VOLUME 1:

**THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING STAFF ABOUT THEIR WORK WITH
GYPSY, ROMA, TRAVELLER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

By

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ABSTRACT

Building on a small body of research, the present study explores the perceptions of teaching staff about their work with Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) children and young people. Specifically the research is concerned with participants' views about the relationship between GRT children and schools in relation to attainment, social inclusion, the GRT culture and lifestyle and wider systemic factors. Existing literature and research about the educational experiences of GRT children and young people is explored. Situated within a critical realist epistemology, the present study utilises semi-structured interviews with 13 members of teaching staff across five schools in Greenshire County Council (pseudonym). Transcripts were subjected to thematic analysis following the model proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). Six superordinate themes (educational outcomes; barriers to education; GRT parents; social inclusion; cultural dissonance and inclusive practices) were identified. Findings are explored in relation to previous research. One key finding concerns the views participants expressed about GRT children's reports of bullying or racism. Implications for practice and future research are considered.

To Lindsay

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BERA	British Educational Research Association
BPS	British Psychological Society
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DES	Department of Education and Science
DfE	Department for Education
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
EHRC	Equality and Human Rights Commission
EP	Educational psychologist
GRT	Gypsy, Roma, Traveller
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education
SEN	Special educational needs
TARGET	Traveller and Roma Gypsy education tool
TEP	Trainee educational psychologist
TESS	Traveller education support service
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Doctoral Training in Educational and Child Psychology

This thesis has been produced in accordance with the requirements set out for trainee

educational psychologists (TEP) undertaking the three year doctoral programme in Applied

Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Birmingham. Trainees are required to

produce two volumes of work during the final two years of their training. This is the first of

those volumes and details an exploratory research study considering the views of teaching

staff about their work with Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) children and young people. This

research was carried out in Greenshire County Council (pseudonym) where I was on

placement for the final two years of my training (2011-2013).

1.2 To whom does the term Gypsy, Roma, Traveller refer?

Throughout this thesis I will be using the abbreviation GRT to refer to people from Gypsy,

Roma, or Traveller heritage. A number of different groups are encompassed within the term

Gypsy, Roma, Traveller:

- • Gypsies (originated from India and historically lived a nomadic lifestyle)

- • Roma (Roma is a collective term used for European Gypsies)

- • Irish Travellers (descendants of itinerant craftsmen and metal workers)

- • Welsh Gypsies and Travellers (descendants of several families who migrated

  to Wales from the South-West of England and lived a nomadic lifestyle)

- • Scottish Travellers (descendants of itinerant craftsmen)

- • Showmen (travellers who earn their living at funfairs)

- • Circus (families who travel and work in circuses)

- • Bargees (those who live and work on waterways) (DCSF, 2010)

The abbreviation GRT is utilised in this context as an umbrella term encompassing the above groups. I recognise that GRT communities are not homogenous and that there are problems associated with describing them in this way. GRT is a commonly used abbreviation in the literature, but it has not been used throughout this work without due consideration. Race is a social construct and labels pertaining to race, ethnicity or cultural background change over time as a result of historical and cultural contexts; as a result they are often contested. All of these groups have a differing history and a culture relating to that history. It is my hope that the term is respectful of all the groups it encompasses. The use of the umbrella term GRT was necessary to operationalise this research and is the abbreviation used across Greenshire County Council to refer to people from these groups. Different researchers who have carried out work in this area utilise different terms and definitions, for this reason, when referring to other people's work I use the term which they employ.

1.3 'The last respectable form of racism'

It is important to be aware of the historical context of the ethnic groups encompassed under the abbreviation GRT. All of the groups have, at times, experienced discrimination and social exclusion, most notably the persecution of Gypsies during the Holocaust. How far the discrimination faced by these groups is consigned to the history books is unclear. Sir Trevor Philips (then Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality) described discrimination towards Gypsies and Travellers as the last "respectable" form of racism (Philips, 2004) and others have echoed the sentiment that it is still largely seen as acceptable to discriminate against these groups based on stereotypes. Examples of this can be seen in the British media (Morris, 2000; EHRC, 2010). The figure below shows a selection of headlines and quotes featured in newspapers over the last two years. All of these newspapers are within the ten most popular British newspapers based on readership.

Gardai's big Rath gypsy dreading...(The Sun, December 2012)
This article discusses the "influx" of Gypsies in Rathkeale, Ireland and quotes a local Councillor: "They'll come back showing off those big vehicles. They'll drive down the road to the nearest filling station in those vehicles worth €100 000 or €120 000 and they'll get €3-5 worth of diesel in it. Then you'll have the same vehicle out there again in ten minutes because the €3 of diesel has gone"

How to crush a gypsy camp French-style: It took us 10 years to clear Dale Farm but France's ruling have smashed six Roma camps in as many weeks. Guess where the gypsies want to come next (The Daily Mail, 2012)

£100K big fat gypsy spongers (The Daily Star, 2012)

Anger at gypsy invasion near Jowell's retreat (The Daily Express, 2012)

Victory for the villagers who ignored death threats, vandalism and the inevitable Left-wing cries of 'racism' to force illegal Romany gipsies to leave after 1,088 days (The Daily Mail, 2013)
This article describes a protest carried out by residents of a village in Warwickshire which led to Roma families being evicted from a site; it describes the court's decision as a 'triumph'.

Schools told to go easy on disruptive gypsy children or face action under the Equality Act (The Daily Mail, 2011)
This article criticises moves to reduce exclusions for GRT pupils: "cash-strapped schools are even told they should launch an 'outreach' programme with a dedicated member of staff to 'build trust' with traveller families. Under Equality and Human Rights Commission guidance, teachers are told to be sympathetic to traveller parents because they struggle with 'confidence' issues and are put off attending school meetings to discuss their children's behaviour". A Conservative MP is cited as saying "The Commission's recommendation on travellers only serves to reinforce stereotypes as well as showing that political correctness and the human rights agenda are being skewered further against common sense"

Figure 1. A selection of newspaper headlines and quotes

Whilst it is difficult to discern whether media discourses shape the views of the public or reflect existing views, such headlines suggest that GRT groups face discrimination and stereotypes and that the media (and perhaps some members of the public) do not afford them the same respect that would be given to other ethnic groups.   It is hard to imagine that the above newspaper headlines would be published if the word 'Gypsy' were to be substituted with another ethnic minority.

In 1999 Jack Straw (then Home Secretary) made the following comment during a live radio show:

> 'Many of these so-called travellers seem to think that it is perfectly OK for them to cause mayhem in an area, to go burgling, thieving, breaking into vehicles, causing all kinds of trouble, including defecating in the doorways of firms and so on, and getting away with it. Travellers have traded on the sentiment, they've masqueraded as law-abiding gypsies, when many of them are not.' (Jack Straw, cited by Holmes and O'Hanlon, 2002, p. 137)

In saying this Jack Straw subscribes to a commonly held view that there are 'true' or 'real' Gypsies and, by contrast, imposters who masquerade as Gypsies (Morris, 2000). Racism towards GRT groups may stem from a reluctance to accept that the groups encompassed within the term should be afforded the status of race or ethnic minority. What is clear is that people belonging to GRT groups face stigmatism, stereotyping and prejudice. This will be having an impact on their day to day experiences including their experiences of education.

1.4 Context of the research

Greenshire County is home to approximately 120 000 children and young people aged 0-18. Official figures from the 2011 census suggest that 0.2% of Greenshire's residents ascribe to the ethnic groups of Gypsy or Irish Traveller. However, there are likely to be more people from GRT groups residing in Greenshire than this statistic suggests since many GRT families do not complete census paperwork or choose not to ascribe to GRT categories (Foster and Cemlyn, 2012). There are nine residential sites across Greenshire for GRT families. In 2011, when this research project commenced, over 400 children and young people aged between 4 and 16 from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller groups were known to be attending schools across Greenshire County.

Nationally, GRT children and young people are recognised as a group of vulnerable learners. Their attainment at key stages 2 and 4 is below national expectations; they are more likely than non-GRT children to be identified as having special educational needs (SEN); and they are at higher risk of exclusion than their non-GRT peers (DCSF, 2009). This is discussed further in the literature review (Chapter 2) but forms part of the rationale behind carrying out research in this area.

1.5 Rationale for choosing research area

Prior to commencing training to become an educational psychologist (EP) in 2010, I had worked as a teaching assistant, a learning mentor and a youth worker. Throughout this time I held an interest in promoting the needs of vulnerable groups. As a TEP I was able to maintain this interest since the work of EPs within Children's Services is to support schools and local authorities to 'narrow the gap' between the outcomes of vulnerable groups (children with SEN, children with disabilities, children from ethnic minorities etc.) and national averages (Fallon et al, 2010). GRT children and young people are one such vulnerable group whose poor educational outcomes have been raised as a concern by successive governments.

When I began a two year placement at Greenshire County Council EPS I became aware of the number of GRT children attending schools in Greenshire. Interested in work with vulnerable groups, I approached the EP service's steering group with a research proposal. I was interested in researching the educational experiences of GRT pupils and proposed that research participants could include GRT children and young people, their parents, and staff supporting them. I also arranged a meeting with the manager of the GRT team in Greenshire. It was the opinion of the manager that the GRT team had a good insight into the views of the GRT families they supported but that they would benefit from research which

could give them information about the views of teaching staff. In addition to this, the psychology steering group expressed concerns about difficulties which may be encountered in recruiting participants from the GRT community.   Overall, a paucity of literature around the views of teaching staff about their work with this group, coupled with advice from the steering group and head of the GRT service in Greenshire led to a decision being made for this research project to consider the views of teaching staff. I acknowledge that further research needs to be carried out with GRT children and families so that their voice is heard. However, this research project adds to a limited body of previous research and evidence about the views of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people.

1.6 Aims of the research

The aim of this research project was to explore the perceptions of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people. Five research questions were developed in light of existing literature and research, these research questions were:

1. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to the GRT culture and lifestyle?

2. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?

3. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to attainment?

4. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to wider school and local authority systems?

5. What support do school staff access to enable them to work with this group and what value do they place on this support?

1.7 Structure of this volume of work

This volume of work comprises of five chapters. In this current chapter I have outlined the definition of GRT being used, the research context and the aims of this study. Next, Chapter 2 explores existing literature and research which considers the education of GRT children and young people in the United Kingdom. In Chapter 3, I explore the methodology utilised and rationalise decisions made with regard to data collection and data analysis. Chapter 4 offers a presentation of the research findings and relates these to previous research and literature. The final chapter, Chapter 5, outlines answers to the research questions set, offers a critical reflection on the research process and concludes with implications for future practice and further research.

Chapter 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Aims

The aim of this critical literature review is to answer the following questions:

- Why is it important for research to consider Gypsy, Roma, Travellers and education and what assumptions underpin such research?

- What policy and legislation impacts upon the education of Gypsy, Roma, Travellers?

- What does research tell us about Gypsy, Roma, Travellers in education?

- What does research tell us about teaching staff's perceptions of Gypsy, Roma Travellers in education?

The chapter begins by further rationalising the importance of this research and exploring the assumptions which underpin it. Next, policy and legislation which pertain to the education of these groups is outlined. This is followed by a critical review of the research literature which considers the educational outcomes of GRT children and young people and factors thought to impact on this. Following this, a conclusion is offered, synthesising what is already known about GRT children and young people in education and considering what is still to be explored.

2.2 Why is it important for research to consider Gypsy, Roma, Travellers and education and what assumptions underpin such research?

2.2.1 Attainment of GRT pupils: The current picture

Concerns around the educational outcomes of GRT children have been expressed for over four decades. The Plowden report (1967) found Gypsies to be 'probably the most deprived group in the country' and The Swann report (DES, 1985) noted a profound failure to address

the educational needs of this group. However, it was not until 2003 that the government made the decision to include categories for Gypsy/Roma and Travellers of Irish Heritage on school admission forms. This data was first analysed in 2005 (Foster and Cemlyn, 2012) and utilising this data in 2009 the DCSF were able to conclude that pupils who were identified as belonging to these groups had:

- very low attainment throughout key stage assessments

- a much higher likelihood of being identified as having SEN;

- higher than average permanent exclusion rates; and

- were less likely to remain in education until key stage 4 than pupils from other backgrounds.

It must be noted that these statistics are based on pupils whose parents voluntarily self-ascribed to the categories of Gypsy/Roma or Travellers of Irish Heritage. It is thought that many parents will have chosen to opt for White British, White Irish or White European categories instead (Foster and Cemlyn, 2012). It is not clear what implications this has for the statistics utilised by the DCSF.

It seems clear though, that educational outcomes (or at least educational outcomes as measured by attainment levels, exclusion figures and attendance rates) suggest that GRT children fare worse than any other ethnic group and their attainment is far below national averages (see Table 1). Factors that have been suggested to relate to this low attainment are outlined later in this chapter.

	Educational outcome	Travellers of Irish heritage	Gypsy / Roma	National average	Source
Attainment	Key stage 2 assessment (percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above in both English and mathematics in 2012)	44	36	85	DfE (2012[a])
	GCSE attainment (percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more A*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent during 2009/2010)	36.6	27.9	76.1	DfE (2010)
Exclusion	Permanent exclusion (percentage of school population permanently excluded during 2010/2011)	0.48	0.30	0.07	DfE (2012[b])
	Fixed-term exclusion (percentage of school population achieving a fixed term exclusion during 2010/2011)	16.81	14.89	4.91	DfE (2012[b])
Attendance	Attendance rates (percentage of half days missed at state funded primary and secondary schools during 2009/2010)	15.73	11.15	6.04	DfE (2011)

Table 1. Attainment, exclusion and attendance figures for Travellers of Irish heritage and Gypsy/Roma pupils.

The rationale for carrying out research into GRT groups in education comes, in part, from the fact that nationally the attainment for this group is poorer than for any other ethnic minority group. However, being mindful of the power imbalance between the researcher and the researched consideration was given to the assumption being made that educational attainment is important and valuable, and to whether or not educational outcomes are valued by GRT communities.

2.2.2 Cultural Dissonance

In a paper exploring the implications of education to support the social and economic mobility of Gypsy/Travellers, O'Hanlon (2010) highlights an important point: GRT groups are often described as occupying the margins of society and O'Hanlon believes that the implication of this is that they are viewed as being 'sick' and in need of help and support to access the mainstream culture occupied by the majority. It is important to remember that the education system has been socially constructed and arguably exists to meet the need for a literate and disciplined workforce in a knowledge economy. The following quote from O'Hanlon reminds us of the need to remember whose aims we hope to meet when we are encouraging the attendance and attainment of "marginalised groups":

> 'The whole notion of enforcing education and consequently a mainstream culture should be constantly questioned. When communities choose non-participation in social institutions this should not be punished, particularly for threatened minorities who cannot survive unless they perpetuate their own traditions and culture' (O'Hanlon, 2010, p. 242)

Education should not be something that is done 'to' the GRT community. It needs to be ensured that the system is inclusive of the GRT community and meets needs that exist within their established culture and traditions. It may be that there is a tension between GRT cultures and the mainstream culture which exists within schools. Overlooking this and

expecting GRT children and young people to be assimilated into the existing school system could be construed as an act of unintentional racism. The following section considers policy and legislation which impacts upon the education of GRT children and young people. There appears to be a contradiction between education legislation which requires school attendance and for schools to improve outcomes and discrimination legislation which requires the acknowledgement of cultural differences.

It is important to explore how well the GRT culture can be fully included within the school system. As noted above, many GRT children do not continue to access formal education until they reach the school leaving age of 16. Ceasing to access formal education is frequently preceded by a breakdown in home-school relationships and Derrington and Kendall (2007) suggest that this is often related to cultural dissonance whereby GRT families feel that there is a contradiction between the cultural norms of the school and their own. Derrington and Kendall (2007) analysed the educational experiences of 44 Gypsy Traveller pupils as they transferred from primary to secondary school and they hypothesise that the high drop-out rate of GRT pupils from education can be attributed, at least in part, to cultural dissonance. As Levinson (2005) states, the education of GRT children and young people can be perceived as a threat to cultural identity but it can also provide a forum for the expression of difference and diversity. Steps need to be taken to ensure that the education system helps to enrich the GRT culture and not undermine it (Foster and Cemlyn, 2012).

2.2.3 Inclusion versus assimilation

In discussions about the education of children with SEN the term 'inclusion' has sometimes wrongly been taken to be synonymous with 'mainstreaming'. This reduces the concept of inclusion to an issue of placement. It is not true that to place a child in a school is to include

them. Instead inclusion is based on the principle that differences are normal and that learning must be adapted to suit the child rather than "the child fitted to preordained assumptions" (UNESCO, 1994). If we are to be fully inclusive of GRT children and young people the educational system will need to be adapted to meet their needs and aspirations and take account of their beliefs, culture and values. Children and young people from GRT groups should not be expected to forego their own culture, values or beliefs to fit in with school life.

To summarise, it is important for research to consider the education of GRT children and young people since their educational outcomes are poor. However, it is also necessary to remember that the educational system and the outcomes it promotes need to sit alongside GRT values and cultures. Schools and school staff should be adapting to meet the needs of these groups rather than expecting GRT children and young people to adapt. It is in line with this ethos of inclusion and inclusive practice that this research project is conducted. Attention is now given to the policy and legislation impacting upon GRT children and young people in education.

2.3 What policy and legislation impacts upon Gypsy, Roma, Travellers in education in the United Kingdom?

2.3.1 Equality legislation

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) outlines the right of all children to attend school. Local authorities have a duty to ensure that all school age children within their authority have access to education regardless of whether their stay is temporary or permanent. The Equality Act (2010) is a key point of reference in discrimination law; it consolidated hundreds of laws which pre-dated it. The act states that schools cannot

discriminate on the grounds of race or ethnicity. Further to this, all schools have a duty to eliminate discrimination and enhance the equality of opportunity for all children or young people in their care. These two pieces of legislation make clear that GRT children and young people should, not only be accepted into schools, but steps should be taken to ensure that they have equality of opportunity. School staff should be actively working to improve outcomes for these children and young people and to combat the discrimination faced by these groups. However, despite protective legislation there are still concerns about the education these groups receive. The chapter now turns to reports which raised concerns about the educational outcomes of GRT groups before moving to consider seminal guidance documents published within the last two decades.

2.3.2 Raising Concerns

Since the 1960s it has been recognised that the needs of Gypsy children were not being adequately met by the British education system (The Plowden Report, 1967). In 1970 a specialist inspector was appointed to oversee the education of this group (Derrington and Kendall, 2007) but fifteen years later the Swann Report (1985) highlighted that there were still significant concerns:

> 'In many ways the situation of travellers' children in Britain today throws into stark relief many of the factors which influence the education of children from other ethnic minority groups - racism and discrimination, myths, stereotyping and misinformation, the inappropriateness and inflexibility of the education system and the need for better links between homes and schools and teachers and parents' (The Swann Report, 1985, p. 756)

Despite the report being written four years before GRT were recognised as ethnic groups, the authors of the Swann report dedicated a chapter to discussing the education of Travellers. They acknowledged that readers at the time may not have expected this group to

be included in the report which aimed to explore the educational experiences of children from ethnic minority groups:

> 'Many people may be surprised to find not only that we have devoted a chapter of our report to considering the educational needs of children from travelling families, but also that we regard the travelling community as an ethnic minority group at all' (The Swann Report, 1985, p. 739)

In discussing Travellers, the Swann report was instrumental in highlighting the negative educational experiences of this group (Derrington and Kendall, 2007) and the past three decades have seen an increase in the policy and guidelines pertaining to GRT pupils in education.

In the 1990s the Labour government committed to ensure the inclusion of GRT children and young people in the British education system (Foster and Cemlyn, 2012). A seminal moment came in 1999 when the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) included Gypsy Traveller children with three other ethnic minority groups deemed to be underachieving in their review 'Raising the attainment of minority ethnic pupils' and concluded that:

> 'Gypsy traveller children are the most at risk in the education system by the time they reach secondary school their levels of attainment are almost always a matter of concern.' (Ofsted 1999, p. 11)

Following the 1999 Ofsted report, the DfES commissioned research to identify effective practice and this resulted in good practice guidance being issued to schools (DfES, 2003).

2.3.3 Aiming high: Raising the achievement of Gypsy Traveller pupils (DfES, 2003)

The Aiming High guidelines advised school staff on how best to raise the attendance and attainment of GRT children and young people, suggesting that this is being impacted upon by four key factors:

- The experience of racism and social exclusion

- Teacher knowledge and expectations

- Parental education and aspirations

- Interrupted educational experiences

Drawing on good practice observed during the course of the research it was suggested that

the factors highlighted in Figure 2 were important in raising the achievement of Gypsy

Traveller pupils.

Good practice in the education of GRT children and young people
- An informed leadership and an ethos of respect
- Staff training which raises expectations and enhances knowledge and understanding
- A culturally relevant and affirming curriculum
- Developing an induction which suits social and academic needs
- Raising the profile of race equality within the school
- Ethnic monitoring and data collection
- Providing equal educational opportunities
- Involving Traveller parents and the wider community
- Encouraging regular attendance
- Promoting continuity of learning

Figure 2. Good practice highlighted within 'Raising the achievement of Gypsy Traveller pupils' (DfES, 2003).

The DfES guidelines issued in 2003 have since been superseded by another research report

commissioned in 2007: Improving the outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils: Final

report (Wilkin et al, 2010).

2.3.4 Improving the outcomes for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils: Final report (Wilkin et

al, 2010)

Research carried out by Wilkin et al (2010) aimed to explore issues affecting the education of

GRT groups and offer strategies for improving outcomes. The research examines data

collected through national data analysis, progress mapping (in the form of questionnaires

sent to educational provisions), a comprehensive literature review, and case study

explorations of 20 educational provisions. As with the 1999 Ofsted report and the DfES

guidelines issued in 2003, the authors suggest that the low attainment of this group is due to

a 'complex range of factors' including barriers that prevent full access to the curriculum.

However, the use of a carefully matched cohort allows the authors to conclude that the

outcomes achieved by GRT pupils cannot be attributed to socio-economic factors.

The case studies provide useful information, illustrating how the factors highlighted

throughout the research impact on the enjoyment and achievement of GRT groups in

education and the report as a whole offers a very comprehensive overview of the area.

However, in choosing to conduct focus groups with pupils, parents and teachers (as opposed

to face to face interviews as conducted with senior leaders and key staff) the voice of

individual members of teaching staff is lost. Smithson (2000) discusses the tendency for

focus group participants to reproduce normative discourses, suggesting that focus groups

may give an insight into public discourses surrounding issues but these may differ from

private discourses which are, perhaps, more likely to surface in individual interviews or

questionnaires. This may be linked to the authors' observation that participants sometimes

used scripts which they define as 'a common response or phrase which may be consciously

or unconsciously applied as a form of personal or cultural observation, defence or

protection' (Wilkin et al, 2010, p. 93).

An additional criticism of the research is that, whilst the report seems mindful of the

interaction between schools and GRT children/families (suggesting, for example, that the

higher rate of SEN amongst GRT might be in part due to schools not responding to cultural

differences), when discussing attainment a conclusion is drawn that 'overall, the fact that

Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils tend to have low prior attainment, have SEN and are

entitled to free school meals is likely to be affected by cultural factors' (Wilkin et al, 2010, p.

ii). In addition, the report states that most schools attributed the low attainment of this group to parental and community attitudes. This focus on 'cultural factors' may be seen by proponents of Critical Race Theory as a smokescreen for institutional racism that is ingrained in our landscape (Gilborn, 2008). Critical race theory sees racism as being endemic in our society. A critical race theorist considering the work of Wilkin et al (2010) might suggest that attributing the poor outcomes of GRT children and young people to their culture masks the reality that GRT children perform poorly because the education system is inherently racist.

Furthermore, although Wilkin et al describe education policy as a contextual influence, the authors of the report appear to avoid discussion of constraints placed upon schools in terms of the curriculum and attainment targets and so on. In addition the report appears to betray the authors' assumptions that non-GRT values are 'helpful' whilst values held by GRT groups may need to be challenged – for example, the authors write:

> "Scripts underpinning parents 'cultural' right to take children out of school during term time could also be successfully challenged in relation to protecting the right of the child to education, as well as the potentially detrimental effect on friendship networks and social opportunities that long periods away from school could have" (Wilkin et al, 2010, p.95).

However, despite the report seeming to attribute outcomes to cultural factors and appearing to have a slight bias, it does offer clear guidance on how schools can begin to better meet the needs of these groups and, refreshingly includes a focus on what it terms to be the 'soft' measures of engagement, enjoyment, health and well-being, alongside the 'hard' measures of attainment, attendance, transfer and transition, progression and retention.

Within the report, Wilkin et al (2010) propose a Traveller and Roma Gypsy Education Tool (TARGET) model illustrated in Figure 3.
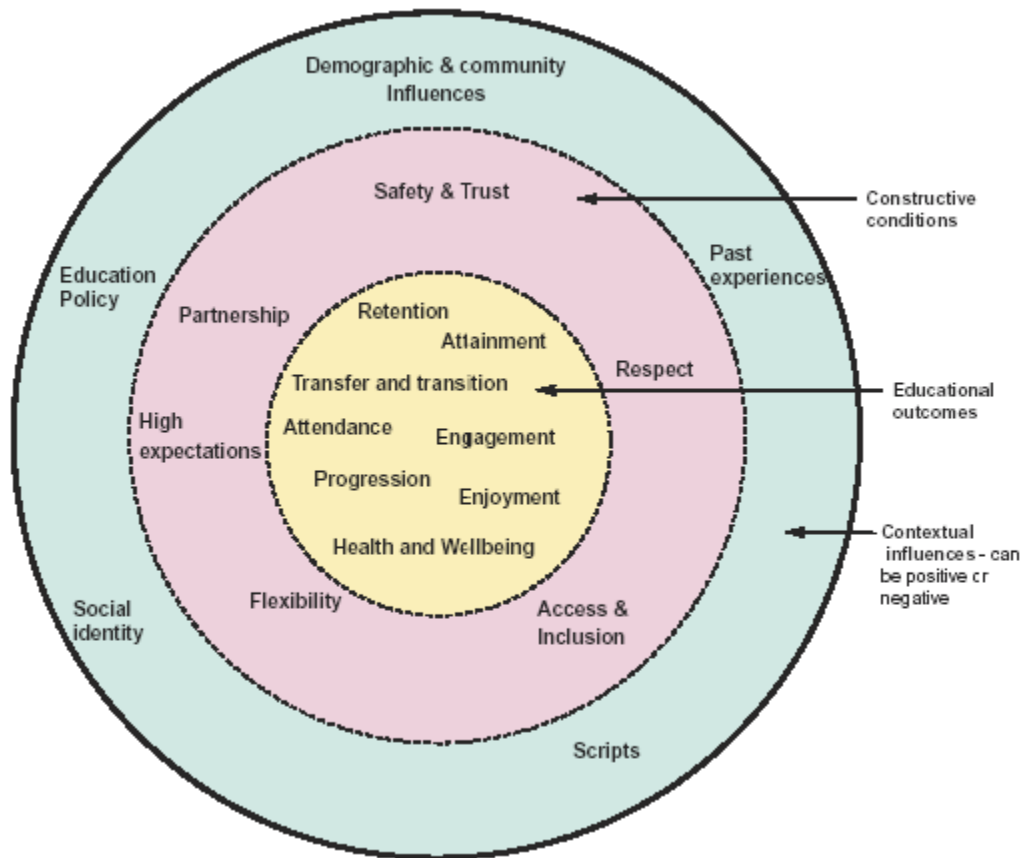
Figure 3. Traveller And Roma Gypsy Education Tool (The TARGET Model, Wilkin et al, 2010)

The model situates eight outcomes within constructive conditions which are nested inside wider contextual influences. The authors aim to encourage school staff to consider GRT pupils within this wider context and encourage them to 'target their efforts on overcoming certain contextual barriers whilst capitalising on other positive influences' (Wilkin et al, 2010, p. viii).

The tool offers a way of gaining a holisitic view of factors which impact on the educational attainment of GRT children and young people. Sadly, there is no evidence that the work included in this report was seriously considered by the government who commissioned the work in 2007 or by the current Coalition government (Foster and Cemlyn, 2012).

The report by Wilkin et al (2010) is the most recent government commissioned research and offers a valuable overview of the education of children and young people from GRT groups.

In the following section attention is given to other research carried out in the United Kingdom (UK).

2.4 What does research tell us about Gypsy, Roma, Travellers in education?

2.4.1 Searching the literature: search strategy

Research considering GRT groups in the context of education has been limited (O'Hanlon, 2010). Literature was identified initially through the reading of key texts and searching for the publications of key authors and key terms. A systematic approach to searching the literature was then taken. Since this research concerns education and race/ethnicity, search engines relating to these topics were utilised. The search engines used were: British Education Index (BEI), Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations (CRER), Educational Resource Information Centre (ERIC), Sociological Abstracts, Proquest and The University of Birmingham's library catalogue. A Boolean search was carried out using all possible combinations of the terms shown in Table 2. Searching the literature was ongoing from when consideration was initially being given to conducting research in this area through to submission.

Ethnicity	Education
Gypsy	Education
Roma	School
Traveller	Teach
Showmen	
Circus	
Bargees	

Table 2. Search terms entered into databases.

2.4.2 Searching the literature: inclusion and exclusion criteria

Educational research carried out in the United Kingdom is often compared with that of the United States of America (USA), Canada or Australia since there are similarities between the

school systems in these countries. Since categories of race are not biological, rather they are categories or labels which are constantly created and recreated by societies, it is likely that the words 'Gypsy'. 'Roma' and 'Traveller' have come to represent different things within these societies. Furthermore, since this research focuses on the communities encompassed within the term GRT, which includes Irish and Scottish Travellers and English and Welsh Gypsies, it was decided not to consider research from the USA, Canada or Australia in this literature review.

With regard to European research, many Roma Gypsies live in former communist countries in Central and South-Eastern Europe. In these former communist countries they are more likely to reside in large urban communities when compared to those from Western European countries. This means that those in Central and South-Eastern Europe are likely to have had more exposure to non-GRT cultural norms (Save the Children, 2001). There are differences between how GRT groups exist within as well as between countries (O'Hanlon, 2010). For this reason a decision has been made to make research stemming from the United Kingdom the focus of this literature review.

2.4.3 Structuring the literature review

As highlighted previously the following review of peer-reviewed journal articles aims to answer two questions:

1. What does research tell us about Gypsy, Roma, Travellers in education?
2. What does research tell us about the perceptions of teaching staff of Gypsy, Roma Travellers in education?

Whilst reading research articles pertaining to the first question I divided findings into themes. What follows is a discussion of the literature related to the following themes:

- social inclusion and experiences of racism;

- GRT parents' perceptions of education;

- the role of Traveller Education Support Services (TESS); and

- transition to secondary school and attendance.

With regard to the second question I am only aware of three key texts (Bhopal, 2011[a], Lloyd et al, 1999, and Cudworth, 2008) which focus on the perceptions of teaching staff about their work with GRT groups. These three texts are discussed in detail and critiqued.

2.4.4 Social inclusion and experiences of racism

Research suggests that children from GRT groups are likely to associate with other GRT children in school and that this may offer security and comfort (Bhopal, 2011[b]). GRT children interviewed by Levinson (2005) expressed a desire to distance themselves from their non-GRT peers. With regard to how school staff view the social inclusion of this group, Wilkin et al (2010) found that staff perceptions were more positive than the perceptions of the children themselves.

GRT children and young people experiencing social exclusion and racial bullying is commonly reported in the literature. The majority of students who took part in Derrington and Kendall's (2007) research said that they had experienced racial bullying of some form including subtle social exclusion as did those interviewed by Deuchar and Bhopal (2012). An increasing body of literature suggests that GRT children and young people are likely to experience racial bullying (Wilkin et al, 2009) and some GRT children and young people are reported to respond to this by 'fighting back' (Derrington and Kendall, 2004, Wilkin et al, 2009). Retaliating to racial bullying can have negative ramifications for the GRT children and young people involved. Experiences of racism are possibly linked to high exclusion rates for

children from GRT groups: an Ofsted report written in 1996 concluded that too many GRT children and young people were excluded from schools following incidents of retaliation to racial bullying. Derrington (2005) notes that bullying may go unreported by GRT children and young people, and that teaching staff find it difficult to understand why this is and why GRT children are likely to try to resolve such conflicts without the support of adults. Derrington (2007) refers to coping strategies employed by GRT children and young people when faced with racism and bullying: 'fight' (retaliation), 'flight' (self-exclusion and absenteeism) and 'playing white' (attempts to conceal their heritage or identity).   Research involving GRT children and young people suggests that decisions not to report incidents of bullying and racism are made for one of two reasons: either because GRT children believe that it is important to deal with such incidents themselves or that GRT children do not feel staff take such reports seriously.   GRT children interviewed by Bhopal (2010) state the importance of 'sticking up for yourself' and others from the community, despite believing that this led some teachers to think that they were gangs who set about starting fights. Furthermore, participants in the study expressed a view that racial bullying towards them was less likely to be acted on by their teachers than it would be had it been aimed at non-GRT children or young people.

Concerns about racism are also expressed by GRT parents and by members of the TESS during interviews (Myers et al, 2010). It seems that bullying is a concern of GRT children and young people, their parents, teaching staff and TESS staff. The underreporting of such issues is a further concern. However, as Derrington (2005) also notes, many secondary age pupils who experience bullying do not report it to school staff (O'Moore et al, 1997) so this does not appear to be a phenomenon related exclusively to children from GRT groups. However,

children from GRT groups do not appear to believe that teachers will deal with incidents of racial bullying adequately, a view also shared by some GRT parents (Myers et al, 2010).

Of more concern, some GRT children believe that teachers harbour and convey racist attitudes towards them (Derrington and Kendall, 2007) and it would appear that in the context of Derrington and Kendall's research that belief may not be unfounded, since one Head of Year is quoted as saying:

> 'The majority of staff welcomed them with open arms, tried very hard with them. But I have to say and I am ashamed to say it…a very small minority were terrible. As far as they were concerned, they were thieves from the minute they walked in…there were certain times when I witnessed them on the corridor perhaps disciplining them for something they wouldn't discipline another child for because of who they were' (Derrington, 2005, p 60)

In summary, research suggests that GRT children and non-GRT children do not fully integrate socially within schools. How far this is a choice made by either group is not clear. What is clear is that racial bullying in schools is viewed as very real issue by GRT children, their families and TESS staff. Moreover, it seems that there is evidence to suggest that some teaching staff discriminate against GRT children and young people.

2.4.5 GRT parents' perceptions of education

Parents' views on education are likely to have been shaped, at least in part, as a result of their own experience of schooling. As concerns about the education of GRT children and young people have been raised since the 1960s (The Plowden Report, 1967) it is likely that parents from the GRT community are likely to have had a negative experience of schooling themselves. This view is supported by interviews carried out by Bhopal (2004). There is an assumption made by many that this means that GRT parents' attitudes towards schooling are negative, even hostile, but research carried out by Bhopal in 2000 for the DfES

challenges this assumption. Despite their own negative experiences, parents interviewed by Bhopal expressed a desire for their children to attend school (Bhopal, 2004). All of the parents expressed positive views about schooling and the majority of them wanted their children to remain in education until school-leaving age. However, it is important to note issues of sampling here as this research does not allow the conclusion that all GRT parents see the value of education and want their children to remain in school, rather that all of the GRT parents who were willing to participate in research about good practice in schools and inclusion want their children to complete school. However, the research does suggest that assumptions about parents expecting children to leave school and enter into the family business may be unfounded. Furthermore, it seems that any unwillingness for children to attend school on the part of parents may be associated with concerns about safety rather than a belief that educational outcomes are unimportant. One of the participants noted that 'a lot of Travellers don't want to send their children to school. They think there's drugs and things out there' (Bhopal, 2004, p. 53). Parents taking part in Bhopal's research saw education as being important since they believed that jobs traditionally associated with the GRT lifestyle would not be available to their children in years to come.

Some research which involved interviews with GRT parents suggests that they may see children becoming literate or completing primary education as sufficient formal education (e.g. Levinson, 2007 and Myers et al, 2010) and contradictory views were expressed by parents who took part in Wilkin et al's research for the Department for Education (Wilkin et al, 2010). Some parents expressed a view that attainment at secondary school was not important for girls (who had a role to fulfil in the family home) or for boys (who could learn whilst working for the family business), whilst others expressed a view that their traditional

lifestyles were restrictive and that a secondary education would give their children more opportunities.

In summary, research into the views of GRT parents of formal education is contradictory. There is evidence that some GRT parents do not see completing compulsory schooling as being important for their children whilst other parents express a view that they feel secondary education has relevance for their community since traditional job roles are no longer available. What is clearer is that GRT parents are likely to have had a negative experience of education themselves and that this will impact on their views of schooling and relationships with schools.

2.4.6 The role of Traveller Education Support Services

In 1990 the Department of Education and Science (DES) introduced a grant for Traveller Education projects. As outlined by Kiddle (2000) many local authorities used this money to establish Traveller Education Support Services (TESS). TESSs work with schools and GRT families with the aim of improving the access, attendance and achievement of GRT children and young people. It should be noted that the TESS in Greenshire is now referred to as the GRT team and therefore is referred to as such during subsequent chapters of this report.

TESSs play several roles in schools; they offer a resourcing function as well as a line of communication between GRT families and school staff (Bhopal and Myers, 2009). GRT families value the work of the TESS (Myers et al, 2010) and the presence of TESS staff supporting schools may be vital in ensuring parents are reassured that their children are safe and that the schools can be trusted (Bhopal and Myers, 2009). However, one parent interviewed by Myers et al (2010) expressed reservations that her children may be

supported by staff working for the TESS in school, raising a concern that this would 'expose' their identity as a Gypsy.

Some GRT parents see the TESS as playing a fundamental role in how they (as a community) are viewed by school staff (Bhopal, 2004) and this is corroborated by teaching staff taking part in Bhopal's (2011[a]) work stating that the TESS had helped them to learn about GRT culture and lifestyle.

A suggestion has, however, been made that school staff may rely too heavily on this service for home-school liaison (Derrington, 2005) and see the TESS fulfilling a role as 'cultural mediators' (Derrington and Kendall, 2004, p.68). In addition, research suggests that too often GRT children and young people are viewed by school staff as being the sole responsibility of the TESS (Derrington and Kendall, 2004 and Bhopal and Myers, 2009).

Illustrating good practice, Bhopal and Myers (2009) write about one school that has an unusual but successful relationship with the TESS. The school was observed to work alongside the TESS but also with GRT families independently of them. This relationship was unusual insofar as other schools in the borough where Bhopal and Myers conducted their research seemed to be more dependent on the TESS for providing teaching and administrative work for GRT children. Since this school had good knowledge and experience of teaching children from GRT groups the TESS were able to work in the school in a different way, such as supporting the school to implement changes to the curriculum which incorporated teaching about GRT cultures (history projects about the arrival of GRT groups into the UK for example).

In summary, the TESS fulfils several functions and, as would be expected, their work varies from school to school. Wilkin et al (2010) suggest that how a school refer to the TESS

reflects how they feel about and refer to GRT children and young people more generally. Successful relationships with staff from the TESS typically co-occur with successful relationships with the GRT community.

2.4.7 Attendance and retention rates

As noted earlier, the attendance rates for children from an Irish Traveller or Gypsy Roma heritage are poorer than those for any other ethnic group. During the academic year 2009/2010 those who ascribed to the category of Traveller of Irish heritage missed 16% of school sessions, whilst those who ascribed to a Gypsy Roma background missed 11% of all school sessions (compared to a national average of 6%). Attendance is particularly low during secondary education (Ofsted, 2003) and many GRT young people do not remain in school until school leaving age (Derrington and Kendall, 2004).

Low attendance is likely to be linked to the issues relating to the education of GRT children and young people discussed previously in this literature review: experiences of racism and bullying, social exclusion, parental views and experiences of education and cultural dissonance (Bhopal, 2011[b]). In addition to this Bhopal (2011[b]) suggests that it is likely to be impacted upon by teachers' attitudes as well. The views of teaching staff are explored in the following section of this literature review.

Teachers interviewed by Lloyd et al (1999) believe that the attendance of GRT children and young people has a significant impact on their outcomes. They suggest that attendance impacts on the likelihood of them cooperating in class, and on their behaviour generally since missing parts of the curriculum can lead to disaffection. Participants interviewed by Lloyd et al (1999) expressed a view that poor attendance is one factor impacting upon low educational attainment and difficulties with forming and maintaining social groups.

Less than one third of a sample of 44 Gypsy Travellers considered by Derrington and Kendall (2004) remained in school until school leaving age. This may also be a result of the factors outlined by Bhopal (2011[b]) in her attempt to explain the low attendance rates of these children. For all children the transition to secondary school is viewed as a pivotal moment in their education, however, primary school teachers interviewed by Derrington (2005) expressed specific concerns about this transition for GRT pupils believing that they may be:

- likely to have a volatile response to teachers challenging them in a hostile manner;

- at risk of having their direct communication style misinterpreted;

- grouped with children with behavioural difficulties as a result of their learning difficulties;

- likely to mask their difficulties and 'act out' to gain peer approval;

- left lacking in terms of a trusting relationship with a member of school staff;

- challenged to fight in order to determine a pecking order;

- affected by irregular attendance (in terms of a sense of belonging, the forming of relationships and attainment).

How far all of these concerns are exclusive to GRT pupils is questionable, however, Derrington (2005) notes that these predictions are fairly perceptive and that there are additional issues based on the application of sanctions, the maintenance of a good home-school relationship and how secondary schools deal with racial bullying.

Less than a third of the children in the sample considered by Derrington completed secondary school (Derrington and Kendall, 2007). A slightly more positive picture is presented by Wilkin et al (2010) who found that approximately half (50.9%) of the children they incorporated in their sample were still attending during their final year at secondary

school (Year 11). That said, should we adhere to the assumption that it is important for children to attend school until the age of 16, then the retention rates for GRT pupils are worrying. If GRT children do leave school before school-leaving age this appears most likely to happen during Year 8 and less likely to happen in schools that have good relationships with GRT parents, hold high expectations for GRT pupils and are flexible in the curriculum they offer (Wilkin et al, 2010).

O'Hanlon (2010) associates the poor retention rates in secondary schools with the possibility that GRT young people are expected to work and follow the traditional job roles occupied by members of their families historically and this view is shared by some teachers (Bhopal, 2011[a]). GRT children are seen within their culture to mature into adults when they enter their teenage years and this coincides with the high dropout rate in Year 8. However, as discussed previously, the view that GRT communities do not value education is simplistic and may be misguided, or outdated.

2.5 What does research tell us about the perceptions of teaching staff of Gypsy, Roma Travellers in education?

This research project is concerned with the views of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people. Ofsted (1999) reported that low teacher expectations were impacting on the educational outcomes of children from these groups. However, there is a paucity of research examining the views of teaching staff. Whilst some of the journal articles and research projects referenced above utilise a multi-perspective design and consider the views of teaching staff alongside those of others, I am only aware of one research article which focuses entirely on the views of school staff around their work with GRT children (Bhopal, 2011[a]). Cudworth (2008) and Lloyd et al (1999) make the views of teaching staff the main focus of their journal articles, but Lloyd and colleagues interviewed children and

parents as well as Traveller support workers, whilst Cudworth spent some time working in the school in which his research is situated and thus describes his work as ethnographic. Cudworth also interviewed employees of the TESS.   What follows is a discussion of these three articles which take the perceptions of teaching staff as their focus.

2.5.1 Bhopal (2011[a])

In her article entitled 'This is a school it's not a site: teachers' attitudes towards Gypsy and Traveller pupils in school in England', Bhopal (2011[a]) sets out to consider good practice and strategies which could be utilised to improve the educational experiences of Gypsy and Traveller children whilst exploring the attitudes of teaching staff towards this group.   The article focuses on data generated through twenty semi-structured interviews with staff (head teachers, deputy head teachers, teachers and teaching assistants) at one primary and one secondary school. The schools were selected as the focus of the article because they were deemed by the author to demonstrate good practice. Good practice is defined by Bhopal as "a set of initiatives that were used to improve the attendance and achievement of Gypsy and Traveller pupils" (p.470).

Ten of the interviewees worked within the secondary school and ten within the primary school. Bhopal states that 'several' of the secondary school teachers displayed negative attitudes towards the Gypsy and Traveller pupils within the school, as did a 'few' of the primary school teachers.   Bhopal goes on to conclude that despite the presence of large numbers of Gyspy and Traveller pupils within the schools and despite the schools being identified as having good practice this does not change the attitudes of some teachers towards Gypsy and Traveller children and young people.

Interviewees quoted within the paper refer to Gypsy and Traveller children as having a "negative attitude", "not knowing how to respond to authority", and as wanting teachers to "allow them to do what they want" with one participant stating that he "dread[s] teaching them" and doesn't like having them in his class. The quotes selected by Bhopal to appear within the article certainly suggest that teaching staff find Gypsy and Traveller pupils challenging. How teachers view the behaviour of children from GRT groups forms the focus of the paper written by Lloyd et al (1999) and is discussed in further detail when their work is considered.

Examples of the good practice, which led to the schools being selected as the focus of the article included, amongst other things, changes to the curriculum (for example, whole classes were taught about the experience of Gypsies and Travellers during the Holocaust), the presence of notice boards illustrating their cultural background and history, and allowing Gypsy and Traveller children to stay in their sibling's classes for the first few weeks of school so that they would find the transition easier. Participants stated that they had gained a knowledge of GRT culture and traditions through working with the local TESS. However, the views expressed by some teaching staff participating in the study suggests that they feel all students should be treated equally and that their approach to working with these young people should not differ depending on a student's race or cultural background, with one participant stating that she couldn't see why education should be different for them. In fact Bhopal reports that some of the interviewees working in the secondary school appeared to view such efforts as an act of 'favouritism' towards Gypsy and Traveller children which was leading to non-Gypsy and Traveller children feeling resentful.

This idea of 'favouritism' being frowned upon by some members of staff is also reflected by Derrington (2005) who cites the example of a homework club, set up for GRT children who

were subjected to peer pressure not to study when they were on the site, being viewed as preferential treatment by some teachers who were unable to empathise with the children's situation.

Bhopal (2011[a]) expresses a view that in aiming to be inclusive the schools inadvertently emphasise the difference between Gypsy and Traveller and non-Gypsy and Traveller pupils and their outsider status, but goes on to state that "it is the recognition of difference that helps to foster an acceptance of a diverse range of cultures" (p. 480). Bhopal highlights a contradiction that exists between staff with some wishing to treat all pupils equally, and others who feel that differences should be celebrated and that adaptations may be necessary to accommodate the differing needs of pupils from GRT groups.

Bhopal's article highlights the negative attitudes of some of the interviewees and suggests that some of the participants' own stereotypes and prejudices became apparent throughout the interviews. Bhopal expresses a concern that the underachievement of this group may be linked to low expectations held by teachers, Derrington and Kendall (2007) also concluded that the teachers in their study held and conveyed low expectations for this group.

Since so few articles explore the perceptions of teaching staff around their work with GRT children and young people, Bhopal's work is of huge value. However, the Gypsy and Traveller children who attended the primary and secondary schools lived on the same site and had been there for over 50 years, so the views of participants may be related to the culture of that particular site and this may not be representative of GRT culture and lifestyle as a whole.

Bhopal's epistemology differs from my own, in that she grants points of view "the culturally honoured status of reality" (p.471). In seeing the participants' responses as truths she feels

able to conclude that in trying to be inclusive the school emphasises the group's outsider status. Whilst this may have some truth, it is not, to my mind, something which can be concluded through research considering the perspectives of teaching staff. Similarly Bhopal states that attendance was related to issues of safety; a plausible conclusion but not one that can be drawn from data generated through interviews with teaching staff. However, the paper reports on a selected dataset from a large ethnographic research project which Bhopal undertook between 2004 and 2005; although Bhopal states that the data from the 20 interviews discussed in the paper were analysed using a grounded theory approach it may be that the journal article has been influenced by findings from other elements of this large scale project and conclusions Bhopal drew from these. Bhopal is a seminal researcher in this area and her work is of great value, however, it is possible that her conclusions in this article have been drawn in part from other elements of her research project and a desire to highlight and disseminate good practice stemming from her interest in social justice.

2.5.2 Lloyd et al (1999)

Following an Ofsted (1996) report highlighting the exclusion of GRT children from schools, Lloyd et al (1999) set out to consider how teaching staff perceive and respond to the culture and behaviour of traveller children. The research stemmed from an awareness that Travellers were at increased risk of being excluded from schools and the researchers were interested in discerning if the behaviour of this group was different to that of non-traveller children and young people, and, if it did differ, how their behaviour was perceived and understood by school staff supporting them.

The journal article is based on findings from 31 interviews conducted with staff in twelve Scottish schools as well as interviews with parents and children from both Gypsy Traveller and Show Traveller communities, and interviews with Traveller support workers.

Interestingly, the authors commence the paper by stating that there was a difference in views of school staff on the two groups of Travellers attending the schools (Show Travellers and Gypsy Travellers). Teachers were thought to be more positive about Show Travellers than they were about Gypsy Travellers, unfortunately the authors do not expand on this, but give this as a rationale for focussing on the behaviour of Gypsy Traveller pupils.

Most of the school and Traveller support staff interviewed discussed an awareness of times when the behaviour of Gypsy Traveller pupils had been seen as problematic. Lloyd et al (1999) note that of the few who reported that they did not have awareness of this, some went on to contradict their claim that there were never any issues with behaviour for Traveller children by giving anecdotes about such times later in their interviews. Although the writers do not explore this, I wonder if interviewees were cautious with their responses through a concern that they might be seen to be saying the wrong thing or holding a racist view.   However, even if it was the case that respondents were cautious, Lloyd et al (1999) state that in some interviews the teachers' own stereotypes or prejudices became apparent, with one participant stating "…they were actually very clean and tidy...they didn't make themselves out to be tinker girls…" (p.53).

Lloyd et al (1999) state that they do not set out to be scientifically neutral, instead the research was conducted as a result of their interest in social inclusion.   The themes they identified in their work are interesting and many of the themes identified relate to research carried out by others. The sections below discuss each of the themes as they are defined by Lloyd et al (1999) and, where appropriate, discuss additional research evidence which is related to these themes.

2.5.2.1 Problems with friendships / peer group relationships and difficulties related to name-calling/bullying of Traveller pupils and fighting

As previously stated within this literature review, concerns about the social inclusion of children and young people from GRT groups are highlighted by many researchers in the area. As with Wilkin et al's (2010) research it may be that staff interviewed by Lloyd et al underestimated the difficulties GRT groups face with this. Some teachers did not feel it was an issue in their school but this was not supported by Lloyd et al's interviews with children and TESS staff.

2.5.2.2 Style of addressing adults and sense of justice

GRT children were said to have an open and adult style of talking. This was viewed as having both positive and negative repercussions. It could be viewed as rude by school staff since it flouted expected conventions about how children should address adults. However, other staff noted that it led to interesting social interactions. As highlighted previously, primary school teachers hold a concern that this open style of communication would be misinterpreted by secondary school staff (Derrington, 2005).

2.5.2.3 Difficulties associated with transition to secondary school

Difficulties associated with the transition to secondary school were thought to be associated with: missing the beginning of the school year; a refusal to engage in particular subjects which teachers felt GRT pupils viewed as being irrelevant; and the complexities brought about by coming into contact with a range of teachers who may have a range of disciplinary approaches. These differ slightly from the concerns offered by staff interviewed by Derrington (2005). Nonetheless what is clear is that the teachers were aware that the transition to secondary school is not always successful for GRT groups.

2.5.2.4 Difficulties deriving from a travelling life and being on a site

TESS staff expressed a concern that teachers lack an insight into GRT cultures and the implications of living on a site.

2.5.2.5 Difficulties associated with local poverty and delinquent subcultures.

Several teachers made reference to the fact that GRT groups were often living in areas of economic deprivation and that they may become involved in "delinquent subcultures" such as drug dealing. The parents interviewed by Lloyd and his colleagues also expressed these concerns. It is interesting to note that 41% of pupils from GRT groups attend schools with the lowest 20% of attainment (Wilkin et al, 2010).

Finally, Lloyd et al hypothesise that a lack of confidence on the part of teachers may be related to difficulties in class. This highlights the need for additional work in the area to ensure that teaching staff are aware of the needs of these groups and feel confident about how to approach their work.

Lloyd and colleagues conclude that the behaviour of Gypsy Traveller pupils is sometimes misjudged but that some school staff have a good understanding of their culture. Although the behaviour of Gypsy Traveller pupils is perceived by school staff as being problematic, it is often understood as being a result of poor attendance rates. Teachers interviewed rarely reflected critically on the education system and tended instead to focus on behaviours as being specific to individual children; they rarely displayed an awareness of the interplay between a child, their culture, and the school system.

In addition to this Lloyd et al (in a similar vein to Bhopal, 2011[a]) believe there to be:

> 'a "confusion or tension between [teachers'] understandings of some behaviour as
> possibly culturally defined and their desire not to discriminate against their Traveller

pupils. This often results in statements which deny difference and stress the particularity of the situation which itself may lead to failure of the school to respond the particular situation of some Traveller children' (Lloyd et al, 1999, p. 61).

Lloyd et al draw a comparison between this and the definition of institutional racism as racism that "operates through the normal workings of the system rather than the conscious intent of the prejudiced individual" (Commission for Racial Equality, 1985).

As with Bhopal's work, the work of Lloyd et al (1999) is very useful since it offers an initial insight into how teachers may view and understand the behaviour of pupils from GRT groups. However, it is important to note that Lloyd et al are explicit about their lack of interest in being scientifically rigorous. Whilst the article raises very important points for consideration we cannot assume that the findings would be replicated elsewhere.

2.5.3 Cudworth (2008)

Cudworth (2008) is another writer interested in social justice issues. In his article 'There is a little bit more than just delivering the stuff: Policy, pedagogy and the education of Gypsy/Traveller children', Cudworth set out to gain an understanding of the difficulties Gypsy/Traveller children face in education from an educationalists point of view. He carried out semi-structured interviews with primary teachers, primary head teachers and trainee teachers, as well as interviews with staff from the TESS. In addition to this he taught for two days a week in the school the research was carried out in. The majority of the pupils attending the school were from a Gypsy/Traveller background.

In analysing the data Cudworth (2008) identifies three themes:

1. "There is an ignorance of the culture and particular educational needs"

2. "There is a sense of conflict in addressing these needs in a structure which demands something different"

3. "There are those who have a sophisticated but often also sympathetic understanding of both Gypsy/Traveller communities and the educational requirements of Gypsy/Traveller children and 'go native' by questioning the demands of the structure all together"

This third point differs from Lloyd et al's (1999) conclusion that staff in school rarely reflect critically on the school system, having a tendency to associate the problem with the individual child and, at times, their culture. The difference may stem from the fact that in the school in which Cudworth's research is situated the majority of pupils come from GRT backgrounds. Perhaps the demands of the structure would be more apparent if the majority of pupils are disadvantaged by them. Cudworth offers a different perspective to that offered by Bhopal (2011[a]) creating an argument that teaching staff have a difficult task in including Gypsy/Traveller children in school life, since the rhetoric of 'inclusion' is at odds with the standards agenda. Cudworth expresses a concern that the pressure on teachers to teach to the National Curriculum and reach attainment targets means that they are unable to differentiate appropriately for children who may have a disrupted learning pattern. Although not often expressed in research articles this argument is not new, in 1985 the authors of the Swann report state that 'the inappropriateness and inflexibility of the education system, (The Swann Report, 1985 p.75) impacts on the education Traveller children.

More recently, O'Hanlon (2010) supported this view stating that 'many minority cultures are threatened by an inflexible mainstream education system and curricula which does not allow for cultural differences' (O'Hanlon, 2010, p. 245). Some reports and research (e.g. Ofsted,

1999, DfES, 2003, Derrington and Kendall, 2007, and Bhopal, 2011[a]) suggest that the poor outcomes for GRT children and young people are at least in part a result of low expectations held by teaching staff and the attitudes of teaching staff towards children from these groups. In contrast to Bhopal's work which highlights a negative attitude of school staff towards pupils from GRT groups, Cudworth states that 'these children were generally seen as 'just kids' like any others, but in need of particular support in achieving their equality of opportunity' (Cudworth, 2008 p. 369).

Cudworth concludes that 'the difficulties Gypsy Traveller children experience in their education are exacerbated by an inflexible UK schooling system structured around a centrally controlled statutory curriculum that prescribes what children should be taught and what should be achieved by a certain age' (Cudworth, 2008 p. 375). This places emphasis on education policy which is outlined by Wilkin et al (2010) within the target model as being a contextual influence – contextual influences according to the model can be either positive or negative.

2.6 Synthesis: What is already known about Gypsy, Roma, Travellers in education and what is still to be explored?

We know that, despite an increase in policy and guidelines since the 1990s, GRT children and young people do not attain the same educational outcomes as non-GRT children and young people. The research carried out by Wilkin et al (2010) suggests that this cannot be attributed to poverty. Research exploring this suggests that social exclusion, low teacher expectations, and cultural dissonance play a role within this (Derrington and Kendall, 2007, Wilkin et al, 2010).

Myers and Bhopal (2009) report that GRT pupils feel that the positive attitude of some staff who have an understanding of their culture helps them to feel safe in school. Despite this very few researchers have set out to uncover the perceptions of teaching staff who work with GRT pupils; only one journal article has this as its sole purpose (Bhopal, 2011[a]) but it utilises data extrapolated from a wider research project and the conclusions drawn with in it are not robust. Others have considered the perceptions of teachers as a part of multi-perspective studies (Lloyd et al, 1999, Cudworth, 2008).

The paucity of research in the area along with a locally identified need have led to me choosing the perceptions of teaching staff as an area of focus for this research project. Table 3 highlights the rationale for the development of my research questions based on this literature review.

Research Question	Rationale
How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to the GRT culture and lifestyle?	A limited body of research suggests that school staff largely attribute poor educational outcomes to cultural factors and values (Wilkin et al, 2010). However, Lloyd et al (1999) note that teachers participating in their research expressed the particularity of a situation when discussing the behaviour of GRT children in an attempt to not appear to be discriminating against young people from these groups.
How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?	Research suggests that GRT children and young people experience social exclusion and racial bullying. A limited body of research suggests that school staff may underestimate this (Lloyd et al, 1999, Myers and Bhopal, 2009).
How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to attainment?	Attainment for this group is below national averages. Little research considers how school staff understand and conceptualise this. The work which has been done leads to different conclusions with Bhopal (2011[a]) suggesting that staff hold and convey

	negative attitudes towards pupils from GRT backgrounds, whilst Cudworth (2008) concludes that staff either have a limited awareness of GRT culture or that their ability to fully support pupils from these groups is constrained by contextual influences such as an inflexible curriculum.
How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to wider school and local authority systems?	The TARGET model (Wilkin et al 2010) encourages teachers to take a systemic look at risk and resiliency factors but there is no evidence that this is being implemented (Foster and Cemlyn, 2012). I am interested in teaching staff's views about the findings of The Swann report (1985) and Cudworth's (2008) assertion that an inflexible schooling system is impacting upon the outcomes for GRT children and young people.
What support do school staff access to enable them to work with this group and what value do they place on this support?	The role of the TESS has been discussed by some researchers. Derrington (2005) and Derrington and Kendall (2007) suggest that school staff may rely too heavily on their services whilst teaching staff report that they find the service a useful resource (Bhopal and Myers, 2009). I am interested in how teaching staff within Greenshire County Council view their role and if there are any other resources they call upon to support them in their work.

Table 3. Research questions and their rationale

This chapter has explored policy and research emanating from the UK which considers the education of GRT children and young people. This research provides a basis for the research project detailed in this volume of work. The following chapter outlines the methodology utilised to answer the above research questions.

Chapter 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This research project aims to explore the perceptions of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people. This chapter begins by outlining specific research questions and explores the ontological and epistemological stances that underlie this research project; namely constructionism and critical realism.   Following this, the research design is outlined and reasons for choosing to utilise semi-structured interviews are given. The chapter moves on to discuss the data collection process and ethical considerations that were made prior to commencing interviews. Since previous researchers have been criticised for omitting details of how they conducted their data analysis (Lee and Fielding, 1996; Attride-Stirling, 2001), considerable attention is given to describing this process which utilised Braun and Clarke's (2006) model for thematic analysis. Finally the problems of qualitative research are scrutinised.

3.1.1 Research aim and questions

My overall research aim was to explore the perceptions of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people. Robson (2002) describes research design as the process of turning unanswered questions into projects. In order to operationalise this research it was necessary to move from this overarching research aim to more specific research questions.   The research questions are as follows:

1. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to the GRT culture and lifestyle?

2. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?

3. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to attainment?

4. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to wider school and local authority systems?

5. What support do school staff access to enable them to work with this group and what value do they place on this support?

These questions were generated from the literature review and the rationale for each was given in Chapter 2 (see Table 3). De Vaus (2001) states that there are two types of research question: descriptive and explanatory; all of the above are descriptive in that they aim to explore and describe what school staff's perceptions are, not give causal explanations or contribute to causal theory.

Once my research questions were established it was necessary to consider the methodology which would be employed. My ontological and epistemological stance influenced and informed all of the methodological decisions I took and so these are outlined in the following section; the research design and research methods are outlined thereafter.

3.2 Ontological and epistemological stance

3.2.1 Ontology

Cohen and Manion (1994) describe ontology as the "assumptions which concern the very nature or essence of the social phenomena being investigated" (p. 7). I subscribe to constructionist ontology and as such do not believe there to be an objective truth or reality lying behind social phenomena. Constructionism is about "dynamic and transactional models of shared, or negotiable, meaning – as opposed to static and objective models – of social and interpersonal experience" (Kelly, 2008, p.21). That is to say, that I do not believe

there to be one 'truth' or 'reality' about the relationship between GRT children and their schools, but instead believe that different people will construct this relationship differently and will make sense of it in a variety of ways.

In relation to race, social constructionism holds that 'race and races are products of social thought and relations. Not objective, inherent or fixed, they correspond to no biological or genetic reality; rather races are categories that society invents, manipulates or retires when convenient' (Delgado and Stefanic, 2001, p.7). I acknowledge that it is problematic to state that there are no objective or fixed racial categories and then move to utilise one such category within my own research. I view racial categories as a social construction but believe their impact to be 'real' in a socio-political sense. There are difficulties associated with labelling and defining a group of people and these were outlined when introducing the abbreviation GRT, however, my interest in social justice necessitates the need to work 'with and against racial categories' (Gunaratnam, 2003). The use of the abbreviation GRT is justified since, although race as a scientific construct is not real, its social implications are and research utilising racial categories is necessary if racism is to be successfully challenged (Warmington, 2010).

3.2.2 Epistemology

In relation to social science, if ontology concerns the very essence of social being, epistemology is concerned with how knowledge of this social being can be acquired and transmitted (Scott and Usher 1996). Ontology and epistemology are inextricably linked, as "claims about what exists in the world imply claims about how what exists may be known." (Scott and Usher, 1996, p. 11). The position one takes in this particular debate will, undoubtedly, have an impact on how one goes about gaining knowledge of social behaviour. My epistemological stance is one of critical realism (Bhaskar, 1998); Robson (2002) describes

critical realism as the integration of positivist and relativist approaches which assume that any given set of data may be explicable by more than one theory.

Arguably, a pure form of constructionism renders research either impossible or worthless since it claims that the world does not exist independently of our perceptions. However, Nightingale and Cromby (2002) assert that "constructionism can potentially elaborate the social, material and biological processes that shape our subjectivities rather than confine itself to an analysis of nothing more than the discursively available outcomes of such processes" (p.710). To meet this end a critical realist epistemology is required "wherein referentiality and objectivity are possible, though always partial, limited and necessarily dependent upon further empirical and discursive revision" (p. 710). In line with my critical realist epistemology, my data collection and data analysis methods explore participants' interpretations of reality and in exploring these I will endeavour to remain objective but accept that the data gathered and my interpretation of it will inevitably be partial and limited.

3.3 Research Design

Research design concerns itself with the aims, purposes and intentions of research alongside the constraints which may be imposed upon a piece of work (Hakim, 1987). De Vaus (2001) describes design as a logical matter not a logistical one and as such a consideration of design must take place before methods are considered. In short, research design must ensure that the evidence collected allows the researcher to answer the research question as unambiguously as possible.

In order to design my research I took into account ethical considerations, my research aim and questions, my epistemological position and existing literature which gives consideration to school staff's perceptions of their work with GRT children and young people.

3.3.1 Possible data collection methods

In order to answer my research questions I needed to gather data directly from school staff and there were three data collection methods that I considered: focus groups, questionnaires or interviews.

3.3.1.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires have numerous advantages: they are a quick and economical technique for collating data, respondents can be assured of their anonymity; and, if constructed properly, they are unlikely to be impacted upon by the researcher's own views, meaning that interviewer bias is not a concern. However, as Gillham (2007) states, the use of questionnaires assumes that respondents have the information readily available to them and there is a risk that participants may not be motivated to give thought and consideration to their answers. In the context of this research, it may be that teaching staff have not previously fully considered their views around their work with GRT children and young people and that follow up questions would be necessary to ensure that responses were as complete as possible at the time of data collection. Furthermore, as outlined in the literature review, there is a paucity of research which considers the views of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people. For that reason this research is exploratory and questionnaire construction would be limited by what is already 'known'. For the above reasons the use of questionnaires was deemed to be inappropriate.

3.3.1.2 Focus groups

Morgan (1998) defines focus groups as a research technique that collects data, through group interaction, on a topic determined by the researcher. Cohen et al (2011) suggest that their use in educational research is growing and debate about their utility is emerging. As with questionnaires, focus groups offer an economical use of the researcher's time. However, Smithson (2000) notes the tendency for focus group participants to reproduce normative discourses, suggesting that focus groups may give an insight into 'public discourses' surrounding issues but these may differ from private discourses which are, perhaps, more likely to surface in individual interviews or questionnaires. Thomas (2009) disagrees with this, describing instead the notion of 'risky shift phenonmenon', a phenomenon whereby groups are more likely to make risky decisions than individuals. Either way it is possible that focus groups will elicit views that are different from those which would be offered in individual interviews. In addition to this, the composition of focus groups has to be given thought. I wanted to gain the views of a variety of teaching staff and power differentials between staff working within and across schools would have made composing the focus groups, whilst ensuring that power differentials did not impact on the dynamic, very difficult. There are also increased ethical concerns with focus groups around ensuring all participants' anonymity. For these reasons the use of focus groups was deemed inappropriate.

3.3.1.3 Interviews

Interviews are a very commonly used method in research (Robson, 2002). Cohen and Manion (1994) cite Cannell and Kahn's (1968) definition of an interview:

> 'a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of
> obtaining research-relevant information, and focused by him on content specified by

research objectives of systematic description, prediction or explanation' (Cannell and Kahn, 1968 cited in Cohen and Manion, 1994, p. 271)

The use of interviews to collect data overcomes some of the disadvantages of using questionnaires and focus groups outlined above. Participants can be provided with time to reflect on their answers and encouraged to think about these; it is possible to explore aspects of the research topic which had not previously been considered by the researcher and, by conducting interviews on an individual basis, each participant's views can be considered without having to be mindful of the impact that the presence of other participants has on the views they express.

This research utilises interviews and consideration is given to the problems associated with this and other qualitative data collection methods in a later section (see section 3.6). The following section discusses the data collection stage of the research process: I discuss the design of the interview schedule, its pilot and the procedure for data collection.

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

For the reasons outlined above, interviewing participants was deemed to be the most effective method for eliciting participants' views about their work with GRT children and young people. Interviews vary in relation to the degree of structure the designer imposes (Cohen and Manion, 1994). At one end of the continuum lies a fully structured interview which involves set questions being asked and responses being recorded on a standardised schedule, at the other, a completely informal interview, whereby the interviewer covers a range of topics in a conversational style but does not adhere to a pre-determined schedule (Robson, 2002). The former type of interview, a fully structured interview is, in essence, a

questionnaire completed verbally. Since this research is exploratory and it had already been decided that questionnaires were not an appropriate method for answering the research questions a fully structured interview was not appropriate. A completely informal interview would also not have been appropriate since there were five research questions which needed to be answered and I felt that a schedule needed to be in place to ensure that I elicited each participant's views around these five questions. For these reasons, I decided to utilise a semi-structured approach to the interviews whereby the questions were determined in advance but as the interviewer, I was free to change the wording or order of questions and add or remove questions if I deemed it to be appropriate as the interview progressed. The use of a semi-structured interview schedule allowed me to ensure that the same questions were asked in each of the interviews (Coolican, 2004) if it was deemed appropriate to ask all of the questions.

3.4.2 Interview Design

The initial interview schedule contained seven main questions: an introductory question inviting the participant to talk about their career to date and their work with GRT children and young people, a question relating to each of the research questions (five in total) and a final question to elicit any important information which participants thought was relevant but had not been covered within the interview up to that point. Since this research is exploratory, open ended questions were used throughout the interview schedule. Cohen and Manion (2002) list a number of advantages of open ended questions: they are flexible, allowing the researcher to ask follow up questions if required; they help to establish rapport between the interviewer and interviewee; and they allow the researcher a truer insight into what the interviewee believes. Open ended questions also allow for unexpected or unpredictable responses (Cohen and Manion, 2002) which is important in the context of this

research which is exploratory in nature. Due to the relative lack of research considering teaching staff's views of their work with these groups of children and young people it was not possible to predict what the responses of teaching staff were likely to be.

3.4.3 Piloting the interview schedule

Following the development of the interview schedule a participant was recruited and asked if they would be happy to be the first interviewee and give comments on the structure and content of the interview schedule. Piloting the interview schedule and discussing it with the participant led to two changes to the schedule (see Appendix 1 for the final schedule used with the remainder of the participants). Firstly, the participant had not understood what I meant by 'social inclusion' and asked me to explain the term, for this reason the phrase was expanded on in the final schedule and it was explained that social inclusion referred to the GRT children's relationships with their peers and how far GRT children experienced a sense of belonging within the school. Secondly, the participant had been unable to answer the question: 'do you feel that there are any systems at play that impact upon the relationship between the school and GRT children?' and stated that she did not understand the question. By 'systems at play' I was referring systemic factors within or outside of the school such as the curriculum or government policies and legislation. Through conversations with my supervisor and on the advice of a researcher within the school of education I decided to elicit views around this in subsequent interviews by reading the following quote from Cudworth (2008) and asking participants to respond to it:

> 'The difficulties Gypsy/Traveller children experience in their education are exacerbated by an inflexible UK schooling system that prescribes what children should be taught and what should be achieved' (Cudworth, 2008, p. 375)

To ensure that participants could reflect on the quote I also presented it to them on a piece of paper and encouraged them to take some time to reflect on it.

These two changes were incorporated into the interview schedule which was used in all subsequent interviews. Because the changes were small and, in the case of the first change, I was able to explain the meaning of social inclusion to the participant and allow her an opportunity to respond to the question, it was deemed appropriate to include the data generated during the pilot interview in the final analysis. I remained mindful that this participant did not have an opportunity to reflect on Cudworth's (2008) quote but since prevalence of themes did not form a significant part of my data analysis this was not thought to be problematic.

3.4.4 Recruitment

Having acquired information about the number of GRT children enrolled at each school in Greenshire from the GRT Team, I contacted all of the schools in Greenshire who had 5 or more GRT children/young people on their roll (30 schools in total). Initial contact was made by a letter addressed to the head teacher (see Appendix 2) this letter included brief details of the research, contact details for myself, my University tutor and my placement supervisor, and concluded with a consent slip asking head teachers whether or not they gave their consent for staff within their schools to be asked if they would like to take part in the research project. For those who did not reply, this letter was followed up with a telephone call. Six head teachers gave their consent for the research to be carried out in their schools and these head teachers were then sent several copies of a letter to be given to potential participants along with information sheets and a consent form (see Appendix 3) for them to disseminate to interested staff.

In both of these letters it was made clear that I was hoping to carry out interviews with a range of school staff (class/subject teachers; teaching assistants; head teachers, pastoral leads etc.) who had at least one year's experience of working with and supporting, or having responsibility for, GRT children and young people in some capacity .

3.4.5 Sample

Fourteen potential participants from five schools completed consent forms, however, one was subsequently not well and therefore unable to take part in the research. In total thirteen members of school staff participated. Table 4 below highlights the types of setting these participants worked within; Table 5 details their job roles (some participants occupied more than one role) and Table 6 illustrates how the thirteen participants' were located across the five participating schools.

Type of setting	Number of participating schools	Number of participants
First	1	3
Primary	3	9
Middle	1	1

Table 4. Settings participants worked within.

Job role	Number of participants
Assistant head teacher	1
Assistant SENCo	1
Class teacher	5
Deputy head teacher	2
Family liaison officer	1
Higher level teaching assistant	2
Inclusion manager	1
Literacy coordinator	1
Nurture teacher	1
Special educational needs coordinator (SENCo)	1
Teaching assistant	2

Table 5. Participants' job roles.

School	Type of setting	Number of participants from school	Job roles of participants
School A	Primary school; academy	5	• Class teacher • Deputy head teacher and SENCo • Higher level teaching assistant • Higher level teaching assistant and assistant SENCo • Teaching assistant
School B	Primary school; Church of England; voluntary controlled	2	• Inclusion manager • Class teacher and Literacy coordinator
School C	First school; Church of England; voluntary controlled	3	• Teaching assistant • Deputy head and class teacher • Class teacher
School D	Primary school; academy	2	• Nurture class teacher • Assistant head teacher and class teacher
School E	Middle school	1	• Family liaison officer

Table 6. Spread of participants across the five participating schools and their job roles.

3.4.6 Interview settings

All participants were interviewed in the schools they worked in. I arranged for interviews to

be held at a time and on a day convenient to the participants in order to limit the disruption

to their day. On average the interviews lasted 45 minutes, with the shortest interview

lasting just 25 minutes and the longest 1 hour and 20 minutes.

All interviews were recorded on two digital recording devices (in case one did not work); ~~all~~ participants were asked if they were happy for this to happen and all agreed. At the start of each interview I reminded the participants of the aims and purpose of the research, and gave them the opportunity to read the information sheet again and ask any questions. Before beginning the interview questions, I gave each interviewee a unique identification number and explained to them how to have their data destroyed should they so wish (see section 3.4.7 detailing ethical considerations).

At the end of each interview, participants were informed that they would be sent a summary of the research findings once the work was complete and that they could contact me should they have any questions. I ensured that all participants still had my contact details and those of my University tutor and supervisor.

I had no further contact with interviewees following this, I did not send participants copies of their transcripts and ask them to comment on these. Given the number of participants and the length of the interviews 'member checking' was not deemed to be appropriate. Furthermore, I was conscious that interviewees had been helpful and I did not want to ask for any more of their time. The implications of this decision are outlined in Chapter 5.

3.4.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations in educational research are complex and should be granted due considerations before data collection commences (Cohen and Manion, 2004). In line with the University of Birmingham's requirements I completed an application for ethical review (see Appendix 4) and received confirmation of ethical approval on July 4th 2012. Recruitment and data collection did not commence until this approval was gained.

In line with my professional body I referred to the British Psychological Society's Code of Human Research Ethics (2010), specifically I paid attention to:

- risk,

- valid consent,

- confidentiality,

- debriefing, and

- maximising benefit.

The table below gives further details about the consideration given and actions taken for each of the above.

Ethical Issue	Action taken
Risk	There were very few risks to participants. To limit the risk of causing stress participation was voluntary and I endeavoured to arrange interviews at a time and place which was convenient to the participant. Risks to reputation and status of participants and the schools in which they work were managed through adhering to confidentiality as outlined.
Valid consent	In accordance with British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines (2011) I ensured that participants understood and agreed to their participation without any duress, prior to the research getting underway. The consent letter and information sheet (Appendix 3) together explained why the research was being carried out, why their participation was requested, the interview process, how data would be used and how and to whom it was being reported. Headings within the information sheet were based on the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics (2010). The contact details of the researcher and supervisor were included on the letter so that we could be contacted for further details. The process was entirely transparent; there was no deception or subterfuge. I obtained signed and dated consent forms from each participant. This consent form asked participants if they understand issues such as confidentiality, data storage and protection, how the results will be presented and their right to withdraw. Participants were asked to tick boxes to say that they understood these areas before signing the form. In addition to this, I reminded participants of the information sheet and consent form immediately before commencing the interviews and gave them an opportunity to ask any questions they had.
Confidentiality	Confidentiality and anonymity was guaranteed with regard to the storage and presentation of data. There was confidentiality in how results were reported in research findings. When data was reported it was anonymised through the use of pseudonyms and participant numbers. Participants' views were not attributed to them but presented collectively in the research paper.

	Hard copies (i.e. transcripts of the data) were printed to assist in the data analysis. These copies were anonymous, clearly labelled with the participant's code and kept in a locked drawer when not in use. Furthermore, electronic copies of these transcripts remain confidential, again they were assigned a participant code, accessed only on secure systems and saved for transfer on an encrypted memory stick.
Debriefing	A public domain briefing was written and copies were sent to schools which took part in the research. An information/summary sheet was also sent to all participants (as recommended within BERA guidelines (BERA, 2011)). This feedback gave a general summary of findings; it did not detail findings from particular schools or staff members (see Appendix 5).
Maximising benefit	It is hoped that the research will indirectly have a beneficial impact on GRT children and young people within Greenshire since staff will be reflecting on their specific needs and good practice. The publication of these findings will allow for good practice to be shared. I will work hard to disseminate these findings to maximise the benefit of this research.

Table 7. Table outlining ethical issues and actions taken in light of these.

3.4.8 Other challenges associated with data collection

Runswick-Cole (2011) outlines challenges for the qualitative research interview. Three of these challenges (overuse of interviews as a method, positionality and voice) are outlined in the table below, along with discussion of the steps taken to overcome these challenges and the implications for my own research.

Overuse of interviews as a method	
Runswick-Cole (2011) highlights the 'overuse' of interviews as a method in qualitative research and cites Potter and Hepburn (2005) who suggest that interviews are commonly used by researchers who do not give enough regard to exploring other options and ensuring that the interviews are well constructed.	I considered the use of other possible methods of data collection (questionnaires and focus groups) and discuss why these methods of data collection were deemed to be inappropriate in this report. In addition to this, the use of interviews is justified since limited interview data already exists which considers the views of teaching staff around their work with GRT children and young people. To ensure my research is of a good quality a great deal of time was given over to its conceptualisation and design. This was refined through a pilot interview, conversations with my University tutor and the presentation of my initial research proposal to a panel of researchers from the University of Birmingham School of Education.
Positionality	
Runswick-Cole (2011) highlights the importance of reflecting on aspects of my life which may impact on how I conduct this research project and how participants perceive me	Nine of the participants did not know me and had not met me prior to the day of their interview. They were aware of my position as a TEP working in the local authority. My position as a trainee perhaps makes power imbalances less of a concern but it is important to remain mindful that each of these participants will have held concepts about EPs which are likely to have impacted on their responses during the interview. Four of the participants knew me in a professional capacity and I had previously worked closely alongside two of them. Burman (1997) states that rapport or friendship with participants may lead them to say something which they would not have said to another researcher. Whilst this is a very real possibility, during the interviews with these two participants it appeared that they were mindful of the fact that the exchange was being tape recorded and both of these participants chose to say things to me at the end of

	the interview which were related to the topic but which they hadn't wanted to be captured on tape, this suggests that they did not say things to me that they would not have said to another researcher whilst they were being recorded.
Voice Interviews are an interactive process and co-construction of meaning between me and the participants will have taken place. As Runswick-Cole (2011) states the value of gaining an individual's narrative is not in seeing it as an objective account of the way things are but an account of the co-construction of subjectivity. This is in accordance with my constructionist epistemology.	To encourage participants to expand on their responses to interview questions I engaged in active listening, making use of eye contact, pauses and vocalisations to encourage participants to continue. However, it is important to be mindful that these may have been taken as a sign that I agreed with what the participant was saying and in turn this may have encouraged them to continue with their account and not consider alternative perspectives. To try to counter this, I offered synopses throughout the interviews, summarising what I felt the participant had said so far in response to a question and I encouraged them to add to it or amend it, this served to remind participants that I was interested in their views and not donating my own.

Table 8. Consideration given to the challenges outlined by Runswick-Cole (2011)

3.5 Data analysis

3.5.1 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis, a widely used tool for analysing qualitative data (Boyzatis, 1998), was

utilised within this research.   This approach to data analysis is described by Braun and

Clarke (2006) as a method in its own right which can be utilised by researchers with a variety

of theoretical and epistemological approaches. Thematic analysis can be used within a

critical realist epistemology by allowing the researcher to acknowledge "the ways individuals

make meaning of their experience and in turn the ways the broader social context impinges

on those meanings, while retaining focus on the material and other limits of 'reality'" (Braun

and Clarke, 2006, p.81)

In order to inform my use of this method of data analysis I considered the work of Boyzatis (1998), Attride-Stirling (2001) and Braun and Clarke (2006). Attride-Stirling (2001) and Braun and Clarke (2006) offer step-by-step guides for approaching a thematic analysis.

Attride-Stirling's (2001) thematic networks are based on the principles of argumentation theory (Toulmin, 1958) and have significant parallels with grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss, 1990). This approach was deemed unsuitable since thematic networks centre around global themes which illustrate a single conclusion and "present an argument, or a position or an assertion about a given issue or reality" (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 389); this approach seemed more suited to research aimed at theory building and not research situated within critical realist epistemology which maintains that any given set of data will be explicable by more than one theory.

I have based my thematic analysis on the model outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006) since this offered a clear guide to the decisions which must be made prior to embarking on a thematic analysis and the process which should then be undertaken; the decisions made and the process undertaken in relation to my research are outlined in the following sections.

3.5.2 *Decisions made prior to beginning the analysis*

Braun and Clarke's (2006) paper highlights a number of decisions a researcher must make before embarking on a thematic analysis and they urge their readers to explicitly discuss these when reporting their research.

3.5.2.1 *A rich description of the data set, or a detailed account of one particular aspect*

Since this research is exploratory and focuses on an under-researched area my approach to the thematic analysis allowed me to provide a rich description of the entire data corpus

rather than provide a detailed account of one theme or area. The themes identified offer an accurate representation of the entire data corpus.

3.5.2.2 Inductive vs theoretical thematic analysis

Thematic analysis can be carried out in a deductive or inductive way. Deductive analysis or a 'top down' approach is used in research which is theory-driven and often involves looking at specific aspects of the data rather than providing a rich overview of it. Inductive analysis, is a 'bottom up' form of analysis and is driven by the data. The themes identified through inductive analysis may not bear relation to the research questions or the questions asked of participants. As already stated this research is exploratory and it was not possible to predict participants' responses for this reason an inductive approach to data analysis was utilised and no fixed coding structure was utilised.

3.5.2.3 Semantic or latent themes

A semantic approach to data analysis involves the researcher looking at a surface level at what has been said and not looking for the meanings or assumptions behind a statement. A latent approach on the other hand involves examining underlying assumptions and ideas held by participants. The large amount of data I have collated means that data analysis is largely on a semantic level, however, my constructionist epistemology means I will, at times, consider the assumptions that may lie behind the data. However, this is not a primary aim of my data analysis as it would be if I had undertaken a discourse analysis or similar more specific approaches.

3.5.3 Thematic analysis: Procedure

Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of thematic analysis was used to guide me in the process of looking for patterns or themes across the entire data corpus. Braun and Clarke (2006)

outline six phases for carrying out a thematic analysis and each of these was adhered to; the following section outlines this process.

3.5.3.1 Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with the data

I decided to transcribe the data myself (see Appendix 6 for an example of this transcription). The process of listening to the recordings, transcribing them and checking the transcriptions can be considered part of this first phase of analysis. Riessman (1993) describes transcription as a useful way of familiarising yourself with the data. Following this transcription process, I read through the entire data corpus twice; on the second reading I began to highlight interesting features of the data and list possible codes (see Appendix 7 for the initial codes generated during this phase of analysis).

3.5.3.2 Phase 2: Generating initial codes

Once I had a list of initial codes I read the transcripts for each interview and coded these. A code is defined as "the most basic segment or element of the raw data that can be accessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon" (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.88). Following Braun and Clarke's advice, I coded for as many potential themes and patterns as possible, coded some extracts more than once, and included extracts of the text long enough to ensure that the context was not lost. This phase took place over five days; I coded a maximum of three interviews per day and took a break in between coding each one to allow time for reflection and ensure that I did not become passive in the process. On the fifth day extracts for each code were collated in separate documents; at this stage some codes were merged and some were removed from the analysis if the quotes were thought to be better placed elsewhere. This resulted in the number of codes being reduced from the 62 initially listed to the 54 included in the final analysis. During this phase I asked a teacher to read a

section of one of the interviews on which I had highlighted extracts and listed the ten codes which I had identified when coding the section. There were 15 codes assigned to the section and the teacher agreed with my coding choices for 13 of them. This suggested that I had remained objective during this stage of the analysis.

3.5.3.3 Phase 3: Searching for themes

Having coded all of the data, I wrote the name of each of the 54 codes on a piece of paper and began to collate these into potential themes. I then left these for a day and returned to them to see if I still agreed with my initial decisions.

3.5.3.4 Phase 4: Reviewing themes

I then read the data collated for each code to check if the choice of theme was appropriate in relation to these coded extracts, this led to some codes being moved to different themes. To give an example I had initially put the code 'attendance' in the theme 'barriers to education', but, on closer reading, it appeared that the majority of participants (8 out of the 13) were saying that the attendance of GRT children was good, for this reason the coded data was moved to sit within the theme 'educational outcomes'. Once I was sure that the coded data did relate to the theme in which it had been positioned I read the data corpus again to ensure that the themes were representative of the data as a whole and that no key features of the data had been missed. Following this review of the themes I drew a thematic map of the data (see Chapter 4).

3.5.3.5 Phase 5: Defining and naming themes

Once I had a map of the data that I was satisfied with, I further defined the themes by writing a consistent and coherent account of each of them (see Chapter 4). During this stage

I returned to the data collated for each theme and working titles were transformed into the titles that the themes are given in the results chapter.

3.5.3.6 Phase 6: Producing the report

The final report was produced shortly after Phases 1-5 were complete. In the following chapter (Chapter 4) an account of each theme is given, I provide evidence for each of the themes and relate these to the research questions in the final chapter (Chapter 5).

3.5.4 Data analysis: A summary

The phase of data analysis was a significant phase in this research project. For clarity, the table below highlights the steps taken in a chronological order.

Phase of data analysis based on Braun and Clark (2006)	Steps taken
Phase 1: Familiarising yourself with the data	1. I transcribed the data (see Appendix 6 for an example). 2. I read the data corpus twice. 3. On the second reading, I began to note potential codes (see Appendix 7).
Phase 2: Generating initial codes	4. I read the data corpus again and began coding (see Appendix 8 for an example). 5. I then collated extracts for each code in a separate document (see Appendix 9 for an example).
Phase 3: Searching for themes	6. The 54 codes were written onto slips of paper and moved around to begin to consider themes. 7. I returned to these after a day to see if I still agreed with the original placement of codes into themes.
Phase 4: Reviewing themes	8. I then read the data collated for each code to check if the choice of theme was appropriate in relation to these coded extracts. 9. I read the data corpus again to ensure that the themes were representative of the data as a whole

	and that no key features of the data had been missed.
	10. I drew a thematic map.
Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	11. I further defined the themes by writing a consistent and coherent account of each of them.
	12. I decided upon names finally used in the research report (see Chapter 4).
Phase 6: Producing the report	13. I wrote Chapter 4 giving evidence for and an account of each theme.

Table 9. Steps taken during the phase of data-analysis

3.6 Problems of qualitative research

The concepts of validity and reliability are often applied to quantitative research but are of limited use when qualitative research is being considered. Burman and Whelan (2011) state that qualitative research is too often judged by the 'problems' which quantitative researchers highlight in their research (validity, for example) and urge readers not to view these as problems but instead as areas warranting attention. Burman and Whelan (2011) dismiss claims that qualitative research is often carried out on too small a scale to be useful:

> 'The art of designing a good piece of qualitative research is to elaborate a form of investigation that is small enough to be explored in depth, that somehow exemplifies wider issues so (as the Poet William Blake put it) 'seeing the world in a grain of sand'. Tiny as the grain of sand may be to the naked eye it nevertheless exquisitely encapsulates a host of wider structures and relationships. Maintaining that analogy, dismissing analysis of that grain of sand as not having relevance to beaches, mineral stocks….is to miss a key opportunity to build a picture of delicate but important systemic links' (Burman and Whelan, 2011, p. 214).

The table below outlines an exploration of three factors which Burman and Whelan (2011) urge qualitative researchers to explore (selection, interpretation and reflexivity).

Selection	
Selection involves the decisions made about what data to include in the presentation of the analysis. Qualitative researchers can be accused of 'cherry-picking' material to support their own arguments (Holloway and Jefferson, 2000)	I have an interest in social justice which means that I want to share 'good practice' and expose difficulties faced by GRT children and young people in education. However, I have included all data in the analysis and carried out an inductive analysis meaning that my final presentation of the data is minimally informed by my pre-suppositions or previous literature. Whilst my own views will inevitably have influenced my decisions during every stage of the research I have been explicit about these decisions in this report and thus the reader can be mindful of this and add their own subjectivities to the text as they read it.
Interpretation	
Qualitative researchers can be accused of under or over interpreting their data. Under-interpreting data leads to data being described (as opposed to analysed), whilst over-interpreting data leads to arguments becoming lost in intricate analytical details.	I have been explicit about the data-analysis process that was undertaken (see Section 3.5) and decisions made during this process. A decision was made to cease analysis once I was happy that the themes represented the data as a whole and that no significant data was excluded by these themes.
Reflexivity	
Burman and Whelan (2011) encourage qualitative researchers to reflect on what went well as well as what went wrong during the research process.	Throughout this research process I have reflected on decisions made, for example a synopsis of my reflections on ethical considerations and power imbalances in the interview process have been included in this research report. Discussions with my colleagues, University tutor and friends and family, as well as extensive note taking throughout the research process, has enabled me to situate myself as a reflective researcher. Chapter 5 offers an account of my reflections on the research process.

Table 10. Attention given to selection, interpretation and reflexivity.

3.7 Summary

The current chapter has outlined decisions made in the data collection and data analysis process and detailed how each stage of the research project was conducted. The following chapter, Chapter 4, outlines the findings of the research and discusses these in the context of previous research carried out in the area.

Chapter 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the research and offers a discussion of these findings in

relation to the previous research presented in Chapter 2. As Braun and Clark (2006) state,

reporting findings is an important phase in the data analysis process. The complicated story

told by the data set is outlined in this chapter: the thematic maps are presented; extract

examples to illustrate each theme are provided and further analysis is offered in the

description of the themes and extracts chosen. Following Braun and Clark's (2006) advice,

the extracts are chosen to evidence the themes and provide vivid examples which capture

the essence of the point being made. Further analysis considers what each theme means,

what assumptions underpin the themes and what the implications of these themes might

be.

Thematic analysis resulted in six superordinate themes and fourteen substantive themes.

Substantive themes are further divided into sub-themes. In addition, there is recognition of

wider factors (such as changes over time) which relate to several of the themes.   The

superordinate themes and substantive themes are presented in Figure 4. This chapter

considers each of the superordinate themes in turn.

| Educational outcomes | Barriers to education | GRT parents | Social inclusion | Cultural dissonance | Inclusive practices | Wider factors relating to overarching themes |

Attendance

'Cultural' factors

Perceptions about parents

Socially included

Fostering social inclusion

Difficulties generalising

Academic outcomes

School based factors

Relationships with parents

Socially isolated

Raising attainment

Gender differences

Emotional and behavioural outcomes

Supporting parents

Staff developing their own understanding of the culture

Change over time

Extra-curricular activities

Key:

Superordinate themes

Substantive themes

Figure 4. Thematic map showing superordinate and substantive themes

4.2 Superordinate theme 1: Educational Outcomes

All participants reflected on the outcomes of GRT pupils attending their schools. Figure 5

shows the thematic map for the superordinate theme educational outcomes. The thematic

analysis resulted in extracts about outcomes being categorised one of four ways, extracts

pertained to: attendance, academic outcomes, emotional and behavioural outcomes and

extra-curricular activities.

Educational outcomes

Attendance

Academic

Low attainment

Strengths

Emotional and behavioural outcomes

Self esteem

Behaviour

Behaviour related to ability to access curriculum

Extra-curricular activities

Key:

Superordinate theme

Substantive theme

Sub-theme
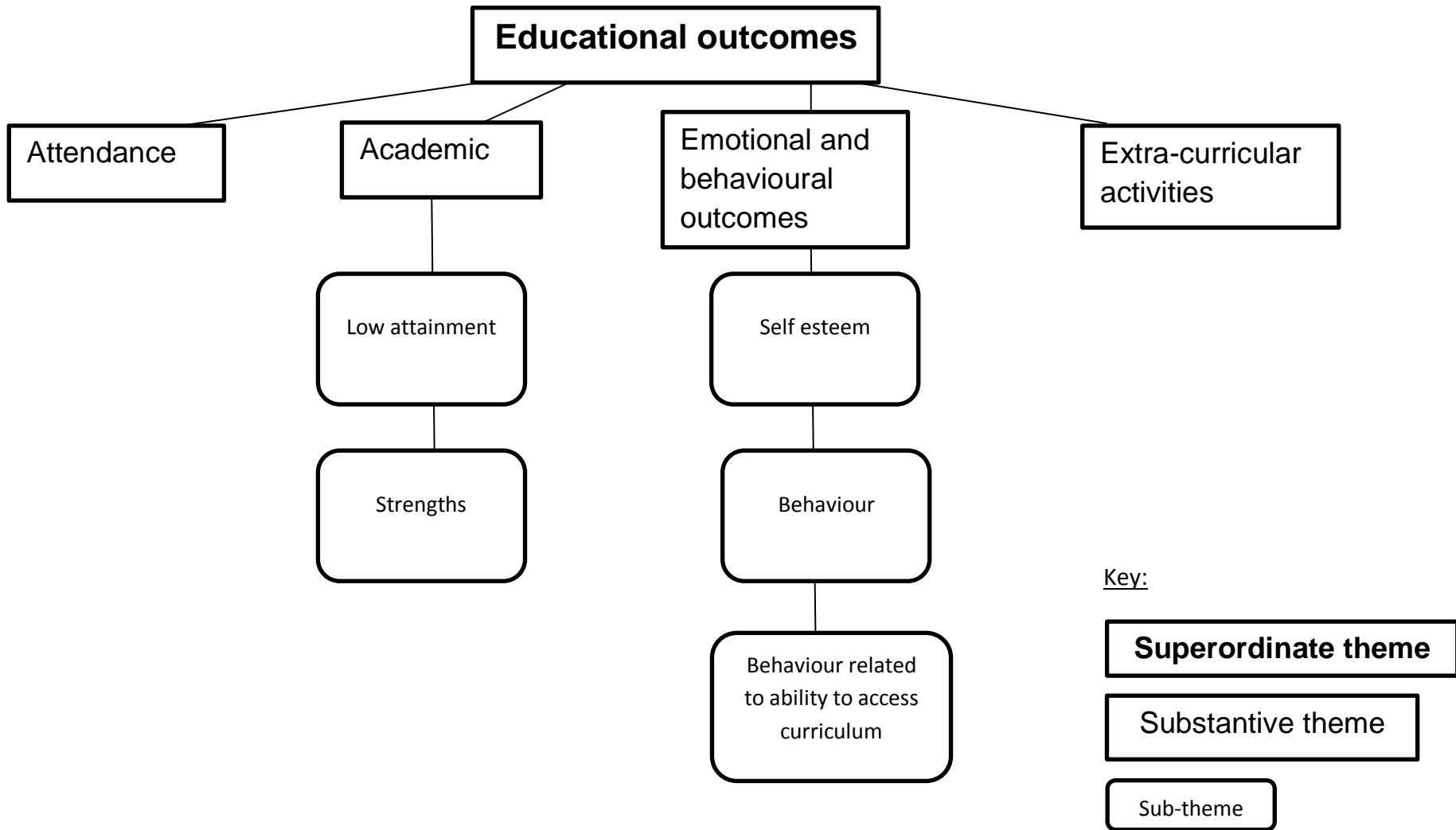
Figure 5. Thematic map for superordinate theme 'Educational outcomes'

4.2.1 Attendance

'The most promising thing is that their attendance is so good and it shows that they trust us by bringing them in every day' (Participant 10)

Eleven of the participants discussed the attendance of GRT children and eight of these stated that attendance was good. This is in stark contrast to the research and data presented in the literature review, which stated that attendance levels for GRT children are below national averages. As stated in Chapter 2, during the year 2012, on average, Irish Travellers did not attend 15.73% of school sessions. Gypsy / Roma children and young people did not attend 11.15% of these. Both of these figures are considerably higher than the national average of 6.04% (DfE, 2012). It may be that the discrepancy between these national statistics, and reports given by participants in this research, is due to the age of children attending the participating schools. The figures presented above are taken from all key stages, whereas participants in this research, worked within first, primary or middle schools and the attendance of GRT children is known to decline as they get older (Wilkin et al, 2010). Alternatively this discrepancy may be due to difference in the samples utilised. For example, within my research it is possible that the existence of permanent residential sites for GRT families across Greenshire facilitates regular attendance at school.

4.2.2 Academic outcomes

Participants discussed the academic attainment of the GRT children and young people they worked with. All discussed the low attainment of children from these groups, and some reflected on their relative strengths.

4.2.2.1 Low attainment

'I think they are all on the SEN register actually' (Participant 2)

Participants referred to GRT children as typically having low academic attainment, and state that many GRT children are on the school's SEN register. This is concordant with low attainment figures highlighted by many researchers, and government publications. The low attainment of these groups was highlighted most recently, and in considerable detail, by Wilkin et al (2010). Data, which has been available since the categories of Irish Traveller and Gypsy/Roma appeared on school monitoring forms, suggests that GRT children have a much higher likelihood of being identified as having SEN and are approximately half as likely to achieve Level 4 or above in both English and Mathematics Key Stage 2 assessments than their non-GRT peers (DCSF, 2009). The attributions participants made about this during their interviews are discussed in section 4.3 under the superordinate theme, 'barriers to education'.

4.2.2.2 Strengths

'They've got life skills that some of our other children who have always been in a formalised setting haven't got' (Participant 6)

Three participants referred to the strengths of GRT children they work with, believing these strengths to be: physical skills, life skills, social skills, knowledge of the world and independence. Similarly, school staff who participated in research carried out by Wilkin et al (2010,) discussed the strengths of GRT children and the importance of working to them (for example by giving them a gardening project to complete).

4.2.3 Emotional and behavioural outcomes

4.2.3.1 Self esteem

'Coming in without being able to do what the other children can do it must be really disheartening' (Participant 1)

Six participants referred to the GRT children they work with having low self-esteem, three

referred to the possibility of this being improved through 1:1 support, and ensuring that

work is appropriately differentiated.   Similarly participants in Wilkin et al's (2010) study

talked of the importance of raising self-esteem, and the use of successful role models as one

way of doing this.

4.2.3.2 Behaviour

'Their behaviour is very different because obviously the rules at home are very different to the rules at school it is hard for them to come here….they have to abide by sitting still and respecting other children' (Participant 5)

All but two participants referred to incidents of challenging behaviour with GRT children.

This was largely seen as being culturally based, as illustrated by the quote above. This will be

discussed further when findings pertaining to cultural dissonance are explored (see section

4.6). With regard to the types of challenging behaviour observed, five participants refer

specifically to 'rough and tumble' play being problematic:

'they rough and tumble[in school] because they rough and tumble at home…they are transferring that to school and some of the other children really don't like it they don't do that and they don't understand that it is playing' (Participant 7)

Levinson (2005) explored the play of GRT children in an ethnographic study. He states that

fighting is seen as play by some members of GRT communities and that GRT adults may see

this as preparation for real life.   It is possible that there is a cultural dissonance around what

is taken to be play and what level of physical contact is acceptable within this.

The behaviour of GRT children and young people forms the basis of the work carried out by

Lloyd et al (1999). This work is highlighted in Chapter 2. Most participants in Lloyd et al's

study were aware of times when the behaviour of GRT groups had been problematic, and Lloyd et al explore the attributions staff make. Participants in this study attributed challenging behaviour to two things: cultural dissonance and the ability of GRT children to access learning.

4.2.3.3 Behaviour related to ability to access learning

> 'we were dealing with all of this behaviour stuff and he was being sanctioned…it was to do with… he couldn't understand anything and this was how he was reacting to not being able to do anything in the classroom' (Participant 2)

Four of the participants who discussed the behaviour of GRT pupils as being a concern, drew a link between their behaviour and their ability to access what was being taught in school. Some participants in Lloyd et al's (1999) study, make a similar attribution, highlighting a perceived link between the behaviour of GRT children and their view that many of these children had 'specific learning difficulties'. Lloyd et al go on to conclude that their participants misjudge the behaviour of GRT children, seeing it as being linked to attendance and attainment. They suggest that staff do not reflect critically on the education system, or display an awareness of the interplay between a child, their culture and the school system. In contrast, some of the participants in this study did perceive a link between GRT children's behaviour and their culture and that of the school system (as highlighted in section 4.6 cultural dissonance).

4.2.4 Extra-curricular activities

> 'The only thing they don't really get fully involved with is the after school activities we have and we have never had one of the traveller community attend the residential' (Participant 9)

Some participants referred to GRT children not taking part in school trips or extra-curricular activities. Ofsted (1999) also reported negligible involvement of GRT children in extra-curricular activities. However, in two schools this seemed to be changing: one participant spoke about a child who had begun to attend gym club, and another spoke about a GRT child attending a trip to a museum and the need to offer reassurance to the parents prior to this:

> '[Parents were] very concerned 'would he be alright?' 'would he be safe?' he was allowed to go but she was very concerned…I spoke to mum and said he will be with me, they will all be checked, they will be seat belted' (Participant 9)

Wilkin et al (2010) suggest that engaging families and communities in school life, may lead to increased participation in educational visits and extra-curricular activities. Furthermore, attendance on school trips and engagement in extra-curricular activities may be a sign of parental trust (Derrington and Kendall, 2004). This view is supported by participants in my research, as the participants who talked about one child's attendance at gym club and another child's attendance on a school trip, had previously discussed the trust they believed GRT parents placed in them and the school.

4.2.5 Discussion of superordinate theme 1: educational outcomes

As outlined above, participants' perceptions about academic outcomes, emotional and behavioural outcomes and extra-curricular activities, are broadly similar to those found by previous researchers. However, what is striking, is the high attendance levels reported by participants, and the absence of any reference to exclusions. As with attendance, the reason for the absence of discussion about exclusions, may be because of the age of the children participants worked with. The number of exclusions increases with age, up to the age of 15 (DfE, 2012), and all but one participant in this study worked in a first or primary school.

4.3 Superordinate theme 2: Barriers to education

Interviewees discussed eleven factors which they perceived to be barriers between children and young people from GRT groups and their educational attainment or outcomes. Figure 6 presents the thematic map for barriers to education. Factors thought to act as barriers, were categorised in one of two ways: school-based factors, which impacted on children from GRT groups, or, factors viewed by participants as 'cultural'. Participants discussed 'cultural' factors, far more than they did school based factors. Wilkin et al (2010) also found that, overall, school staff were likely to attribute low attainment to cultural factors. Interpretation of these results must be carried out cautiously, with readers being aware that I am concluding that the teaching staff, who took part in this study, perceive cultural factors to be important factors, in the attainment of GRT children and young people. This research does not allow for the conclusion that the low attainment of these groups can be attributed to cultural factors.

Barriers to education

'Cultural' factors

- Parents' literacy levels
- Punctuality
- Starting school with low attainment
- Attendance at high / secondary school
- Travelling
- Aspirations
- Valuing education
- Homework and assimilating learning at home

School-based factors

- Deployment of support and resources
- Expectations of teaching staff
- The curriculum
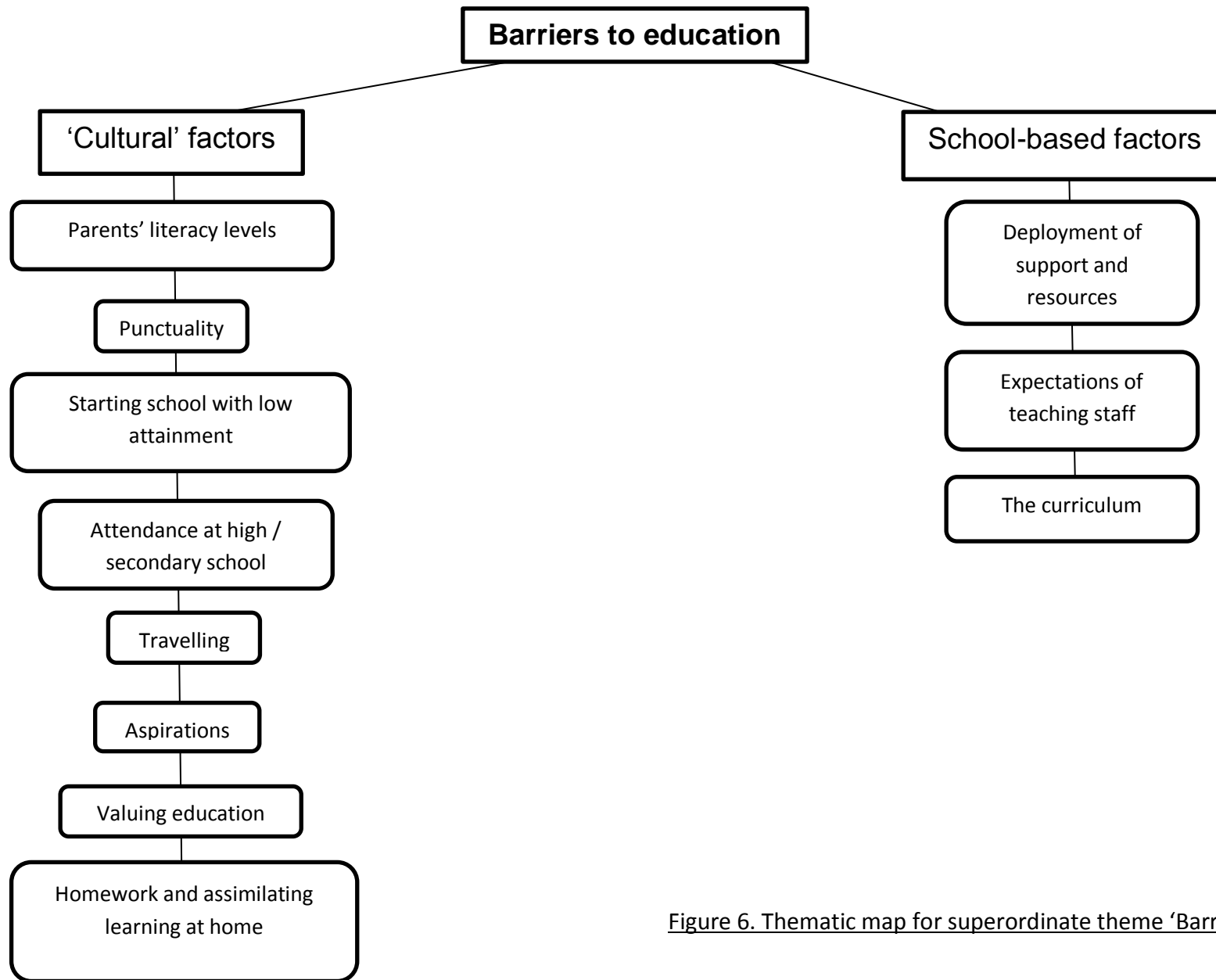
Figure 6. Thematic map for superordinate theme 'Barriers to education'

4.3.1 'Cultural' factors

Participants discussed many factors which they believed to be due to GRT cultures and beliefs, impacting upon the education of GRT children. They discussed issues which impacted on the school day, such as punctuality and travelling, and home-based issues, such as parents' literacy levels, homework completion and the early learning experiences of GRT children. They also discussed cultural values, such as the aspirations held by GRT children and their families and the value they place on education. All of these are discussed below.

4.3.1.1 Parents' literacy levels

'The family is largely I suspect if not illiterate then functionally they are probably functionally illiterate but in terms of reading with them or doing a bit of writing or spelling you don't get support that way' (Participant 2)

Twelve of the thirteen participants stated that the GRT parents they were in contact with had poor levels of literacy. Nine of these participants drew a link between parents' low literacy levels and the GRT children's education, stating that the low literacy levels of parents, meant that children did not get support with school work at home. More specifically, staff believed that children from GRT groups were not able to read aloud or share books with an adult at home. Some staff discussed the ways in which they responded to this, for example, by ensuring the child has additional time to read in school, or by inviting parents to come into lessons and hear a book being read to the class.

4.3.1.2 Punctuality

'Their attendance is very good they do arrive late though quite often quarter past or twenty past nine whereas all of the other children arrive at twenty to [nine] but their attendance is good' (Participant 5)

Two participants referred to the punctuality of GRT children that they had worked with, impacting on their education.

4.3.1.3 Starting school with low attainment

'But their attainment is and again it is a sweeping statement but it is generally below that of their peers they do fall behind and I do think that they haven't had the kind of basis of literacy and that kind of communication at home that we would expect children to have in their first three or four years of growing up' (Participant 12)

Participants refer to GRT children being at a 'disadvantage' before they begin school. Reference was made to GRT children not being familiar with nursery rhymes and stories that non-GRT children are likely to be familiar with. Participants also referred to the fact that GRT children were, in their view, unlikely to attend a nursery or pre-school setting. One participant refers to overcoming this disadvantage as an 'uphill struggle'.

4.3.1.4 Attendance at high/secondary school

'when a lot of our children have gone to secondary school they've not gone. Their attendance has dropped and dropped and dropped to 0% really' (Participant 7)

Participants believed that many of the GRT children they were currently working with would not complete their education. Some of the extracts relating to this subtheme, appear to be based on participants' prior experiences. However, three participants remark that this is, or may be, changing:

'The fact that girls aren't expected to finish their education, I spoke to them [the parents] about that and they said that they didn't want their girls to get married, they want them to go through school so you wonder whether there will come a time when it does all change' (Participant 10)

As discussed in Chapter 2, GRT children and young people are less likely than their non-GRT peers, to remain in school until school leaving age (Derrington and Kendall, 2007; Wilkin et al, 2010). Some participants perceived this to be the case for children they were currently working with. However, it is perhaps surprising that this expectation, that the children will not remain in school until the school leaving age, was hypothesised by some participants to link with the children's current attitudes towards learning (in first, primary and middle schools). Participants cited examples of children not trying their best with school work because they were aware that they would not remain in school.

4.3.1.5 Travelling

'You lose six to eight weeks, longer twelve weeks of maths or of reading and writing and it is just like a slap in the face and it is back to square one...you know that dip that all kids have in the summer when they have forgotten stuff and it takes almost half a term to get them back up to speed? Really they are having that twice a year so it is hard for them' (Participant 2)

Participants referred to time spent travelling having a detrimental impact on the children's behaviour and learning when they return to school. In terms of overcoming this, participants made reference to home education packs, but comment that these are rarely completed (see section 4.7.2.3). According to one participant, when the children return from travelling they, *'go back into class and they just have to pick it up and get on'*. Wilkin et al (2010) discuss the impact that travelling has on the education of GRT children and their social inclusion – they suggest that this impact is grounds to challenge the GRT communities' discourse about their 'right' to travel.

4.3.1.6 Aspirations

'she was learning her trade which is to, unfortunately, and I think it Is unfortunate, to look after the men folk and clean the place and whatever' (Participant 13)

Reference was made to GRT children not having aspirations for future careers which made education necessary or desirable. Participants shared their expectations that girls would be 'housewives' and boys would follow in the father's footsteps 'cutting trees' and 'paving'. This was viewed by the teaching staff as impacting on the children's attitudes towards their learning. One participant, however, contradicted this, giving the example of a girl she had taught, who worked very hard because she wanted to be a teacher. Bhopal (2000) interviewed GRT parents and concluded that aspirations within the community were changing, as they were aware that traditional jobs (such as fruit picking) were no longer readily available. Some participants in this study did believe that they had seen a change in the aspirations of GRT community, during the time that they had worked with them.

4.3.1.7 Valuing education

'I think one of the biggest things that is their problem, I mean their problem in the nicest possible way, is that they just don't, education just doesn't seem to have any relevance for them not…I don't mean…I nearly said they don't value education but I don't mean it like that it just hasn't got any relevance for them, they see the path their children are going to have, so Molly will have children and set up a home….' (Participant 2)

Linked to the subtheme of aspirations is that of valuing education. Teaching staff call into question how far GRT parents and families value the education schools set out to provide. One participant referred to this, 'rubbing off' on the children, which is then reflected in their work and behaviour. However, there are contradictions within this theme: some participants challenged the view that GRT families do not value education, citing parents who say that they are proud of their child's achievements, or want their children to succeed at school. Some participants, who had worked with GRT families over a period of time, felt that the value they placed on education was changing:

'some of the parents are starting to see education as being important they want their children to be literate and we've got them staying in high school so it is a changing culture' (Participant 13)

Wilkin et al (2010) conclude that most schools attribute low attainment to cultural attitudes towards education. Previous research suggests that school staff assume that GRT parents will have a hostile or negative attitude towards education, in part brought about by their own experiences of schooling (Bhopal, 2004). However, Bhopal (2004) interviewed parents, and those interviewed stated that they did want their children to attend school and remain in school until school leaving age. In a literature review, Wilkin et al (2009) state that positive attitudes towards education, held by GRT parents, are tempered by fears and anxieties about the safety of their children (this is discussed further in section 4.4.2.3).

4.3.1.8 Homework and assimilating learning at home

Those children that are at national [expectations] or above often have halfway met by home…but homework is non-existent for her, I don't ever get it or I get an excuse but it is a really important consolidation tool' (Participant 7)

All but two participants stated that GRT children do not complete homework. More specifically, many staff referred to their view that GRT children do not read to an adult at home. Some believed there to be a connection between this and the fact that their parents may not be able to support them with this work if they have low literacy levels themselves. Staff from two schools outlined ways in which they try to compensate for this, by providing additional support in school. Wilkin et al (2010) highlight a flexible approach to how and when homework is completed, as an example of good practice in working with GRT families. Furthermore, Levinson (2007) got to know Gypsy families through ethnographic work and suggests that GRT families expressed a view that school work should be completed in school time.

4.3.2 School based factors

Participants discussed three school based factors, which they perceived to be impacting on the education of GRT children and young people: the curriculum, teachers' expectations and issues around the deployment of support and resources.

4.3.2.1 Deployment of support and resources

'It's difficult, because you've got the attitude at home...do you put all our resources into one child when there are other children whose parents probably will be supporting them at home and when [GRT children] probably will get pulled out of school at some time anyway…it's very difficult' (Participant 1)

Two participants (both working at the same school) referred to the scarcity of resources and support within their school, and the difficult decisions which needed to be made with regard to the deployment of these. There was a suggestion from both of these participants that the decisions tended to go in favour of non-GRT children. One member of staff made clear that he was aware of the ethical implications of this:

'it depends how charitable you feel if you want to look at it negatively you would say that they [staff who decide how the resources are used] have made some sort of judgement based on the culture that they are from and decided that they are not going to bother with them or you can think that they have put resources into those families where they think they are going to make a difference' (Participant 2)

There is no literature, of which I am aware, that makes reference to decisions about the deployment of support and resources in the education of GRT children. If such decision making is common, then it is likely to have huge ramifications for GRT children who, at least in the school referenced above, are being placed at a disadvantage to their non-GRT peers, who are more likely to receive appropriate support and resources.

4.3.2.2 Expectations of teaching staff

'There are one or two staff that you will catch saying 'oh what do you expect' or 'it is not surprising is it?' like they have already made up their mind and they have already put a ceiling on what that child is going to achieve' (Participant 2)

One participant (quoted above) talked at length about the expectations of teaching staff impacting on the education of GRT children and young people. This participant believed that the low expectations of teaching staff, were the main contributory factor in the outcomes of GRT children and young people. Two other participants made reference to the fact that teachers may 'slip into' holding low expectations for children from GRT groups:

'Even though we have a very good relationship with them they are travellers you know and we could slip into that stereotypical expectation it is easy to go 'oh well they won't carry on after 14 anyway' that sort of thing' (Participant 9)

The expectations of teaching staff have long been believed to be a limiting factor on the education of GRT children and young people (Ofsted, 1999; Derrington and Kendall, 2007; Bhopal, 2011[a]). Some participants in the current study held similar views. However, it is important to note that, unlike the research carried out by Bhopal (2011[a]); this research does not classify participants as holding low expectations. Instead, it shows that participants were aware of the existence of low expectations amongst their colleagues, or a potential risk of teaching staff having low expectations.

4.3.2.3 The curriculum

Without prompting, systemic factors were not salient to participants. It was only when asked to reflect on the quote taken from Cudworth's (2008) article (see Appendix 1), that school staff reflected on systemic factors which may impact on the educational outcomes of GRT children and young people:

'I don't think as teachers you have the chance to explore anybody's talent or anybody's gift…we try to as much as we can but we have boxes to tick, we have targets to hit and unfortunately that is tailored to those children who will sit and listen and do exactly as they're told and find it okay to be confined in a classroom for six hours a day' (Participant 7)

Two participants referred to the pressure on teaching staff to improve National Curriculum levels and two others to inflexibility in the curriculum, which does not allow for a child's strengths to be utilised. Many participants, when presented with the quote taken from Cudworth (2008), agreed with it but felt that it was true of all children; no staff expressed a view that this may be specifically relevant to GRT children and young people.

As highlighted in Chapter 2, the Swann Report (1985) underlined the impact of the 'inflexibility of the education system' on the attainment of GRT children and young people. More recently, Cudworth (2008) suggested that the inclusion agenda is at odds with the standards agenda. Stating that the pressure placed on teachers to raise the attainment levels of their classes continuously results in children with difficulties or differences, not being fully included. Participants in this research did not spontaneously express views about this.

4.3.3 Discussion of superordinate theme 2: Barriers to education

GRT children are known to have poor educational outcomes: 36% of Gypsy/Roma children and 44% of Irish Traveller children achieve a Level 4 in their English and Maths Key Stage 2 assessments, compared to an 85% national average (DfE, 2012). Participants explored their hypotheses behind why this might be. In line with research carried out by Wilkin et al (2010), teaching staff commonly attributed low attainment to cultural factors, such as the value that GRT communities place on education or the periods of school missed when families go travelling. Reflecting on the interview process, it seemed that participants found it difficult to answer the question about how far systemic factors impacted on the

attainment of GRT children. As stated above, participants were provided with a quote by Cudworth (2008) and requested to comment on it. Their difficulties in doing this, support Lloyd et al's (1999) assertion that teaching staff do not often reflect critically on the education system and the impact of it on the GRT children they support. Some teaching staff, who participated in Cudworth's (2008) work, were found to 'go native' and question the demands of the system. One participant in my study did, however, reflect on the extract taken from Cudworth, stating that:

> ' this system that we have got and the inflexibility and the central control of the curriculum and SATs and standardised testing and so on is making it difficult for all children really in terms of preparing them for what is going to come beyond school because I think we are working on a system that... we are working on... I don't know I have only read one or two things but it seems to me that we are working in a system that is based on the needs of an industrialised market and workforce and all of the rest of it and that has completely gone and schools are just way behind in what we have got to churn out for our young people...the world doesn't look like that anymore and I think it is even worse for them [GRT children] yeah so I think that is that is true for all children but it does exaggerate it for GRT because it is just fitting people into boxes and things that is completely alien to as I understand it to their kind of view on life and so on' (Participant 2)

Cudworth's article, in part, inspired my work in this area. Rather than suggest, as I feel Bhopal (2011[a]) did, that teachers are somehow responsible for the low attainment of GRT children, Cudworth suggests that the curriculum and education system as a whole are responsible, in a way that is tantamount to institutional racism. I wanted to give participants the opportunity to respond to this claim, but perhaps the question did not allow them to do so (this will be reflected upon further when I consider the limitations of this research in Chapter 5).

As well as offering a reflection on what participants believed to be barriers to the education of GRT children, it is important to note the absence of factors highlighted in other research but not by participants in this study, namely attendance and socio-economic factors.

Attendance of GRT children is below national averages (DfE, 2011) and school staff interviewed by Lloyd et al (1999), suggest that this impacts on learning and behaviour. In this study, attendance and travelling have been separated out, as absence for travelling is authorised by Greenshire County Council. However, staff did view travelling as a factor impacting on attainment and behaviour of the GRT children they worked with.

As stated in Chapter 2, Wilkin et al (2010) suggest that attainment cannot be attributed to the socio-economic status of GRT families. However, school staff who participated in Lloyd et al's (1999) study, highlight the difficulties associated with poverty and delinquent subcultures. This was not discussed by participants in this study. Attention now turns to the third superordinate theme, 'GRT parents'.

4.4 Superordinate theme 3: GRT parents

All participants referred to the parents of the GRT children they work with. More specifically, they discussed their perceptions of parents, their relationships with parents and how they attempted to support and work with GRT parents. Figure 7 presents the thematic map for the superordinate theme 'GRT parents'.

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                          ┌─────────────────┐
                          │   GRT parents   │
                          └─────────────────┘
         ┌────────────────────────┼────────────────────────┐
┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────┐
│ Perceptions about│   │ Relationships with parents│   │ Supporting parents│
│ parents          │   └──────────────────────────┘   └──────────────────┘
└──────────────────┘
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Perceptions about parents

Staff wary of parents

Perceptions of parenting skills

Perceptions about GRT parents experiences of education

Relationships with parents

Positive relationships with parents

Developing relationships with parents

Issues of safety and trust

Schools being recommended

Limited contact with fathers

Supporting parents

Adaptations due to parents' literacy levels

GRT team supporting families

Figure 7. Thematic map for superordinate theme 'GRT parents'

4.4.1 Perceptions about parents

Interviews with participants gave an insight into how they perceived GRT parents.

Participants described being wary of GRT parents. Some participants reflected on the

experiences that they believed GRT parents would have had, when they attended schools

themselves. Some participants were critical about the parenting capacity of GRT parents.

4.4.1.1 Staff wary of parents

'When I first had Adam I was quite wary of [his mother]…she can be quite
confrontational really, in a different way to other parents so to start with you'd be
'Woah' but then after a while we have built up quite a nice relationship really'
(Participant 1)

Five participants alluded to being wary of GRT parents or, of perceiving them as intimidating.

It may be that this view is formed, at least in part, as a result of media stereotypes

(discussed in Chapter 2). However, as with the participant quoted above, some participants

discussed being wary of parents initially and finding them intimidating but going on to build

good relationships with them. Participants views around the importance of staff working to

develop relationships with GRT parents, is discussed in section 4.4.2.2.

4.4.1.2 Perceptions of parenting skills

When asked about ways in which the culture and lifestyle of GRT families impact upon their

education, one participant remarked:

'I think it is their parenting skills and their style of life, I mean some of the children
come in absolutely shattered and it is because they don't have a routine' (Participant
3)

Four participants questioned the parenting skills of GRT parents, either directly: 'a lot of

them have very little parenting skills', or indirectly, 'they were having too much adult

input…the films they were watching were too…it got a little bit awkward'. This perhaps shows cultural dissonance between the perceptions of teaching staff about good parenting, and GRT parents' views of the same. It is likely that such perceptions of parenting skills, would feed into teaching staff holding and conveying low expectations for GRT children. They may assume that the children will not have good academic outcomes, due to the parenting they have experienced.

4.4.1.3 Perceptions about GRT parents' experiences of education

'You have got to understand that it has taken a huge amount for them just to come through that door because often their experiences of schooling have been very negative' (Participant 12)

Two participants discuss their view that GRT parents may have had negative experiences of schooling themselves. The participants see this as something school staff should be aware of and work to overcome, to help GRT parents to 'see school in a different light'. As discussed earlier in this volume of work, Bhopal (2004) states that GRT parents are likely to have had a negative experience of education. It is positive that some participants in this study, expressed an awareness of this, and felt that it is something schools can work towards overcoming.

4.4.2 Relationships with parents

Teaching staff discussed positive relationships which existed between themselves and GRT parents. Some saw the fact that GRT parents were recommending their schools, as testament to these positive relationships. Participants reflected on the efforts currently being made, and those which had been made in the past by school staff aiming to develop those relationships. It is interesting to note that although one participant refers to a GRT father volunteering to help in school, some participants referred to the limited contact they

had with GRT fathers. Participants also referred to the need to gain the trust of GRT families and that for GRT parents, ensuring the safety of their children, was of the utmost importance.

4.4.2.1 Positive relationships with parents

'Some of our children went to a farm on Monday and one of the GRT dads actually joined in and went which was fantastic and you know he thoroughly enjoyed it so that is just phenomenal' (Participant 6)

Six participants made reference to positive relationships between school staff and parents. Three of those remarked that this was something that had changed over the time they had worked in their schools, and that relationships had 'strengthened'. The fragility of relationships between school staff and GRT parents, has been alluded to in other reports (Kiddle, 2000, Ofsted, 1999; Bhopal et al, 2004 and Derrington and Kendal, 2004). However, Derrington (2005) suggests that relationships with parents are more likely to be positive whilst children attend primary, rather than secondary schools.

4.4.2.2 Developing relationships with parents

'One of the things I've been working on is actually getting these parents into school…It takes a long time to build a relationship with the families so I go out there with a smile on my face and I am very friendly to them' (Participant 11)

Participants referred to efforts made by school staff to develop the relationships they had with parents. Specifically participants talked about inviting them into school for activities; saying 'hello' to them on the playground; sharing positive feedback with parents; and remaining approachable. Staff from case-study schools participating in Wilkin et al's (2010) research, stress the importance of engaging GRT parents and believe that this has an impact on the attainment of these groups.

4.4.2.3 Issues of safety and trust

'That's the biggest challenge for any school really…building up the trust and we're just lucky that we've got that here and I think a lot of that is to do with the families and the fact that families are willing to trust and keep sending their children here' (Participant 10)

Reference was made by participants to the importance of school staff proving that GRT children were safe whilst they were in their care, and also gaining the trust of the parents. The value that GRT parents place on education, is tempered by their anxieties about their children's safety whilst they are in school (Wilkin et al, 2010). Bhopal (2004) interviewed parents who expressed concerns about the availability of drugs. Myers et al (2010) state that GRT parents view areas in which non-GRT people live, as being largely unsafe. Again, it is reassuring to know that participants in this study were aware of this, and were taking steps to ensure that parents believed their children to be safe, whilst they were at school.

4.4.2.4 Schools being recommended

'They have used word of mouth to get other children here so I think that speaks volumes' (Participant 7)

Two participants (from different schools) were aware of their school being recommended within the GRT community. They saw this as a testament to their relationships with GRT parents and the trust they placed in the school. Research with parents of GRT children suggests that they like their children to attend schools that other GRT children attend (Derrington and Kendall, 2004).

4.4.2.5 Limited contact with fathers

'The trouble is we do not have much contact with fathers it is always the mothers who come in' (Participant 3)

Three participants remarked that they have little contact with the fathers of GRT children they work with. Derrington and Kendall (2004) believe that GRT parents not attending events, such as school parents' evenings, are a reflection of their anxiety levels. One participant expressed an awareness of this, particularly in relation to fathers:

> 'I think they find it quite hard [to come into school] certainly the dads that come you don't find that they speak they'll sort of stand back from a distance and even sort of physically you can see that they're maybe not that comfortable because they'll often stand along the fence at home time and the children will have to walk that distance to them' (Participant 10)

4.4.3 Supporting parents

Participants referred to two ways in which they supported GRT parents: they discussed the adaptations they made in light of the low literacy levels of many of the parents and they also discussed the role of the GRT team in supporting GRT parents.

4.4.3.1 Adaptations due to parents' literacy levels

> 'I'll say 'Do you want me to fill that form in for you?' or 'There's a form in their bag. Is it okay if they go?'' (Participant 12)

Participants were aware of low literacy levels amongst the GRT community and outlined strategies they implemented to assist GRT parents in their communications with school: reading letters to parents, telephoning them to remind them about upcoming activities and filling in forms for them. These strategies are in line with an ethos of inclusion, within which, adaptations should be made to ensure that all children enjoy equal opportunities.

4.4.3.2 GRT team supporting families

> 'It's reassurance to the parents, it's alright you can have the educational psychologist and the behaviour support team and the learning support team but that doesn't mean anything to them if they haven't got somebody who understands their culture if they haven't got somebody there to support them and that is why we invite [the GRT team] to the meeting' (Participant 6)

Two members of staff refer to the support that the GRT team give to families. One (quoted above) saw this as a positive thing, another felt that the GRT team should offer more in terms of supporting the school:

> '[The GRT team's work is] more to do with supporting the Travellers in terms of any complaints or grievances they have got against the school rather than actually coming in and talking to us as a school about how we work and what we need' (Participant 2)

The TESS (referred to as the GRT team in Greenshire) play an important role in reassuring GRT parents that children are safe when they are in schools, and that school staff can be trusted (Bhopal and Myers, 2004). They are thought to play an important role in developing the relationships between GRT communities and schools. The GRT team were not frequently referred to by participants and, therefore, there are few themes pertaining to them. However, their role in Greenshire is discussed further in the concluding chapter of this volume of work.

4.4.4 Discussion of superordinate theme 3: GRT parents

Participants spoke about GRT parents at length and obviously viewed their relationships with them as an important factor impacting on the education of their children. Good practice guidelines emphasise the importance of developing positive relationships with parents (Ofsted, 1999, DfE, 2003 and Wilkin et al, 2010). It seems that many participants already

enjoyed positive relationships with GRT parents or were making efforts to develop these.

This contrasts with the views expressed by some participants that they were wary of GRT

parents (at least initially) and that they see GRT parents as lacking parenting skills. This

highlights the importance of raising awareness of GRT cultures with teaching staff as, it is my

opinion that these views are likely to be born from media and public discourses.

4.5 Superordinate theme 4: Social Inclusion

One of the questions on the interview schedule was concerned with the social inclusion of

GRT pupils. Therefore all participants reflected on the social inclusion of GRT pupils

attending their schools. Figure 8 shows the thematic map for the superordinate theme

social inclusion. The thematic analysis resulted in extracts about social inclusion being

categorised in one of two ways: extracts which suggested that GRT children were socially

included and those which suggested that GRT children were socially isolated.

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                         │  Social inclusion   │
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            ┌──────────────────┘          └──────────────┐
   ┌──────────────────┐                        ┌──────────────────┐
   │ Socially included│                        │ Socially isolated│
   └──────────────────┘                        └──────────────────┘
            │                                           │
   ╭──────────────────╮                       ╭──────────────────────╮
   │  Integrate with  │                       │ Do not integrate with│
   │     non-GRT      │                       │    non GRT children  │
   │    children      │                       ╰──────────────────────╯
   ╰──────────────────╯                                 │
                                              ╭──────────────────────╮
                                              │ Gravitate towards    │
                                              │    each other        │
                                              ╰──────────────────────╯
                                                        │
                                              ╭──────────────────────╮
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                                                        │
                                              ╭──────────────────────╮
                                              │ Non-GRT children wary│
                                              ╰──────────────────────╯
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                                              │  Non-GRT children's  │
                                              │ preconceptions from  │
                                              │        home          │
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                                              ╭──────────────────────╮
                                              │ Non GRT and GRT      │
                                              │ parents do not       │
                                              │ integrate            │
                                              ╰──────────────────────╯
                                                        │
                                              ╭──────────────────────╮
                                              │ Children reporting   │
                                              │  bullying/racism     │
                                              ╰──────────────────────╯
                                                        │
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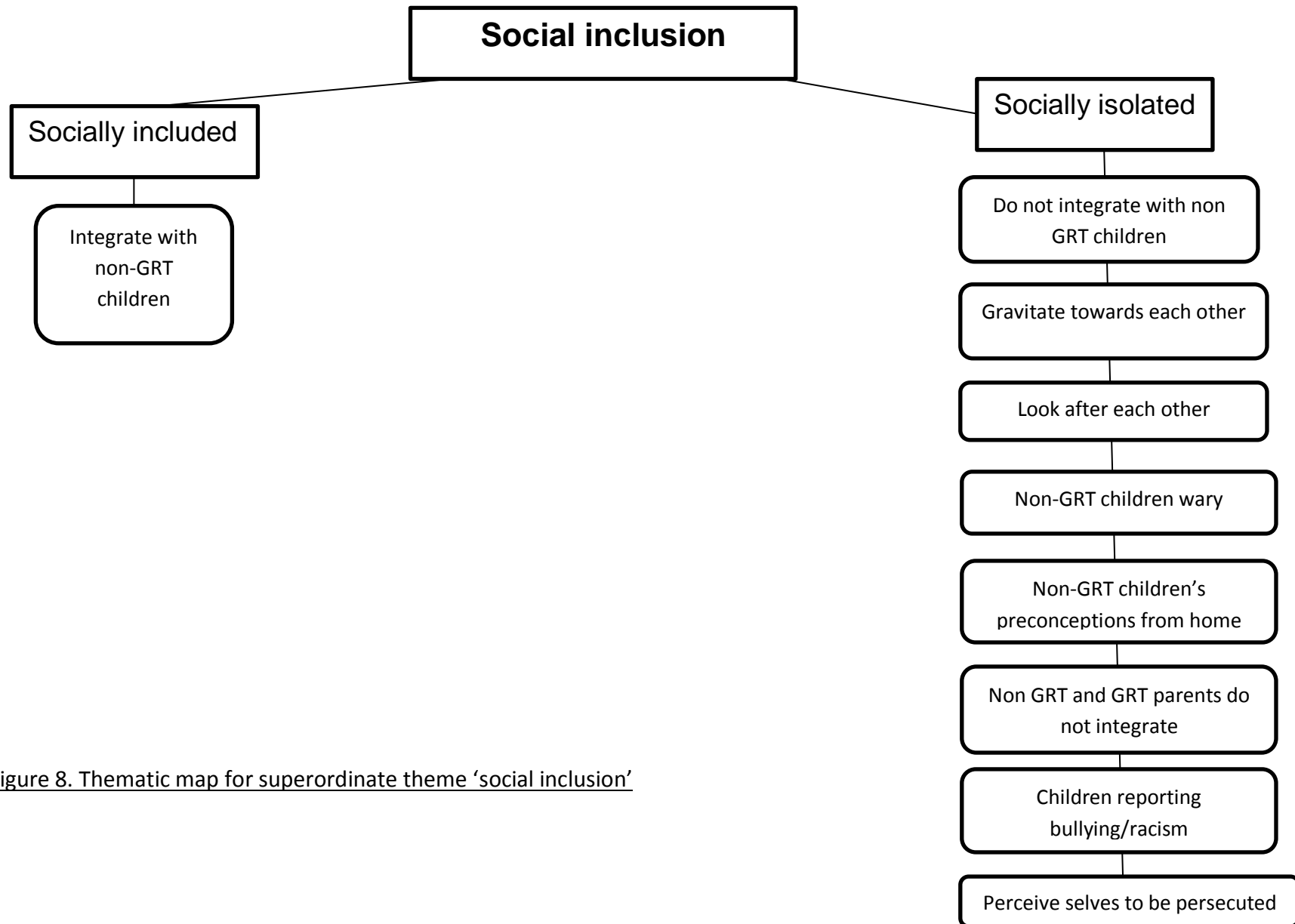
Figure 8. Thematic map for superordinate theme 'social inclusion'

4.5.1 Socially included

4.5.1.1 Integrate with non-GRT children

'We do find that they mix really well with the other children, they do integrate with the other children and they do play with them you know' (Participant 8)

Nine participants state that GRT children and non-GRT children 'integrate' and 'mix'. One participant who had worked in the same school for a long time felt that this was a change she had observed, remarking that 18 years ago, it would not have been the case. However, it is interesting to note that participants initially talked about GRT and non-GRT pupils integrating, in response to the question about social inclusion, but many go on to give information which contradicts this. For example, one participant says that GRT children 'integrate with all of the other children' and that, 'all of the other children would say that they like them', but goes on to discuss the fact that 'they don't get invited to parties'. Wilkin et al (2010) found that staff perceptions about how well integrated GRT and non-GRT children were, appeared more positive than those of GRT children. It seems likely that, although staff report that GRT and non-GRT integrate well, there are difficulties in the social inclusion of GRT children which must be addressed.

4.5.2 Socially isolated

Despite initially stating that GRT children were socially included, all participants went on to allude to incidents which would cast doubt on this assertion. These are explored in this section. Participants discuss times when GRT children and non GRT children do not integrate. They explore the tendency for GRT children to play together and look after each other. In addition to this, they refer to non-GRT children being wary of GRT children, to GRT children reporting bullying and racism, and to the preconceptions which they believe non-GRT children may have been given about GRT children from home.

4.5.2.1 Don't integrate with non-GRT children

'If you hear them talk together you sometimes can't make head nor tail of it so maybe that is another thing that could irritate some of the other children, they don't understand what they are saying all of the time so they think 'Oh I can't be bothered' (Participant 7)

As stated above, although the majority of participants explicitly stated that GRT and non-GRT children were integrated, many went on to say things which contradicted this. For example, participants gave specific examples of GRT children who had not 'fitted in', or discussed barriers between GRT children and non-GRT children (their dialect and rough and tumble play, for example). GRT children who participated in Wilkin et al's (2010) research, reported that other (non-GRT) pupils were unfriendly towards them, and despite stating initially that GRT children were fully socially included, many participants in this study went on to give examples of non-GRT children not being friendly towards GRT children.

4.5.2.2 Gravitate towards each other

Participants described a tendency for GRT children to play with one another, as opposed to with their non-GRT peers:

'You mainly notice it at lunchtime where they will go back to people from the site and play with them' (Participant 10)

Often participants rationalised this as being what they would expect from children who live near to each other and socialise together out of school:

'it's like with any of the children, if you've got a next door neighbour who is in school…you play with them at home so you play with them in school it's exactly the same they [GRT children] are in each other's pockets at home so it's natural that they want to play with each other at playtimes' (Participant 9)

Previous research considering the views of GRT children, suggests that the majority of GRT

participants said that their friends at school were other GRT children, and that they tended

to spend social time with other Travellers, even if they were in different year groups (Wilkin

et al, 2010).

4.5.2.3 Look after each other

'They do make sure they look after each other at playtimes and if there are issues
and things they will take them on with other children...the older siblings will make
sure they are okay' (Participant 4)

Two participants referred to GRT children looking after each other. This is supported by

previous research: Derrington (2005) found that GRT children were likely to resolve conflict

without the support of adults. Children interviewed by Bhopal (2010,) referred to the

importance of sticking up for yourself.

4.5.2.4 Non-GRT children 'wary'

'I don't think the other children are obviously excluding them, I don't know whether
their play is too rough for them and I have had children say 'I don't like it when they
do that, that's why I don't want to play' (Participant 7)

Four participants suggest that non-GRT children are wary of GRT children, linking this to the

'rough and tumble' play, that staff believe GRT children are likely to engage in.

4.5.2.5 Non-GRT children's preconceptions from home

'There are occasional, [it's] not often, but you do get a child that expresses concern
about the traveller children or that they don't really want to play with them and
sometimes you don't know whether that is their opinion or their parents' opinion'
(Participant 8)

Some participants expressed a view that if there was a degree of separation between GRT

children and non-GRT children, this was likely to come from views held by the parents of

non-GRT children. Some participants discussed incidents when non-GRT children had been

told by their parents not to play with GRT children:

> 'It was people saying to their child you are not playing with those gypsy kids you stay away from them' (Participant 12)

4.5.2.6 Non-GRT and GRT parents do not integrate

Participants referred to GRT parents being socially isolated:

> 'they don't stand and talk to other parents they're very isolated when they come and pick [the children] up' (Participant 10)

I am not aware of any other research which considers the social inclusion of GRT parents

amongst other parents.

4.5.2.7 Children reporting bullying / racism

Six participants said that GRT children perceived themselves to be victims of bullying or

racism. One participant believed reports of bullying to be untrue:

> 'No, no I would honestly say that we don't have bullying they seem to think that everybody is against them and they're the ones who are hard done by and everybody is out to get them, but I would have to say really that they are wrong because we don't experience anybody who is spitefully calling them Gypsies or being nasty to them or anything like that at all' (Participant 4)

> 'So as for bullying I'd say no they assume they are going to be bullied and picked on and you know this figure of somebody is going to thieve and rob off you and stuff but you know we haven't, the children are fine, it's the parents so...' (Participant 4)

Some participants seemed to suggest that if children referred to themselves as Gypsies or

Travellers, then they should expect others to use those terms:

> I have had one or two bits we had a bit when bless her Natalie didn't know how to describe herself so she was kind of saying... she went through a spate of reacting really badly if anybody called her a Traveller and she would say that she was being

bullied she would say that people were being racist to her but then a fortnight later she was saying that she wanted to be called a Traveller you know she didn't want to be called anything else she wanted to be called a Traveller so the goalposts moved a little bit. I think some kids, as kids do, if they are black or anything if they are having a row they will latch on to something and say something that we would know is inappropriate and we would have done as a racist sort of thing but when you go into it with children you go into it and it is just something that they have said in the heat of the moment and they have used it just as a weapon really and they have used it just to say something….I haven't had any of that[name calling] with the boys and there was only this little patch with Natalie but I do suspect with Natalie she encounters more of it but just doesn't maybe let on quite so much because she has got quite a few there is a little dynamic in her class that doesn't work very well and there is a little trio of friends and they are forever in and out and I do suspect that it is used then as some stick to quote about but she doesn't come forward about it anymore I think she is quite happy to let it ride really' (Participant 2)

'You have to be very careful the children can take offence, the girls will go around quite happily calling themselves Gypsies but as soon as somebody else calls them a Gypsy then that's, you can't, you are calling them names, you are being nasty, so I said to them if you call yourself a Gypsy people will use that term for you, you know so if you don't like it don't use it. You know I think they know that they can get people into trouble by saying 'Oh they are calling me Gypsy' and it seems to be that. I think the adults take that view as well that as long as you don't call them gypsies they can call themselves Gypsies but you can't and in school when you have children of 5, 6 or 7 they find that quite hard because if you went round calling yourself a name you know…so I had to have a couple of words about that really' (Participant 4)

Some participants appeared to minimise these reports of name calling and bullying, describing them as; 'not a huge problem'. None discussed specific details about how they responded to them.

'Yeah it [name calling] goes on it would be a lie to say it doesn't yeah it does go on but it's not a huge problem but yeah it does go on' (Participant 13)

'No not at all I don't think that that's an issue here at all in the two years I have been here the one that is often used is gyppo isn't it I've heard that once and it was

completely out of context It wasn't really erm used erm because they understood it' (Participant 11)

In addition to this, and perhaps most worryingly, some staff appeared to see such incidents as being justified by the GRT children's behaviour.

'They will probably say that there's racial bullying sometimes it depends on which family you're looking at as well they might get called names. You know 'you live in a caravan' and all the rest of it or 'you live in a so and so', erm it doesn't happen with all of them some of them it does but then they can be not very nice back or not nice first I mean there's been incidences of them thumping other people' (Participant 13)

'They'll stick up for each other it's very much, err they'll sort of glue together a bit and look after each other, but I mean yeah it's everywhere isn't it people call them names and 'travellers' 'gypsies' some of the words they don't mind but then they call us 'gaujas' and quite openly' (Participant 13)

'Tom said to me once "when I at park this lady she shout at me "did she "yeah she said I gyppo" and you think 'Oh what a shame' that was probably other parents, but then you think he probably hit their child with a stick or something' (Participant 5)

The majority of children in Derrington and Kendall's (2007) research reported experiencing some form of racial bullying. It appears that the children who attend the school participating in this research, report bullying too. However, teaching staff interviewed by Derrington believed that racial bullying went unreported (Derrington, 2005). In contrast, staff in this research, appear to perceive name-calling as being reported, but perhaps untrue, exaggerated or justified. This corresponds with GRT children's views that racism against them is less likely to be taken seriously, than racism towards other ethnic minorities (Deuchar and Bhopal, 2012).

4.5.2.8 Perceive selves to be persecuted

Linked to the theme of children reporting bullying or racism, one participant discussed a conversation she had had with a GRT parent. The parent felt that her children were singled out, and that all GRT children were; 'tarred with the same brush'. The teacher remarked:

> 'And their mum has actually cut off all their tassels, all their hair because she felt it was causing a problem. And she was, you know, she was adamant that she would never do it because obviously it's not school uniform and she said 'Don't tell me I've got to cut that off because it's part of their culture I'll never cut that off' but she's actually removed them so there's obviously some pressure somewhere whether she might let them grow them back I don't know, but it was quite interesting that something she was adamant that she would never do she actually did because she felt it would benefit her children. It's quite sad really because a Muslim wouldn't take off her head-dress' (Participant 6)

4.5.3 Discussion of superordinate theme 4: Social inclusion

Interviews revealed that, on one level, participants did have an awareness that GRT children were not fully socially included in school. References to barriers between them and non-GRT children, as well as references to the parents of non-GRT children urging their children not to play with them, demonstrates this. However, it is interesting to note that all participants were quick to state, in response to the question about social inclusion, that all children were fully included. One reason for this may be that staff had not previously reflected on the social inclusion of GRT children in their schools. They had perhaps viewed the tendency to play with other GRT children to be expected and it may be that it was only through discussions, that an awareness of examples of social isolation was raised. Another, less favourable, interpretation would be that participants did not see raising the social inclusion of GRT children as being part of their role. Thus, although they were aware of a lack of social inclusion, they did not see that as being problematic.

4.6 Superordinate theme 5: Cultural dissonance

> 'I think that teachers are predominantly white, middle-class and whether we like it or not we come with that set of values…and we cannot inflict that on these children we have to value and respect that they come from a very different set and sometimes there is a lack of understanding, it isn't racist, it is just a lack of understanding about where exactly they are coming from….we pull them out and we say 'Right, come and function in this' it is a bit like us being pulled out and being asked to go and work in a Chinese school it would be a different culture, it would be completely beyond what we knew, and we would be asked to function within that school, within that system and I think that is what these [GRT] children are asked to do' (Participant 12)

Nine participants expressed an awareness that there was a difference between the GRT culture and values, and the non-GRT culture which predominates in schools, and that this impacted on the educational experience of GRT children.

Some participants saw this as impacting on the behaviour of GRT children :

> 'The experience they have had growing up before they came into this environment needs to be unlearnt and a different way of operating learnt, so, we don't just take things because we want them or give people a slap' (Participant 2)

4.6.1 Discussion of superordinate theme 5: cultural dissonance

Many participants see the behaviour of GRT children resulting, at least in part, from cultural dissonance. That is to say, they believe there is discrepancy between what is culturally acceptable on a site, and what is culturally acceptable in a school. Derrington and Kendall (2007) suggest that poor retention rates are in part attributable to GRT children experiencing a feeling of cultural dissonance. Research carried out directly with GRT children and young people, suggests that the presence of other GRT children in schools and, members of staff who have a good understanding of GRT culture, limits this feeling and increases a feeling of safety and security.

4.7 Superordinate theme 6: Inclusive practice

The Equality Act (2010) states that; schools should actively work to overcome discrimination and enhance the equality of opportunity for all children in their care. All participants reflected on practice currently in place which aimed to improve the social and academic inclusion of GRT pupils. Figure 9 shows the thematic map for the superordinate theme, inclusive practice. The thematic analysis resulted in these reflections being categorised one of three ways: practice aimed at fostering social inclusion, practice aimed at raising the attainment of GRT pupils, and steps participants were taking to develop their understanding of GRT cultures.
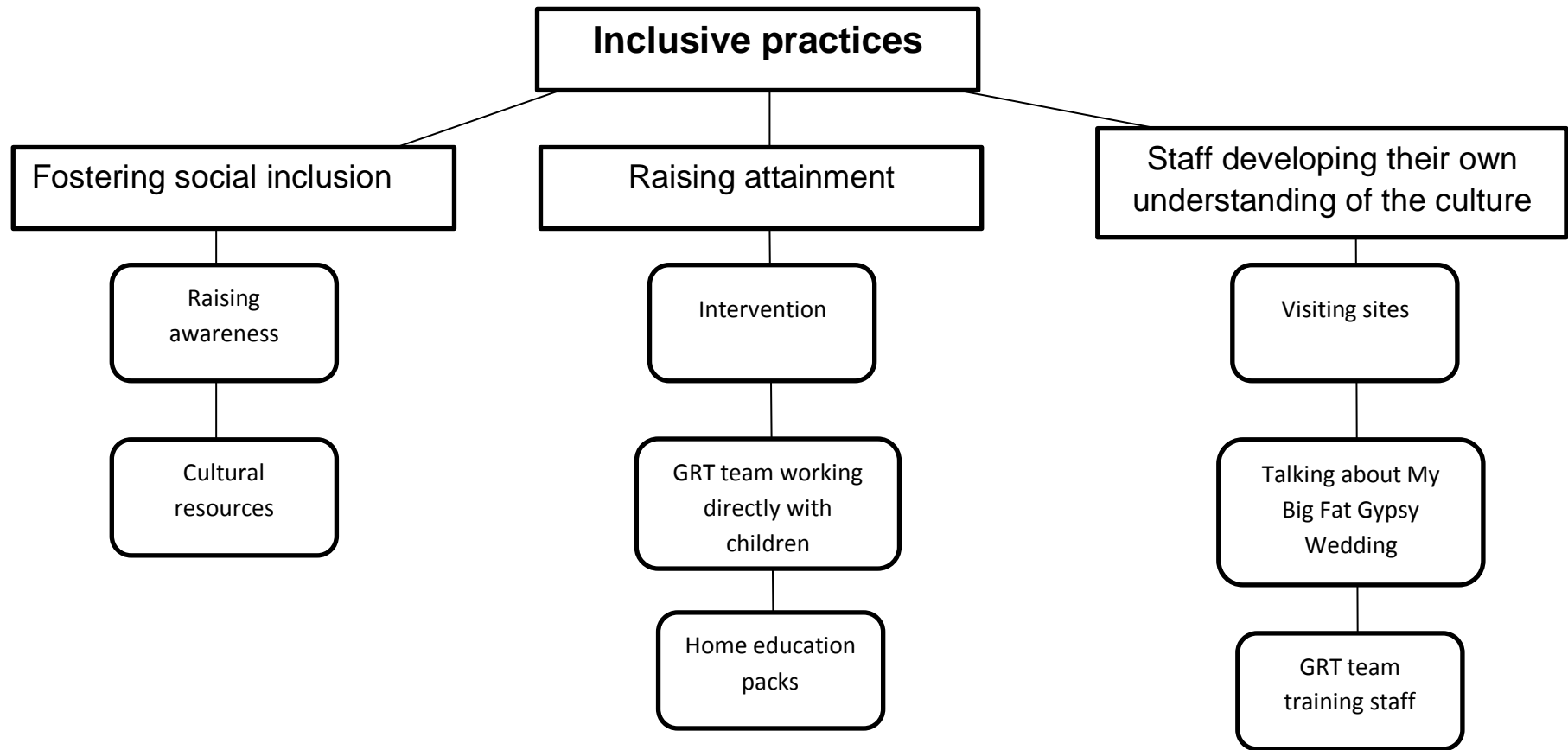
Figure 9. Thematic map for superordinate theme 'Inclusive practice'

4.7.1 Fostering social inclusion

Participants described one main method employed to foster social inclusion: raising

awareness about GRT cultures within the school. A few referred to the use of cultural

resources.

4.7.1.1 Raising awareness

'One teacher went down to where they are and took some photos of them outside
their trailers, outside where they did their washing and that was really nice because
the other children were really interested' (Participant 5)

Participants discussed the steps that had been taken in their schools to raise awareness of

GRT cultures amongst non-GRT children. For example, some schools had included activities

pertaining to the GRT culture, such as painting Crown Derby plates, into arts' week. Others

had taken photos on GRT sites and incorporated these into a lesson about GRT cultures,

whilst children from one school had been to a museum celebrating GRT cultures. One

participant referred to the importance of this awareness raising, as she believed that

prejudice comes from ignorance. However, it is important to note that two members of

staff expressed reservations about such activities:

'you have got to be sensitive to the child in your class because some of them
wouldn't want it made obvious that they are[GRT] and they quite like the fact that
they are just swimming around in this big pond and that nobody knows who they are
or where they were from' (Participant 7)

Another participant whose school had introduced assemblies to raise awareness about GRT

cultures stated that:

'We've had the GRT people [GRT team] in to do assemblies and talk about the culture
and where it comes from and everything else. Now the children who have
complained about that are the GRT children saying that some of what they say is a
load of twoddle or they don't agree with it or 'they're not GRT how would they
know'' (Participant 13)

Wilkin et al (2009) urge teachers to make use of the curriculum to celebrate diversity and GRT culture. Ofsted (2003) suggest that too often this takes place incidentally and that this leads to GRT groups becoming hidden minorities. In the schools participants worked within, there were some incidental discussions which staff felt raised awareness of the GRT culture (such as a GRT child choosing to talk about their home during an assembly about houses). There were also times in some schools when information about GRT cultures was taught explicitly, during arts' week, for example. Some participants discussed times when GRT families had been involved in this awareness raising, such as a GRT parent coming in to talk about Crown Derby pottery, and a GRT child making a book about their home for their classmates. This is a positive step and an Ofsted report suggests that involving GRT families and inviting them into school to share their skills, raises their confidence and trust in the school (Ofsted, 1999).

4.7.1.2 Cultural resources

'We have caravans to play with and things like that…there is a lot of stuff in school to make people aware of Gypsies and their lifestyle' (Participant 4)

Some participants were aware of resources being used in the school (such as toy trailers and books about GRT cultures), to raise awareness amongst non-GRT children. Discussion about this was, however, limited despite good practice guidelines, (Wilkin et al, 2010), encouraging the use of GRT culture-friendly resources, both to raise awareness of GRT cultures and, to engage GRT children by tapping into their interests and experiences.

4.7.2 Raising attainment

Participants discussed three ways in which they attempted to raise attainment: intervention,

the GRT team engaging in one to one work with GRT children and the use of home-

education packs when children went travelling.

4.7.2.1 Intervention

'She'll be taken out either on her own or in small groups where I try and accelerate
those areas of learning that are weak' (Participant 7)

Participants referred to GRT children often being placed in small intervention groups to

accelerate their learning in particular areas. Sometimes this intervention work was at the

recommendation of outside agencies, such as speech and language therapists and learning

support teachers. As was the case with Wilkin et al's (2010) case study schools, all schools in

this research tracked attainment and targeted support aimed at improving attainment for

children deemed to be underachieving. However, this support was offered to all children in

the schools and not aimed specifically at GRT children.

4.7.2.2 GRT team working directly with children

'We had someone from the GRT service who came in and was working with the
children as well, she would come and see them and would take them to do individual
reading' (Participant 12)

Some participants said that staff from the GRT team came into school to do direct work with

GRT children and young people. Others said that this had happened historically, but that it

was no longer happening. All of the participants, who talked about members of the GRT

team working directly with GRT children and young people, viewed this work positively.

Additional adult support was the most commonly cited form of support given by head

teachers responding to a survey in 2007 (Wilkin et al, 2010). This support was commonly

given by teaching assistants, or by members of the TESS. Participants in this study did not

refer to the use of teaching assistants but did see the use of TESS staff in this way as positive.

4.7.2.3 Home education packs

'If they have gone somewhere then we get packs together to make sure we can
monitor their education from afar because that is a massive problem when they have
gone and they come back and there are massive gaps' (Participant 7)

Participants referred to home education packs, which school staff compile for GRT children

prior to them going travelling. Three of the four participants who talked about home

education packs, reflected that they were often not used by the children whilst they were

travelling:

'Never ever since I have been here, nothing ever comes back so that is a bit of a
problem but in theory it should work that you set work for them, but then they come
back, go into class and just have to get on with it and pick it up' (Participant 2)

Wilkin et al (2010) state that home education packs can contribute to the engagement and

relationships with school whilst GRT children are travelling, as well as ease the reintegration

on their return. Kiddle (1999) reports on the initial use of such packs in Devon and states

that parents did not have confidence in their own ability to support their child's learning. It

seems that further consideration needs to be given to the use of these in the schools which

participated in the research.

4.7.3 Staff developing their own understanding of the culture

Cudworth (2008) states that if teaching staff work in schools without a high number of GRT

children on roll, they may lack an awareness of the GRT cultures and the implications for

education. Participants in this study reflected on three ways they have increased their

awareness of the culture: by visiting sites, by asking questions of the GRT children and families they work with and by attending training delivered by the GRT team.   Staff demonstrating an understanding of the GRT culture and lifestyle are reported to encourage GRT parents that schools are safe places for their children to attend (Myers and Bhopal, 2009).

4.7.3.1 Visiting sites

'The best thing I did was go down to the site when I first started' (Participant 2)

Staff from two schools referred to visiting GRT sites, and all saw this to be a positive action which impacted on their relationships and understanding of the GRT culture. Interestingly, two participants felt that this was something which would not have happened until recently, and they saw it as signalling a change in the relationship between the GRT community and the school. One teacher who had recently spent an evening at the site, having been invited for tea by one of the children in her class, remarked on the different reception she was given when she first tried to visit the site some years before:

> 'they wouldn't let me in the gates were shut and they said that the children were asleep and they were very cagey and now, I mean that's got to have been at least 5 years ago, we weren't let in they made an excuse and then to think….it's such progress' (Participant 10)

As well as improving the awareness teaching staff about the culture, it is likely that site visits will also improve the relationships between school staff and the GRT community (Wilkin et al, 2010).

4.7.3.2 Talking about 'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding'

At the time of carrying out this research, a series called 'My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding' was being aired on Channel 4. Described by Channel 4 as a; 'revealing documentary series that offers a window into the secretive, extravagant and surprising world of gypsies and travellers in Britain today', the series has been surrounded by controversy. The latest advertising campaign for the programme which heralded the recent series to be; 'Bigger Fatter and Gypsier', showed a picture of young girls in low cut tops and young boys frowning with pursed lips. It was banned by the Advertising Standards Agency, on the grounds that it reinforced prejudiced views. However, three of the four participants who referred to the programme, said that it had offered a way into conversations with the GRT community about their lifestyle:

> 'we [a teacher and two GRT children] had a fantastic discussion coming home from swimming one day about My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding…a completely open conversation about it all and it was quite interesting to get their own take on their culture' (Participant 9)

4.7.3.3 GRT team training staff

Two participants referred to helpful training they had received from the GRT team, which enabled them to have a better understanding of the GRT culture and lifestyle:

> '[The GRT team] comes in and talks about the different types of travellers, the travellers we have in our community, and their different traditions, because if you don't know that that is a tradition you can sometimes offend people' (Participant 7)

GRT parents believe that TESSs play an important role in how the community is viewed by school staff (Bhopal, 2004). Participants from just two schools made reference to this

training; this is in line with research by Bhopal et al (2000) which suggests that TESS training is underutilised.

4.7.4 Discussion of superordinate theme 6: Inclusive practice

Many government policies have aimed to highlight good practice in raising the outcomes for GRT children and young people. Participants did not reflect many of these strategies. At times during interviews, there was a sense that GRT children were treated as any other children would be, that they were 'just kids' (Cudworth, 2008). This may be as a result of low expectations, alluded to earlier. It may be that teaching staff do not see improving the outcomes of GRT children as being within their power.

4.8 Wider factors relating to the six superordinate themes

When carrying out the thematic analysis, three factors were noted to occur across the six superordinate themes: difficulties generalising, gender differences, and changes over time. Reference has been made to these where relevant above, but they are outlined in full in this section, to ensure clarity. Figure 10 show the thematic map for these wider factors which relate to the superordinate themes.
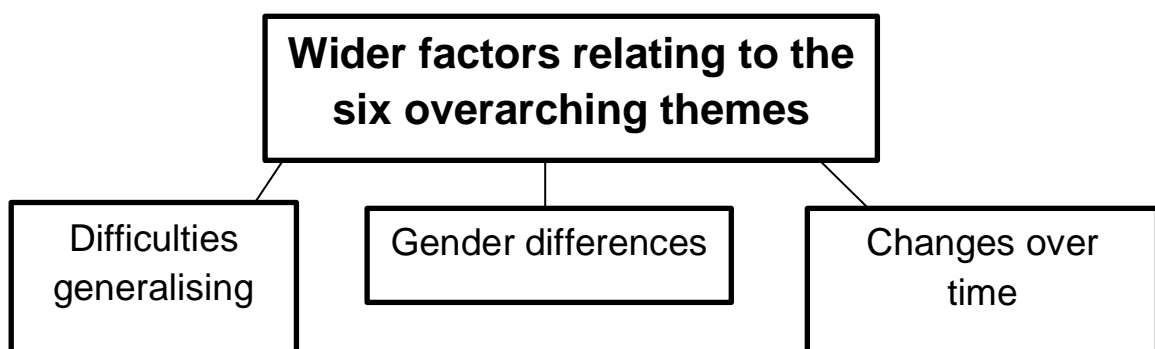
Figure 10. Thematic map showing wider factors relating to the six superordinate themes.

4.8.1 Difficulties generalising

> 'I think you have to sort of take each family on its own merit really and work with what you know about that one family. Don't just put them all in one bag and treat them all the same because you're not going to get the same response' (Participant 4)

Some participants expressed discomfort at having to generalise and made efforts to highlight the differences between the GRT children who attended their schools. At times participants would describe a problem, such as the behaviour of a child, but finish their account by stressing the particularity of that situation to one child or family, or by asserting that they had seen similar behaviour from non-GRT children as well. As Lloyd et al (1999) conclude, denying differences between GRT children and non-GRT children, may lead to a failure to respond to the particular needs and challenges facing GRT children on roll in their schools. However, the counter view would be that stressing differences would exacerbate the outsider status of these groups (Bhopal and Myers, 2009).

4.8.2 Gender differences

Within some of the sub-themes highlighted above, gender differences were noted by participants. More specifically, this occurred during discussion about:

- *attendance at high school*

  Participants believed boys were more likely to attend high school than girls, but this is contradicted by absence figures which suggest that absence is slightly higher for boys from GRT groups than for girls. However, it may be that girls do not transfer to secondary school, this would not be shown in the attendance data as they would not be enrolled at a school.

- *current attendance*

  One participant remarked that girls took time off school to learn to cook and clean.

- *aspirations*

  Participants perceived GRT girls as not having any aspirations, and boys as wanting to earn money and have a job.

- *behaviour*

  One participant stated that boys found it more difficult to be indoors in a classroom and sit still during lessons. Exclusion figures expose the over-representation of boys (DfE, 2012[b]), suggesting that boys behaviour is more likely to be deemed to be disruptive or inappropriate.

4.8.3 Change over time

Within some of the sub-themes highlighted above, participants referred to changes that they had observed over time.

- *extra-curricular activities*

  Participants referred to the increasing likelihood of GRT children going on trips or joining in with extra-curricular activities.

- *homework*

  Participants remarked that with some GRT children homework was now more likely to be done, and that parents were being supportive with this.

- *valuing education*

  Two participants believed that the GRT community placed more value on education now than they had done before. Staff who took part in Wilkin et al's (2010) research also noted this change.

- *relationships with parents*

  Three participants remarked that the relationships between school staff and parents were improving.

- *aspirations*

  Two participants believed that the aspirations of the GRT community were changing. They attributed this to the fact that jobs, which traditionally would have been occupied by GRT people, such as fruit picking, were no longer readily available. This view held by participants, is corroborated by research with GRT parents, suggesting that some parents believe that the changing economic climate, means that their children have to be prepared for the workplace through school (Wilkin et al, 2010).

- *attendance at high school*

  Two participants believed that GRT children were more likely to attend high school than had previously been the case.

4.8.4 Discussion of wider factors relating to the six superordinate themes

Some participants noted positive changes over time. However, few were able to reflect on the mechanisms which had led to these changes. One participant stated that they were, 'just lucky'. School staff should be encouraged to reflect on practice in their own schools, which may be in part, leading to these changes. It is also important for staff to reflect on the uniqueness of the educational experiences of GRT groups as noted above. Many were reluctant to generalise and saw this as being inappropriate. However, commonalities between these children must be explored to allow for the development of good practice, which improves outcomes for these groups.

4.9 Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has explored the findings of this study, making links to pertinent literature and research which had previously been outlined in Chapter 2. In order to ensure that these findings have utility, it is important to explore the limitations of the research and

implications for the practice of professionals working with, and supporting, GRT children and

young people. These issues are explored in full in the following, and concluding, chapter.

Chapter 5: CONCLUSIONS, REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to explore the perceptions of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people. The previous chapters included in this volume offer an account of the literature which informed this work, details of how the research was carried out and a description and discussion of the findings of the research project. The data collection and data analysis methods employed have allowed me to achieve the aim of the research and answer the five research questions. To conclude this volume of work, the current chapter considers answers to each of the research questions in turn, before outlining implications for practice and suggesting areas for further research.

5.2 Answering the research questions

As outlined in Chapter 3, this research was exploratory and so the thematic analysis was inductive and driven by the data. The previous chapter offers a detailed account of the data set and, where relevant, relates this to previous research. The following section returns to the research questions and considers how the findings answer these. For clarity, the research questions are outlined below and consideration is given to each in turn.

1. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to the GRT culture and lifestyle?

2. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?

3. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to attainment?

4. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to wider school and local authority systems?

5. What support do school staff access to enable them to work with this group and what value do they place on this support?

5.2.1 How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to the GRT culture and lifestyle?

The findings suggest that participants believed that the GRT culture and lifestyle impacted significantly on the education of GRT children and young people. Participants talked more about cultural factors which they perceived to be barriers to the education of GRT children, than they did about school based factors which impacted upon the education of GRT children. In discussing barriers to the education of GRT children, participants highlighted many factors related to the GRT culture and lifestyle. Participants referred to the values and aspirations held by GRT communities impacting on the attitude of GRT children towards their learning. In addition participants highlighted the low literacy levels of GRT parents, the punctuality of GRT children, and the time they spend away from school travelling as factors which impact on the achievements of children from GRT groups within school.   Some participants expressed a view that GRT children started school at a disadvantage and one remarked that overcoming this disadvantage was an 'uphill struggle'.

Some participants expressed a view that the importance that GRT communities place on issues of safety and trust impacted on their relationships with parents. Participants who expressed an awareness of this commented on the reassurance they had offered GRT parents about the safety of their children whilst they were in school or on school trips.

Participants stated that having an understanding of the GRT culture was important and they discussed three ways in which they sought to develop their awareness of GRT cultures and communities: by visiting sites, by attending training organised by the GRT team and by having conversations with GRT children about their culture. Participants also discussed the importance of raising awareness about GRT cultures with non-GRT pupils and they did this through activities such as having GRT parents and the GRT team facilitate pottery painting during arts week.

A few participants expressed an awareness of cultural dissonance between the GRT culture and the mainstream culture occupied by the majority of school pupils and staff.   However, this was discussed in relation to parents not wanting to send their children to school because of the differences in cultural norms and values and in relation to the behaviour of GRT children. Few participants explored the impact of this cultural dissonance on GRT children and their experience of school.

Overall, participants saw the relationship between GRT children and school in relation to their culture and lifestyle as being problematic.   Participants viewed factors related to the GRT culture and lifestyle as having a negative impact on the outcomes of children from these groups. Some participants were, however, actively seeking to develop their own knowledge and that of non-GRT pupils about the GRT culture, lifestyle and values. Many participants were aware of the dissonance between non-GRT and GRT cultures but few reflected on how that would impact on the emotional wellbeing of GRT children attending their schools.

5.2.2 How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?

Through the process of inductive data analysis social inclusion was identified as a superordinate theme. Interestingly, in response to the question relating to social inclusion, all participants stated that GRT children were fully socially included. However, most participants went on to give evidence which contradicted this claim. Therefore, to answer the research question 'how do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?' is difficult. If participants' answers are to be taken at face value, most do not see the social inclusion of GRT children as being problematic within their schools. However, many went on to discuss events which, if accurate, would suggest that GRT children are not fully socially included. Moreover, participants reflected on the fact that GRT children reported bullying or racism but comments made by participants suggested that this was either disbelieved, minimised or rationalised as being a response to the behaviour of GRT children. The reason for these contradictions within individual participants' accounts is not clear. It may be that over the course of the interviews, as discussions around this topic progressed, participants became aware of evidence that GRT children were not fully socially included or it may be that participants viewed some level of social exclusion as being inevitable or acceptable. Whilst participants' accounts of the attainment of GRT children and the impact of their culture and lifestyle were largely coherent, discussions about the social inclusion of GRT children were contradictory. If GRT children are not socially included then participants are either not fully aware of this, do not see this as being problematic, or were not happy discussing social exclusion explicitly in the context of these interviews.

5.2.3 How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to attainment?

Participants highlighted the low attainment of GRT children and the high likelihood of them being identified as having SEN. As stated above, this was attributed by many participants to cultural factors such as the low literacy levels of GRT parents or the limited value perceived to be placed on education by GRT families. However, some participants reflected on the strengths of GRT children such as their physical skill and strength.

Participants discussed steps taken to raise the attainment of GRT children such as the inclusion of children from these groups in Wave 2 and 3 interventions; utilising the individual support offered by members of the GRT team and by supplying GRT children with home education packs prior to them going travelling.

Participants perceived the behaviour of many of the GRT children they worked with as being problematic and some linked this to their ability to access and engage in the curriculum.

Overall, staff viewed the attainment of GRT children as being of concern. However, they largely attribute this to cultural factors rather than school based factors. Participants did however highlight steps being taken to raise the attainment of GRT children and they highlighted a link between the attainment and the behaviour of GRT groups.

5.2.4 How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to wider school and local authority systems?

Participants offered few reflections on the interplay between GRT children, education and wider school and local authority systems. Two participants reflected on decisions made around the deployment of support and resources. These participants worked in the same school and both stated that if decisions had to be made about who received individualised

support the decision was likely to go in the favour of non-GRT children since they were more likely to have support consolidating the learning at home and a higher likelihood of remaining in education until school leaving age.

Four participants reflected on the impact of the curriculum on GRT children stating that the curriculum did not meet the needs of this group and that the pace of the curriculum often meant that GRT children were left with gaps in their learning.

Overall, responses during the interviews suggest that participants did not view wider school and local authority systems as having a salient impact on these groups of learners or at least they did not feel that they could talk about this. However, it may be that the construction of the question related to wider factors closed down this conversation in interviews. By presenting participants with a quote taken from Cudworth and asking them to respond to this perhaps they felt that they either needed to agree or disagree with it and they may not have felt able to expand on the quote.

5.2.5 What support do school staff access to enable them to work with this group and what value do they place on this support?

Participants highlighted the support they receive from Greenshire's GRT team. Participants viewed the GRT team as having several functions:

- a resourcing function: members of the GRT team provided schools with physical resources (such as a book about life on a site) and knowledge about the culture either on an individual basis through discussions about specific children or through delivering training.

- working directly with GRT children: participants saw this as a positive thing and a core role of the GRT team. They reflected on GRT children enjoying this time and benefitting from it.

- advocacy for GRT families: participants discussed times when the GRT team had spoken with school staff on behalf of GRT parents or families when there had been difficulties.

Aside from the support of the GRT team participants did not highlight other forms of support which they accessed to assist them in their work with these groups. Participants did not make reference to good practice guidelines or government policies. Some teaching staff reflected on the fact that they had no knowledge of GRT children prior to starting work in Greenshire and that they felt many of the inclusive practices they were employing had been 'chanced upon' since there was no clear direction in schools (of which they were aware) about how to meet the needs of children from these groups.

5.3 Reflections on the research process

Previous research has been limited and is critiqued in Chapter 2, therefore the present study has value in that it has added knowledge to a small body of literature and research. Burman and Whelan (2011) encourage qualitative researchers to reflect on what went well as well as what went wrong during the research process. This section offers reflections on some of the key decisions made throughout the research project and consideration of methodological limitations.

5.3.1 Reflections on data collection process

The rationale behind my decision to conduct interviews is outlined in Chapter 3 – there was a robust rationale for the methodology and methods employed since they allowed me to

achieve the research aim and answer the research questions. However, my position as a researcher and as a TEP will have impacted upon the data collection process. Runswick-Cole (2011) urges researchers utilising interviews to consider the impact of their positionality. My role as a TEP and participants' constructs about this role will have impacted on their responses during the interviews. In addition to this my role will have impacted on my responses to participants' comments. In line with my constructionist epistemology I believe that co-construction of subjectivity takes place throughout the interview process (Runswick-Cole, 2011). To limit the impact of this I paused at times in the interview process to offer synopses of what the participants had discussed in response to each question I asked and I allowed them the chance to add to, amend or clarify my interpretation of their response. Participants rarely amended or clarified my interpretation but it would be naïve to dismiss the fact that my positionality will have impacted on the interview process.

As stated in Chapter 3, Runswick-Cole (2011) highlights the importance of reflecting on aspects of my life which may have impacted on how participants perceived me. Nine of the participants did not know me and had not met me prior to the day of their interview. Four of the participants knew me in a professional capacity and I had previously worked closely alongside two of them. Burman (1997) states that rapport or friendship with participants may lead them to say something which they would not have said to another researcher. Whilst this was a possibility, during the interviews with the two participants I knew it appeared that they were mindful of the fact that the exchange was being tape recorded. Both of these participants chose to say things to me at the end of the interview which were related to the topic but which they hadn't wanted to be captured on tape. This suggests that they did not say things to me that they would not have said to another researcher whilst they were being recorded. So it did not appear that my professional relationship with

two of the participants impacted on what they were willing to say. However, it may be that my position as a trainee educational psychologist impacted on the responses of all participants. Participants were likely to have had an awareness of the role of the EP in promoting inclusion and their responses may, as a result, have been given with this in mind. The tendency for some participants to give socially desirable answers during the interview process was evidenced by the fact that many participants shared other thoughts after the interview was concluded.

5.3.2 Reflections on sample

Although, as argued in Chapter 3, qualitative research should not be judged by the 'problems' associated with quantitative research (Burman and Whelan, 2011) it is important to be mindful of the possibility of sample bias in a relatively small sample size. Two stages were undertaken in the recruitment phase: head teachers had to agree to members of staff from their school being asked to take part in the research and then participants volunteered. I did not ask participants why they had chosen to take part however it is likely that each will have different reasons (such as strong views to share, an interest in the GRT culture, a desire to share good practice). This will have impacted upon responses and therefore the themes constructed cannot be seen to be representative of the views of all teaching staff. I interviewed all of the staff who volunteered to take part in the research and, prior to commencing this project, I had hoped to interview more than 13 people. However, on reflection interviewing more staff would have necessitated further reduction of the data given in this report and this would have brought with it the risk of losing the richness of the account given here.

5.3.3 Reflections on data analysis process

Qualitative researchers should reflect on their data analysis process and consider their 'selection' (Burman and Whelan, 2011). Throughout the data analysis process selections are made. Initially decisions are made about which code to select for statements made by participants, in the latter stages quotes and extracts are selected to illustrate points in the final report. Whilst I bring to this research a desire for social justice I have avoided 'cherry-picking' extracts and themes to create a line of argument by explicitly describing and making transparent the data analysis process and by following the guidelines proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006). In addition to this I used a fellow educational professional to check the face validity of the codes I had ascribed to a section of transcript.

5.3.4 Reflections on the use of the umbrella term GRT

Kiddle (2009) discusses the use of the umbrella term 'Traveller education' arising in part through the existence of TESSs and queries its utility given the diversity between groups which are deemed to be Travellers (Gypsies and Showmen, for example). As noted in the introduction there are differences between the groups encompassed under the term GRT, each has their own culture and history which will mean the relationship between those groups and the education system differ. Lloyd et al (1999) note that teachers in Scotland reflect on the behaviour of Gypsy Traveller and Show Travellers differently. Only one participant in my research noted a difference between the groups encompassed within the term GRT. Although the use of the term is commonly used in Greenshire and widely understood by teaching staff working within the County, it could be argued that the use of this term places limits on this research. Future research may need to begin to consider the different groups encompassed under the term GRT separately.

5.3.5 Reflections on the usefulness of this research

Within my critical realist epistemology I did not set out to find definitive, generalisable answers to questions, and as such my work does not allow readers or future researchers to make predictions about the experiences or views of teaching staff working with GRT children and young people. Instead, I have provided knowledge about the views of participants in this research study with regard to their work with GRT children and young people. Overall, I believe that this exploratory research is a valuable contribution to a limited body of previous research.

5.4 Implications for practice

As noted above this research is not generalisable to other members of teaching staff in other schools. However, the findings of this research project are of use to educational professionals working to enhance the outcomes of GRT children and young people.

Findings from this research and from previous research highlight the poor educational outcomes for GRT children and young people. Participants taking part in this research shared their views about existing good practice in their schools aimed at improving outcomes for these children and young people. The findings of this research suggest that school staff do not routinely access government publications and guidelines when considering how best to meet the needs of the GRT children and young people they work with. However, they value input and support from outside agencies such as the GRT team. School staff should be encouraged to reflect on how far their schools are inclusive of GRT pupils and provided with support to select strategies which may improve the inclusion of these pupils within their settings.

5.4.1 Implications for the practice of educational psychologists

My initial review of the literature suggests that whilst there is a wealth of research relating to the needs of some vulnerable groups there is a paucity of research about GRT children and young people and their education. There is no research or literature, of which I am aware, which considers the role of EPs in promoting the needs of children from GRT groups. It is therefore important to reflect on their role in this area.

EPs engage in a breadth of work which means that they are well placed to be able to work flexibly to support the needs of GRT children and young people in educational settings. Moore (2005) states that the work of an EP should be "primarily viewed as a social and ethical endeavour with a central concern for social relationships" (p. 103). It is my opinion that EPs should play a significant role in challenging the disadvantages faced by children from ethnic minorities.

A review of the role of EPs in Scotland (SEED, 2002) suggested that the EPs' core functions are: consultation, assessment, intervention, research and training and that functions can be carried out at three levels: individual, group, and organisation.

With regard to individual and group work with GRT children, EPs working in schools with GRT pupils should have an awareness of their vulnerability and be mindful of the implications of this for assessment and intervention procedures.

With regards to organisational work, findings from this research suggest a need to further develop the knowledge of teachers about factors impacting on the education of GRT children and young people and how these affect their time in school. More specifically, it seems that school staff should be aware of the difficulties faced by GRT children and young people in terms of their social inclusion. Whole-school training delivered by EPs could focus

on conceptualising the social inclusion of GRT pupils within the school context and considering how to improve this.

Furthermore, in their role as practitioner-researchers with a clear understanding of the current education system EPs would be well placed to conduct further research into the educational experiences of children and young people from these groups.

Although EPs are well placed to raise awareness and understanding about the education of children from GRT groups, there may be an initial need to raise awareness within the profession itself so that EPs feel equipped and empowered to challenge the disadvantages faced by GRT groups in the education system.

5.5 Directions for future research

When compared to what is known about other vulnerable groups of learners (such as other minority ethnic groups or looked after children) the paucity of research in this area is concerning. Further research is needed into all aspects of the education of GRT children and young people. Since many difficulties appear to arise in the relationship between GRT young people and the education system during their time at secondary school it is important that researchers try to engage staff working in secondary schools and gain an insight into their views about their work with children from these groups.

As stated in the introduction to this volume of work, a paucity of literature around the views of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people, coupled with advice from colleagues in Greenshire, led to a decision being made for this research project to consider the views of teaching staff. Further research must now be carried out with GRT children and families so that their voice is heard.

One of the key findings of this research is related to the social inclusion of GRT children and young people. Participants' responses and the thematic analysis carried out would suggest that GRT children in participating schools were not fully socially included. Moreover, whilst participants did reflect on the fact that GRT children reported bullying or racism, extracts from the transcript suggest that this was either disbelieved, minimised or rationalised as being a response to the behaviour of GRT children. Further research should be carried out with a wider number of teaching staff to see if this finding is replicated elsewhere. In addition to this, it is important that the views of members of GRT communities are sought in relation to these findings and that their experiences of racism and social exclusion are explored.

As noted in the literature review and in the findings section of this volume of work, teachers' expectations are likely to impact upon the attainment of GRT children and young people. It appears from participants' responses during interviews that low expectations are linked to views and assumptions about GRT cultures and values. This is evidenced by the number of 'cultural factors' viewed by participants as contributing to the low attainment of these groups. However, there is an emerging body of evidence which suggests that assumptions, such as the view that GRT parents do not value education, may be misguided or outdated (Wilkin et al, 2010). One way in which these assumptions can be challenged is through further research which listens to the views of GRT communities being carried out and published.

The table below details specific questions that could be asked of members of GRT groups within further research in light of my own findings.

Finding from the current research study	Questions which should now be asked of GRT groups
• Participants' responses suggest that GRT children in participating schools were not fully socially included • GRT children in participating schools report bullying although this was often minimised, disbelieved or rationalised by teaching staff	• How do GRT children and parents view their social inclusion in the school environment? • What are the experiences of GRT children and parents in relation to social exclusion and/or bullying? • What are the experiences of GRT children and parents in relation to how social exclusion and/or bullying is viewed by school staff? • What changes would GRT children and parents like to see to the school environment to improve their social experiences?
• Participants' responses suggest that they view the culture and lifestyle of GRT communities as impacting upon the attainment of GRT children and young people.	• What value do GRT children and parents place on the education system? • What aspects of the education system do they value and which would they like to see changed? • What aspirations do GRT children and young people hold? • What aspirations do GRT parents hold for their children?

Table 11. Questions that could be asked of members of GRT groups within further research

5.6 Concluding comments

GRT children and young people are amongst the most vulnerable children in the education system. This research has added to a limited body of evidence concerned with the views of teaching staff about their work with children from these groups. It is hoped that this research will be published in order to raise the profile of GRT groups in the education system. This and other existing research can be viewed as a starting point for raising awareness about issues in the education of GRT children and young people. The findings have highlighted some contradictions between participants' views and those of staff who have previously taken part in research about these groups. In addition, there are contradictions between participants' views of the GRT culture and lifestyle and research which has taken place with members of GRT groups themselves.

The use of interviews has allowed the perceptions of teaching staff to be explored in depth and has enabled current issues to be outlined. Further research is now required to gain insight into all stakeholders' views so that the educational experiences of GRT children and young people can be improved.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Final Interview Schedule

Thank you for offering to take part in this interview. Can I first of all assure you that you will remain completely anonymous and that no records of the interview will be kept with your name on them. Should you wish to withdraw from the study you can do so up until the point of data analysis with no costs incurred. Your identification number is…….

1. **First of all can I ask you to tell me a little bit about your experience of working with children from a GRT background?**

Follow up questions to ascertain:
How recently?
Over what period of time?
In current setting or in previous work?

2. **I'd like to talk a little bit about what impact, if any, you feel the GRT children's culture and lifestyle has on their education…**

Follow up questions to ascertain:
In your experience what impact do you think the GRT lifestyle and culture has on their education?
How does this influence your work with GRT children?
Have you found it necessary to have a good understanding of GRT cultures?

3. **How do you view the social inclusion of the GRT children you have worked with? By that I mean their relationships with peers.**

Follow up questions to ascertain:
Do you feel they are socially included?
Do you employ any strategies around their social inclusion?

4. **How do you view the attainment of the GRT children you have worked with?**

Follow up question:
Have you had to differentiate your approach to teaching in any way to meet the needs of this group?

5. **Do you feel that there are any systems at play that impact upon the relationship between the school and GRT children?**

Response to this quote "The difficulties Gypsy/Traveller children experience in their education are exacerbated by an inflexible UK schooling system that prescribes what children should be taught and what should be achieved"

Prompts:

For example, the structure of the education system or the standards agenda?

6. **What resources do you use to support you in your work with GRT children?**

<u>Prompts</u>
For example, TESS, colleagues, good practice guidelines, other?
How could you be better supported?

7. **Are there any further comments you'd like to make on your experience of working with GRT children?**

Thank you very much for helping me and giving up your time.

Appendix 2: Initial letter sent to head teachers

Dear XXXX,

I am a trainee educational psychologist currently on placement within XXXX County Council. I am seeking your consent to approach teaching staff working within your school about a research project I am undertaking. The research forms part of my thesis requirements, which are part of my professional training as an educational psychologist.

As you will know, XXXX has a high number of children and young people from a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) background. Nationally, when gender, free school meals, deprivation and special educational needs are controlled for, GRT young people still make considerably less progress than their peers, but there is limited research which considers teaching staff's views on this.

I am interested in the views of school staff on their work with GRT children and young people. In particular, I am interested in considering the following questions:

1.   How do teachers perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to: the GRT culture and lifestyle, social inclusion, attainment and systemic influences; and
2.   What support do teachers access to enable them to work with this group and what value do they place on this support?

I will be carrying out interviews with a range of teaching staff (class/subject teachers; teaching assistants; head teachers, pastoral leads etc.) who have had at least one year's experience of having some level of contact with, or responsibility for, GRT children and young people. I will conduct the interviews at a time and place convenient to participants. Interviews will be held on an individual basis and last a maximum of one hour.

I will not be making comparisons between schools, data will be confidential, participants and the school in which they work will remain anonymous.

I have enclosed a copy of the letter which would be sent to staff working within your school should you consent to me contacting them. Further details can be found within this document.

If you would like any further information or have any questions you can contact me on XXXX,   my University supervisor, Dr. Jane Leadbetter, on XXXX or XXXX (Senior Educational Psychologist) on XXXX.

I would be grateful if you could complete and return the attached consent slip by ………. to………

Yours faithfully

Laura Thomson
(Trainee Educational Psychologist)

Name of school: ………

I, the head teacher, do / do not give my consent for staff within my school to be asked if they would like to take part in the research project.

Signed: ……………………….

Appendix 3: Letter, information sheet and consent form sent to prospective participants

Dear ,

I am a trainee educational psychologist currently on placement within XXXX County Council. I am seeking volunteers for a research project I am undertaking.

As you will know, XXXX has a high number of children and young people from a Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) background. Nationally, when gender, free school meals, deprivation and special educational needs are controlled for, GRT young people still make considerably less progress than their peers, but there is limited research which considers teaching staff's views on this.

I am interested in teachers' and teaching assistants' views and perceptions around their work with GRT children and young people. In particular, I am interested in considering the following questions:

1. How do you perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to: the GRT culture and lifestyle, social inclusion, attainment and wider school and local authority systems; and
2. What support do you access to enable you to work with this group and what value do you place on this support?

I am hoping that this research will offer one of the first studies focussed entirely on the views of teaching staff around their work with GRT children and young people.

I will be carrying out interviews with a range of school staff (class/subject teachers; teaching assistants; head teachers, pastoral leads etc.) who have had at least one year's experience of working with and supporting, or having responsibility for, GRT children and young people in some capacity .

I will conduct the interviews, they will be held on an individual basis and last a maximum of one hour and, should you agree to take part, I will arrange the interview at a time and place which is convenient to you. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed.

I will not be making comparisons between schools, data will be confidential, and you and the school in which you work will remain anonymous.
I have enclosed an information sheet with further details about the process. Should you be willing to take part in this project please read the information sheet and complete the consent slip returning it to me by ………….. at …………..

I can be contacted on XXXX if you wish to discuss this further.

<div align="center">

Yours faithfully,

Laura Thomson
(Trainee Educational Psychologist)

</div>

To ensure that you are aware of what participation entails I have outlined details below, contact details are provided at the end should you wish to seek further clarification.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary; this research will offer one of the first studies focused entirely on the views of teaching staff around their work with GRT children and young people.

Please read the information below carefully and retain a copy for your records.

What is the aim of the project?
I am seeking your informed consent to participate in a study considering teaching staff's views on their work with GRT children and young people.   The term GRT will be taken as an umbrella term to include all gypsy and traveler groups as well as Roma. The results will not be used to reinforce any negative stereotypes of this group.

The research should indirectly have a beneficial impact on GRT children and young people within the area since teaching staff will be reflecting on their specific needs and good practice. The publication of these findings will allow for good practice to be shared.

What data will be collected?
Data will be gathered through individual interviews, it will be recorded on a Dictaphone and I will then transcribe it.

Will the data be confidential and anonymous?
Your data will remain confidential and will be anonymous except to me. Recordings and transcripts will be marked with an identification code. Only you and I will know what your identification code is.

Once recorded interviews have been transcribed, they will be kept on a secure system for 10 years.

During analysis, some data may be kept on an encrypted memory stick, to facilitate transfer of data between secure systems.

There will be confidentiality in how results will be reported in research findings. When data are reported they will be anonymised. Your views will not be attributed to you but presented collectively in the research paper.

There is a very small chance that confidentiality would need to be over-ridden if abusive practices were discussed – in the unlikely event that this happens the local authorities safeguarding procedures would be adhered to and necessary actions would be taken through the local authority's response.

How much time will I have to give?
I anticipate that the interviews will last up to a maximum of 60 minutes each. Should you be willing to take part I will contact you to arrange a time and place which is convenient to you.

Can I withdraw part way through?

Wishes to withdraw will be accepted without question. Should you withdraw from the study your data (recording and transcript) will be destroyed. At the start of your interview you will be assigned an ID number, if you want to withdraw, you can ask for your coded data set to be discarded (unless you wish otherwise). This will only be possible up to the point of data analysis, December 21st 2012.

How will the data be used?
The research forms part of my thesis requirements, which are part of my professional training as an educational psychologist. I am hoping that this research will offer one of the first studies focused entirely on the views of teaching staff around their work with GRT children and young people.

Will I get to hear about the results?
A public domain briefing will be written and copies will be sent to you if you choose to take part; you will also receive an information/summary sheet, this will give a general summary of findings; it will not detail findings from particular schools or staff members.

Who can I contact if I want further information?
You can contact me (Laura Thomson) on XXXX my University supervisor, Dr. Jane Leadbetter, on XXXX or XXXX (Senior Educational Psychologist) on XXXX.

CONSENT FORM

	Yes / No
I have read and understood the above conditions and would like to participate in the research project	
I understand that I can withdraw from the project at any time, with no cost incurred.	
I give my consent to the use of information I provided being written up for research purposes.	
I give my consent to the researcher potentially quoting me in the results, and understand that my responses will be kept confidential and anonymised, so that I cannot be identified within the reporting of the research.	

Name: ....

Position: ....

School: ....

Contact details: ....

....

Date: ....

Appendix 4: 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 Ethical Review of Research Self Assessment Form 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 <u>first registered as from 1st September 2008</u> 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:
>
>> o staff of the University of Birmingham; or
>>
>> o a research postgraduate student 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 postgraduates should refer to their Department/School for advice.

NOTES:

> ➢ Answers to questions must be entered in the space provided – the beginning of an answer field will be indicated by a grey bar (　　).
> ➢ Use the up and down arrow keys to move between answer fields; use the side scroll bar to navigate around the document.
> ➢ 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.

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM
APPLICATION FOR ETHICAL REVIEW

1. TITLE OF PROJECT

The perceptions and views of staff in schools on their work with Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) children and young people

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	Dr. Jane Leadbetter
Highest qualification & position	Academic and Professional Tutor in Educational
School/Department	School of Education
Telephone:	
Email address:	

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:	Laura Thomson	Student	
Course of study:	Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology	Email	
Principal	Sue Morris		

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

4. ESTIMATED START OF   Date: September 2012   PROJECT

ESTIMATED END OF   Date: June 2013   PROJECT

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

Funding Body	Approved/Pending /To be submitted
None	

If applicable, please identify date within which the funding body requires acceptance of award:

Date: N/A

If the funding body requires ethical review of the research proposal at application for funding please provide date of deadline for funding application:

Date: N/A

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.

The Educational Psychology Service in which, as a trainee educational psychologist, I am currently on placement has a high number of Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) pupils within the local authority it serves. Within the Early Intervention and Targeted Support plan, which the Educational Psychology Service has a role in delivering, there are two targets which make reference to GRT pupils:

1.   To develop joint working with GRT team to ensure support interventions are improving attendance
2.   To reduce gaps in attainment between GRT and non-GRT pupils.

Having met with the manager of the Children's Service GRT Education Team, it was felt that the team had a good understanding of the GRT community's perceptions of schooling and education but that they lacked insight into how teaching staff perceived their work with this group.   Anecdotal reports suggest that GRT children sometimes feel they are not liked or trusted by adults from the non-GRT community and teachers are included within this.

Nationally, when gender, free school meals, deprivation and special educational needs are controlled for, GRT young people still make considerably less progress than their peers (Wilkin et al, 2010). Research exploring this suggests that attendance (Wilkin et al, 2010), social exclusion (Derrington and Kendall, 2007) and low teacher expectations (Derrington and Kendall, 2007) play a role within this.

Within the local education authority where I am on placement, a need to examine teaching staff's perceptions of working with GRT pupils has been identified locally and this is supported by the limited body of literature in this area.

Myers and Bhopal (2009) report that GRT pupils feel that the positive attitude of some staff who have an understanding of their culture helps them to feel safe in school. A few researchers have set out to uncover teachers' attitudes to GRT pupils; some have had this as their sole purpose (Bhopal, 2011[a]; Cudworth, 2005) whilst other   have considered this as a part of multi-perspective studies (Derrington, 2005; Myers and Bhopal, 2009; Derrington and Kendall, 2007).

From my literature review this far, I have found two papers (Bhopal, 2011 and Cudworth, 2005) devoted to uncovering teacher's views of their work with GRT children and young people.   For this reason I have decided to carry out exploratory work to consider the views and perceptions teaching staff have of their work with this group.

I hope to answer the following research questions:

1.   How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to the GRT culture and lifestyle?
2.   How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?
3.   How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to attainment?
4.   How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to wider school and local authority systems?
5.   What support do school staff access to enable them to work with this group and what value do they place on this support?

7.   CONDUCT OF PROJECT

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

In order to investigate my research questions I want to employ semi-structured interviews. Teaching staff will be invited to participate in these individual interviews to gather their views and perspectives on their work with children from a GRT background.

The term GRT will be taken to as an umbrella term to include all gypsy and traveller groups as well as Roma (Wilkin et al 2010).

A pilot interview will be conducted to trial the interview schedule; in addition; the interview schedule may evolve based on previous participants' responses (snowball schedule). A copy of the initial interview schedule which will be piloted is included (see Appendix 1) Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed.

Data will be analysed using thematic analysis.

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

✓ Yes

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.

Participants will be school staff with more than one year's experience of having some level of professional contact with, or responsibility for, children and young people from a GRT background. Age of expected participants is likely to vary from between 23-60 years. Depending on response rate, approximately 15 staff will be selected for individual interviews. If there are more than 15 volunteers for interviews, purposive sampling will be used, in order to ensure a number of variables are represented within the sample to include role within the school (class teacher, subject teacher, head teacher, special educational needs co-ordinators, teaching assistant, head of year) and size and type of school (specialist/mainstream; secondary/primary).

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.

Letters inviting participation will be sent to head teachers of schools in the county that have five or more GRT children attending (30 schools in total). See Appendix 2 for a copy of the letter to be sent to head teachers. Once head teachers have consented, I will write to staff at the school seeking their consent. I am asking for volunteers for the research to ensure that consent is voluntary and that participants are not placed under duress at any point.

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.

In accordance with British Educational Research Association (BERA) guidelines (2011) I will ensure participants understand and agree to their participation without any duress, prior to the research getting underway.

The consent letter and information sheet (Appendix 3) together explain why the research is being carried out, why their participation is being requested, the interview process, how data will be used and how and to whom it will be reported. Headings within the information sheet are based on the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics (2010). The contact details of the researcher and supervisor will be included on the letter so that we can be contacted for further details.

The process will be transparent; there will be no deception or subterfuge.

I will obtain signed and dated consent forms from each participant. This consent form will ask participants if they understand issues such as confidentiality, data storage and protection, how the results will be presented and their right to withdraw. Participants will be asked to tick boxes to say that they understand these areas before signing the form.

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?   **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.

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).

A public domain briefing will be written and copies will be sent to schools which take part in the research. An information/summary sheet will also be sent to all participants (as recommended within BERA guidelines). This feedback will give a general summary of findings; it will not detail findings from particular schools or staff members.

13. PARTICIPANT WITHDRAWAL

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

It is important that staff do not feel coerced into participation. I will include in the letter and information sheet (Appendix 3) details of their right to withdraw from the project at any time, and will also remind them of this orally at the start of individual interviews. Wishes to withdraw will be accepted without question; participants will not be requested to re-engage.

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.

Should participants withdraw from the study their data (recording and transcript) will be destroyed. Participants will be assigned a code number. So if a participant wants to withdraw, they can ask for their coded data set to be discarded (unless they wish otherwise). This will only be possible up to the point of analysis.

14. COMPENSATION

Will participants receive compensation for participation?

i) Financial   **No**

ii) Non-financial   **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?   **No**

b)   Will all data be treated as confidential?   **Yes**

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 and anonymity is guaranteed with regard to the storage and presentation of data.

Information will be kept confidential. Participants will be assigned an ID code. Once recorded interviews have been transcribed they will be kept on a secure University system for 10 years.

During analysis, some data may be kept on an encrypted memory stick, to facilitate transfer of data between secure systems. There will be confidentiality in how results will be reported in research findings. When data are reported they will be anonymised. Participants will understand that their views will not be attributed to them but presented collectively in the research paper.

There is a very small chance that confidentiality would need to be over-ridden if abusive practices were discussed – in the unlikely event that this happens the local authorities safeguarding procedures would be adhered to and necessary actions would be taken through the local authority's response.

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.

Participants will be informed through the information sheet that data will be anonymous other than to me, as researcher.

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.

Hard copies (I.e. transcripts of the data) will need to be printed to assist in the data analysis.   These copies will be anonymous, clearly labelled with the participant's code and kept in a locked drawer when not in use.

Electronic copies of these transcripts will remain confidential. Again they will be assigned a participant code, accessed only on secure systems and saved for transfer on an encrypted memory stick.

In line with ESRC (2005) guidelines consideration has been given to what will happen to the data beyond the end of the project: data will be kept for ten years from the date of the first publication of results; after this period the data will be destroyed in accordance with the University of Birmingham's procedures.

17. OTHER APPROVALS REQUIRED? e.g. Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks

NOT APPLICABLE

If yes, please specify.

N/A

18. SIGNIFICANCE/BENEFITS
Outline the potential significance and/or benefits of the research

The research should indirectly have a beneficial impact on GRT children and young people within the area since staff will be reflecting on their specific needs and good practice. The publication of these findings will allow for good practice to be shared.

In addition to this the Traveller Education Service (an agency that supports GRT children in school) will be given a better understanding of the views and perspectives of colleagues they are working alongside.

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

Risk to participants

There are very few risks to participants. To limit the risk of causing stress participation is voluntary and I will endeavour to arrange interviews at a time and place which is convenient to the participant. Risks to reputation and status of participants and the schools in which they work will be managed through adhering to confidentiality as outlined above.

Risk to researcher

Interviews will be carried out within schools. For this reason, there will be no risk to the researcher beyond those that are normally associated with the work of an educational psychologist.

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.

N/A

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

No

If yes, please specify

20. 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	X	
Participant information sheet	X	
Consent form	X	
Questionnaire		X
Interview Schedule	X	

21. 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 Conduct for Research (http://www.ppd.bham.ac.uk/policy/cop/code8.htm) 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:

Date:

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THE PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHING STAFF ABOUT THEIR WORK WITH

GYPSY, ROMA, TRAVELLER CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

(A public domain briefing)

Context

This research has been completed in accordance with the requirements of the three year full-time postgraduate professional training programme in Applied Educational and Child Psychology at the University of Birmingham. The study was completed with the support and agreement of XXXX County Council Educational Psychology Service where I was on placement as a Trainee Educational Psychologist during the final two years of my training.

Introduction

Throughout this research project the abbreviation GRT was used to refer to people from Gypsy, Roma, or Traveller heritage. A number of different groups are encompassed within the term GRT: Gypsies; Roma; Irish Travellers ; Welsh Gypsies and Travellers ; Scottish Travellers; Showmen; Circus; Bargees (DCSF, 2010).

Official figures from the 2011 census suggest that 0.2% of XXXX's residents ascribe to the ethnic groups of Gypsy or Irish Traveller. However, there are likely to be more people from GRT groups residing in XXXX than this statistic suggests since many GRT families do not complete census paperwork or choose not to ascribe to GRT categories (Foster and Cemlyn, 2012). When this research project commenced, over 400 children and young people aged between 4 and 16 from GRT groups were known to be attending schools across XXXX County.

Nationally, GRT children and young people are recognised as a group of vulnerable learners. Their attainment at key stages 2 and 4 is below national expectations; they are more likely than non-GRT children to be identified as having special educational needs (SEN); and they are at higher risk of exclusion than their non-GRT peers (DCSF, 2009).

In comparison to other vulnerable groups (looked after children or other minority ethnic groups, for example) little research considers the educational outcomes of GRT children and

young people. This research project adds to a limited body of previous research and evidence about the views of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people.

Previous Research

Myers and Bhopal (2009) report that GRT pupils feel that the positive attitude of some staff who have an understanding of their culture helps them to feel safe in school. Despite this very few researchers have set out to uncover the perceptions of teaching staff who work with GRT pupils; only one journal article has this as its sole purpose (Bhopal, 2011). Others have considered the perceptions of teachers as a part of multi-perspective studies (Lloyd et al, 1999, Cudworth, 2008). The paucity of research in the area along with a locally identified need led to me choosing the perceptions of teaching staff as an area of focus for this research project.

Research Aim

The aim of this research project was to explore the perceptions of teaching staff about their work with GRT children and young people. Five research questions were developed in light of existing literature and research.

Research Questions

1. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to the GRT culture and lifestyle?

2. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?

3. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to attainment?

4. How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to wider school and local authority systems?

5. What support do school staff access to enable them to work with this group and what value do they place on this support?

Methodology

I was interested in exploring how teaching staff perceived their work with GRT children and young people and adopted a critical realist approach: my data collection and data analysis methods explore participants' interpretations of reality, in exploring these I endeavoured to remain objective but accept that the data gathered and my interpretation of it is inevitably partial and limited.

Research Sample

Thirteen members of teaching staff agreed to take part in the research from five schools (a first school, three primary schools, and a middle school). Participants job roles varied and some held more than one role. The sample included teaching assistants, classroom teachers, a nurture teacher, Special Educational Needs co-ordinators (SENCo) and an assistant head.

Data Collection

All participants took part in a semi-structured interview, whereby the questions were determined in advance but as the interviewer, I was free to change the wording or order of questions and add or remove questions if I deemed it to be appropriate as the interview progressed.

Ethical Considerations

This research was given full ethical approval from the University of Birmingham's Ethics Committee. Particular attention was given to gaining valid consent and ensuring confidentiality.

Method of Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data once it had been transcribed. Specifically, I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) model of thematic analysis. This allowed me to provide a rich description of the data gathered during interviews, rather than provide a detailed account of one theme or area.

Key Findings

<u>How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to the GRT culture and lifestyle?</u>

The findings suggest that participants believed that the GRT culture and lifestyle impacted significantly on the education of GRT children and young people. Participants talked more about cultural factors which they perceived to be barriers to the education of GRT children, than they did about school based factors which impacted upon the education of GRT children. In discussing barriers to the education of GRT children, participants highlighted many factors related to the GRT culture and lifestyle. Participants referred to the values and aspirations held by GRT communities impacting on the attitude of GRT children towards their learning. In addition participants highlighted the low literacy levels of GRT parents, the punctuality of GRT children, and the time they spend away from school travelling as factors which impact on the achievements of children from GRT groups within school. Overall, participants saw the relationship between GRT children and school in relation to their culture and lifestyle as being problematic.   Some participants were, however, actively seeking to develop their own knowledge and that of non-GRT pupils about the GRT culture, lifestyle and values. Many participants were aware of the dissonance between non-GRT and GRT cultures but few reflected on how that would impact on the emotional wellbeing of GRT children attending their schools.

<u>How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to social inclusion?</u>

Interestingly, in response to the question relating to social inclusion, all participants stated that GRT children were fully socially included. However, most participants went on to contradict this claim, for example by making reference to barriers between GRT and non-GRT children, or reference to the parents of non-GRT children urging their children not to play with GRT children. Moreover, participants reflected on the fact that GRT children reported bullying or racism but comments made by participants suggested that this was either disbelieved, minimised or rationalised as being a response to their behaviour.

How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to attainment?

Participants highlighted the low attainment of GRT children and the high likelihood of them being identified as having SEN. As stated above, this was attributed by many participants to cultural factors such as the low literacy levels of GRT parents or the limited value perceived to be placed on education by GRT families. Participants perceived the behaviour of many of the GRT children they worked with as being problematic and some linked this to their ability to access and engage in the curriculum. However, some participants reflected on the strengths of GRT children such as their physical skill and strength.

Participants discussed steps taken to raise the attainment of GRT children such as the inclusion of children from these groups in Wave 2 and 3 interventions; utilising the individual support offered by members of the GRT team and by supplying GRT children with home education packs prior to them going travelling.

How do school staff perceive the relationship between GRT children and the school in relation to wider school and local authority systems?

Participants offered few reflections on the interplay between GRT children, education and wider school and local authority systems. Two participants reflected on decisions made around the deployment of support and resources. These participants worked in the same school and both stated that if decisions had to be made about who received individualised support the decision was likely to go in the favour of non-GRT children since they were more likely to have support consolidating the learning at home and a higher likelihood of remaining in education until school leaving age.

Four participants reflected on the impact of the curriculum on GRT children stating that the curriculum did not meet the needs of this group and that the pace of the curriculum often meant that GRT children were left with gaps in their learning.

Overall, responses during the interviews suggest that participants did not view wider school and local authority systems as having a salient impact on these groups of learners or at least they did not feel that they could talk about this.

Participants highlighted the support they receive from XXXX's GRT team. Participants viewed the GRT team as having three functions:

• a resourcing function: members of the GRT team provided schools with physical resources (such as a book about life on a site) and knowledge about the culture either on an individual basis through discussions about specific children or at training courses.

• working directly with GRT children: participants saw this as a positive thing and a core role of the GRT team. They reflected on GRT children enjoying this time and benefitting from it.

• advocacy for GRT families: participants discussed times when the GRT team had spoken with school staff on behalf of GRT parents or families when there had been difficulties.

Asides from the support of the GRT team, participants did not highlight other forms of support which they accessed to support them in their work with these groups. Participants did not make reference to good practice guidelines or government policies. Some teaching staff reflected on the fact that they had no knowledge of GRT children prior to starting work in XXXX and that they felt many of the inclusive practices they were employing had been 'chanced upon' since there was no clear direction in schools (of which they were aware) about how to meet the needs of children from these groups.

GRT Parents

Participants spoke about GRT parents at length and obviously viewed their relationships with them as an important factor impacting on the education of their children. It seems that many participants already enjoyed positive relationships with GRT parents or were making efforts to develop these. This contrasts with the views expressed by some participants that they were wary of GRT parents (at least initially) and that they see GRT parents as lacking parenting skills. This highlights the importance of raising awareness of GRT cultures with teaching staff.

<u>Inclusive Practice</u>

Participants said that their schools aimed to improve social inclusion by raising awareness of the GRT culture. Academic attainment was targeted through the use of interventions and through the GRT team working directly with children. Staff also talked about home – education packs but reflected that these were often not completed. Staff made efforts to raise their own awareness of the culture by attending training, visiting sites and by engaging young people in conversations about the culture. Many government policies have aimed to highlight good practice in raising the outcomes for GRT children and young people but participants did not reflect many of these strategies. At times during interviews, there was a sense that GRT children were treated as any other children would be, that they were 'just kids' (Cudworth, 2008).

Implications

The findings of this research suggest that school staff do not routinely access government publications and guidelines when considering how best to meet the needs of the GRT children and young people they work with. However, they value input and support from outside agencies such as the GRT team. School staff should be encouraged to reflect on how far their schools are inclusive of GRT pupils and provided with support to select strategies which may improve the inclusion of these pupils within their settings.

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If you would like to discuss this research further or have any queries, you can contact me (Laura Thomson) by telephone on XXXX or by email XXXX.

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Key publication

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Appendix 6: Extract from transcript

P5: And I'm not, don't get me wrong it's not that we haven't had teething problems with integrating Gypsy Roma Traveller children I mean last year it was very volatile between two we've got because they're cousins and we did have a volatile year with them but we've worked at it and worked at it and this year, I mean the last year it was at a point where we couldn't have them in the same room but this year I work with them and they can be with each other side by side on a computer and work together and be a team because last year they wanted to use their fists and sort things that way but this year they will actually converse now and okay you have your sparks still but that's the nature of children anyway but if you sit there with them and say why have you reacted like that and things like that they can answer you know it's not from nothing to an explosion, it's much more calm, much calmer now and as I say they will work together now which as I say is great progress when you think that six months ago, seven months ago you couldn't even put them in the same room and this year they said "We're in different classes Miss" and I said "Why's that?" and they said "Cos we fight Miss" and I thought well you can't be any more open than that and I said "But you don't fight anymore" and they said "No we don't Miss no" and it was lovely that they could see that actually we don't fight anymore and it was really good, they've come along way it's brilliant

LT: So it sounds as if, in terms of how their culture is impacting on their education there's some stuff around them not being able to access the lessons and then it sounds as if there might be something about their behaviour as well their behaviour in school, could you go into that a little bit more?

P5: Well I couldn't now because it's not an issue but back when they first came especially the one little boy because when he first came because he'd never done nursery before or playschool, he'd never done anything like that and it was a big culture shock I think what you've got to remember is that the GRT culture is a totally different culture to what our culture is you know especially if they're travelling GRT children because they're used to being on the move all the time but the behaviour now doesn't have the impact that it did then I mean the behaviour of the one boy at one point was quite bad and you couldn't get them to sit still you couldn't get them to have any interest in the lessons, it bored them so they'd walk out, the one little boy used to walk out of lessons all the time now this little one sat and did a writing assessment the other day and wrote over half a page which was just phenomenal 'cause you know as I say 6-12 months ago he'd have scrumpled the paper up and thrown it away. And you know, and literacy is the big one numeracy because it's logical they seem to be able to engage in numeracy because it is a logical thing but literacy you've got to write a story well what's a story define a story you know how do you explain to a child what a a story is but the one little boy I work with we've got a computer programme called rapid writing and it's very short sharp clear instructions and he can access that he enjoys that it's not just GRT children you give a child a blank piece of paper and say write a story and the barriers come down and they say" I can't do it" but no this little one I work with he's also on rapid reading and he's on one to one with the computer and he enjoys that it records their voices so they hear themselves as they actually speak so it's their voice their intonation everything and I do whiteboard work with him I do one to one handwriting work with him and you know he's taken it on board and he'll say "Oh I can't do it Miss can you show me again but you know it's having a positive impact on them self-esteem I would say is the big area

Travelling	Children reporting bullying/racism	Start school with low attainment
Home education packs	Teacher expectations	Changes over time
Homework	GRT team site visits	Contact with fathers
Parents literacy levels	GRT team direct work	My Big Fat Gypsy Wedding
Additional work in school	GRT team supporting families	Other children wary
Generalising	Visiting sites	Rough and tumble / fighting
Interventions	Needing education	GRT strengths
Deployment of support/resources	Parents socially isolated	Self esteem
Cultural resources	Parents not adhering to norms/rules	Socialise together
Behaviour related to attainment	Valuing education	No setting before reception
Other children's preconceptions from home	Protect each other	Playing to strengths
Parental views of education	Raising awareness	GRT team unique perspective
Attainment	Parenting skills	Gender differences
Guidelines/policy/legislation	Perceive selves to be persecuted	Relationships with parents
Cultural dissonance	Adaptations due to parents' low literacy	Ascription
High school	GRT team as barrier	GRT team training staff
Aspirations	Attendance	Behaviour
Parents intimidating	Punctuality	Systemic factors
Socially included	Safety / Trust	School recommended
Socially isolated	Extra-curricular activities	Moral code
Staff wary of parents	GRT parents experiences of education	

Appendix 8: Example of coding

Well I couldn't now because it's not an issue but back when they first came especially the one little boy because when he first came because he'd never done nursery before or playschool, he'd never done anything like that and it was a big culture shock I think what you've got to remember is that the GRT culture is a totally different culture to what our culture is you know especially if they're travelling GRT children because they're used to being on the move all the time **[NO SETTING BEFORE RECEPTION / CULTURAL DISSONANCE / TRAVELLING]** but the behaviour now doesn't have the impact that it did then I mean the behaviour of the one boy at one point was quite bad and you couldn't get them to sit still you couldn't get them to have any interest in the lessons, it bored them so they'd walk out, the one little boy used to walk out of lessons all the time now this little one sat and did a writing assessment the other day and wrote over half a page which was just phenomenal 'cause you know as I say 6-12 months ago he'd have scrumpled the paper up and thrown it away. **[BEHAVIOUR /CHANGE OVER TIME]** And you know, and literacy is the big one numeracy because it's logical they seem to be able to engage in numeracy because it is a logical thing but literacy you've got to write a story well what's a story define a story you know how do you explain to a child what a a story is but the one little boy I work with we've got a computer programme called rapid writing and it's very short sharp clear instructions and he can access that he enjoys **[INTERVENTION]** that it's not just GRT children you give a child a blank piece of paper and say write a story and the barriers come down and they say" I can't do it" but no this little one I work with he's also on rapid reading and he's on one to one with the computer and he enjoys that it records their voices so they hear themselves as they actually speak so it's their voice their intonation everything and I do whiteboard work with him I do one to one handwriting work with him and you know he's taken it on board and he'll say "Oh I can't do it Miss can you show me again but you know it's having a positive impact on them self-esteem I would say is the big area **[SELF ESTEEM]**

Appendix 9: <u>Collated extracts for the code 'children reporting bullying / racism'</u>

Participant and School	Extracts
1 (School A)	None
2 (School A)	I have had one or two bits we had a bit when Megan bless her she didn't know how to describe herself so she was kind of saying she went through a spate of reacting really badly if anybody called her a traveller and she would say that she was being bullied she would say that people were being racist to her but then a fortnight later she was saying that she wanted to be called a traveller you know she didn't want to be called anything else she wanted to be called a traveller so the goalposts moved a little bit. I think some kids as kids do if they are black or anything if they are having a row they will latch on to something and say something that we would know is inappropriate and we would have done as a racist sort of thing but when you go into it with children you go into it and it is just something that they have said in the heat of the moment and they have used it just as a weapon really and they have used it just to say something.

I haven't had any of that with the boys and there was only this little patch with Megan but I do suspect with Megan she encounters more of it but just doesn't maybe let on quite so much because she has got quite a few there is a little dynamic in her class that doesn't work very well and there is a little trio of friends and they are forever in and out and I do suspect that it is used then as some stick to quote about but she doesn't come forward about it anymore I think she is quite happy to let it ride really. |
| 3 (School A) | I think with that programme on the television that children have made comments and it hasn't really happened in year 4 it hasn't really happened lower school because I think year 6 she is very with like the parent the parents are there if anything is said or whatever so sometimes she is she has got this thing at the moment with another lad I don't know whether it is a love hate relationship and it seems as though they are just winding each other up and yet the next minute they are happy to be together and you know she has always got a smile on her face and I think if anything with our children they just sometimes don't think or they make a comment and before they know it they've said it and it's all just flared up and then it's done and dusted it is never left if something crops up you know they say something we deal with it we see something we deal with it is always we are always on the ball with that and as far as I am concerned I think the children are really quite settles in school and I think I think they are happy here in their own way |
| 4 (School A) | you have to be very careful the children can take offence to the girls will go around quite happily calling themselves Gypsies but as sons as somebody else calls them a gypsy then that's you can't you are calling them names you are being nasty so I said to them if you call yourself a gypsy people will use that term for you know it's so if you don't like it don't use it you know I think they know that they can get people into trouble by saying oh you know they are calling me Gypsies and it seems to be that you know I think the adults take that view as well that as long as you don't call them gypsies they can call themselves Gypsies but you can't and in school when you have children of 5 6 or 7 they find that quite hard because if you went round |

	calling yourself a name you know…so I had to have a couple of words about that really No no erm I would honestly say that we don't have bullying they seem to think that everybody is against them and they're the ones who are hard done by and everybody is out to get them but I would have to say really that they are wrong because we don't experience anybody who is spitefully calling them gypsies or being nasty to them or anything like that at all So as for bullying I'd say no they assume they are going to be bullied and picked on and you know this figure of somebody is going to thieve and rob off you and stuff but you know we haven't' the children are fine, it's the parents so…
5 (School A)	We yes they know they are different I think they do I don't think the children make that assumption themselves I think what they the only things we ever had is they said Luke is a Gypsy Liam is a Gypsy my mum says he's a Gypsy not traveller that word isn't very often used it is Gypsy but I don't think that has come from the child it has come from their parents. them I sometimes feel sorry for them because I think they sometimes get the blame for things not here but when they are out at the park or something they will say Luke said to me once "when I at park this lady she shout at me " did she "yeah she said I gyppo" and you think oh what a shame that was probably other parents but then you think he probably hit their child with a stick or something it is a shame they are really defensive but I think that is a barrier but it is a shame
6 (School B)	None
7 (School B)	None
8 (School C)	None
9 (School C)	None
10 (School C)	None
11 (School D)	no not at all I don't think that that's an issue here at all in the two years I have been here the one that is often used is gyppo isn't it I've heard that once and it was completely out of context It wasn't really erm used erm because they understood it
12 (School D)	None
13 (School E)	they will probably say that there's racial bullying sometimes it depends on which family you're looking at as well they might get called names. You know you live in a caravan and all the rest of it or you live in a so and so erm it doesn't happen with all of them some of them it does but then they can be very not nice back or not nice first I mean there's been incidences of thumping other people they'll stick up for each other it's very much err they'll sort of glue together a bit and look after each other but I mean yeah it's everywhere isn't it people call them names and travellers gypsies some of the words they don't mind but then they call us 'gaujas' and quite openly yeah it [name calling] goes on it would be a lie to say it doesn't yeah it does go on but it's not a huge problem but yeah it does go on

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