status and possible associated needs, it is undoubtedly suggested by the lack of visibility of children on a CINP or CPP, and their associated needs, in government guidance. It is possible that the 'invisibility' of these children's difficulties affects their access to resources and appropriate intervention during transition. Rich contextual information in qualitative research enables practitioners to relate findings to their own position if they believe their context to be similar (Bassey, 1981). Therefore a clear focus on context strengthens trustworthiness of the research (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).
Time	Some constraints have been placed on the ability to assess the time dimension of the theory, due to data being

	collected at one single time point. However, episodic interview questions were incorporated into the interview schedule focusing on specific points in time, alongside visual timelines, and the children's retrospective accounts highlight the influence of time on experience, with temporal elements underpinning much of their experiences of transition. For example: • Micro-time relates to the flow and disruption of the children's proximal processes, with people, objects or symbols. The continuity of relationships between participants and their primary school teachers and peers were disrupted during transition, which has been discussed within the findings. A sense of loss from key relationships was felt over time. • Children reported mixed emotions regarding the process of transition. The children's attitudes and beliefs towards their experience of transition and new schools shifted as the academic year progressed. For example, children reported a 'fear of the unknown' prior to transition (e.g. anxious, excited, nervous), followed by feeling that they were thrown in at the deep end immediately after transitioning (e.g. overwhelmed, scared, isolated). • Children began to feel more settled over time (the course of the academic year) as they adapted to their new environment and formed relationships with adults and peers. Temporal references were made, with the children's accounts shifting from past to present tense as they discussed their experiences. • The participants and, from their perspectives, the adults around them, started to expect the children to 'grow up' and become more independent during transition. This shift in expectations influenced the nature of interactions (proximal processes), including the frequency and consistency of contact with key adults able to facilitate positive wellbeing in school. The support from teachers also shifted over time. For example, Jayden reported that teachers *"go easy"* on pupils initially following transition, though teacher attitudes shift as the academic year progresses.

4.9 Summary of Main Findings

This chapter details how participants generally reported mixed feelings about their transition, reflecting upon their experiences both positively and negatively. Overall, whilst two of the participants (Summer and Priya) had a predominately positive transition experience, and are now well integrated in their new schools, the majority did not. A noticeable majority reported challenges with adjusting to their new schools, which remained until the end of Year 7, mirroring findings by Curson et al. (2019), Zeedyk et al. (2003), and Stradling and MacNeil, (2000). Consistent with previous research, social discontinuity appeared to be a greater challenge for participants, as opposed to the institutional and academic discontinuities that were also initially evident but then subsided over time (Ashton, 2008).

Participants' reflections on their experiences provided a detailed picture of the many factors that may influence how children on a CINP or CPP experience transition to secondary school. Table 14 offers an overview of the factors (although not exclusively) that influence the children's experiences within the research.

Table 14: Factors that influence the experiences of transition from primary to secondary school for children subject to a CINP or CPP

Factors influencing children's experiences of transition
• Experiencing a SoB in school • Strong support networks • Difficulties forming trusting relationships with adults and peers • Transitioning with primary school peers • Relationships with older peers • A lack of preparatory support

- Social isolation
- Sanctioning procedures in school (i.e. exclusion and isolation)
- Perceived limited support from parents and/or other family members
- Personal characteristics and internal attributes
- Increased academic opportunities

The findings support previous literature exploring risk factors, with both children on SEN support experiencing greater challenges during transition (Makin et al., 2017; Symonds, 2015; Barnes-Holmes et al., 2013). However, this study makes no claims of causality and rather, as described by Tobbell (2003), transition is presented as a complex set of circumstances, highlighted through the participant's accounts of the unique and multi-dimensional influences at a number of levels, both in and out of school, outlined in section 4.8.

Many of the findings presented in this study reflect those found in existing research focusing on the wider population. The children's narratives gave an insight into the emotional journeys they had taken, as they were required to navigate a variety of changes, opportunities and potential challenges in a relatively short space of time (Coffey, 2013; Pratt and George, 2005). Some participants had to cope with profound feelings of loss and conflict as they were required to 'move on and let go' of their familiar primary schools (Bagnall et al., 2019; Topping, 2011; Jindal-Snape and Foggie, 2008). This coincided with children attempting to adjust to new schools and renegotiate friendship groups, whilst battling with increased agency, and the reconstruction of their identities and perceived social position as secondary school students. These factors, alongside the absence of emotional support and limited social security, made transition a challenging, complicated, and, at times, lonely

process. Despite this, some positives were identified such as increased academic opportunities leading to an increase in academic self-concept (Strand, 2019).

The most noteworthy finding was that despite the challenges highlighted, positive relationships (‘proximal processes’) possessed the power to potentially overcome difficulties relating to ‘context’ ‘person’ and/or ‘time’, supporting the assumption put forward by Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006). Each participant had threads running through their narratives pertaining to the importance of belonging during transition, as previous research conducted on the general population and vulnerable groups found (van Rens et al., 2018; Lester and Cross, 2014; Sancho and Cline, 2012). It was apparent that the experience of school belonging was unique to each individual, though heavily shaped by his or her ability to form and maintain positive relationships (Baumeister and Leary, 1995; Bowlby, 1969). The most prominent aspect of transition highlighted was the relationships with peers and teachers, which were held in highest regard. This included pre-transition concerns and post-transition challenges related to forming positive relationships and the protective nature of these relationships. Forming friendships and ‘fitting in’ was the turning point for many on their journey to becoming settled within their school environments. These findings support ideas voiced by previous researchers, who discuss the critical role peer and teacher relationships play during transition for all children, aiding in the reduction of a sense of vulnerability and establishing and maintaining resilience (Curson et al., 2019; Bailey and Baines, 2012; Crafter and Maunder, 2012; Brewin and Statham, 2011; Dann, 2011; Geddes, 2006). The need for the children to feel safe and

understood by adults and peers in their schools became apparent and, when this did not transpire, children reported heightened vulnerabilities.

As illustrated in previous research, support received from parents, teachers and peers was found to be particularly important (Coffey, 2013; Topping, 2011; Ashton, 2008), though participants found it difficult to draw on support systems, as they were not always visible or readily available. The social support provided by peers served as a facilitative factor and buffer against stress, whilst being part of a social network provided the child with security, and a SoB, which was often missing in the stages following transition. For Elle, Jayden and George, challenges with forming relationships with teachers and peers played a central role in the overall experience of transition, leaving them feeling isolated and vulnerable. These findings provide support to the view that establishing trust in an adult at school was a facilitative factor to positive adjustment (Bailey and Baines, 2012; Rice et al., 2011).

Although many of the findings are similar to previous studies into the wider population with the challenges and opportunities experienced, the length of time in which the problems continue to persist differ and create additional barriers, and unique challenges, for the children interviewed. It is likely that the very nature of being classified on a CINP or CPP means that these children may be affected by several factors, which contribute to creating an individual set of circumstances. For example, it is possible that some challenges reported by the participants are related to their potential increased exposure to risk factors at differing levels, such as ‘child-oriented disadvantages’ (i.e. poor emotional regulation, often associated with SEMH

difficulties) interacting with micro-systemic factors (i.e. ACEs and physical isolation in school), presented in Table 13. There may also be factors that are likely to support all children, but which may be particularly pertinent for this group. The weight of peer relationships as a protective factor may be increased for these children, particularly when relationships with school staff were more difficult to establish. Peers also served as essential support providers, at a time when support from family members was limited to physical preparations.

Despite these challenges, the variance in findings reflected how some participants had multiple protective resources they could draw upon to buffer the challenges faced. Evidence was provided in relation to positive personal attributes and internal resources, including self-awareness, effective social skills, and motivation. This supports the notion that despite potential adversity during transition, participants were able to overcome many of the challenges faced, particularly when the interacting systems around the child work to nurture and harness their strengths, assets and development. Findings from this study add to existing understanding by demonstrating additional stressors experienced by children on a CINP and CPP that may contribute to a negative transition experience.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction to Chapter

This chapter summarises the main findings and unique contribution of the research. A critique of the research is offered, followed by possible directions for future exploration. Finally, implications of the study for practice for schools, education and social care professionals are considered.

5.2 Unique Contribution to Research

This study is the first to explore the experiences of primary-secondary school transition for children on a CINP or CPP. In doing so, it is hoped that it will address a gap in the current transition literature, and contribute to the government's aim of increasing the visibility of children on a CINP and CPP, in order to improve outcomes and effectively safeguard this group. The importance of smooth and effective transition between phases of education for children on a CINP and CPP has been stressed (DFE, 2018b), with transition to secondary school being highlighted as a key intervention point for reducing the risk of further negative outcomes (Farouk, 2017; Rice et al., 2015).

To date, the majority of existing research into transition focuses on the wider population, or other specific vulnerable groups. Equally, research into the educational experiences of children on CINP and CPP has been purely quantitative, presented in DfE statistics. In order to appropriately support children on a CINP or CPP through transition, schools and supporting professionals must have a clear understanding of their unique challenges. As advocated by Rae (2015), although it is not always possible to eradicate the risk, an awareness of its presence can change the way that

adults understand, and respond to, a child's needs. To this end, an IPA methodology was utilised to allow for a unique insight into individual experience, often underrepresented in research.

The aim of the research was to explore how children subject to CINP and CPP experience their transition from primary-secondary school, and what factors influenced these experiences. The children's experiences of transition were complex and defined by risk, opportunity and challenge. The four overarching themes of analysis highlighted a number of aspects of transition for the participants, both shared experiences as well as their unique and personal insights. Together, these themes highlight the range of psychological and social challenges that participants faced, as well as ways in which participants adapted to, and coped with, these challenges over time. These challenges were confounded with varying levels of support provided by the systems around them. Despite divergence in children's accounts, this research emphasises the importance of proximal processes (peer, teacher and family relationships) at all stages of transition, providing a possible avenue through which children transition from primary to secondary school, might be supported.

Often, when conducting research focusing on children who have experienced ACEs, there is an overwhelming emphasis on problem-saturated discourses and deficits. Although significant challenges were reported for some participants, two participants in the current study thrived in their new schools. Equally, the three children who experienced more difficult transitions were still able to draw upon positive aspects of

their experience, alongside challenges they successfully overcame. It is important that the protective factors are acknowledged with the same weight as the risks, to celebrate the huge wealth of strengths, skills, and resiliencies that these children, and the systems around them, display.

5.3 Critical Evaluation of the Research

As a small, qualitative study, caution must be taken when considering the findings in relation to the wider population of children on a CINP or CPP (Yin, 2014). Furthermore, although the research took place across three secondary schools, they were all part of one LA, so the findings may not be as easily applied within the context of other LAs. Rather, by developing understanding around a specific context, this study provides a contextualised example of subjective findings, a concept known as theoretical transferability, rather than empirical generalisability (Smith et al., 2009). It is hoped that, by sharing the insights gained from the participant's accounts and a focus on context, readers are able to evaluate the transferability of the findings to their own personal and professional experiences in contexts which are, more or less, similar.

As the researcher, I acknowledge that the current findings are operating within a double hermeneutic (Smith et al., 2009) (see Chapter Three, section 3.4.2), as I interpreted the children's interpretation of their experiences. However, I was consciously aware of my influence during the research process, as a TEP, and through my personal experiences of transition. Although these influences are largely unavoidable, steps were taken to minimise the effects of my influence on the

research. I engaged in reflexivity throughout, and kept a reflexive diary during data collection and analysis to aid this process.

Reflecting on the research, I considered how it might have been conducted differently. For example, it could be argued that by interviewing participants in the summer term of Year 7, they might have found it difficult to recall certain aspects of transition, due to the time elapse. Given that there were some discrepancies and at times, contradictory statements in the participant's accounts, this could be one possible explanation. However, the rationale for this decision was to allow time for assimilation and adjustment to take place due to the significance of the changes (Rice et al., 2011). Equally, the research defines transition as a process spanning the whole of the first academic year, and dependent on the experience of each individual. However, I acknowledge that data collection could have taken place over more than one time point to explore children's experiences and feelings at different time points, to gain a greater understanding of the transition over time. In the current study, this would not have been possible due to the timeline for ethical approval to be submitted and returned before data collection took place.

Another possible explanation for inconsistences in the participant's accounts could be linked to a power imbalance between the participant and myself, the researcher. Some children may have felt pressured to respond to questions in a certain way, to avoid any potential repercussions. Throughout the interview process, I was mindful of the power I held as an unfamiliar adult and professional, and appointed a number of measures to counteract this imbalance. These included: providing detailed information for potential participants to make an informed decision, providing a

familiar location for the interview to take place, meeting with each participant prior to interviews to answer any potential questions, and offering participants the option to have a familiar adult present during interviews. Though, in hindsight, given that some of the children reflected on the challenges they experienced in forming trusting relationships with adults, it may have been helpful to take more time to get to know the children prior to the interviews. Equally, I acknowledge that conducting a pilot study would have allowed for the interview schedule to be tested prior to the data collection phase.

Notably, no attempt was made to ascertain detailed information for the reason the children, and their families, were in receipt of social care involvement. This could be viewed as a research limitation, as homogeneity is required for IPA studies, and certain circumstances could have differing effects on the participants. However, requesting access to this information has ethical implications, as cited in Chapter 3, Section 3.6.3. The parameters of the research were clear, to explore the lived experiences of transition to secondary school for children on a CINP or CPP. The children's specific home life experiences were not part of the study. Nevertheless, it could be argued that this information would have potentially allowed for tentative links to be strengthened and for greater triangulation during analysis, thus allowing for greater trustworthiness of the data.

Finally, as a novice researcher, I found it challenging to achieve a balance of both diversity and depth during data analysis, within the constraints of the thesis. IPA was challenging and time consuming, as I was required to focus on the particular experience of each individual whilst identifying commonalities across the sample. It

was also challenging to explore individual accounts in depth, yet concurrently compare and contrast several accounts. Although it is possible to obtain a rich account of individual experience with IPA, as they have to be categorised into themes, an element of the children's voices was lost. For example, Priya spoke a great deal about dating and exploring her sexuality during Year 7. Whilst it may have been interesting to consider some of the children's unique experiences in depth, breadth took priority in most cases.

5.4 Future Directions

Drawing on the findings and critical evaluation of the present research, there are several directions for future research to consider. The current research study intentionally privileges the voice of the child. While individual experiences of the children are extremely valuable, future research could explore the views of those directly involved in supporting the transition process. The implications for accepting Bronfenbrenner's PPCT model (2005) would be that children, families and schools are all active collaborators in a child's experience of transition. The importance of strong links between home, and school systems for child development has also been identified when utilising this conceptual framework. Therefore, including parents and school staff views in the research would help to explore the wider relational context, whilst allowing for a more holistic, detailed and in-depth exploration of transition (Van Rens et al., 2018; Graham and Hill, 2003). Gathering the views of parents will also support with identifying ways in which education and social care professionals can offer appropriate support to prepare families for transition.

This study included five children in Year 7 cohorts of three mainstream secondary schools who were subject to CINP or CPP. Given that a significant proportion of these children attend alternative or specialist provisions, it would be interesting to conduct a similar study with a group on a CINP or CPP, as it could be argued that their voices are marginalised further.

In general, there is a requirement for more longitudinal studies of children transitioning to secondary school. However, it would be interesting to follow children on a CINP and CPP, as they progress through secondary school and transition into adulthood. Such research is particularly significant, as many of these children experience challenges as they navigate early life. Generally, it is hoped that future research will be conducted to enhance findings from the present study.

5.5 Implications for Practice

Although no attempt has been made to generalise the experiences of the five children who participated in the research, certain implications for professionals have been identified from the current findings (Table 15). Implications are considered in terms of support for children on a CINP or CPP at different ecological levels, according to Bronfenbrenner's (2005) PPCT model of development.

Table 15: Implications for Practice

Implications for Practice

Individualised Support and Transition Packages

Overall, it would be reasonable to suggest that findings emphasise the need for transition interventions to be holistic and person-centred (Crafter and Maunder, 2012; Sancho and Cline, 2012) while ensuring support is available, if needed, not only throughout the first year at secondary school (Zeedyk et al., 2003), but also beyond. EPs are well placed to support schools to better understand the interacting and influencing factors during transition for children on a CINP or CPP, and guide them to accurately identify the potential vulnerabilities and strengths of each child prior to transition.

As reflected throughout the current research, children are able to provide detailed accounts of their experiences, and so, it is important that their views are at the centre of decision-making processes associated with their transition. However, two children mentioned that they had never been asked to discuss their transition experiences, which contributed to some of their challenges remembering key aspects and feelings. This has an important implication for EPs, who are uniquely placed to offer time and space for children to share their views, or recommend the allocation of a key adult in school to the same effect. By enabling children on a CINP or CPP to share their views about transition, more detailed information regarding their strengths and needs may be gained.

Bronfenbrenner's bioecological framework may help professionals to identify the most appropriate intervention for children on a CINP or CPP throughout their transition. A strengths-based approach for support is encouraged, as the findings highlight that children can overcome many challenges faced during transition, and such successes should be celebrated. EPs are well placed to use their understanding of the theories behind psychological constructs and knowledge of a wide range of existing educational interventions to support the development of individualised and holistic transition packages (Brewin and Statham, 2011).

Promoting School Belonging

As outlined by Sancho and Cline (2012) for all children, the findings have highlighted that when working with CYP on a CINP or CPP,

facilitating a SoB as a fundamental premise of school transition programmes is of the utmost importance. School staff need to consider how they can foster a SoB for children on a CINP or CPP at all transition stages. Exploring pupils' SoB in primary school, prior to transition to secondary school, may help schools identify those who may find transitioning more challenging.

The findings also support recommendations from previous research, which highlights the importance of positive proximal relationships for children during transition. Therefore, greater attention needs to be placed on social provision during transition, especially opportunities for relationship formation (Tobbell and O'Donnell, 2013; Sancho and Cline, 2012). The importance of establishing positive relationships with adults and peers was particularly pertinent within the participant's narratives and should be focused on where possible. It is hoped that all of the discussed implications will aid the promotion of a SoB for children on a CINP or CPP following transition. Some further suggestions have been listed below.

- Schools can offer a secure-base, attachment and security, through actively promoting the establishment of relationships with trusted adults. The regular availability of a key adult, who has an awareness of the child's needs and will be able to monitor their academic progress and emotional well-being, is recommended throughout the transitional period and beyond.
- A strong pastoral department to offer stability, emotional and practical support in a nurturing and safe space is advocated. It is imperative for school staff to offer the emotional support that may potentially be limited at home.
- The implementation of nurture groups at secondary school, based on principles of attachment theory (Boxall, 2002; Perry, 2009), is advocated for. Nurture groups allow for a key adult to replicate the role of a primary school teacher (Geddes, 2006), allowing for vulnerable children to access a close, nurturing relationship beyond primary school. Such interventions provide students with a safe base, to help them cope with the new and unfamiliar demands of their secondary schools, sudden loss and potential trauma associated with primary-secondary transition, and become more resilient (Colley, 2009). Parent involvement in this programme would be advantageous, as a means of securing effective connections between home and school.

- The findings indicate there is a role for EPs to provide practical, targeted support for children, sustaining their social, psychological and academic needs through direct work, such as consultation and therapeutic intervention. EPs could also help to support the emotional wellbeing of school staff, through supervision or coaching methods.

Development of Nurturing Whole School Ethos

Children made reference to punitive approaches, which they are frequently subjected to, in their secondary schools. Participants discussed how school policies, such as the use of isolation rooms, make a successful transition more difficult to achieve. As discussed in Chapter Four, it is hoped that government behavioural guidance will be reviewed, and further support and guidance can be offered as to how best to support 'vulnerable' children. It is hoped that the punitive approach outlined in current guidance is replaced with acknowledgement of the importance of a whole school nurturing approach to facilitate a SoB for all pupils, as outlined in the Green Paper: Mental Health in Schools (DfE, 2017). Previous researchers have argued that interventions aimed at supporting a positive transition should be grounded in a whole-school approach in order to be effective (Rice et al., 2011; Anderson et al., 2000). EPs can work with school staff to develop systems and structures to facilitate a nurturing, attachment-friendly school ethos and approach to behaviour management. Support on further refining transition policies in schools could also be offered.

Sources of Support

Support was a superordinate theme that arose from the data analysis, as all children valued support during the transitional process. However, the effectiveness and accessibility of support was fairly limited across participants. This highlights the need for all professionals working with children on a CINP or CPP to identify appropriate means of ensuring the accessibility of both high quality emotional, and practical, support.

Parental Engagement and Support

- Although parents appear to be key to the success of a transition, there is currently very little, if any, attention paid to this. Equally, the current findings illuminated parental support as an area of deficit for participants. All participants spoke of the limited support received by their parents during the transition process. When support was provided, it was predominately practical in nature, with very little emotional support received between the five children. It is possible that further support and guidance is required for parents, possibly through avenues of education and social care. However, given that parents were not able to contribute their perspectives to the research, such implications must be considered with caution.
- A programme of support for parents could be advantageous to assist their understanding of the changes and potential challenges that their children are experiencing, and how they can support them. Social care professionals and EPs are both able to offer this support and deliver these interventions.

Peer Support

- Peer support was a key theme, heavily relied upon by all participants. Though, at times, many faced challenges with accessing this support, due to difficulties forming peer relationships. Given that social interactions are considered to be some of most important drivers of children's development (Bronfenbrenner and Morris, 2006), it is fundamental for schools to promote and strengthen these opportunities as much as possible within the first term (Sancho and Cline, 2012), particularly for children who may find it challenging to establish close peer relationships.
- The development and implementation of peer support groups may be beneficial for children who are experiencing similar challenges with settling into their new schools and forming positive relationships. A 'buddy system' could also be implemented, in which new students are matched with an older pupil, who will support them throughout their first year at secondary school. Again, EPs are well placed to support staff and children in the development of such interventions. In addition, EPs could also be instrumental in monitoring and evaluating interventions to contribute towards the evidence base for future transition interventions.

Information Sharing and Collaborative Working (Mesosystem)

This study has highlighted a need for primary and secondary schools to take a pro-active role in ensuring effective liaison between settings, whereby crucial information pertaining to individual children can be disseminated. In order to best support children who have experienced instability and unpredictability in the home, like those on a CINP or CPP, a consistent and collaborative approach to adult support is necessary. This approach should be person-centred and flexible.

When considering supporting children on a CINP or CPP more widely, schools cannot address the barriers faced by children 'in need' in isolation and will need to make full use of the local multi-agency support offer available within their LA (DfE, 2019b). Ultimately, keeping children in education relies on LAs, schools, health, police and others working together (DfE, 201b), so, communication between schools, parents and LA professionals is strongly advised. EPs are well placed to facilitate such multi-agency work.

Social care services, and other supporting professionals, can act as a protective buffer at a variety of levels during transition. I would recommend to use social care professionals to tap into the naturally occurring support networks in the home and community.

Children on a CINP or CPP attend regular multi-agency meetings with professionals, parents and school staff. From experience, it is very rare that educational professionals (i.e. EPs) are included in such meetings. This would be a useful opportunity for upcoming transitions to be discussed and for EPs to share their knowledge on how best to support this group of children, in order to ensure the most appropriate support is implemented.

Increasing Awareness and Visibility of Children 'in need'

This research offers support to current government agenda and priorities in increasing the visibility of children 'in need', as outlined in the Child In Need Review (DfE, 2019). Whilst the potential negative implications are recognised, such as stigmatisation of children and

families receiving social care involvement, it is felt that these are outweighed by the positive implications.

It is vital that school staff are aware of the complex set of circumstances that may be surrounding these children and the risk factors associated with being on a CINP or CPP. This information may not always be disclosed to schools but, in order for staff to help to build adaptive responses to environmental stresses, they must first be aware of each child's individual needs. However, careful consideration must be taken when deciding what information needs to be shared, with whom and how it is best disseminated, to avoid the potential risk of harm. Parents should be consulted with regarding what information they are happy to be shared with school staff.

As previously emphasised, the role of the EP is to promote inclusion. One way of doing this is through raising awareness of the needs of this group of children, and how they can be supported in schools. Regular planning meetings between the EP and the SENCo (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator) serve as a useful opportunity for the EP to explicitly discuss children, on a CINP or CPP, who may be transitioning to secondary school in the following academic year, or who have recently transitioned. In doing so, SENCOs can be prompted to consider the available support and how EPs can assist with the development of individualised support plans.

The study's findings have wider implications for the training of teachers and support staff, to develop their knowledge and understanding, and enable them to identify and support children on a CINP or CPP through their transitional experience. EPs are well placed to delivery training informed by relevant psychological theory such as Bowlby's (1980) attachment theory to educational settings, or as a part of initial teacher training, to support staffs understanding of the needs of this vulnerable group.

Local Authority Initiatives (Exosystem)

Currently, the LA I am placed in has channelled its resources into providing services and multi-disciplinary teams to address the disadvantage of children 'on the edge of care' (namely on a CINP or CPP), focusing on the age range of 10-15. The current findings

will be shared with key professionals, with the intention that the research will support the on-going development of multi-disciplinary teams set up to support children 'on the edge of care', to remain with families and achieve positive outcomes. Upon reflection, EPs could also:

- Contribute towards the development of LA polices and publications related to good practice at transition, particularly for children on a CINP or CPP; and
- Deliver training to other teams within the LA, such as Behaviour and Attendance Teams, to raise awareness of the significance of primary-secondary school transition, and share best practice on how all professionals can support successful transition.

5.6 Concluding Comments

To conclude, this novel, small-scale exploratory study has aided with promoting the visibility of children on a CINP and CPP in research and practice. To my knowledge, it is the first known piece of research conducted into the lived experiences of primary-secondary school transition for this group, and therefore, provides a unique insight into the transition experiences of children on a CINP and CPP. This research is intended to assist the development of professional reflection about this topic, whilst helping to generate interest in future research, related to children on a CINP and CPP, and transition.

Overall, It is hoped that this research provides an insight into how adults can better support this group of children through transition. Without receiving appropriate support, children on a CINP or CPP may experience an overwhelming and, at times, isolating transition experience, best encapsulated in Elle's eloquent reflection, *"It was like we were just thrown in at the deep end, without anyone telling us how to swim..."*

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: EXAMPLES OF ENTRIES FROM REFLECTIVE DIARY

ELLE

Extract from reflective diary: **Interviewing Elle**

- Elle was the first participant to choose to use the visual timelines and visual prompts. Though I am not sure how useful they actually were during the interview to elicit more information or help with reflections. She found it quite difficult to put information onto paper and wrote very few single words for prompts.
- Elle didn't really look at the prompt sheets again during our discussions. However, it was helpful for me in the way as I could double check we had covered everything on the sheet.
- I felt that I was less reliant on sticking rigidly to the interview schedule and more confident to open up a more realistic type conversation. This seemed to make the interview flow better and she was quite open as a result.
- Elle is the first female participant I have interviewed. I'm not sure whether it was because her schooling experiences have been more settled that the two boys, but I didn't need to use as many prompts and probing questions with her. I was aware of my previous reflections highlighting my concerns that due to some of the short, closed answers that the boys gave, I was asking slightly leading questions to avoid missing any key information. I felt much more comfortable in this interview due to her openness and ease when sharing her views.
- This interview has made me realise that this is an iterative process and the flexibility of the schedule and my approach to interviewing is developing through each interview. The next interview I need to make sure that I hold onto the view I have used in this interview, that this schedule should not be prescriptive but rather suggestive and can be adapted based on the young person and the direction they chose to go.
- I must remember to ask only one question at a same and not jump in when there is a long pause!

JAYDEN

Extract from reflective diary: **Interviewing Jayden**

This was the first interview I conducted and perhaps the most challenging. Jayden kindly agreed to participate in my interview and expressed that he was happy to as he was spending the day in isolation. Despite appearing confident, as soon as the tape recorder was turned on and the interview started he appeared to withdraw somewhat and his initial answers were short and direct. It was apparent that Jayden found it difficult to discuss some areas of his school experiences. He

repeatedly responded with 'I don't know' to questions regarding primary school and found it difficult to recall his experiences prior to starting at secondary school. This is no surprise given his disrupted education to date.

At the beginning of the interview, some of my questions were also met with a 'yes' or 'no', which required further prompting. My aim throughout the interview was to create a safe environment and atmosphere that made Jayden feel comfortable to open up and share his experiences with me. However, these short answers made it difficult for me as the interviewer to ensure that my follow up questions weren't too leading, and rather curious and facilitative in line with IPA and semi-structured interviews.

Interestingly, at the end of the interview, he appeared to open up a lot more and shared information with very little prompt from myself. His responses become much more detailed and visibly he appeared more relaxed. On reflection, I feel that I could have given more time for rapport building at the beginning of the interview session to ensure that he felt completely comfortable from the off set of the interview. This is something to consider for the next interview next week…

Some of Jayden's responses were extremely emotive and it was clear to see that he had experienced significant challenges since starting in Year 7. What was more upsetting was how blasé he was when talking about it. I would if this has impacted the way I interviewed Jayden, and possibly the way that I interpret the data at a later point.

GENERAL REFLECTIONS TAKEN FROM DIARY DURING DATA ANALYSIS

- Listening to the interviews over and over again is draining! I am on my third time listening to Summer's now and I am starting to feel like I am familiar with the data and ready to get started with initial coding. This is the fourth participant I am analysing and I have to be increasingly more conscious not to allow the other participant's interviews influence my interpretation of Summer's experience. Summer feels different to the other three I have analysed. There is a sense of optimism in her voice and contentment with her current situation.
- Bracketing aside key literature that I have been reading before this point is really difficult. I keep thinking how certain quotes relate to key points drawn out from the literature and currently in my draft literature review. I need to remember to bring myself back to the data in front of me and remember that each child's experience is unique. It is really important to me that I do the children justice and reflect their experiences as accurately as possible.

APPENDIX 2: APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW

Who should use this form:

This form is to be completed by PIs or supervisors (for PGR student research) who have completed the University of Birmingham's Ethical Review of Research Self Assessment Form (SAF) and have decided that further ethical review and approval is required before the commencement of a given Research Project.

Please be aware that all new research projects undertaken by postgraduate research (PGR) students first registered as from 1st September 2008 will be subject to the University's Ethical Review Process. PGR students first registered before 1st September 2008 should refer to their Department/School/College for further advice.

Researchers in the following categories are to use this form:

1. The project is to be conducted by:
   - staff of the University of Birmingham; or
   - postgraduate research (PGR) students enrolled at the University of Birmingham (to be completed by the student's supervisor);
2. The project is to be conducted at the University of Birmingham by visiting researchers.

Students undertaking undergraduate projects and taught postgraduate (PGT) students should refer to their Department/School for advice.

NOTES:

- An electronic version of the completed form should be submitted to the Research Ethics Officer, at the following email address: aer-ethics@contacts.bham.ac.uk. Please **do not** submit paper copies.
- If, in any section, you find that you have insufficient space, or you wish to supply additional material not specifically requested by the form, please it in a separate file, clearly marked and attached to the submission email.
- If you have any queries about the form, please address them to the Research Ethics Team.

☒ **Before submitting, please tick this box to confirm that you have consulted and understood the following information and guidance and that you have taken it into account when completing your application:**

- **The information and guidance provided on the University's ethics webpages (https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/finance/accounting/Research-Support-Group/Research-Ethics/Ethical-Review-of-Research.aspx)**
- **The University's Code of Practice for Research (http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/docs/COP_Research.pdf)**

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW	*OFFICE USE ONLY:* Application No: Date Received:

1. TITLE OF PROJECT

An investigation into the lived experiences of transition to secondary school for children who are subject to Child In Need or Child Protection plans: An IPA study

2. THIS PROJECT IS:

University of Birmingham Staff Research project ☐
University of Birmingham Postgraduate Research (PGR) Student project ☒
Other ☐ (Please specify):

3. INVESTIGATORS

a) PLEASE GIVE DETAILS OF THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS OR SUPERVISORS (FOR PGR STUDENT PROJECTS)

Name: Title / first name / family name	Nick Bozic
Highest qualification & position held:	MEd Academic and Professional Tutor in Educational Psychology
School/Department	School of Education
Telephone:	
Email address:	N.M.Bozic@bham.ac.uk

Name: Title / first name / family name	
Highest qualification & position held:	
School/Department	
Telephone:	
Email address:	

b) PLEASE GIVE DETAILS OF ANY CO-INVESTIGATORS OR CO-SUPERVISORS (FOR PGR STUDENT PROJECTS)

Name: Title / first name / family name	
Highest qualification & position held:	
School/Department	
Telephone:	
Email address:	

c) In the case of PGR student projects, please give details of the student

Name of student:	Abbie Roberts	Student No:	1855815
Course of study:	Ap. Ed. and Child Psy.	Email	AXR717@student.bham.ac.uk
Principal supervisor:	Nick Bozic		

Name of student:		Student No:	
Course of study:		Email address:	
Principal supervisor:			

4. ESTIMATED START OF PROJECT Date: March 2019

ESTIMATED END OF PROJECT Date: June 2020

5. FUNDING

List the funding sources (including internal sources) and give the status of each source.

Funding Body	*Approved/Pending /To be submitted*
N/A	

If you are requesting a quick turnaround on your application, please explain the reasons below (including funding-related deadlines). You should be aware that whilst effort will be made in cases of genuine urgency, it will not always be possible for the Ethics Committees to meet such requests.

There is a requirement for participant recruitment and data collection to be carried out before the end of the academic year during the Summer Term (May-July 2019). This is due to the nature of the data being collected. Participants must be in Year 7 at the time of the interview and it would not be possible to collect data in the Autumn term as: (1) the focus of the research is on their transition to secondary school and transition packages within secondary schools tend to last at least one term after transition; (2) the participants will need time to settle into their new provision before they are able to reflect on their experiences.

6. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

Describe the purpose, background rationale for the proposed project, as well as the hypotheses/research questions to be examined and expected outcomes. This description should be in everyday language that is free from jargon. Please explain any technical terms or discipline-specific phrases.

Purpose of the Research and Background Rationale

I am aiming to conduct an exploratory piece of research into the lived experiences of children (aged 11-12) in mainstream secondary schools who were subject to Child In Need (CINP) or a Child Protection Plan (CP) at the time of their transition to secondary school. CINP is an assessment under Section 17 Children Act 1989 and considered in need if:

- The child is unlikely to achieve or maintain or to have the opportunity to achieve or maintain a reasonable standard of health or development without provision of services from the Local Authority;
- The child's health or development is likely to be significantly impaired, or further impaired, without the provision of services from the Local Authority.

CP is an action under section 47 when there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm.

This area of research has been developed as a response to: a lack of research nationally; the current focus from the Department of Education (DfE, 2018); and priorities within my Local Authority. Research efforts addressing the primary–secondary transition have been warranted over the years due to (1) this period of transition involving stresses and anxiety for all young people, even those who adjust well to secondary school Hanewald 2013); (2) a poor transition is associated with concurrent psychological problems (Goodenow, 1993a; Sancho & Cline, 2012; Waters et al. 2012); and (3) a poor transition can begin to create a number of difficulties that impact on future attainment and adjustment (West, Sweeting and Young 2010).

As a group, children subject to CINP or CP experience poorer educational outcomes than other children (DfE, 2018). Therefore, this time of transition is likely to be particularly challenging for this identified group for a number of reasons. For example, children who experience psychosocial adversity, which includes a high proportion of children subject to CINP and CP, are more likely to have difficulties adjusting to secondary school (Reyes et al., 2000). Additionally, children who have lower attainments are likely to have difficulties making systemic transitions (West, Sweeting & Young, 2010). This group of children are also more likely to present with challenging behaviour (DfE, 2018), which can manifest itself at times of stress such as during transition (Berndt & Mekos, 1995).

Despite extensive research into the area of KS2 to KS3 transitions, to date the issue of transition for children subject to CINP and CP has not been researched. Therefore, the present study will attempt to address this gap. The research intends to support with identifying what factors make a difference to the experiences of these children during transition and where schools and other professionals can support at both an individual and systemic level to improve those outcomes.

The aims of the project are to (1) explore the experiences of transition to secondary school for children subject to CINP or CP (2) identify the factors that facilitate /inhibit the positive experiences of transition for this identified group.

Research Questions

1. How do children subject to Child in Need and Child Protection Plans experience their transition from primary to secondary school?
2. What, if any, are the facilitative factors to positive transition experiences for children who are subject to CINP or CP?
3. What, if any, are the barriers to positive transition experiences for children who are subject to CINP or CP?

Expected Outcomes

The findings are relevant to the practice of Educational Psychologists, social care and other professionals supporting these young people in education. As stated, little has been done to investigate the transition experiences of this group of children and therefore the research will provide an original contribution to knowledge. It is hoped that this research will offer the benefit of providing empirical research in an under researched area, with the additional benefit of the insights contributing towards an understanding around what supports with a successful transition to secondary school for this group of children.

7. CONDUCT OF PROJECT

Please give a description of the research methodology that will be used

I propose to use Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), which is a qualitative methodology that explores how an individual subjectively experiences the world (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). In order to gain an understanding of their experience of school in depth, I aim to carry out individual semi-structured interviews with a small sample (6), year 7 pupils who have recently transitioned to secondary school placements. All of the participants will have been subject to a Child in Need plan or a Child Protection plan during this transition. The questions asked during these interviews will aim to explore the children's lived experiences of their transition to secondary school. It is estimated that the interviews will take approximately one hour each and will be carried out in the school setting. The interviews will be carried out with each of the participants on an individual basis. Interviews will be held in a room in the school setting, which is familiar to the pupils involved in the research.

Visual aids in the form of timelines and drawings will be used to support with the child's accounts of their experiences. This timeline activity will be incorporated into the interview, in order to support with the participants memory of their experiences. This is due to the interviews planned to be carried out two terms after their transition. The children will be asked to draw pictures to represent aspects of their transition experiences across a timeline of events from primary school to secondary school with the support of the interviewer, in order to aid memory, accurate chronology of events, and offer an alternative focus to discuss potentially emotional circumstances.

The interview data will be recorded and then transcribed and analysed qualitatively using IPA, which is used to draw out sub-ordinate and super-ordinate themes. I believe that this method will provide high quality qualitative data, which other methods would not be able to provide. The researcher will also make notes during the interview. After the interview the researcher will check out the notes they have made with the pupil to help ensure credibility.

All aspects of the research will be completed in line with the British Psychological Society's (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics (2014) and will comply with the four principles outlined in this Code: respect for the autonomy and dignity of persons, scientific value, social responsibility, and maximising benefit and minimising harm (p.37).

A copy of the intended interview schedule has been attached to this document as Appendix 4.

8. DOES THE PROJECT INVOLVE PARTICIPATION OF PEOPLE OTHER THAN THE RESEARCHERS AND SUPERVISORS?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Note: 'Participation' includes both active participation (such as when participants take part in an interview) and cases where participants take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time (for example, in crowd behaviour research).

If you have answered NO please go to Section 18. If you have answered YES to this question please complete all the following sections.

9. PARTICIPANTS AS THE SUBJECTS OF THE RESEARCH

Describe the number of participants and important characteristics (such as age, gender, location, affiliation, level of fitness, intellectual ability etc.). Specify any inclusion/exclusion criteria to be used.

I aim to recruit six participants to take part in the interviews. These will all be children aged between 11-12 years old who are attending a mainstream secondary provision in Year 7, within the identified local authority. All of these children will be attending secondary schools within the same city but may be from different schools (both Local Authority Maintained and Academies).

To keep the study homogenous, inclusion criteria would be children who are subject to Child in Need (CINP) or Child Protection (CP) plans, with these being in place during their transition to secondary school. All children must be attending a mainstream secondary school within the city. Ideally, there would be an equal mix of female and male participants to offer a more representative sample. However, as the sample will be purposive it is likely that there will be a random number of males and females. 6 children would provide enough data for a robust Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

As I will be using IPA as my method for data collection, 3-5 participants would be adequate for the research. Equally, as the participants and/or parents have six weeks to withdraw following the interview, this would provide adequate time to recruit additional participants if required. Therefore, validity would not be compromised.

10. RECRUITMENT

Please state clearly how the participants will be identified, approached and recruited. Include any relationship between the investigator(s) and participant(s) (e.g. instructor-student).

Note: Attach a copy of any poster(s), advertisement(s) or letter(s) to be used for recruitment.

Purposive sampling will be used to recruit the participants by linking with Head teachers of mainstream secondary schools in [redacted]. Head teachers will then facilitate recruitment, identifying young people who were subject to Child In Need (CINP) or Child Protection (CP) plans during their transition to secondary school, which attends the school and may have an interest in the research. Schools will be given verbal information, alongside parent and pupil information sheets about the study to discuss with child and their parents/carers.

The parent and participant information sheets (Appendix 1 and 2) will be shared with the head teachers of each of the children's schools so that they are fully informed about the research before consent is sought from the participants and their parents. This will be supplemented by discussion, if appropriate. Verbal consent will be gained from the head teacher for the research to commence.

The invitation letter to take part in the study, with an information sheet (Appendix 2), will be provided to potential participants by the researcher. Following this, a consent form will be sent prior to the interviews, which will be returned to the researcher. The parent and pupil information sheets provided to both participants and parents is theirs to keep, and includes the researchers' contact details should they have any further queries about the research. It will also explain the project and act as a prompt to explain the key principles of voluntary participation, right to refuse or withdraw, and anonymity. Information sheets have been developed in language suitable for 11 – 12 year olds.

The researcher will have no prior relationship with any of the participants.

11. CONSENT

a) Describe the process that the investigator(s) will be using to obtain valid consent. If consent is not to be obtained explain why. If the participants are minors or for other reasons are not competent to consent, describe the proposed alternate source of consent, including any permission / information letter to be provided to the person(s) providing the consent.

Valid consent will be obtained in line with Section 4 of the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2014). The Headteacher of the school will be contacted to gain approval and consent for the research study, alongside the child and their parent/carer. As the children will be subject to CINP and CP this means that parents still have full legal guardianship over the child despite social care involvement. Therefore, the parents will be the legal guardians who will be providing parental consent for participation.

In order to secure informed consent each participant will be provided with an information sheet about the research in general. The researcher will clarify that the participants understood the information sheet, which includes information about the purpose of the research, what taking part would involve, who would have access to the data, the right to refuse to answer questions or to ask for data to be deleted until it was anonymised and how it would be stored. The researcher will also be on hand (either at the point of data collection or by phone prior to the activity) to discuss the process and answer any questions that the participants and/or may have.

Before the interviews take place, the researcher will visit the child at school for an initial session, with information provided on the information sheet being reiterated to the children verbally. Parents will also be given the option to attend this initial session. They will also be given a written consent form containing this information; the participants will be asked to sign this and a signed copy of the consent form will be given to each participant and the researcher will keep a second copy. Consent forms have been developed in language suitable for 11 – 12 year olds. Obtaining consent is a continuing process and the right to withdrawal will be reiterated during the interviews.

Participants will be made aware that, although quotes will be used in the write-up for the Thesis, all identifying information about themselves (such as names) will be removed from the transcripts and the Thesis and pseudonyms will be used. They will also made aware that academic supervisors and examiners will have access to anonymised transcripts.

Note: Attach a copy of the Participant Information Sheet (if applicable), the Consent Form (if applicable), the content of any telephone script (if applicable) and any other material that will be used in the consent process.

b) Will the participants be deceived in any way about the purpose of the study? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒

If yes, please describe the nature and extent of the deception involved. Include how and when the deception will be revealed, and who will administer this feedback.

N/A

12. PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

Explain what feedback/ information will be provided to the participants after participation in the research. (For example, a more complete description of the purpose of the research, or access to the results of the research).

The children who took part in the interviews will also be given time to ask any questions after the interview, and will be sent a letter of thanks for participating. Thus, appropriate debriefing will be offered in line with Section 8 of the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2014). Following completion of the research, participants will be provided with details regarding how they may access the final research report. A brief summary of outcomes sheet will be produced and shared with participants.

13. PARTICIPANT WITHDRAWAL

a) Describe how the participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project.

The right to withdraw from the study will be made clear to the parents and participants via the information sheet (Appendix 1 and 2) and consent form (Appendix 3 and 4) and a further reminder will be given verbally during the initial session and at the start and end of the interview (second session). They will be given a copy of the consent form to keep; this will include details of how they can contact the researcher and withdraw their data after the interview has been conducted.

It will be emphasised to the participants during both sessions that they are under no obligation to take part as participation is purely on a voluntary basis and that they can terminate the interview at any time. In addition, participants will also be informed that they do not have to answer any question they do not want to and that they could have their data withdrawn from the research any time with immediate effect from the end of the interview up to four weeks. If requested, it would then be erased and not used in the research. However, it will be stated that once the advised time period of four weeks has elapsed, their data will then be analysed by the researcher and included within the final report, with anonymity preserved. This will be explained verbally before and at the end of the interview. This will apply to participants and parents/carer alike. A 'stop' card will be provided for participants and can be used to indicate withdrawal from the interview or a wish to not answer a certain question. There will be a practice using the card at the beginning of the interviews.

Participants will be directed to contact the designated member of staff identified in school, or their parent if they wish to withdraw or know more about the research.

b) Explain any consequences for the participant of withdrawing from the study and indicate what will be done with the participant's data if they withdraw.

There will be no consequences for the participant of withdrawing from the study. However, if they wish to do so their data (recording of their interview and transcript of their interview) will be destroyed. During the interview, if the participant wishes to withdraw their comment or answer to a question, this will be noted and this section of the interview will not be transcribed.

14. COMPENSATION

Will participants receive compensation for participation?

i) Financial **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒

ii) Non-financial **Yes** ☐ **No** ☒

If **Yes** to **either** i) or ii) above, please provide details.

N/A

If participants choose to withdraw, how will you deal with compensation?

N/A

15. CONFIDENTIALITY

a) Will all participants be anonymous? Yes ☒ No ☐

b) Will all data be treated as confidential? Yes ☒ No ☐

Note: Participants' identity/data will be confidential if an assigned ID code or number is used, but it will not be anonymous. Anonymous data cannot be traced back to an individual participant.

Describe the procedures to be used to ensure anonymity of participants and/or confidentiality of data both during the conduct of the research and in the release of its findings.

Confidentiality will be maintained in line with Section 5 of the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2014). Each interview will be allocated a pseudonym, which only the researcher and the participant will know is linked to them. It is unlikely that participants could be identified from this anonymous data when it is transcribed and analysed. During the writing of the material, all names will be made anonymous and care will be taken to ensure that there are no quotes that may identify any individuals. Data will not be shared with anyone (aside from the researcher) in its raw form. Further, details such as place names may be changed to ensure anonymity if it appears that these may aid identification of participants.

When participants are asked to provide their contact details these will be recorded on individual sheets to prevent other participants seeing personal details. The researcher will only capture confidential information about participants on their consent forms and will not record any personal information about participants on the audio- recording only a coded name. All personal details (including signed consent forms) will be scanned and saved and then shredded according to local authority data protection guidance. The transcripts and recordings will also be kept in a secure filing cabinet in a locked LA office. Electronic data (the recordings) will be stored on a password protected, encrypted laptop. Participants will be notified of the protocol regarding the data collection and storage including the fact that pseudonyms will be used in the transcriptions and the Thesis. Permission for the use of direct quotations will be sought from the participants.

The first names of any other people discussed will be removed from the transcript and replaced by an initial (e.g. Jack will become 'J').

If participant anonymity or confidentiality is not appropriate to this research project, explain, providing details of how all participants will be advised of the fact that data will not be anonymous or confidential.

The consent forms (Appendix 3 and 4) will explain the circumstances when confidentiality would be broken, such as when the participants or another individual are at risk of harm.

16. STORAGE, ACCESS AND DISPOSAL OF DATA

Describe what research data will be stored, where, for what period of time, the measures that will be put in place to ensure security of the data, who will have access to the data, and the method and timing of disposal of the data.

The researcher will comply with GDPR (2018) in all data handling and storage. Audio data will be removed from the audio device as soon as it is possible, encrypted, password protected and stored securely. Transcription will be carried out in a private space. All personal identification information will be removed or changed during transcription. When transcriptions are completed they will be handled with caution, stored by the researcher in a locked cabinet within a locked LA office. All electronic versions of transcriptions will be stored on a password protected, encrypted laptop. Any signed consent forms will be scanned and saved and then shredded. I will only store this information on a password protected, encrypted laptop, and not on my home computer or any portable devices. Any information which may identify a child, their school or parents/carers will not be included in any publications or presentations. The data will be stored for 10 years following completion of the research as per the University of Birmingham's protocol, after this time it will be destroyed. Nobody other than the researcher will have access to the raw data.

17. OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED? e.g. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks or NHS R&D approvals.

☒ YES ☐ NO ☐ NOT APPLICABLE

If yes, please specify.

It should be noted, that as a Trainee Educational Psychologist acting within the Local Authority, the researcher has passed the necessary checks. E.g. DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service). Furthermore, the researcher has completed all of the required mandatory training that is required of Local Authority staff.

18. SIGNIFICANCE/BENEFITS

Outline the potential significance and/or benefits of the research

The research may benefit the participants and make an original contribution to the field of research, as it will focus directly on a vulnerable group of children (CINP and CP) who have been overlooked in current literature, and are often grouped alongside other vulnerable groups such as children in care despite the clear differences between the two. As highlighted there is a lack of research focusing on these children and their educational experiences, particularly in relation to their transition from primary to secondary school. More specifically, this research and its conclusions will have direct implications towards the practices of educational psychologists, schools, education welfare officers and social workers. Potential benefits for the LA are that the research may help them to identify good practice and possibly develop tools to support with the successful transitions of this group of children.

The intentions are that this research will add to a growing body of evidence to support the importance of listening to child voice and provide further insight into educational experiences.

19. RISKS

a) Outline any potential risks to **INDIVIDUALS**, including research staff, research participants, other individuals not involved in the research and the measures that will be taken to minimise any risks and the procedures to be adopted in the event of mishap

There are limited risks (as defined in Section 3 of the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics, 2014) to the individuals involved in the research. However, the nature of the participants (children aged 11-12 subject to CINP or CP) and the sensitivity of the topic (transition, relationships) pose important ethical issues. For a copy of the consent form used with pupils see Appendix 4. The content of this form is closely aligned with the specification for 'fully informed consent' given by the British Educational Research Association (BERA) (2004) and the British Psychological Society (BPS) (2014). As all of the pupils are under 18 years, parental permission will be gained via a consent form (Appendix 3), and a follow up discussion prior to the interviews.

One potential risk to the participants is that the interviews may uncover information of a sensitive or emotional nature, which may lead to the participants to experience a level of distress. It is also possible that issues may be raised regarding a child's level of happiness and inclusion within the school. Previous distress may be reawakened. However, this is unlikely, as the interview questions will be asked in a non-directive, exploratory way and not related to their care experiences. Also, the researcher conducting the interviews has experience in dealing with potentially emotionally laden conversations and sensitive information. However, if unpleasant thoughts or feelings do arise, the researcher will allow the child to talk about the feelings if they would like, to return to their classroom or a safe space in school and/or talk to a trusted and known adult. Following each interview, a de-brief session will be conducted and the participant will provided with time to reflect on the process and given an opportunity to request the removal of any material from the recording which she/he feels uncomfortable about. Participants will be appropriately signposted to information or services (for example, child counselling services such as Beam) as required in the event that any may wish to seek further information or support.

The focus will be on their lived experiences of school and therefore children will not be asked any direct questions regarding their care experiences. If children do not answer questions they will not be interrogated on why they do not want to answer. A protocol will be agreed that, at the end of the debriefing session, a named teacher is given, as a point of contact for the participant to go to, should there be a need to speak to someone or to access support. It is also imperative to explain to the participants that confidentiality cannot be assured if, during the course of the interview, an issue arises that places them or another individual at risk of harm or any indication of illegal activity is disclosed. It will be made explicit in the consent information that issues of concern raised during the process of the interviews will be followed up by the Designated Safeguarding Lead at school, and if after discussion with the Designated Safeguarding Lead is deemed appropriate, external agencies. This is in line with [redacted] Educational Psychology Service safeguarding procedures. This will also be made explicit verbally at the beginning of each interview.

Another potential risk is that due to social care acting as a third party recruiter, parents of participants may feel obligated to agree to their child taking part in the research, as the social worker has identified their child as being a suitable participant. This may put into question if the consent given by the parent is informed. However, the parent information sheet and consent sheet explicitly emphasises that their child's participation in voluntary and that there are no repercussions to the child or parent if they chose to not participate. It is stated that regardless of whether they decide for their child to take part or not, nothing will change in the way that their child is being supported in school. Additionally, information will not be shared with social care and affect the way in which they are supported.

The consent form for parents and children will differ. The consent for parents outlines the purpose of the research being to explore children's experiences of transition who are subject to CINP and CP, whilst the children's consent form will not include information about CINP and CP; children will be consenting to participate in a "moving forward project". The reasons for this are 1) I do not want children to experience unwanted or unpleasant thoughts or feelings as a result of participating in the research; 2) children may not have be consciously aware that they are subject to CINP or CP; 3) I did not want children to be identifiable as being on CINP or CP within their class or school setting, therefore the title "moving forward project" was used.

Children will take part in session, which will be held at their school. To protect their identity within school and ensure they are not stigmatized in their learning environment, the project will be given an accessible name to use in schools such as 'Moving Forward project. School staff will be made aware of the details of the project if the child and parents have given their consent to take part. The time that the child will take part in the study will be agreed with the teacher so that educational or social learning will not be impacted. The child will be in a familiar school environment and they will be made aware that they can leave to return to their classroom or a quiet space if they no longer want to take part in the study or want a break. The child can have a trusted adult (such as a teaching assistant or parent) with them at all times during the sessions if they choose to and that would make them feel more comfortable.

b) Outline any potential risks to **THE ENVIRONMENT and/or SOCIETY** and the measures that will be taken to minimise any risks and the procedures to be adopted in the event of mishap.

None anticipated.

20. ARE THERE ANY OTHER ETHICAL ISSUES RAISED BY THE RESEARCH?

Yes ☐ **No** ☒

If yes, please specify

All Ethical Issues have been highlighted in the 'Risks' section of this form.

21. EXPERT REVIEWER/OPINION

You may be asked to nominate an expert reviewer for certain types of project, including those of an interventional nature or those involving significant risks. If you anticipate that this may apply to your work and you would like to nominate an expert reviewer at this stage, please provide details below.

Name
Contact details (including email address)
Brief explanation of reasons for nominating and/or nominee's suitability

22. CHECKLIST

Please mark if the study involves any of the following:

- Vulnerable groups, such as children and young people aged under 18 years, those with learning disability, or cognitive impairments ☒
- Research that induces or results in or causes anxiety, stress, pain or physical discomfort, or poses a risk of harm to participants (which is more than is expected from everyday life) ☐
- Risk to the personal safety of the researcher ☐
- Deception or research that is conducted without full and informed consent of the participants at time study is carried out ☐
- Administration of a chemical agent or vaccines or other substances (including vitamins or food substances) to human participants. ☐
- Production and/or use of genetically modified plants or microbes ☐
- Results that may have an adverse impact on the environment or food safety ☐
- Results that may be used to develop chemical or biological weapons ☐

Please check that the following documents are attached to your application.

	ATTACHED	NOT APPLICABLE
Recruitment advertisement	☐	☒
Participant information sheet	☒	☐
Consent form	☒	☐
Questionnaire	☐	☒
Interview Schedule	☒	☐

23. DECLARATION BY APPLICANTS

I submit this application on the basis that the information it contains is confidential and will be used by the University of Birmingham for the purposes of ethical review and monitoring of the research project described herein, and to satisfy reporting requirements to regulatory bodies. The information will not be used for any other purpose without my prior consent.

I declare that:

- The information in this form together with any accompanying information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it.
- I undertake to abide by University Code of Practice for Research (http://www.as.bham.ac.uk/legislation/docs/COP_Research.pdf) alongside any other relevant professional bodies' codes of conduct and/or ethical guidelines.
- I will report any changes affecting the ethical aspects of the project to the University of Birmingham Research Ethics Officer.
- I will report any adverse or unforeseen events which occur to the relevant Ethics Committee via the University of Birmingham Research Ethics Officer.

Name of principal investigator/project supervisor:	Nick Bozic
Date:	04.03.2019

Please now save your completed form, print a copy for your records, and then email a copy to the Research Ethics Officer, at aer-ethics@contacts.bham.ac.uk. As noted above, please do not submit a paper copy.

APPENDIX 3: PARENT/CARER INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

To the parent(s)/carer(s) of _____,

My name is Abbie Roberts and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist working for (Name of Local Authority)'s Educational Psychology Service. I am also studying for a Doctorate in Educational Psychology at the University of Birmingham. As part requirement of my studies I am completing a piece of research designed to find out how pupils subject to Child In Need (CINP) or Child Protection Plans (CPP) experience their transition from primary to secondary school placements. I would like to invite your child (YOURCHILD) to take part in this project. In total, five to six pupils from different secondary schools in [redacted] are being asked to participate.

Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Contact details are listed below if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Please take your time to decide whether or not you wish for your child to take part. Thank you for reading this.

What does it involve?

I hope to conduct this research during the Summer Term 2019 and it will last for two sessions. In the first session I will meet with your son/daughter at school to talk about the research and what will happen. You are more than welcome to attend this first meeting. In the second session, your child will be asked to participate in an interview with myself that may last up to one hour. However, if your child does not feel that they would be able to focus for this length of time, they will be given the option to meet on more than one occasion to complete the interview in full. The pupil interviews will start with an activity to help build a friendly informal relationship. The session will provide your child with an opportunity for guided reflection on their thoughts, memories and feelings about their transition to secondary school and their understanding of it. During the interviews your child does not have to answer any questions that would make him/her uncomfortable. YOURCHILD will be given the opportunity for a trusted adult (yourself or teacher) to sit in on the interview if this would make them feel more comfortable. With your permission the interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed for analysis, then the recording will be destroyed.

Following each interview, a de-brief session will take place and YOURCHILD will be provided with time to reflect on the process and given an opportunity to request the removal of any material from the recording which she/he feels uncomfortable about. YOUR CHILD will also be appropriately signposted to information or services (for example, child counselling services such as Beam) as required in the event that they would to seek further information or support.

Your child will not be asked to talk about any of their experiences with the social care system. The focus of this research is entirely on their transition experience. The project will be described to your child as 'The Moving Forward Project'. Other information behind the reason why YOURCHILD has been invited to participate in my study has not been outlined on their information sheet. This is due to the fact that some children will not be aware of being subject to a Child In Need Plan or Child Protection Plan. This will only be explained to him/her if they query it during the interview. I will explain that it is due to the fact they have social care involvement and in the year 7 cohort. Equally, if you feel it would be appropriate to make your child aware as to why they have been asked to participate in my study then please feel free to do so. If your child does not answer any questions s/he will not be interrogated on why they do not want to answer. All information obtained during the study will be confidential. If serious issues of concern are raised during the interview process, this will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead at school, which is in line with school protocol. The school will not have access to the interview data and you will not be identified in any reports or publications. I will not report the information shared with anyone else.

Does my child have to take part?
No. Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and your child is under no obligation to take part in this study. If you do decide for your child to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep. In addition to this, you will be asked to sign the consent form attached. Please seek consent from any other parent/guardians where appropriate.

What if I have any concerns?
If you have any concerns at any point during the project, you can talk to me on [redacted]. If you wish to withdraw your child from the project you can do this at any time, up to four weeks after the second session has taken place. You do not have to give a reason to withdraw your child, and it will not affect their education or the support they are currently receiving at school in any way. The study information will be explained to your son/daughter verbally to ensure their understanding and informed consent. They are also free to withdraw from the study, at any time up to four weeks after their interview. They will not have to give a reason if they wish to withdraw. If requested, their interview data would be erased and not used in the research. However, once the time period of four weeks has elapsed, their data will then be analysed by the researcher and included within the final report, with anonymity preserved.

Any of the information obtained from the interviews will not be shared with social care and your child's participation will not affect the social care support you are currently in receipt of.

What happens after the interview?
When I have completed the interview, I will be writing up the results in a report. All of the information will be used to create an understanding of what was like for your child when they transitioned to secondary school. In order to achieve this, some of the information they provide may be used within the final report. This may include direct

quotations of what they said. Your child will not be named in anything that I write, so no one will be able to tell who has said which things as a pseudonym will be used in replacement of your child's name. There is a possibility that academic supervisors and examiners will require access to anonymised transcripts.

The research will form part of my thesis, which is completed as part of the Professional Doctorate in Educational Psychology. Therefore, some parts of my research may be published in the future. If I do this I will let you know beforehand, and you will receive copies of any publications. YOURCHILD will not be named or identified in any publications.

If your child participates in the project you will be given the option of whether you would like to receive a short report detailing a summary of the findings.

What next?
If you are happy for YOURCHILD to participate in the project, I would be grateful if you could complete the *Parent/Carer Consent Form.* Your son/daughter will need to complete the Pupil Consent Form. A Pupil Information Sheet is also provided, which explains what your son/daughter can expect from taking part in the project.

Please return the completed consent forms to school by DATE 2019.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that there are only a few potential participants across XXXXXXX who will be approached to take part in this project and your child's contributions would be extremely valued.

If you would like to know more about the project or discuss anything further please contact me (Abbie Roberts, Trainee Educational Psychologist) on [redacted], or at Abbie.Roberts@[redacted].gov.uk. Alternatively you can contact my university supervisor Nick Bozic at [redacted]

Yours Sincerely

Abbie Roberts
Trainee Educational Psychologist

Consent form for participants' parents/guardians

Please read the following statements and tick the boxes if you agree with them.

I have read and understood the information about the proposed research project. As the legal guardian of CHILD, I agree to let him/her participate in the project. I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project and I understand that:

There is no compulsion for my child to participate in this research project and, if they do choose to participate, they may at any stage withdraw their participation;	
Any information which my child gives will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications;	
My child will be audio-recorded which will be confidential and this will be deleted as soon as it is transcribed;	
All information my child gives will be treated as confidential;	
The researcher will make every effort to preserve my child's anonymity;	
In the case of a safe guarding concern I am aware the researcher has a duty to report disclosures to the relevant safeguarding officers at my child's school.	

Details of legal guardian/s of CHILD:

Child's Name _____

Signed _____ (parent/carer)

Print Name _____ (parent/carer)

Date _____

One copy of this form will be kept by the participants' parent or guardian; a second copy will be kept by the researcher.

Your contact details are kept separately from your interview data.

In the unlikely event that the researcher needs to contact you regarding your child please provide a telephone number that you can be contacted on and consent to being contacted (this is optional).

Phone number: _____

Contact Information

If you would like further details on the sessions or have any questions or concerns, I would be happy to discuss them with you. Please contact me:

Email: Abbie.Roberts@[redacted].gov.uk

Phone: [redacted]

Best wishes,

Abbie Roberts
Trainee Educational Psychologist

APPENDIX 4: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET AND CONSENT FORM

Moving Forward Project

CHILD's Invitation

Dear _____,

Hello! My name is Abbie Roberts and I am training to become an Educational Psychologist. This is somebody who helps make school better for children and young people. I am also a student at University of Birmingham and as part of my training I am conducting research that is looking at children's experiences of moving to secondary school. I would like to learn about what you think and feel about your move to secondary school and what has made you think and feel that way.

I hope that this research will help to make other children's move from primary school to secondary school a positive one. What you tell me might help other children who move to secondary school in the future. With your help I would like to find out about your experiences of moving to secondary school. You wont be the only young person to take part in the study; I will be talking to other young people in (Name of Local Authority) and asking them the same questions.

If I want to be part of this project what will happen?

I will meet you twice at your school. The first time I will meet you to talk about the project and answer any questions you have. Then the second time I will visit to complete a few activities and talk to you about when you moved to secondary school. I will ask you some questions to help to get the conversation started but there are no right or wrong answers!

Our chat on the second time we meet will last about 1 hour but we can have a break or meet again another time if 1 hour is too long for you.

When I talk with you I will record what you say so that I can remember what you have told me using a tape recorder. If you are not sure about this then you can talk to me about it before we begin talking when we meet. No one else will listen to the recording. I will only record our conversation during the second time we meet.

What you say will be kept confidential and between us. This means that although other people will hear about all of the children's views given in the sessions, no one will know who said what in the sessions and no names will be given. I will change your name to a different one to help with this.

After our chat and once the tape recorder has been switched off, we will have chance to talk about the things we discussed when you were being recorded and how you felt about the questions you were asked. You will also be able to let me know if you would like for any of the things we spoke about to be removed from the recording.

If you would like to have an adult you feel comfortable with (like your parent, a teacher or a teaching assistant) to sit in the room when we meet then that would be ok and you can let your Mr/Mrs TEACHER or your PARENT know. They can then let me know and we can arrange this.

The only time that I would have to speak to anyone else would be if you tell me something that means either yourself or someone else is in danger. If this happens, then I will let you know that I will need to speak to TEACHER about what you have told me. If you get upset by talking about any of the things I want to find out then we can stop straight away. If you want to stop talking for any reason we can also stop straight away.

What happens next?

1. If you would like to take part in this research then please let your parents/carers know now.
2. If you would like to know a bit more about the research before you make a decision you can ask your parents/carers or Mrs/Mr TEACHER at school to contact me with any questions that you have. You can do this before or after the interview.

What if I decide I don't want to take part?

1. It is really important to remember that you don't have to take part in the project if you do not want to.

2. If you don't want to take part you don't have to give a reason. It is your choice and nobody will be upset.
3. It is also OK if you do decide to take part and then change your mind later, or even if you want to stop half way through the session. If you do change your mind, you will need to let your parents or TEACHER know up to four weeks after the second session. If you decide this, all of the information given in the session will be deleted. However, if you decide you don't want to take part over four weeks after the second session, the information will still be used in research.
4. You can also skip some questions if you like; just say "I don't want to answer that question."

What happens after the project?

- All of the information that I get from second session yourself and the other children will be written up in a report that other people will read.
- Nothing that I write will have your name on it, so that whatever you say will not be linked to you in any way. I will not talk to other people about what you tell me about your move to secondary school.
- I may want to publish something about the project in the future. If I do this I will tell you first. You will get to see what I publish.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this project!

Abbie Roberts

Participant Consent Form: Moving Forward Project

My name is _____

Please read the following statements and tick the boxes if you agree with them. Signing your name at the bottom of the page means that you **agree** to take part in the research.

I have read and understand the information sheet	
I have attended the introductory session	
I have had the opportunity to ask questions	
I know that I do not have to take part in the project if I don't want to	
I am free to change my mind about taking part in the project at any time, up to four weeks after the second session, without giving any reason.	
I know that the session could last up to one hour.	
I understand that the things I talk about in this research will be written in a report. My name will not be used so no one will know who said what.	
I understand that what I say will not be shared with anyone else. But if I say something, which makes the researcher (Abbie) concerned about my wellbeing, then she would need to tell a TEACHER in school.	
I know that the session will be tape recorded so that there is a good record of what was said.	
I would like to take part in the project.	

……. …….

(Please sign your name) (Date)

Thank you for reading and completing this form!

Abbie Roberts, Trainee Educational Psychologist

APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

A timeline activity will be incorporated into the interview, in order to support with the participants memory of their experiences. This is due to the interviews being carried out two terms after their transition.

Issue/Topic	**Possible main questions**	**Prompts**	**Probes**
Opening question (getting to know the child and their previous schooling experience)	I'd like to find out about your time in primary school. Could you tell about the primary school you attended?	What else do you remember about this school?	This there anything else you liked/disliked? Is there anything else you can remember?
Experience (current thoughts and feelings)	Now let's talk about your experience of being in Year 7 at secondary school? Could you tell me a bit about your time so far? How do you feel about school and your experience?	How is this school different to your primary school? Could you expand on this point a bit more? What is going well/not so well? What do you like about it? What is important to you about school?	In what way? Is this a good/bad change…? How did you feel about those changes?
The School Day	Can you describe a typical school day?	What makes a good/bad day? Break times?	This may seem like a silly question but..?
Lessons	What are the lessons like at secondary school?	Is this different to primary school? if so, how?	
Reflection (introducing the topic of transition)	Please tell me something about your move from primary to secondary school?	How did you feel? Could you tell me a bit more about that…?	Could you just explain…in a bit more detail please?

Preparation (transition)	In what ways did you prepare for moving to secondary school? Did anyone help you to prepare? Can you tell me about your visits to secondary school?	What did they do? Was that helpful?	
Autonomy in decision making	What secondary school did you want to go to?	Why is that? Did you have a choice in the school?	What did you think about this? Was this a good or bad thing?
Thoughts and feelings (before)	What were your feelings prior to secondary school? (the six weeks before)	Can you describe to me how..? What did you think it would be like?	Why do you think…?
Thoughts and feelings (during)	What were your feelings during the time you moved to secondary school? So, thinking about your first day?	What was it like? Why do you think you felt this way? What did you do on your first day? How did you feel?	What do you mean by…?
Relationships	Can you think of anyone that helped you when you moved to secondary school? Who do you spend time with at school?	Any teaching staff in particular? Any peers in particular? Any other adults in your life? How did they help?	Can you tell me a bit more about…?
Autonomy (role-play)	If you were headteacher of your primary school what support would you put in place?		
Future/Reflection	Do you think that anything else	What are the most important	Anything else?

	would have been helpful to make you feel even more settled/ enjoy school?	things? Why would this be helpful?	
Summing up (enabling participants to provide any other information of interest)	Overall, how have you found moving to secondary school? Is there anything else that you would like to tell me about your transition to secondary school?		
Clarification	Would you like to clarify or change anything you have said?		

Appendix 6: Example of participant thank you Letter

Dear _____,

I wanted to write to you to say a huge thank you for meeting with me on (DATE) and sharing with me your experience of moving to secondary school.

I really enjoyed talking to you and finding out more about you, and what life is like for you now you are at secondary school. It was really interesting to here about your primary school, and how you prepared for moving to your new school.

Your experiences and views related to moving to secondary school are really important! The information that you shared with me will be used to help adults to understand what it is like for you at school, and how they can make moving to secondary school an even better experience for other children in the future.

If you have any questions about the interview, you could speak to (TEACHERS NAME) or your parents.

I will be sending you another letter once I have written up all my results from the study, as promised! This will give you some more detail on what you shared, as well as other children in Year 7.

I hope that you enjoyed taking part in the Moving Forward Project.

Thank you again!

Abbie

APPENDIX 7: ANALYSED TRANSCRIPT WITH NOTES (JAYDEN)

Conceptual comments, **Descriptive comments**, **Linguistic comments**

Emergent Themes	Original Transcript	Exploratory Comments
	Researcher: Ok so, to start with I'd like to find out about your time in primary school. Could you tell me a bit about what your primary school was like?	
Indifferent about primary school	Jayden: It was ok.	Primary school was ok – short in his response, very little opinion of primary?
	R: Ok? What was ok about it?	
Attended PRU - Disruptions to education	J: Well I went to two different ones. I went to my normal primary school and then the PRU.	Attended a PRU in primary school – normal used to describe mainstream – previous experiences of school transition
	R: The second is a pupil referral unit?	
	J: Yeah.	
	R: Ok, so tell me a little bit about your first primary school. What was that like?	
Negative primary school experience	J: It was worse.	Describing primary school was 'worse' than PRU, didn't have a positive experience at primary school?
	R: Why was it worse? What do you remember about it?	
Feeling an injustice/hard done by	J: Teachers were unfair. I don't know why, they would just do things that don't need to be done.	Teachers unfair in primary – would not explain sanctions etc. to him? A feeling of injustice?
	R: Like what?	
Gradual decline	J: Just, I don't even know. Like keep you in for no reason. It was ok to start with, only when I got a little bit older it was bad, but yeah it was unfair.	Progressively got worse as he moved through primary school
	R: Ok, well was there anything that you liked about your primary school? J: Urm, a bit. Some of the teachers were ok.	

	R: Right, what was “ok” about them?	Liked some of his teachers, teachers are the first thing he mentioned positive about primary school
	J: I dunno, they were just fair…about things. There were more things that I didn’t like.	Bad outweighed the good in primary
	R: Ok, well could you tell me about those?	
Exclusion as a negative experience	J: Getting kicked out.	Excluded from primary school and sent to a PRU – kicked out (an aggressive way of describing exclusion, almost physical)
	R: You got kicked out? Why did that happen?	
Lack of understanding of reasons behind exclusions	J: I can’t even remember. They just kicked me out.	Unable to pinpoint the specific reason for getting excluded.
	R: Do you think it was a fair reason to be kicked out?	
Level of acceptance without understanding – powerless?	J: It probably was but I don’t even know what I did.	Probably was even though he didn’t know what he did –accepting adult sanctions and himself as someone who gets/does things wrong? – Sense of self is negative and influenced by others? Passive?
	R: Was the reason not explained to you?	
Lack of autonomy over decisions made – done ‘to’	J: No, they just told me one day that I wasn’t going to be coming to that school no more. I had to go to a PRU instead.	‘Had’ – no choice. Very little preparation for transition to PRU and little autonomy over decisions made – done to.
	R: That must have been difficult for you.	
	J: Hm.	
	R: Ok, well is there anything else that you can remember about being at primary school?	
	J: Hm, some of my friends from that school came to (his secondary school).	Some friends transitioned with him
	R: And are you still friends with those now?	
Maintained friendships	J: Yeah.	Has maintained friendships from primary

Isolation/RTL big part of school experience **Truanting** **Lack of resilience to take on new challenges**	R: Ok, we will come back to friends a little bit later then. Now let's talk about your experience of being in Year 7 at [his secondary school]. Could you tell me a bit about your time so far? J: It's ok yeah, but I hate being in isolation. R: Ok, and was isolation a thing at your primary school? J: No, it's a new thing. R: And why do you end up spending time in isolation? J: Urm, I don't know. It's just like you do things that you aren't meant to so they put you in there. R: What sort of things? J: I don't even know just like skiving lessons and that kind of thing. R: What lessons do you skive? J: French. R: Why is that? J: I was meant to do French in primary but I never used to do it. R: How come? J: I hate French. I hate everything about it. Like, why do I need to speak in a different language? I hate it. R: Ok, it's a new thing for you then. Can you tell me a bit more about school life?	Ok used to describe secondary school – same way as describing primary school- Hates isolation – first thing he mentions about secondary school – big part of school? Isolation is a new concept in secondary Initial response 'I don't know' and used frequently, difficult to find an appropriate answer, something he hasn't thought about before? Understands the concept of isolation Doesn't seem to fully understand the reason for being sent to isolation – skiving mentioned Skiving a lesson that is new to him – lack of resilience to take on new challenges? Passionate about his dislike for French – repeating 'hate' even though he has not been in the lesson much Ok – same description as primary school – little

Better than anticipated	J: It's ok. Better than I thought it would be. R: In what way?	feeling towards school? Secondary school is better than he anticipated
Prefers secondary to primary	J: It's just better than primary. R: What makes it better though?	Prefers secondary school to primary,
	J: It's just easier to get to your lessons. Like say in primary if one person was doing something the teacher would hold up everyone just to stop and wait for like half an hour if you do something wrong. R: And what do they do now?	Fewer disruptions to learning due to behaviour management in secondary
Better behaviour management strategies	J: They just take that one person out and let everyone else carry on. They just manage behaviour better here. R: Is there anything else that makes this school different to your primary school?	Better behaviour management strategies – removal from classroom – he recognises the impact of disruptive behaviour on the learning of others.
Size of school	J: It's a lot bigger. R: Ok great, can you tell me a bit more about that.	Referring to size of secondary school - bigger
Difficulties navigating around school **Relied on others for support**	J: I mean it's ok but it's harder to get to places quicker and then when you start running, that's when you get told off. But I'm just trying to get to my lesson on time. Like when I first got here I was just following everyone, I didn't know my way. R: Who did you follow?	Size makes it difficult to get to classes on time – sense of injustice and dissonance (getting in trouble through no fault of his own?) Followed people to begin with/didn't know his way around the school
Support from older peers	J: Na, like some people in my year and my brother's friend were helping me find my way as well who are in Year 11. R: So it sounds like you had a lot of help from students?	Support from older peers and friends of sibling – status in school? No mention of staff
Feeling unsupported	J: Yeah. No one else though.	Only students helped him – explicit in this

Difficult to identify positives	R: What else is going well for you in school at the moment? J: I don't know. I don't really know to be honest. Probably things going good for me yeah but I don't know. I've just been at home for too long.	Finds it hard to think of positives about school and what is going well – spent time out of school
Excluded from secondary school	R: Ok, tell me a bit about that then because I don't know about this? J: So, I got kicked out, again. They went to put me on a managed move but I didn't go and ended up staying at home for like 3 months. And then they told me to come back and I just came and they put me in RTL.	Excluded from secondary school and disrupted experience to date – again (more than once) missed periods of education. 'Put me' – done to
Missed education opportunities/ time out of school	R: Oh I see. So you have missed 3 months of school? J: Yeah.	Missed 3 months of secondary school and stayed at home – significant disruption
Conflicting views of school	R: How do you feel about that, now you are back? J: It's better. Better than being at home. R: In what way? J: It gets boring when you are at home. You just keep doing the same things. It's just better at school there is actually things to do. When you are at home you just sit there and look at the walls and just trying to think of something but you can't. R: Did you feel the same when you were at primary school? J: Kind of. I don't mind school.	Prefers being at school to being at home – repeating 'better' for emphasis – very conflicting and contradicting statements about his views regarding school. Very little to do at home and bored when there in the day. Prefers to be at school Doesn't have strong negative views on school despite experiences to date
Wider social isolation and lack of protection	R: That's good! Ok, let's think about the school day now. What is a typical day like at school for you? J: Basically yeah, just do all my work, get sent to isolation, go home, go to my friend's house, go to sleep, wake up, shower and go back to school.	Isolation is part of a typical school day, despite getting his work done – matches with his expectations and understanding of what his educational experiences should look like (prior exclusion and wider social isolation) – cognitive dissonance in what is expected

Matches with identity and doesn't challenge who he thinks he is	R: I know you spoke about not liking French. Are there any lessons in a typical day that you like? J: Maths is ok. History is alright, so is Geography. Some of the lessons are good because I like some of them but the one's I don't like, I don't like them because I don't think they are good.	of him? (Getting work done is a positive, but still gets sanctioned) Has lessons that he likes but unable to explain what he likes and dislikes about lessons – Finds it difficult to articulate himself?
Teachers as 'rude' – lack of relatability	R: What don't you like about those lessons? J: It's just the subject itself, and some of the teachers. They are just rude. Not all of them, about two of them that are just rude. When you are rude back they send you to somewhere else.	Teachers affect his view of certain lessons as opposed to content Referring to teachers as rude again (repeating) – will at times be rude back to teachers – injustice in this?
Isolation a consistent element of school life	R: And how often does that happen that you get sent somewhere else like isolation? J: Like, a few times a week. I'm the RTL a lot.	Spends a lot of time in RTL/isolation
Lots of disruptions to education	R: So when you were in primary school, what would they do when you were "rude"? J: Take me out the class or hand me over to the head teacher and just sit in that office. Either way in primary or here whenever I do something wrong I am out the classroom quick.	Lots of disruptions to education, removal from the classroom and failed behaviour management strategies
Internalising and self-blame	R: Ok, so how would you know if it was a good or bad day at school? J: A bad day would be just if I woke up in a bad mood. Sometimes that happens. The teachers just put me in RTL when that's the case. That's how they deal with it.	Internalising and blaming himself when he is having a bad day or in RTL – not taking into account other influencing factors – is this the narrative that has been shared with him from adults? – RTL used as punitive response to behaviour challenges.
Big change	R: So, could you tell me something about your move from primary to secondary school? What was that like? J: It felt so much different.	Transition was a big change for him

Tall to small **Feeling inferior**	R: How come? J: Because, like when I was in primary it's like I was just taller and bigger than anyone else but when I came here I felt, I felt like I was really small. Everyone is tall here. Everyone is tall.	Physical differences and physical presence changes – repeating to emphasise the point
Identity shift – significant change	R: Is that a bad thing? J: Sometimes. It makes me feel like I'm an ant yeah, and they are a spider or something. I just feel really small. It's barely changed the way I am at school though.	Metaphors used to describe feeling small in secondary school – identity shift – quick to stress that this change has not influenced his presentation in school
Positive sibling presence	R: Oh really, why do you think that is? J: I dunno, my brother went to the school so I think that helped.	Brother attended the same school and influential in Jayden's presentation and how he adapted – positive sibling relationship and presence?
Status amongst peers/safety and security offered	R: How did that help? J: Well, I just knew more people and people wouldn't want to fight me yeah here because of my brother. People are scared of him for some reason, I dunno why but he is well known and big to be fair.	Older sibling influenced how peers perceived him and offered protection/protective factor– credibility and status amongst peers (positive)
Family influence	R: Ok, so how do you think this helped then? J: People just ain't going to fight me are they, because they know if they do then my brother will be after them.	Protection from older sibling – consequences and threats if peers fight with Jayden
Loss of coping strategies due to lack	R: Oh right, anything else about the move to secondary school? So when you were coming to the end of primary school and thinking about secondary, how were you feeling? J: It's a lot harder. It's like in primary school I had things to do if I got angry like, when I went to the PRU they used to take me out the classroom when I got angry they used to put me in this room and I could just go on the laptop for a bit and do some work at the same time and then I would go on the laptop for 15 minutes and	Secondary more difficult from an SEMH perspective (anger management), very little opportunity to practice self-regulatory behaviours – lack of understanding of Jayden and the appropriate ways of supporting him linked to limited positive relationships and amount of time out of school – sense of belonging?

of teacher support	then do 15 minutes work and then do that yeah. But in here if I do something wrong they are just gonna put me in RTL and I have to do my work there.	
	R: Why do you think it is different here then?	
Not feeling understood by teachers	J: I have loads of different teachers…they don't know me. My teacher in primary knew me well.	Has not established relationships with staff and not feeling understood– this is important to him, does he feel part of the school community?
	R: Tell me a bit more about that then?	
	J: I just got on better with my primary teacher. They got me. It was just easier to talk to them and stuff.	Had better relationships with teachers in primary and felt understood. More open communication
	R: Oh right, I see. Ok, so how did you prepare to move to secondary school? What did you do?	
No preparation for transition	J: Nothing.	Did not prepare in any way for transition
	R: Anyone that helped you?	
View of school influenced by sibling	J: No. I knew a bit about the school from my brother.	Some information was shared by sibling – possibly a negative viewpoint shared due to brothers experience
	R: Does he still attend the school now?	Brother excluded - did teacher's perceptions of brother influence their approach to supporting Jayden?
Sibling excluded	J: Na, he got kicked out in Year 11.	
	R: (pause) Did you have any visits to secondary school before you came?	Attended induction days – three in total
Induction days	J: Urm, yeah. We had like 3 induction days.	
	R: What were they like?	Preferred induction days to now – novelty?
	J: It was alright. It's way better on induction.	
	R: How come?	Teachers as rude and 'acting' previously–

Change in teacher attitude **Mistrust in adults** **Pre transition support vs. current support** **Differences in expectations** **Defiance** **Normality of exclusion** **Lack of school readiness** **Good at nothing**	J: It's just, some of the teachers that are rude now yeah, it's like they were all acting on the induction. Like acting good. Then you come to the school and they are shouting in your face. R: So what were they doing on the induction days? J: Trying to act like it's good. Like helping you out with everything yeah and now you get here they throw a book on the table and expect you to be able to do everything that's in there. R: Let's talk a bit more about that then. What support do you get in lessons? J: Well some teachers help. It's ok, they come and help me but if they don't then I just ask someone next to me and then I get I told off for talking. R: And how does that make you feel? J: Annoyed. I just blank the teacher. I just stop doing my work. R: Is there any teachers in school that have helped you? J: Yeah. R: Ok, who? J: A lot of them. They have stopped me for getting kicked out a few times. They've helped me with my work and they've got me out of RTL and stuff like that. R: Ok, great. How else did you prepare for secondary school? J: I just wasn't. I thought I was prepared, but I wasn't. Because like all of the other kids were practising their work before they came here and I came here and I was not good at nothing apart from maths and English, but now my English is just not good at all.	changes in teacher discipline since induction days - teacher views of pupil have changed since starting school? Lack of trust in adults? Support received on induction days differs to reality of support now offered - incongruity – teaching styles differ, is this due to teachers views that as Year 6s, they need more nurture? Occasionally receives support in lessons. Gets told off for asking for peer support – this is likely to be a strategy used in primary school ('brain, buddy, boss' technique) – lack of consistency and continuity in teaching styles and expectations Unfair sanctions create defiance and a break down in relationship – noted to occur frequently, possible lack of resilience? Some teachers have helped him in school Recognises that it is not all teachers who have negatively impacted on his view of school. Teachers have prevented exclusions. Talks about exclusions like it is normal, his understanding of how school is Wasn't prepared for secondary school (academic focused) and negative view of himself as a learner which has shifted since primary, felt at a disadvantage– due to disrupted education to date and sense of competence diminished

Disrupted education **Lessons are more difficult** **Sibling influential**	R: Why is that do you think? J: Because I've had time off and in different places I've just forgot to use anything in English. I forgot half of maths as well. R: How are you in lessons now if you are finding these subjects a bit more difficult? J: It's just harder. That's it really. R: Ok, we might come back to this point in a little while. What secondary school did you want to go to? J: Urm, I wanted to go here or XXXX (another school in the city). R: Oh right, and why is that? J: Just both are good schools. R: What is good about them? J: I just prefer them out of any other school, and well, my brother came here and I thought he was still gonna be here when I came, but he got kicked out. I was still coming anyway though so I was like oh forget it, I may as well just come here, and I don't really know. My parents didn't let me go to XXXXX I don't think. R: How come? J: I don't know, they just wanted me to come here with my brother so. R: How did you feel about your brother being at this school? J: It would have made a difference if he was still here. I probably would have been better.	Makes link between feeling unprepared and a number of educational transitions Lessons are more difficult now, Short response, nothing else to say. Wanted to go to his secondary school or another in the city Positive view of secondary school Sibling was a big influence on his wish to attend secondary school. Brother was excluded from school. Parents made final decision on school choice. Parents wanted Jayden to attend same school as sibling – ease and continuity? Feels brother would have been influential in contributing to positive secondary experience Has more respect for brother when compared to

	R: Why is that? J: Because he would just shout at me, so I would be more good. I listen to him, I only listen to the teachers a bit. R: Oh right, tell me a bit more about that? J: Depends how they talk to me. If people are respectful to me, I'll be respectful back but if they are rude to me, I'll be rude to them. R: How would you describe what the teachers are like here then? J: Some of them are rude, some are good. R: Ok, let's move on. What were your feelings prior to secondary school? J: I just felt the same innit, I didn't care. I had already been to two schools. That helped me, I knew what it was going to be like. R: Oh, the two primary schools? J: Yeah. Going to a new one wasn't a big deal. R: What did you think it would be like? I know you mentioned it was better than what you thought it was going to be. J: I thought it was just gonna be like everyone just shouting at ya, out of nowhere and just giving you hard work. But actually they give you hard work, but not hard, hard work. It's like they give you work that they know you can do. If you are here all the time anyway, because I haven't been here much it's harder. R: In what way? J: Well they don't know what I can do, do they? Cos I've haven't been in the lessons. Everyone it telling me we are in sets now, but I haven't been here so I	teachers – big influence in his life? – Element of fear? (he would shout at him which would then influence behaviour), referring to him like a parental figure Mirrors behaviours and responses back to adults. Hasn't had opportunity to form positive relationships with teaching staff due to amount of time out of school Transitions were normal to him – says that he knew what it was going to be like but earlier stated that it was different to his expectations. Some contradicting statements. – 'I didn't care' – self-preservation? Ease in adjustment due to number of educational transitions to date. The work isn't as difficult as he expected but he is finding the work more difficult due to periods of missed education – detrimental impact on education Teachers do not know his capabilities due to absence and isolations, which influences on his access to learning opportunities and feelings of competence, and sense of belonging. – not up to date on key changes in lessons at school due to absence. – Almost an outcast, is he part of this school
Transitions are 'normal' **Self-preservation** **Challenges due to missed learning** **Lack of teacher**		

understanding **Shift in view of capabilities** **Positive peer influence and relationships** **Infamous**	don't know. My friends are telling me they've switched up the classes and stuff. R: Do you know what classes are you in now? J: No. I don't know for maths, I'll be in like…I don't know. Probably like in bottom because I've forgot half of it. I was on top table at primary though so. R: Ok, so what was the first day of secondary school like for you? J: Urm, I don't think I remember. Actually, yeah. The first day I was just silent. R: How come? J: I don't know, I didn't know anyone, apart from some of my friends that came here. That was a bit helpful, but then I started talking to my brothers friends yeah and then I started to see more of my friends because they started moving to this school, and some of them started coming in because some weren't coming in for a bit. Basically, they didn't start on the same day as me but they came after. R: Was that a good or a bad thing? J: Good. Because like then you got people to talk to so you ain't gonna be silent. I had more people to speak to. R: How did that make you feel? J: Better. Happier. R: How come? J: Just did, and even though I haven't been at school I still speak to them. I know more people now actually as well you know. Some people know me and I don't even know them. I'm a bit well known in school, probably cos of my brother. R: So, I know you mentioned you were quiet on your first day. What else do you	community? Big shift in teacher views of his capabilities (top set to bottom set). Lots of hesitation, genuinely doesn't know (completely detached from school and understanding of his own capabilities?) First response to most questions that require him to think back to the beginning of school. Quiet on first day of secondary school Didn't know many people when he started school, which influenced his presentation (quiet) – "a bit helpful" = playing this down? – Some of his friends did not start at the beginning of the term with Jayden. A gradual transition or atypical transition? / peers had a big influence on his feelings of security in school and allowed him to be himself? Made friends and had more people to speak to in school. Big positive for Jayden! Happier when he knew more of his peers and began to form relationships Maintains communication with friends during absences from school – positive/protective factors? Has status in school due to older sibling – "a bit" (some attempt to play status down?) – no awareness that his behaviour/presentation around school is likely to be a contributing factor

	remember?	Older friends in school and socialising outside of classes and year group (confident?)– Mentions peers who are older frequently
	J: I seen a few of my other friends as well and I started talking to them. They are older than me though so not in my lessons.	
	R: What about your lessons? What were they like?	Lessons were initially more difficult than primary
	J: Urm, ok. Kinda hard, harder than primary anyway.	
	R: In what way?	Work was more challenging and 'confusing' – continuity of lesson content or a result of his absences in education? – either way it made transition in lessons more challenging for Jayden and likely influenced his sense of self as a learner. – He quickly falls back on a lot of things that he is unsure of by blaming himself.
Changes in curriculum – lack of curriculum continuity **Self-blame**	J: It's like, the work is way more confusing. Stuff I didn't know and..well I can't remember learning. That could be because of me though, I missed a lot of stuff.	
	R: Can you think of anyone that helped you when you moved to secondary school?	Had a variety of people helping him with transition
	J: Yeah. My friends, my family, some of the teachers as well.	
	R: Ok, how did they help?	Peers influential in supporting his sense of belonging in the school – Jayden's social network increased due to his friendships – this seemed important to him
Positive peer influence	J: My friends helped me fit. I started talking to more people cos they knew more people. Some of them were already here but some came from my primary school.	
	R: What about the teachers?	Teachers were positive influence initially. Helped with 'everything' – felt highly supported? Teachers are less supportive now when compared to the beginning of Y7 – keen to reiterate this point throughout interview
Changes in support	J: They were just nice to me. They just helped me with everything. Bit different now though.	
	R: In what way?	Still receives some help from certain teachers, mainly academic focused – is this what he sees the role of a teacher to be, solely academic support? Lack of pastoral support from staff? – Based on previous experiences and punitive approaches received throughout educational career. 'Rude' repeated.
Lack of pastoral support	J: Urm, well some of them are still helping me at times, but some of them, when i'm in their lessons, some of them are just rude.	
	R: What do you mean by rude?	Feels that teachers responses to him are unjustified – is this something he is oversensitive

	J: Just like staring me down for no reason, giving me dirty looks like.	to as it is repeated consistently?
Poor teacher/child relationship	R: Why do you think that is?	
	J: I don't know cos I haven't done anything and that just puts my in a bad mood then. When I haven't done something they want me to do in my book they are like "just do it now". You could just ask nicely and I'd do it, simple.	Doesn't feel that he does anything to warrant negative teacher responses. Does not respond well to abrupt challenges from teachers. This has an influence on his mood and presentation – vicious cycle and lack of communication and understanding between Jayden and his teachers.
	R: Yeah, ok. Why do you think they are like that with you?	
Changes in teachers attitudes and behaviour management strategies	J: I don't know. They weren't like it at the start, it's changed. Probably to do with my brother.	He feels that teachers approach to him has changed over year and associates his difficulties with his teacher with his brother
	R: What do you mean by that?	
Self-fulfilling prophecy	J: Well, he was naughty right, so they probably think I'm the same cos we are brothers. It's like oh you are his little brother, must be bad. He got kicked out, now I probably am so.	'Naughty' used to describe brother. Teaching staff hold preconceived views on family and this is influencing their beliefs about Jayden. Submissive of the likelihood of him following same route as his sibling and being excluded. Is this something that is expected from him at home as well and sibling is a role model?
	R: You mentioned family too, what did they do to help you?	Family helping with emotional regulation and containment
	J: They are helping me, urm, just like to control my anger and stuff.	
	R: Oh ok, in what way?	
Lack of family support **Lack of parent understanding**	J: Well, I've started to like just sitting in my room on the TV and stuff and on the Xbox. I've got a punching bag as well. So, that helps and they brought me that stuff so. That's it though really. They don't really know much about school and stuff. Like, they told me I need to go to another one but they don't know why, and like, I don't know, they never ask me really. So yeah.	Strategies used to manage anger (i.e. brought him a punch bag) – recognises that he is receiving little support at home? – Limited communication and understanding from parents regarding school and support around this. Making this point, does he want them to ask him and support him? – 'so, yeah' to end, like that's just the way that it is.
	R: You mentioned you get angry, is there times at school when this isn't the case? Certain lessons or?	
	J: No, I don't think so.	Unable to identify specific times in school when he consistently does not get angry – his perception of himself as an angry person? – Must be very unsettled

Big jump **Lack of trust and respect in teacher/child relationship** **Feeling unprepared**	R: Ok, that's fine. Ok, so if you were a head teacher of your primary or secondary school what would you do to make moving from year 6 to year 7 a better experience? J: I would leave them having the same work yeah, like as they did in primary school then make it a bit harder as they get more settled. Not such a big jump yeah. R: Anything else? J: Just like, if anyone needs help with something, the teacher's need to stop being so rude, and like, half of them are just emailing other people to come pick you up from the class and put you in RTL, and it's like when you are asking them for help half way through the lesson, they are like "one second" and stuff like that yeah, cos they are trying to get someone else out of the class. It's annoying. R: Was this different to your primary school? J: Yeah. It's because like, they will hang out the door, call another teacher yeah, ask to take them out the lesson and they would and everything would be fine. R: Anything else you would do if you were a head teacher? J: I would just show them round the school that would have been helpful. R: In what way? J: Because like, when I first got here it's like half of my classmates knew where they were going because they had been to look round already, but I wasn't so I just started following them and then got to my lessons. Na, like I mean, nobody got to look round the school before but some were doing it on their lunches and stuff to know where they should be. I just followed them. R: Anything else? That would be helpful for others in the future?	in school to hold this view. Would like more continuity in the curriculum initially in the settling period. Would prefer less of a 'jump' with academic work – some really good insight into what could have helped him to feel more settled and possibly change his Year 7 experience for the better. Feels unable to ask for help due to the responses he frequently receives from staff that are usually ones of challenge. – would like for teachers to communicate with students in a less threatening way? Lots of removal from lessons as a response to behaviour management. Better orientation opportunities and guidance around school. ' Would have been' like he didn't receive this Some people knew how to navigate their way around school, so Jayden was reliant on these peers. – Didn't feel as prepared?

	J: I dunno. R: What about personally for you? Do you think that anything else would have been helpful to make you feel even more settled? J: Well, I'm going to alternative provision, so loads yeah to make it better.	Viewing alternative provision as a failure at secondary school? – Feels that lots of things could have been done to improve his experience and make him feel more settled.
Alterative provision as a failure	R: Ok, like what? J: Too much, probably not been good for me because I have had exclusions and loads of time off stuff. Just if it was the same as the beginning and the teachers were alright still. I think it was Miss Jones who came to my primary school to talk to me about [secondary school] though. That was good because I got to miss a lesson.	'Too much' to identify – not sure where to start? Emphasising point about changes in teacher attitudes and behaviour management styles. Recognised the positive in some continuity between primary and secondary school with member of staff bridging the two.
	R: What did she talk to you about? J: She just told me what it was going to be like, which was a lie.	Teacher spent time discussing what secondary school would be be. Lie – not trusting of adults?
Lack of trust in adults	R: Ok, you mentioned it was a lie on a few occasions. How are you feeling now about school? J: Urm, I don't know. Now I just want to stay at school and go back into my normal lessons now and stuff. I don't think they are gonna do that. I don't know why.	Wants to be part of the school and lessons, but recognises that this is unlikely. Responses to Jayden are often punitive in his view, and he has little understanding of why certain actions are being taken. Has anyone attempted to get his side of the story before, understand him and explain to Jayden the processes that are being undertaken? Being done to.
Lack of autonomy in decisions made regarding him	R: How come? J: I dunno, I just don't think they will put me back. They want me gone now.	Believes school do not want him there anymore -
Poor sense of belonging / feeling unwanted	R: Why do you think that? J: Because I am always in RTL or getting in trouble, and that's what happened with my brother isn't it?	Self-preservation? Self-fulfilling prophecy?
Self-preservation as	R: How soon after starting at school did you notice changes?	Had a honeymoon period when he began

coping strategy **Truancy** **Peers offering sense of belonging** **Few opportunities to experience success**	J: Just like, a month in I was getting in trouble. R: So, the first month what was you like? J: Like I started talking to more people yeah, and I started skiving lessons yeah, skived the lesson once yeah, with one of my friends and his cousin and then we just started skiving lessons more often and then we ended up, like when I came to school I just ended up not going to any lessons apart from like one. R: Which one? J: Urm, P.E., things like that, and geography actually. R: Why those subjects? J: I don't mind P.E. I am good at some of the things they do in the lessons, not then they always play football which I'm shit at. R: What are you good at then? J: Basketball. I got scouted for the city for basketball and I went but they were all shit so I didn't bother going anymore. My brother liked basketball as well so that's probably why and he was on the team. R: Do you play basketball for the school too then? J: No, they don't have a team anymore, else I would. I was at primary school as well. R: Ah right! So going back to the first of school and skiving of lessons, what do you think the main reason for the change in your behaviour was? J: Making friends.	secondary Peer relationships contributed to his behaviour changes (i.e. truancy) spiralling and gradual over time– sense of excitement and belonging? – Doesn't get this from school, teachers and the lessons. Went to the lessons he enjoyed and felt competent at – lack of resilience and limited subjects where he experiences success. Not able to participate in the sport he enjoys – impacts on motivation Confirmed forming friendships influenced behaviour

Peers influence on behaviour **Freedom** **Physical aggression** **More independence**	R: Overall, how have you found moving to secondary school? J: It's been ok, it's just better than primary. R: In what way? J: Here yeah, there is just more freedom. In primary school it's like they are more strict and they take you everywhere, you don't get to do what you want, but here you got to make it to your own lessons and that, you can talk to your mates on the way there. It's just like when you did that in primary you aren't allowed to do anything, they just take you to the lessons you don't have to think. R: So, why is that better? J: It's like, I hate people being too close to me like. It's like, sometimes I don't mind it but when people are too close to ya, you just wanna hit them or something. Just gonna move them somehow. I hate when people are touching me as well. I just hate it, it's just so annoying. R: Ok, right. Can you explain what you mean a bit more to me please? J: Basically, in primary they treated you like you were a toddler. They just bring you everywhere. They may as well have just picked you up and carried you to the lesson. It's just annoying, they don't give you enough space. I'm just not used to that, at home or anywhere. R: Ok, so you say you have more freedom here. How are you treated? J: They treat like yeah, like an adult. How I should be treated. R: Like an adult? J: Yeah, you can do what you want more and that's how I'm treated at home and stuff. It's just better.	Reiterating his preference for secondary Freedom used to describe secondary – likes the freedom that secondary schools offers. Fewer restrictions. Dislikes physical closeness with other people and can result in him becoming physically aggressive as a strategy for moving a possible threat? Simile used ' like a toddler' – felt molly coddled in primary school and not in line with how he felt he should be treated. Doing 'for'? – High levels of nurture in primary, not a typical experience for Jayden at home? – felt uncomfortable for him and like he was being restricted. Not giving him the space he needs. Shift in way he is treated at secondary. Sees himself as an adult? – More comfortable with this. Does a change in expectations and responsibility come with this? More freedom at home and treated like an adult – prefers this and something he is used to.

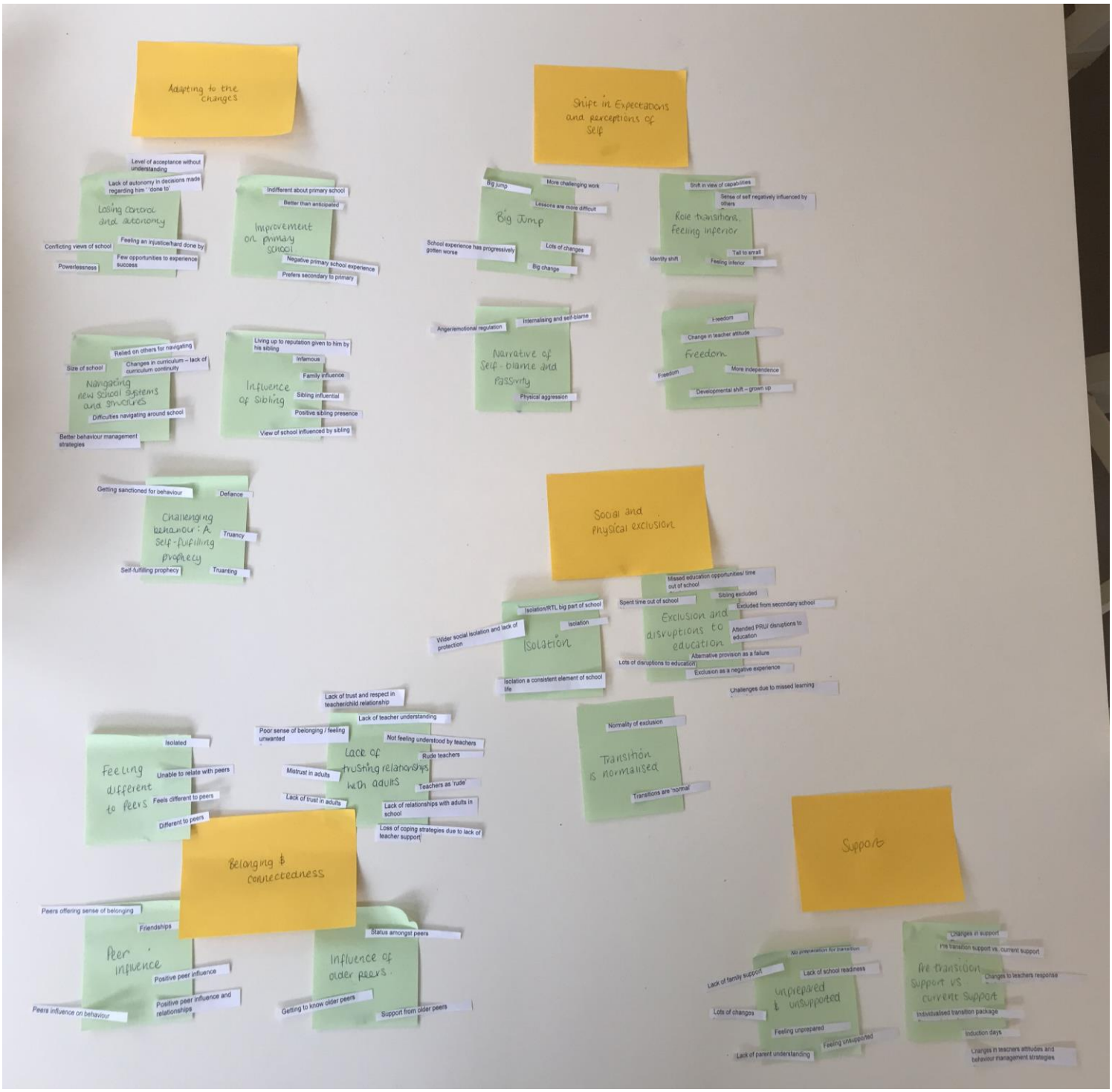
Freedom **Individualised transition package** **Lack of relationships with adults in school**	R: Ok, anything else? J: I dunno, primary was just boring. I was there for a while but then went to PRU, and then came straight from PRU to here so. R: Did they help you with the move to secondary? J: Yeah, so on the induction days, urm, one of the teachers that was really nice yeah, they came with me and they helped me round here. R: Ok, what did they do? J: Like, some of the teachers before the induction days showed him round the school so he knew it and where to go and stuff and take me. So, he started taking me round the school. R: How did that make you feel? J: Well I just knew where to go, and because like I actually knew a teacher so that was better. I actually already knew a teacher though that worked here because she used to work at my primary. I haven't had her in a lesson though, she's probably my favourite teacher here as well and I haven't even had her teach me. R: Why is she your favourite? J: She's not rude to people. Say if someone was being bad yeah, she'd just ask them to go somewhere, she wouldn't shout in their face and tell them to go somewhere. That just makes me angry. So she asks, and if they don't want to, she will just take them into a room and calm them down or something like that. It's just better than other teachers. R: Is there anything else you want to mention or anything else that you think I need to know? J: Urm, well I get angry quick. It's like I hate people staring at me as well. That was	Repeating that primary school was boring Some support from primary school during transition. One teacher attended induction day – sees this as a positive. Teacher supported him during induction particularly with orientation of school – speaks positively of induction days. – received transition package individual to him from primary school. The positive relationship Jayden had with teacher aided in his feelings of ease. Knew a teacher when he started who previously worked in his primary school. Classes her as his favourite teacher - Lack of relationships with key staff in school and his teachers as he does not identify staff that he comes into contact with every day as his 'favourite' teacher. Sense of belonging in school impacted? Does he want the nurture offered in primary school without realising it? 'Rude' – repeated again, emphasises that this is a trait that he associates with most teachers; she is an exception to the rule? She is calm in her approach and more nurturing, allows time for self-regulation. Other teachers do not allow for this, linked to them not knowing Jayden? Internalising difficulties he is experiencing again (getting angry quick). Can become angry quickly. Dislikes people staring – insecure to others perceptions of him and/or hyper vigilant and feeling threatened by others. 'Hate' to emphasis dislike of

	a big problem in primary too, I used to get angry quick. I used to just get mad at people, especially the kids in my class.	this.
Anger/emotional regulation	R: Oh ok, is that still the case now?	Managed anger more effectively when in PRU due to the environment (smaller classes etc.) feels that moving to secondary and into normal class sizes was a big change – little done to recognise and support with this? Feeling overwhelmed by changes and difficult to regulate and manage this. Felt that his peers were different to him, classes are louder. Overwhelmed? 'Annoying' used repeatedly to describe this.
Overwhelming	J: Well, when I was at the PRU there was like six people in my class, so that felt better and then I had to come here and have loads in my class, because like the normal classroom now is just more loud and more annoying cos some people are just too different like and I'm just not used to it after being at the PRU. It gets annoying because they start, they just talk too quick sometimes and then some just don't talk at all. It's just annoying.	
Lots of changes	R: Why is that annoying?	His was able to relate to peers in PRU more (they were like him), doesn't feel that peers at secondary are relatable to him – feeling isolated in his year group and like he does not fit with them – alienation?
	J: Because right at the PRU yeah, it's like there are people just like me. They talk to you and they can be silent when they want. They were just more like me, whereas here they ain't.	
	R: In what way?	'Different, bad and annoying' used to describe the differences between himself and his peers. Sees the differences as negative. Becomes irritated by his peers. Sees a big difference in being classed as a 'year 6' and a 'year 7' and doesn't feel that his peers have made that developmental transition.
Isolated **Unable to relate with peers**	J: Just different, just bad. Some of them just get on my nerves so much. It's just like the way they speak as well, they just speak yeah like they aren't a year 7, like they are still year 6's, it's just annoying.	
	R: What's the difference between a year 6 and a year 7?	Perceives being in year 7 as needing to grow up – developmental transition. 'Act like babies' – to describe their immaturities (linking primary school to being a 'baby') prefers to spend time with older peers, feels he can relate to these more.
	J: Just have to be more grown up now you are older aren't you. They act like babies still, probably why are hang around with my brothers mates at school and older ones. They act so dumb sometimes.	
	R: So that is why you feel different to them sometimes?	Doesn't feel that he can relate to his peers, doesn't find the same things assuming. 'Annoying, dumb and weird' used to describe this – un-relatable and like he is above this. Has this been influenced by the inconsistencies in Jayden's attendance at school or in lessons? Limited his opportunities to form relationships with his peers in his classes.
Developmental shift – grown up	J: Urm yeah, cos like they laugh about dumb things, it's just annoying. Laugh about games and things, I'm like "why?' it's a game for a reason, you are meant to play it, not laugh about it. I just don't get it it's weird. We are just different so I get on the	

Feels different to peers	older kids. Everyone always thought I was in year 8 or year 9 because I hang around with all the older kids. R: Great, thank you. Anything else to add? J: Oh, I'm going to a different school for a bit next week I think. R: How are you feeling about that? J: I don't know, I don't know what the school will be like, but my family is telling me that I will like it so. I don't know what they think I will like but it's hopefully smaller classes and less people like the PRU. R: Ok, fingers crossed then for you! Anything else? J: No, I don't think so. R: Great, well thank you Jayden.	Going to be attended an alternative provision next week. Very casually added this to the conversation, a normal thing for Jayden? Unsure how he is feeling about the change of school, doesn't know what the new school will be like, uncertainty and anticipation. Trusts family when telling him that he will like new school. Preferred smaller classrooms and group sizes at PRUs.

APPENDIX 8: POST IT NOTES FOR THEMES (JAYDEN)

This image depicts the process of searching for connections across emergent themes. This process allowed for spatial representation of how emergent themes relate to each other, offering ease in the process. This process was carried out for all five participants.



APPENDIX 9: INITIAL GROUPING OF RELATED THEMES FOR JAYDEN (WITH KEY QUOTATIONS)

Emergent Themes	Subordinate Themes	Superordinate Themes	Key Quotations
Powerlessness Feeling unwanted Few opportunities to experience success	**Losing Control and Autonomy**		*"I just want to stay at school and go back into my normal lessons now and stuff. I don't think they are gonna do that. I don't know why."* *"I don't mind P.E. I am good at some of the things they do in the lessons.."*
Changes in curriculum – lack of curriculum continuity Difficulties navigating around school Size of school Relied on others for navigating Better behaviour management strategies	**Navigating New School Systems and Structures**		*"But actually they give you hard work, but not hard, hard work"* *"Stuff I didn't know and..well I can't remember learning."* *"It's harder to get to places quicker"* *"It's a lot bigger."* *"I was just following everyone, I didn't know my way."* *"They just manage behaviour better here."*
Negative primary school experience Indifferent about primary school Prefers secondary to primary Better than anticipated	**Improvement on Primary School**	**Adapting to The Changes**	*"It was worse."* *"There were more things that I didn't like."* *"Better than I thought it would be."* *"I dunno, primary was just boring."*
Positive sibling presence Sibling influential Living up to reputation given to him by his sibling View of school influenced by sibling	**Influence of Sibling**		*"..my brother went to the school so I think that helped."* *"People are scared of him for some reason, I dunno why but he is well known and big to be fair."* *"People just ain't going to fight me are they, because they know if they do then my brother will*

Infamous Family influence Self-fulfilling prophecy Truanting Truancy Defiance Getting sanctioned for behaviour	**Challenging Behaviour: A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy**		*be after them."* *"It would have made a difference if he was still here. I probably would have been better."* *"I listen to him, I only listen to the teachers a bit."* *"Some people know me and I don't even know them. I'm a bit well known in school, probably cos of my brother"* *"Probably to do with my brother."* *" he was naughty right, so they probably think I'm the same"* *" oh you are his little brother, must be bad"* *"that's what happened with my brother isn't it?"* *"He got kicked out, now I probably am so."* *"..and I started skiving lessons yeah"* *"..just like skiving lessons and that kind of thing."* *"Annoyed. I just blank the teacher. I just stop doing my work."* *"I get I told off for talking."*
Isolated Unable to relate with peers Feels different to peers Different to peers Friendships Positive peer influence Positive peer influence and	**Feeling Different to Peers** **Peer Influence**		*"I don't know, I didn't know anyone"* *"..at the PRU yeah, it's like there are people just like me."* *"They were just more like me, whereas here they ain't."* *"Just different, just bad. Some of them just get on my nerves so much."* *"they just speak yeah like they aren't a year 7, like they are still year 6's"* *"They act like babies still…"* *"..yeah, cos like they laugh about dumb things, it's just annoying."* *"We are just different so I get on the older kids."* *"..people are just too different like and it's just not used to it after being at the PRU."* *"..some of my friends from that school came to [his secondary school]."* *"Good. Because like then you got people to talk to so you ain't gonna be silent. I had more people to*

relationships Peers influence on behaviour Peers offering sense of belonging Lack of relationships with adults in school Lack of teacher understanding Not feeling understood by teachers Loss of coping strategies due to lack of teacher support well Teachers as 'rude' Rude teachers Mistrust in adults Lack of trust in adults Lack of trust and respect in teacher/child relationship Poor sense of belonging / feeling unwanted Support from older peers Status amongst peers Getting to know older peers	**Lack of Trusting Relationships with Adults** **Influence of Older Peers**	**Belonging and Connectedness**	*speak to."* *"My friends helped me fit."* *"Making friends."* *"Well they don't know what I can do, do they?"* *"I haven't had her in a lesson though, she's probably my favourite teacher here as well and I haven't even had her teach me."* *"It's just the subject itself, and some of the teachers."* *"the teacher's need to stop being so rude"* *"They are just rude. Not all of them, about two of them that are just rude."* *"..the teachers that are rude now yeah.."* *"Then you come to the school and they are shouting in your face."* *"she wouldn't shout in their face and tell them to go somewhere. That just makes me angry."* *"Just like staring me down for no reason, giving me dirty looks like."* *"I have loads of different teachers, they don't' know me. My teacher in primary knew me well."* *"But in here if I do something wrong they are just gonna put me in RTL and I have to do my work there.'* *"She just told me what it was going to be like, which was a lie."* *"..they were all acting on the induction. Like acting good."* *"I just don't think they will put me back. They want me gone now."* *"They are older than me though so not in my lessons."* *"my brother's friend were helping me find my way as well who are in Year 11."* *"I just knew more people and people wouldn't want to fight me"* *"I started talking to my brothers friends yeah.."*
Big jump Big change			*"..make it a bit harder as they get more settled. Not such a big jump yeah."*

Lots of changes School experience has progressively gotten worse Lessons are more difficult More challenging work	**Big Jump**	**Shift in Expectations and Perception of Self**	*"t felt so much different."* *"It's a lot harder."* *"It's just harder. That's it really."* *"It was ok to start with, only when I got a little bit older it was bad.."* *"Kinda hard, harder than primary anyway."* *" the work is way more confusing"*
Identity shift Tall to small Shift in view of capabilities Feeling inferior Sense of self negatively influenced by others	**Role Transitions: Feeling Inferior**		*"It makes me feel like I'm an ant yeah, and they are a spider or something. I just feel really small."* *"I was just taller and bigger than anyone else but when I came here I felt, I felt like I was really small. Everyone is tall here. Everyone is tall."* *"Probably like in bottom because I've forgot half of it. I was on top table at primary though so."*
Freedom Freedom More independence Change in teacher attitude Developmental shift – grown up	**Freedom**		*"..there is just more freedom."* *"It's just like when you did that in primary you aren't allowed to do anything, they just take you to the lessons you don't have to think."* *"Basically, in primary they treated you like you were a toddler."* *"They may as well have just picked you up and carried you to the lesson."* *"They treat like yeah, like an adult. How I should be treated."* *"..you can do what you want more"* *"Just have to be more grown up now you are older aren't you."*
Internalising and self-blame Anger/emotional regulation Physical aggression	**Narrative of Self-Blame and Passivity**		*"A bad day would be just if I woke up in a bad mood."* *"well I get angry quick. It's like I hate people staring at me as well."* *"I had things to do if I got angry"* *"I hate people being too close to me like. It's like, sometimes I don't mind it but when people are too*

			close to ya, you just wanna hit them or something. Just gonna move them somehow."
Isolation/RTL big part of school Isolation Isolation a consistent element of school life Wider social isolation and lack of protection	**Isolation**	**Social and Physical Exclusion**	*"I hate being in isolation."* *"I just came and they put me in RTL."* *"..Just do all my work, get sent to isolation,.."* *"Like, a few times a week. I'm the RTL a lot."* *"The teachers just put me in RTL when that's the case."* *"Because I am always in RTL or getting in trouble"*
Exclusion as a negative experience Excluded from secondary school Sibling excluded Attended PRU/ disruptions to education Alternative provision as a failure Missed education opportunities/ time out of school Challenges due to missed learning Lots of disruptions to education Spent time out of school	**Exclusion and Disruptions to Education**		*"So, I got kicked out, again."* *"Getting kicked out."* *"Well I went to two different ones. I went to my normal primary school and then the PRU."* *"..he got kicked out in Year 11."* *"Well, I'm going to alternative provision, so loads yeah to make it better."* *"Because I've had time off… I've just forgot to use anything in English. I forgot half of maths as well."* *'They went to put me on a managed move but I didn't go and ended up staying at home for like 3 months"* *"I've just been at home for too long."* *"If you are here all the time anyway, because I haven't been here much it's harder."* *"It probably was but I don't even know what I did."* *"I can't even remember. They just kicked me out."* *"No, they just told me one day that I wasn't going to be coming to that school no more. I had to go to a PRU instead."*
Normality of exclusion Transitions are 'normal'	**Transition is Normalised**		*"They have stopped me for getting kicked out a few times."* *"I just felt the same innit, I didn't care. I had already been to two schools. That helped me, I knew what it was going to be like."* *"Going to a new one wasn't a big deal."*
Feeling unsupported			*"Yeah. No one else though."*

No preparation for transition Feeling unprepared Lack of school readiness Lots of changes Lack of family support Lack of parent understanding	**Unprepared and Unsupported**	**Support**	*"I would just show them round the school that would have been helpful."* *"t's like half of my classmates knew where they were going because they had been to look round already, but I wasn't"* *"I just wasn't. I thought I was prepared, but I wasn't."* *"..when I was at the PRU there was like six people in my class, so that felt better and then I had to come here and have loads in my class"* *"They don't really know much about school and stuff. Like, they told me I need to go to another one but they don't know why, and like, I don't know, they never ask me really"*
Induction days Individualised transition package Changes in teachers attitudes and behaviour management strategies Changes to teachers response Pre transition support vs. current support Changes in support Pre transition support vs. current support	**Pre Transition Support vs. Current Support**		*"Just if it was the same as the beginning and the teachers were alright still."* *"They weren't like it at the start, it's changed"* *"They were just nice to me. They just helped me with everything. Bit different now though."* *"Like helping you out with everything yeah and now you get here they throw a book on the table and expect you to be able to do everything that's in there."*

APPENDIX 10: TABLE OF INDIVIDUAL THEMES ACROSS CASES

Emergent Themes – Jayden	Emergent Themes – George	Emergent Themes – Elle	Emergent Themes – Summer	Emergent Themes - Priya
Adapting to The Changes • Losing Control and Autonomy • Navigating New School Systems and Structures • An Improvement on Primary School • Influence of Sibling • Challenging Behaviour: A Self-Fulfilling Prophecy	**Importance of Feeling Understood** • Seeking Familiarity • Importance of Relationships For Learning • They Don't Get Me Now'	**Integrating into a New Peer Group** • Difficulties Establishing Trust • Positives of Forming Friendships • Struggling to Form Connections with Others • Loss of 'Family' and Connectedness	**'It was hard to begin with'** • School Readiness • Facing Challenges • Pre-transition Fears • Challenges with Forming Trusting Relationships	**Peer Relationships and Social Acceptance** • Maintaining Familiar Connections and Expanding Friendship Circles • 'Friends Forever' – The Power of Friendship • Influence of School Environment on Peer Relationships • Social inclusion: Desire to Fit In and Be Accepted
Belonging and Connectedness • Feeling Different to Peers • Peer Influence • Lack of Trusting Relationships with Adults • Influence of Older Peers	**Making Sense of One's Identity** • Man up and Grow up • Parental Pressures • Unprepared for Increased Responsibilities • I am an Angry Person	**Transition as an On-going Process** • Need More Time • Preparations	**Peer Relationships** • Forming and Expanding Social Circles • Friends = Key Sources of Support • Support of Older Peers • Reliance on Familiar Faces	**Moving from Childhood towards Adolescence** • Complexity in Changing of Relationships • Oldest to Youngest • Increased Expectations and

	• Testing the Boundaries			Responsibilities • Exploring Sexuality • Social Media
Shift in Expectations and Perception of Self • Role Transitions: Feeling Inferior • Freedom • Narrative of Self-Blame and Passivity	**Enormity of the Change** • Time • Sense of Loss • Secondary School is a Big Place • Mixed Feelings • Uncertainty and Misconceptions • Adult Support	**Vulnerability** • Overwhelmed • Isolated/Alone • Coping Strategies	**Negotiating A Sense of Self** • Conflicting Identity • Increased Expectations and Responsibilities • New Interests: Dating • Self-esteem and Self-efficacy	**Moving Forward: A Fresh Start** • A Perfect Time to Change Appearance • Comparing Primary to Secondary School • Finally Feeling Settled • Family Members at School • Saying Goodbye to Primary School
Social and Physical Exclusion • Isolation • Exclusion and Disruptions to Education • Transition is Normalised	**Teaching and Learning** • Teaching and Learning: From Fun to Formal • Increased Engagement in Learning	**Being Supported by Others** • Teacher Support • Friends as Support • Family Support	**Adapting to My New School** • Some Challenges are Only Temporary • School Systems and It's New Challenges • Family Influence and Support	**Growing Accustomed to School Changes** • Greater Opportunity and Variety • Positive View of Teaching and Learning • Pastoral Support • Changes in School Systems and Structures • Challenges with Older Peers
Support	**Peer Relationships**	**Continuity and**	**Teaching and**	**Anticipation and**

• Unprepared and Unsupported • Pre Transition Support vs. Current Support	**and Social Experience** • Sport • Bullying • Friends Ease the Challenges	**Change** • Logistics of a New Environment • Pressure to Remember • Teaching and Learning • Rules, Boundaries and Consequences • From Walking to Getting the Bus • Family Influences	**Learning** • More Opportunities • Increased Motivation and Engagement • Organisation of Classes: Setting • Curriculum Continuity and Pedagogy	**Preparation** • Initial Fears and Challenges • Pre-Transition: Mixed Emotions • Practical Preparations
			Leaving Primary School Behind • Primary School as a Community • Sense of Loss • Mixed Feelings when Comparing Schools	

APPENDIX 11: PATTERNS/CONNECTIONS BETWEEN AND ACROSS INTERVIEWS

Individual Themes	Subordinate Theme	Superordinate Theme
Sense of Loss (George) Loss of 'Family' and Connectedness (Elle) Primary School as a Community (Summer) Sense of Loss (Summer) Saying Goodbye to Primary School (Priya)	**Saying Goodbye to Primary School**	**New Beginnings: Moving on and Letting Go**
Unprepared and Unsupported (Jayden) Transition is Normalised (Jayden) Uncertainty and Misconceptions (George) Preparations (Elle) Pre-transition Fears (Summer) School Readiness (Summer) Pre-Transition: Mixed Emotions (Priya) Practical Preparations (Priya)	**Fear of the Unknown**	
Peer Influence (Jayden) Seeking Familiarity (George) Maintaining Familiar Connections and Expanding Friendship Circles (Priya) Influence of School Environment on Peer Relationships (Priya) Forming and Expanding Social Circles (Summer)	**Making and Maintaining Friendships**	
Self-esteem and Self-efficacy (Summer) Role Transitions: Feeling Inferior (Jayden) Influence of Sibling (Jayden) Man up and Grow up (George) Conflicting Identity (Summer) Oldest to Youngest (Priya) A Perfect Time to Change Appearance (Priya) Exploring Sexuality (Priya)	**Negotiating a New Identity**	

Big Jump (Jayden) Navigating New School Systems and Structures (Jayden) Testing the Boundaries (George) Overwhelmed (Elle) Logistics of a New Environment (Elle) Rules, Boundaries and Consequences (Elle) Facing Challenges (Summer) Some Challenges are Only Temporary (Summer) School Systems and It's New Challenges (Summer) Changes in School Systems and Structures (Priya) Initial Fears and Challenges (Priya) Challenges with Older Peers (Priya)	**'Thrown in At The Deep End'**	**Opportunities and Challenges: Adjusting to Change**
Freedom (Jayden) Unprepared for Increased Responsibilities (George) Pressure to Remember (Elle) From Walking to Getting the Bus (Elle) Increased Expectations and Responsibilities (Summer) Mixed Feelings when Comparing Schools (Summer) Increased Expectations and Responsibilities (Priya)	**A Step up In Responsibility and Expectations**	
Jayden Teaching and Learning: From Fun to Formal (George) Increased Engagement in Learning (George) Teaching and Learning (Elle) More Opportunities (Summer) Increased Motivation and Engagement (Summer) Organisation of Classes: Setting (Summer) Curriculum Continuity and Pedagogy (Summer) Positive View of Teaching and	**Teaching and Learning**	

Learning (Priya) Greater Opportunity and Variety (Priya)		
Unprepared and Unsupported (Jayden) Time (George) Mixed Feelings (George) Need More Time (Elle)	**'I Need More Time'**	**A Search for Belonging: Facing Challenges**
Isolation (Jayden) Exclusion and Disruptions to Education (Jayden) Feeling Different to Peers (Jayden) I am an Angry Person (George) Bullying (George) Isolated/Alone (Elle) Struggling to Form Connections with Others (Elle)	**Isolation and Exclusion**	
Lack of Trusting Relationships with Adults (Jayden) Losing Control and Autonomy (Jayden) They Don't Get Me Now' (George) Difficulties Establishing Trust (Elle) Challenges with Forming Trusting Relationships (Summer)	**Feeling Safe and Secure**	
Influence of Older Peers (Jayden) Peer Influence (Jayden) Friends Ease the Challenges (George) Friends as Support (Elle) Friends = Key Sources of Support (Summer) Support of Older Peers (Summer) Reliance on Familiar Faces (Summer) 'Friends Forever' – The Power of Friendship – (Priya)	**Peer Support**	**Support**
Influence of Sibling (Jayden) Parental Pressures (George) Adult Support (George) Family Support (Elle)	**Family Support**	

Preparations (Elle) Family Influence and Support (Summer) Family Members at School (Priya)		
Pre Transition Support vs. Current Support (Jayden) Importance of Relationships For Learning (George) Teacher Support (Elle) Pastoral Support (Priya)	**Teacher Support**	

APPENDIX 11: TABLE IDENTIFYING RECURRENT THEMES

Sub-ordinate theme	Jayden	George	Elle	Summer	Priya	Present in over half sample?
Superordinate Theme 1: New Beginnings: Moving on and Letting Go						
Saying Goodbye To Primary School	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Fear of the Unknown	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Making and Maintaining Friendships	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Negotiating a New Identity	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES
Superordinate Theme 2: Opportunities and Challenges: Adjusting to Change						
A Step up in Responsibility and Expectations	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
'Thrown in at the Deep End'	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Teaching and Learning	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Superordinate Theme 3: A Search for Belonging: Facing Challenges						
'I Need More Time'	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
Isolation and Exclusion	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
Feeling Safe, Secure and Understood	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
Superordinate Theme 4: Support						
Peer Support	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Family Support	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES
Teacher Support	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES