

**AN EXPLORATION OF THE IMPACT OF CONSULTATION  
ON EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY SERVICE USERS, NAMELY TEACHERS,  
PARENTS AND PUPILS IN A LARGE RURAL LOCAL AUTHORITY**

**by**

**Andrea Henderson**

A Thesis submitted to  
The University of Birmingham  
in part fulfilment for the degree of  
Doctor of Educational Psychology

School of Education  
The University of Birmingham  
September 2013

UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

**University of Birmingham Research Archive**

**e-theses repository**

This unpublished thesis/dissertation is copyright of the author and/or third parties. The intellectual property rights of the author or third parties in respect of this work are as defined by The Copyright Designs and Patents Act 1988 or as modified by any successor legislation.

Any use made of information contained in this thesis/dissertation must be in accordance with that legislation and must be properly acknowledged. Further distribution or reproduction in any format is prohibited without the permission of the copyright holder.

## **ABSTRACT**

Research and recent policy developments in the education of children with special educational needs highlight the need for both greater involvement of parents and pupils in determining how pupil needs are met, and increased accountability of educational psychology services, particularly in demonstrating the impact interventions have on clients, namely children and young people.

The research aimed to explore the impact of consultation in relation to four areas, namely teachers' perceptions of their ability to make a difference with regard to progress of the pupils about whom they are concerned; parental perceptions of whether consultation had made a difference to their child's subsequent progress; pupil perceptions of whether/how actions undertaken following EPs' consultation with school staff and/or their parents had made a difference to their progress; and what educational psychologists considered to be the key factors enabling consultation to contribute to pupil progress.

The educational psychologists used consultation in school with teachers, using Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME) in order to set targets and monitor progress. Semi-structured interviews were carried out in order to ascertain perceptions regarding the consultation process.

Findings suggest that although consultation is perceived as a helpful approach by EPs and those to whom they offered consultation, review and further development of the Service approach to consultation is needed to ensure the greater involvement of parents and pupils in determining and monitoring targets set.

## **DEDICATION**

This research is dedicated to my parents, John and Glynis; for everything.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to express my thanks to my supervisor, Sue Morris, for her on-going support over a longer period of time than either of us anticipated. Sue, your advice, guidance and faith in me have enabled me to reach my goal of completing this research.

To the three educational psychologists whose support with this research was invaluable; I could not have completed this journey without you. With particular thanks to EP1 for guidance on formatting the document, loaning of reference materials and guidance on thematic analysis. I am more grateful than you will ever know.

To the teachers, parents and pupils who took part in the research, I acknowledge that without your participation this research would not have been possible.

To my friends, especially Lorna and Amanda, who knew when not to ask how the work was progressing, as well as providing emotional support and a welcome distraction when needed.

To my parents, for looking after my home and garden enabling me to focus on my studies; especially to my mother Glynis for hours of transcribing the interviews.

Finally to Colin, your love, faith and belief that I could achieve this meant everything to me.

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

### **LIST OF FIGURES**

### **LIST OF TABLES**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Consultation and social constructionism	2
1.3 National Influences on educational psychology service delivery	3
1.4 Broad aims of the current study	4
<b>CHAPTER TWO: CONSULTATION</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 What is consultation?	5
2.2. Models of consultation	6
2.3 American research on consultation	9
2.4 British research on consultation	15
2.5 Critique of studies on consultation which informed the current research	20
<b>CHAPTER THREE: THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT FOR THE CURRENT RESEARCH</b>	<b>44</b>
3.1 National context	44
3.1.1 Political agenda	44
3.1.2 Financial constraints	46

3.1.3 Traded services	47
3.1.4 Accountability	49
3.2 Local context	52
3.2.1 Background to adoption of consultation as a model of service delivery	52
3.2.2 Information from Primary SENCo Networks regarding ‘what is consultation?’	55
3.2.2.1 Aims	55
3.2.2.2 Method	55
3.2.2.3 Results	57
3.3 Pupil and parental involvement	60
3.3.1 Importance of gathering children’s views	60
3.3.2 Importance of parental involvement	64
3.3.3 Impact of recent legislation on pupil and parental involvement	65
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>68</b>
4.1 Research Aims	68
4.2 Epistemological Stance	71
4.3 Evaluation Methodologies	77
4.4 Evaluating the Consultation Process	80
4.4.1 Case study design	80
4.4.2 Semi-structured interviews	82
4.4.3 Thematic analysis	84
4.5 Evaluation Outcomes	88
4.5.1 Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS)	88
4.5.2 Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)	92



4.6 Ethical considerations	95
4.7 Study Design	99
4.7.1 Context	99
4.7.2 Overview of the planned design	100
4.7.3 Participants	100
4.7.4 Procedure	106
4.7.5 Analysis	107
4.7.6 Reliability of the thematic analysis	109
 <b>CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS</b>	 <b>112</b>
5.1 Introduction	112
5.2 Global Theme One: Understanding what Consultation is	114
5.3 Global Theme Two: Directive versus Non-Directive	120
5.4 Global Theme Three: Relationships	124
5.5 Global Theme Four: Shifting the Perceptions of Others	128
5.6 Global Theme Five: Making a Difference	135
5.7 Pupil Feedback	139
5.8 Evaluation of Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)	143
 <b>CHAPTER SIX: IMPLICATIONS</b>	 <b>155</b>
6.1 The research questions	155
6.2 How the research builds on previous studies	155
6.2.1 Relationship between consultant and consultee	155
6.2.2 The directive versus non-directive debate	157

6.2.3 A shared understanding of the process	158
6.2.4 The need for greater accountability	160
6.3 Contribution to knowledge and theory development	161
6.3.1 Research practitioner	161
6.3.2 Parental perceptions	163
6.3.3 Pupil perceptions	164
6.4 Critical analysis of the research	167
6.4.1 What are the benefits of this study?	167
6.4.2 What are the limitations?	168
6.5 Concluding comments	171
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>192</b>
Appendix 1: The Consultation Record	193
Appendix 2: The Consultation Leaflet	198
Appendix 3: The Card Sorting and Tally Sheet Activity Results: SENCo Networks	200
Appendix 4: The Consultation Record adapted to include TME	205
Appendix 5: Ethics Form	210
Appendix 6: Briefing Note to Educational Psychologists	239
Appendix 7: Consent Form for Educational Psychologists	244
Appendix 8: Briefing Note to Teacher Consultees	245
Appendix 9: Consent Form for Teacher Consultees	247
Appendix 10: Briefing Note to Parents	248
Appendix 11: Consent Form for Parents	251

Appendix 12: Pupil Briefing Sheet	<b>253</b>
Appendix 13: Consent Form for Pupils	<b>255</b>
Appendix 14: Semi-structured Interview Questions for Teachers	<b>256</b>
Appendix 15: Semi-structured Interview Questions for Parents	<b>257</b>
Appendix 16: Semi-structured Interview Questions for Pupils	<b>258</b>
Appendix 17: Semi-structured Interview Questions for EPs	<b>260</b>
Appendix 18: Thematic Analysis of Interview between Researcher and EP1	<b>262</b>
Appendix 19: Interview with EP1 and T1	<b>290</b>
Appendix 20: Interview with EP1 and P1	<b>294</b>
Appendix 21: Interview with EP1 and James	<b>298</b>
Appendix 22: Completed Consultation Record Showing TME	<b>300</b>
Appendix 23: Thematic Analysis: from Coding to Global Themes	<b>305</b>
Appendix 24: Thematic Analysis of TME: from Coding to Global Theme	<b>319</b>

## **LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS**

	<b>Page</b>
 <b>CHAPTER TWO</b>	
Figure 2.1: The Direct and Indirect Model of Service Delivery (Conoley and Conoley, 1990, p 85)	<b>6</b>
Figure 2.2: Two Types of Consultant Knowledge Bases (West and Idol 1987, in Miller, 1996, p 115)	<b>8</b>
Figure 2.3: Disentangling the collaboration and directiveness dimensions of school-based consultation (Gutkin, 1999a, pp 180-181).	<b>12</b>
Figure 2.4: Disentangling the collaborative and directiveness dimensions of school-based consultation: An expanded model (Gutkin, 1999b, p 237).	<b>14</b>
 <b>CHAPTER FOUR</b>	
Figure 4.1: The Consultation Triad and Challenges for Efficacy Research (Kennedy et al, 2009, p 607)	<b>69</b>
Figure 4.2: Planned multiple case study design	<b>70</b>
Figure 4.3: Actual multiple case study design	<b>71</b>
Figure 4.4: The Narrative Metaphor Figure 1, (Macready, 1997, p 130)	<b>76</b>
Figure 4.5: The Narrative Metaphor Figure 2, (Macready, 1997, p 131)	<b>76</b>
Figure 4.6: The intervention as the product of its context (Pawson, 2006, p 32)	<b>79</b>
Figure 4.7: Steps in analyses employing thematic networks (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p 391)	<b>88</b>
Figure 4.8: The service business model (from Checkland and Scholes, 1993) in Baxter and Frederickson (2005, p 96) with my additions in brackets.	<b>90</b>
 <b>CHAPTER FIVE</b>	
Figure 5.1: Thematic Network One: Understanding what consultation is	<b>114</b>
Figure 5.2: Thematic Network Two: Directive versus non-directive	<b>120</b>

Figure 5.3: Thematic Network Three: Relationships	<b>124</b>
Figure 5.4: Thematic Network Four: Shifting the perceptions of others	<b>128</b>
Figure 5.5: Thematic Network Five: Making a difference	<b>135</b>
Figure 5.6: Thematic Network Six: Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)	<b>150</b>

## **LIST OF TABLES**

	<b>Page</b>
<b>CHAPTER TWO</b>	
Table 2.1: Overview of consultation model parameters (Conoley and Conoley, 1990)	<b>6</b>
Table 2.2: Stages of the Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a)	<b>28</b>
Table 2.3: The potential value/contribution of consultation to changes within Kirklees (Dennis, 2004)	<b>38</b>
<b>CHAPTER THREE</b>	
Table 3.1: Summary of consultation work completed with the EPS and other agencies since 2005	<b>53</b>
Table 3.2: Results from SENCo Network tally chart activity	<b>57</b>
Table 3.3: Collated responses from SENCo Network card sorting activity	<b>59</b>
<b>CHAPTER FOUR</b>	
Table 4.1: Composition of the Service	<b>99</b>
Table 4.2: Overview of the five cases: part one	<b>104</b>
Table 4.3: Overview of the five cases: part two	<b>105</b>
<b>CHAPTER FIVE</b>	
Table 5.1: Pupil feedback	<b>141</b>
Table 5.2: TME results for James	<b>145</b>
Table 5.3: TME results for Leon	<b>145</b>
Table 5.4: TME results for Luke	<b>146</b>
Table 5.5: TME results for John	<b>147</b>
Table 5.6: TME results for Craig	<b>147</b>
Table 5.7: TME scaling question responses from EPs	<b>148</b>

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background**

I have worked as an Educational Psychologist for 13 years in two different local authorities. In the first local authority, consultation was a model of service delivery that was used by the majority of educational psychologists, although work was still in progress to try further to embed the consistency with which a consultation-based approach was used by the EPs in this service. The local authority to which I moved had operated a very traditional model of service delivery and although a number of training days had focussed on consultation, it had not been implemented as a model of service delivery. Part of the reason for my appointment to the service was to support the service in its transition to adopting a consultation model of service delivery.

My approach as an applied educational psychologist has always been one of working alongside professionals, parents and families, doing work ‘with’ others rather than ‘to’ them. My approach to changing the model of service delivery in my current local authority was to ensure that I led and managed the changes in order that the EPs felt skilled and empowered to implement the changes themselves. As a reflective researcher-practitioner I have promoted a model which emphasises the power of reflection in promoting personal professional development and as an important component of organisational learning and development (Schön, 1983). EPs were encouraged to reflect on the consultation model whilst applying it. I promoted the use of consultation as a ‘first point of contact’ with schools, enabling EPs to implement the model of consultation, whilst also being able to practise more traditional ways of working as part of the approach, thus using observation and individual assessment to

inform consultation, rather than conflicting with it. This is discussed in more detail in Section 3.2.

After eight years, although the model is now well embedded in practice, training addresses the on-going need to revisit the consultation model and improve it for both EPs and service users. The area which is less well developed is that of evaluation of the model. We have encouraged EPs to ask questions pertaining to the evaluation of consultation as a process, but we have not addressed the question of whether consultation makes a difference to service users: predominantly teachers, parents and/or pupils.

## 1.2 Consultation and social constructionism

Consultation can be described as “a conversation which aims to bring about some change in the completion of the task” (Macready, 1997, p 130), during which “meaning is built up” and the “conversation becomes a context for the meaning” (p 132). Thus the consultant (in this case the EP) is involved in the construction of meaning, alongside the consultee (in this case, normally a teacher).

The model of social constructionism assumes that the “inescapable mutual interchange of understanding” is what enables the opening of “further avenues for change” (Moore, 2005, p 110). Therefore the relationship between the consultant and consultee is crucial, and the consultant cannot be disentangled from the consultation process as they are crucial to the co-construction of the meaning which develops during the consultation.



It is important therefore that the consultant (EP) who is engaged in the consultation is also the one who reflects on the situation with the consultee (teacher), as opposed to an unfamiliar EP, as the shared understanding they have developed needs to be reflected on together in order to appreciate what has been successful or unsuccessful with regard to the consultation process.

### 1.3 National influences on educational psychology service delivery

The Children and Families Bill (DfE, 2012) will potentially bring about significant changes to all services working with children with special educational needs, and although the legislation is yet to be finalised, pathfinder implementation initiatives in local authorities are enabling services to envisage how some of the proposed changes may be implemented. Alongside this, proposed changes to the Code of Practice (DfE, 2013a) will determine the role of educational psychologists in the revised statutory assessment process.

These proposed changes are due to be implemented in a financial climate which brings further uncertainty to many educational psychology services, many of which, (in most cases, in order to compensate for reductions in their central funding from local authorities, following the radical reductions in Government funding to Local Authorities, initiated by the 2010 Standard Spending Assessment), have already started to put aspects of their services out to tender in order to generate income to allow current staffing levels and contingent service capacity to be maintained.

#### 1.4 Broad aims of the current study

The current study aimed to explore the consultation model of service delivery, building upon numerous studies already carried out. However, the focus of previous research on the consultation process has predominantly fallen on the perceptions of the class teacher as the consultee and/or client, and to a lesser extent parents.

My research explores consultation from the perspectives of EPs (consultants), teachers (consultees) and parents and/or pupils (clients), using a method, Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME), which aims to demonstrate whether consultation makes a difference to pupil progress.

The current research study focuses on the following areas:

- the impact of consultation on teachers' perceptions of their ability to make a difference (positive) with regard to children's progress in learning or behaviour;
- the impact of consultation on parents' perceptions of their child's subsequent progress;\*
- the impact of the consultation process on pupils' perceptions of their progress;\* and
- the perceptions and beliefs of EPs about the skills and other conditions needed to enable the consultation process to be effective in facilitating change for children.

\*Footnote: The focus is on the impact of consultation on children and young people, where data comprise subjective measures cf. 'hard' outcome measures.

## **CHAPTER TWO: CONSULTATION**

### **2.1 What is consultation?**

Numerous authors have written about consultation, defining what consultation is and exploring its application.

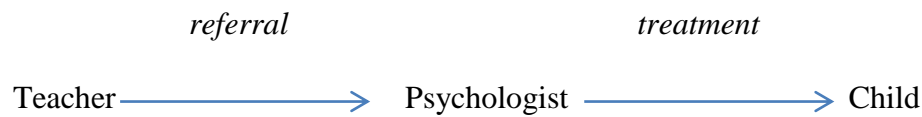
Conoley and Conoley (1990) describe consultation as a “problem solving relationship between professionals of differing fields” (p 84). They note the purpose of consultation is to “enhance the problem solving capacity of a consultee” (p 85), although they are keen to specify this is not about giving advice; it is about “empowerment” (p 85) of the consultee. This is achieved by providing “new knowledge, new skills, a greater sense of self-efficacy and a more perfectly developed level of objectivity in consultees” (p.85).

They note that consultation is an indirect model of service delivery in that educational psychologists (consultants) work with teachers and parents (consultees) in order to develop strategies for children and young people (clients), which will be carried out by the consultee. They note the difference between this way of working and a more direct model of service delivery, as illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

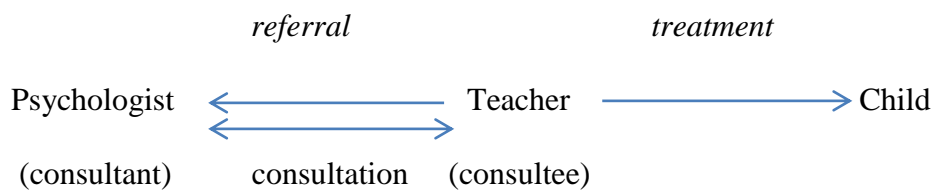
Figure 2.1:

The Direct and Indirect Model of Service Delivery (Conoley and Conoley, 1990, p 85)

#### Direct Service Model



#### Indirect Service Model



## 2.2 Models of consultation

Conoley and Conoley (1990) outline three theoretical perspectives in relation to consultation in a helpful table, replicated below.

Table 2.1: Overview of consultation model parameters (Conoley and Conoley, 1990, p 87)

Model	Entry	Strategies	Targets	Evaluation
<b>Mental health</b>	Difficult, ambiguous to administrators	Theme interference, build skills, knowledge, increase self-esteem	Primarily consultees	Consultee satisfaction
<b>Behavioural</b>	Clear process and goals, difficult in some organisations	Entire range of social learning theory techniques	Primary clients	Client change
<b>Process</b>	Increasingly easy due to recent developments in schools	Data collection, feedback, simulation, process analysis, administrator coaching	Interactions among consultees	Climate, morale, productivity

Conoley and Conoley (1990) also list a number of additional consultation approaches which they describe as “refinements” to the “consultation relationship and application of consultation”, namely collaborative consultation, instructional consultation, and problem solving approaches (p 87).

Mental health consultation was developed by Caplan (1970) and is based largely in the field of mental health rather than educational settings. Caplan believed that difficulties arose for practitioners/service users from a lack of “skills, knowledge, self-esteem or professional objectivity” (Miller, 1996, p 113). ‘Theme interference’ was the term Caplan used to describe consultees linking thoughts about particular cases which impacted on their behaviour. Hence the strategy of ‘theme reduction’ aimed to support consultees in breaking free from these invasive thoughts, through discussion and problem solving.

Behavioural consultation uses approaches such as behaviour modification and is popular with psychologists working in America. It is another problem solving framework, but it is “based on social learning theory,” therefore placing more emphasis on overt behaviours than on unconscious processes (Conoley and Conoley, 1990, p 91).

Process consultation, associated with the work of Schein (1988) has been used in business and more recently in school psychology. It involves assessing the links between processes and events in the environment and how these impact on work. The focus is upon “the relationship formed between the consultant and consultee” and ensuring that changes occur in relation to (the consultee’s) “behaviour, attitudes, feelings and views” (Leadbetter, 2002, p 135). The theory behind process consultation stems from organisational psychology and social

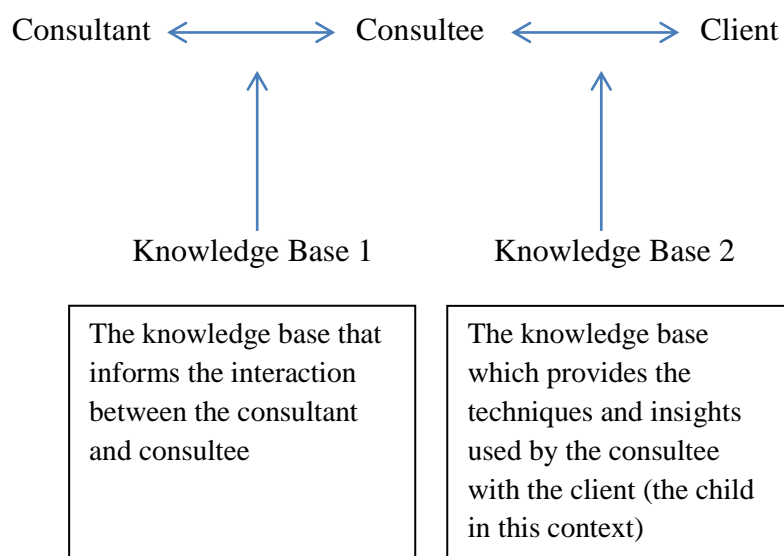
psychology, affording a relevant, and therefore popular model for EPs working in schools.

The model focusses on supporting teachers' skills in relation to the concerns they articulate in relation to children's developmental progress and/or learning, focussing on supporting teachers in conceptualising these difficulties in dynamic interactionist terms, and identifying steps they may be able to take in order to facilitate pupil progress, rather than seeking static within-child explanations.

Process consultation is an indirect form of service delivery. West and Idol (1987) have attempted to separate the knowledge that informs "the interaction between the consultant and the consultee" (Knowledge Base 1) from the knowledge base concerned with "the techniques and insights used by the consultee with the client" (Knowledge Base 2). This is shown in Figure 2.2 below.

Figure 2.2:

Two Types of Consultant Knowledge Bases (West and Idol 1987, in Miller, 1996, p 115)



Leadbetter (2002) notes this distinction can be helpful when differentiating between consultants who may be being more directive, by offering advice (Knowledge Base 2) as opposed to those using a more collaborative approach (Knowledge Base 1).

### 2.3 American research on consultation

There has been an on-going debate between two researchers in America regarding the role of the consultant and the nature of the relationship between the consultant and consultee. The issue of collaboration has been central to this debate, and due to the importance of this concept in relation to my research, some of the key arguments are explored in more detail.

In 1980 Gutkin et al. analysed teacher perceptions of consultation, finding that teachers preferred consultation to more traditional approaches, certainly for supporting students with less severe needs. Teachers who had taken part in a consultation approach perceived concerns as less severe than those in a control group who had not been part of a consultation approach.

Gutkin and Conoley (1990) suggest that the “process” used when working in schools is at least as important as the “content” of the knowledge (p 204), going on to discuss the direct versus indirect model of service delivery (as illustrated above in Figure 2.1), noting that in the indirect model, the psychologist needs to be able to work effectively with adults, not children and young people; and that their role is to support the adults (teachers/parents) to implement appropriate interventions rather than implementing them directly. Gutkin and Conoley note that if psychologists endeavour to “bring about meaningful improvements” for children, they need to “exert meaningful influence on parents and teachers” (p 209). They refer to this as “The Paradox of School Psychology” in that psychologists are reliant on parents and teachers

implementing the recommendations agreed upon in order for there to be any impact on the child or young person. They argue that “interpersonal influence” and a “collaborative relationship” are essential if this indirect way of working is to be successful (p 211).

In a later article (Gutkin, 1997) goes on to reflect that “without behaviour changes by those adults who surround the lives of children”, psychology services will not be making a difference (p 105). Thus this relationship between the consultant and consultee is crucial.

In a 1996 paper, Gutkin reflects that researchers such as Erchul (1987) have begun to cast doubts on the assumption about collaboration being key to the consultation process in terms of the interaction between consultant and consultee. Gutkin (1996) notes that Erchul (1987) argues that consultees are “generally passive” and that consultants are “highly controlling” during consultation meetings (Gutkin, 1996, p 200). Erchul (1987) also claims that the more controlling the consultants are during consultation (in terms of determining the conversation topics and guiding the development of analysis and suggestions for intervention), the more highly both consultees and consultants rate the process. Gutkin (1996) conducts his own research, analysing the verbal interactions of 41 initial consultation interviews using Bergen’s (1977) Consultation Analysis Record (CAR) procedures. What emerges from the analysis is a “shared and partially overlapping style of communication leadership” (p 216).

Consultants generally posed more questions than consultees; talked more about the process; summarised verbalisations and the consultant content leads were generally accepted by consultees. In contrast, consultees spent more time answering questions, and “uttered two-thirds of the verbalisations” during the consultations (p 212). Gutkin claims that “consultants

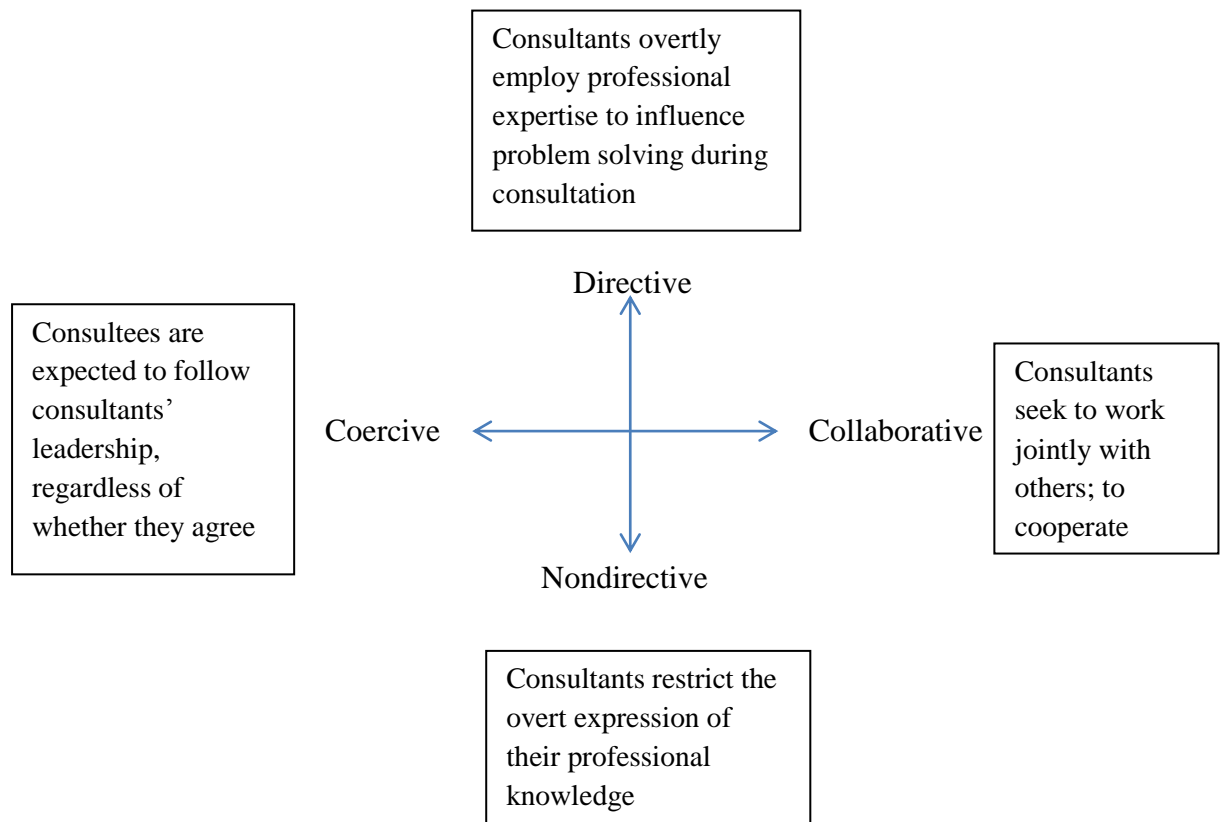


and consultees both play positive leadership roles” in relation to the content of the discussion, but consultants make a “unique contribution” to the problem solving process (p 214). Gutkin concludes that consultation appears to suggest a partnership between consultant and consultee, that neither party seemed to dominate the conversation and nor were they equal partners in terms of roles; rather, each had a role to perform. Gutkin (1996) concludes that this does appear to be consistent with his original summations that the consultation relationship is collaborative.

Gutkin (1999a) produced a paper which summarised research in relation to consultation as a collaborative approach, noting that although methods and techniques may differ, consultation should always be collaborative in order to ensure that consultees are engaged. However, Gutkin commented on a further paper by Erchul (1990) in which Erchul claimed, following research into consultation dyads, that consultation might be “co-operative” but not “collaborative” due to the fact “consultants controlled the nature and course of the consultation relationship (Gutkin, 1999a, p 167). Erchul (1990) appeared to promote a more directive approach to consultation.

In an attempt to move forward with this collaborative versus directive debate, Gutkin (1999a) proposed that they are “not opposites of each other” (p 180), but rather that “the opposite of “collaborative” is “coercive”, NOT “directive”. Likewise the opposite of “directive” is “nondirective” or “laissez-faire”, NOT “collaborative” (p 180), as depicted in Figure 2.3.

Figure 2.3: Disentangling the collaboration and directiveness dimensions of school-based consultation, (Gutkin, 1999a, pp 180-181).



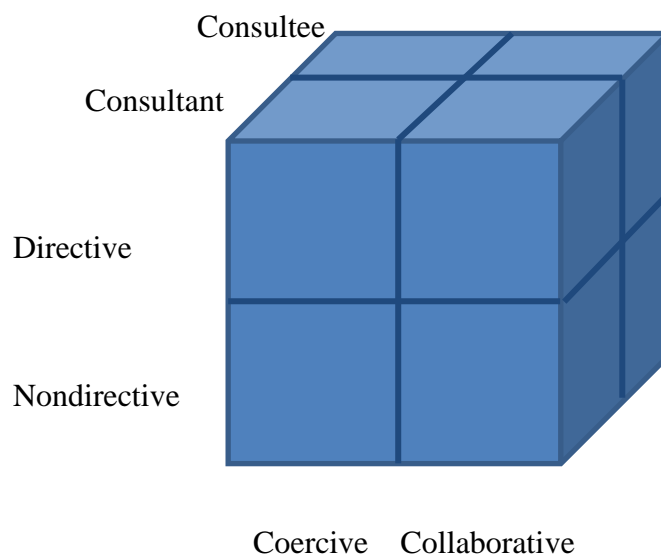
The above model summarises Gutkin's argument that consultation can be both "directive and collaborative at the same time" (p 180); he notes that although consultation could take part in each of the four quadrants, the majority of the literature to date would support the collaborative-directive or the collaborative-nondirective dimensions. He concludes that rather than any one dimension being superior to another, that consultants may need to be able to "move fluidly and skilfully" (p 187) among them as a consultation progresses.

Erchul (1999) critiqued Gutkin's work, noting that although the model illustrated in Figure 2.3 goes some way towards explaining the collaborative versus directive debate, it fails to incorporate any reflections on the interpersonal perspective of the relationship between the consultant and consultee. Erchul (1999) states that he does not like the term "collaboration" due to its "multiple and imprecise meanings", although he does note the work of Caplan (1993) who replaces the term 'mental health consultation', with 'mental health collaboration' (p 194). Erchul (1999) acknowledges this definition is different to how the term is used by Gutkin in describing school consultation.

Apart from the difficulty with the terminology of collaboration, Erchul (1999) notes the lack of rigorous exploration of the interpersonal perspectives in consultation, particularly from the perspective of the consultee, and criticises that this had been overlooked in Gutkin's (1999a) proposed model (Figure 2.3), where the sole dimension that allows for any exploration of the consultee's behaviour is 'collaborative', as all the other dimensions (directive, nondirective, coercive) refer to the consultant's behaviour only.

In response to Erchul's criticism of the two dimensional model, Gutkin (1999b) responded by adding a third dimension: that of the consultee, as depicted in Figure 2.4. Gutkin (1999b) acknowledges that in order to devise an understanding of consultation "we will have to examine (a) the behaviours of consultants *and* consultees, as well as (b) the intentions between them" (p 236). Gutkin does not elaborate on the model, but highlights a comment Erchul made, that there is a need to do further work on "how consultants respond in an on-going way to consultee needs" (Erchul, 1999, p 198).

Figure 2.4: Disentangling the collaborative and directiveness dimensions of school-based consultation: An expanded model (Gutkin, 1999b, p 237).



To conclude this resumé on some of the key work coming from American theory development and research, Gutkin and Reynolds (2008) further reflect on the consultant-consultee relationship, noting that it is “viewed as pivotal to effective consultation”, adding that “without the cooperation of the consultee, the consultant is powerless to provide assistance to the client” (p 599). Thus, they retain the belief that the relationship is key to determining whether the consultee is resistant to or cooperates with the consultation process and agreed interventions.

## 2.4 British research on consultation

Miller (1996) noted that consultation in Britain began to grow in the early 1980s, in response to frustration with the clinical nature of the then dominant casework model, particularly in relation to referrals and waiting lists. Taylor (1981) sought a framework that would help to prioritise work if EPs were able to negotiate their work directly with individual schools, which Miller notes was loosely based on the model of process consultation. Towards the end of the 1980s, Figg and Stoker (1989) drew to some extent upon Caplan's model of mental health consultation as a means by which referrals to an EP service could be managed.

Although not referred to as consultation, work by Burden (1978), Miller (1980), and Cameron and Stratford (1978) had explored a wider role for educational psychologists, looking at their role in project development work in schools, breaking away from the individual referral model. This work established some of the underlying principles later incorporated into models of consultation, such as holding regular meetings to feed back to staff involved with the concern which had prompted the involvement, addressing whole school issues rather than just those pertaining to individuals, using problem-solving techniques and effecting change indirectly through teachers, rather than through direct intervention with children.

Aubrey (1987) reviewed the literature regarding consultative practice noting that "however successful an in-service programme is in changing individual skills, the institution in which the teacher operates has its own norms, roles, expectations and relationships which form natural barriers to innovative efforts" (in Miller, 1996, p 118), which meant that, following training, typically, little was adopted, used or generalised within the school. Hence further

work was needed to ensure that EP involvement did contribute to change for children, with consultation being the suggested means to effect change.

Miller (1996) notes that a number of authors developed consultation with schools, based largely on Caplan's mental health model of consultation, namely Osborne (1983), Hanco (1990) and Stringer et al. (1992).

Osborne (1983) provided sessions for teachers in which concerns regarding pupils exhibiting challenging behaviour could be addressed. Hanco (1990) ran groups for teachers, in which they could talk and share emotions regarding challenging casework examples, whilst planning interventions together. Stringer et al. (1992) built directly upon Hanco's work, using consultation with groups of school staff to facilitate whole group problem solving arising from issues of concern in the workplace.

Leadbetter et al. (1992) used consultation in order to address concerns regarding whole school behaviour, gathering data, feeding back and supporting subsequent interventions. The approach was described as an example of "what can be achieved when schools and psychologists take joint responsibility for solving problems and working together to find solutions" (p 96).

Huffington (1996) suggests that the climate of change in public sector services since the early 1980s has required services to reflect upon their practices and make changes accordingly. Huffington stated that services needed to devise local solutions to the problems instigated by national changes, yet acknowledges that the pace of change can leave little time for reflection,

which can affect the quality of a service. Huffington (1996) suggests that consultation can be used to help manage this change “offering involvement and a sense of ownership to all those participating” (p 104).

Farouk (1999) stated that although a move towards using consultation had begun, with services understanding “the qualities needed for effective consultation”, drawing on models from mental health consultation, behavioural consultation, problem solving consultation and process consultation, there was “no evidence of a coherent approach” (p 253), which he argued, needed to be developed across the profession.

Leadbetter (2002) notes that Services were having difficulty coping with the number of statutory assessments as a consequence of the 1981, 1993 and 1996 Education Acts, all of which required statutory advice from a local authority educational psychologist. This increase in individual assessments led to a reduction in the amount of “preventative and systemic work” (p 157) in which educational psychologists could engage. As an attempt to manage the situation, many services, including the service in which this current research has taken place, introduced a ‘time allocation model’, allocating a specific amount of time to each school.

Leadbetter (2002) explains that alongside this move towards a time allocation model, many services started to change their model of service delivery to a consultation approach, with some services using consultation as the sole approach (Dickinson, 2000, discussed further in Section 2.5), and others using the model alongside other approaches (Leadbetter, 2000, discussed further in Section 2.5).

One particular model of consultation has strongly influenced the practice of consultation in EP Services across the country, namely that used in the London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (Wagner, 1995a, 1995b, 2000). Materials pertaining to this model have been published, alongside a number of articles advocating the approach, and training has been delivered by Wagner to numerous services (including in the early 2000s, the service in which the research has been developed, although interestingly the service chose not to take up the model of consultation at that time).

Wagner (1995a) gives the following definition of consultation:

“Consultation embodies a way of working with schools which puts collaborative work with teachers at the centre of the activities of the EP.”

“Consultation is for the major part, a preventative approach to working with schools.”

“The focus of consultation can be described at three major levels: the individual pupil level, the group or class level and the organisational level.”

Wagner, 1995a, p 22

Wagner (1995a) goes on to note that consultation differs from a more traditional, referral based model in that within a consultation approach the responsibility for the pupil remains with the school; the EP role is to facilitate the process of problem analysis and accurately targeted evidence-based intervention.

Personal Construct theory (Kelly, 1955), symbolic interactionism (Blumer, 1962) and systems thinking (Minuchin, 1974 and Boscolo, 1996) are presented as providing the theoretic underpinnings of the model, with the notion that the school is a complex, multi-layered social



system in which the child interacts. Any work to effect change has to be undertaken with the child in context, which is considered best achieved through the EPs working with the class teacher, with the teacher retaining the role of the direct agent of change (Wagner, 1995a).

In the Consultation Handbook (Wagner, 1995b) a number of frameworks are presented which guide the process of consultation. These include the initial consultation, consultation request, joint family-school meeting, consultation follow-up, planning meetings and annual reviews. Wagner (1995a) notes that by using these frameworks to support the process, EPs can enable teachers to move towards a “more useful and effective conceptualisation of the concern” and towards a “more useful and effective conceptualisation of what might bring about change” (p 25).

However, Leadbetter (2002) notes that the Wagner model “does not place a great emphasis on outcomes, either for teachers or pupils” (p 161), although it does refer to effecting change, noting that consultation is about “conversations that make a difference” (Wagner, 2000, p 14); however, this “difference” would appear to be referring to the change in perceptions of the teacher consultees. Wagner (2008) talks about evaluation of consultation in terms of how effective teachers perceive the process, asking consultees to review the process at each consultation meeting. She does go on to note that questions do address “outcomes for children, families, staff and the school as a whole” (p 155) although no further details are given regarding the information on which this evaluation would be based.

Leadbetter (2006) explores “what exactly EPs do under the guise of consultation” (p 19) in order to be “better informed” about the process (p 20); undertaking a number of activities in

order to “seek out EPs understanding of the term, as it related to their own practice” and “redefine a whole service definition” that represented the work. Fifty statements were presented to the EPs who had to consider whether activities were part of a consultation process, and the frequency with which the activities were undertaken. The analysis of these data gave an insight into EP perceptions of what is involved in the consultation process, enabling a service definition to be redefined, and activities which EPs perceived they needed to develop, enabling further continuing professional development to be arranged by the EPS.

Timmins et al. (2006) conducted research into the perceptions of teachers regarding the consultation process and to determine if consultation had any impact on teacher behaviour. They noted that EP Services were working in a “climate where they are more accountable than ever for their performance”, and that “self-evaluation” is encouraged (p 305). They used a collaborative action research framework known as RADIO (Research and Development in Organisations) (Timmins et al. 2003) to structure the research. They found that many teachers did value consultation, although some showed a lack of understanding of “the underlying principles of consultation as an indirect model of service delivery” (p 317), suggesting that further promotion and explanation of the consultation approach was needed in schools.

## 2.5 Critique of studies on consultation which informed the current research

Whilst Sections 2.3 and 2.4 overviewed the main themes in the American and British consultation research since the 1980s, Section 2.5 considers a number of papers which focus on the areas related to the specific aims of this research.

Gutkin (1980) has written widely regarding consultation practice in America. His 1980 article reported an inquiry which aimed to discover whether teachers preferred consultation or a more traditional model of service delivery (direct work with children and young people); if the consultee role was perceived as appropriate by teachers; and if consultation was considered to have increased the professional skills of the consultee. The study involved 173 teachers in twelve schools (including schools in both urban and rural communities) while twelve advanced school psychology graduates (with a Master's degree and specific training on consultation) provided the consultation. Each of the consultants provided two and a half days per week of consultation, over a period of 14 weeks. In addition, all schools continued to receive their normal allocation of traditional services from the psychology service. A questionnaire was distributed to teachers at the end of the consultation period, for which there was a 70% return rate.

Gutkin (1980) notes that although consultation had been found to be effective and well received, there had been little empirical analysis of these assumptions. Hence he aimed to investigate if teachers thought their teaching skills would improve as a result of working in a consultative way with an educational psychologist. Qualitative methods for obtaining information were used, namely a questionnaire completed by teachers following the intervention phase (consultation between teachers and the consultants using a collaborative problem solving process).

The findings indicate that teachers responded “very positively to the consultation services that were provided” with 84% of the teachers who took part feeling it was “desirable” to work with a consultant. 69% reflected that consultation was more effective than the “traditional

testing role” of the psychologist (p 640). One of the criticisms of this approach is that the questionnaire consisted of four questions with closed responses, whereby participants indicated to what extent they agreed with each of the statements presented. No further exploration of the responses was undertaken; therefore it is not possible to extract how the teachers perceived that consultation was more effective than the traditional model, but simply that 69% agreed that it afforded a more effective approach.

Gutkin (1980) concluded that consultation was viewed favourably by school staff, although many had noted that both the traditional model (direct work with children and young people) and consultation were important, and in this study both a traditional model and the consultation model had run alongside each other. However, the researcher also concluded that teachers did want to work with the consultants in order to develop “treatment strategies” (p 640) and felt that their professional skills would be improved by working in this way.

Gutkin (1980) notes that the findings of this study are consistent with a number of other pieces of research, such as those reported by Lambert et al. (1975), Martin et al. (1973), and Waters (1973), in that they all found that teacher perceptions of consultation were favourable. However, he does not say whether these favourable perceptions led to any changes in practice, or had any impact on clients/service users.

Gutkin’s paper was written in 1980, and in the USA, which raises questions regarding its contemporary relevance within UK settings. However, there are very few papers which report analysis of the consultation approach, rather than those simply making assumptions about its (positive) effects. Importantly too, the consultation model was delivered in addition to the

schools' regular, more traditional psychological service, so raising the question of how favourably teachers would have perceived consultation if this were the only model of service delivery they received and/or if this had been carried out and evaluated by their regular school psychologist (cf. one of the graduate students, as an addition to their routine school psychology service). The amount of consultation time available was also particularly high (two and a half days per week to each school), which would not be replicated if consultation were delivered as part of a time allocation model in the local authority in this research. Further, this study only focused on teacher perceptions of consultation, whereas I plan to broaden the focus to ask questions of parents and pupils.

MacHardy et al. (1997), three educational psychologists working for Aberdeen Psychological Service, had been working with a fairly traditional model of service delivery, namely "direct work with individuals using within-child explanations" (p 1), but began to consider the consultation model following training as a service from Wagner (1995). They decided to pilot the use of consultation in a number of primary and secondary schools (two secondary and four primary schools, which differed in size and socio-economic factors), with the intention of gathering views from teachers and parents about this model of service delivery. Their aim was to evaluate the consultation model, examining the effects of this model of service delivery on teachers' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about the contribution of EPs.

MacHardy et al. (1997) acknowledge that consultation takes place within a social constructionist paradigm, in that consultants effect change not on actual behaviour or relationships but on the consultees' constructs with regard to situations. They note that

consultation has two aims, one to find a solution to the presenting concern and the other to empower the consultee.

The model of consultation was evaluated using a pre-post-test non-equivalent groups design. Pre and post questionnaires were completed by teachers prior to the project being implemented and at the end of the project. Some teachers were chosen via a random sample to take part in a structured interview with a research assistant to supplement the questionnaire data. Staff in a small number of schools which were not part of the area chosen for the pilot of the consultation model also completed the questionnaires and thus formed a comparison group (one secondary and two primaries). Parents “participated in consultation meetings” (p 17) although this statement is not elaborated with regard to the parents’ level of involvement in those meetings (as consultee or observer of the consultation with the teachers). Views of a random sample of parents who participated in the consultation meetings were also sought through structured interviews with a research assistant.

The findings from the questionnaires showed that the perceptions of teachers towards EPs had shifted in that teachers who had received the consultation-based service:

- were more aware of the range of work in which EPs could become involved and therefore moved away from the belief that EPs only see individual children;
- understood EPs were available to discuss concerns at an early stage;
- better understood the purpose of testing when it is used;
- understood EPs spend time in the classroom observing problems in context;
- thought EPs spent more time with teachers, finding out about concerns from their point of view;

- appreciated that EPs help to develop strategies for solving a problem;
- understood that EPs analyse problems objectively;
- felt there was enough time to discuss problems with an EP;
- felt able to say what they thought in confidence;
- thought EPs took on board the concerns raised;
- felt that talking to the EP helped to clarify their thoughts about the concern; and
- thought the written record of the intervention was useful.

The results from the structured interviews with teachers appear to confirm these statements.

The results of the structured interviews with a random sample of parents who participated in the consultation meetings are less conclusive, however. Eleven sets of parents responded and of those, nine parents reported that their views about the problem did not change as a result of consultation. Eight parents felt that there had been positive changes in their child since the meeting (although there is no further detail provided about these changes) and five parents were aware that there was a plan to review progress.

Consultation is described by Wagner (1995) as a process which should “help the teacher towards a different, more useful conceptualisation of the concern, and through this to a more useful and effective conceptualisation of what might bring about change” (p 25). MacHardy et al. (1997) claim to show that teachers, parents and EPs involved rated the experience positively against this broad definition and contingent success criteria, and that there was evidence of positive changes in teacher perceptions. Teachers had a wider understanding of the range of work EPs could offer within a consultation model (particularly the use of

observation) and the increase in teacher/EP direct contact time increased the teachers' perceptions of feeling listened to and supported. However, there was no significant difference in the teachers' perceptions about the role they themselves played in terms of their contribution towards the intervention through the consultation method as opposed to the more traditional model, although EPs reflected that the teachers played a more active role during the consultation process.

Although parental perceptions were gathered via structured interviews, little time is given to reflect on their perceptions other than that they were "overwhelmingly positive" (p 41). Further work needs to be done in this area to understand parental perceptions of the consultation model and whether/how, from their perspective, it is seen as contributing to change for children.

The above conclusions appear consistent with other research in this area, in that the research showed consultation changed teacher perceptions of EPs. However, the authors acknowledge that future research could investigate how, following consultation with an EP, teachers' behaviour changes, and any contingent changes in pupil behaviour: an invitation taken up by the current study.

Dickinson (2000) discusses the development of consultation in the Lincolnshire Educational Psychology Service, looking at the principles that underpin the consultation approach, how practice was reviewed and how outcomes were recorded.



Dickinson (2000) states that the consultee is the client and recipient of the service and therefore it is the consultee to whom EPs are accountable. He goes on to state that in order to ensure consultation is 'fit for purpose', the purpose has to be agreed between the consultant and the consultee. A number of principles are then described which underpin what the consultation model encompassed in Lincolnshire. The model of consultation outlined is an interactionist model, in that the focus of the work is with the adults who are working with the child or young person in order to effect change, rather than working directly with the young person.

Dickinson assumes that the quality and outcomes are a direct result of having a clearly defined model of consultation, which enables EPs to check the fitness for purpose of the approach and any actions planned. Consultation reviews allow for both the consultant and consultee to have a conversation about the outcomes, which is based on a "plan-do-review" model (pp 21-22).

Dickinson relates the introduction of consultation and changes in the nature of EP work to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a). This is a five-staged graduated approach used to identify, assess, make proportionate provision for and monitor children's special educational needs.

"The interventions are a means of matching SEN provision to the child's needs, and are therefore part of the continuous and systematic cycle of planning, action and review within the school to enable all children to learn and progress."

DfES (2001a)

Stages One and Two are carried out by the child's school, with parents being kept informed of the process. At Stage Three the school may request the involvement of outside agencies. Statutory assessment is the focus at Stage Four. A summary of the five-stage model is presented in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Stages of the Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a)

Stages	Action
Stage One	Concerns are identified about a child's progress. A class teacher registers a child's special educational needs and, consulting the parents and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo), takes initial action to differentiate teaching to meet needs.
Stage Two: Early Years Action/ School Action	A child is not progressing satisfactorily even though the teaching style has been differentiated. The SENCo takes lead responsibility for recording information and for coordinating the child's special educational provision, using Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to set and monitor targets.
Stage Three: Early Years Action Plus/ School Action Plus	Despite receiving an individualised programme the child continues to make little or no progress. Provision of more specialist assessments are needed that can inform planning and help to measure pupil progress. Teachers and SENCo are supported by specialists from outside the school.
Stage Four: Request for Statutory Assessment	Any strategy or programme has been implemented and continued for a reasonable period of time without success. The Local Authority considers the need for a statutory assessment and, if appropriate makes a multi-disciplinary assessment.
Stage Five: Statement	The Local Authority considers the need for a statement of special educational needs; if appropriate, it makes a statement and arranges, monitors and reviews.

There is a distinct lack of data in this article, other than that showing a reduction in statutory assessment, as evidence that the model is more preventative than the pre-consultation approach to service delivery in the county. There are no data shared regarding what kinds of issues might be discussed (plan), what work is done as an outcome of the plan (do), or indeed how the discussion considers whether the plan was implemented with fidelity (or not at all) and if so, how effective it proved in supporting agreed targets (review). The author uses the

reduction in statutory assessment, from 90% of EP involvement prior to consultation to 13% (over a three year period following the introduction of consultation), and a subsequent increase of work at Stage 3 of the Code of Practice, alongside more development work in schools, as evidence of efficacy.

The DfEE (2000) working group on EPS role and practice had viewed reductions in EPS involvement in Stage Four and Five of the Code of Practice as a desirable direction for development, facilitating increased EPS involvement in prevention and early intervention. The DfEE (2000) noted that around 35% of educational psychology services had reported a decrease in the amount of time spent working at Stage Four and Five, attributing this reduction to both local authority action and to outcomes of initiatives taken by EP services; the latter including the move from a referral system to a consultation based problem solving approach (p 40).

Dickinson (2000) concludes that the Lincolnshire consultation model is something of a “tatty model” (p 22) in that it cannot be neatly defined, as this would over-simplify the work that is carried out through the consultation model. Despite this imprecise definition he argues that the model does respond to the needs of the clients and therefore is fit for purpose.

The principles of what constitutes a consultation model are certainly in keeping with other researchers in this area, as is the description of the plan-do-review model. However, the lack of data presented makes it difficult to draw any definite conclusions about the impact of the consultation model.

Dickinson (2000) notes that EPs face increasing pressure to become more accountable, but one of the difficulties with which EPs have contended is, “accountable to whom?” He concludes, (as he started) arguing that with regard to consultation, the consultee is the client and therefore the recipient and focus of the work. The consultee could be a member of school staff or parents, depending on the purpose of the involvement. I would argue, however, that the child is the primary client and that therefore, the impact of consultation on their progress should be taken into account.

I would also argue that what Dickinson presents constitutes a model of espoused good practice regarding consultation, rather than the evidence-based demonstration of the quality of outcomes which he set out to provide. There surely needs to be some evaluation of the process as a whole, and of whether the actions made a difference, not just to the consultee (be that teacher or parent) but also to others who should see some benefits of this model (teachers, parents, pupils). The “tatty model” (p 22) is surely only acceptable if it effects change for children, alongside empowering and/or being viewed as effective by consultees.

Leadbetter (2000) is an academic and professional tutor at the University of Birmingham and has written many articles regarding the consultation model. Her 2000 paper reported a survey of aspects of educational psychology service practice across England and Wales, particularly on those aspects of practice relating to consultation-based models of service delivery. Like Dickinson (2000), the author notes that at the time of writing there was an increasing pressure for services to be accountable for what they deliver, noting OFSTED inspections and the DfEE report (2000) as two examples. Yet there was still a distinct lack of information from

services about how they monitored both the “quality and effectiveness of their services” (p 450).

Leadbetter (2000) assumes that due to a number of external and internal factors influencing EP services, different models of practice would exist across different services and that this would affect the type of service that is delivered as well as the way the service is evaluated. A further assumption was that more services had moved towards consultation-based approaches, from their previous more traditional, direct work with children and young people in response to a referral-based casework model.

A questionnaire was sent to all Principal Educational Psychologists (PEPs) in England and Wales which asked about current models of service delivery. The questionnaire consisted of nine sections, two of which are of particular relevance to my own study, namely those seeking information re: ‘models of service delivery’ and ‘number of monitoring and evaluating systems used by EP services’. There was a 58% response rate to the questionnaire (92 responses in total).

Responses to the questions were initially Yes or No, with the opportunity to elaborate given through a number of follow-up questions. Responses were clustered into categories that were then analysed for similarities and differences. The categories were based on key words in the responses, considered to convey similar information. Each cluster was analysed, looking for similarities, differences and connections. Quantitative analysis was used in parallel to the qualitative analysis, to identify any significant correlations.

The results from services indicating that they used a consultation model initially looked low (only 8%), but most services were operating a time allocation model, and within this model had drafted service level agreements (SLAs), within which many were using consultation as a model of service delivery (67%). In the light of this, in addition to the main study, Leadbetter reviewed EP job advertisements over a 5 month period, finding that of 100 advertisements, one third referred to consultation as a model of service delivery (although the wording differed across adverts).

There was wide variation in the number of services which reported evaluating their practice, from those with no system at all for monitoring or evaluating practice (nine EP services) to those with six or more systems (four EP services). The average response from services appeared to be having two systems of evaluation in place (twenty-nine EP services).

The range of types of systems for monitoring and evaluating practice also varied, and included:

- qualitative systems, such as:
  - visits to schools by managers;
  - quality surveys; or
  - focus groups;
- clients surveys and feedback, such as:
  - questionnaires to schools;
  - structured interviews with head teachers; or
  - school and parent surveys;
- internal systems, such as:
  - annual data collection;
  - supervision; or
  - meetings to discuss workload;

- quantitative systems, such as:
  - analysis with reference to performance indicators;
  - speed of written feedback;
  - statutory data collection numbers and completion time;
  - use of the service action plan with performance indicators; and/or
  - review of SLAs.

The details of no one model are specified. None of the examples given mention evaluation specifically in relation to consultation, although given this was the preferred model of service delivery for a number of authorities, one would assume that some of the aforementioned methods would have focussed on evaluating some aspects of consultation.

There is a lack of clarity as to why one model of service delivery was chosen as opposed to another by any of the EPSs, but the increasing need to justify practice and report outcomes of service delivery is likely to have given impetus to some services rethinking their models of operation.

Many services reported operating a consultation model of service delivery, although these are not discussed in any detail in the article, other than to link them to a time allocation model.

Many services reported evaluating practice, although the range and number of methods employed in order to gather evaluation data varied across services, with little evidence of robust/rigorous methods capable of evaluating impact on either consultees or children.

At the time of the survey, in response to the question about views on patterns of practice in the future, PEPs wanted to be able to both “move to preventative work, resulting in earlier intervention” (27 respondents, 29%) and “move to a more consultative role with collaborative work with schools” (21 respondents, 23%) (p 437), although no reason is given as to why this is an aspiration.

Leadbetter (2000) reflects on the fact the profession had gone through periods of significant change, from child-centred referral models of the 1950s and 1960s, to the preventative and more systemic practices of the 1970s and 1980s, noting the frustrations which stemmed from the increased statutory duties of the later 1980s and 1990s, which appeared to conflict with these desired developments: directions and frustrations noted by many other authors writing about EP practice in England and Wales (DfEE, 2000; Farrell et al., 2006).

Leadbetter (2000) noted dangers for services in becoming more accountable in that there was a tendency to measure “what is easily measurable” (p 450), which may restrict practice.

Outcomes of consultation were not considered easily measurable; however that does not mean the profession should favour other methods of service delivery whose outcomes could more readily be measured, but rather that the profession should strive to develop meaningful measures of outcomes which are fit for purpose, reliable and of social value. As outlined in Chapter 3, Dunsmuir (2007), amongst others, endeavoured to address this challenge on behalf of the profession.



Leadbetter's research highlighted the need for more accountable models of practice, particularly in those areas, such as consultation, whose impact was perceived as less easy to measure, and for robust outcome evaluation.

Larney (2003), an educational psychologist in West Dunbartonshire, Scotland, undertook research exploring the increasing trend towards consultation models of service delivery, asking questions relating to what 'consultation' means, how is it practised and whether it is effective. The third section of the research, exploring the evaluation of the consultation approach is of particular relevance to the remit and design of the current study.

Larney's paper outlines different models of consultation, including mental health consultation, behavioural consultation and systems consultation, drawing on descriptions given by numerous authors. Larney (2003) concludes that the behavioural model of consultation was the most widely used in schools. She notes a number of studies which have attempted to evaluate the outcomes of consultation (using mainly qualitative data such as pre/post questionnaires or semi structured interviews) (Erchul, 1987) or the process of consultation (using mainly quantitative data such as analysis of the conversations in consultation using coding systems or reduced referral rates) (Gutkin and Curtis, 1990; Gutkin, 1996), arguing that a combination of both methods is needed if any conclusions are to be drawn about the effectiveness of consultation. The author notes this has not been the case with much of the consultation research to date. Methods used have been described as producing 'soft data', derived from questionnaires and interviews rather than quantitative data. It is also noted that much of the research is based in the USA, not in the UK.

Larney (2003) notes that many of the research studies completed to date have restricted their evaluation of consultation to the effects on the consultees, and to a lesser extent, the consultants: studies have not focussed on the impact on clients (children and young people). This is interesting as Dickinson (2000) argued the consultee was the client, whereas Larney argues the client is the child.

Larney (2003) notes that “until the methodological shortcomings of research on consultation are corrected, school psychologists are likely to remain sceptical of consultation as a wholly effective model of service delivery” (p 17). She believes that consultation has yet to prove itself as a reliable and effective model due to the above shortcomings, and although she does not give details, suggests that future studies need to employ both quantitative and qualitative methods and triangulate data from a range of sources. I would argue it is not only, or even primarily school psychologists who need convincing of the effectiveness of consultation, but all those involved in both commissioning and receiving our services.

Larney’s paper adds no new information to the research available on consultation, but merely analyses what information has been produced by other authors to date and attempts to critique that research and in doing so, identify what is needed for future studies.

Larney (2003) notes a number of areas which need to be addressed in future research (p 16), suggesting the need:

- a. to study client (i.e. child/young person) outcome variables;
- b. for follow-up of consultation outcomes;

- c. for use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods in evaluating consultation outcomes;
- d. for further research on the consultation process; and
- e. for research with groups/teams (although it does not specify to whom this refers).

In my research I aimed to address a number of the above needs (a, b, c and d) in order to develop a more robust evaluation of the impact of the consultation process on teachers, parents and pupils.

The suggested identity of the school psychologist as a “researcher-practitioner” (p 17) is interesting, and was rarely considered in some of the aforementioned studies, when a separate team of consultants may have been used to carry out the research. I am proposing in my study, that the psychologists who use the consultation model of service delivery will themselves be researching their practice.

Dennis (2004) is an educational psychologist in Kirklees, whose research involved carrying out a small scale evaluation of the consultation model, from the perspective of school staff. Schools chosen to participate were at different stages with regard to the implementation of consultation, after a year of its implementation within the authority.

The consultation model was one that was recommended in a review of educational psychology practice (DfEE, 2000) and had begun to be implemented in many authorities across the country; the model is also now part of initial training courses (Kennedy et al, p 607). Consultation was considered to constitute a practice model that would help to address a

number of issues relevant to the current context within the local authority, as shown in Table 2.3.

Table 2.3: The potential value/contribution of consultation to changes within Kirklees LA.  
(Dennis, 2004)

<b>Significant changes noted in Kirklees</b>	<b>Potential value/contribution of a consultation model</b>
Reorganisation of schools which had brought about change, and meant a change of schools link EP	Opportunity to develop new working relationships in school; introduce the consultation model as a new way of working. New EPs sharing “the range of things” they can offer (Dennis, 2004, p 28) therefore schools aware of the wider role of the EP.
An Ofsted report which noted a number of areas of weakness in the way services worked in schools	Joint problem solving model, “specialist knowledge and skills” used in “a collaborative way”. EP working alongside the adults most concerned by the problem in order to work together to effect change (Dennis, 2004, p 18). EP seen as having a wider range of skills which could be used to address whole school issues and practice (Dennis, 2004, p 27).
The need for a more strategic approach to working with pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and the management of the statutory procedures, as highlighted in the Ofsted report	Individual difference seen as an “opportunity for whole school development” and one-to-one support “no longer seen as the only way of helping individuals” (Dennis, 2004, p 27)
The government’s inclusion agenda	The DfEE (2000) report noted a change in the role of the EP, from less work at Stage Five of the Code of Practice, to more preventative work at Stage Three. Thus enabling EPs to support schools at a much earlier, more preventative stage, promoting inclusion.

The model of consultation adopted was based on “joint problem solving” (p 18) and claimed to incorporate symbolic interactionism, systems thinking and social constructionism, and use a plan-do-review cycle. The model is not, however, made explicit; therefore it is not possible to apprehend what this was comprised of in practice.

Semi-structured interviews were used in 12 schools which had been identified by EPs as those in which consultation had been implemented with “varying degrees of success” (p 19), and where staff would be willing to discuss this new way of working. The interviews were carried out by an unfamiliar EP, with the rationale that school staff might give more honest responses if they were talking to someone other than their regular visiting EP.

The interviews were recorded and partially transcribed and the data were analysed using a grounded theory approach. Units of meaning were grouped into ‘concepts’, which were then grouped with other concepts to form ‘categories’ which were then linked to form an ‘analytic story’ (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

There were eight main categories of factors which consultees believed influenced the implementation of consultation as a service delivery model. The analytical story gave a brief summary of the concepts within it:

- effective use of resources
  - schools being more flexible with how they use resources, enabling them to implement actions arising from consultation more readily (such as deployment of teaching assistants);
- service issues
  - some schools felt the time allocation model limited the availability of the EP;
- relationships and personal characteristics
  - the relationship between the EP and the SENCo was considered central to the success of the model, alongside the interpersonal skills of the EP;

- view of the role of the EP
  - the wider remit of the EP role was appreciated more fully by schools using the consultation model;
- school empowerment
  - consultation was viewed as a means of empowering staff by increasing their skills and confidence;
- understanding special needs and inclusion
  - consultation was more successful in schools who viewed individual needs as opportunities for whole school development, as opposed to those focussing on models of child deficit;
- internal school issues
  - such as the role and status of the SENCo; and
- external influences
  - such as local authority and statutory procedures.

Dennis (2004) uses a gardening analogy of growing flowers to illustrate the different stages which schools had reached in relation to their understanding and use of the consultation model. This is somewhat inconclusive as schools were perceived to be at all stages, from those unaware of the model or the influence it might have in terms of changing their practice, to those where consultation had become an integral part of their inclusive practice. However, looking at the themes common to the schools in which consultation was being implemented successfully allowed the author to reflect on elements which needed to be improved in those schools in which consultation had not been implemented/received as successfully.

The research suggests that consultation works best when schools already have an inclusive ethos, as consultation is a model that is perceived to be preventative and not reactive.

The focus of the research was again on the impact of consultation on the teacher who was the consultee. Although this is one aspect I address in my research, I will also gather the views and perceptions of parents and pupils in relation to their understanding of the consultation process and its perceived impact on pupil progress in the area identified as a concern. EP colleagues from my employing LA EPS will comprise the primary research sample from whom I will gather research data, while each EP in turn will elicit views from a small sample of professional colleagues, parents and children/young people, to whom s/he has provided a service through the medium of consultation, over a 3 month period. Thus my research differs from the Dennis (2004) study, in which an unfamiliar member of staff carried out the interviews. I am interested in how EPs and teachers jointly construct their understanding and views of the consultation process and its outcomes.

Kennedy et al. (2009) are three educational psychologists based in the south of England. This was the most recent paper I could locate pertaining to the evaluation of consultation models of educational psychology service delivery.

The researchers assume that educational psychologists can make a distinctive contribution to improving outcomes for children and their families and that consultation affords an appropriate means of applying psychology in a variety of contexts. They note the climate for accountability has led to services needing to be able to demonstrate the difference they make to children and families, and that this in turn may drive some services back into individual

casework and reactive practice, as the outcomes are more easily demonstrable. The paper considers ways of developing consultation so that it is effective and can be evaluated and therefore potentially shown to be an appropriate method of service delivery.

The article explores a number of issues with regard to consultation and how it is an effective model of service delivery for teachers, parents and children. It looks specifically at the training of educational psychologists in the use of consultation, which may affect how they apply it in their practice.

Given the arguments set out in the paper, the conclusions drawn are sparse. The authors argue that models of consultation which are well constructed and have a sound theoretical base are superior to those without. They do not propose any means by which the consultation model could be evaluated, although they spend much of the paper arguing that it should be evaluated.

Kennedy et al. (2009) talk about the concept of ‘psychologists as scientist-practitioners’ (as discussed in Larney (2003), but termed ‘research-practitioners’). The model outlined emphasises the need for a practitioner to be an “evaluator of practice” (p 618) and someone who generates new research.

The paper notes the triadic relationship in consultation which a number of other papers omit when evaluating consultation: the relationship between the consultant (EP), a consultee (teacher or parent) and the focus of change (colleague, child, year group, system). As noted previously the research papers discussed above have concentrated largely on the perceptions



and satisfaction ratings of the consultee when evaluating consultation, and in the main, taking the consultee to be a teacher rather than a parent.

The Kennedy et al. (2009) paper also notes that apart from three papers MacHardy (1997), Dickinson (2000) and Dennis (2004), there is very little research in the UK that considers the efficacy of consultation. The authors note that this lack of research is not surprising, since the complex interaction between consultant, consultee and client make decisions about “what and how to measure efficacy”, very challenging (p 606).

They go on to note that, in this climate “justifying an assessment process that precludes child outcomes is a professional minefield” (p 610), and that there is increasing pressure to justify engagement in any activity by ensuring that it has a positive impact on children and young people, and ultimately, makes a difference in terms of outcomes.

## **CHAPTER THREE: THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT FOR THE CURRENT RESEARCH**

### **3.1 National context**

#### **3.1.1 Political agenda**

“We are transforming the special educational needs (SEN) system from birth to age 25; raising aspirations; putting children, young people and parents at the centre of decisions; and giving them greater choice and control over their support so that they can achieve at school and college and make a successful transition to adult life”.

Children and Families Bill, 2013, p 15

The proposed changes to services working within the field of special education are extensive, as exemplified by the above quote. Indeed, Webster and Blatchford (2013) note that the proposed changes will “bring about the biggest changes in SEN in 30 years” (p 30). The legislation is yet to be finalised, so uncertainty continues to surround the final outcomes, although the pathfinder implementation initiatives in local authorities selected to implement the changes and feed back to the Department for Education (DfE) are enabling services to envisage how some of the proposed changes may be applied. Dessent (1994) notes how the way EPs work is “linked to the requirements of the special education system” (p 51), so highlighting that changes within this domain of education policy will have pervasive effects on EP service delivery.

The SEN Green Paper (DfE, 2011b) outlined a number of proposed changes to the way in which children and young people with disabilities and their families should have their needs met. The proposed changes affect services in health, social care, education and the voluntary

sector. The proposed changes would remove the current statutory assessment system and replace it with a single education, health and care plan. The details of the changes have yet to be confirmed, pending evaluation of the pathfinder pilot projects.

Within the SEN review, educational psychology is one of the professions referred to (p 104 - 106), with suggestions made as to the possible future role. The proposals include “working in a more flexible manner” (p 104) in order to respond to local community needs, and working with teachers to “help develop the skills” (p 105) they need when working with pupils with special needs. The DfE (2011b) proposed to consult on the most effective way of deploying educational psychologists in the future.

The response to the Green Paper (DfE, 2012) noted that “28 per cent of respondents felt there should be more EPs” and “23 per cent of respondents thought the EP role should have a greater focus on early intervention and preventative work” (p 78). Although very positive, set against the current financial climate (Section 3.1.2) such suggestions may prove somewhat unrealistic.

The role of the educational psychology service in relation to the legislative changes for assessment is unclear, although the Indicative Draft of the Code of Practice (DfE, 2013a) indicates that educational psychologists are one of the relevant professional groups from whom a local authority must seek advice. In the context of the document, ‘must’ refers to a statutory requirement.

The Academies Act (2010) was introduced by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition government following the 2010 general election, authorising the creation of Free Schools, (all ability, state-funded schools, set up in response to what local people say they want and need in order to improve education for children in their community), and allowing existing state schools to become academies.

Academies remain publically funded but with vastly increased autonomy in areas such as teachers' salaries and the curriculum delivered. Free Schools make it possible for parents, teachers, charities and businesses to set up their own schools.

Many academies have chosen to 'buy in' support services from outside the Local Authority, thus reducing the role of local authority services. However, Local Authorities retained the responsibility for pupil Special Educational Needs (SEN) assessments, Statementing, funding of statemented pupils, putting the SEN support arrangements in place and monitoring the SEN support.

### 3.1.2 Financial constraints

"The difficult financial situation we face makes it vital for us to make the best possible use of resources" (DfE, 2012, p3). This quote summarises the current climate for Local Authorities and the services within them. Educational psychology services are not immune to the changing financial climate. The Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP) reflects that "approximately 200 substantive educational psychologists' post" (AEP, 2011, p 3) were removed from local authorities in the academic year 2010/11 as a result of the reductions to local authority budgets.

In a recent restructure of the service in this study, the number of full time equivalent posts was slightly reduced in order to make the required financial savings, although the range of work in which the educational psychologists engage remains unaffected.

However, with further financial constraints predicted for 2014/15, “central government funding to councils to decrease by around 26 per cent over the next four years” (HM Treasury, 2010), services are likely to face requirements for further financial savings which are likely to affect aspects of service delivery. If numbers of educational psychologists employed reduces, the consequences are likely to include a reduction in the range of services offered, or maintenance of current services, albeit with those which are not perceived as statutory/essential, put out to tender for alternative commissioners and/or purchasers of EP services.

Educational psychology services will need to be able to demonstrate aspects of their work which although not statutory, are valued by stakeholders, and effective in promoting change for children if risks of their services being confined solely to statutory duties are to be avoided. This will be discussed further in Section 3.1.4 which considers accountability.

### 3.1.3 Traded services

Responses to a recent email survey by NAPEP (the National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists, June 2013) demonstrated that most local authority educational psychology services remained centrally funded, at least in part. However, many services had started to trade some aspects of their work, such as training.

The AEP (2011) noted three broad categories of EP service:

- i. those offering a traditional model of service delivery, fully funded by the local authority;
- ii. those offering some functions as part of a traded model, where statutory functions were still funded by the local authority, but other work was traded. Some services were trading to the extent that they are able to maintain the functions and staffing levels which existed prior to the reduction in local authority funding, but with schools and other settings now purchasing some of the input previously funded by the local authority; and
- iii. those which had become fully traded or commissioned, generating all of their income through trading.

The local authority in this study is currently working within the first of these models; however, preparations are in progress should a need arise for transition to the second model. Indeed, the AEP (2011) implied that in future, those EP services which only receive funding from the local authority might “struggle” (p 12) to fulfil the principles they outline in the document, namely delivering a “full range of work” (p 5).

Due to our geographical position I am part of two regional Principal Educational Psychologist (PEP) groups, which meet on a half termly basis. In one of these areas, the discussion about trading is high on the agenda for all meetings due to the extent to which trading is affecting service delivery (Model ii above). Due to the financial climate in that region, in order to maintain services, the PEPs are heavily engaged in trading all aspects of their service delivery, apart from statutory duties. This includes offering consultation to schools.

In order for schools to elect to spend their own (diminishing) budgets on buying in EP services, schools would need to have confidence that EP services can meet their needs and will make a difference. This requires services to be more accountable for all aspects of the work they offer (see Section 3.1.4).

The DfE (2011a) report notes how the commissioning of educational psychology services is changing due to current financial climate, predicting that fewer educational psychologists will be employed directly by local authorities. Rather, EPs will increasingly be commissioned by a variety of service providers including local authorities, schools and parents. The DfE (2011a) also note that although early intervention is “accepted as a cost-effective approach” (p 6), in the current political and financial environment, it is likely that this long term effectiveness is replaced by “short term statutory interventions” (p 6). This is a concern and another reason why local authority educational psychology services need to become more accountable for any preventative work in which they engage.

### 3.1.4 Accountability

In 1990, Gersch et al. noted how the need for accountability had increased over the preceding decade and that services would need not only to offer services that were effective but “be seen to do so” (p 124). Dessent (1994) also noted how services need to be “transparent” about what they offer and “demonstrate cost-effectiveness” (p 54) of the services they provide for children and young people. Cherry (1998) noted that according to research, the method most often used for evaluating service delivery was “consumer opinion surveys” with “very few” studies looking at “positive pupil outcomes” (p 120).

Bartram & Wolfendale (1999) reflect on a process which is even more applicable in the current context. They note that “by formalising what services are on offer to schools” (p 55), through Service Level Agreements (SLAs), EP services are made to consider the systems and the procedures which are key to the quality of any services delivered. In the current context there is greater accountability on services, who will be expected to publish, as part of the Local Offer (DfE, 2012) what their services can provide and how they will be accountable for the quality of the provision.

The Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP), the Division of Educational and Child Psychology (DECP) and the National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists (NAPEP) wrote a joint paper in 2009, considering the evaluation of services, in terms of evidence of impact on outcomes for children. A number of the reflections in the paper regarding evaluation of EP services hold contemporary, notably, the reflection that EP services are “judged not by what they have done but by what difference their contribution has made for children” (p 4).

The authors go on to note that due to the varied nature of EP work, using both direct and indirect methods of intervention, the impact on individual children and young people is “not easily obtained” (p 4), so that it may be necessary to gather “softer data” (p 4) to measure impact. They also note that it may be more appropriate to evaluate the impact EPs’ involvement has had on adults in certain situations, given the indirect nature of the EP involvement. Further, they argue that it is important to recognise the “importance of process” (p 8) when appraising the contribution EPs make.



However, in the current climate, as outline in the quote below, just because evidence of effectiveness may be difficult to achieve does not mean that EPs can side-step the requirement to be more accountable for the work in which they engage.

“In a climate of privatisation in education, services must become increasingly accountable for their work. Various stakeholders want to know what they are getting for their investment, and EPs need to be clear about what services they are offering.”

MacKay, 2002, p 249

Woolfson et al. (2003) also note that EPs need to work in ways that “promote accountability and transparency” (p 283) and be able to “justify their decisions and recommendations” (pp 283-284) to a range of stakeholders.

Ashton & Roberts (2006) meanwhile, note that EPs have a range of clients who may place “differing demands” (p 112) on a service, but that EPs also have thoughts about what services they should provide, and that these perceptions may be different. In the climate reflected in the above quote by MacKay, it is important that services clarify with stakeholders what they can expect, but also ensure that the services are “perceived as valuable by them” (Ashton & Roberts, 2006, p 121).

## 3.2 Local context

### 3.2.1 Background to adoption of consultation as a model of service delivery

As mentioned in Chapter One, the educational psychology service in which this research has taken place has implemented a consultation model over the last eight years. The model was introduced at a Service development day in July 2005, and numerous pieces of work have taken place since then, both within the service and with other support services, to continue the development of the consultation approach. This is illustrated in Table 3.1.

The purpose of the first service day was to ascertain EPs' perceptions of consultation, what they knew about the approach already prior to any training. An activity was used as described in Leadbetter (2006), whereby fifty statements were presented, which EPs had to rate as to whether they considered the activity to be part of the consultation approach, and the frequency with which they engaged in the activity. The responses from the activity were used to tailor the input at the training days which followed. The training aimed to enable educational psychologists to understand more about the consultation approach and enabled them to practise consultation skills in a safe environment with each other, prior to using and applying the skills in school settings.

The decision was made that in order to ensure all educational psychologists started to use consultation in a broadly consistent way, an appraisal target should be set for all staff, whereby they were required to use consultation in the first instance in response to any requests for involvement. They were encouraged to use other techniques such as observation or individual assessment to inform the consultation, as they judged necessary.

Table 3.1: Summary of consultation work completed with the EPS and other agencies since 2005

<b>Date</b>	<b>Type of Meeting/Contact</b>	<b>Focus</b>
July 2005	EP Service development day	Questionnaire used to ascertain EP perceptions regarding consultation.
September 2005	Email feedback	Collated responses to the above feedback to the service.
October 2005	2 EP Service development days	Input from a Southern University regarding circular questioning and reflecting teams.
January 2006	EP Working Group meetings	Purpose of the group meetings was to devise a recording format for consultation meetings. Shared with the service at team meetings.
April 2006	EP Appraisal meetings (and 6 month reviews in Dec 2006 & March 2007)	Target set requiring all EPs to use consultation as the first point of contact following a request for involvement. Monitored at team meetings and through supervision.
October 2007 to February 2008	Training days for support services	Researcher and colleague ran a 3 day training programme on consultation and solution focussed approaches, which ran with 3 different groups of Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) outreach staff.
November 2009	Workshop	Researcher ran a workshop at the LA Behaviour Conference on solution focussed approaches to managing challenging behaviour, and for the education social work service.
July 2010	EP Service development day	Repeated questionnaire used in July 2005 to see if perceptions about consultation had changed. Discussion about consultation approaches and further training needs.
September 2010	Training days for support services	Researcher trained Integrated Service colleagues and those chairing Common Assessment Team Around the Child meetings in consultation and solution focussed approaches.
September to November 2010	Training days for support services	Researcher and colleague ran a 2 day training programme on consultation and solution focussed approaches, which ran with 3 different groups of outreach staff.
September 2011	EP Working Group meetings	New working group established to review the consultation process, revise the consultation record forms, develop a leaflet for service users regarding consultation and plan training for Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) Networks.
February 2012	EP Service development day	Questionnaire given to EPs regarding the consultation process.
April 2012	EP team meetings	Questionnaire responses and revised forms shared with the service.
June 2012	SENCo Networks	Presentation and card sorting activity completed; new record forms shared.

The Service has continued to support the development of consultation, ensuring that EPs review how consultation is being used and received in schools. Due to staff turnover we consider it necessary to revisit the approach with the whole service at regular intervals.

Using feedback from the February 2012 service day, the Consultation Working Group revised the forms that educational psychologists use to record their consultation meetings, in order to reflect that there is a range of models used as part of the consultation process. The most commonly used model is the solution focussed approach, as we have provided most training as a service on this model, although number of more recently trained colleagues also use aspects of PCP and narrative therapy.

The revised forms added questions as prompts from solution focussed approaches (Rhodes and Ajmal, 1995; Ajmal and Rees, 2001), Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) (Kelly, 1955) and narrative approaches (Morgan, 2000; White and Morgan, 2006). This form can be found in Appendix 1. The form is very similar to the one used in this research, with one addition, which will be described in Section 4.5.2. We also produced a leaflet to explain the consultation model (Appendix 2), which is given to staff and parents, and was also given to participants in this research.

There is also variation in what colleagues use to supplement consultation. Some colleagues use a very pure model of consultation, resolving issues with teachers using consultation only.

The majority would use consultation but use observation or individual assessment to inform the consultation. Others use consultation but would see other methods such as observation and assessment as sitting outside of this consultation process.

The current study explores how the three educational psychologists involved in this research perceive and employ consultation in their work, and the outcomes of this work, as evidenced by the feedback derived from consultees (teachers) and clients (children and their parents) as outlined in Chapter Five.

### 3.2.2 Information from Primary SENCo Networks regarding ‘what is consultation?’

#### 3.2.2.1 Aims

The aim of the Working Group presenting at the Primary Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo) Networks in June 2012 was to gather perceptions from service users (school staff) regarding consultation, and clarify their understanding of the model. We also used the Network meeting to share the Service’s recently produced consultation leaflet and the revised consultation record forms.

#### 3.2.2.2 Method

The working group consisted of myself, EP1, another educational psychologist and a Year One Trainee on placement. There are five Primary SENCo Network meetings across the Local Authority, and one Secondary meeting. The three qualified educational psychologists presented at two meetings each, with support from the local EPs (EP2 supported in one of the areas whilst the trainee supported the delivery in a second area). Since the current research is

concerned solely with consultation in primary school settings it is the results of the Primary SENCo Networks only which are presented.

As part of the presentation the SENCos engaged in two activities. The first involved the SENCos completing a tally chart to indicate if, in their perception, they had experienced consultation with an educational psychologist. We asked them to complete this prior to our presentation and again at the end of the presentation. The purpose of this was to see if any had experienced the process without being aware of what it was called, as the Working Group was concerned that as a Service we may need to be more explicit about the model.

We also asked the SENCos to consider their perceptions of consultation and complete a card sorting exercise whereby they had been given a number of statements and had to sort them under the headings “usually part of the consultation process”, “sometimes part of the consultation process” or “not usually part of the consultation process”. At each of the five SENCo network meetings, the SENCos worked in groups in order to complete the card sorting activity, each group completing a ‘board’ on which the statements were attached. The boards were photographed by the EPs in order that the results of the card sorting activity could be collated at a later date and results compared across the five groups. The information was collated so that for each of the five local areas, the results from all the ‘boards’ were displayed on one sheet per area, displaying the results of the card sorting activity and the tally charts (see Appendix 3).

### 3.2.2.3 Results

Table 3.2: Results from SENCo Network tally chart activity

Question: Have you experienced consultation with an educational psychologist?								
	Area Two		Area Three		Area Four		Area Five	
Start of session	Yes 40	No 4	Yes 36	No 4	Yes 41	No 1	Yes 9	No 17
End of session	Yes 41	No 3	Yes 36	No 4	Yes 34	No 8	Yes 20	No 6

As shown in Table 3.2, responses were gathered from four out of the five geographical areas (Area One did not complete this part of the activity). In Area Three there was no change in perceptions before and after the presentation, suggesting the SENCos were confident with the definition of consultation and understood whether consultation, as we described, had taken place between themselves and the educational psychologist.

In Areas Two, Four and Five some change was evident, with a significant post-presentation increase in SENCos reporting having experienced consultation following the presentation in Area Five, and conversely, a surprising reduction in Area Four, which seems to suggest that Area Four EPs may have used consultation in name only, which raises concerns regarding the model of service delivery the SENCos have received.

With regard to the card sorting activity, there was variation in responses between each of the groups in each area, and between each area. The collated responses across all five areas are summarised in Table 3.3. However, there were a number of statements which the majority of groups (n=34 groups) perceived consultation does involve, which is congruent with the model of consultation we have promoted, namely:

- information gathering (33);
- discussion with the teacher/school staff (31);
- dedicated time for discussion away from the child/class (30);
- the solution is the focus (25); and
- a reflexive process (25).

It is interesting that the majority of groups perceived that consultation does involve, or sometimes involves discussion with the parents (33) or discussion with the child (31), demonstrating that involving pupils and parents in this model is an important part of the process.



Table 3.3: Collated responses from SENCo Network card sorting activity (n=34 groups)

<b>Consultation does involve...</b>	<b>Consultation sometimes involves...</b>	<b>Consultation does not usually involve...</b>
Information gathering (33)	Discussion with child (27)	Cognitive assessment (17)
Discussion with teacher/school staff (31)	Attending a review meeting (27)	Delivering training (14)
Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/group (30)	Discussion with parents (26)	The problem is the focus (12)
The solution is the focus (25)	Observation (24)	Attending a review meeting (4)
Reflexive process (25)	Analysis of classroom practice (23)	Reflexive process (4)
The problem is the focus (12)	Cognitive assessment (16)	The solution is the focus (4)
Discussion with parents (7)	Delivering training (19)	Discussion with child (3)
Observation (7)	The problem is the focus (8)	Observation (3)
Analysis of classroom practice (7)	The solution is the focus (5)	Analysis of classroom practice (3)
Discussion with child (4)	Reflexive process (4)	Discussion with parents (1)
Attending a review meeting (1)	Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/group (4)	
Delivering training (1)	Discussion with teacher/school staff (2)	
Cognitive assessment (1)	Information gathering (1)	

### 3.3 Pupil and parental involvement

#### 3.3.1 Importance of gathering children's views

The 1989 Children Act changed the law in relation to children's views, in that it embodied the principles of listening to children, and public policy and legislation which have followed, have further embedded this principle.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) was ratified in Britain in 1991. This highlighted the expectation that children should be able to express an opinion and have this opinion taken into account in relation to decisions which affect them. Article 12 of the Convention notes that adults need to "create the opportunities" for children to be able to express their views (Brady, 2007, p 32).

Ruddock and Flutter (2004) give three reasons why it is important to listen to student voice. The first stems from the children's rights movement which advocates that children should have a say in decisions which affect them. The second is related to school improvement, which encourages children to participate actively in their learning. The third reason is engagement and empowerment, which are part of the citizenship curriculum (DfE, 2007).

Gersch et al. (1993) focus specifically on why children should be involved in their own assessment, giving three reasons: namely they can contribute information about themselves; they have a right to be listened to; and legally they should be listened to as required at this time by the Children Act (1989) and the Code of Practice (1994), for example.

However, Gersch et al. (1993) reflect that this can only take place successfully if there is an ethos which respects and values children's views, and an appropriate mechanism through which their views can be obtained. Davey (2010) also reflects this view, stating that participation is a process, not a 'one-off' event, and that it should be woven into the culture of the school if it is to be successful.

Morton (1996) notes that "if children need to be motivated" (p 28) to make improvements to aspects of their learning or behaviour, then gathering their views about their progress is important. This increased motivation to complete their targets, Morton argues, comes from a "sense of ownership" (p 29) of the targets. This principle is one applied to consultation, in that if the teachers (consultees) have ownership of the targets they set with the educational psychologists (consultants) then they are more likely to achieve the targets set.

When teachers listen to the views of children and young people it can support teachers to "make what they teach more accessible" to them (Cook-Sather, 2002, p 3). The author goes on to argue that by listening and responding to pupil views, it can make the learning process more collaborative. Teachers respond to pupil perceptions about their learning and in turn pupils respond to the teaching in a way that enhances their learning.

The Code of Practice (DfES, 1994) recommends that schools involve children and young people in the assessment process and that their views are taken into account, indeed it goes on to state that the "effectiveness" of assessments and interventions will be "influenced" by the level of involvement of the child/young person (2:34, p 14). Roller (1998) states that when

children are involved in their own learning, they develop a greater understanding and are encouraged to take part in reviewing their progress against targets set.

The SEN Toolkit (DfES, 2001b) advocated that children and young people with special needs should be involved in decision making, such as setting and reviewing targets. Todd (2003) notes that educational psychologists often ask children their views in terms of what they like and dislike, but states that this is not enough as it does not enable children to contribute to any decisions which may be made about them. The Code of Practice (DfES, 2001a) notes that educational psychologists need to listen to and record children's views when writing reports.

Woolfson et al (2006) note that although there are "many variations" in the legislation requiring that children and young people should be consulted, they all adopt the same principle, that "consulting with children is not simply the preferred model, but is instead a requirement placed upon professionals" (p 338). Woolfson et al. (2006) advocated using methods "appropriate for children and young people" (p 339) and conducted focus groups with children and young people in order to determine how they would prefer to be consulted. The children and young people in this study wanted to be "fully informed and prepared for discussions about their needs", with the ability to decide who else should be involved and the mechanism through which their own views were gathered. Children and young people also wanted to ensure there was a "tangible outcome", as too many had experienced tokenistic consultation (p 350).

Harding and Atkinson (2009) note the importance of representing children and young people's views, which has been highlighted in recent legislation and research. However they

note that despite this, children and young people are often “left out of decision-making processes” (p 125) and that more should be done to encourage their participation.

Furthermore, Franklin and Sloper (2009) note that although in general pupil participation is increasing, children with special needs are less likely to be involved than those without.

Harding and Atkinson (2009) support this view, stating that opinions of children and young people with special needs are “rarely asked for” (p 126).

There can be potential conflict when listening to the views of children and parents, especially if their views differ. However, as Stoker (1996) acknowledges, it is better to discuss this potential difference of opinion openly and address it by sharing the views of all parties concerned.

Harding and Atkinson (2009) reflect on a number of factors which may help when gathering the views of children and young people, the first of which is relevant to this research. They advocate for the use of a “pro forma which offers scaling choices” which allows them to rate their views. They note that “numbers or smiley faces” could be used to support the scaling process. In this research I have incorporated scaling questions, using both numbers and faces (due to the age of the pupils involved), into an informal semi-structured interview format.

Spyrou (2011) states that time can often prevent those engaged in research from gaining a deeper insight into children’s views, in that there is often little time for “intensive and extensive interaction” (p 158). Adults have to interpret what children mean, which may not always be correct, especially if views are gathered once rather than over time. Within the limitations of research, the educational psychologists involved in this research gathered the

pupil views as a one off event. However, as noted by Fielding (2004), where possible, children's actual words should be used, rather than professional interpretations of these words. In this research, I have reported what children actually say although some interpretation may be used when looking at themes across each of the children involved.

### 3.3.2 Importance of parental involvement

The Warnock Report (DES, 1978) emphasised the importance of parental involvement in the education of children with special needs, noting that "the successful education of children with SEN is dependent upon the full involvement of their parents" (p 150). The report advocated that parents should be included more in decisions made regarding their children, working in partnership with those in education, but that this partnership could only be created if "professionals take note of what they say" (p 151). Thus parental opinion needed to be acted on by professionals, and their views should help to inform changes in practice in relation to their child.

Similar views are echoed in the Lamb Inquiry (DCSF, 2009). Lamb noted that "parents need to be listened to more" (p.1) and that their views should be taken into account. "Good, honest and open communication" (p 40) with parents was perceived as the key to the development of a positive working relationship between parents and professionals.

The Lamb Inquiry also noted that "the effective engagement of parents has an impact on children's progress" (p 40), suggesting that if parents are engaged in their child's learning and their views are acted upon by relevant professionals involved, this has a positive outcome for

pupils; this shared knowledge from both parents and professionals can help to make a difference to children.

I have used an informal method of collecting the views of parents, using a semi-structured interview (discussed in more detail in Section 4.4.2). Brady (2007) notes that both formal and informal methods can be used to gather views, and that informal methods do so in a way which encourages participants to express their opinions in a less structured way, which may better support authentic communication on their part.

### 3.3.3 Impact of recent legislation on pupil and parental involvement

The Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP, 2010) advise that EPs ensure that they “promote children’s views” (p 3) when engaging in direct work with children and that they “actively work with parents” (p 3) in terms of being a link between parents and other services. However, this does not go far enough with regard to what is expected in the new draft legislation in terms of involving both pupils and parents.

The Green Paper (DfE, 2011) stated the vision to “give parents confidence by giving them more control” (p 4) and ensuring that “parents are empowered” when making decisions which concern their child. Similarly, in 2012 the DfE state that “we want to give greater control to disabled children and young people themselves – to make them the ‘authors of their own life stories’ ” (p 10).

The proposed new legislation in the Children and Families Bill (DfE, 2013) aims to put children and families at the centre of decision making, moving away from the concept of ‘doing to or for’ parents and children, and more towards ‘doing with’ them. This will enable a greater degree of both pupil and parental participation. The DfE produced a pupil friendly version of the Bill (DfE, 2013b) to enable children and young people to access the information in the Bill in a child friendly format. This clearly states that children and young people, and their parents should have “more say about the help they get” (p 7) and that they should “take part as much as possible” (p 23) in the decision making regarding the support they receive.

The Indicative Draft of the Code of Practice (2013a) states that “the views and participation of children and young people and their parent/carer are central” and that a person-centred approach should be used to enable their views to be “at the heart” (p 11). The outcomes that children, young people and their families want should inform any decisions that will be made. Thus the views of parents and children should be driving any changes, which is a change in the focus of the process. The new Education, Health and Care Plan process will empower parents and young people, giving them more control over decisions that are made.

Therefore in the proposed legislation there is an expectation for service design and delivery to be fully informed by service user feedback.

As part of a recent service day on pupil participation (July 2013), the service in this study reflected on how, as educational psychologists, we gather and record views of pupils and to what extent we involve them in decision making. We used Hart’s Ladder of Participation



(Hart, 1992) to analyse our involvement. As outlined by Lodge (2005) at one of end of the continuum/ladder is “manipulation, decoration and tokenism” and at the other end are “more consultative and child led initiatives” (p 130). A similar continuum of pupil participation is described by Jelly et al. (2000). Using Hart’s Ladder of Participation (Hart, 1992) the majority of educational psychologists in the service reflected that we are at rung three of the Ladder, namely tokenism (adult led activities in which children may be consulted with minimal opportunities to feedback). If we are to move up the Ladder, which the proposed changes in legislation would suggest is necessary, children and young people would need to be more involved in the decision making.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY**

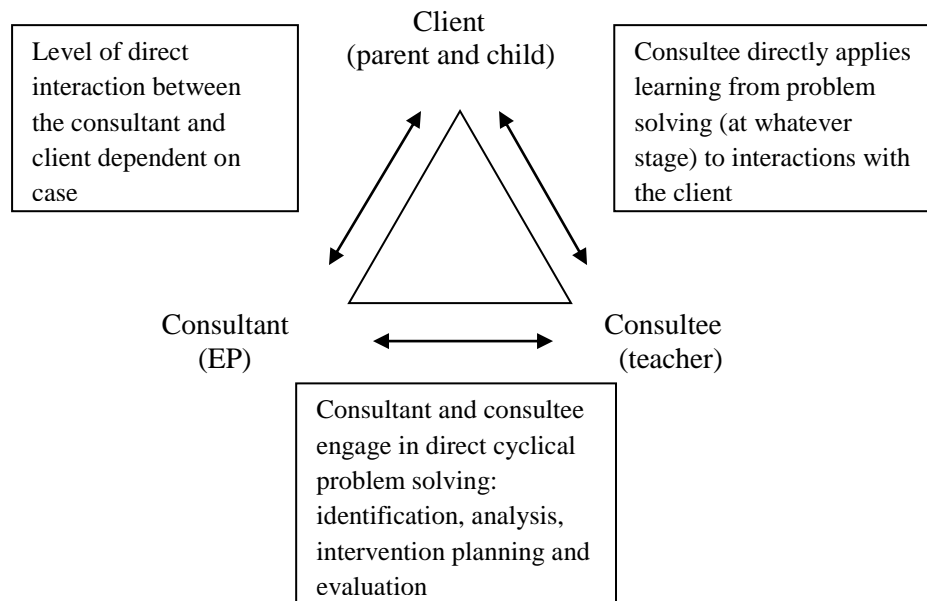
### **4.1 Research Aims**

As noted in Section 1.4, the current study aimed to explore the consultation model of service delivery, building upon numerous studies already carried out. However, the focus of previous research of the consultation process had predominantly fallen on the perceptions of the class teacher as the consultee and/or client, and to a lesser extent parents.

The studies presented in Chapter Two go some way toward evaluating the impact of consultation in relation to its impact on teachers' perceptions of either their own, or the psychologist's practice. One of the studies (MacHardy et al., 1997) explored parental perceptions, although limited conclusions could be drawn from the small sample and the slender information in the report detailing the parental views. Previous studies have used largely questionnaire-based techniques or semi-structured interviews in order to elicit views of consultees.

My study aims to gather the views of EPs (as consultants), teachers (as consultees) and parents and pupils (as clients), within the broad working relationship between each, as illustrated in Figure 4.1. I have used semi-structured interviews to evaluate the process of consultation and Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME) to evaluate the perceived outcomes.

Figure 4.1: The Consultation Triad and Challenges for Efficacy Research (Kennedy et al, 2009, p 607)



The current research study focuses on the following areas:

- the impact of consultation on teachers' perceptions of their ability to make a difference with regard to children's progress in learning or behaviour;
- the impact of consultation on parents' perceptions of their child's subsequent progress;
- the impact of the consultation process on pupils' perceptions of their progress; and
- the perceptions and beliefs of EPs about the skills and other conditions needed to enable the consultation process to be effective in facilitating change for children.

In order to gather this information I used a case study design, using multiple cases (Thomas, 2010a). I planned to recruit four educational psychologists from the EP service, with each EP using a set of consistent methods (semi-structured interviews which, in every case, included a scaling exercise) with the research data comprising the evaluation data each EP collated from

three triads including the focus child, the child’s parent(s) and the teacher consultee, augmented by the interviews I conducted with each EP. In the event, recruitment proved a significant challenge, for reasons outlined more fully in Section 4.7.1, so the actual research sample comprised three EPs, two of whom worked with two triads (child, parent, teacher) and one of whom worked with one triad. The planned design and the actual design are illustrated in Figures 4.2 and 4.3 respectively.

Figure 4.2 Planned multiple case study design

(EP: educational psychologist; CS: case study; YP: young person; T: teacher; P: parent)

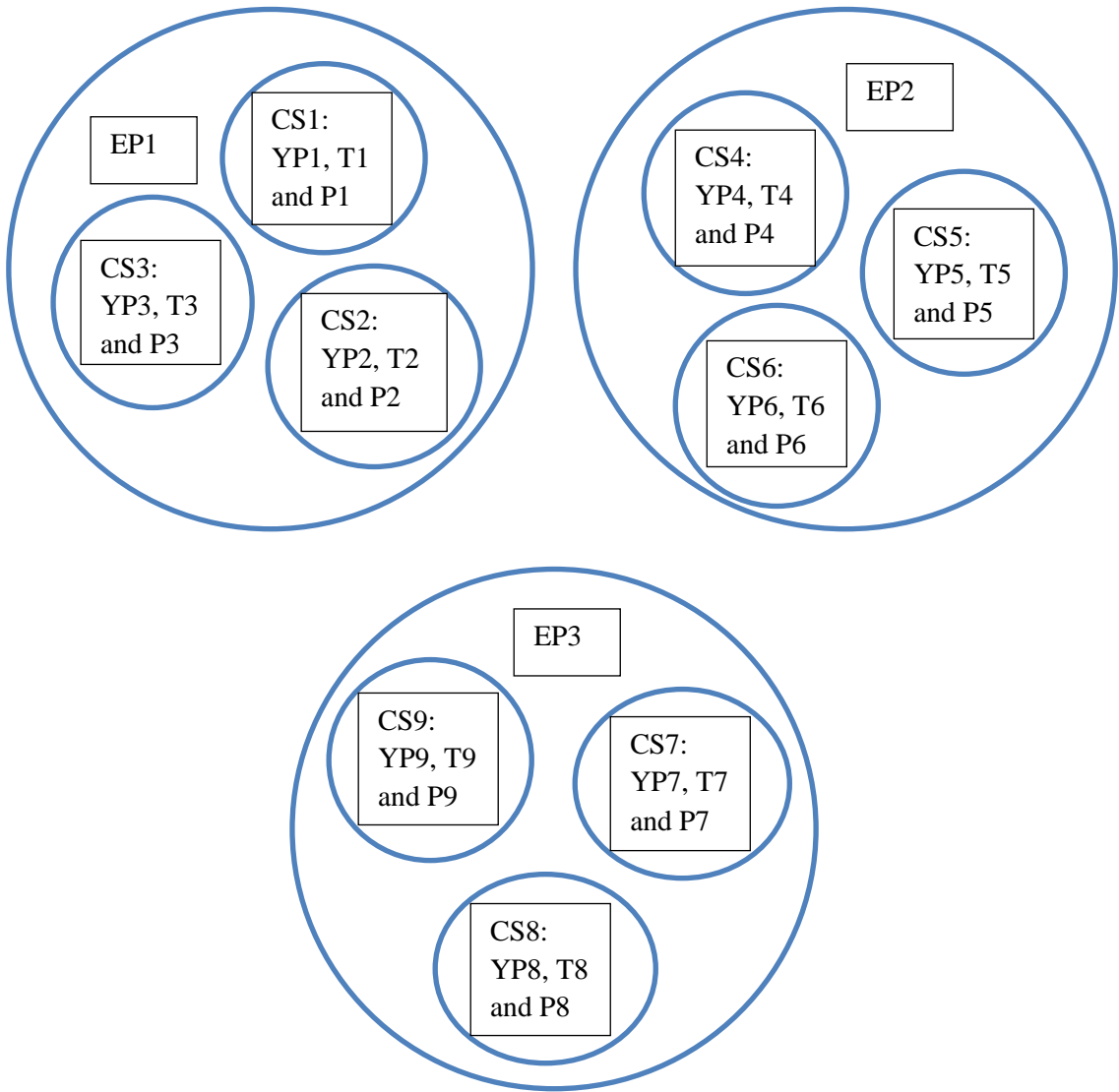
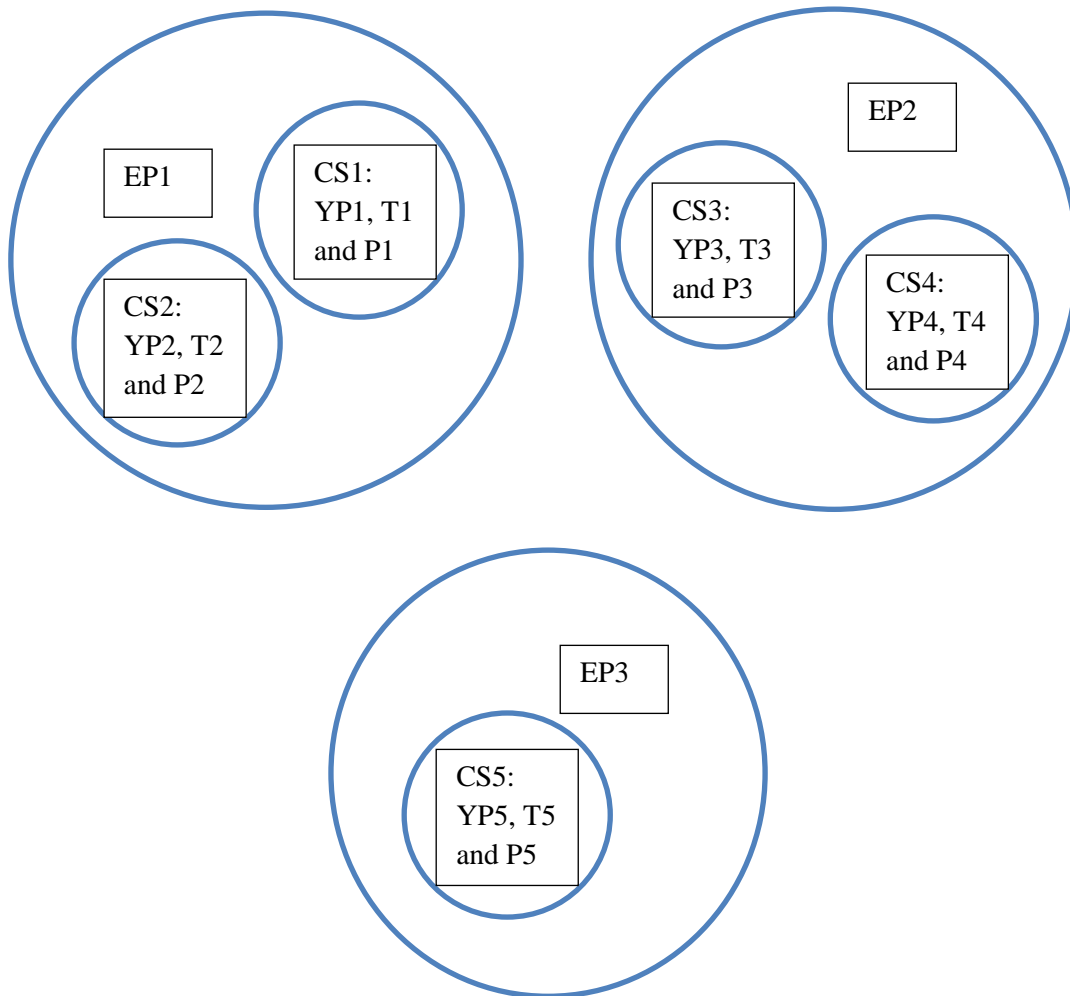


Figure 4.3 Actual multiple case study design

(EP: educational psychologist; CS: case study; YP: young person; T: teacher; P: parent)



## 4.2 Epistemological Stance

“Ontological assumptions give rise to epistemological assumptions; these, in turn, give rise to methodological considerations; and these, in turn, give rise to issues of instrumentation and data collection.”

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995) in Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2000, p 3

Moore (2005) gives a useful description of the above terms which helps to expand on their definitions and more importantly reflects their role within this research. Ontology is “related to questions about the nature of being” (p 106) and about how we form reality. Moore describes two views, and questions about these views are concerned with epistemology. He defines epistemology as “explanatory principles that underpin particular bodies of knowledge” which are concerned with both “knowledge and the nature of the relationship between the knower (for example, the researcher or practitioner) and what can be known” (p 106). The two main assumptions are explained by positivism (where it is assumed there is a truth, a reality that can be discovered which is objective) or social constructionism (whereby reality is constructed and subjective). The methodological questions which lead on from this are dependent on both the ontological and epistemological stance of the researcher.

In this research I take a social constructionist stance, believing that the “inescapable mutual exchange of understanding” (Moore, 2005, p 110) that takes place between the Educational Psychologist (consultant) and teacher (consultee) enables change to occur. Important to social constructionism and consultation are the need to be a reflective practitioner, the relationship between the educational psychologist and those with whom they are consulting and the dialogue within the consultative interaction.

Social constructionism is concerned with “explicating the processes by which people come to describe, explain, or otherwise account for the world in which they live” (Gergen, 1985, quoted in Norwich, 2000, p 90). It emphasises the salience of the interactions between people and how together they construct meaning. The interpretation of this shared meaning is critical to our understanding. Burr (2003) supports this view, noting that through our “daily actions”

our “versions of knowledge become fabricated” (p 4) and that knowledge is not something an individual has but “something that people do together” (p 9).

Orford (2008) notes that social constructionism is interested in “how discourses are constructed as well as how they are constructive of shared meanings and how they support joint actions”, thus social constructionism is about “generating meaning together” (p 47).

Social constructionism entails the researcher understanding the “multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge” (Robson, 2002, p 27). Any data are a “product of joint respondent-researcher interaction”, not just the viewpoints of the respondent (Huberman and Miles, 2002, quoted in Hill, 2006, p 70). The participants in the research are part of the construction of reality; hence the research questions to be asked in this research could not be fully determined prior to undertaking the process.

Research within this perspective is about identifying ways of constructing reality and exploring how these constructions are used (Willig, 2008). What we “perceive and experience” is not a “direct reflection” of reality, but is an interpretation of it (p 7).

“Researchers construct versions of the world through their activities as social and political subjects, and do not merely reflect facts with a self-evident objective reality”.

Henwood, 1996, p 27

Clarke and Jenner (2006) discuss social constructionism in relation to consultation approaches. They note that as social constructionism “recognises discourses underpinning interactions”, it affords a “major influence” on consultation approaches (p 187), allowing

those involved to reflect on the processes in which they are engaged, and acknowledging how their own constructs may affect the interaction.

A criticism of the constructionist approach is that generalisations cannot be drawn from any conclusions the researcher may state, due to the lack of experimental design. Leadbetter (2002) notes another criticism regarding the extent to which “subjective knowledge, perceptions and intentions owned by individuals can be brought together in any meaningful way” (p 24) in order to provide a source of knowledge which can be used and generalised.

However, the purpose of this research is to explore the perceptions of the individuals involved, in order to inform theory development. As noted in section 5.4.1, while no claim is made that the results of the current study would generalise to other settings, cautious claims *are* made for theoretical generalisation of argument re: the impact which consultation may have, and the conditions necessary for effective consultative relationships, process and outcomes.

Fox (2002) notes that as a profession, educational psychology appears to be moving towards a “constructional perspective” and away from a “positivist position” (p 44). However, he notes that this shift may create “substantial issues” for the profession in the current climate of “evidenced-based practice” (p 44). However, I would challenge this perception that a social constructionist perspective would create problems with regard to demonstrating how educational psychology involvement has made a difference. In section 4.3 I offer further discussion of how evaluation approaches may be combined with consultation in order to begin to demonstrate the perceived impact of consultation approaches.



In a later paper, Fox (2003) is critical of the “variations in practice” (p 92) across educational psychology services, arguing that this is due to the lack of evidenced-based practice. The evidence base should inform practice and enable professionals to monitor and evaluate their practice. Fox notes some reluctance from some educational psychologists to engage in evidence-based practice, listing a number of possible reasons. One of those reasons is the epistemological stance, as constructionism claims that “reality is constructed by us in different ways” (p 97) and therefore every situation is different and generalisations cannot be drawn. He notes that a constructionist stance may be helpful to clients, enabling them to reframe concerns. However, Fox also notes the difficulty that may occur for educational psychologists working in local authorities, who are expected to make “objective judgments” (p 101) about children with special educational needs. Fox does suggest that by looking at “outcome measures” (p 101) this may help to establish an evidence base regarding effective models of practice.

As Macready (1997) notes, from a social constructionist perspective, “meaning is regarded as a continually emerging outcome of interactional processes” (p 130), which challenges the idea that objective judgments can be made, as the “presuppositions of the observer” (p 130) are part of what is observed.

Macready uses two diagrams to illustrate how we (can/may) make sense of the social world, the first looking at our individual meaning making, the second looking at the interaction with others. Both are shown below in Figures 4.4 and 4.5.

Figure 4.4: The Narrative Metaphor Figure 1 (Macready, 1997, p 130).

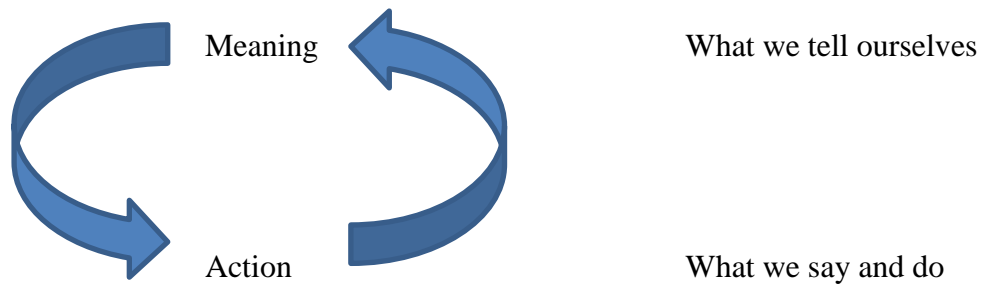
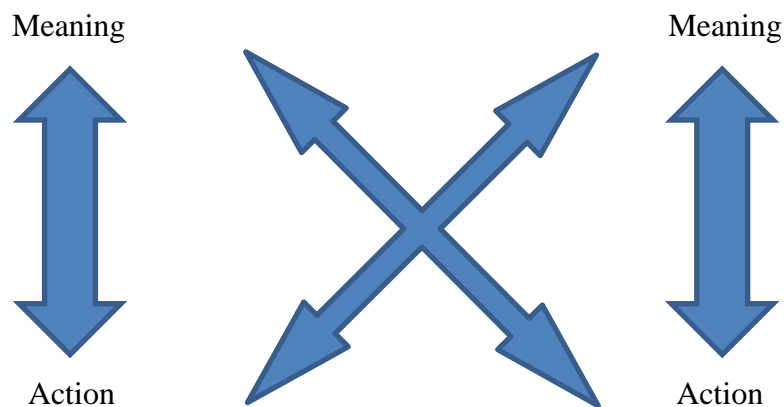


Figure 4.5: The Narrative Metaphor Figure 2 (Macready, 1997, p 131).



Macready notes that different conversations will enable “different opportunities” (p 132) to revisit and revise the concerns, reforming them together during the conversations within a consultation process. This can be done using a variety of approaches within the consultation framework, such as solution-focused approaches or narrative approaches. This model informed my decision to engage the EPs as research practitioners, as the ‘interactional effects’ of “meaning, action and context” have an influence on the process of change (p 130). Therefore, I judged that using a researcher who was not part of the context would not

facilitate an equivalent level of involvement, or afford similar opportunities for the co-construction of shared meaning. The EPs and the teacher consultees engage in a process “involving interpretation and coherence making” (p 131), constructing a shared understanding of a concern and contingent shared actions and shared solution to a concern. By exploring issues together through a consultation approach, different aspects of conversation would create “different opportunities” for the “re-authoring” of the problem, enabling different solutions to be employed (p 132).

Macready concludes by saying that social constructionism provides “a model” for consultation”, where the EP acts in a way which enables “possibilities for developing useful meanings and useful actions” (p 133).

#### 4.3 Evaluation Methodologies

Evaluation aims to assess the “effects and effectiveness of something” (Robson, 2002, p 202): in this research this is a model of service delivery. As mentioned in Chapter 3.1.4, the increasing importance of accountability has led to acceptance of the need to critically assess the worth and value of aspects of service delivery, to ensure services are meeting the needs of customers and clients. In this research, consultation is the model of service delivery evaluated in terms of the effectiveness and appropriateness of both process and outcomes, as described below.

Evaluation of consultation is concerned with the process in terms of looking at “what actually occurs” (Robson, 2002, p 208) during the consultation process; it is important that the researcher should avoid making assumptions about what *should* be happening rather than

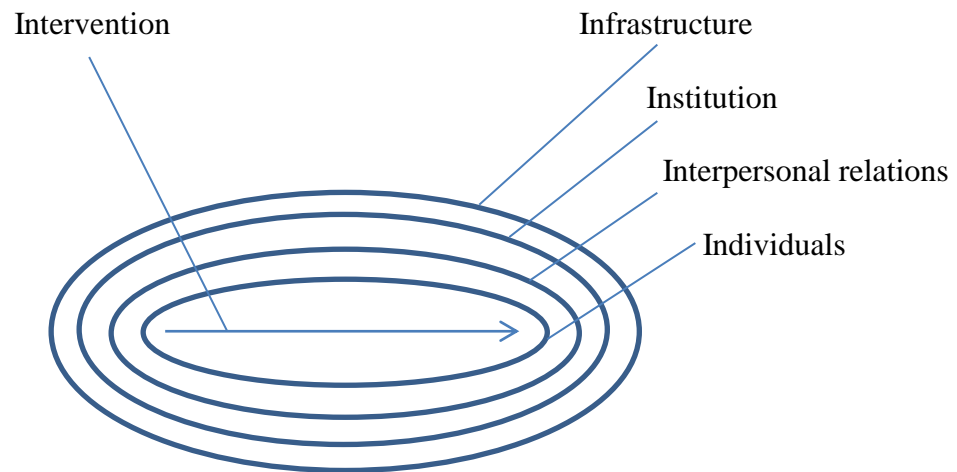
looking at what *is* actually happening. This research is concerned with the perceptions of the educational psychologists regarding what the consultation process involves and particularly what is perceived by service users (consultees and/or clients) as making a difference with regard to pupil progress. These perceptions about the consultation process have been obtained through semi-structured interviews with the three educational psychologists involved, with interview transcripts then analysed thematically.

The traditional view of evaluation has been principally concerned with outcomes, namely how far a programme, or intervention meets the objectives set (Pawson and Tilley, 1997). It is now recognised that this covers only one aspect of evaluation, and is helpfully complemented by the evaluation of the process. In this research, Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME), which has its roots in Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) is used to support the educational psychologists (consultants) and the teachers (consultees) to set appropriate targets to monitor and evaluate, in order to demonstrate progress.

When evaluating consultation it would be very difficult to conduct a classical pre and post-intervention evaluation, as the independent variables affecting outcomes could not be rigorously controlled, or even identified, due to the complex range of influences operating alongside the intervention process. Pawson (2006) notes that all programmes are inherently “porous embedded in (open) social systems” (p 30); therefore the significant influence of the context in which any intervention takes place is important and should be considered.

Pawson (2006) goes on to note that “interventions are leaky” (p 32) in that during the course of a process or intervention, things change due to the effects of the infrastructure, the institution, interpersonal relations and individuals, as illustrated in Figure 4.6 below.

Figure 4.6: The intervention as the product of its context (Pawson, 2006, p 32)



Thus it is difficult to evaluate if, how and under what conditions a ‘programme’ or intervention (such as consultation) works, using traditional outcome evaluation methods; ‘softer’, ecologically sensitive methods are needed, capable of evaluating an intervention process and its outcomes. In this research, semi-structured interviews and TME are used to elicit ecologically valid evaluative feedback.

Sayer (2000, p 77) summarises how we make sense of data within social systems:

“Social systems are always open and usually complex and messy. Unlike some of the natural sciences, we cannot isolate out these components and examine them under controlled conditions. We therefore have to rely on abstraction and careful conceptualisation, on attempting to abstract out the various components or influences in our heads, and only when we have done this and considered how they combine and interact can we expect to return to the concrete, many-sided object and make sense of it.”

Sections 4.4 and 4.5 have a differential focus on the methods used to achieve these complementary, but distinctive purposes, namely evaluating the consultation process and evaluating outcomes.

#### 4.4 Evaluating the Consultation Process

##### 4.4.1 Case study design

“A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context is not clearly evident”

Yin, 2008, p18

In this research I have used a case study design in order to explore consultation, as this methodology has philosophical underpinnings in social constructionism, in that “truth is relative and dependent on one’s perspective” (Baxter and Jack, 2008, p 545). Through case studies, the researcher and participants work closely together in order to construct meaning. Participants describe their views, enabling the researcher to have a better understanding of their actions.

Yin (2003) clarifies that a case study approach should be used when (a) the focus of the study is asking ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, (b) the behaviour of participants cannot be manipulated, (c) context is important to the study and when (d) the boundary is not clear between the phenomenon and context.

Simons (2009) notes that the purpose of a case study design is to “generate in-depth understanding” of the situation in order to “generate knowledge” about that situation which may then inform changes to both policy and practice (p 21).

Thomas (2010a) highlights that a case study does not aim to provide generalizable knowledge, rather case study design is interested in the “how and why” something happens (p 4), the focus being on “one thing looked at from many angles” (p 9). The aim is to create a “rich picture” (p 21) with insights coming from the different kinds of information presented. Thomas (2010b) notes that the case study offers an understanding “presented from another’s ‘horizon of meaning’, but understood from one’s own” (p 12).

Thomas (2010a) goes on to note that case study should include the following:

Investigates...	One case or a small number of cases
Data are collected and analysed about...	A large number of features of each case
Study of...	Naturally occurring cases where the aim is not to control variables
Qualification of data...	Is not a priority
Using...	Many methods and sources of data
Aiming to...	Look at relationships and processes

Baxter and Jack (2008) note some of the difficulties with reporting case studies, due to the complex nature of the approach. In this study I used semi-structured interviews with three EPs and have analysed the interview transcripts using thematic analysis, discussed in more detail in Section 4.4.3. The purpose of studying more than a single case was to enhance what Robson (2002) calls “analytic generalisation” (p 183) as opposed to statistical generalisation, in that the cases help to support the theory about what is happening during, in this study, consultation.

#### 4.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

I worked collaboratively with the EP volunteers in order to co-construct the interview questions for teachers, parents and pupils. This ensured all EP participants were confident with the questions they would be asking staff, parents and pupils. Thus although I had a proposal of what questions might be asked, I anticipated changes to my proposals.

I also asked the EP participants to co-construct the questions I would be asking them at the end of the consultation period, with the intention that participants were confident in the integrity and meaning of the questions they would be asked about the consultation process and its impact, to ascertain their views about using consultation, and the utility of TME as a method of quantitative evaluation in relation to outcomes of the consultation model of service delivery.

With regard to semi-structured interviews Robson (2002) notes that they:

- allow “flexibility of response” (p 270);
- involve pre written questions, the order of which can be changed to suite the interviewee responses;
- allow for modification of the questions based on the interviewers perception of what is appropriate in each situation; and
- encourage participation and involvement due to the presence of the interviewer.

Therefore the semi-structured interview allows a degree of flexibility whilst using a standard format (Busse and Beaver, 2000) affording the interviewer opportunities to modify questions



to make them more appropriate in situ, and to ask follow-up questions to clarify answers or further explore areas of emerging interest.

However, the disadvantages of semi-structured interviews include:

- they are time consuming, however, as there would be 4 EPs involved in the project, I judged that this would not be problematic in this research;
- risks of social desirability effects in the responses offered to the researcher;
- risks of interviewer effects, requiring the interviewer to be aware of how their behaviour and responses may affect the discussion;
- the lack of confidentiality and direct exposure to the interviewer perhaps rendering interviewees vulnerable and needing reassurance that their responses will be anonymous; and
- responses, if audio-recorded, being time consuming to transcribe and analyse.

The questions asked in a semi-structured interview should enable the participants to reflect and comment on the subject, providing the interviewer with useful information in relation to the chosen themes (Willig, 2008).

In this research, potential strengths were harnessed by the fact the semi-structured interview questions were co-constructed by the researcher and the EPs, which included some suggested supplementary questions which could be asked to ascertain more information from the interviewees. However, the EPs also understood that they were able to use the format flexibly,

asking questions in an order which appeared most natural to the discussion and asking additional questions as required.

The limitations were addressed by working with a small sample, which kept the data set manageable. Letters sent to all those who participated in the research clarified that confidentiality would be protected; for my own part, anonymity was assured since I did not at any time know which schools, teachers, parents or pupils were involved in the research as codes or pseudonyms were used throughout. The audio-recordings of the interviews were transcribed for me, although I thoroughly checked each audio-recording and amended the corresponding transcription as necessary, enabling more time to be spent on analysis of the data.

#### 4.4.3 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis was derived from the tradition of content analysis, which involved establishing categories and counting the instances in which each occurred in the text. Critics judged the method ‘trite’ as it relied exclusively on the frequency of the outcomes generated (Joffe, 2012, p 210). Thematic analysis moved beyond this to looking at more implicit themes and structures, allowing the analysis to be more subtle and complex.

“Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p 79). It illustrates important themes in the description of what is being studied, the end result of which should highlight the most salient groups of meanings presented in a data set (Joffe, 2012).

A theme refers to a pattern of meaning which is found in the data, where emerging themes become categories for analysis (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane, 2006). The content of a theme may be “manifest”, in that it is explicitly stated, or “latent” in that it is implied by what has been said. Therefore themes can be patterns of both explicit and implicit content (Joffe, 2012, p 209).

Joffe (2012) also notes the distinction between inductive and deductive methods of thematic analysis (referred to as ‘bottom up’ or ‘top down’ methods by Braun and Clarke, 2006). If the themes are drawn from a “theoretical idea” which the researcher brings to the research, they are said to be deductive. If the themes stem from “the raw data itself”, without trying to fit these into a pre-existing frame, this is said to be inductive. Joffe (2012) argues that the strength of thematic analysis is that it should draw upon both approaches in that “one goes to the data with certain preconceived categories derived from theories, yet one also remains open to new concepts that emerge” (p 210).

Thematic analysis is a useful method within the epistemological stance of social constructionism; in particular, an inductive thematic analysis enables themes to emerge from the data independently of the researcher’s preconceived ideas about what the data should contain. Inductive analysis allows themes to emerge that might provide some indication that there are some commonalities in the way reality is experienced and an insight into the processes which may influence this. However, Braun and Clarke (2006) emphasised that whilst inductive thematic analysis is data-driven, as opposed to theory-driven, the researcher’s own epistemological position will influence the way in which themes are identified.

There are, as Joffe (2012) notes, “surprisingly few” published guides about how to carry out a thematic analysis; although it is often used in research, there is usually little specification concerning the techniques used. The guides I have referred to are Joffe (2012), Braun and Clarke (2006), Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) and Attride-Stirling (2001), which discuss similar, albeit different, steps in the process, although as noted by Braun and Clarke (2006) there does not appear to be a clear agreement about what a thematic analysis is, or how to conduct one. However, some explanations are clearer, more detailed than others. Joffe (2012) explains the initial coding process well and discusses reliability of the process, but the next steps following the initial coding are unclear, and the process appears to move from the initial coding to the themes, with no explanation of the steps in between.

Joffe (2012), Braun and Clarke (2006), Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) and Attride-Stirling (2001) agree that once data have been gathered (in this case, interviews completed and transcribed), information needs to be read and re-read and a “coding frame” needs to be applied in order to be able to classify and examine the data. It is important that “one devises a coding frame that will enable one to answer one’s research question(s) in a balanced manner” (Joffe, 2012, p 216).

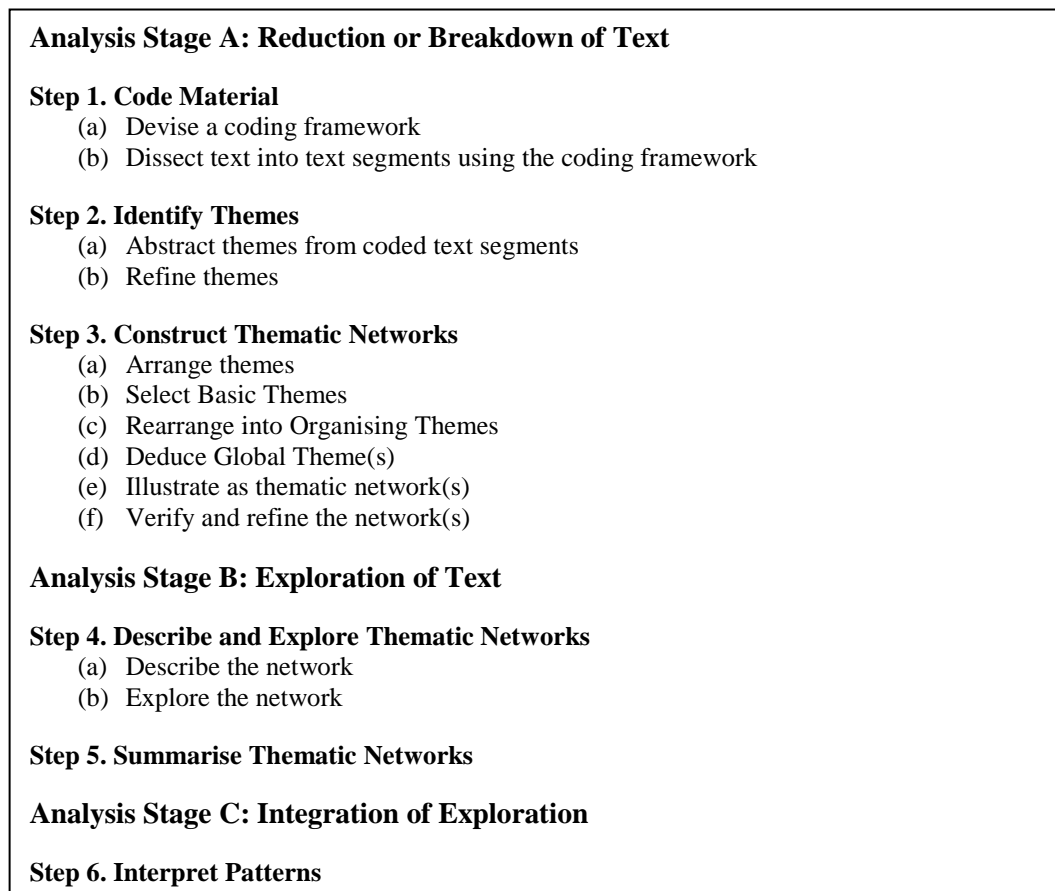
Braun and Clarke (2006), Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) and Attride-Stirling (2001), also agree that a theme “captures something important within the data” regarding the research questions, and demonstrates “patterned response or meaning” within the data. The “keyness” of a theme is therefore not dependent on anything quantifiable but on whether the theme captures something in relation to the overall research question (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p 82). What is important is the consistency with which the method chosen is applied throughout the

analysis. However, what determines a theme is dependent on researcher judgment, there are no prescriptive methods, hence the importance of reliability as discussed below.

Joffe (2012) discusses the importance of reliability within a coding framework, noting that a way to ascertain this is by having two independent coders look at the data, which should be applied to least 10-20% of the data. Joffe (2012) notes that if inter-rater reliability is above 75% then the coding framework is regarded as “transparent and reliable” (P 216). If there are any inconsistencies, relevant codes should be redefined. In this study, two people looked at the coding, one was part of the research (EP1) in order to check that the codes were consistent with the expectations of EP1, and another EP who was not involved in any other aspect of the research. This is discussed further in section 4.7.4

Where the above mentioned accounts differ is that Braun and Clarke (2006) and Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) appear to end up with a thematic map showing two levels of overarching themes and sub-themes, whereas Attride-Stirling (2001) end up with a thematic map showing basic themes, organising themes and global themes. Although very similar, my preferred model, due to the clarity of explanation and the applicability to my own research was the Attride-Stirling (2001) model of thematic analysis, which is summarised in Figure 4.7 overleaf.

Figure 4.7: Steps in analyses employing thematic networks (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p 391).



Braun and Clarke (2006) note that the process of a thematic analysis is not linear, in that the process does not move straight from one phase to the next. Rather, they describe it as a “recursive process” (p 86) as the analysis requires the researcher to move back and forward through the phases.

## 4.5 Evaluating Outcomes

### 4.5.1 Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS)

Baxter and Frederickson (2005) develop a proposal for how it might be viable to demonstrate improved outcomes of consultation/indirect models of service delivery for pupils, noting that there is increased emphasis on the “child as client” (p 95) which could undermine the

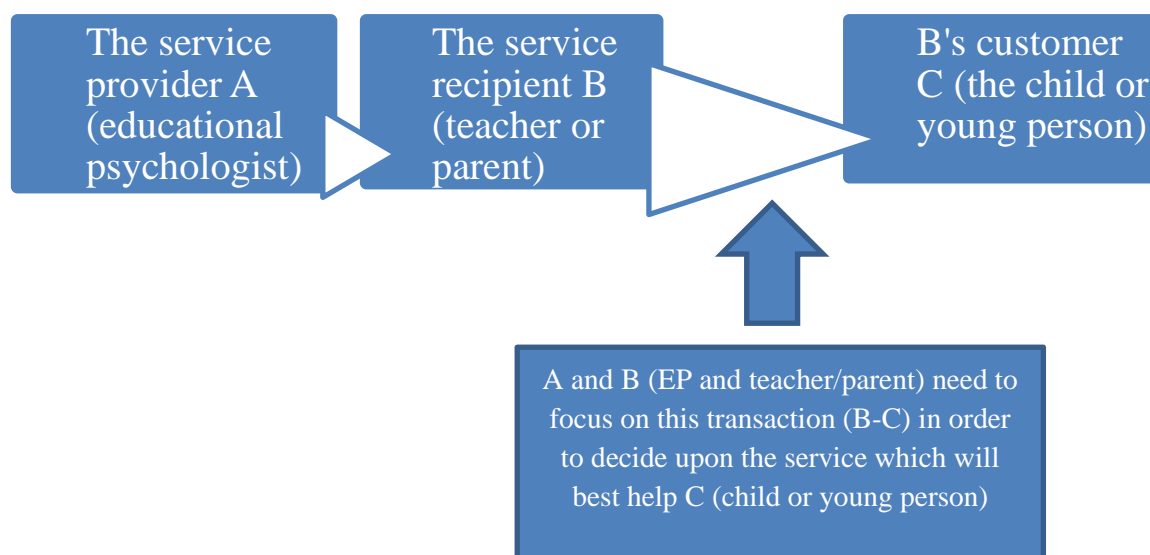
consultation model, since previous methods of evaluation (through satisfaction surveys of adults) have failed to demonstrate positive impact on children. They note that the Government policies were, at this time, driving towards children having more influence about how services should be delivered in the future: argument which retains contemporary relevance. Despite this article being written in 2005, the predications of Baxter and Frederickson (2005) are realised in the requirements of the Children and Families Bill (2013). Baxter and Frederickson note the lack of evidence to demonstrate what difference educational psychologists make to children's development and learning. In a climate in which the deployment of resources is subject to increasing scrutiny, educational psychologists will need to gather this evidence to demonstrate that their involvement does make a difference, and what "value the profession is adding" (p 93) to the development of children and young people.

Baxter and Frederickson (2005) note that when using the consultation model, which many services had, by this time adopted, educational psychologists had relied on adult satisfaction surveys, as teachers were seen as the primary clients, as noted, for example, by Dickinson (2000). They argue that if the focus is to shift, as mentioned above, to the child as the client, then educational psychologists need to consider how they may assess the impact of consultation in terms of "value added" to children and young people (p 95), rather than just through adult satisfaction surveys.

However, they go on to illustrate a 'service business concept' in which the question "who is my customer's customer" (p 95) is used to talk about the consultation model; the customer is the teacher/parent and the customer's customer (or primary client) is the child. Therefore a school staff may be the direct recipient of consultation, but the work carried out should impact

on the child, albeit indirectly. They note that using this model, when undertaking consultation with teachers, the key questions should not be about what teachers want for themselves, but what they want to achieve for the child or young person about whom they are consulting the EP, so that the skills of the educational psychologist can be deployed to support pupil achievement, as shown in Figure 4.8.

Figure 4.8: The service business model (from Checkland and Scholes, 1993) in Baxter and Frederickson (2005, p 96) with my additions in brackets.



Baxter & Frederickson (2005) go on to suggest Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) as one commended method of evaluating practice, whereby the impact of consultation on pupil progress could be evaluated, although they do not elaborate on the approach.



GAS was initially developed by clinical psychologists to evaluate the outcomes of interventions (Kiresuk and Sherman, 1968). The approach can assess the impact of change in relation to any target set.

Frederickson (2002) notes that there was at this time, increased emphasis from the DfEE (2000) for educational psychologists to demonstrate the progress individuals pupil make in response to interventions, by regular monitoring and follow up of any work undertaken. Frederickson argues that GAS could “significantly assist EPs in evaluating individual outcomes” (p 107) as it can assess change which may be produced by any intervention. GAS consists of 9 steps, as outlined in Frederickson 2002, p 108:

1. Identify the issues that will be the focus of the intervention
2. Translate the selected problems into at least 3 goals
3. Chose a brief title for each goal
4. Select an indicator for each goal
5. Specify the expected level of outcome for the goal
6. Review the expected level of outcome
7. Specify somewhat more and somewhat less than expected levels of outcome for the goal
8. Specify much more and much less than expected than levels of outcome for the goal
9. Repeat the 8 scaling steps for each 3 small goals

The expected level of outcome is scored as 0; somewhat more and somewhat less than expected as 1 and -1 respectively; and much more or much less as 2 or -2. Scores can be summed and transformed to T-scores, to facilitate more sophisticated levels of composite

qualitative analysis of the impact of consultation-based services, and of whether some goals are more readily achieved than others, using consultation as a change mechanism.

The positive aspects of GAS are that:

- it is individualised to each situation, with the goals clearly agreed and articulated at the beginning of any intervention;
- collaboration between all parties involved is required;
- adequate progress is measured against the goals set; and
- reliability and validity of scores have been investigated, showing sound inter-rater reliability

Imich and Roberts (1990) talk about GAS as a “programme evaluation approach, which aims to develop a scaling process for evaluating pre-determined levels of goal attainment” (p 203).

It enables the rating of measurable outcomes on a scale from ‘most favourable’ to ‘least favourable’ outcomes, over an agreed period of time.

Roach and Elliott (2005) note the usefulness of GAS in relation to showing changes in both “academic and social behaviours” (p 8). They argue that the outcome-evaluation method affords a user-friendly tool for monitoring progress and for verifying the need for additional intervention, which can be used with teachers and pupils in order to monitor progress.

#### 4.5.2 Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)

A critique of the GAS methodology comes from Hart (2009), who evaluated the use of the approach in an EPS in the West Midlands, which was using GAS to evaluate methods of

service delivery, showing the impact the EPS was having on children and young people, largely through its consultation-based model of service delivery. Although Hart found GAS a useful means of engaging consultees and noted that it “can be a tool that facilitates the consultation process” (p 19), he goes on to say that some of its benefits in turn made it vulnerable to criticism “on the grounds of subjectivity, lack of norm-referencing and potential for bias” (p 19). He also develops a critique of the goal setting, noting that the process will be flawed if robust baseline data are not collected, since the setting of goals will not be grounded in evidence which can assure ambitious but realistic goals are set, supported by methods which are ecologically valid and for which some evidence exists that the child will engage and benefit.

Dunsmuir et al. (2009) also identify some concerns when using GAS, noting the difficulties that can arise trying to define a goal with five different levels when working with teachers, parents and pupils.

Hart (2009) mentions another similar approach, Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME) which has been developed as a modified version of Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) and is considered more user-friendly. Targets are set at only two levels, a baseline and target, with progress monitored on a Likert scale from 1 to 10. The baseline measure is usually towards the lower end of the scale, and the expected outcome towards the middle of the scale, which enables progress to exceed the expected target. The approach was, like GAS, developed as a means of evaluating the impact of indirect approaches to intervention by EPs, as is the case within a consultation model. The data units within TME are subjective in their calibration and the rating process too, requires subjective judgement.

Currently there are only two published reports on the use of TME (Dunsmuir et al., 2009 and Monsen et al., 2009) so the evidence in relation to reliability and validity is limited. However, Dunsmuir et al. state that with TME “the strengths of GAS are maintained but the TME system is more streamlined and user friendly” (p 67).

Dunsmuir et al. (2009) note that TME developed from the need to have an effective method for evaluating the consultation process, which could itself be embedded within a consultation framework. It was adapted from GAS in order to overcome some of the difficulties with GAS in educational research, particularly the issue of the process being time-consuming to complete. The TME scale “provides interval level measurements that parallel that of GAS” (p 57).

Dunsmuir et al. (2009) note that “the detail of the action plan (agreed between the consultant and the consultee, to address meaningful targets set for the child) becomes embedded into the evaluation process” (p 57) and that TME can be completed with staff, families and children. The targets are agreed by the consultant and the consultee at the outset of the intervention, with an agreement about how the outcomes will be evaluated. Dunsmuir et al. note that pupil progress could be evidenced at the point of the review session when the intervention was evaluated.

The use of the 10 point Likert scale is described in more detail by Dunsmuir et al. (2009) and Monsen et al. (2009); both sets of authors note that agreed targets should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-limited) and that once formulated, a baseline rating should be indicated on the 10 point scale, marked with a letter B (for baseline).

It is expected the baseline would be towards the lower end of the scale. A review date should be set, and the consultee should indicate on the 10 point scale where they expect the child’s level of progress to be at the review date, circled and marked with E (expected level). It is felt this should be between 6 and 8 on the scale in order that the child’s actual progress could exceed or be lower than the expected target. At the review meeting, the child’s actual progress should be discussed and a number circled and marked with A (actual). Comparisons can then be made between expected and actual progress.

An example of this is shown below (Dunsmuir et al., p 70).

<b>Target:</b> To be able to remain on task for three minutes with achievable task and no adult prompts										
		<b>B</b>				<b>A</b>	<b>E</b>			
Rating:	1	(2)	3	4	5	(6)	(7)	8	9	10
<i>Descriptor of baseline level:</i> On task for one minute maximum without prompts										
<i>Descriptor of level achieved:</i> On task for two minutes on average after starting task, and occasionally three minutes in numeracy										

In my research I used TME to evaluate the consultation process from the perspective of EPs, teachers, parents and pupils. I did this through training a number of school EPs (four) in using TME, and asking them to use the approach in a number of consultation situations (two different scenarios each). The TME questions have been added to our service consultation record form (Appendix 4). Further details of the study design are outlined in Section 4.7.

#### 4.6 Ethical considerations

All the stages of my research should reflect the Code of Ethics of the British Psychological Society (BPS, 2009) and the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC, 2012). I also

needed to take into account the Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research published by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011). The ways in which I endeavoured to ensure the ethical integrity of all stages of my research can be seen in the Ethics Form as Appendix 5.

EP colleagues from my employing LA EPS comprise the primary research sample from whom I elicited research data, while each EP in turn elicited data from a small sample of professional colleagues (the teachers(s) who engaged in the consultation with each EP), parents and pupils, to whom s/he provided a service through the medium of consultation, over a five month period. I worked together with the participating EPs to negotiate the number of cases with which each felt able to engage for the purposes of this research.

I considered how my findings were to be presented so that individuals cannot be identified, but that groups (parents, teachers etc.) can still be referred to and identified in order to be able to draw any meaningful conclusions about perceptions of consultation.

The EPs in the study were not anonymous to me as the researcher; however their confidentiality has been protected. No names have been reported in the write up of the study; EP participants have been referred to in a way that safeguards their anonymity (using the code EP1, EP2 or EP3). It has not been necessary to exclude material where its inclusion might have compromised confidentiality.

The teachers, parents and children are anonymous to me as a researcher but were not anonymous to the Educational Psychologists involved in the research. Their anonymity and

confidentiality have been protected and they have been referred to in a way that ensures this, using a code T1 to T5 for teachers, TA1 and TA2 for teaching assistants, P1 to P5 for parents and a pseudonym for each pupil. This information is referred to in tabular form in Section 4.7.13, p 103-103).

Ethical considerations in relation to EP colleagues:

- The potential impact of my role as researcher and lead educational psychologist of the Educational Psychology and Early Years' Services in which the research has been carried out, on potential (EP) participants confidence that to decline to participate would be acceptable, and that data would be used solely for research purposes (and not for management and appraisal of their effectiveness for example).
- Educational Psychologists involved in the research were sensitive to the risks of reputational bias.
- To ensure that the information gathered from Educational Psychologists for this research was wholly independent of performance review processes.
- If any elements of an Educational Psychologist's practice were questionable, that consideration has been given as to how to address this.
- EPs might have expressed some reservations about the consultation approach which they did not wish to share with the schools where they were trying to encourage this model of service delivery.

Ethical considerations in relation to consultees (teachers):

- Freely given informed consent needed to be obtained from teachers

- Participants were free to withdraw from the project at any time, with no adverse consequences.

Ethical considerations in relation to clients (parents and children/young people):

- Freely given informed consent needed to be obtained from parents and pupils
- Parents needed to give permission for their child to be involved in the research
- Participants had the ability to withdraw from the project at any time.
- Parents may not wish information in relation to their child's progress to be shared.

An ethical concern raised by the EPs at the team meeting in December 2012, where I initially presented my research proposal, concerned asking pupils about their progress when they might not have been aware of any concerns; as consultation is indirect and the child may not be aware of any discussion/strategies employed to support them, some EPs felt that asking parents their perceptions of their child's progress would suffice. My perception was that there would be grounds for ethical concern if school staff did indeed consult with EPs without respecting children's rights to be involved in decisions made about them. The questions used in this research sought to gain children's perspectives about their progress and factors contributing to this, without locating such discussions in problem-saturated discourse, as should be evident from the Children's Interview Schedule, included for reference as Appendix 16. Moreover, all three participating EPs were mindful of the need to show sensitivity and skill in their interactions with all interviewees.



## 4.7 Study Design

### 4.7.1 Context

The EPS in which this research takes place has contended with significant staffing shortages since 2005, and continues to be understaffed, putting pressure on staff to take on additional work in order to ensure each school has an allocation of EP time. The current composition of the EPS in which this study takes places is outlined in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Composition of the Service

<b>Composition</b>	<b>Total (n=24, 17.4 fte)</b>
Male	8
Female	16
Trainees	2
Main scale	2
Senior practitioners	15
Area seniors	4
Years qualified:	
1-2	1
2-10	5
Over 10	16

Between September 2012 and April 2013, the service underwent a significant restructure, organising the service into three geographical areas (previously six), reducing the senior management team from seven full time equivalent posts (fte) to four, and reducing the overall number of fte EPs within the service from 21 to 19.5. All EPs within the service had to apply for a post in the new structure and undergo a competitive interview.

I approached the service regarding my research proposal in December 2012, during this period of uncertainty and turbulence. This, and my position as service manager, may have affected the number of EPs who volunteered to take part in this research.

#### 4.7.2 Overview of the planned design

As outlined in Section 4.1, I used a case study design, using multiple cases (Thomas, 2010a). I planned to recruit four educational psychologists from the EP service, with each EP using a set of consistent methods (semi-structured interviews which, in every case, included a scaling exercise) with the research data comprising the evaluation data each EP collated from three triads including the focus child, the child's parent(s) and the teacher consultee, augmented by the interviews I conducted with each EP. In the event, recruitment proved a significant challenge, for reasons outlined in Section 4.7.1, so the actual research sample comprised three EPs, two of whom worked with two triads (child, parent, teacher) and one of whom worked with one triad. The planned design and the actual design are illustrated in Section 4.1 (Figures 4.2 and 4.3).

#### 4.7.3 Participants

In order to generate interest in taking part in my research I emailed the Educational Psychologists (EPs) in the service, giving them a Briefing Note which outlined my research project (see Appendix 6) and copies of the proposed questions for EPs, teachers, parents and pupils so that they were able to see what participation in this study would involve. I also presented my research proposal at a team meeting (19/12/2012) in order to answer any questions about the research and make any amendments in the light of colleagues' feedback and suggestions.

I aimed to recruit four EPs, each of whom would, in turn endeavour to recruit three teachers, three parents and three pupils who were willing to engage in the study, commenting on the consultation process. I sought to recruit only members of the Service whom I did not directly

line manager, in order to avoid conflating my roles as researcher and Service manager. Each EP sought to secure the freely-given, informed consent of teacher consultees, one parent/carer of the child who had formed the focus of consultation and, at a later stage, the child him/herself. Each EP would therefore generate data from three such triads for the purpose of the study.

I met with the four EPs who were interested in taking part in the research (20/02/2013) in order to outline my research proposal and answer any questions, so that all were clear about expectations, and what participation in the research would involve for themselves and the consultee, parent and child triads. All four EPs completed the Consent Form (Appendix 7) to signal their agreement to participate, and their acknowledgment and acceptance of the conditions surrounding participation.

During the above meeting the proposed semi-structured interview questions were discussed and adaptations made in order to ensure the questions had been co-constructed by all EPs involved in the research.

It was also decided at the above meeting that the number of cases I had initially proposed (three) felt too ambitious and not achievable across the term in which the data would be gathered; therefore we agreed that each EP involved would aim to work with a triad of teacher (consultee), parent (secondary client) and child (client) in *two* cases.

It was also proposed that the cases would all be in Key Stage Two (in that the children were likely to have the maturity, understanding and social capacity to be able to offer their freely

given, informed consent to participate in a 'research' interview with an EP, whilst also having the cognitive, language and social development to be able to reflect on and communicate about their experiences). However, in order to ensure that I was able to gather enough data, the remit was extended to include upper Key Stage One (Year Two), with the acknowledgment that the above capabilities could less readily be assured. The focus on primary-aged children was agreed on in order to limit the number of confounding variables likely to influence uptake of actions agreed through the consultation process. Had secondary schools been used (with a focus on Key Stage Three and/or Four students), organisational complexities would have had a far stronger influence on diluting the impact of consultation with one key staff member. In this research I was not interested in the nature of the concerns discussed through the consultation approach; rather I was interested in the process and the outcomes with regard to progress made against targets set. Therefore I did not restrict the type of case with which the EPs should engage (such as learning or behaviour concerns only) as this was not directly relevant to my research aims.

Each of the four EPs recruited two cases to work with. However, shortly into the project one of the EPs informed me that both of the cases had been retracted as, in one case, parents no longer gave consent for an EP to be involved with their child (unrelated to the research) and another child had moved school out of area. The EP chose to withdraw from the research at that point.

Of the three remaining EPs involved in the research, EP1 and EP2 each recruited two triads of teacher, parent and pupil; EP3 was, in the event, able to recruit only one triad.

I wrote separate briefing notes for teachers, parents and pupils. The EPs shared the Briefing Notes with teachers, parents and pupils and ensured consent forms were signed and returned to me (see Appendices 8 to 13). They also shared a copy of our Service leaflet, giving more details about the consultation process (Appendix 2).

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 give an overview of the five cases, showing the codes that have been used to protect the identity of the EPs, teachers, teaching assistants and parents, and the pseudonyms used for the pupils.

Table 4.2: Overview of the five cases: part one

	<b>Educational Psychologist</b>	<b>Class Teacher</b>	<b>Teaching Assistant</b>	<b>Parent</b>	<b>Pupil (pseudonym)</b>
<b>Case 1</b>	EP1 Female, in 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of qualified practice Trained at a Northern University	T1 Female Experienced teacher Some consultation experience	n/a	P1 Mother	James
<b>Case 2</b>	EP1	T2 Female Experienced teacher Some consultation experience	n/a	P2 Mother	Leon
<b>Case 3</b>	EP2 Male, in 8 <sup>th</sup> year of qualified practice Trained at Midlands University 1	T3 Female Experienced teacher No prior experience of consultation	TA1 Female TA was part of the consultation process, implemented the agreed strategies and took part in the interview with the EP and T3	P3 Mother (not interviewed)	Luke
<b>Case 4</b>	EP2	T4 Female Senior experienced teacher (SENCo) Extensive consultation experience	n/a	P4 Mother	John
<b>Case 5</b>	EP3 Male, year 3 trainee Trained at Midlands University 2	T5 Female Senior experienced teacher (SENCo) Extensive consultation experience	TA2 Female TA was part of the initial consultation, and implemented the agreed strategies	P5 Mother	Craig

Table 4.3: Overview of the five cases: part two

<b>Pseudonym</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Year Group /Key Stage</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>School Context (number on roll, urban/rural)</b>	<b>Presenting Concern/What prompted the consultation</b>	<b>Focus of the discussion during consultation</b>	<b>Indirect or Direct Action by EP</b>
James	Male	Year 2/KS1	White British	191/rural	Communication and interaction difficulties & difficulty recording ideas	Difficulties with recording and some sensory needs	Indirect
Leon	Male	Year 3/KS2	White British	270/urban	BESD & difficulty making academic progress	The need to identify underlying learning needs	Both – School to complete the BRIEF looking at executive functioning. EP to analyse and produce a report with actions
Luke	Male	Year 3/KS2	White British	88/rural	Emotional difficulties, self-esteem, slow academic progress	Difficulties with recording and emotional outbursts	Indirect (augmented by brief classroom-based behavioural observation)
John	Male	Year 4/KS2	White British	129/rural	Aggressive behaviour (pupil has speech difficulties, severe learning difficulties and epilepsy)	Managing the aggressive behaviour	Indirect ( EP had attended an annual review meeting the week before the consultation)
Craig	Male	Year 4/KS2	White British	52/rural	Literacy development	Motivation and self-confidence	Indirect (Year 1 trainee EP had observed the consultation then completed individual work with the pupil)

#### 4.7.4 Procedure

The EPs used consultation with the teachers who had consented to participate in the research. The EPs had been encouraged to use consultation as they normally would in their schools. The only required difference for the purpose of this research was that they should use Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME) to set a baseline target, set an expected level of progress and then evaluate the actual level of progress at the consultation review meeting. This process was recorded on the consultation record form, which was the normal service consultation form adapted with the addition of the TME section (Appendix 4).

Following the consultation review meeting, the EPs met separately with the teachers, parents and pupils and asked them the semi-structured interview questions outlined in Appendices 14 to 16.

EP1 completed written feedback from the consultation meetings and had audio-recorded and transcribed the interviews with both triads of teachers, parents and pupils.

EP2 completed written feedback from the consultation meetings, apart from the last meeting with T3 and TA1, and the interview with them, which was audio-recorded, and whose transcription I later organised. EP2 chose not to interview P3 (the mother of Luke) but asked T3 to gather some more informal feedback. EP2's rationale for this decision was that Luke's parents had recently separated and the situation between them was acrimonious; and EP2 considered it inappropriate to ask further questions about Luke's progress at that time. EP2 also chose not to interview either of the pupils involved, due to concerns about involving pupils at this stage when they were not aware of the consultation process, but also in Luke's



case for similar reasons to the above rationale for not wanting to interview his mother, and in John's case due to the severity of his special needs.

EP3 interviewed the teacher, parent and pupil, making notes during the discussion and providing me with written feedback.

Once all of the above data had been gathered, I met with the EPs individually in order to conduct a semi-structured interview with them, based on the questions in Appendix 17. These interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed.

Braun and Clarke (2006) note that, when transcribing information for thematic analysis, it does not require the same level of detail in the transcription as discourse or narrative analysis. However, I did use, as they recommend, a "rigorous and thorough 'orthographic' transcript" in order to account for the verbal and non-verbal (pauses, laughter) utterances (p 88). The transcripts were true to the original recordings, with punctuation added in the correct places to account for meaning. Although I did not transcribe the data myself, I checked the transcripts back against the original recordings for accuracy, making amendments where necessary, which helped me become familiar with the data.

#### 4.7.5 Analysis

Recordings of the EP interviews were analysed using a primarily inductive thematic analysis. This method was chosen as the process did not attempt to identify pre-existing themes, but instead sought meaning across the whole data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Although

meaning was determined from the data without reference to prior research, it was acknowledged that data would be interpreted by the researcher in relation to the question being explored (Willig, 2008). As the data set was relatively small, the thematic analysis was completed by hand, rather than through the use of a software programme. An example of one of the transcribed EP interviews, showing the thematic analysis, can be found in Appendix 18.

Data gathered from the interviews with teachers and parents were used to supplement the above analysis. During the semi-structured interviews with teachers and parents the EP researchers used the agreed questions largely in the format in which their focus and wording had been agreed, resembling an oral questionnaire rather than a semi-structured discussion. In reading the responses, it was my own view that this had limited some of the responses from teachers and parents, and that overall, the capacity of the semi-structured interview format to support exploration or expansion of issues raised had not been harnessed. Due to the limited depth of response from these interviews, these data were not subject to the rigorous thematic analysis of the EP interviews: rather, the information was subjected to a largely deductive quantitative analysis in order to gather information which supported or contradicted the themes identified from the thematic analysis of EP responses. An example of a completed interview transcript with a teacher can be found in Appendix 19, whilst an example of a completed interview transcript with a parent can be found in Appendix 20.

Data from the interviews with pupils are presented in tabular form and discussed in relation to some of the above themes. An example of an interview with a pupil can be found in Appendix 21.

The TME ratings from each of the five consultation records were discussed in the interviews with EPs and in the interviews between EPs and teachers. Themes relating to the approach are considered alongside the charts showing the baseline, expected and achieved outcomes in relation to the targets set. An example of a completed consultation record, demonstrating the use of TME can be found in Appendix 22.

#### 4.7.6 Reliability of the thematic analysis

As discussed in Section 4.4.3, Joffe (2012) discussed the importance of reliability within a coding framework, noting that a way to ascertain this is by having two independent coders look at the data, which should be applied to least 10-20% of the data. Joffe (2012) stated that if inter-rater reliability is above 75% then the coding framework is regarded as “transparent and reliable” (P 216). If there are any inconsistencies, relevant codes should be redefined.

In this study, two educational psychologists looked at the coding, one of whom was part of the research (EP1) in order to check that the codes were consistent with the expectations of EP1, while the second EP (EP4) was not involved in any other aspect of the research.

EP1 compared the interview transcript against the initial coding framework I had used to identify basic themes. At this stage I had only completed the thematic analysis on the transcript from EP1, therefore EP1 was only able to comment on this data. EP1 agreed that the themes arising from the data were consistent with her expectations and did not suggest any changes that needed to be made.

EP4 conducted a very thorough review of data in order to check the process I had applied, tracking the analysis through from my initial coding to the identification of global themes. EP4 began by looking at one of the interview transcripts (from EP3), reading the transcript in full and noting the codes I had used. This was then referenced to the codes for all three transcripts of my interviews with the EPs and checked against the quotes I had identified. EP4 then checked that the basic themes that arose from this coding were consistent and had been appropriately grouped in relation to the organising themes, and that these in turn were appropriately grouped into the global themes.

EP4 commented that the tracking from transcript to global themes was logical and the process was ‘easy to follow’, with the grouping of the data making sense at each stage. Overall EP4 reflected agreement with the decisions I had made regarding the organisation of the data into thematic networks, demonstrating a high level of inter-rater reliability, although two suggestions were made to improve the presentation; both of these have been incorporated into the presentation and discussion of findings (Chapter Five).

Firstly, that the name of one of the organising themes (refer to Figure 5.5) was changed from “Target setting” to “Imagined outcomes”, which EP4 suggested as better reflecting the breadth of this theme, talking about the end product or goal, not just one of the mechanisms for getting there.

Secondly, EP4 suggested that the organisational theme “Clarity” which I had initially grouped under Global Theme Two (“Directive versus non-directive”) should be moved (along with its four associated basic themes) to Global Theme One (“Understanding what consultation is”)

and subsumed under the organisational theme “Raising awareness”, due to the perceived overlap of these organisational themes (and the associated basic themes). Refer to Figure 5.1.

Following the above changes I judged that, under Global Theme One (Figure 5.1) and within the organising theme ‘Raising awareness’ it would be advisable that two of the basic themes may then be merged due to the overlap of content, reducing the organising themes from six to four.

EP4 had argued that the removal of the organisational theme ‘Clarity’ from Global Theme Two would make this thematic network (“Directive versus non-directive”) a simpler, bi-polar construct to explore, shown in Figure 5.2.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter begins by describing the thematic analysis of the interview data, using the model presented by Attride-Stirling (2001). I began by coding the transcripts from each of the three interviews with EPs separately in order to identify issues arising for each individual. I then looked across each of the three interviews and noted the codes that were common across all three, making a note of the issues discussed.

During the process of analysis, 48 basic themes were identified, which were then grouped into 15 organizing themes, which in turn were grouped into 5 global themes. These thematic networks are presented and discussed in turn through Sections 5.2 to 5.6.

The process from coding to identifying the global themes can be found in Appendix 23, in order to help the reader conceptualise the entire data set.

Within each section, themes are illustrated by associated excerpts from the discussion with EPs, to provide further illumination of the themes identified. Excerpts have been selected in order to represent the range of comments made. In order to facilitate understanding, in places I have added a word in brackets to help put the quotation into context, or missed out words if they make the quotation harder to follow, replacing them with three dots.

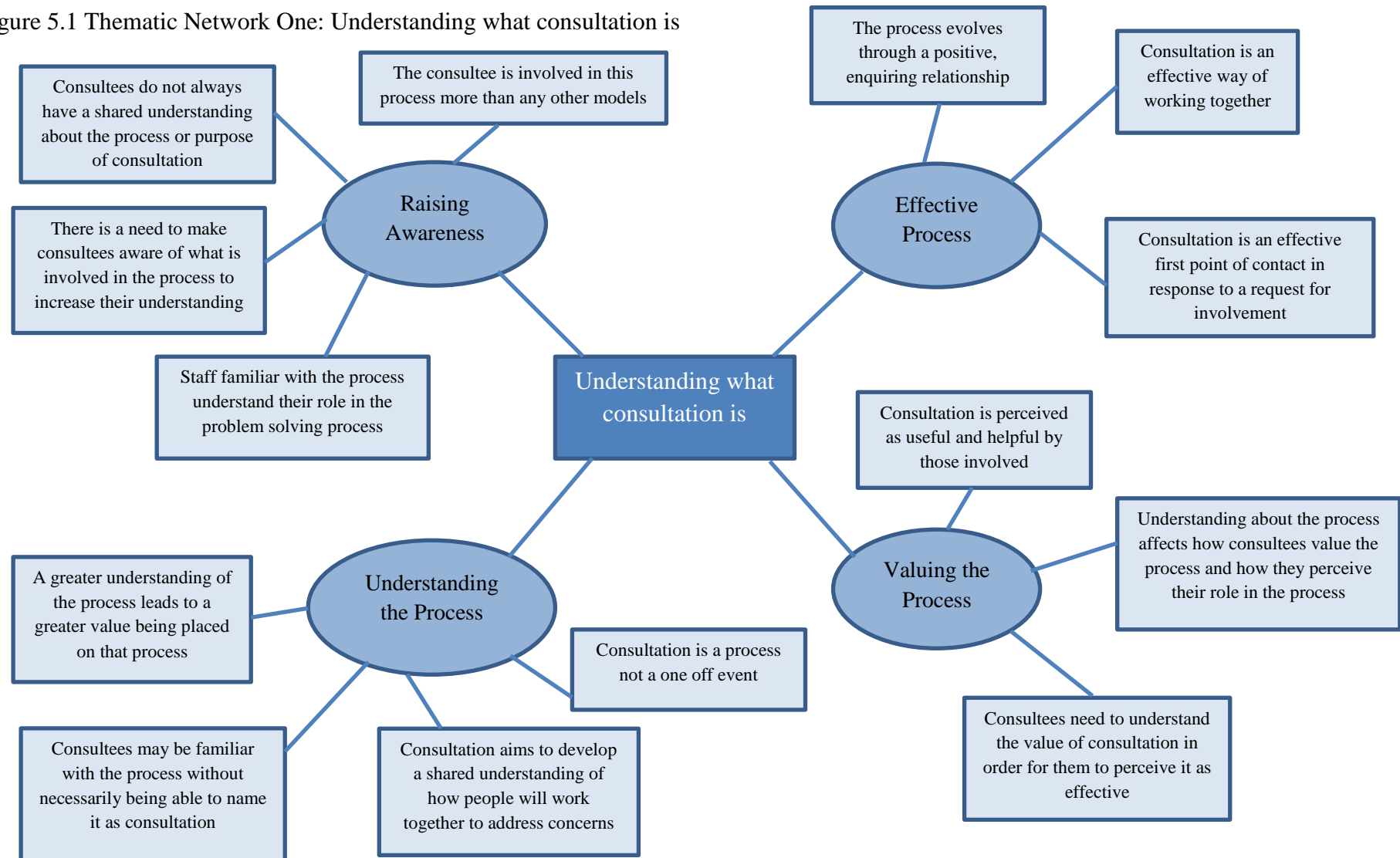
As discussed in Section 4.7.3, due to the limited amount responses the data from the interviews with teachers and parents were not subject to the rigorous thematic analysis of the

EP interviews, rather the information was analysed in order to gather information which supported or contradicted the themes identified by the EPs from the thematic analysis.

The information from pupils is presented separately in a table and discussed in relation to the relevant themes.

## 5.2 Global Theme One: Understanding what consultation is

Figure 5.1 Thematic Network One: Understanding what consultation is





This global theme is concerned with perceptions of both the EPs in their role as consultants regarding their understanding of consultation, and with how the EPs think consultees (teachers) perceive consultation. The four organising themes will be discussed in turn, with quotations used to illustrate some of the discussion points.

The EPs in this study perceived consultation as an ‘effective way of working’ with colleagues in school, both as a starting point to a piece of work which may lead on to other things, or as a process in itself.

“It’s a really useful way to start any piece of work.”

EP1

“Even if it’s just seen as a starting point within and amongst the process but it can be the process itself I suppose.”

EP3

There were many comments about consultation being an effective and helpful way of working together, noting how the relationship is an important factor in this process (‘relationships’ is also a separate theme discussed in Section 7.3).

“An effective way really of working together.”

EP1

“The consultation and that process is something that sort of evolve, that comes out of a positive relationship, and enquiring relationship.”

EP2

Linked to how effective the consultation process is perceived is the theme of how much the ‘process is valued’ by those involved. That those who value the process are likely to be more engaged with the process.

“I would say that they value it quite strongly.”

“They need to have that value placed on the consultation as well if they perceive it to be of value, there is probably every chance they will be more involved in the process.”

EP3

This was echoed by comments from the teachers. When asked to rate the consultation process on a scale of one to ten, with one being ‘not very helpful’ and ten being ‘very helpful’, four out of five of the teachers rated the process as eight out of ten (T2, T3, T4, T5) and T1 rated it as seven out of ten. Therefore all perceived it as a helpful approach.

T1, T2 and T5 noted that the process helped in terms of clarifying that what they were already doing was appropriate, whilst T4 noted the opportunity to reflect on the problem.

“It was very reassuring to know that the things we were doing were the right sort of things.”

T1

T2 also reflected that “staff in school are part of the solution”, demonstrating an understanding about their role in the process, which affects how they value the process.

The four parents who took part in the semi-structured interviews were also asked to rate the consultation process on a scale of one to ten, with one being ‘not very helpful’ and ten being ‘very helpful’; all of whom rated it as eight out of ten.

P1 noted that “it definitely helped us understand” James’ difficulties by exploring the concerns in more detail which was perceived as “really helpful.” P1 also reflected a change in perceptions about James’ learning in terms of “knowing how to approach his learning” and “how to engage him best in the classroom.” P2 stated that “I thought he had some issues with learning and that it wasn’t just his behaviour and it (the consultation process) supported that.” Thus the process helped to clarify what the concerns were.

P4 and P5 both noted the success of the process in terms of the impact it had on the target areas in that “the problematic behaviour has stopped” (P4) or “it has worked” in relation to an increase in confidence (P5). This demonstrates an understanding of the outcome of the process rather than the process itself. P5 did reflect that they would have liked to have been involved in the process earlier “it was frustrating that I wasn’t involved from the start”, which may have increased understanding in what the process aimed to achieve.

The theme concerning the ‘understanding of the process’ addressed the fact that the more it is understood, the more engaged consultees are and the process is perceived as more successful.

“It’s that shared understanding of how we are going to work together.”

EP1

“Obviously if people know what’s going to be happening to them it reassures them and they feel more comfortable in the process whatever that process is.”

EP2

T2 also talked about the process leading to a shared understanding.

“Together we come to a shared understanding about how to move things forward.”

T2

The ‘raising awareness’ theme addressed the fact that the EPs were concerned that, although perceived as important under the previous theme, there is not always a shared understanding of the process, in that consultees do not always fully understand what consultation is about. It was felt that perhaps EPs need to be more explicit about the expectations of the consultation process in order to help those that are part of it to develop a greater understanding about what is involved, which will help with the engagement and the outcomes of the process.

(Importance of) “Knowing what their expectations might be for their work with you.”

“Their expectations again might be quite different.”

“I don’t think that they do have that shared understanding but they did appreciate having some time to talk and having erm some time to jointly come up with some solutions.”

EP1

“It would help if they knew what was happening...maybe there is a need (to be more explicit).”

EP2

“I needed to be more explicit I think about what the model of consultation was from our point and from the services point of view”

EP3

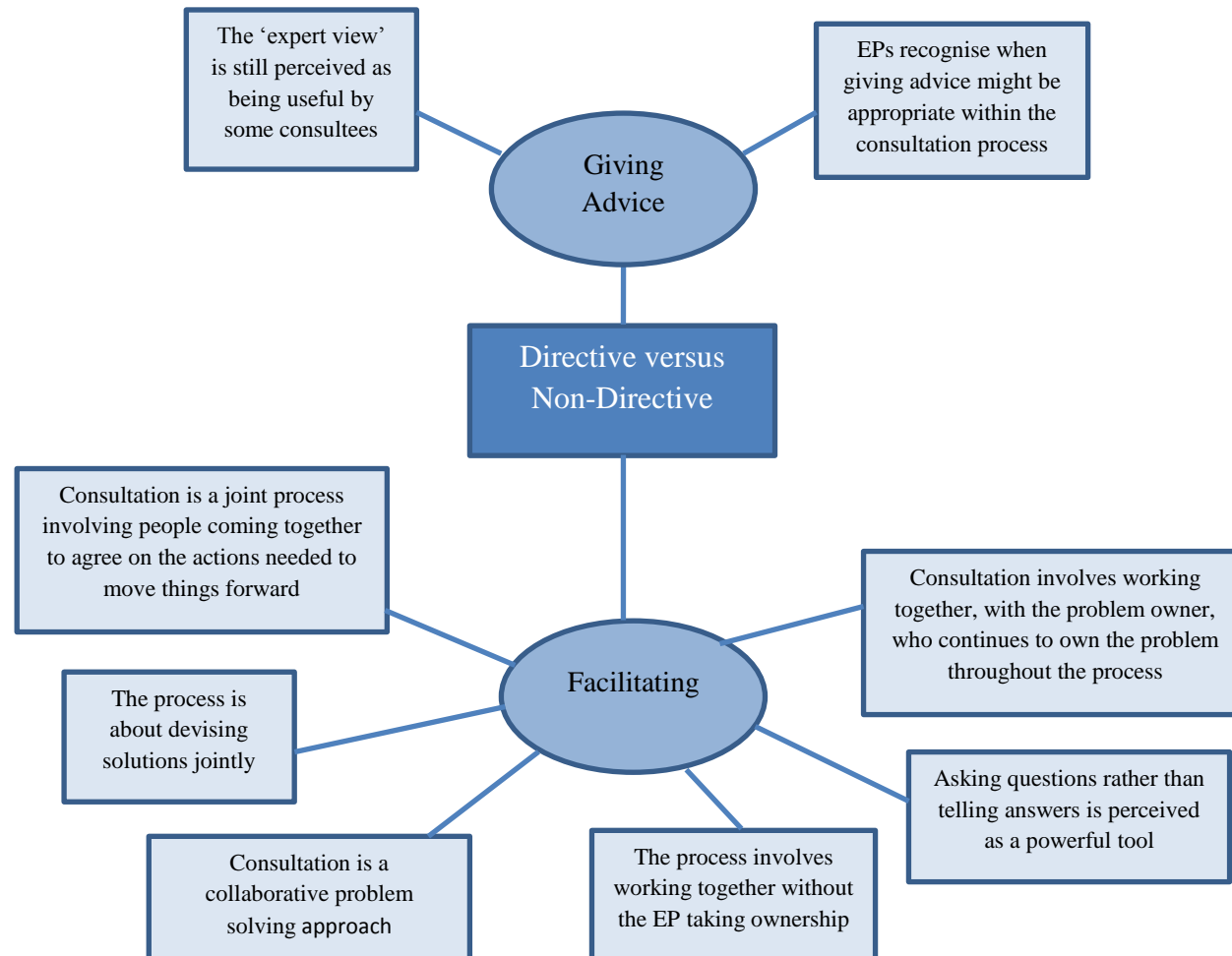
School staff in the role of consultee was perceived by the EPs to be a role which required staff to engage in the process more than any other form of intervention, therefore their understanding of the process and their role in it was perceived as very important.

“There’s an element of the...on the consultee actually, not getting off as lightly as perhaps they might with other erm, sort of more direct models of working, because they have to work a little bit, at least as hard as me.”

EP 2

### 5.3 Global Theme Two: Directive versus non-directive

Figure 5.2 Thematic Network Two: Directive versus non-directive



This global theme is concerned with the issue of being ‘directive or non-directive’ during the consultation process, which is a concept explored widely in the literature, particularly by Gutkin (1996, 1999a, 1999b, 2008) and Erchul (1987, 1990, 1999), as discussed in Section 2.3.

The global theme comprises two opposing organising themes, that of ‘facilitating’ or ‘giving advice’, which will be discussed in turn.

The first organising theme is that of ‘facilitating’, recognising that consultation is a joint problem solving process involving both the consultant and consultee working together in a non-directive, collaborative way. This theme emphasises the importance of the process and that questions are asked in order to facilitate joint problem solving (rather than donating ideas) and that the ‘problem’ remains owned by the ‘problem owner’, which in this research refers to the teachers as consultees.

“Helping the school staff or parents be part of the solution as well...so you don’t become the problem owner as such but that they are part of that and they are part of the solution.”

EP1

“I was waiting for the consultees to actually get, get somewhere and work it out.”

“The fact that you were asking questions and not telling is quite a powerful tool really.”

EP2

“It’s not me coming in as an expert but it’s, they’re part of the process as well.”

“Consultation needs to be a collaborative process whereby problem holder is also seen to own that problem and is able to make necessary steps with say, my support if necessary.”

EP3

T2 and T4 understood that the process was about working together, as already noted above, T2 talked about staff being part of the solution, whilst T4 commented that they “worked through it together” with the EP “sharing the thinking” rather than “having all the answers”.

With regard to the second organizing theme, views differed among the EPs regarding the ability to ‘give advice’ or be directive as part of the consultation process. EP1 and EP3 were clear that giving advice is not part of the consultation process, although EP1 acknowledged that this is what schools sometimes are expecting which can lead to a misunderstanding about what consultation is about.

“They (teachers) talked a lot about an expert view being useful, and that’s not really the aim of consultation.”

“It isn’t about necessarily bringing in an expert view erm, because maybe their expectations are different because they think ‘we’ve brought in an expert’.”

“They talked about having an expert opinion which I don’t necessarily agree with.”

“You maybe need to go away and reflect a little bit and then go back to the school staff with some erm, well suggestions I suppose which isn’t really in the theme of consultation.”

EP1



“Not necessarily the EP going in as an expert but erm more of a collaborative problem solving approach.”

“It didn’t ever feel that I was ever going in as, to solve a problem, or to be err, to have a problem passed on but err, it was certainly, you know the, collaborative, I think.”

EP3

In contrast, EP2 felt that advice giving was sometimes a necessary part of the process, although expressed some unease about whether advice giving/being directive was actually part of the consultation process.

“I don’t mind giving them an opinion and advice reasonably quickly and dropping that into the hat. So, so I don’t, maybe I don’t let them work hard enough at resolving some of their own issues before I offer advice. So maybe I’m corrupting the consultation system slightly.”

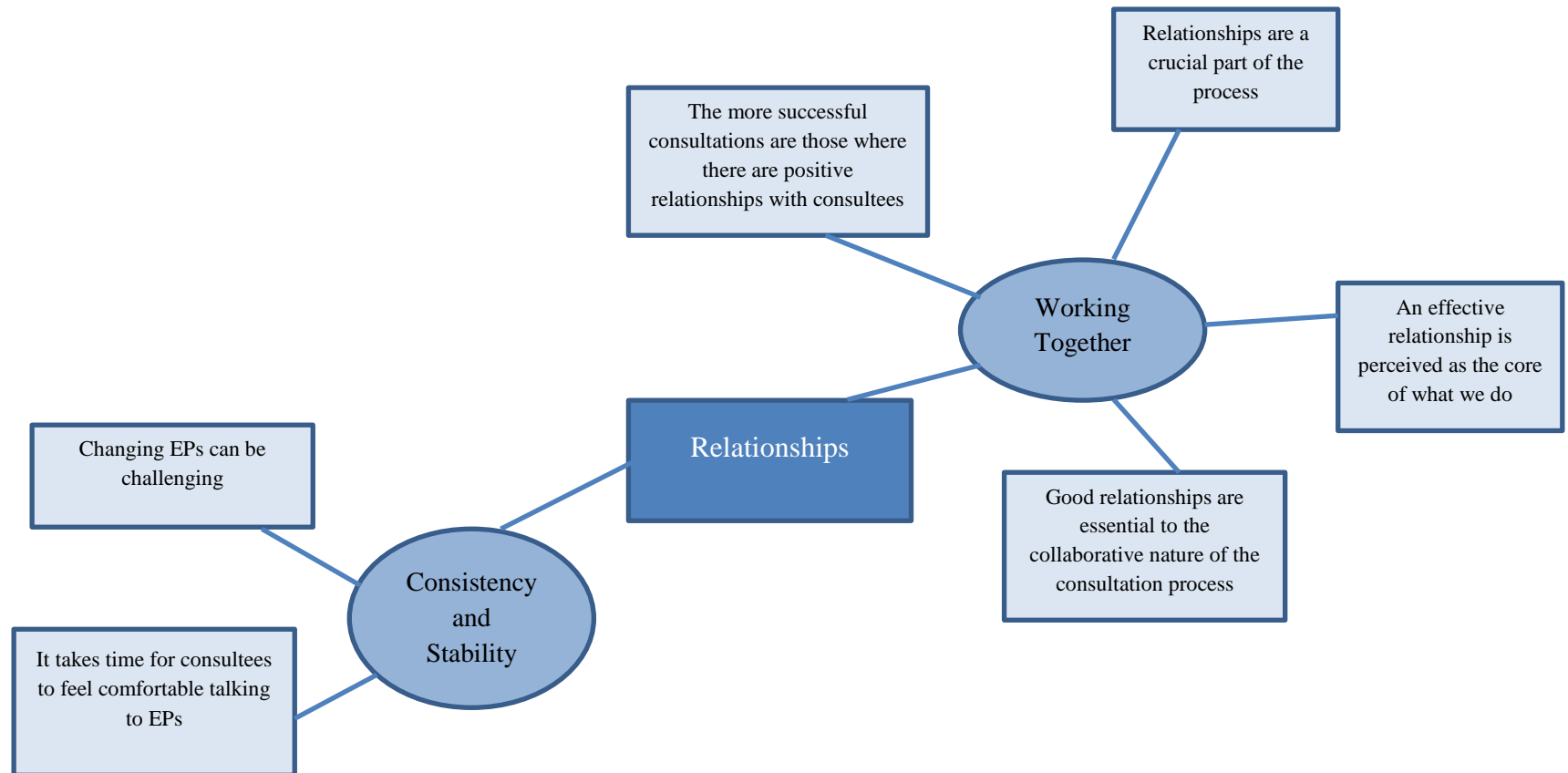
EP2

In contrast to T2 and T4, who perceived the process as more collaborative, T1 and T5 talked about the EP in the role of the expert, wanting “fresh ideas” (T1) from the EP and the EP being “someone who can give us some further advice” (T1), giving “professional support and guidance” (T5). Thus there is still some uncertainty and misunderstanding about what the process does and doesn’t involve, from both the EPs and teachers involved in this research.

P1 valued the role of the EP as an expert, in terms of the “knowledge and that deeper understanding” the EP brings to a situation, stating “just having an expert opinion” was something that was perceived as important. However, the other parents did not comment on this issue.

## 5.4 Global Theme Three: Relationships

Figure 5.3 Thematic Network Three: Relationships



The third global theme ‘relationships’ was perceived as another important area by the EPs involved in this research, with regard to the influence a good working relationship could have on the success of the consultation process, and the impact that a change of EP might have on school staff.

There are two organising themes in this thematic network; firstly, the importance of working together will be explored. EPs expressed the opinion that the more successful consultations are those in which the relationship between the EP and the school staff is perceived as positive. The collaborative nature of the consultation process is felt to work more successfully when there is a good working relationship between EPs and school staff.

“I think it (the relationship) does play a part.”

“Certainly the ones that I feel have been more successful are those where I feel I have got positive relationships with staff members.”

EP1

“I think the relationships play an important part in what’s allowed and what isn’t.”

“It’s the core of what we do, is to be able to have a relationship erm, an effective relationship.”

“The relationships are crucial and I think any model would fall down if it wasn’t, if there wasn’t an effective relationship but perhaps consultation would fall down more quickly than other models if there wasn’t that relationship.”

EP2

“It makes it (consultation) much easier when you have that relationship already established.”

“Challenging practice, challenging assumptions and I think that’s the key to that, you, you need to have a positive relationship in those situations.”

EP3

Interestingly, none of the teachers made any direct comments about the relationships being an important part of the process. T2, whose comments are noted below with regard to the change of EPs, reflects on this in terms of EPs not knowing the context of the school, rather than the effect it has on working relationships.

The second organising theme is the issue of consistency and stability, noting that it takes time to build a relationship and for school staff to feel comfortable sharing concerns with EPs, and that when EPs change their allocation of schools, this has an impact on working relationships.

“One of the members of staff that I spoke to in regards to this erm work did highlight that it, one of the challenges for them has been having different EPs, because part of the (consultation) process is about knowing the context of the school. So if the EP changes quite a lot you don’t necessarily have a good insight into the things they might already be doing.”

EP1

“You’re proving a service over a length of time; you’re not going in as a one off consultant.”

EP2

T2, the teacher referred to in the above quotation by EP1, did discuss the difficulty that a large number of changes of EPs can have “because you don’t know the school” as one of the frustrating things about the process, as the EP does not then know the context in which the concerns arise. The other teachers did not reflect on this, but they have had a relatively stable, consistent service from the EPS over the last few years.

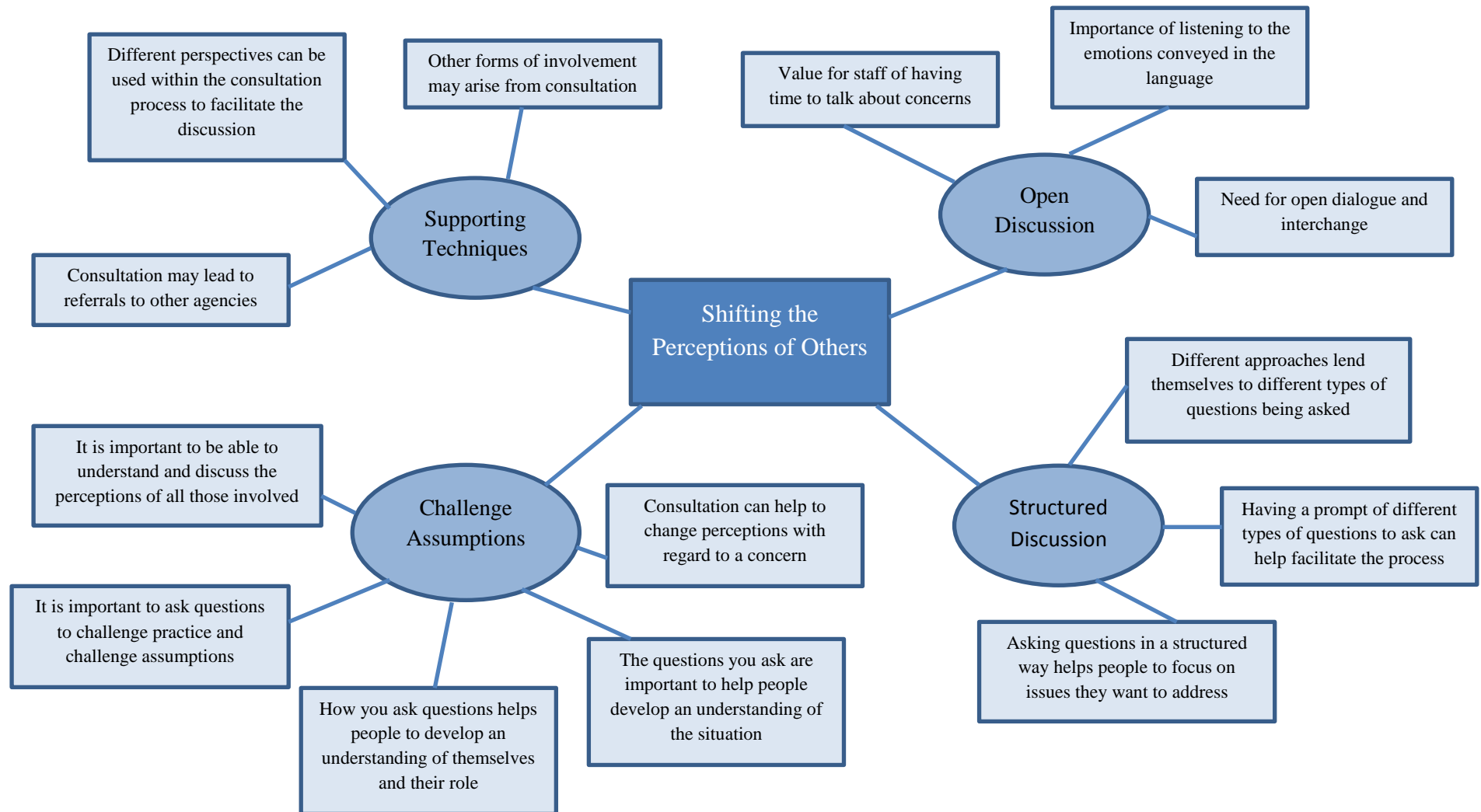
EP3 noted that consultation could still be used with consultees (teachers) with whom no such relationship was established, as the process could be applied in any situation, perhaps in a more structured way with consultees who were unfamiliar with the process.

“You may enter a consultation process with err a group of people or individual who you don’t have, necessarily have that background err or existing relationship with, I mean that’s where you may follow a particular process of consultation which is more solution focussed through the questions that you ask.”

EP3

## 5.5 Global Theme Four: Shifting the Perceptions of Others

Figure 5.4 Thematic Network Four: Shifting the Perceptions of Others



The fourth global theme concerns ‘shifting the perceptions of others’, which is made up of four organising themes considering different ways that change in perceptions might be achieved. This notion of changing the perceptions of the consultee is a key theme of consultation as discussed in the literature (Wagner, 1995a).

The first organisational theme considers the notion of ‘open discussion’, the importance of consultees (teachers) having time to be able to talk about their concerns, in an open and honest manner, with the EPs, whilst feeling their concerns have been listened to and addressed. This open discussion also enables the EPs to gain an understanding into the nature and extent of the perceptions regarding the concerns.

“Time is made available to have consultation which is probably one of the most important things err making sure that staff have got some time away from class to have that discussion because otherwise it’s very difficult to get a clear picture of what the, what the concerns are.”

EP1

“When people start talking about their emotions in a normal consultation process, there is information at that point.”

EP2

“The dialogue and interchange needs to be sort of open I think.”

EP3

T2 reflected that the “dialogue that we have helps to clarify that a little bit”, with regard to focussing what to work on, although T2 does not go on to give any further details about it.

The above contrasts with the second organising theme, namely ‘structured discussion’, whereby the EPs talk about the use of asking questions in a way which helps the consultees to focus on their concerns. The theoretical framework used to support the consultation, solution focussed or narrative approaches for example, will influence the types of questions used to structure this discussion. Prompts may be used by the EPs to help facilitate this discussion.

“I find it useful to have a prompt of the kind of questions that might be useful to ask. Particularly if it’s a case that feels a bit tricky erm, where I feel as though we are not quite getting somewhere.”

EP1

“How you questioned err people to elicit information so that you can reflect it back on them and so if, if you like, what they are talking about becomes better illuminated for them.”

“There were problems all over the place with this chap, they didn’t really know what they were, how to describe them (asking structured questions) just helped them speak about the erm, the situation in a slightly structured way, really helped them focus on, eventually, the two areas they really wanted to address.”

EP2

“I think being able to ask the right questions perhaps, or what I feel were the right questions at the right time, may have helped us move along.”

EP3



T5 talks about consultation as being a “formal and structured” process in which concerns and strategies can be discussed, suggesting more of a structured approach has been applied when using the consultation process.

The contrast between these two approaches, either open or structured discussion used to shift the perceptions of others, is not purely a coincidence arising from the coding. The EPs used the two approaches in different situations. An open discussion was had when consultees were more familiar with the process and therefore knew what to expect from the process. The discussion became more structured if consultees were unfamiliar with the process and therefore needed more questions to be asked to help elicit views and move the process forward. Structured questions were also employed in situations that were perceived by the EPs as being more ‘tricky’ or ‘complex’; when lots of issues needed to be explored before to priorities could be established.

Another situation in which a more structured approach was used was when EPs needed to ‘challenge assumptions’ of consultees, which is the third organisational theme. EPs talked about the use of questions to ‘shift thinking’, exploring the nature of the concern with the consultee, in order to agree the priority concerns, which often differ from the initial presenting concerns once issues have been explored together.

(Consultation) “enabled us to shift the focus a little bit, where behaviour had maybe been the priority and the concern, actually it was the learning side of things that we came to look at a little bit more. And we agreed that would, that would, probably would make quite a big difference. So it was that shift in perception about what the issues were.”

“Not just looking at the issues that are sort of really ‘in your face’ (laugh), but looking at what was underneath that and getting them to understand that there were other factors that were feeding into that, and they were aware of that but maybe didn’t realise the extent to which these things were having an impact.”

EP1

“It’s how you ask people things about themselves, which helps them develop their understanding of themselves or their circumstances.”

“Asking the right questions for them to think about the situation in a way perhaps that they hadn’t done before so that they understood it a little bit better.”

EP2

“The questions that I might ask might help that along shift, shift maybe, shift thinking or get people, help people to question, you know, current practice, or question their own assumptions...or shed light on an area they may not have been aware of.”

“The teacher may have had a particular perception or concern...people were able to move away from what was thought the initial primary concern...those sorts of ideas came up through that dialogue really.”

EP3

T1 and T4 both talked about consultation providing the opportunity to be reflective and think about problems in a different way. T1 perceived that she was already a reflective practitioner,

whereas T4 noted it gave her “a chance to reflect on the problem” and helped them to think about things differently in a way they “hadn’t really thought about it before.”

The final organising theme in this thematic network is that of ‘supporting techniques’, some of which may be used to inform the consultation process, others may arise from the consultation. As a service we had a ‘working group’ last academic year, 2011 to 2012 (EP1 and I were both members of this group) which, among other things, updated the consultation recording forms to include prompt questions from the solution focussed, narrative and Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) perspectives. As a working group we also delivered training to the service on these approaches, mainly on the solution focussed approach, but including all three. It is therefore not surprising that all three psychologists in this research referred to these perspectives as ones which could be used to help facilitate the consultation process. T2 was the only teacher who directly mentioned solution focussed approaches to looking at problems.

All three EPs talked about other forms of involvement which may arise from consultation, which, especially regarding observation, is often used to inform further consultation sessions. This work may include observation, direct work with the pupil, meeting the parents, gathering pupil views or referral to and assessments from other agencies.

“Part of the strategies that we discussed came from the observation not just from the consultation and whilst I think consultation can work really well on its own I do tend to use the two hand in hand, erm because I think it’s useful then when you are talking about that young person for you to have seen them in context.”

EP1

“Consultation might involve meeting for further observation, it might involve meeting with parents. It might involve individual assessment or it might involve follow up meetings, which may form part of the consultation process.”

EP3

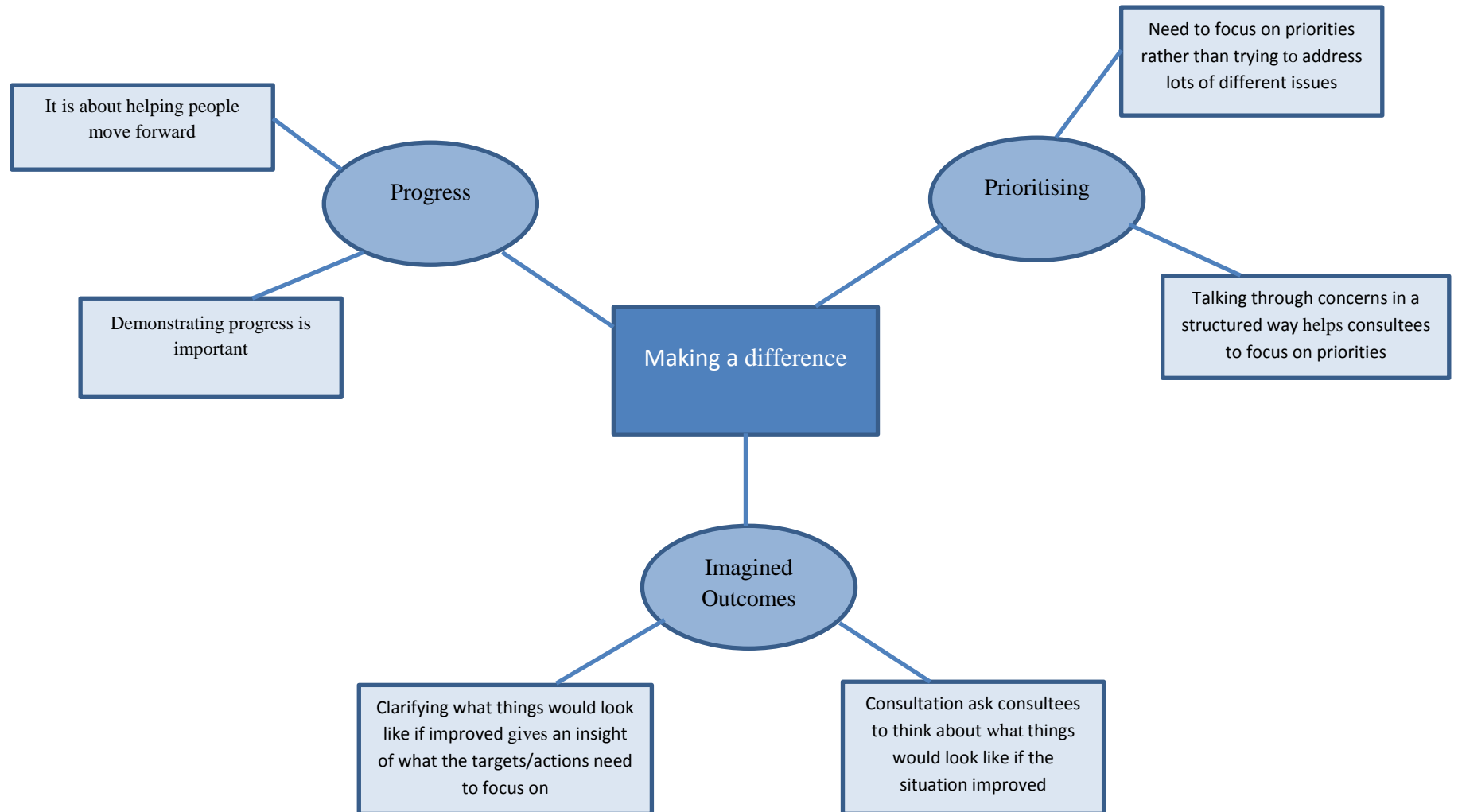
The use of observation was discussed by both T1 and T3, whose comments were also reflected by TA1 who took part in the consultation alongside T3. T1 requested a “longer observation” of the child in context as the observation carried out was perceived as “too limited, too short to get a true picture of the child.” T1 felt observation was crucial to the process as the EP may “pick up on certain things that might not be picked up on by the teacher”, therefore using the observation to inform the consultation process.

T3 and TA1 also reflected that the EP “could have come and seen him more in class” in order to observe the concerns and get an accurate picture of them. TA1 noted the process is good, but it would be better “if you’d have actually seen what we were concerned about.”

Two of the parents noted the importance of referrals to other agencies in order to help address some of the concerns and “work out what works” (P1) for pupils. P5 attributed a number of the changes in Craig’s behaviour to the involvement of another outside agency rather than to the consultation process with the EP.

## 5.6 Global Theme Five: Making a difference

Figure 5.5 Thematic Network Five: Making a difference



The fifth and final global theme is concerned with ‘making a difference’, which is made up of three organising themes namely, ‘prioritising’, ‘imagined outcomes’ and ‘progress’.

‘Prioritising’ is concerned with the fact that consultees need support to focus their concerns into a number of priority areas, rather than trying to address everything at once. This becomes more apparent when problems are complex; the questioning used during the consultation process can help to focus on those areas which are perhaps most appropriately managed first.

“One of the key things that I find useful that I didn’t always used to do but I always do now is to make sure that I have asked staff what they are prioritising...rather than trying to address lots of different issues.”

“Useful erm, to know exactly what the teacher wanted to focus on.”

EP1

“We normally come out with a plan at the end of it. Which is really what, well, my goal is for us to actually have something that, that we can work with erm, at the end of it really.”

EP2

The notion of prioritising was discussed by T2 who talked about the need to focus on “what are the most important issues and what are we going to tackle first”, with the notion of “teasing out what is the first step” needed in working towards these priorities.

Most parents reflected that they were aware of the targets that had been agreed, although P2 said they were not aware but “would like to know” what the targets were. P1 described the target in detail and also felt that James was aware of what his target was, largely due to the value he placed on the reward if his target was met, which motivated him to achieve. P4 was

aware of the targets and perceived that the school could have involved the EP earlier in order that “a lot of stress could have been avoided” as the behaviours to target would not have been so extreme. P5 was aware of the targets but was not sure that Craig would be aware as the targets are incorporated into the general teaching.

The organising theme ‘imagined outcomes’ refers to the EPs supporting the consultees to reflect on how they would like things to have changed by the end of the intervention period. This theme would incorporate the idea of target setting, in that once imagined outcomes have been explored, targets are set in order to support the move from the current situation to the preferred outcome.

“We were able to really clarify what it was she (consultee) wanted to be different.”

“What would change, what thing would look like if things improved because, and I suppose this links in with the TME, because it gives you that real insight into what we need to focus on and what it will look like when we’ve made a difference.”

EP1

“Normally I’d say ‘so where are you now’, err and ‘where do you think, where, where are we hoping to get to’.”

EP2

“It’s actually trying to keep it quite solution focussed so that we do have an outcome, whatever that outcome might be at the end.”

EP3

Linking to the above is the notion of demonstrating ‘progress’ against the targets that have been set, which will be discussed in more detail in Section 5.8 in relation to the specific approach used in this research, namely TME. In their comments the EPs do not discuss how they normally demonstrate progress linked to consultation, but all acknowledged the importance of being able to demonstrate progress, or ‘move things forward’.

“How they would like to move things forwards and we came up with some actions during the consultation meeting that they could run with and see if they made a difference, which is the ultimate really.”

“Agree on the kind of things the school were going to put in place to try and move things forward a bit.”

“That joint process of people coming together to be able to agree on the kind of actions that we might take to move things forward.”

EP1

“What I can come in to do to help, to change the situation. It was about helping people move forward.”

“It was quite helpful to speak to them (parents and class teacher) and see how things had progressed from their point of view.”

EP3

Both T1 and T2 reflected that the consultation process helped them to think about “how to move things forward” in relation to the children they were concerned about. Most of the teacher’s reflected on progress in relation to the use of TME, which will be discussed in Section 5.8.



All five parents reflected that progress had been made against the agreed targets, in terms of the changes they had noticed. P1 talked about “feedback that I have had from his teacher”, and seeing pieces of his work, which informed her that James was making progress. P1 also notes that James had talked about having “lots of coins” in his treasure box (reward system), therefore demonstrating a level of success against his target. P1 attributed this success to “the strategies they are using with him” and the motivation provided by the reward system and that both had helped demonstrate “things have moved on a little bit.” P2 did not say specifically what changes had been noticed other than “he seems better at home”, but perhaps if P2 had been aware of the targets school were working on the feedback could have been more specific. Although P3 was not interviewed by the EP, feedback given to T3 was that “P3 thinks Luke is much better at school and is pleased with Luke’s progress in writing”. P4 reflected that the “problematic behaviour had stopped” but did not elaborate on this. Finally, P5 noted “big changes” especially with “his confidence in reading.” However, P5 did not attribute this change to the consultation process, but to another outside agency that was involved.

### 5.7 Pupil Feedback

As mentioned in Section 4.7.2, feedback was gathered from three out of the five pupils involved in the consultation process. EP2 chose not to interview Luke or John; EP2 was concerned about involving the pupils by asking them questions about their progress when they had not been part of the process. EP2 also felt that other issues, Luke due to family circumstances and John due to the severity of his special needs, would impact on their ability to respond to the proposed questions. Therefore in Table 5.1 there are responses from only three of the five pupils.

The pupils were interviewed using a semi-structured interview format which contained pictures to support the understanding of each question, an example of which can be found in Appendix 21. None of the questions asked directly about the consultation process as it was felt that the pupils would not be familiar with this concept; rather questions focussed on pupil perceptions of their needs and what support was available, to see if there was any correlation between the pupil perceptions and the areas the consultation focussed on.

Table 5.1: Pupil Feedback

Question	James	Leon	Craig
What things do you like doing?	Maths. Reading stories. I like Horton Hatches the Egg.	Golden Time and playing. I've been put in a different class, I don't know why. I sometimes go to that classroom (points) for play therapy.	I like sheep. I help with them on my dad's farm. Working things out (on the farm).
What don't you like?	Homework. Drawing stories. Solving questions.	Work. All the lessons are rubbish.	I don't like school because it's boring. All you're doing is sitting at a desk.
What are you good at?	I don't know. That's hard.	Golden Time. I'm quite good at maths and kind of good at reading.	I'm good at catching sheep and separating them into different pens.
What do you find difficult?	Writing. It makes my brain go funny. I have to tap it and it goes.	Work. Writing is really hard.	I find difficult maths, writing and reading because maths I have to work things out. Reading I struggle reading words because I don't get to see them much, I don't have the time.
How well are things going for you in school (scale of 1 to 10)?	Picked 7 (because that's how old I am).	Picked 1 because I don't get help anymore; I do everything on my own.	Picked 10 because I'm learning things and it's going fairly well and I'm getting good at my reading.
How much help and support do you have in school (scale of 1-10)	Picked 5	Picked 2. I don't know why I have to go in a different class.	Picked 10
Is there anyone who helps you in school?	Lists 4 female names.	(Name) He used to help me with some things on a morning.	(Name) TA because she is there every day and she helps me really well.
What do they help you with?	Writing, I have to talk about my ideas.		I have support with reading, maths and literacy. I think the support helps me.
What might you like to do when you leave school?	A shopkeeper gets paid £12,000, a scientist gets £30,000 and a doctor gets £70 to £80,000. I haven't decided yet.	Not go to High School. Play with my mates. I'm good at making things.	My own farm and flock of sheep. I'm close to getting there as I'm helping on the farm every day.
If you had a magic wand is there anything you would change?	Don't have to do writing anymore.	I'd have a car and I'd be good at spelling.	

Although James was the youngest pupil who took part in the research (the only pupil from Key Stage One) he demonstrated a good awareness of his learning needs (writing) and the support that is in place to help him. The target set by EP1 and T1 “For James to record his ideas in writing” appeared to be clear to James, as he understood he had to talk about his ideas with the TA before recording them, to help him structure his writing. He was aware that support from a number of different members of staff was available to help him.

Leon focussed on writing as something he found difficult, and although this was not the area on which the TME target had focussed, it was a legitimate area of concern as Leon was struggling to make progress (as reflected in the consultation discussion). Leon received a lot of support with literacy skills; daily support was in place for him in school, although he reflected he thought he no longer received any support. Leon perceived he was good at maths and reading, and although he had made progress in maths, T2 identified through the consultation process that in her view, Leon needed support with reading. The area targeted through TME was for Leon “To improve his emotional stability so that he is more settled on entering the classroom after lunch.”

Leon made no reference to his behaviour during the discussion with EP1, which may indicate a lack of awareness that his behaviour is considered a cause for concern, or simply an outcome of the interview dynamics, where none of the questions asked by EP1 specifically addressed behaviour. This raises a concern with regard to the level of pupil participation in plans made to support Leon; it would appear he has been a passive recipient of support measures which had no relation to how he viewed his own profile of strengths and difficulties, targets for improvements and methods he felt confident would help him achieve personally

meaningful targets. This runs counter to the arguments for pupil participation as discussed in Section 3.3.1 (Gersch et al., 1993; Morton, 1996, and Ruddock and Flutter, 2004).

Craig's TME target was "To improve self-esteem and confidence, Craig should tell an adult where, when and what could be better." Craig talked a lot about his work on the farm, which he really enjoys and is clearly very important to him. When he did talk about school-related issues, he said that he found maths, writing and reading difficult, which matches T5's description of his attainments being low in both English and Maths. Craig was aware that he had support from a TA and reflected he thought this was helpful. He also felt that things were going well and he was aware of making improvements with his reading. However, Craig did not appear to be aware of the target relating to his self-esteem or confidence, although this target was linked to success in literacy (such as having more confidence to read). Again, this raises a concern with regard to the level of pupil participation in plans made to support Craig, suggesting here too that a greater level of pupil participation is needed.

## 5.8 Evaluation of Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)

In this study, Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME) was used to demonstrate whether, in the judgement of the consultee, progress was made against agreed targets set by the EP and the teacher consultees in each case. Progress can be coded as described by Dunsmuir et al. (2009, p 57):

- Worst progress (actual outcome rating is below the baseline)
- No progress (baseline maintained)
- Some progress (outcome is rated less than expected rating but above baseline)
- Expected level of progress (actual rating matches expected rating)
- Better than expected progress (actual outcome exceeds expected rating)

In four out of the five cases, ‘better than expected progress’ was achieved in that the actual outcome was considered to have exceeded the expected rating (see Tables 5.2 to 5.5). In one of the cases ‘some progress’ was made (Table 5.6) as the outcome was above the baseline but less than the expected rating.

Overall, these trends are positive, demonstrating that in each of the cases, progress was considered to have been made against the agreed targets. However, as noted above, concerns the pupil feedback indicated that, in at least two of the cases, the targets had been agreed and reviewed by the adults, with pupil participation apparently afforded a very low premium.

When looking at the targets recorded by the EPs, there is variability in the quality of the targets defined. As noted by Dunsmuir et al (2009), targets should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time limited). Although the targets are clear to an extent, the terminology used is sometimes “vague, ambiguous and lacked specificity” (Dunsmuir, 2009, p 64), which suggests that further work may be required to support both EPs and teacher in setting appropriate, specific targets.

Table 5.2: TME results for James

Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)	
Pupil: James	Consultation between: EP1 and T1
Date of consultation: 17.04.2013	Date of review: 04.06.2013
<p><i>Target 1:</i> For James to record his ideas in writing.</p> <p>Rating:            <b>1</b>        <b>(2)B</b>    <b>3</b>        <b>4</b>        <b>5</b>        <b>(6)E</b>    <b>(7)A</b>    <b>8</b>        <b>9</b>        <b>10</b></p> <p><i>Descriptor of baseline level:</i> James is rarely able to record his ideas. His independent performance is a 2, increasing to 3/4 when adult support is provided.</p> <p><i>Descriptor of level achieved:</i> James has developed a much happier relationship with writing, with encouragement to stay on task he is at a 7.</p> <p>B = baseline, E = expected level of progress, A = achieved</p>	

Table 5.3: TME results for Leon

Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)	
Pupil: Leon	Consultation between: EP1 and T2
Date of consultation: 27.03.2013	Date of review: 04.06.2013
<p><i>Target 1:</i> To improve Leon's emotional stability so that he is more settled on entering the classroom after lunch.</p> <p>Rating:            <b>1</b>        <b>(2)B</b>    <b>3</b>        <b>(4)E</b>    <b>(5)A</b>    <b>6</b>        <b>7</b>        <b>8</b>        <b>9</b>        <b>10</b></p> <p><i>Descriptor of baseline level:</i> Leon is unsettled most of the time.</p> <p><i>Descriptor of level achieved:</i> Leon will enter the classroom ready to work.</p> <p>B = baseline, E = expected level of progress, A = achieved</p>	

Table 5.4: TME results for Luke

Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)													
Pupil: Luke							Consultation between: EP2, T3 and TA1						
Date of consultation: 23.04.2013							Date of review: 27.06.2013						
<i>Target 1: Luke will produce more written work</i>													
Rating:	1	2	(2½)B	3	4	(4½)E	5	6	(6½) A	7	8	9	10
<i>Descriptor of baseline level:</i> Writing only one or two words													
<i>Descriptor of level achieved:</i> Writing two or more paragraphs and proud of the work he has done													
<i>Target 2: Luke will stop ‘whining and moaning’ when asked to do something he doesn’t want to do</i>													
Rating:	1	2	3	(4)B	5	(6)E	7	8	(9)A	10			
<i>Descriptor of baseline level:</i> An outburst at least once a day													
<i>Descriptor of level achieved:</i> No outburst in the last few weeks													
B = baseline, E = expected level of progress, A = achieved													



Table 5.5: TME Results for John

Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)										
Pupil: John					Consultation between: EP2 and T4					
Date of consultation: 18.06.2013					Date of review: 23.07.2013					
<i>Target 1: Stop John hurting other children</i>										
Rating:	1	2	3	(4)B	5	(6)E	(7)A	8	9	10
<i>Descriptor of baseline level:</i> This is an almost daily event										
<i>Descriptor of level achieved:</i> Only two incidents recorded over last four weeks										
<i>Target 2: Stop John hurting staff</i>										
Rating:	1	2	3	(4)B	5	(6)E	7	(8)A	9	10
<i>Descriptor of baseline level:</i> This currently happens two or three times a week										
<i>Descriptor of level achieved:</i> No incidents recorded over last 4 weeks										
B = baseline, E = expected level of progress, A = achieved										

Table 5.6: TME Results for Craig

Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)										
Pupil: Craig					Consultation between: EP3, T5 and TA2					
Date of consultation: 06.03.2013					Date of review: 10.07.2013					
<i>Target 1: To improve/develop Craig's self-esteem and confidence. Craig to tell an adult where, when and what could be better.</i>										
Rating:	1	2	(3)B	4	5	(5½)A	6	7	(8)E	9 10
<i>Descriptor of baseline level:</i> Craig is not very self-confident with aspects of his learning.										
<i>Descriptor of level achieved:</i> Craig is more self-led in his learning and is able to identify targets/next steps to support his basic skills (literacy and numeracy). Craig has felt happier in himself, confident to read, coming out of the literacy group, seeing that he can do it.										
B = baseline, E = expected level of progress, A = achieved										

During the interviews with EPs I asked a scaling question with regard to the TME process, the responses of each EP are shown in Table 5.7.

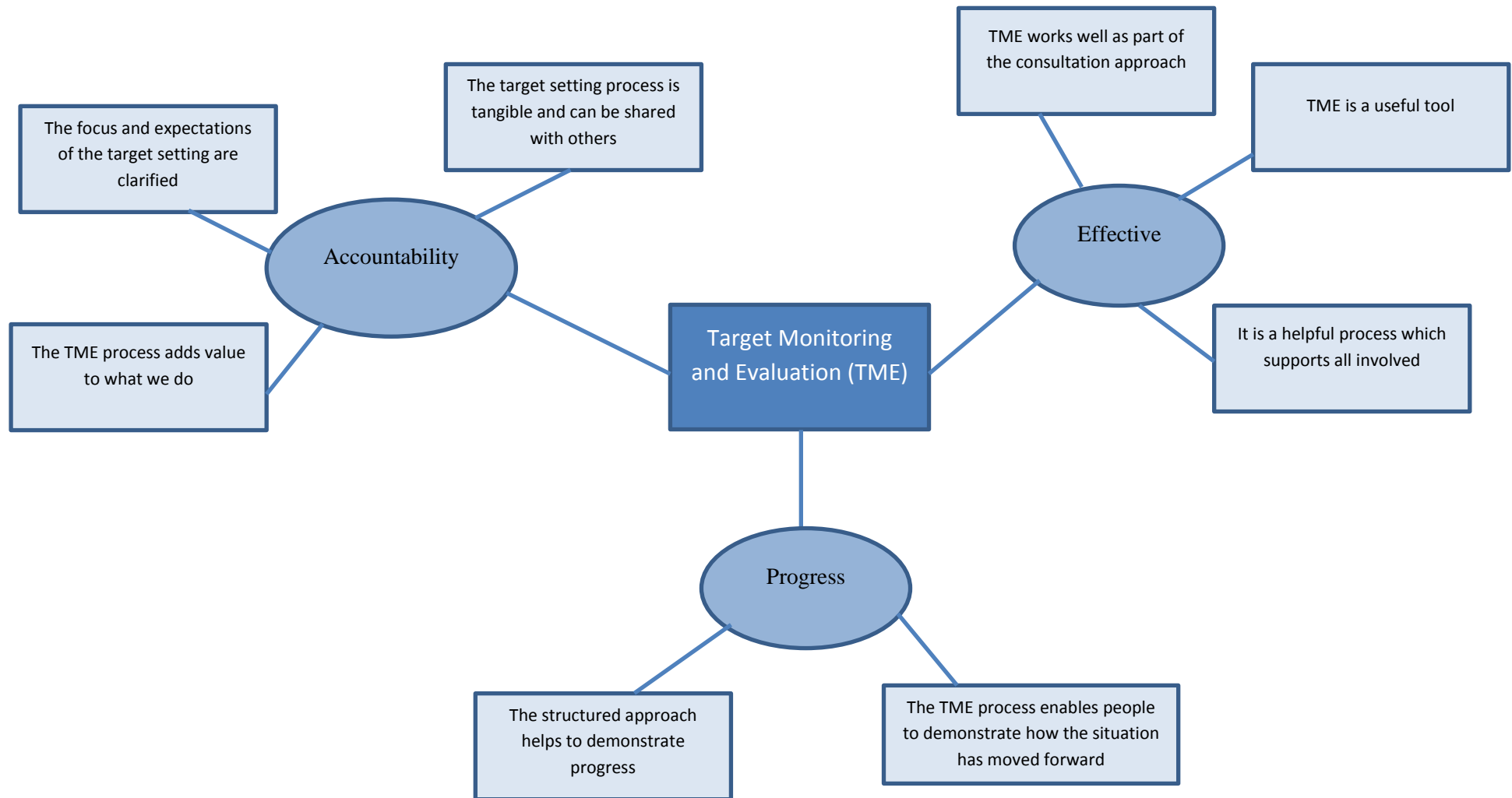
Table 5.7: TME scaling question responses from EPs

<i>Question:</i> On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is ‘not very useful’ and 10 is ‘very useful’, how useful was the TME process in supporting the teacher to set targets and monitor progress?										
Rating:	1	2	3	4	5	6	EP3 (7)	8	EP1 (9)	EP2 (10)

The five teachers were asked a similar question regarding how useful they found TME in helping them to set targets and monitor progress, but only two of them responded by giving a number (both T1 and T5 gave the TME process a score of 9). T2 and T3 gave verbal responses to say that it was “it’s always good” (T2) and that it’s “quite beneficial” (T3). However, T4 thought it “wasn’t that helpful” as “all we wanted to do was stop the behaviour”, yet in further comments T4 notes that there had been significant (positive) changes in the behaviour (“John’s behaviour has changed completely”) due to the strategies agreed on through the consultation process, and that “It’s been great.” This apparent contradiction may be explained by the fact the behaviour concerned was very serious (hitting children and members of staff); therefore T4 had just wanted this behaviour to stop, rather than improve as the target setting would suggest. However, the target setting helped to structure the conversation regarding what strategies they were going to use to implement the changes, which subsequently stopped the behaviour occurring,

All three EPs reported that TME was a useful process which enhanced the consultation process. I used thematic analysis again on the EPs responses relating to TME, in order to look for common themes across the data from all 3 EPs, and to expand on the above ratings to find out *why* they perceived TME as effective. Comments from the teachers were again used to supplement the thematic analysis. This was coded separately to the rest of the interview data, as it related specifically to TME rather than consultation. In this analysis I have used TME as the global theme as all the responses from this part of the interviews related specifically to this. The successive levels of data abstraction derived from thematic analysis, from coding to the global theme can be found in Appendix 24, while this final thematic network is summarised in figurative form in Figure 5.6, with themes further exemplified and discussed thereafter.

Figure 5.6 Thematic Network Six: Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)



The first organising theme identified is that relating to how ‘effective’ TME was perceived by the EPs as a process. All perceived it as something simple, effective and helpful to use which also fits well within process of consultation. The language used during the TME process, thinking about a baseline, possible expected outcomes and actual achievement, linked to the questions the EPs were used to asking as part of a solution focussed consultation approach. The scaling questions for example require consultees to consider a rating to reflect their current circumstances (similar to the baseline question), think about ‘best hopes’ or where they would like things to be (similar to the expected progress question) and the review of the process revisits the scaling asking consultees to reflect on what they have achieved since the previous meeting (similar to the actual progress question). Thus the process felt familiar to the EPs, although appeared to be more structured by having the specific TME questions incorporated into the consultation record form.

“It was really helpful when I actually came to do the written feedback, to be able to emphasise this is what we agreed would be the most useful thing to target. This is where we felt it was and where we’d like it to move to and then be able to link that to the actions that we’d agreed. So I certainly think it is something that makes consultation probably more effective and I will use it again.”

EP1

“It struck a chord at how effective it was and it’s such a simple tool.”

EP2

“The language (of having a baseline, expectations and outcomes) seemed to fit and that the model itself seems to fit with the consultation process.”

EP3

The teacher's talked about TME helping to clarify where they perceived the concerns to be (baseline) and where they wanted to get to (expectations). T1 summarised this as quoted below.

"It's a clearer way of being able to explain how difficult the particular task was for the child and it gave you an idea of how important it is to try and meet his needs in that area."

T1

The organising theme looking at 'progress' reflects that fact the TME approach is a structured process, enabling those involved in the process to clearly identify the priority areas to target, agree actions in order to help achieve the targets and review the process in order to demonstrate that progress that has been made. Having to set targets that are clear and can be measured helps both the consultant and the consultee to focus on what it is that they want to change. It also encourages all involved to review the progress against the specific targets set.

(Use TME to) "Pin down what the target might be and to erm look at where we want to move from there."

"I found it really useful because again it just sort of clarified exactly what it was that we were going to focus on."

EP1

"I thought that was great you know, the fact that he'd moved on."

"We've identified the priorities and I know that I'll be coming back...we can see the movement err and they can see the movement."

EP2

Similar thoughts were expressed by the teachers, for example T3 talked about the process helping to “narrow down” the areas to focus on and being able to “show how much he (Luke) has come on.” T1 and T5 echoed this by saying that TME helped to show how things had “moved forward.” The notion of setting a baseline was reflected on by T2, in that it is important to know “where we started” before thinking about where you want to get to.

Within this section, T2 talked about the importance of “helping the child to be able to voice what they feel” in relation to their perceptions about the concern and their progress, in case there is a discrepancy between how the adults perceive the concern and the progress and how the child perceives it. T2 acknowledged that they didn’t know if this was already part of the process, but they felt that it should be.

Linked to the above theme about progress is that of ‘accountability’, being able to demonstrate to those outside the consultation process the impact of the involvement; demonstrating that the agreed interventions have made a difference and enabled the child or young person to make progress. This is often a criticism of the consultation process in that the most immediate impact appears to be the effect the process has on the consultee (teacher) as opposed to the client (pupil).

TME was referred to by the EPs as being something ‘tangible’, something that could be shared with others outside the process in order to demonstrate the progress that had been made against the agreed targets, as a result of the interventions applied. In the context of this

research, this is very important, as the need to demonstrate what (positive) difference has been made becomes more critical.

“They (teachers) had really something to get hold of...it gives you, gives you something tangible doesn’t it.”

“We’ll put some figures on this.”

EP2

“It’s something you can go back to erm staff, parents or other professionals with and actually say well this is what we wanted to do, this is what we err, have developed as a target for whoever to take away and work on, have we achieved what we set out to achieve.”

“If we’re looking at a wider picture of erm, evaluating practice and erm, err, evaluating impact or auditing our work that we do, this, in a very small scale, this is, this is a way of doing that and adding value to what we are doing.”

EP3

Only T3 (with TA1) reflected on the notion of being able to “quantify exactly” where things were, and being able to share this with others, notably sharing where the pupil was (baseline) and where he had moved to (achieved) with the head teacher in order to demonstrate the difference the work they had been doing had made. The notion of being able to set targets helped them to express their concerns to others, and for others to understand what they perceived as a concern, noting it’s “better than just us (T3 and TA1) feeling it’s such a big issue.”



## **CHAPTER SIX: IMPLICATIONS**

### **6.1 The research questions**

The current research study focused on the following areas:

- the impact of consultation on teachers' perceptions of their ability to make a difference with regard to children's progress in learning or behaviour;
- the impact of consultation on parents' perceptions of their child's subsequent progress;\*
- the impact of the consultation process on pupils' perceptions of their progress;\* and
- the perceptions and beliefs of EPs about the skills and other conditions needed to enable the consultation process to be effective in facilitating change for children.

### **6.2 How the research builds on previous studies**

A number of elements within this research relate to key issues discussed in the literature on consultation, namely the relationship between the consultant and consultee; the directive cf. non-directive debate; the extent to which consultants and consultees have a shared understanding of the consultation process; and the need for greater accountability. Each of these will be explored in turn.

#### **6.2.1 Relationship between consultant and consultee**

Schein (1988) and Dennis (2004) comment on the working relationship between the consultant and consultee, both arguing that a positive working relationship is needed to enable consultation to be effective. Dennis (2004) reported (as discussed in more detail in Section 2.5) that the SENCos (consultees) who took part in this study perceived the relationship

between the EP and the school as “central to the success” (p 22) of the consultation process. In the current study, relationships were perceived as important by the EPs, in that consultations that were described as the most collaborative were those in which a good working relationship was established. Interestingly though, in all of the cases improvements were made regarding pupil progress, suggesting this relationship is perhaps not as critical to the success of the consultation process as previous literature has suggested. Gutkin and Conoley (1990) refer to the fact consultation is an indirect model of service delivery, with EPs reliant on the consultees (teachers) to implement agreed strategies, and for this, they argue, good working relationships are essential.

However, none of the teacher consultees in this research made reference to the importance of relationships. This difference may be accounted for in that in the study by Dennis (2004), the consultees were the SENCos, who, by the nature of their role, have relatively frequent contact with educational psychologists and therefore a good working relationship may be perceived as more essential by them, than by the class teachers in the current research, two of whom had limited, and one no previous experience of consultation and/or prior working relationship with the EP consultant. However, T4 and T5 were both in the position of SENCo and again, neither made any comments in regard to the working relationship.

The implication of this study suggests that the instrumental value of a positive working relationship from the perspective of consultees, may have been overstated by previous authors. It may be, for example, that, for consultees, the level of ‘Knowledge Base 1’ and ‘Knowledge Base 2’ expertise is a more important influence (West and Idol, 1987).

In this study, it is the consultant who is eliciting consultee feedback regarding the consultation process; here therefore demand characteristics/the level of direct exposure to the provider of the consultative service may have inhibited disclosures regarding more personal dimensions of the consultation process and relationship between the consultant and consultee.

#### 6.2.2 The directive cf. non-directive debate

The directive cf. non-directive debate was explored in Section 2.3, largely reflected in the exchange of ideas, supported by research, between Gutkin (Gutkin et al., 1980; Gutkin and Conoley, 1990; Gutkin, 1996; 1997; 1999a; 1999b; Gutkin and Reynolds, 2008) and Erchul (1987; 1990; 1999). Gutkin (1999) stated that consultation could combine both directive and collaborative characteristics as they are neither incompatible nor opposites of each other. Importantly in terms of links to the current research, Gutkin (1999a) noted that consultants needed to be able to move “fluidly and skilfully” (p 187) between dimensions, (particularly collaborative-nondirective and collaborative-directive) in order to meet the needs of the consultee and ensure the process was successful, although he acknowledged the legitimacy of Erchul’s (1999) criticism that further work was needed to determine how consultants respond to the need of consultees.

In the current research, consultation was largely perceived by the EPs as a collaborative-nondirective process, with the role of the EP described as a ‘facilitator’ rather than an ‘advice giver’. The use of questioning was seen as important in supporting the development of this joint problem solving process. Two of the teachers also reflected the importance of working together to develop solutions.

With regard to being more directive, two of the EPs (EP1 and EP3) described ‘giving advice’ as something that was not part of the consultation process, as though giving advice would run counter to the collaborative nature of the consultation process, whereas EP2 considered that giving advice was sometimes a necessary component of consultation, suggesting (like Gutkin 1999a and 1999b), that consultation could be both collaborative and directive. Meanwhile, two of the teachers and one of the parents appeared to perceive the EP as an expert, wanting advice and new ideas, and thus also affirming the value of more directive, solution-offering contributions by EPs.

There is perhaps a need to revisit the model of consultation with the Service in which this research has taken place, to clarify how other EPs within the Service would describe their approach to consultation, and if they recognise the need to move between the dimensions (collaborative-nondirective or collaborative-directive) in response to the needs of the consultee. Also, consultants might simply find it helpful to check with consultees whether the consultee would value suggestions/advice for the consultee to consider, rather than simply imposing a ‘pure’ elicitational approach, irrespective of the expectations and preferences of different consultees and/or differing problem or complexity demands.

### 6.2.3 A shared understanding of the process

MacHardy et al. (1997) note that although teachers’ perceptions about the EP role had changed following their participation in the consultation process, teachers did not perceive their own role (with regard to contributing to the invention), had changed, suggesting that

teachers did not fully understand, or perhaps even seek, the expected equal, collaborative nature of the process.

In this research, a shared understanding of the process was perceived by the EPs as important in ensuring its success, although concerns were raised by EPs as to whether teachers, and to some extent parents, fully understood what the process involved. EPs expressed the need to be more explicit in communicating their own expectations of the process in order to optimise the engagement of the consultees in the process.

Although both teachers and parents regarded the consultation process as helpful, rating it highly (seven or eight out of ten) on a scale, only one of the teachers showed a genuine understanding compatible with that of the EPs, that the process was collaborative, noting that staff in school were perceived to be part of the solution.

Two parents reflected a change in perceptions about their child's needs, noting that exploring the concerns helped to clarify areas of need.

The above implies the need to be more explicit regarding the process and for clarity regarding the expectations of the role of both consultees and consultants. Without this clarity it is unlikely that the process will be as effective, particularly with regard to the outcomes for children and young people.

#### 6.2.4 The need for greater accountability

The need for EP services to demonstrate accountability has been discussed by numerous authors including Gersch et al., (1990); Dessent, (1994); Leadbetter, (2000); MacKay, (2002) and Kennedy et al., (2009). One of the issues discussed in the literature (Dickinson, 2000) is that of ‘to whom are EPs accountable.’

Dickinson (2000) advocates that the consultee (teachers and/or parents) is the client and therefore the accountability concerns the difference made to consultees. In contrast, Larney (2003) argues that the child is the client and therefore any attempt at accountability must seek to demonstrate the difference made to the child/young person. Kennedy et al. (2009) also advocate that in this climate there is increasing pressure to justify the impact interventions have on children and young people.

Leadbetter (2000) noted difficulties with measuring outcomes of consultation due to the fact that they are rarely easily measurable, however, despite these acknowledged challenges, she advocated more accountable models of practice and robust outcome measures in order to demonstrate the impact of consultation. Dunsmuir et al. (2009), as discussed in Section 4.5.2, endeavoured to address this by employing the TME approach to measure perceptions of progress against agreed targets.

Within the current study, the ability to demonstrate progress for children was an important theme for EPs, teachers and parents. EPs and teachers talked about the need to prioritise areas to be addressed, with EPs supporting teachers thinking about what the situation would look like if/once the intervention had been implemented successfully. EPs, teachers and parents

reflected on how useful the TME approach had been in enabling them to demonstrate progress, both to those immediately involved in the process and to a wider audience.

The implication is that the TME model could be incorporated into our consultation practice in order to strengthen evaluation of the approach. However, there is perhaps a need to include children and young people in the setting, monitoring and evaluation of these targets, as discussed in Section 6.4.2, and for other evaluation methods to supplement the TME approach, as discussed in Section 6.4.1.

### 6.3 Contribution to knowledge and theory development

#### 6.3.1 Research practitioner

The notion of educational psychologists as ‘research-practitioners’ was discussed by Larney (2003) and Kennedy et al. (2009), both suggesting the need for educational psychologists to evaluate their own practice. In other studies cited in Section 2.5 of this thesis (Gutkin, 1980; Dennis, 2004) and Section 4.5.2 (Dunsmuir et al., 2009), psychology graduates, unfamiliar EPs and assistant EPs have all been used to implement and evaluate aspects of consultation. Very few studies have employed the educational psychologist allocated to the school to implement consultation and to elicit structured feedback through which to contribute to research and evaluation. While MacHardy et al., (1997), cited in Section 2.5, did use the allocated school educational psychologists to *implement* the consultation process, the structured interviews with teachers and parents were carried out by a research assistant, not the educational psychologists who had provided the consultation.

In this research, the EPs used consultation in their allocated schools, using the process as they would normally with the one addition of the TME questions. Therefore staff in the school were familiar with the EPs and their consultation approach. The EPs also carried out the semi-structured interviews with teachers, parents and pupils, enabling them to ask supplementary questions pertaining to each individual situation as necessary, as they were familiar with the process that had been undertaken in each case.

The strengths of practitioners researching their own practice include the high ecological validity alongside the action research value, emphasised by lead authors such as McNiff (2013), Reason (2007) and Whitehead (2006), in providing feedback which enables practitioners to engage in informed reflection on their practice and its outcomes, harnessing this improved understanding to strengthen aspects of their practice.

Limitations, as demonstrated above, lie in threats to the trustworthiness of the data provided, caused by the interpersonal and inter-professional dynamics between EPs and teachers with on-going working relationships with one-another.

In order to maximise benefits and contain risks arising from these potential influences, it would appear helpful that consultation should be subject to both practitioner evaluation (as with the current study), to harness its potential formative value, while research by more independent researchers should be undertaken in parallel, in order to gain a more reliable profile of outcomes.



### 6.3.2 Parental perceptions

Most of the research on consultation cited in Sections 2.3-2.5 of this thesis has focussed on the perceptions of teacher consultees regarding the consultation process; very few studies have attempted to gather the views of parents. MacHardy et al. (1997) gathered parental perceptions through semi-structured interviews with a research assistant, although the conclusions that can be drawn from parental responses are limited, as very few details are reported in the study other than that some parents felt there had been positive changes for their child following the consultation meeting.

In the current study, parents were interviewed by the educational psychologists who had carried out the consultation, in order to gather parental perceptions about the process and the impact parents considered the intervention had made on their child's progress. The educational psychologists had been involved in co-constructing the questions that were included in the semi-structured interview and understood that changes could be made to the order in which the questions were asked, and supplementary questions could be used to enable to dialogue between themselves and the parents to feel as natural as possible.

The parental perceptions gathered in this research are very positive about the process, with all four parents whose views were gathered rating consultation as 'helpful', giving the process a score of eight out of ten when presented with a scale. The reasons why the process was perceived as helpful included the fact that the process "had worked" (P5) in that there had been improvements in the areas targeted, such as "the problematic behaviour has stopped". P1 and P2 were more reflective about the process having helped their understanding of the concerns, changing their perceptions regarding the focus of the concerns. P1 and P5 were the

only two parents who were asked to reflect on what they had valued about the EP contribution, with P1 noting she had developed a ‘deeper understanding’ of the concerns while P2 commented on a sense of ‘acceleration of the support process’.

The parental interviews also raised some concerns regarding the process however, in that one parent said that she had not been aware of the targets her child was working towards, suggesting she had not been involved in the target-setting, and that the process has not been as collaborative between parents and school as the researcher would have anticipated. The remaining three parents were aware of the targets, with P1 reflecting that James was also aware of his targets. This issue is reflected on further in Section 6.4.2.

Such parental feedback suggests a clear need to strengthen opportunities for parental participation in the consultation process. Concerns which had prompted the Lamb Inquiry (2009) and its recommendations, such as “the extent to which the school, teachers and support staff understood the nature of their child’s disability or learning difficulty”, and “the willingness of the school to listen to parents’ views and respond flexibly to their child’s needs” (p 12) would appear to continue to be areas requiring more thoughtful, focussed attention in educational psychology consultation.

### 6.3.3 Pupil perceptions

As noted in Section 6.3.2, the majority of the research on consultation to date has been concerned with evaluating the process from the perspectives of consultees (teachers), as opposed to clients (parents and/or pupils). Cherry (1998) noted that very few studies looked at

“positive pupil outcomes” (p 120) and Larney (2003) noted that research on consultation had focussed on evaluating effects of the process on consultees and not on the clients, which she advocated were the children and young people. Kennedy et al. (2009) note the increasing pressure to justify those processes which have a positive impact on children and young people, making a difference in terms of outcomes. Larney (2003), MacHardy et al. (1997) and Kennedy et al. (2009) advocated that future research should investigate the impact of consultation on changes in pupil behaviour, although none proposes a method which may be used to achieve this.

Within the context in which the current study was undertaken, the need to demonstrate the impact of educational psychology involvement is becoming even more critical, especially given the climate of accountability which has arisen due to many services trading aspects of their services (AEP, 2011). Schools which are commissioning educational psychology services would need to have confidence that EP services could meet their needs and ultimately make a difference for the children and young people with whom they are working. There is a greater accountability on services to publish, as part of the local offer (DfE, 2012) not only what the services can provide but how they will be accountable for the quality of the provision. The joint paper written by the AEP, DECP and NAPEP (2009) also reflects that services will be judged by the “difference their contribution has made” for children and young people (p 4).

In this research pupil perceptions were sought relating to their progress, although this was only gathered from three of the five pupils involved in the research (as explained in Section

4.7.2) , using a semi-structured interview format which contained pictures to support children's understanding of each question.

The results from the semi-structured interviews revealed differences in the level of pupil participation in plans made to support them. James appeared to have a greater involvement in the process as he was very aware of his targets, whereas Leon and Craig appeared to be passive recipients of support measures, as their perceptions of their needs did not align with areas targeted through the use of TME. This apparent lack of pupil participation is disappointing, and indeed at odds with current education policy (DfE 2011b, 2012 and 2013) This will be reflected on further in Section 6.4.2.

The fact that each of the three pupils referred to support being primarily from a teaching assistant may signal a need to consider more carefully the mechanisms through which post-consultation support is mediated, especially in the light of the recent research by Webster and Blatchford (2013) which “raises questions about the appropriateness of current arrangements” (p 31) regarding the use of teaching assistants to provide support for pupils with special educational needs, suggesting the needs of pupils with SEN need to be addressed “more inclusively” (p 32). While addressing this issue is beyond the parameters of this research, it is worth noting that in only one of the cases in this research (Luke) was the teaching assistant (TA1) part of the consultation process alongside the class teacher (T3), suggesting a need for a more ‘joined up’ approach in schools with regard to consultation.

EP2 gave reasons why, in his view, gathering perceptions from Luke and John was ‘not appropriate’, in Luke’s case due to family turbulence caused by a separation, and in John’s

case due to the severity of his special needs. This is concerning, especially in the light of the research outlined in Section 3.1.1 and a recent Service development day (July 2013) which focussed on the importance of gathering pupil perceptions, regardless of the age or needs of the child, and also gave attention to methods which have been proven effective and sensitive in work with children who may be vulnerable, due to language and/or communication difficulties and/or who may be subject to emotional distress (e.g. Lewis, 2009, 2010, 2011). If EP2 anticipated insuperable difficulties in gathering pupil views in the light of Luke's assessed vulnerability, my expectation would be for the EP to work with the adults familiar with working with those children in order to establish a means of communicating which would account for emotional sensitivity (in Luke's case) and the level of adaptation needed to enable John to participate.

#### 6.4 Critical analysis of the research

##### 6.4.1 What are the benefits of this study?

Within the literature search, I was unable to locate any research which had attempted to gather perceptions of EPs (consultants), teachers (consultees) parents (clients) and children/young people (clients), the majority of studies having focussed on the relationship between the consultant and consultee.

The current study therefore adds to a small number of studies (Dunsmuir et al., 2009 and Monsen et al., 2009) which use TME to demonstrate perceptions concerning pupil progress following an intervention agreed during the consultation process between an EP consultant and consultee. TME was viewed favourably by EPs and teachers in this research as a useful

mechanism to help make targets more specific, discuss expectations regarding progress and evaluate pupil achievement against targets set.

This is beneficial in having provided an insight into perceptions regarding the ability of consultation to make a difference to pupil progress; data derived from use of TME will be useful to EP services, all of which need to ensure they demonstrate greater accountability regarding interventions used, in relation to the difference made to clients. Wolpert et al. (2006) note that in terms of categories of evidence, the strongest conclusions can be drawn from ‘meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials’ (p 5) with case study evidence perceived as weak in comparison to this, and other forms of controlled/experimental trials. EPs will do well to use multi-method evaluation methods and data to supplement these subjective data with direct outcome data such as those derived from norm-referenced or criterion-referenced assessments.

#### 6.4.2 What are the limitations?

The research aimed to recruit four EPs, who in turn would each endeavour to recruit three teachers, three parents, and three pupils who were willing to engage in the study, commenting on the consultation process (therefore twelve teachers, parents and pupils in total). However, due to circumstances outlined in Section 4.7.1, the number of EPs reduced to three, the number of teachers to five, parents to four and pupils to three. Thus the sample of cases was much smaller than that for which I had planned, limiting the conclusions that can be drawn from this study.

During the semi-structured interviews with teachers, parents and pupils, the EP researchers used the prescribed questions largely in the format in which their design and wording had previously been agreed, with the resultant dialogue resembling an oral questionnaire rather than a semi-structured discussion. This limited some of the responses from teachers, parents and pupils as the capacity of the semi-structured interview format to support exploration or expansion of issues raised was not harnessed. Indeed, Cohen et al. (2000, p 271) warn of this risk that the “important or salient topics may be inadvertently omitted”, as happened here, where the EP interviewers made only limited and tightly scripted attempts to reach and research views of parents and pupils within the semi-structured interviews. Cohen et al. (2000) go on to note a number of criteria which constitute an ‘ideal’ interview, which include “the degree to which the interviewer follows up and clarifies” the responses given (p 281), which, in this research, was limited. Goddard and Villanova (2006) note the importance of training those conducting the interviews to ensure they “probe subjects (in this case parents and pupils) when responses are incomplete” (p 121). I was perhaps guilty of assuming too readily that EPs trained in research design and implementation would have rendered them ‘automatically’ competent interviewers, able, with little training or direction from myself as lead researcher, to implement the semi-structured interview with skill, which proved not to be the case. Perhaps there was also some interference from positivist research which still forms a dominant paradigm within psychology, with the EPs reluctant to ‘deviate from’ the agreed script, placing greater emphasis on consistency than sensitivity.

In future research it would be important to ensure those involved in asking the questions used semi-structured questions as a framework for exploration, rather than as a script; they perhaps need more encouragement to explore interesting issues as these arise in the discussion,

following on from themes mentioned in the conversation before moving on to the next question. Time constraints may account for this in that the EPs perhaps felt pressured to complete the interviews within the agreed time scales, and reduce time demands on the interviewees, and were therefore reluctant to develop some of the themes further.

It is interesting to consider how well equipped EPs are for the role of ‘practitioner researcher’, given that none chose to explore issues that arose in the discussion. During the consultation process one would assume that skills of elicitation and elaboration would be employed in order to explore issues discussed by the consultees; therefore the capacity for skilled management of a semi-structured interview process might be expected to fall within the ‘every-day’ repertoire of EPs. Perhaps, within the boundaries of this research, EPs felt they needed simply to ask the agreed questions in pursuit of inter-interviewer consistency, rather than elaborating on topics. In future, it would be important to make clear the legitimacy of encouraging further exploration and elaboration of themes within each discussion.

The analysis of the teacher, parent and pupil questionnaires was therefore limited, the quality of data being too sparse to support a full thematic analysis, rather, I used the consultee and client interview transcripts as secondary data to complement and supplement themes derived from the more detailed analysis of the EP interview transcripts.

The findings from this study suggest that the process of TME would be strengthened if pupils were also involved in setting meaningful targets, contributing to planning re: support mechanisms which they would experience as helpful and in reviewing their progress (Parson’s et al., 2009; Watkins, 2007; Lewis, 2010; Lewis, 2011); this would require the need



for pupils to be more involved in the establishment of the targets alongside the adults (EPs, teachers and parents), so that the process becomes more of a partnership whereby adults work alongside children to set targets *with* them, rather than adults working out programmes *for* them.

### 6.5 Concluding comments

In this research the sample size was very small, and perhaps skewed as a result of including solely those EPs and teacher consultees who offered their freely-given informed consent to participate. With this important caveat in mind, the study did offer support for the value of consultation in empowering the teacher consultees and proving instrumental in promoting progress for children.

Despite its very narrow remit, however, the study did also offer grounds for concern that neither children's nor their parents' perspectives were routinely fully harnessed within the consultation process: a strong indictment of an approach often positioned as "empowering service users" and/or as a departure from "the expert model" which is held to have characterised the more traditional direct casework approaches of the "medical model." Rather it would appear that EPs and teachers are the 'experts' with regard to discussing concerns and deciding what happens, largely excluding parents and pupils from this decision making.

Billington (2000; 2009) adopts a social constructionist perspective, exploring how professional discourses can construct children with special needs, magnifying their 'difference', and so, quite unwittingly, exacerbating risks of their exclusion and

marginalisation. In this study, despite their best intentions, it appears that the consultative discourses between EPs and teachers may have constructed difficulties/differences which the children themselves did not attribute to themselves.

The above conclusion is somewhat concerning, especially given the proposed changes, as outlined in detail in Chapter Three, which highlight the views of children as “central” (DfE 2013a, p 11). If consultation is to be a model fit for purpose in the changing context, EP services need to demonstrate how children are part of the process; one suggestion arising from this research is for children’s direct involvement in the process of target-setting and evaluation through the use of the TME approach. The TME approach helps to demonstrate pupil progress, therefore helping to address concerns regarding accountability (Gersch et al., 1990), but the approach would be strengthened if the pupil voice was included.

Kirkpatrick (1975) designed a four-level evaluation model, widely used in order to evaluate aspects of training and learning. The four levels essentially measure:

- Level One: reaction of student – what they thought and felt about the training
- Level Two: learning- the resulting increase in knowledge or capability
- Level Three: behaviour- extent of behaviour and capability improvement and implementation/application
- Level Four: results- the effects on the business or environment resulting from the trainees performance

More recently, Kirkpatrick (1994) and Phillips (1996) have referred to a fifth level, namely ‘return on investment’: the extent to which the intervention forms the most effective mechanism through which the process/outcomes could have been facilitated.

Applying the model to the consultation process can be thought of in terms of the extent to which consultation is accepted by the consultee (Level One), is assimilated within the teacher’s cognitive schema (Level Two), is then adopted and incorporated accurately within the teacher consultee’s behaviour repertoire (Level Three), and in turn, results in improvements in the child’s learning or behaviour (Level Four).

For Kirkpatrick, all these levels of evaluation are considered necessary for full and meaningful evaluation of learning in organisations. It is often the case that ‘evaluation’ begins and ends with Level One. Indeed, the review of available literature suggests that evaluation most commonly focuses solely on Level One: the extent to which teacher consultees view the provision of a consultation-based service response as acceptable and helpful.

This study has contributed to the evaluation of the operationalization and impact of consultation in the EP Service from levels One to Four in a small number of cases and has also afforded a methodology through which, within the ‘routine’ model of service delivery, the acceptability and outcomes of consultation could and will routinely be subject to evaluation scrutiny.

This study has however also highlighted the need for EPs to give fuller attention to their commitment toward parental and pupil participation, and the mechanisms through which they consider this commitment can be best operationalized in their ‘routine practice’. Such a process of shared reflection, planning, contingent action and evaluation of its outcomes will form a focus for Service development during the academic year 2013-14, therefore supporting the service in remaining a learning organisation (Senge, 2006), reducing the risk of complacency and ensuring that the Service continues to ‘move’ (Stoll, 1998) and progress, ensuring the service is fit for purpose in the changing climate.

However, with further proposed cuts to Local Authorities of around 26 per cent (HM Treasury, 2010) I am mindful of our vulnerable status as an EP service fully funded by the Local Authority; where further reductions to the budget, and therefore to staffing are likely to lead to discussions about the range of services offered, or maintenance of current services, with those services which are not perceived as statutory or essential put out to tender for alternative commissioners of EP services. If we are to become a traded service, the need to be more accountable, demonstrating “the difference the contribution of (our) service has made for children” (AEP, DECP, NAPEP, 2009) will have even greater significance. If consultation is to be preserved within this changing context the need to demonstrate outcomes for children is crucial.

## REFERENCES

Ajmal, Y. and Rees, I. (2001) *Solutions in Schools*. London: BT Press.

Ashton, R. and Roberts, E. (2006) What is valuable and unique about the educational psychologist? *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 22, No 2, pp 111-123.

Association of Educational Psychologists, Division of Educational and Child Psychology & National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists (2009) *The Evaluation of Educational Psychology Services in the Light of Outcomes for Children*. Durham: AEP.

Association of Educational Psychologist (2010) *The Contribution of Educational Psychologists to the Delivery of Local Services for Children*. Durham: AEP.

Association of Educational Psychologists (2011) *The Delivery of Educational Psychology Services*. Durham: AEP.

Attride-Stirling, J. (2001) Thematic Networks: an analytic tool for qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 1, No 3, pp 385-405.

Aubrey, C. (1987) Training for the role of school consultant as a means of dealing effectively with behaviour problems in schools. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 4, No 2, pp14-29.

Bartram, P. and Wolfendale, S. (1999) Educational Psychology Services. The pursuit of quality assurance. The role of service level agreements. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 15, No 1, pp 51-56.

Baxter, J. & Frederickson, N. (2005) Every Child Matters: can educational psychology contribute to radical reform? *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 21, No. 2, pp 87-102.

Baxter, P. & Jack, S. (2008) Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13, No 4, pp 544-559.

Billington, T. (2000) *Separating, Losing and Excluding Children: Narratives of Difference*. London: Routledge Falmer.

Billington, T. (2009) Open Dialogue: 'Working with children: psychologists at the boundaries of knowledge and experience'. *The Psychology of Education Review*, 33, No 2 pp 3-11.

Brady, B. (2007) Developing children's participation: lessons from a participatory IT project. *Children and Society*, 21, pp 31-41.

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006) Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3, pp 77-101.

British Educational Research Association (2011) *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. London: BERA.

British Psychological Society (2009) *Code of Ethics and Conduct*. BPS: Leicester.

Burden, R. (1978) Schools' systems analysis: A project-centred approach. In Gillham, B. (Ed.) *Reconstructing Educational Psychology*. London: Croom Helm.

Burnham, S. (2013) Realists or Pragmatists? “Reliable evidence” and the role of the educational psychologist. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 29, No 1, pp 19-35.

Burr, V. (2003) *Social Constructionism*. Second Edition. London: Routledge.

Busse, R. T. and Beaver, B. R. (2000) Informant report: parent and teacher interviews. In Shapiro, E.S. and Kratochwill, T. R. (Eds) (2000) *Conducting School-based Assessments of Child and Adolescent Behaviour*. New York: Guilford Press.

Cherry, C. (1998) Evaluation of an educational psychology service in the context of LEA inspection. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 14, No 2, pp 118-127.

Children and Families Bill (2013) *Contextual Information and Responses to Pre-Legislative Scrutiny*. London: TSO.

Clarke, S. and Jenner, S. (2006) The psychology of delivering a psychological service: self-organised learning as a model for consultation. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 22, No 3, pp 185-197.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2000) *Research Methods in Education*. Fifth Edition. London: Routledge.

Conoley, J. C. and Conoley, C. W. (1990) Staff Consultative Work in Schools. In Jones, N. and Frederickson, N. (1990) *Refocusing Educational Psychology*. London: Falmer Press.

Cook-Sather, A. (2002) Authorising students’ perspectives: toward trust, dialogue, and change in education. *Educational Researcher*, 31, 4, pp 3-14.

Crawford, R and Phillips, D. (2012) *Local Government Spending: Where is the axe falling?* London: IFS.

Davey, C. (2010) *Children's Participation in Decision Making*. Summary report on progress to 2010. [www.participationworks.org.uk](http://www.participationworks.org.uk)

Dennis, R. (2004) So far so good? A qualitative case study exploring the implementation of consultation in schools. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 20, No 1, pp 17-29.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (2009) *The Lamb Inquiry*. London: TSO.

Department for Education (1993) *Educational Act 1993*. London: HMSO.

Department for Education (1996) *Education Act 1996*. London HMSO.

Department for Education (2007) *Citizenship. Programme of study for Key Stage 3*. London: QCA.

Department for Education (2010) *Academies Act*. London: TSO.

Department for Education (2011a) *Developing Sustainable Training Arrangements for the Initial Training of Educational Psychologists. Final Report*. London: TSO.

Department for Education (2011b) *Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability. A consultation*. London: TSO.



Department for Education (2012) *Support and Aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability. Progress and next steps*. London: TSO.

Department for Education (2013a) *Indicative Draft: The (0-25) Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. London: TSO.

Department for Education (2013b) *The Young Person's Guide to the Children and Families Bill*. London: TSO.

Department for Education and Employment (1994) *The Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs*. London: HMSO.

Department for Education and Employment (2000) *Educational Psychology Services (England): Current role, good practice and future directions*. London: DfEE Publications.

Department for Education and Science (1978) *Special Educational Needs (The Warnock Report)*. London: HMSO.

Department for Education and Science (1981) *Educational Act 1981*. London: HMSO.

Department for Education and Skills (2001a) *Special Educational Needs Code of Practice*. London: DfES.

Department for Education and Skills (2001b) *SEN Toolkit*. London: DfES.

Department of Health (1989) *The Children Act 1989: An Introduction to the Act*. London: DoH.

Dessent, T. (1994) Educational Psychology: What Future? *Educational and Child Psychology* 11, No 3, pp 50-54.

Dickinson, D. (2000) Consultation: assuring the quality and outcomes. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 16, No 1, pp 19-23.

Dunsmuir, S., Brown, E., Iyadurai, S. and Monsen, J. (2009) Evidence based practice and evaluation: from insight to impact. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 25, No 1, pp 53-70.

Erchul, W. P. (1999) Two steps forward, one step back: Collaboration in school-based consultation. *Journal of School Psychology*, 37, No 2, pp 191-203.

Farouk, S. (1999) Consulting with Teachers: An Exploratory Study into EP Practice. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 14, No 4, pp 253-263.

Farrell, P., Woods, K., Lewis, S., Rooney, S., Squires, G., and O'Connor, M. (2006) *A review of the functions and contribution of Educational Psychologists in England and Wales in light of "Every Child Matters: Change for Children"*. Nottingham: DfES Publications.

Fereday, J. and Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006) Demonstrating Rigor Using Thematic Analysis: A Hybrid Approach of Inductive and Deductive Coding and Thematic Development. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5, No 1, pp 1-11.

Fielding, M. (2004) Transformative approaches to student voice: theoretical underpinnings, recalcitrant realities. *British Educational Research Journal*, 30, No 2, pp 295-311.

Fox, M. (2002) The education of children with special educational needs: evidence or value driven? *Educational and Child Psychology*, 19, No 3, pp 42-53.

- Fox, M. (2003) Opening Pandora's Box: evidence-based practice for educational psychologists. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 19, No 2, pp 91-102.
- Franklin, A. and Sloper, P. (2009) Supporting the participation of disabled children and young people in decision making. *Children and Society*, 23, No 1, pp3-15.
- Frederickson, N. (2002) Evidence-based practice and educational psychology. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 19, No. 3, pp 96-111.
- Gergen, G. (1985) The social constructionist movement in modern psychology. In Norwich, B. (2000) *Education and Psychology in Interaction. Working with uncertainty in interconnecting fields*. London: Routledge.
- Gersch, I.S., Holgate, A. and Sigston, A. (1993) Valuing the child's perspective: revised student report and other practical initiatives. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 9, No 1, pp 36-45.
- Gersch, I.S., McCarthy, M., Sigston, A. and Townley, D. (1990) Taking an educational psychology service into the 1990s. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 6, No 3, pp 123 – 130.
- Goddard, R.D. and Villanova, P. (2006) Designing Surveys and Questionnaires for Research. In Leong, F.T.L. and Austin, J.T. (Eds) *The Research Psychology Handbook*. (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition) London: Sage.
- Gutkin, T. B. (1980) Teacher perceptions of consultation services provided by school psychologists. *Professional Psychology*, 11, No 4, pp 637-642.

Gutkin, T. B. (1996) Patterns of consultant and consultee verbalisations: examining communication leadership during initial consultation interviews. *Journal of School Psychology*, 34, No 3, pp 199-219.

Gutkin, T. B. (1997) An introduction to the mini-series: the social psychology of interpersonal influence with adults. *Journal of School Psychology*, 35, No 2, pp 105-106.

Gutkin, T. B. (1999a) Collaborative versus directive/prescriptive/expert school-based consultation: reviewing and resolving a false dichotomy. *Journal of School Psychology*, 37, No 2, p 161-190.

Gutkin, T. B. (1999b) The collaboration debate: finding our way through the maze: moving forward into the future: a response to Erchul (1999). *Journal of School Psychology*, 37, 3, p 229-241.

Gutkin, T.B. and Conoley, J. C. (1990) Reconceptualising school psychology from a service delivery perspective: implications for practice, training and research. *Journal of School Psychology*, 28, pp 203-223.

Gutkin, T. B. & Curtis M.J., (2008) School based consultation: the science and practice of indirect service delivery. In Gutkin, T. & Reynolds, C.R. (Eds) *The Handbook of School Psychology* (4th Edition, pp 591-635). New York: Wiley.

Gutkin, T. & Reynolds, C.R. (Eds) *The Handbook of School Psychology* (4th Edition, pp 591-635). New York: Wiley.

Gutkin, T. B., Singer, J. H. and Brown, R. (1980) Teacher reactions to school-based consultation services: a multivariate analysis. *Journal of School Psychology*, 18, No 2, pp 126-134.

Hanko, G. (1990) *Special Educational Needs in Ordinary Classrooms: Supporting Teachers* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Oxford: Blackwell.

Harding, R. and Atkinson, C. (2009) How EPs record the voice of the child. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 25, No 2, pp 125-137.

Hart, R. (1992) *Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF.

Hart, R. (2009) *Out of GAS? Evaluation in education service delivery*. Paper for doctoral research: University of Birmingham.

Health and Care Professions Council (2012) *Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics*. London: HCPC.

Henwood, K. L. (1996) Qualitative inquiry: perspectives, methods and psychology. In Richardson, J. T. E. (1996) *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods for Psychology and the Social Sciences*. Leicester: BPS books.

Hill, M. (2006) Children's voices on ways of having a voice: children and young people's perspectives on methods used in research and consultation. *Childhood*, 13, No 1, pp 69-89.

HM Treasury (2010) *Spending Review*. London: TSO.

Huberman, A. M. and Miles, M. B. (2002) *The Qualitative Researcher's Companion*. In Hill, M. (2006) Children's voices on ways of having a voice: children and young people's perspectives on methods used in research and consultation. *Childhood*, 13, No 1, pp 69-89.

Huffington, C. (1996) Consultation and Service Development. In Jennings, C. and Kennedy, E. (Eds.) *The Reflective Professional in Education*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Imich, A. & Roberts, A. (1990) Promoting positive behaviour: an evaluation of a behaviour support project. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 5, pp 201-209.

Jelly, M., Fuller, A. and Byers, R. (2000). *Involving Pupils in Practice*. London: David Fulton.

Joffe, H. (2012) Thematic Analysis. In Harper, D. and Thompson, A.R. (Eds) (2012) *Qualitative Research Methods in Mental Health and Psychotherapy: A Guide for Students and Practitioners*. London: Wiley.

Kelly, G. A. (1955) *The Psychology of Personal Constructs*. New York: Norton.

Kennedy, E. K., Cameron, R.J. and Monsen, J. (2009) Effective consultation in educational and child psychology practice: professional training for both competence and capability. *School Psychology International*, 30, No. 6, pp 603-625.

Kiresuk, T. J. and Sherman, R. E. (1968) Goal attainment scaling: a general method for evaluating community mental health programmes. *Community Mental Health Journal*, 4, 443-453.

Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1975) *Techniques for Evaluating Training Programs. Evaluating training programs*. In Kirkpatrick, D. L. (Ed.) Alexandria, VA:ASTD.

Kirkpatrick, D.L. (1994) *Evaluating Training Programs*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

Larney, R. (2003) School-based Consultation in the United Kingdom. *School Psychology International*, 24, pp 5-19.

Leadbetter, J. (2000) Patterns of Service Delivery in Educational Psychology Services: Some implications for practice. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 16, No 4, pp 449-460.

Leadbetter, J. (2006) Investigating and Conceptualising the Notion of Consultation to Facilitate Multi-agency Work. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 22, No 1, pp 19-31.

Leadbetter, J., Rose, E. and Tee, G. (1992) Whole-school approaches to reducing problem behaviour. In Lindsay, G. and Miller, A. (Eds.) *Psychological Services for Primary Schools*. Harlow: Longman.

Leadbetter, J. V. (2002) *A Sociocultural and Activity Theoretical Investigation of the Changing Patterns of Professional Practice in Educational Psychology Services*. University of Birmingham: PhD thesis unpublished.

Lewis, A. (2009) Methodological issues in exploring the ideas of children with autism concerning self and spirituality. *Religion, Disability and Health*, 13, pp 64-76.

Lewis, A. (2010) Silence in the context of child 'voice'. *Children and Society*, 24, pp 14-23.

Lewis, A. (2011) Disabled Children's 'Voice' and Experiences. In Haines, S. and Ruebain, D. (Eds.) *Education, Disability and Social Policy*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Lodge, C. (2005) From hearing voices to engaging in dialogue: problematizing student participation in school improvement. *Journal of Educational Change*, 6, pp 125-146.

MacHardy, L., Carmichael, H. and Proctor, J. (1997) *School Consultation: It don't mean a thing if it ain't got that swing. An evaluative study of a consultation model of service delivery*. Aberdeen: Aberdeen City Council Psychological Service.

MacKay, T (2002) Discussion Paper: The future of educational psychology. *Educational Psychology in Practice* 18, No 3, pp 245-253.

Macready, T. (1997) Conversations for Change. Counselling and consultation from a social constructionist perspective. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 13, No 2, pp 130-134.

McNiff, J. (2013) *Action Research: Principles and Practice (Third Edition)*. Abingdon, Oxford: Routledge.

Maher, C. A. (1983) Goal Attainment Scaling: a method for evaluating special education services. *Exceptional Children*, 49, No 6, pp 529-536.

Miller, A. (1980) Systems theory applied to the work of the educational psychologist. *Association of Educational Psychologists Journal*, 5, No 3, pp 11-15

Miller, A. (1996) *Pupil and Teacher Culture*. London: Cassell.



Monsen, J.J., Brown, E., Akthar, Z. and Khan, S.Y. (2009) An evaluation of a pre-training assistant educational psychologist programme. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 25, No. 4, pp 369-383.

Moore, J. (2005) Recognising and Questioning the Epistemological Basis of Educational Psychology in Practice. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 21, No 2, pp 103-116.

Morgan, A. (2000) *What is Narrative Therapy?* Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.

Morton, J. (1996) Helping children contribute to learning plans. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 13, No 2, pp 23-30.

National Association of Principal Educational Psychologists (2013) Email survey regarding funding of EP posts. NAPEP –L.

Norwich, B. (2000) *Education and Psychology in Interaction. Working with uncertainty in interconnecting fields*. London: Routledge.

Orford, J. (2008) *Community Psychology. Challenges, Controversies and Emerging Consensus*. West Sussex: Wiley.

Osborne, E (1983) The teacher's relationships with the pupils' families. In Salzberger-Wittenberg, I., Henry, G. and Osborne, E. (Eds.) *The Emotional Experience of Learning and teaching*. London: Routledge.

Osborne, C. and Alfano, J. (2011) An evaluation of consultation sessions for foster carers and adoptive parents. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 27, No 4, p 395-413.

Parsons, S., Lewis, A., Davison, I., Ellins, J. and Robertson, C. (2009) Satisfaction with educational provision for children with SEN or disabilities: A national postal survey of the views of parents in Great Britain. *Educational Review*, 61, No 1, pp 19-47.

Pawson, R. (2006) *Evidence-Based Policy: A Realist Perspective*. London: Sage.

Pawson, R. and Tilley, N. (1997) *Realistic Evaluation*. London: Sage Publications.

Reason, P. and Bradbury, H. (2007) *Handbook of Action Research* (Second Edition). London: Sage.

Rhodes, J. and Ajmal, Y. (1995) *Solution Focused Thinking in Schools*. London: BT Press.

Roach, A.T. and Elliott, S.N. (2005) Goal Attainment Scaling: an efficient and effective approach to monitoring student progress. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 37, No 4, pp 8-17.

Robson, C. (2002) *Real World Research*. Second Edition. Oxford: Blackwell.

Roller, J. (1998) Facilitating pupil involvement in assessment, planning and review processes. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 13, No 4, pp 266-273.

Ruddock, J. and Flutter, J. (2004) *How to Improve Your School. Giving Pupils a Voice*. London: Continuum.

Sayer, A. (2000) *Realism and Social Science*. London: Sage.

Schön, D. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*. New York: Basic Books.

Senge, P. (2006) *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation*. London: Random House.

Simons, H. (2009) *Case Study Research in Practice*. London: Sage.

Spyrou, S. (2011) The limits of children's voices: from authenticity to critical, reflexive representation. *Childhood*, 18, No 2, pp 151-165.

Stoker, R. (1996) Enabling young people to become key actors in planning their futures – a constructivist approach. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 13, No 2, pp 49-59.

Stoll, L. (1998) School Culture. *School Improvement Network's Bulletin*. No 9, Autumn 1998.

Stringer, P., Stow, L., Hibbert, K., Powell, J. and Louw, E. (1992) Establishing Staff Consultation Groups in Schools. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 8, No 2, pp 87-96.

Thomas, G. (2010a) *How to do Your Case Study: A Guide for Student Researchers*. London: Sage.

Thomas, G. (2010b) The case: Generalisation, Theory and Phronesis in Case Study. *Oxford Review of Education*, pp 1-15.

Timmins, P., Bham, M., McFadyen, J. and Ward, J. (2006) Teachers and Consultation: Applying research and development in organisations (RADIO). *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 22, No 4, pp 305-319.

Todd, L. (2003) Consulting the Children. *Special Children*. September/October, pp 15-19.

United Nations. (1989) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. New York: United Nations.

Wagner, P. (1995a) A consultation approach to the educational psychologist's work with schools. *Educational and Child Psychology*, 12, No 3, pp 22-28.

Wagner, P. (1995b) *School Consultation: a handbook for practising educational psychologists*. London: Kensington and Chelsea EPCS.

Wagner, P. (2000) Consultation: developing a comprehensive approach to service delivery. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 16, No 1, pp 9-18.

Wagner, P. (2008) Consultation as a framework for practice. In Kelly, B., Woolfson, L. and Boyle, J (2008) (Eds.) *Frameworks for Practice in Educational Psychology*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Watkins, A. (Ed.) (2007) *Assessment in Inclusive Settings. Key Issues for Policy and Practice*. Odense: European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education.

Webster, R. and Blatchford, P. (2013) Worlds apart? How pupils with statements lead a life away from the class: findings from the Making a Statement project. *Assessment & Development Matters*, 5, No 2, pp 30-32.

White, M. and Morgan, A. (2006) *Narrative Therapy with Children and their Families*. Adelaide: Dulwich Centre Publications.

Whitehead, J. and McNiff, J. (2006) *Action Research: Living Theory*. London: Sage.

Willig, C. (2008) *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology. Adventures in theory and method*. Second Edition. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Wolpert, M., Fuggle, P., Cottrell, D., Fonagy, P., Phillips, J., Pilling, S., Stein, S. and Target, M. (2006) *Drawing on the Evidence*. London: CAMHS Publications.

Woolfson, L., Whaling, R., Stewart, A. and Monsen, J. (2003) An integrated framework to guide educational psychologist practice. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, 19, No 4, pp 283-302.

Yin, R.K. (2008) *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Fourth Edition. London: Sage.

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: The Consultation Record	<b>193</b>
Appendix 2: The Consultation Leaflet	<b>198</b>
Appendix 3: The Card Sorting and Tally Sheet Activity Results: SENCo Networks	<b>200</b>
Appendix 4: The Consultation Record adapted to include TME	<b>205</b>
Appendix 5: Ethics Form	<b>210</b>
Appendix 6: Briefing Note to Educational Psychologists	<b>239</b>
Appendix 7: Consent Form for Educational Psychologists	<b>244</b>
Appendix 8: Briefing Note to Teacher Consultees	<b>245</b>
Appendix 9: Consent Form for Teacher Consultees	<b>247</b>
Appendix 10: Briefing Note to Parents	<b>248</b>
Appendix 11: Consent Form for Parents	<b>251</b>
Appendix 12: Pupil Briefing Sheet	<b>253</b>
Appendix 13: Consent Form for Pupils	<b>255</b>
Appendix 14: Semi-structured Interview Questions for Teachers	<b>256</b>
Appendix 15: Semi-structured Interview Questions for Parents	<b>257</b>
Appendix 16: Semi-structured Interview Questions for Pupils	<b>258</b>
Appendix 17: Semi-structured Interview Questions for EPs	<b>260</b>
Appendix 18: Thematic Analysis of Interview between Researcher and EP1	<b>262</b>
Appendix 19: Interview with EP1 and T1	<b>290</b>
Appendix 20: Interview with EP1 and P1	<b>294</b>
Appendix 21: Interview with EP1 and James	<b>298</b>
Appendix 22: Completed Consultation Record Showing TME	<b>300</b>
Appendix 23: Thematic Analysis: from Coding to Global Themes	<b>305</b>
Appendix 24: Thematic Analysis of TME: from Coding to Global Theme	<b>319</b>

## Appendix 1: Consultation Record Form

### Consultation Record number

**Date:**                      **School:**                      **Consultation with:**

**Name of child/group class:**

**DOB:**                      **Year Group:**                      **Class:**

**Teacher:**

**Family status (siblings/parents/guardian)**

**Other:**

**What are your best hopes for our work together/ hopes for this consultation?**

**What are your concerns about?**

**What is your main priority at the moment?**

***Solution Focussed Scaling:*** On a Scale of 1-10.... (label the ends of the scale as appropriate)

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

What stopped you choosing the number below/above the one you chose?

What would the next step look like? How can we get there?

**OR**

***PCP Salmon Line:*** to identify how the teacher is experiencing the current situation:  
Through discussion, identify the construct to be explored and identify the polar ends of the scale (e.g. I can have no influence over this issue vs I feel fully in control of this issue)

|-----|

Where are things at present? Where were they in the past? Where would you like to be in the future? What steps can you take to get there?

**What do you feel may be contributing to the concern?**

**Narrative deconstruction:** exploration of the history of the problem story, its origins, actions and effects. This characterisation of the problem furthers the externalisation process and creates opportunity to identify and subsequently challenge the beliefs

**Systems thinking:** Impact of factors at different levels– individual (child and teacher), class, organisation

**How would you like things to change? What would you like to achieve?**

**Solution Focussed:** If you could wave a magic wand, what would you change? What would be different? What would you/others be doing differently? What else? (**miracle question**)  
When faced with this sort of issue before, what did you do that worked? How could you do that again?

**Narrative:** When does the ..... happen? In what context are you most likely to see .....?

**PCP:** How does the child/ adult/ group see the situation/problem? For what problem might this behaviour be a solution for the child?



**How have other agencies supported your work with this student/issue?**

<b>What have you tried so far?</b> (strategies/ interventions/curriculum/support)	<b>What effects have you noticed?</b>

**Systems thinking:** What changes have been made at the level of the individual... class... organisation

**Solution focussed:** What did you feel went particularly well? And what else? Was there anything you felt would have been 'even better if'?

**What is currently successful? What has contributed to this success? (Appreciative Enquiry)**

**Solution focussed exceptions:** When isn't this problem around? What stops it getting worse? Is there a time when – does not occur, or occurs less than at other times?

What do you do at these times? What is different about those times?

**Narrative exceptions:** What are the times that the ..... doesn't happen/ isn't around?

When are the times when the ..... isn't as bad as usual? Are there any ways that you have stopped ..... getting worse? What kind of encouragement did this give you?

**PCP:** 3 adjectives to describe the child/ 3 ways the child has surprised you

**What are parents/carers views and involvement?**

**What are the pupil's views?**

**Summarising**

What ideas have you developed during the consultation? What else do we need to consider?

What would it take to put these ideas into practice in your classroom?

***Solution Focussed:*** what might be a first step?

***Systems Thinking:*** Actions at the level of the individual/ class/ organisation?

***PCP:*** Experiments to try

<b>Date</b>	<b>Agreed Actions</b> (to include follow up arrangements)	<b>Responsible</b>

**Current conclusions**

Are further follow up sessions with the Educational Psychologist needed? yes/ no  
Reasons for ceasing Educational Psychologist involvement:

**Next Meeting:**

**Educational Psychologist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Circulation:**

**How helpful did you find this consultation process?**

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**Not at all helpful**

**Very helpful**

**Why?**

## Appendix 2: Consultation Leaflet (Word version)

Note: PDF leaflet was given to participants

### What is Consultation?

Consultation is a process, not a one off event. It is a way of working that will allow us to work more closely together and make the best use of our shared expertise to find new solutions.

Many factors affect the learning and development of children and young people. The child's learning happens within a context. The interactions a child has with adults, peers and the learning environment are very important factors leading to success. Changing some of these interactions or perceptions can create long lasting and positive changes for the child or young person and those who spend time with them.

The aim of Consultation in school, whether at the individual, group or organisational level is the same, that is, to help school/setting-based staff and parents to find solutions to their concerns. The aim is to apply psychology in order to explore appropriate intervention strategies. This work is undertaken in a collaborative fashion with the adults concerned, although pupils can also be involved in this process when appropriate.

### What might the work involve?

Within the Consultation approach the work is about information gathering, problem solving and intervention. This could involve the Educational Psychologist (EP) undertaking a range of different activities, which would vary depending on whether the Consultation is about an individual, a group or an organisational issue. Examples of these activities are:

- o Problem solving with teachers about the concern
- o Observation in the classroom context
- o Individual discussion/work with a pupil
- o Working closely with teaching staff
- o Analysing pupil's or a group's learning, looking at learning styles, strategies and approaches to learning
- o Attending a review meeting
- o Meeting with other adults, including parents
- o Delivering relevant training to parents and staff

## What happens before a consultation meeting?

Before a consultation session takes place regarding a named individual pupil, the teacher/SENCo will have already involved a parent/guardian in discussing the concerns. Written parental permission for Educational Psychologist's (EP) involvement will also have been sought and gained, using our standard parental permission letter.

For Consultations about unnamed pupils, groups, classes or organisational issues parental permission is not usually needed. An agreed amount of time needs to be set aside for the EP to meet with those directly involved with the issue, such as the parent, a teacher, or a teaching assistant (TA). A dedicated quiet area should be provided in which the consultation meeting can take place.

## What happens during a Consultation meeting?

The collaborative nature of Consultation is fundamental to the process. In a consultation meeting, the EP works with the SENCo/Teacher/TA to explore various aspects of the school and classroom context which may be having an effect on the pupil's learning or behaviour. These colleagues, therefore, contribute their knowledge, understanding, perceptions and views to the Consultation.

The session may explore different issues depending on the nature of the concern, but may include, for example:

- o History of the pupil's education
- o Current attainments, achievements and learning style
- o Support the pupil has received/is currently receiving
- o Pupil's perception of themselves as learners
- o Triggers for the behaviour
- o Strategies that are effective
- o Exceptions to the behaviour

## What are the outcomes of Consultation?

The outcome of Consultation is an informed picture, which can lead to the development of effective interventions. At the end of each Consultation, strategies and actions are agreed and documented. Any agreed strategies should be implemented by the teacher, teaching assistant, parent or psychologist before the follow up meeting. The primary aim of Consultation is to help the teacher work out appropriate classroom based interventions and to review and evaluate them. However, Consultation also aims to increase the repertoire of skills a teacher has in working with all children.

### Appendix 3: Consultation Process –Area One– 5 boards

(No start/end data)

<i>Does involve...</i>	<i>Sometimes involves...</i>	<i>Doesn't usually involve....</i>
<p>Discussion with teacher/school staff (5)</p> <p>Information gathering (5)</p> <p>Observation (1)</p> <p>Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/group (5)</p> <p>The solution is the focus (5)</p> <p>Reflexive process (4)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (2)</p> <p>Discussion with parents (1)</p>	<p>Discussion with parents (4)</p> <p>Attending a review meeting (4)</p> <p>Discussion with child (4)</p> <p>Cognitive or standardised assessment (1)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (2)</p> <p>Delivering training to staff/parents (1)</p> <p>Observation (3)</p> <p>Analysis of class room practice (4)</p>	<p>The problem is the focus (2)</p> <p>Cognitive or standardised assessment (4)</p> <p>Observation (1)</p> <p>Delivering training to staff or parents (4)</p> <p>Attending a review meeting (1)</p>

**Appendix 3: Consultation Process –Area Two– 8 boards**

**(Start: Yes 40/No 4 End: Yes 41/No 3)**

<i>Does involve...</i>	<i>Sometimes involves...</i>	<i>Doesn't usually involve....</i>
<p>Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/ group (7)</p> <p>The solution is the focus (6)</p> <p>Discussion with teacher/school staff (6)</p> <p>Observation (2)</p> <p>Information gathering (7)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (2)</p> <p>Reflexive Process (5)</p> <p>Discussion with child</p> <p>Discussion with parents</p> <p>Attending a review meeting</p>	<p>Delivering training to staff or parents (6)</p> <p>Discussion with child (7)</p> <p>Attending a review meeting (6)</p> <p>Reflexive Process</p> <p>Discussion with parents (7)</p> <p>Information gathering</p> <p>Cognitive or Standardised assessment (5)</p> <p>Analysis of classroom practice (6)</p> <p>Observation (6)</p> <p>Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/ group</p> <p>The problem is the focus (2)</p> <p>Discussion with teacher/school staff</p> <p>The solution is the focus</p>	<p>Cognitive or Standardised Assessment (3)</p> <p>Analysis of classroom practice (2)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (3)</p> <p>The solution is the focus</p> <p>Delivering training to staff or parents (2)</p> <p>Attending a review meeting</p> <p>A reflexive process (2)</p>

### Appendix 3: Consultation Process –Area Three– 10 boards

(Start: Yes 36/No 4 End: Yes 36/No 4)

<i>Does involve...</i>	<i>Sometimes involves...</i>	<i>Doesn't usually involve....</i>
<p>Discussion with teacher/school staff (10)</p> <p>Information gathering (10)</p> <p>Observation (3)</p> <p>Analysis of classroom practice (5)</p> <p>Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/group (9)</p> <p>The solution is the focus (4)</p> <p>Reflexive process (9)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (4)</p> <p>Delivering training to staff/parents (1)</p> <p>Discussion with parents (3)</p> <p>Discussion with child (1)</p>	<p>Dedicated time for discussion away from child/group (1)</p> <p>Discussion with parents (7)</p> <p>Attending a review meeting (10)</p> <p>Discussion with child (9)</p> <p>Cognitive or standardised assessment (6)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (2)</p> <p>Delivering training to staff/parents (8)</p> <p>The solution is the focus (3)</p> <p>Observation (6)</p> <p>Analysis of class room practice (4)</p> <p>Reflexive process (1)</p>	<p>The problem is the focus (4)</p> <p>The solution is the focus (3)</p> <p>Cognitive or standardised assessment (4)</p> <p>Observation (1)</p> <p>Delivering training to staff or parents (1)</p>



**Appendix 3: Consultation Process –Area Four– 7 boards**

**(Start: Yes 41/No 1 End: Yes 34/No 8)**

<i>Does involve...</i>	<i>Sometimes involves...</i>	<i>Doesn't usually involve....</i>
<p>Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/ group (5)</p> <p>The solution is the focus (6)</p> <p>Discussion with teacher/school staff (6)</p> <p>Observation</p> <p>Information gathering (7)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (3)</p> <p>Reflexive Process (4)</p> <p>Discussion with child</p> <p>Discussion with parents</p> <p>Analysis of classroom practice</p> <p>Cognitive or standardised assessment</p>	<p>Delivering training to staff or parents (4)</p> <p>Discussion with child (4)</p> <p>Attending a review meeting (5)</p> <p>Reflexive Process</p> <p>Discussion with parents (5)</p> <p>Cognitive or Standardised assessment (4)</p> <p>Analysis of classroom practice (6)</p> <p>Observation (5)</p> <p>Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/ group (2)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (2)</p> <p>Discussion with teacher/school staff</p> <p>The solution is the focus</p>	<p>Observation</p> <p>Discussion with parents</p> <p>Cognitive or Standardised Assessment (2)</p> <p>Discussion with child</p> <p>Reflexive process</p> <p>Delivering training to staff or parents (3)</p>

**Appendix 3: Consultation Process –Area Five– 5 boards**

**(Start: Yes 9/No 17 End: Yes 20/No 6)**

<i>Does involve...</i>	<i>Sometimes involves...</i>	<i>Doesn't usually involve....</i>
<p>Discussion with teacher/ school staff (4)</p> <p>The solution is the focus (4)</p> <p>Dedicated time for discussion away from the child/ group (4)</p> <p>Reflexive Process (3)</p> <p>Information gathering (4)</p> <p>Discussion with child</p> <p>Discussion with parents</p> <p>Analysis of classroom practice</p> <p>The problem is the focus</p>	<p>Discussion with parents (3)</p> <p>Discussion with child (3)</p> <p>Attending a review meeting (2)</p> <p>Analysis of classroom practice (3)</p> <p>Observation (4)</p> <p>Cognitive or Standardised Assessment</p> <p>Reflexive Process 1</p>	<p>Cognitive or Standardised Assessment (4)</p> <p>The problem is the focus (3)</p> <p>Delivering training to staff or parents (4)</p> <p>Attending a review meeting (2)</p> <p>Discussion with child</p>

#### Appendix 4: Consultation Record Form (showing TME)

##### Consultation Record number

Date:

School:

Consultation with:

Name of child/group class:

DOB:

Year Group:

Class:

Teacher:

Family status (siblings/parents/guardian)

Other:

What are your best hopes for our work together/ hopes for this consultation?

What are your concerns about?

What is your main priority at the moment?

***Solution Focussed Scaling***: On a Scale of 1-10.... (label the ends of the scale as appropriate)

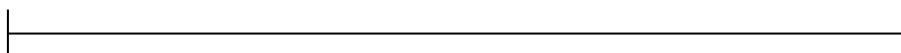
1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

What stopped you choosing the number below/above the one you chose?

What would the next step look like? How can we get there?

**OR**

***PCP Salmon Line***: to identify how the teacher is experiencing the current situation: Through discussion, identify the construct to be explored and identify the polar ends of the scale (e.g. I can have no influence over this issue vs I feel fully in control of this issue)



Where are things at present? Where were they in the past? Where would you like to be in the future? What steps can you take to get there?

**What do you feel may be contributing to the concern?**

**Narrative deconstruction:** exploration of the history of the problem story, its origins, actions and effects. This characterisation of the problem furthers the externalisation process and creates opportunity to identify and subsequently challenge the beliefs  
**Systems thinking:** Impact of factors at different levels– individual (child and teacher), class, organisation

**How would you like things to change? What would you like to achieve?**

Target 1:

Rating:        1        2        3        4        5        6        7        8        9        10

Descriptor of baseline level:

Descriptor of level achieved:

Target 2:

Rating:        1        2        3        4        5        6        7        8        9        10

Descriptor of baseline level:

Descriptor of level achieved:

Target 3:

Rating:        1        2        3        4        5        6        7        8        9        10

Descriptor of baseline level:

Descriptor of level achieved:

B = baseline, E = expected level of progress, A = achieved

***Solution Focussed:*** If you could wave a magic wand, what would you change? What would be different? What would you/others be doing differently? What else? (**miracle question**)

When faced with this sort of issue before, what did you do that worked? How could you do that again?

***Narrative:*** When does the ..... happen? In what context are you most likely to see .....?

***PCP:*** How does the child/ adult/ group see the situation/problem? For what problem might this behaviour be a solution for the child?

**How have other agencies supported your work with this student/issue?**

What have you tried so far? (strategies/ interventions/curriculum/support)	What effects have you noticed?
<p><b><i>Systems thinking:</i></b> What changes have been made at the level of the individual... class... organisation</p> <p><b><i>Solution focussed:</i></b> What did you feel went particularly well? And what else? Was there anything you felt would have been 'even better if'?</p>	

**What is currently successful? What has contributed to this success? (**Appreciative Enquiry**)**

***Solution focussed exceptions:*** When isn't this problem around? What stops it getting worse?

Is there a time when – does not occur, or occurs less than at other times?

What do you do at these times? What is different about those times?

***Narrative exceptions:*** What are the times that the ..... doesn't happen/ isn't around?

When are the times when the ..... isn't as bad as usual? Are there any ways that you have stopped ..... getting worse? What kind of encouragement did this give you?

*PCP:* 3 adjectives to describe the child/ 3 ways the child has surprised you

**What are parents/carers views and involvement?**

**What are the pupil's views?**

### Summarising

What ideas have you developed during the consultation? What else do we need to consider?

What would it take to put these ideas into practice in your classroom?

*Solution Focussed:* what might be a first step?

*Systems Thinking:* Actions at the level of the individual/ class/ organisation?

*PCP:* Experiments to try

Date	Agreed Actions (to include follow up arrangements)	Responsible

**Current conclusions**

Are further follow up sessions with the Educational Psychologist needed? yes/ no  
Reasons for ceasing Educational Psychologist involvement:

**Next Meeting:**

**Educational Psychologist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signed:**

**Date:**

**Circulation:**

**How helpful did you find this consultation process?**

**1**

**2**

**3**

**4**

**5**

**Not at all helpful**

**Very helpful**

**Why?**

## **Appendix 5: Ethics Form**

### School of Education Research Ethics Protocol for Staff, Postgraduate and Undergraduate Students

#### Section 1: Introduction and overview

##### 1.1 Preamble

1.1a People are such important resources for researchers that often without their time and participation there can be no advance of knowledge. We are therefore indebted to them and obliged to treat all with the highest regard and respect. The University of Birmingham is committed to ensuring that the highest standards of ethical care are followed in the conduct of research by staff and students. The university has a 'code of conduct for researchers' which all researchers should be familiar with and which can be found at:

<http://www.ppd.bham.ac.uk/policy/cop/code8.htm>.

1.1b The school adopts as its principal set of guidelines the BERA Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2004) available on the schools ethical guidelines page on the staff intranet/research office.

1.1c To assist the Head of School in ensuring that the provisions of the code are met the Ethics Committee has developed a protocol for staff and students. The guidelines cover the research of staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students.

1.1d The aim of the protocol is to encourage and promote good practice by staff and students alike through due reflection on the ethical issues pertaining to their research. Supervisors may find it helpful to use and draw on the protocol as a teaching tool, and staff as a framework for writing bids and confirming good research practice.



1.1e The Ethics Committee is available to help all researchers in promoting ethical standards after they have made sufficient efforts to follow the 'Code of Conduct' and BERA or other relevant guidelines.

## 1.2 A summary of key aspects of the procedure

1.2 a The ethics forms contained in this protocol are simple to complete and are shaped around 9 questions about the fundamental ethical considerations of research projects:

- o Recruitment of participants
- o Consent
- o Withdrawal
- o Confidentiality
- o Detrimental effects
- o Storage and handling of data
- o Harmful or illegal behaviour
- o Subterfuge
- o Dissemination of findings

1.2 b There are three versions of the form; one each for staff members, postgraduate students and undergraduate students. All include the same 9 questions. The correct to use are:

Staff Members: EC1

Postgraduate Students (MPhil/PhD/EdD: EC2 PGR

CPD Students: EC2 applies – please refer to your module leaders for the appropriate version

Undergraduate Students: EC3

1.2c The forms have two main functions:

- o (1) as a general framework for assisting staff and students to consider the key ethical aspects of their research
- o (2) as a form that can be completed and submitted to the Ethics Committee for scrutiny if formal ethical approval is required

1.2d The majority of research proposals will probably not require a formal submission to the Ethics Committee for approval. However, we are asking EVERY research proposal/project, whether for an accredited course or sponsored research, to complete the relevant version of the form in order to demonstrate proper consideration of the 9 main ethics questions.

1.2e In the case of staff submissions, much of this information can be taken from existing documents such as grant proposals and/or project summaries.

1.2f In ALL cases where formal approval is necessary, completed forms should be sent to the Ethics Committee Administrator (Julie Foster). In MOST cases, we anticipate formal approval from the Ethics Committee will not be required/necessary and forms will be filed to monitor good practice. All staff forms will be filed in the Research Office; EC2 PGR forms, CPD and Undergraduate forms will be filed with the appropriate administrative office.

1.2g In SOME cases, the student supervisor or principal investigator may decide that a formal submission to the Committee should be made for advice and/or approval (see Section 1.3 below). These forms will then be forwarded to the Ethics Committee for consideration.

1.3 When is it necessary/appropriate to make a formal submission to the Ethics Committee for approval?

1.3a Formal submissions to the Ethics Committee may be made for a number of reasons, including instances when:

- Funding bodies require formal ethical approval at the point of proposal submission
- Supervisors/Investigators require additional scrutiny of methods and procedures for their own (or the student's) reassurance.
- Formal ethical approval may help to reassure and recruit potential participants to the project.
- The research involves (e.g.) vulnerable groups, potentially harmful stimuli or equipment, or elements of subterfuge or undisclosed research activity.
- Consideration of particular aspects of the research may be needed before submission to an external Ethics Committee.

1.3b It is assumed that all research carried out in the School of Education involves human participants either directly or indirectly. If your research indirectly involves human participants through their viewing or interpretation of representations or artefacts, then this may invoke ethical concerns (e.g. images or texts which represent people in ways which may be considered discriminatory), and so you should still consider making a submission to the Ethics Committee. All externally funded research projects to be carried out solely within, or in partnership with, the School of Education must take due note of ethical considerations.

#### 1.4 Timing of submission

1.4a The Committee welcomes all applications and aims to be as flexible and as helpful as possible. If tight deadlines loom (perhaps in relation to a grant proposal) we will do our best to accommodate individual needs. However, it is ESSENTIAL that all

submissions follow the correct procedure and use the appropriate form in order to facilitate this.

1.4b Students may complete form EC2 and EC3 at different stages during their course of study but IN ALL CASES before data collection commences. The forms can be completed in the early stages of project planning and design or later on once a clearer idea of the project has been formed. Supervisors may wish to approach this flexibly depending on the needs/readiness of individual students.

1.4c Staff members should aim to submit a completed EC1 form to the Research Office before data collection commences. Staff members are reminded that if a submission is made to the Ethics Committee at this stage data collection should not commence until formal approval is granted.

1.4d The Ethics Committee aims to deal with submissions within two weeks, but there may be delays at some certain times of the year (e.g. summer holidays). Please give more notice if you can. Please also make sure that the correct procedure is followed and documents submitted. Failure to do so may result in a delay in providing feedback.

## 1.5 Involvement of other Ethics Committees

1.5a If your research involves medicine or the NHS in any way you must apply to the appropriate NHS Research Ethics Committee (see Central Office for Research Ethics Committees (COREC) at [www.corec.org.uk](http://www.corec.org.uk)). This includes interviews with staff, patients and even relatives of patients. If you are new to the system, you can seek advice from the School of Education Ethics Committee before applying.

1.5b Research in other settings (e.g. health, social work) may also require approval from specific Ethics Committees outside the School of Education (e.g. Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Services) and it is the responsibility of the Principal

Investigator to check with relevant bodies / agencies / frameworks to decide on the most appropriate course of action [see separate list for Formal Codes of Practice].

1.5c You may decide to make a submission to the School of Education Ethics Committee in addition to this as some agencies / departments / external Ethics Committees may require a letter of approval from the School of Education.

## 1.6 Responsibilities

1.6a Although all must be familiar with relevant ethical criteria, certain individuals have a central role to play in assuring the ethical conduct of research. These are Principal Investigators and Student Supervisors. The involvement of student research supervisors in ensuring compliance with the University's Code is a University expectation– 'Supervisors of students involved in research will seek to ensure compliance with the Code on the part of students' (Principle 1.2 of the Code).

1.6b The responsibilities are as follows. Principal Investigators and Student Supervisors will:

- Take full responsibility for ensuring the relevant EC form is completed and deciding to make a submission to the Ethics Committee prior to the start of an investigation and for the ethical conduct of the research in all its aspects
- Ensure that studies are not started without approval (if needed)
- Ensure that studies which have been rejected by the Ethics Committee are not started.

1.6c The Ethics Committee aims to be helpful. Therefore if an outline project is rejected by the Ethics Committee the researcher and the chair of the Ethics Committee should

maintain a close dialogue so that the researcher is able to respond to suggestions and amendments in order to ensure that the project remains close to its targeted time line.

1.6d Principal Investigators and Student Supervisors are also responsible for checking and conforming to the ethical guidelines and frameworks of other societies, bodies or agencies that may be relevant to their work (an illustrative, but not exhaustive, list of these is included separately).

#### 1.7 Support with making a decision about ethical approval

1.7a All students are encouraged to discuss their project and its ethical considerations with their Supervisors in the first instance.

1.7b Staff members are encouraged to use their new Research Group Convenors and/or other colleagues for informal discussions about any ethics queries or concerns.

1.7c The Ethics Committee also encourages informal discussion with staff and students when deciding whether a formal submission is required or appropriate. Julie Foster should be contacted in the first instance with any queries.

1.7d Members of the Ethics Committee will also be providing support through a number of ethics 'clinics' throughout the year. Anyone with queries will be encouraged to attend these to discuss aspects of the project in an informal setting. Contact: [education-ethics@contacts.bham.ac.uk](mailto:education-ethics@contacts.bham.ac.uk)

## Section 2: Formal Codes of Practice

This is an indicative rather than exhaustive list of formal codes of practice that may be relevant to research projects being carried out within the School of Education.

Association of Computing Machinery (ACM) – USA

“ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct”

<http://www.acm.org/constitution/code.html>

Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK & the Commonwealth.

“Ethical Guidelines for good Research Practice”

<http://www.lel1.man.ac.uk/asa/ethics/htm>

British Association for Applied Linguistics (BAAL)

“Recommendations on Good Practice”

<http://www.baal.org.uk/goodprac.htm>

British Computer Society (BCS)

“Freedom of Access to Information”

<http://www.bcs.org.uk/ethics/freedom.htm>

British Educational Research Association (BERA)

“Ethical Guidelines”

<http://www.bera.ac.uk/guidelines.html>

British International Studies Association (BISA)

“Guidelines for Good Professional Conduct” (draft)

<http://www.bisa.ac.uk/code/htm>

British Market Research Association

“Code of Conduct”

<http://www.bmra.org.uk>

British Psychological Society

“Code of Conduct for Ethical Principles and Guidelines”

<http://www.bps.org.uk/documents/code.pdf>

British Sociological Association (BSA)

“Statement of Ethical Practice”

<http://www.britisoc.org.uk/about/ethic.htm>

Central Office for Research Ethics Committees

<http://www.corec.org.uk>

Department of Health

“Research Governance Framework”

<http://www.doh.gov.uk/research/rd3/nhsrandd/researchgovernance.htm>

<http://www.hop.man.ac.uk/rd/rgf.doc> (in MS WORD)

“Governance Arrangements for NHS Research Ethics Committees”

<http://www.doh.gov.uk/research/rd1/researchgovernance.htm>

“Good Practice in Consent Implementation Guide”

<http://www.doh.gov.uk/consent/implementationguide.pdf>

ESRC

“Research Ethics and Confidentiality”

<http://www.esrc.ac.uk>

New ESRC ethics framework introduced from January 2006:

[http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/research\\_ethics\\_framework/index.aspx](http://www.esrc.ac.uk/ESRCInfoCentre/opportunities/research_ethics_framework/index.aspx)

Medical Research Council (MRC)

“Ethics and Best Practice” (provides a list of websites for guidance in specific medical research areas, including a more general document on “Good Research Practice”)

[http://www.mrc.ac.uk/index/public\\_interest/public-ethics\\_and\\_best\\_practice.htm](http://www.mrc.ac.uk/index/public_interest/public-ethics_and_best_practice.htm)



See also

<http://www.cioms.cn> (Council for International Organisations of Medical Sciences)

<http://www.gmc-u.org> (General Medical Council)

Oral History Society

“Ethical Guidelines”

<http://www.nmgw.ac.uk/~ohs/ohs.ethics.html>

Qualidata

Confidentiality and Informed Consent [Internet].

<http://www.qualidata.essex.ac.uk/creatingData/confidentiality.asp>

Social-Legal Studies Association

“First Restatement of Research Ethics”

[http://www.ukc.ac.uk/slsa/download/ethics\\_drft.bdf](http://www.ukc.ac.uk/slsa/download/ethics_drft.bdf)

Social Research Association

“Ethical Guidelines”

<http://www.the-sra.org.uk/index2.htm>

<http://www.the-sra.org.uk/ethics02.htm>

Social Research Online

“Statement of Ethical Practice”

<http://www.socresonline.org.uk/info/ethguide.html>

See also:

WHO – World Health Organisation

<http://www.who.int>

WMA – World Medical Association

<http://www.wma.net>

## Form EC2 for POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH (PGR) STUDENTS

MPhil(A), MPhil(B), MPhil/PhD, EdD, PhD IS

This form **MUST** be completed by ALL students studying for postgraduate research degrees and can be included as part of the thesis even in cases where no formal submission is made to the Ethics Committee. Supervisors are also responsible for checking and conforming to the ethical guidelines and frameworks of other societies, bodies or agencies that may be relevant to the student's work.

### Tracking the Form

- I. Part A completed by the student
- II. Part B completed by the supervisor
- III. Supervisor refers proposal to Ethics Committee if necessary
- IV. Supervisor keeps a copy of the form and send the original to the Student Research Office, School of Education
- V. Student Research Office – form signed by Management Team, original kept in student file.

Part A: to be completed by the STUDENT

NAME: Miss Andrea Henderson

COURSE OF STUDY (MPhil; PhD; EdD etc): EdPsychD

POSTAL ADDRESS FOR REPLY:

CONTACT TELEPHONE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

DATE: 26th November 2012

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: Mrs Sue Morris

PROPOSED PROJECT TITLE: Exploration of the impact of consultation on service users, namely teachers, parents and pupils.

BRIEF OUTLINE OF PROJECT: (100-250 words; this may be attached separately)

I have worked as an Educational Psychologist for 12 years in two different local authorities. In the first local authority, consultation was a model of service delivery that was used by the majority of educational psychologists; although work was still in progress to try further to embed the consistency with which a consultation-based approach was used by the EPs in this service. The local authority to which I moved had operated a very traditional model of service delivery and although a number of training days had focussed on consultation, it had not been implemented as a model of service delivery. Part of the reason for my appointment to the service was to support the service in its transition to adopting a consultation model of service delivery.

After 7 years the model is well embedded in practice, although training addresses the on-going need to revisit the consultation model and improve it for both EPs and service users.

The area which is less well developed is that of evaluation of the model. We have encouraged EPs to ask questions pertaining to the value and effectiveness of consultation as a process, but have not addressed the question of whether consultation

makes a difference to service users; namely teachers and parents, as direct recipients of consultation services, or pupils, who are the ‘clients’ of the service and are normally its intended beneficiaries of the changes to practice negotiated within the consultative conversations.

The current research study aims to focus on the following areas:

- the impact of consultation on teachers’ perceptions of their ability to make a difference with regard to children’s progress in learning or behaviour;
- the impact of consultation on parents’ perceptions of their child’s subsequent progress;\*
- the impact of the consultation process on pupils’ perceptions of their progress;\*
- the perceptions of EPs about the skills and other conditions needed to enable the consultation process to be effective in facilitating change for children.

MAIN ETHICAL CONSIDERATION(S) OF THE PROJECT (e.g. working with vulnerable adults; children with disabilities; photographs of participants; material that could give offence etc):

EP colleagues from my employing LA EPS will comprise the primary research sample from whom I will elicit research data, while each EP in turn will elicit data from a small sample of professional colleagues, parents and children/young people, to whom s/he has provided a service through the medium of consultation, over the past 3 month period. We will work together to negotiate the EP level of involvement which is feasible, in terms of the number of cases in which each EP thinks it will be realistic to engage for the purposes of this research, during the Spring / first part of the Summer Term, 2013.

Ethical considerations relevant to EP colleagues as research participants/ co-researchers:

- I need to weigh and take action to address the potential impact of my role as researcher and acting principal educational psychologist of the Educational Psychology and Early Years' Services in which the research is being carried out, on potential (EP) participants' confidence that to decline to participate would be acceptable, and that data would be used solely for research purposes (and not for management and appraisal of their effectiveness for example).
- Educational Psychologists involved in the research will be sensitive to the risks of reputational bias arising from exposing their practice to research scrutiny.
- I need to ensure that the information gathered from Educational Psychologists for this research is wholly independent of performance review processes., and that participant EPS fully understand such boundaries, and that I too respect these.
- If, through the research process, I became aware that any elements of an Educational Psychologist's practice were 'unsafe', (i.e. falling below the standards of due diligence, competence or compatibility with the duty of care expected of psychologists), however, I would need to give careful consideration has been given as to how to address this. EP participants would need to have been apprised of the steps that would be taken should this occur.

Ethical considerations relevant to consultees (teachers and parents):

- Freely given informed consent will need to be obtained from teachers and parents
- Parents will need to give permission for their child to be involved in the research
- Participants will have the ability to withdraw from the project at any time.

Ethical considerations relevant to clients (children and young people):

- Freely given informed consent (consistent with their developmental capacity and understanding) will need to be obtained from pupils

- Participants will have the ability to withdraw from the project at any time.

RESEARCH FUNDING AGENCY (if any): None

DURATION OF PROPOSED PROJECT (please provide dates as month/year):

February 2013 to July 2013

DATE YOU WISH TO START DATA COLLECTION: February 2013

Please provide details on the following aspects of the research:

1. What are your intended methods of recruitment, data collection and analysis? [see note 1]

Please outline (in 100-250 words) the intended methods for your project and give what detail you can. However, it is not expected that you will be able to answer fully these questions at the proposal stage.

I intend to email the Educational Psychologists (EPs), giving them an outline of my research project (see Appendix 1) and copies of the proposed questions for EPs, teachers, parents and pupils so that they are able to see what participation in this study would involve (see Appendices 11-14). I then intend to discuss the research at a meeting

of the South Team, in order to answer any questions about my proposals, and make any small adjustments in light of colleagues' feedback and suggestions.

I aim to recruit four EPs, who in turn would each endeavour to recruit three teachers, three parents and three pupils who are willing to engage in the study, commenting on the consultation process. The EPs will be any members of the team (comprising four EPs in total) whom I do not directly line manage. Once I have a number of volunteers I will meet with them as a group in order to go over the information and answer any questions, so that everyone is clear about expectations, and what participation in the study will involve. EPs who volunteer will be asked to complete a consent form (see Appendix 2), to signal their agreement to participate, and their acknowledgement and acceptance of the conditions surrounding participation.

I plan to work collaboratively with the EP volunteers in order to co-construct the proposed interview questions for teachers, parents and pupils (see Appendix 12-14). This will ensure all EP participants are confident in the questions they will be asking staff, parents and pupils with/on whose behalf they are working using the consultation model. Thus although I have a proposal of what questions might be asked, I anticipate these will undergo some further amendment, integral to the collaborative orientation of the study.

In my research I plan to use Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME) (Dunsmuir, S., Brown, E., Iyadurai, S. & Monsen, J., 2009) which has been developed as a modified version of Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) (Imich, A. & Roberts, A., 1990), and is considered more user-friendly. Like GAS, TME has been developed as an evaluation framework for indirect models of service delivery / intervention, such as consultation. Within TME, targets are set at only two levels, a baseline and target, which are positioned on a Likert scale from 1 to 10. The scale is then used to monitor progress, so allowing for simple descriptive statistical analysis of the effectiveness of interventions. The baseline measure is usually towards the lower end of the scale, expected outcome

towards the middle of the scale, which enables progress to exceed the expected target. The approach was developed as a means of evaluating the impact of indirect approaches to intervention by EPs, as is the case within a consultation model. The data units within TME are subjective in their calibration and the rating process too, requires subjective judgement.

In my research I plan to use TME to evaluate the consultation process from the perspective of teachers, parents and pupils. I plan to do this through training a number of school EPs (four) in using TME, and asking them to use the approach in a number of consultation situations (three different cases). The TME questions have been added to page 2 of our service consultation record form (see Appendix 9).

I also plan to interview the educational psychologists involved in the research, to ascertain their views about: using consultation; and the utility of TME as a method of gathering quantitative evaluation data in relation to the consultation model of service delivery. This will be achieved through semi-structured interviews with the EPs. I also intend to invite the EP participants to co-construct the questions I will be asking them at the end of the consultation period, with the intention that participants are confident in the sensitivity and validity of the questions they may be asked about the process and its impact. Thus the proposed questions in Appendix 11 are likely to be adjusted, within the collaborative spirit of the research enterprise.

It needs to be made clear that participants can redact their data should they chose to do so. However, there will be a point at which they need to continue. Participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project during the data collection stage. However, once the analysis of their data has been included in the material submitted as part of the EdPsychD thesis, it would not be possible for participants to withdraw their data.



2. How will you make sure that all participants understand the process in which they are to be engaged and that they provide their voluntary and informed consent? If the study involves working with children or other vulnerable groups, how have you considered their rights and protection? [see note 2]

As mentioned above, I will email all relevant information to all EPs about the process so that they are fully informed before agreeing to become part of the project (see Appendix 1). I will then meet with those who volunteer to take part in order to answer any questions and ensure that all understand what would be involved and what they would be expected to do. If more than four EPs volunteer I would invite all of them to the above meeting and if, after being fully informed of what is involved, more than four EPs agreed to participate, I would employ selection criteria to ensure (non-probability) purposive sampling. Criteria would include number of years' experience as an EP, EPs with/without a doctoral initial professional qualification in educational psychology, EPs who have worked solely in North Yorkshire/those who have worked elsewhere, EPs who have worked in North Yorkshire prior to/since the introduction of the consultation model.

With regard to teachers and parents I will write a letter outlining what the research is about (see Appendices 3 and 5). This will be shared with them by their Educational Psychologist (who is taking part in the research). Attached to each letter will be a consent form to sign (see Appendices 4 and 6) and our service leaflet explaining more about the consultation process (see Appendix 10). Parents will be consenting to take part themselves and also giving their permission for their child to take part, subject to later confirmation of the child's freely-given consent.

With regard to pupils, I will write them a child-friendly version of the letter (see Appendix 7) which will be shared with them by the school's educational psychologist

(one of the four EP participants). Pupils will also have a consent form to sign (see Appendix 8).

3. How will you make sure that participants clearly understand their right to withdraw from the study?

I will inform participants that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time prior to the point at which I have completed the data analysis. This will be clearly stated in the letter informing them about the research. Participants are not obliged to give a reason for withdrawing, but will be invited to do so, since this would help me to examine whether aspects of the research design and implementation contributed to their decision to withdraw, and if anything could have been done to encourage other participants to carry on with the research.

If a participant chose to withdraw, I would need to consider alternative steps in order to ensure that enough data are collected to make this study viable; I would therefore seek to recruit further participants, to ensure a viable sample.

Once the data have been analysed and included in the material submitted as part of the EdPsychD thesis it would not be possible for participants to withdraw their data

4. Please describe how you will ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of participants. Where this is not guaranteed, please justify your approach. [see note 3]

The EPs in the study will not be anonymous to me as the researcher; however their confidentiality will be protected. No names will be reported in the write-up of the study; EP participants will be referred to in a way that makes them anonymous (using a code).

It may be necessary to exclude some material where its inclusion might compromise confidentiality: to safeguard confidentiality will therefore be afforded greater priority in the reporting of the data than would the richness or nuancing of data.

The teachers, parents and children will be anonymous to me as a researcher but will not be anonymous to the Educational Psychologists involved in the research. Their anonymity and confidentiality will be protected and they will be referred to in a way that ensures this (using a code).

5. Describe any possible detrimental effects of the study and your strategies for dealing with them. [see note 4]

Disclosure of harmful or illegal activity: Remote

This may have an impact on what can be reported in the findings and what may need to be left out. It would be necessary to consider making a disclosure to the appropriate authorities and responsible others. Little impact on the research but may have wider impact on involvement of the EP in future work in the school.

Disclosure of Child Protection issues: Low

This may have an impact on what can be reported in the findings and what may need to be left out in order to protect confidentiality within the research.

The issues will need to be reported through the normal CP/LA safeguarding procedures.

If the disclosure was to an Educational Psychologist whilst in school (which is where the research will take place) the EP would follow Local Authority safeguarding procedures, as would normally be the case for EPs in their everyday practice, reporting to the school's designated officer for it to be recorded and acted upon as appropriate. The EP would also report the concerns to their line manager on returning to the EPS office and discuss during supervision, as appropriate.

If the disclosure was to a member of school staff, s/he would report it to the school's designated officer for it to be recorded and acted upon as appropriate.

CP issues may need to be followed up prior to completing the research, which may delay the research process.

Power differentials between myself as lead researcher and service manager, and the EPs involved in the research. Occupational standing, my role as Acting PEP: Moderate

This may have an impact, affecting who will/will not volunteer to take part in the research. EPs may feel obliged to volunteer as I am acting head of service or may not want to take part as I will be looking at their work in more detail. I will ensure that none of the EPs involved in the research are staff whom I line manage directly, thus removing some of the power differentials that may be related to a line management function (such as appraising staff).

I will emphasise that participation is wholly voluntary with no penalties to EP colleagues who prefer not to contribute, and that data will be used wholly to inform understanding of the impact of consultation as a model of service delivery (and not as a back door mechanism to evaluate EP competence).

The collaborative orientation of the study aims further to reduce power differentials and ensure that it is consultation and its impact on service users that is the focus of the inquiry, rather than scrutiny of the differential effectiveness of individual practitioners! I need to be mindful of how my role as Acting PEP and researcher may have an impact on the data gathered and need to ensure I reflect on this in the methodology, and in the interpretation and discussion of my findings.

Evidence suggesting EP professional competence falls below expected professional standards      Remote (existing management, supervisory and QAE systems should ensure that the competence and fitness to practice of EPs in this Service are secure

Loss of data provided by the EP from the study

Potential need to recruit a further 'replacement' EP participant      This may lead to action being implemented to support the development of the EP or, at worst, implementation of Local Authority competence proceedings / Health and Care Professions Council Fitness to Practise proceedings, in liaison with Local Authority Human Resources colleagues, as would normally be the case within EPs' conditions of service Delay to the research process (alongside inevitable increase in duress / concerns re: scrutiny by other EP participants)

Perceptions of the consultation approach from service users are all negative: Moderate

This may have an impact on EP practice in terms of EPs, contributing to reluctance to continue using a consultation approach, and so potentially destabilising work and practice.      Any comments, positive or negative will need to be addressed to try and understand perceptions and what may need to happen to address any concerns raised.

It is important to control for risks of confirmatory bias, and be open to disconfirming feedback and its bases: this is a primary purpose of the study.      Purpose of the study is to inform future service delivery. Critical feedback unwelcome in some regards but vital if service is to remain responsive to service user as well as service provider needs.

6. How will you ensure the safe and appropriate storage and handling of data?

The data will be kept on an encrypted USB which will be kept in a locked cabinet, prior to their transfer onto my home PC. None of the data will be on the Local Authority Network, as all work will be carried out at home on my home PC. The data on the memory stick will be preserved for 10 years following the completion of the research.

Any paper copies will be shredded/disposed of in secure confidential waste, once data have been transferred to an electronic storage medium.

7. If during the course of the research you are made aware of harmful or illegal behaviour, how do you intend to handle disclosure or nondisclosure of such information? [see note 5]

All Educational Psychologists and class teachers involved in the research have enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and understand the LA safeguarding procedures that need to be followed should a disclosure occur should information suggesting risk of harm be elicited in the course of this research: EPs / teachers would follow the usual practices for managing a disclosure. The North Yorkshire website for information on safeguarding is: [www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk](http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk)

If the disclosure were to an Educational Psychologist whilst in school (which is where the research will take place) the EP would report it to the school's designated safeguarding / child protection officer for it to be recorded and acted upon as appropriate. The EP would also report the concerns to his/her EPS line manager on returning to the EPS office, and discuss during supervision, as appropriate.

If the disclosure were to a member of school staff, s/he would report it to the school's designated officer for it to be recorded and acted upon as appropriate.

Educational Psychologists are regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) and receive regular line management and clinical supervision, alongside performance management/appraisal from their line manager. In no case will I be the provider of this to the Educational Psychologists involved in this project.

If lack of due diligence / professional competence of an EP participant were brought into question within the research process, this would be followed up through the normal Local Authority phased competence proceedings which are integral to the contacts and conditions of service all employees.

8. If the research design demands some degree of subterfuge or undisclosed research activity, how have you justified this and how and when will this be discussed with participants?

Not applicable.

9. How do you intend to disseminate your research findings to participants?

I intend to summarise the findings of the research in order to be able to feed back to all participants. This will be done via a short report that can be disseminated to the adults who participated in the research, and a parallel child-friendly version for the pupils who participated in the research.

I also intend to feed back at a service meeting CPD slot to inform the Educational Psychology and Early Years' Service of my findings.

I intend to publish a summarised version of the research in a journal; probably Educational Psychology in Practice.

## References

Dunsmuir, S., Brown, E., Iyadurai, S. & Monsen, J. (2009) Evidence based practice and evaluation: from insight to impact. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, Vol 25, No 1, 53-70

Imich, A. & Roberts, A. (1990) Promoting Positive Behaviour: An evaluation of a behaviour support project. *Educational Psychology in Practice*, Vol 5, 201-209

Part B: to be completed by the SUPERVISOR

1. Have the appropriate guidelines from relevant research bodies / agencies / societies (e.g. BERA, BPS, SRA, Research Governance Framework, Data Protection Act, Freedom of Information Act) been checked and applied to this project?

Yes

If Yes, which:

BERA and BPS

2. If relevant, have you ensured that the student holds a current Criminal Records Bureau check for the participants they will be working with during their research project? [see note 6]

Yes

3. Have you seen information and consent forms relevant to the present research project? [if not relevant at this time, please review this within 6 months]

Yes



4. Is a referral to the Ethics Committee necessary?

Yes

5. Do you require a formal letter of approval from the Ethics Committee?

No

Declaration by Project Supervisor

I have read the University's Code of Conduct for Research and the information contained herein is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, accurate.

I am satisfied that I have attempted to identify all risks related to the research that may arise in conducting this research and acknowledge my obligations as Project Supervisor and the rights of participants. I am satisfied that those working on the project have the appropriate qualifications, experience and facilities to conduct the research set out in the attached document and that I, as Project Supervisor, take full responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research in accordance with the School of Education Ethical Guidelines, and any other condition laid down by the School of Education Ethics Committee.

Print name: Sue Morris Signature:

Declaration by the Chair of the School of Education Ethics Committee (only to be completed if making a formal submission for approval)

The Committee confirms that this project fits within the University's Code of Conduct for Research and I approve the proposal on behalf of the University of Birmingham's School of Education Ethics Committee.

Print name:

(Chair of the Ethics Committee)

Signature:

Date

Date:

Supervisor – please keep a copy of this form for your records and send the original to the Student Research Office, School of Education.

Date sent to Student Research Office:

STUDENT RESEARCH OFFICE – PLEASE OBTAIN SIGNATURE FROM  
MANAGEMENT TEAM AND RETAIN ORIGINAL IN STUDENT FILE

Date Form Received:

Print name:

Signature

For and on behalf of

Student Research Office

Date:

Notes for completion of forms EC1, EC2 and EC3

1. If your methods, methodology and /or participant group(s) alter substantially from those outlined in this submission during the course of the project, continued ethical approval by the Committee must not be assumed. Under such circumstances, you may wish to complete an updated submission for consideration by the Committee. Please contact the Chair of the Ethics Committee in the first instance for advice on how to proceed. This may be particularly appropriate for longitudinal studies where research populations and indeed content/focus can change over time.

2. Please consider the ‘chains’ or hierarchies of consent that may be necessary for e.g. working with children and young people. There may be a number of people / agencies /organisations who may be required to provide consent or agreement to participate. For example, project work in a Local Authority may require agreement from members of Senior Management before agencies/organisations may be approached. Involving children may then require agreement from (e.g.) Head teachers and parents/carers (as well as the child/young person themselves) plus professionals from other organisations.

3. This concern may arise, for example, in experimental or quasi-experimental designs where treatment is viewed as desirable and withheld from the control group. It might also arise in unpredictable ways in other intervention designs and, for example, in interview-based studies. Harm to the researcher if, for example, working with emotionally difficult subject matter or in potentially dangerous contexts should also be considered here including the forms of support that will be made available in such circumstances.

4. This may apply in circumstances where methods involve the use of e.g. video or photographs that could identify participants, or in the case of interviews where the status / job role of the interviewee will enable them to be identified by others.

5. You may wish to refer to the BERA Revised Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research, 2004; paragraphs 27 & 28, p.8 for more information about this issue.

6. When applying for a CRB make it clear whether the check is for children or vulnerable adults or both. Also, organisations/schools/ services may have different requirements for how recently a CRB check should have been completed for it to be acceptable. The CRB recommend that a recheck is needed every 5 years for enhanced checks and 10 years for standard checks but it is worth clarifying with research partners whether they require a check that is more recent and an enhanced rather than standard disclosure.

## **Appendix 6: Briefing Note to Educational Psychologists**

As you are probably aware, I am engaged on the EdPsychD course at the University of Birmingham and am about to initiate research in relation to consultation. The main areas I am interested in researching are:

- the impact of consultation on teachers' perceptions of their ability to make a difference with regard to children's progress in learning or behaviour;
- the impact of consultation on parents' perceptions of their child's subsequent progress;
- the impact of the consultation process on pupils' perceptions of their progress; and
- the perceptions of EPs about the skills and other conditions needed to enable the consultation process to be effective in facilitating change for children.

I hope to recruit four EP volunteers to carry out consultation sessions, as part of their normal practice. This research would not require you the EP participants to work in a different way; participants would continue to carry out consultation as they would normally.

In order to remove any potential concerns regarding conflict of interest relating to a dual relationship of myself as a researcher and myself as a line manager, I would prefer that volunteers should be colleagues whom I do not directly line manage.

For the purposes of this study, the consultation needs to be carried out in response to concerns about the progress and development of Key Stage Two pupils, and therefore with staff (SENCo or class teacher), parents and pupils within/related to this key stage. I have restricted the age range to Key Stage Two in order to reduce compounding factors and facilitate cross-case comparisons and aggregation of data.

Each EP participant would be asked to identify three members of staff with whom s/he is working, in relation to three pupils and the parents of each child. The three cases do not need to be in the same school.

It is anticipated that consultation sessions and reflections will be completed between February and May 2013.

If you are willing to participate in this research, please let me know; I will arrange a date for all interested EP colleagues to meet as a group where I can explain the task in person and answer any questions you may have. I would like to work collaboratively with you in order to co-construct the questions that will be asked of you as participating EPs, and with the teachers, parents and pupils who agree to take part in the study: I am keen to ensure that the study has a collaborative orientation, within which EP participants and I work in partnership to strengthen our understanding of conditions that are supportive of and /or those which may militate against consultation being used to positive effect.

Once we have met, as a next step, you will be asked to seek freely-given, informed consent from each teacher consultee, focus child and his/her parents that the consultation meetings can be shared with me for the purposes of this research.

All participants (yourselves as EPs, the teacher consultees, pupils and parents) need to be assured that their identity and data will be confidential. They will be assigned an identification code so that no names or other identifying details will be recorded or reported. (However, the data will not be anonymous as they can be traced back to individual participants; for example, I will know the identity of the EP participants, while each participating EP will be aware of the identity of the consultees and focus child).

Once informed consent has been given, within the consultation, you need to carry out a baseline assessment and set targets using TME, (for which a short pro forma has been added to the consultation record form on page 2), complete your consultation as you would normally, but be prepared to share the notes from your consultation session(s) (from which identifying details have been deleted, and codes substituted) with me.

At the end of your consultation session(s), please review the process with school staff, parents and the pupil as appropriate, using TME and the agreed interview questions.

Please return all of the completed sheets to me, having first deleted all identifying details, substituting codes or pseudonyms in their place.

Once the information is gathered from all three sets of consultees, we will arrange a date to meet individually to discuss your reflections on these consultation-based interventions, using the agreed interview questions to structure this process.

It should be noted that you, or any participants, have the right to withdraw from the project at any time during the life of this research project, without offering a reason for so doing, and be confident that there would be no negative consequences of withdrawal.

If you as the consulting EP wished to withdraw, you would need to inform me.

If the teacher consultees or parents wished to withdraw, they would do so by approaching you as the consulting EP, and you would then apprise me of their withdrawal / wish to withdraw.

Similarly, if a pupil chose to withdraw, they would inform their class teacher who would, in turn, notify you, and you would then need to notify me.

If anyone chose to withdraw, their data would be removed from the study. It will not be possible to withdraw data once the analysis of these data has been completed, since to identify a specific respondent's contributions and / or disaggregate data at this late stage would be logistically difficult.

The information/data collected for the purposes of the study will be kept on my home PC and an encrypted USB which will be kept in a locked cabinet. None of the data will be on the Local Authority Network, as all work relating to the research will be carried out on my home PC. The data on the USB will be transferred to my PC as soon as is feasible.

University regulations require that data are retained for 10 years following the completion of the research.

I intend to summarize the findings of the research in order to be able to feed back to all those who participated in the research. This will be done via a short report that can be disseminated to the adults who participated in the research, and a child-friendly version for the pupils who participated in the research. I also intend to feed back at a service day or team meeting CPD slot to inform the Educational Psychology and Early Years' Service of my findings. I hope also to publish an account of the research in a journal; probably Educational Psychology in Practice, and invite (but do not expect or require) participating EP colleagues to co-author this paper, should they so wish.

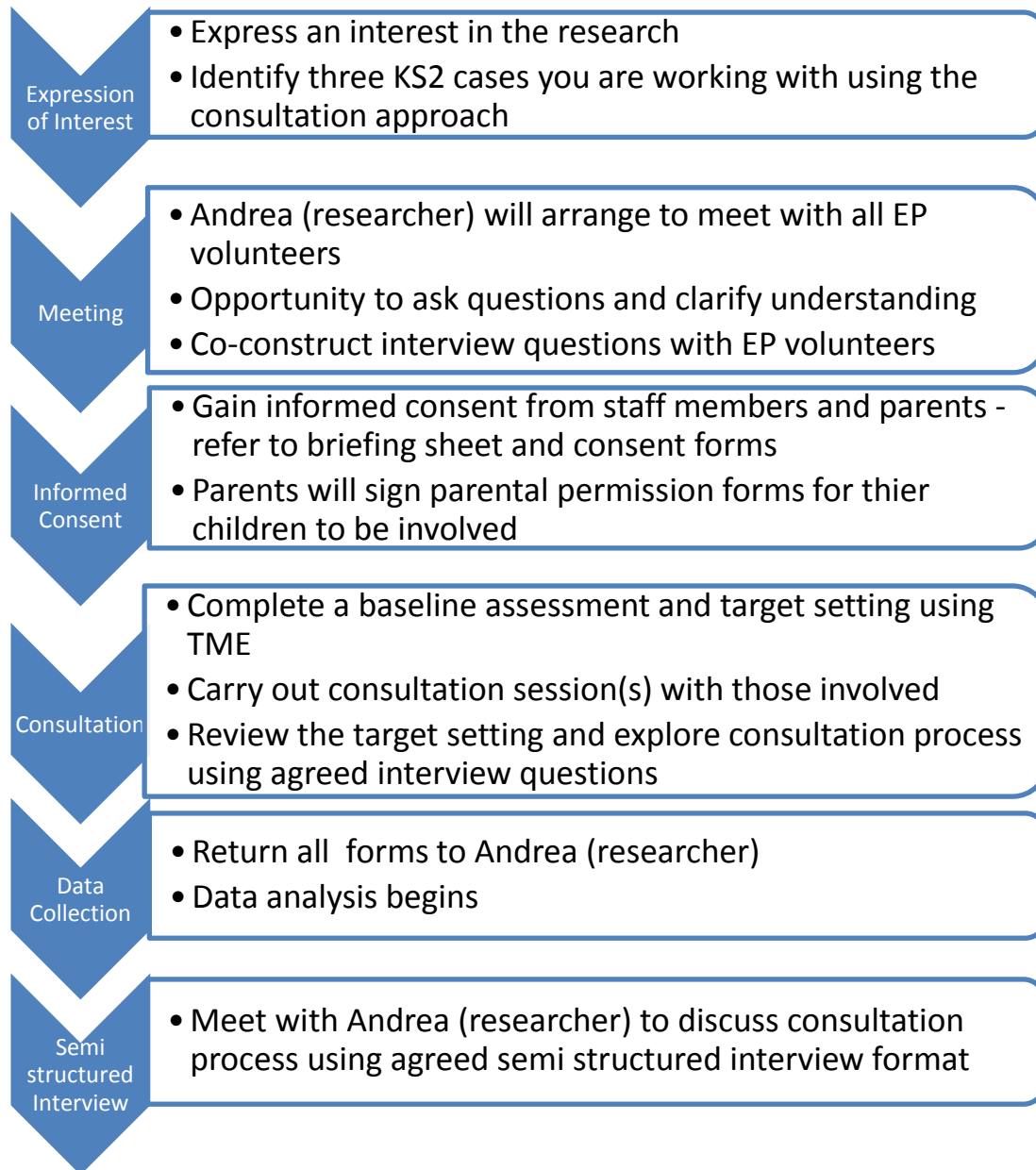
The above information has been summarized in the flow chart overleaf.

Andrea Henderson

Acting Principal Educational Psychologist



**Flow chart of the EP involvement in the research process.**



## Appendix 7: Consent Form for Educational Psychologist

	Please tick if you agree
Andrea has informed me about the project and I have also read the Briefing Note to Educational Psychologists.	
I understand that I do not have to take part in the research project and can leave at any time without giving a reason, and without risk of adverse consequences.	
I understand that I will work with Andrea and the other EP volunteers to co-construct questions to be asked of EPs, teachers, parents and pupils.	
I understand that I am volunteering to take part in research, where I will be asked to use consultation with up to three teachers, in relation to three pupils and their parents. During the process I will use TME to record baseline, expected and actual progress.	
I will discuss the consultation process and its impact on pupil progress with up to three teachers, three pupils and their parents, using the co-constructed questions, recording and sharing this information with Andrea.	
I will take part in a discussion with Andrea, to talk about my views about consultation and its impact on pupil progress. This discussion will be recorded for subsequent analysis.	
I understand that Andrea will share her analysis of the findings derived from this research with the EP&EYS in order to help improve service delivery, but I know my name will not be used, and that it will not be possible to identify any of the research settings or participants from this presentation.	
I agree to take part in the project.	

Your name (please print):

Your signature:

Date:

Thank you for reading and completing this form.

Andrea Henderson

## **Appendix 8: Briefing Note to Teacher Consultees**

I am writing to let you know of some research that I am doing as part of my EdPsychD course at The University of Birmingham.

I am interested in the consultation process which Educational Psychologists use in their work in schools. I have attached our leaflet for further information about the consultation process. In particular I am interested in these four things:

- the impact of consultation on teachers' perceptions of their ability to make a difference with regard to children's progress in learning or behaviour;
- the impact of consultation on parents' perceptions of their child's subsequent progress;
- the impact of the consultation process on a focus pupil's perceptions of their progress; and
- the perceptions of EPs about the conditions needed for consultation to be effective in facilitating change for children

In order to gain information about teachers' and parents' perceptions of consultation, four Educational Psychologists within our Educational Psychology & Early Years' Service have agreed to carry out a baseline assessment and target setting, prior to using consultation as they normally would. Following this, the EP will review the focus child's process using a structured approach, in line with their usual practice, in addition to which the EP would like to undertake short interviews with the focus child's teacher(s) and parents/carers, in order to explore the outcomes for children following implementation of actions agreed within the consultation process.

Where this is appropriate and where both parents/carers and the focus child her/himself agree to this, the EP will conduct a short, developmentally appropriate, strengths-based, solution-focused interview with each child, to elicit her/his views on how s/he is progressing in school, and the factors contributing to this.

In your role as a staff member (SENCo or class teacher) working in consultation with the EP with a focus on a child in Key Stage 2, (which is where my research is focused), you are invited to take part in this research.

If you agree to take participate in this study, please can you sign the attached consent form, and return it to me directly or via your school EP.

Please note that, whether or not you agree to participate will not affect the type or level of support which the EP will offer to support the focus child.

Similarly, if you agree to participate in the research, but later wish to withdraw, you are free to do so with no risk that the consultation concerning the child will be affected.

In order to safeguard confidentiality, you will be assigned an identification code so that no names or other identifying details will be recorded or reported.

As noted above, you, or any participants, have the right to withdraw from the research at any stage. You would just need to let the consulting EP know, if you did wish to withdraw. You could also request that any data you had contributed prior to your withdrawal from the study should be deleted. However, removal of data would not be possible once the data analysis had been completed, since at this stage, it would be difficult to trace data back to individual participants.

University regulations require that I keep all the data collected for this study will be preserved for 10 years following the completion of the research. I will keep all the research information in a secure place.

I will provide feedback on the findings of the research to all participants. This will be done via a short report that can be given to the adult participants and a child-friendly version for the pupil participants.

I hope the findings can be built upon to help the Educational and Early Years' Service improve the way we work.

Andrea Henderson  
Acting Principal Educational Psychologist

Footnote: It should be noted that I am a part-time graduate researcher registered at the University of Birmingham, where the research proposal has been approved by the University of Birmingham Ethics Committee. The research is supervised by Sue Morris at the University of Birmingham. Sue can be contacted direct for information or to discuss any questions or concerns relating to this study at [REDACTED]

## Appendix 9: Consent Form for Teacher Consultees

	Please tick if you agree
(Name of EP) has informed me about the project and I have also read the Briefing Note to Teacher Consultees.	
I understand that I do not have to take part in the research project and can leave at any time without giving a reason, and with no risk of adverse consequences.	
I can ask for any record of my answers to be deleted and removed from the research.	
My views will be kept confidential unless I say anything that suggests a child or young person is at risk of harm, in which case, routine Local Authority Safeguarding procedures would be followed.	
My views will be recorded and the recording kept in a secure place. Only (name of EP), Andrea and her university tutor will have access to the original material, for the purposes of data analysis All identifying information will be removed before records at the first opportunity; it will not be possible for any child, school or adult to be identified. .	
My views will be used to inform future developments to educational psychology practices to support the development and progress of children and young people. My name will not be recorded or used, so that my individual views cannot be identified.	
I would like to take part in the project.	

Your name (please print):

Your signature:

Date:

Thank you for reading and completing this form.

Andrea Henderson

## **Appendix 10: Briefing Note to Parents**

I am writing to let you know of some research that I am doing as part of my EdPsychD course at The University of Birmingham.

I am interested in the consultation process which Educational Psychologists use in their work in schools. I have attached our leaflet for further information in case you want to find out more about the consultation process.

In this research, I am particularly interested in these four things:

- the impact of consultation on teachers' perceptions of their ability to make a difference with regard to children's progress in learning or behaviour;
- the impact of consultation on parents' perceptions of their child's progress;
- the impact of the consultation process on a focus pupil's perceptions of their progress; and
- the perceptions of EPs about the skills and other conditions needed for consultations to contribute to facilitating change for children

In order to gain information about teachers' and parents' perceptions of consultation, four Educational Psychologists within our Educational Psychology & Early Years' Service will be following up their normal consultative practice by asking to conduct short interviews with teachers and parents.

Where appropriate, and where parents agree to this, the EP will also conduct a short interview with the child, to explore the child's perspectives on her/his progress in school, and factors contributing to this.

You are invited to contribute to this study as a parent of a child with whom the EP is involved.

If you agree to take part in this research, please can you sign the attached consent form, and return it to me directly or leave it in the attached envelope at the school, from where it will be forwarded to me.

I would also like to ask your consent for your child to meet the EP, so that the EP can explore how s/he thinks s/he is doing at school, and what has been helpful in supporting progress. Please sign the attached consent form relating to your child in addition to the one you are signing for yourself.

Your identity and data will be confidential: identification codes will be used throughout the research, so that no names or other identifying details will be recorded or reported.

It should be noted that you, or any participants, have the right to withdraw from the study should you so wish. You would just need to approach the school's EP, the head teacher or your child's teacher. Please be assured that your withdrawal would not affect the EP's work with the school to support your child.

(If you do withdraw, your data can be removed from the study; it would not, however, be possible to delete your data once the analysis of your data has been completed).

University regulations require that research data are preserved for 10 years following the completion of research. You can be confident that all the research data will be stored in a safe place at my home: research data will not be kept in school or Educational Psychology Service files, and no-one other than me and my University supervisor will have access to this information. As noted above, all names and other identifying information will have been removed from this stored information.

I will provide a short report for the adults who participate in the research and a child-friendly version for the pupils who take part. I will also share the findings with

colleagues within the Educational Psychology and Early Years' Service, so we can use your feedback to improve our practice.

Andrea Henderson

Acting Principal Educational Psychologist

Footnote: It should be noted that I am a part-time graduate researcher registered at the University of Birmingham, where the research proposal has been approved by the University of Birmingham Ethics Committee. The research is supervised by Sue Morris at the University of Birmingham. Sue can be contacted direct for information or to discuss any questions or concerns relating to this study at

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix 11: Consent Form for Parents

### My Own Participation

I (name of parent) \_\_\_\_\_ agree/do not agree to participate in an interview with the school's educational psychologist to give feedback on my experiences of and views on consultation and my perception of my child's progress. I have read the Briefing Sheet for Parents and understand that:

	Please tick if you agree
I do not have to take part in the research project and can leave at any time without giving a reason, and with no risk of negative consequences.	
I can ask for any record of my answers to be deleted and removed from the research.	
My views will be kept confidential unless I say anything that suggests my child or another child or young person is at risk from harm, in which case, the Local Authority Safeguarding procedures would be followed.	
My views will be recorded by the EP, and this recording stored in a safe place, with all identifying information deleted prior to storage. Only (name of EP), Andrea and her university tutor will have access to the original (anonymised) records	
My interview feedback will be used to inform future work of the educational psychology service regarding supporting the development and progress of children and young people, but my name will not be used so that my individual views cannot be identified.	
Care will be taken to ensure that it would not be possible for the school, my child or me to be identifiable from any of the records, or in any reporting of the research.	

Your name (please print):

Your signature:

Date:

My Child's Participation

Name of Child:

	Please tick one of the boxes
I <u>give consent</u> for my child to take part in the research, by meeting the school's educational psychologist (EP) for a short interview. The EP which will be asking my child questions about how well s/he thinks s/he is doing in school, and what helps / has helped her to make progress.	
I <u>do not give consent</u> for my child to take part in a short research interview with the EP	

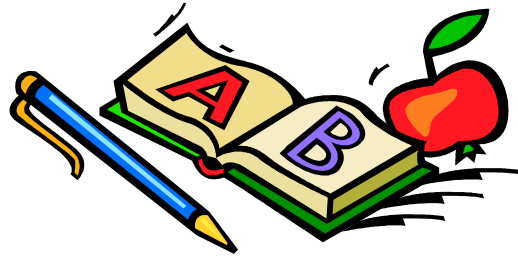
Note: an interview would not proceed unless both you, as parent, and your child her/himself agree.

The interview would be discontinued immediately if the child so wished, or if the EP had any grounds to think the child was finding the interview difficult or distressing.

(Children usually enjoy talking to EPs)!

Thank you for reading and completing this form.

Andrea Henderson



## Appendix 12: Pupil Briefing Sheet

**Name of EP**, your school Educational Psychologist (EP) is doing some work with your class teacher and your **mum/dad/parents/carers (delete as appropriate)**. **Name of EP** would also like to ask your views about how well you think you are



doing at school.



**Name of EP** will share the information with me so that we can learn how well we are doing as an Educational Psychology Service when it comes to helping teachers, **mums/dads/parents/carers (delete as appropriate)** and children.

I will be writing this up  
research, no- one's



as part of some research I am doing. In this name will be used: children, their teachers, mums and/or dads will not be named, so no-one will be able to know which children took part in this study or who said what.

When I write up this study I will share my main findings with **name of your EP**, your mum/dad/parents/carers (delete as appropriate) and you.



will share my main findings teacher, your (delete as appropriate) and

I will not name names, so no-one will be able to tell which children said what.

Your mum/dad/parents/carers (delete as appropriate) has given permission for **name of EP** to talk to you about your views and I need to ask if you are happy for **name of EP** to talk to you; and there is a form for you to sign to say that you agree. If you decide later that you would rather not take part, please let your teacher know and they will tell **name of EP**.



Yours sincerely

Andrea Henderson



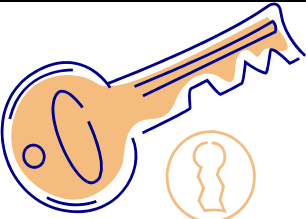


Acting Principal Educational Psychologist

Footnote: It should be noted that I am a part-time graduate researcher registered at the University of Birmingham, where the research proposal has been approved by the University of Birmingham Ethics Committee. The research is supervised by Sue Morris at the University of Birmingham. Sue can be contacted direct for information or to discuss any questions or concerns relating to this study at [REDACTED]

## Appendix 13: Consent Form for Pupils

My name is:

I agree/ do not agree to meet (EP's name and photo), to talk about how I am doing in school, and some of the things that have helped me. I have read the Pupil Briefing Sheet (or had it read to me) and I understand that:

		Tick box
	I do not have to take meet (EP's name). It is something I can choose to do, or not to do.	
	If I decide to, I can leave the meeting with EP's name) at any point. It will be OK: I won't get into any trouble if I want to leave.	
	My views will be kept confidential (unless I say anything that suggests I or anyone else is at risk of being hurt).	
	My views will be written down and kept safe. Only (name of EP), Andrea and her supervisor at the university will have access to it. I can ask for my answers to be removed if I am not happy.	
	My views will be used to help with future work of the Educational Psychology Service, supporting children and young people to make progress, although my name will not be used, so no one will know who said what.	

## Appendix 14: Interview Questions for Teachers

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'very helpful', how helpful have you found the consultation process in supporting you with your concern?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

What has been helpful/gone well for you to choose this rating?

What have you valued about the EP contribution?

What would need to be different for you to rate it one point higher?

What could have been even better?

Was anything frustrating?

When you are working with other services, what is it that they do that you perceive as helpful?

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is 'not very' and 10 is 'very useful', how useful was the TME process in supporting you to set targets and monitor progress for the pupil?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

Would this be something you would be happy to use again?

If not, what reasons would you give?

If yes, is there anything you would amend/do differently?

What would need to be different for the consultation process to be more effective?

Have you noticed any changes?

If yes,

What changes have you noticed?

What do you think has made the difference?

If no,

What would/should have made the difference?

Having gone through this process, are there any things you would do differently in the future? What has been the impact on your practice?

## **Appendix 15: Interview Questions for Parents**

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'very helpful', how helpful have you found the consultation process in supporting your child?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

What has been helpful/gone well for you to choose this rating?

What have you valued about the EP contribution?

What would need to be different for you to rate things one point higher?

What could have been even better?

Was anything frustrating?

When you are working with other services, what is it that they do that you perceive as helpful?

Were you aware of the targets your child was working towards?

Do you think your child knew what targets they were working towards?

Have you noticed any changes?

If yes,

What changes have you noticed?

What do you think has made the difference?

If no,

What would/should have made the difference?

## Appendix 16: Interview Questions for Pupils

What things do you like doing?



What don't you



like?

What are you good at?



What do you find



difficult?

On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'very well', how well are things going for you in school?



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10



What helps you to be here (at this number)?

Have you ever been one place higher or lower?

Where would you have put yourself at the start of Year X?

What is it you are doing better now/ (what was it that you were doing better then)? How come? What helped you?

What could be even better to help you move up one place?



Has anything got in the way of your doing as well as you could ...really doing your very best?

Has anything caused any difficulties for you?

What has helped you cope with these difficulties?

On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is 'none at all' and 10 is 'a lot', how much support/help do you think you have in school?



1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10



What do you have support with?

What do you want to be better at?

What helps you to be better at....?

Who do you think is/are the best person/people to help you?

Does the support you have now help you?

Could the support be any better or different?

What help/support do you think you need?

How do you see your future?

What are your hopes/goals?

What have you achieved in school so far?

What support do you have/have you had that will/would help you in reaching your goal?

What else might help you?

If you had a magic wand, what would you change?



## **Appendix 17: Interview Questions for EPs**

Can you tell me about your training as a psychologist and how consultation was introduced to you as a way of working? How has this influenced your practice?

Have you engaged in any further CPD in this area which may have developed/enhanced your thinking and possibly changed aspects of your practice?

Think about what mediates your own thinking regarding your practice.

What are your perceptions about how schools on your patch perceive consultation? Is this something they readily engage in/view favorably, or do you need to negotiate this way of working instead of a more traditional form of service delivery?

How does this compare to the perceptions of the school(s) in which the research has taken place? What are their attitudes towards consultation?

In your perception, is consultation any more effective if the staff in the schools understand consultation? Is its efficacy increased by an understanding of the process?

How important are the interpersonal relationships between consultants (EPs) and consultees (teachers)?

How important is the dialogue/interchange during the consultation?

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is 'not very' and 10 is 'very helpful', how helpful do you think the consultation process was with regard to resolving the concerns of the teacher consultee and parent?

What went well for you to choose this rating?

What do you perceive was valued about the EP contribution?

What would need to be different for you to rate it one point higher?

What could have been even better?

Was anything frustrating?

When you are working with other services, what is it that they do that others perceive as helpful?

Did you carry out any additional work with the child or family (observation, individual assessment etc.)?

On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is 'not very' and 10 is 'very useful', how useful was the TME process in supporting the teacher consultee and parent to set targets and monitor progress for the pupil?

Would this be something you would use again in your practice?

If not, what reasons would you give?

If yes, is there anything you would amend/do differently?

What would need to be different for the consultation process to be more effective?

## **Appendix 18: Interview between Researcher (R) and Educational Psychologist**

**(EP1) - 5<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

**R:** Ok (name) can you tell me about erm your training as a psychologist and how consultation was introduced to you as a way of working?

**EP1:** Yeah, erm I think in Newcastle it's really emphasized as a really erm effective way of working with schools. So my perception of consultation has always been that it's a really useful way to start any piece of work and I suppose it was introduced as being a solution focussed approach but one that erm was open to using different kinds of psychology...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Erm to erm try and get a shared understanding about issues with whoever you are doing the consultation with, erm but also in helping the school staff or parents be part of the solution as well so that it's that shared understanding of how we are going to work together to move things forward...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...So you don't become the problem owner as such but that they are a part of that and they are part of the solution.

**R:** Right

**EP1:** Erm so an effective way really of working together erm but without you then taking ownership...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Of whatever the issue is that they have brought to you.

**R:** OK and do you think that training has then influenced how you practice psychology in your schools now?

**EP1:** Yeah definitely because I think from coming to work in a local authority even from the offset psychol..., erm using consultation was always the initial way...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...That I would work with a school.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** Erm and that hasn't really changed over the years that I've been working and now that I'm qualified because I do find it to be an effective way at least even as a first point of contact...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Even if we then go on to do something different afterwards.

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** And often I find actually that initial consultation is enough for that moment in time.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** Erm and we might not need to go on and do anything else because we have managed to come up with a way of moving things forward without going on to any extra work...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...As such.

**R:** Right, fantastic. I suppose since that initial training have you had any further CPD around consultation which may have sort of developed or enhanced err your thinking and possibly how you are working with schools?

**EP1:** Yes I think the most useful thing was being part of the Research and Development group that we had, well it was a Working Group wasn't it, that we had on consultation erm because it meant going back and reading a lot of the literature around why it is a useful approach.

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** And coming up with a prompt that all of the service could use.

**R:** Yeah

**EP1:** And thinking about how different, erm, perspectives could be brought into that process so whilst most people were probably most comfortable with using solution focussed approach we looked at how things like personal construct psychology and narrative therapy might be able to erm play a part in the questioning...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...As well so erm quite a lot of time was spent looking at that and I think that really helped me develop my practice a little bit further.

**R:** Right, fantastic. Ok so thinking about your schools now how do you think schools in general on your patch perceive consultation, erm, is it something that they readily engage in, are in favour of or do you constantly feel that you are having to negotiate that way of working as alternative to perhaps a more traditional approach?

**EP1:** I think with the schools that I've got now, 'cause I haven't had them for very long...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...I get the sense that they are quite familiar with it consultation.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** So all the schools that I have been into in my new patch erm have been quite comfortable with the process.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** They haven't really questioned why we might be doing that rather than me going in and say working with a child individually...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...Erm and I think that is probably because the previous psychologist has use that approach for...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Some time, whereas when I have worked with patches before where they probably haven't had much experience of it...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...There has been questions about why we are doing that rather ...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Than doing some individual assessment work or using a different kind ...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Of approach.

**R:** Right, OK and I suppose in terms of the schools in which your research has taken place, erm how have you felt about their attitudes towards consultation?

**EP1:** I think both schools are very comfortable with it...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...Erm, again neither of them questioned that that is something that we were going to do at least as a starting point ...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...And the teachers that, and the staff in the schools that I have worked with using consultation are very open to that and time is made available to have...

**R:** Mmm.



**EP1:** ...Consultation which is probably one of the most important things err making sure that staff have got some time away from class to have that discussion.

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** Because otherwise it's very difficult to get a clear picture of what the, what the concerns are...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...And what we might need to focus on to move things forward.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** So I would say that these schools are supportive of that process and certainly that's the kind of feedback that I got when I asked them...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...About it.

**R:** Super (pause) so in your perception is consultation any more effective if the staff in the schools understand what consultation is about?

**EP1:** That's a difficult question...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...Because erm from going and asking them about consultation I get the sense they don't quite get, fully understand what it's about. They talked a lot about an expert view being...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...Useful and that's not really...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...The aim of consultation so, erm, I don't think they do have that shared understanding but they did appreciate having some time to talk...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...And having erm some time to jointly come up with some solutions.

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** So err I'll just look at the question there.

**R:** Number, number six, so thinking about their understanding of it and whether I suppose efficacy is increased by their understanding of the process of what you are doing.

**EP1:** I think it probably would be. I think it would be helpful maybe to have that conversation with them about how it is about working jointly and...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...It isn't about necessarily bringing an expert view...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Erm, because maybe their expectations are different because they think we've brought in an expert. Erm, we know we are doing the right things...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...Erm, and for them to understand that actually it's about, more about jointly coming up with solutions rather than me saying this is what you need...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...To be doing, I think maybe that it would be more effective if we spent a little bit of time talking about what it's supposed to achieve.

**R:** Yes, yeah. I suppose one of the things I'm conscious of, thinking about the question is, erm that we haven't done an awful lot training with schools around what the consultation model is.

**EP1:** Mmm.

**R:** We kind of done a lot of work at as a service and gone into schools with the model without perhaps prepping schools in terms of what it's about.

**EP1:** Yes.

**R:** You know apart from the consultation form...

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** ...We haven't done a lot of discussion with them. When we went to the SENCO Networks they seemed quite favourable about the approach.

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** But as we noticed from where they'd rated certain things that were part of the consultation process...

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** ...Some of them hadn't quite, got it, as you say.

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** In terms of thinking about that expert view erm, and what was actually part of consultation and what we consider wasn't part of it so there were still some skewed views if you like...

**EP1:** Yes.

**R:** ...About what was consultation.

**EP1:** And I think that's gonna err always be difficult...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...Because every time you go into a school you speak to a different member of staff...

**R:** That true.

**EP1:** ...So even if you have done some training with the SENCo and it isn't the SENCo ...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...That you then go on to have that conversation with then their expectations again might be quite different.

**R:** Yeah, that's true.

**EP1:** Erm, but may be reflecting on my own practice its worthwhile making a bit of time at the start of that...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...Conversation to say that this is why we are doing it this way.

**R:** Right, yeah sounds good. Erm how important do you feel the interpersonal relationship between consultant and consultee are?

**EP1:** I think it does play a part and actually erm one of the members of staff that I spoke to in regards to this erm work did highlight that it, one of the challenges for them has been having different EPs.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** Because part of the process is knowing the context of the school.

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** So if the EP changes quite a lot you don't necessary have a good insight into the things they might already be doing.

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** The kind of context in terms of the kind of children that attend school and all those issues, erm but then also feeling comfortable talking to that member of staff and I suppose knowing what their expectations might be for their...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...Work with you. So yeah I think it probably does play a part and certainly the ones that I feel have been more successful are those where I feel I have got positive relationship with the staff members.

**R:** Right, OK. So thinking I suppose about the dialogue and interchange during the consultation, do you use anything in particular to help structure the conversations; you have mentioned some approaches?

**EP1:** Yeah erm, I do use a prompt erm, I don't necessarily always follow it and ask every single question...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...But I find it useful to have a prompt of the kind of questions that might be useful to ask.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** Particularly if it's a case that feels a bit tricky erm, where I feel as though we are not quite getting somewhere. I will refer back to some of the prompt questions and ...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...I find that it does give me a bit more information. Erm (pause) I think one of the key things that I find useful that I didn't always used to do but I always do now is to make sure that I have asked staff what they are prioritising but also what would, what would change, what things would look like if things improved...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Because and I suppose that links in with the TME because erm it gives you that real insight into what we need to focus on...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...And what it will look like when we've made a difference in that regard...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...Rather than trying to address lots of different issues.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** So that's probably the most useful thing that erm I use during that conversation.

**R:** OK super. Ok so if we are thinking on a scale of 1 – 10, where 1 is 'not very' and 10 is 'very helpful', how helpful do you think the consultation process was with regard to resolving the concerns of the teacher consultee and also the parents?

**EP1:** So for the first case I would probably say erm (pause) I think I would probably say about 8...

**R:** Mu-huh.

**EP1:** ...Because in the first case we did, I did the consultation with the teacher first of all but then we also had a joint consultation with the parents after school as well. So I think it was useful erm to know exactly what the teacher wanted to focus on and have that opportunity to, for parent to share their concerns but also how they would like things to move forwards and we came up with some actions during the consultation meeting...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...That they could run with and see if they made a difference which is the ultimate really.

**R:** Yes.

**EP1:** Because I think that the more frustrating are the ones where you feel as though you don't come up with very much during that conversation and ...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...You maybe need to go away and reflect a little bit and then go back to school staff with some erm, well suggestions I suppose which isn't really in the...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...Theme of consultation, (laughter) Yeah.

**R:** Right so what do you feel went well in that case to give it 8 out of 10?

**EP1:** I think the teacher was really open to the process and we were able to really clarify what it was that she wanted to be different.



**R:** Right.

**EP1:** And for her it was about this child being able to write more erm, because that was the real difficulty for him. Erm but also in terms of understanding what some of the issues were and what some of the concerns were as well for both home and school.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** And I think it confirmed to her that there was a lot that she was already doing...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...That wou... I would think would be very helpful but we also came up with a few additional things that she was going to try as well.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** Yes.

**R:** So what do you perceive was valued about the EP contribution?

**EP1:** Well I know from asking *them* what they think (laughter).

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** And they talked about having that expert opinion which I don't necessary agree with...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...Because I wouldn't say that we are the experts and I suppose that's in the nature of consultation as well. Erm I think it's that reassurance that they are doing things that will make a difference...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...And that they haven't missed something that they think that we might pick up on...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...That they should already have in place.

**R:** Yes, ok and in that particular situation what do you think could have been different or better for you to give it a rating of 9 out of 10?

**EP1:** (pause) I think the reason I said 8 is because as part of that process I also did an observation.

**R:** Mu-huh.

**EP1:** And part of erm the strategies that we then discussed came from the observation...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...not just from the consultation and whilst I think consultation can work really well on its own I do tend to use the two hand in hand.

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** Erm because I think it's useful then when you are talking about that young person for you to have seen them in context...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...And be able to understand what, what the teachers perceptions are and what your own perceptions are and be able to talk about those points of view.

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** So I think just if having done the consultation on its own, I maybe wouldn't have got as full a picture...

**R:** Right

**EP1:** ...Of some of the concerns and that observation was probably needed in that instance.

**R:** OK and was there anything frustrating about that particular consultation or did it all run fairly smoothly?

**EP1:** I think that was probably an example of a good one actually.

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** Yes I think that was quite an effective one and part of that was because school were really good at making sure that erm parents were going to come in after school and on the same day rather than...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...having only spoken to the teacher then having to go back and arrange a separate meeting. We were able to all meet together and have that shared discussion...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...And agree on the kind of things the school were going to put in place to try and move things forward a bit.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** So it was nice and contained.

**R:** Mu hum.

**EP1:** And the only thing that needed to be done afterwards really was to send the written feedback.

**R:** Mu-hum, OK I don't know if F is particularly relevant in terms of when working with other services what is it that they do that people perceive as helpful as in this instance your contribution *was* perceived as helpful?

**EP1:** Yeah I think in this case in consultation one, erm there was a role for other services and that and that was part of the action that came out...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Of discussions that actually it would be useful to have some assessments from speech and language therapy...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...And from erm some of the other support services.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** Erm and I think that schools value that very, sort of, again, I suppose they would call it expert opinion...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...But knowing that there is somebody that they can go to that really knows that area very well and can may be follow up on some of the things that were picked up on.

**R:** Right

**EP1:** So there was a role in that case for other service to become involved as the result of this initial...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...Consultation.

**R:** OK, lovely.

**EP1:** Do you want me to tell you about the other one?

**R:** Yes.

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** Please, number two.

**EP1:** Erm, the second one (pause) I am going to say (pause) for me, my perception would be probably about 7.

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** The second one was trickier because (pause) there were more factors playing into the concerns it wasn't just say about learning or just about behaviour...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...It was about a whole range of different things and I think the school staff in that situation were quite fixed on one aspect of it...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Erm that I couldn't have much of an influence on.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** I don't know how much I can say really.

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** About them sort of out of school context...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...That may be we, we none of us have much of an influence on.

**R:** OK.

**EP1:** And so whilst they did identify that they wanted to focus on the behaviour and learning in school...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...I think then going back and reflecting on how useful it had been, it seemed to come back again to these issues that were out of our control...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...To a certain extent. So in terms of how effective that process had been overall or how helpful it had been. I'm not, I think it did make a difference to a certain extent but...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...But there were certain other things we may couldn't do an awful ...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Lot about at that time.

**R:** OK. So thinking of your rating of 7 out of 10 what had gone well for you to choose a 7?

**EP1:** One of the great things about that consultation was that, erm I met with the teacher and the SENCo so the teacher could give me, erm a really good insight into her concerns in the class room.

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** Whilst the SENCo could also feed in, in terms of the wider picture ...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Of the school context and also being able to have that influence to make certain things happen ...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...That may be the teacher wouldn't have been able to do.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** So again that joint process of people ...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...Coming together to be able to agree on the kind of actions that we might take to move things forwards.

**R:** Super.

**EP1:** Erm and I think very specifically to this case it enabled us to shift the focus a little bit...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...where behaviour had maybe been the priority and the concern...

**R:** Right



**EP1:** ...actually it was the learning side of things that we came to look at a little bit more.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** And we agreed that would, that would, probably would make quite a big difference.

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** So it was that shift in perception ...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...About what the issue were as well.

**R:** OK and again what did you perceive about the value of your contribution in that situation. You've mentioned already it was perhaps that shift in perception?

**EP1:** Yeah, I think it was I think it was that erm, not just looking at the issues that are sort of really in your face (laugh)...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...But looking at what was underneath that ...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...And getting them to understand that there were other factors that were feeding into that, and they were aware of that ...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...But may be didn't realise the extent to which these things were having an impact.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** So being able to speak to and move things into a positive direction by focusing on the learning rather than the behaviour.

**R:** Mu-hum, ok. You have touched on some things already but in terms of what might need to be different to rate it one point higher?

**EP1:** I don't think it was quite as joined up...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...In that I did meet with Mum afterwards...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...But erm we didn't do that as a school and home type ...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Conversation. It felt more about feeding back to her about things that were happening in school...

**R:** OK.

**EP1:** ...Rather than that been more collaborative with the parents.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** (pause) And again I did use observation again ...

**R:** Mmm.

**EP1:** ...To facilitate that erm discussion, but in this case we had the consultation first, then I observed and then we came back together again afterwards.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** So it did follow on from the consul-the initial consultation.

**R:** OK, again you have touched on some things already in terms of what might have been frustrating about this case partly because there were things happening outside the school remit erm but was there anything else that, that could have been better?

**EP1:** I think one of the issues in this case was that not as much time was made available for me to speak to the teacher.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** It was erm done sort of before the lesson started so it felt a little bit more rushed.

**R:** OK.

**EP1:** And maybe if we'd have had more time, we would have got more from the process.

**R:** Mmm. OK (pause) Right Oh and yes I didn't see "G" but you've answered that already. In terms of did you carry out any additional work with the child or family? You mentioned...

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** ...That you'd used observation both of the cases to help...

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** ...Facilitate that consultation.

**EP1:** In the second one err, one of the actions that came out of the consultation was to do erm a BRIEF assessment...

**R:** OK.

**EP1:** ...As well so that was fol..., that was an action that was followed up on afterwards.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** Erm in the first consultation there would be actions mostly related to referrals to other services aside from the things that school were going to put in place.

**R:** Right excellent. OK so thinking now specifically about the TME part of the process again on a scale of 1 to 10 where 1 is 'not very useful' and 10 is 'very useful', how useful was the TME process in supporting the teacher and parents or just the teacher to set targets and monitor progress?

**EP1:** (pause) From my perception I would probably say a 9.

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** I found it really useful because again it just sort of clarified exactly what it was that we were going to focus on.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** And that was a technique that I haven't used previously.

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** I've used scaling to try and understand how erm the extent of the issue I suppose but to actually use the TME in a more formal manner to really pin down what the target might be.

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** And to erm look at where we want it to move from there. I found it very useful and it's something that I will probably continue to use.

**R:** Right. Excellent that was just an (inaudible due to laughter).

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** Erm if you did use it again is there anything you would amend or do differently or do you feel it worked as it was?

**EP1:** I think the only thing I didn't do erm probably in these cases is to go back and look at the TME again and to look at whether we had moved ...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...to where we hoped to move, so that follow up part. Erm, the only reason I didn't say 10 is because I find, I always find asking scaling questions quite difficult...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...because it feels a little bit false sometimes trying to word it in a way...

**R:** Yeah.

**EP1:** ...that sounds natural. Erm, but that's an issue with scaling questions in general ...

**R:** Mmm

**EP1:** ...and I think again it's just a matter of finding the right way to bring that into the conversation without it feeling like a step, a process that you've got to formally go through.

**R:** Mmm and do you feel that the teachers found it helpful?

**EP1:** I think so yeah and, and it was really helpful when I actually came to do the written feedback...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...To be able to emphasise this is what we agreed...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...Would be the most useful thing to target.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** This is where we felt it was and where we'd like it to move to and then be able to link that into the erm actions that we'd agreed.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** So I certainly think it's something that makes consultation probably more effective and I will use it again.

**R:** Right, super. I think that you've probably answered the other parts, though do you feel that was the same in both of the cases that you used?

**EP1:** Erm let me just think, (pause) erm (pause) yeah I think so because it was a question that I used in both cases...

**R:** Mu-hum.

**EP1:** ...and the feedback I had from staff afterwards was they'd found that useful.

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** The first consultation just generally felt more effective (laugh)...

**R:** Right.

**EP1:** ...Overall I think. But in relation to the TME I think it probably was in both cases useful.

**R:** Mu-hum. OK.

**EP1:** Yeah.

**R:** Excellent.

## **Appendix 19: Interview between Educational Psychologist (EP1) and Class Teacher (T1)**

**EP1:** (explanation of consultation process that we used). On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being very helpful, 1 not at all, where would you judge how you found the consultation process?

**T1:** About 7, just because I felt that we were already doing most things, but it was very reassuring to know that the things we were doing were the right sort of things and that your feedback was positive with regards to how we were doing things. The reason it's not higher is just because I was hoping for more but the sensory profile will hopefully bring more when that comes back.

**EP1:** So that reassurance about being on the right track with things but you felt that it would be helpful to have more to work on?

**T1:** Yes that's right.

**EP1:** What would we need to do to improve the score to 8?

**T1:** Fresh ideas, and I'm sure there will be other things based on the sensory profile.

**EP1:** So would you say that there is anything particular about having EP involvement that you find valuable?

**T1:** It's knowing that there is someone there to ask when you get to a sticking point and you think that I haven't got anything more to offer this child, is there someone who can give us some further advice.

**EP1:** Is there anything about the actual process of consultation that could be better?



**T1:** I think, you stayed and observed and things but in order to get a fuller picture of the child I think it needs to be a slightly longer observation, in my opinion, you know in different environments and different activities and to see them socially. It was really good that you stayed and watched him at playtime and things like that but previously I've felt that the observation has been too limited, too short to get a true picture of the child.

**EP1:** And do you feel that that observation is really crucial to the process because sometimes we will do the consultation (that bit between you and I) and we don't always go on to do an observation.

**T1:** Yes I do. I think as an EP you might pick up on certain things that might not be picked up on by the teacher and there might be gaps that you can fill. It might be something that's there all the time and you've just overlooked it or not linked it to other things.

**EP1:** Is there anything that you find frustrating about the process?

**T1:** The waiting game. And I know everyone has got so much on but when you know there's a need and that you might not be meeting the needs of the child you need that person straight away.

**EP1:** If you were thinking about other services, what do you perceive to be helpful about their involvement?

**T1:** Just advice and new ideas again really to support the child.

**EP1:** We identified what the priority was for this child and scaled that in terms of where he is now and where he might get to (TME) – did you think that was a useful thing to do?

**T1:** Yes I think it showed you, where I was thinking, which that scale put in place. Yes it was helpful.

**EP1:** To clarify things?

**T1:** Yes definitely.

**EP1:** How would you rate the TME process on a scale of 1 to 10 (most helpful)?

**T1:** About 9. It's a clearer way of being able to explain how difficult the particular task was for the child and it gave you an idea of how important it is to try and meet his needs in that area.

**EP1:** Thinking about where we are now, there are still actions to be completed but do you think anything has changed based on the consultation?

**T1:** I think using 'stop' instead of 'finish' – I hadn't ever thought about that in my mind and I don't think I would have said that but now I say 'You can do your 3 sentences and then stop' and I think that helps to make a clear finishing point for him and I think that did help so that was a really useful thing. Most of the other things I think that we were doing anyway but now that we know they are the right sort of things to do we are doing them more consistently.

**EP1:** Has anything changed in terms of your perceptions of his issues or how you support him?

**T1:** I think we are just moving forwards and he's responding well to the things we are doing and it does still take a very long time to get what we need but he is producing the writing so it's working so we just have to take lots of breaks. For example with SATS's, he completed it

but it took him a lot longer than everyone else, but he managed to do it and that's the main thing.

**EP1:** So small steps in the right direction?

**T1:** Yes.

**EP1:** Based on us having gone through the consultation process, do you think there is anything differently that you might do in the future e.g. for another child or reflecting on these issues?

**T1:** As a teacher I'm pretty reflective anyway and if there is something that needs sorting or doing I will always ask everybody to try and find the best ways to go about things. I'm that sort of person anyway so I would continue to do that, to ask, So I feel like I'm doing my best.

**EP1:** Is there anything else that you wanted to add?

**T1:** No that's everything.

## **Appendix 20: Interview between Educational Psychologist (EP1) and Parent (P1)**

**EP1:** (Described consultation process). If you were thinking on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is 'very helpful' and 1 is 'not at all', where do you think you would put the consultation process?

**P1:** I'd say about an 8.

**EP1:** And what made you choose that number?

**P1:** It definitely helped us understand, in terms of, I remember you talking about different sensory processes and seeking certain sensations and avoiding certain sensations and I think that was really helpful. I think we had some understanding of that already, we appreciated that he had some problems with noise but I didn't realize quite how visual he was beforehand, things like that were really helpful to know. I think until we have gone through the process with him and tried different things in the classroom I won't feel like we fully understand him, I think that's why I haven't gone for a 10.

**EP1:** That's understandable yes, there are still some actions that we are following up with.

**P1:** Yes like the speech and language therapist who we haven't heard back from and all the rest of it but certainly the initial consultation was very useful.

**EP1:** Was there anything else that you felt was particularly beneficial?

**P1:** (Scan's record of consultation) I can't think of anything else of the top of my head.

**EP1:** I suppose one of the things you said there was about that perception – how you understand his needs?

**P1:** Yeah, I think knowing how to approach his learning in the classroom and how to engage him best in the classroom so that he gets the most out of every single lesson.

**EP1:** So in terms of being able to move up the scale towards a 10, it would be about getting feedback from the other services/ completing assessments etc?

**P1:** Yes I think now that we have agreed, his provision map has been signed and so the support service can be involved and we can work out what works for him and what doesn't. And you had the slight concern about his speech and that referral is going through school so obviously we don't know the outcome of that either.

**EP1:** If you had to think about what you valued about having an EP involved, what would it be?

**P1:** Really just that you have got more of an understanding. We can observe certain things and we can say things that he likes and doesn't like but we might not be able to explain why that is and you've got that knowledge and that deeper understanding of why he may avoid certain things or seek out certain things and what the psychological basis behind that is and I think just in case you spotted something that we haven't between us as parents and his teachers and the teaching staff. You know what to look for.

**EP1:** So making sure that there is nothing there that has been missed?

**P1:** Yes, just having an expert opinion. Teachers and teaching staff, as much as we like to be we can't be experts on everything.

**EP1:** Was there anything that you think could be better about this way that we work? Anything that's frustrating?

**P1:** Erm, not necessarily. It took a few weeks for the report to come back so we felt like there was a bit of a lag and it feels a bit frustrating that we have got to half term now and there is only half a term left of this year. I've got a slight concern that we only have half a term to get in there and make a difference because obviously then the summer holidays are going to kick in and that's a big break for him before he comes back in September.

**EP1:** Are you aware now of the targets your child is working towards?

**P1:** Yes his main target that his teacher has given him is to organise his thoughts before he writes which is the main thing that he seems to struggle with when he is doing his writing. He says that he sees things in pictures so I know that it's basically getting him to get the pictures out of his head and into a written form on the paper within the confines of the lesson.

**EP1:** And do you think your child would be aware that that's something people are trying to support him with?

**P1:** I think he is, I think his coin system and his treasure box are special to him and he is very motivated by getting to spend time on the computer. And I think he does recognise, because we have talked about it with him at home, I think he recognises that he struggles to write things down and that he can't get things that are in his head into some sort of form that he can write things down.

**EP1:** Have you noticed any changes so far?

**P1:** The feedback that I have had from his teacher is that they have had some more success with him, they've taken their SATs recently and there have been a few occasions where he has come home and said that he has had a lot of coins that day and she has shown me one of

the pieces of writing he has done subsequently which was a lovely piece of writing and they do seem to be having more success in class at getting him to get things done either within the allotted time or with not as much extra time.

**EP1:** What do you think has made the difference?

**P1:** It's presumably the strategies that they are using with him, I know that they are using various strategies to get him to order his thoughts before he writes things down, I think the motivation of the coins to go in his treasure box really works. And also they are using things like the pictorial representations for things like his shoes and coat and I think from what I have heard that seems to be working quite well. So it does sound as though things have moved on a little bit. Obviously we just want to make things as easy as possible for him.

**EP1:** Was there anything additional you wanted to mention?

**P1:** Not specifically. (Asked about future involvement).

## **Appendix 21: Interview between Educational Psychologist (EP1) and James**

**EP1:** What things do you like doing?

**C1:** Maths. Reading stories. I like Horton Hatches the Egg.

**EP1:** What don't you like?

**C1:** Hmm. Homework. Drawing stories. Solving questions.

**EP1:** What are you good at?

**C1:** I don't know. That's hard.

**EP1:** Your mum told me there are lots of things that you are good at doing out of school.

**C1:** There are four things I do. Football, Karate, Swimming and Drums.

**EP1:** What do you find difficult?

**C1:** Writing. It makes my brain go funny. I have to tap it and it goes.

**EP1:** On a scale of 1-10, where 1 is 'not at all' and 10 is 'very well' (shows faces), how well are things going for you in school?

**C1:** (Points to 7).

**EP1:** What made you pick that number?

**C1:** That's how old I am.

**EP1:** Ok. What things would you put next to the smiley face?



**C1:** Golden time on Fridays!

**EP1:** Is there anything you would put next to the sad/ angry face?

**C1:** I can't think of anything.

**EP1:** Is there anyone who helps you in school?

**C1:** Mrs C, Mrs W, Miss O and Mrs H.

**EP1:** What do they help you with?

**C1:** Writing.

**EP1:** How do they help you with your writing?

**C1:** I have to talk about my ideas.

**EP1:** What might you like to do when you grow up?

**C1:** A shop keeper gets paid £12,000, a Scientist gets £30,000 and a Doctor gets £70 to £80,000. I haven't decided yet.

**EP1:** If you had a magic wand is there anything you would change?

**C1:** Don't have to do writing anymore.

**Appendix 22: Consultation Record Form (showing TME) EP1 with T1**

**Consultation Record number 1**

**Date:** 17/04/2013      **School:**      **Consultation with:** class teacher (T1)

**Name of child/group class:** James (pseudonym)

**DOB:**      **Year Group:** Two      **Class:**

**Teacher:** T1

**Family status (siblings/parents/guardian):**

**Other:**

**What are your best hopes for our work together/ hopes for this consultation?**

**What are your concerns about?**

My involvement was requested to further explore any strategies to overcome barriers to learning that James might be experiencing. I visited school on the 17th April to consult with T1, observe James in the classroom and meet with parents, class teacher (T1) and SENCo. James is currently in Year 2.

James has difficulty with writing tasks. He finds it difficult to put his ideas into sentences and can become quite distressed when a writing task is presented. When trying to describe this difficulty, James has said that he thinks in pictures.

James can often seem as if he is in his own world. Whilst this isn't always an issue, it can mean that he misses information and instructions.

James can be sensitive to some sounds and will cover his ears.

**What is your main priority at the moment?**

T1 identified that supporting James with writing tasks is currently the main priority to ensure he is able to achieve his potential. On a scale of 1 to 10 (with 1 being that James is never able to record his ideas and 10 being that he is always able to record his ideas) T1 identified James' independent performance as 2, increasing to 3 or 4 when adult support is provided.

**What do you feel may be contributing to the concern?**

**How would you like things to change? What would you like to achieve?**

Target 1: For James to record his ideas in writing.

Rating:        1        2(B)    3        4        5        6(E)    7(A)    8        9        10

Descriptor of baseline level: James is rarely able to record his ideas. His independent performance is a 2, increasing to 3/4 when adult support is provided.

Descriptor of level achieved: James has developed a much happier relationship with writing, with encouragement to stay on task he is at a 7.

Target 2:

Rating:        1        2        3        4        5        6        7        8        9        10

Descriptor of baseline level:

Descriptor of level achieved:

Target 3:

Rating:        1        2        3        4        5        6        7        8        9        10

Descriptor of baseline level:

Descriptor of level achieved:

B = baseline, E = expected level of progress, A = achieved

**How have other agencies supported your work with this student/issue?**

<b>What have you tried so far?</b> (strategies/ interventions/curriculum/support)	<b>What effects have you noticed?</b>
See successful strategies below.	

**What is currently successful? What has contributed to this success?**

The following information was gathered through consultation with T1.

Things that are going well:

James can produce very neat handwriting if he is copying text.

James is better able to access interactive tasks and can engage well in discussions on the carpet.

James is happy to play on his own much of the time but will sometimes play with his peers on the school field.

James enjoys self-directed time on the computer.

James is working at Level 3 in Maths (but can struggle with wordy challenges).

Out of school, James is very skilled at playing the drums and is progressing quickly through the grades.

Successful strategies:

James has a Coin Box reward system, enabling him to earn time on the computer for completing small tasks.

James has his own place to sit at the front of the carpet.

James' visual prompt (James' Amazing List) is used to break tasks down into small steps

James' name is used at the beginning of an instruction to gain his attention

A visual timer is used for some tasks

Writing prompts are used to make tasks feel safe (e.g. mind maps/ sentence starters).

**What are parents/carers views and involvement?**

Additional information gathered through discussion with parents:

James' mother (P1) shared her concerns about some of the unusual behaviours she has observed, for example, hand flapping.

Parents have noticed that James benefits from time to process questions and using his name to tune him in before an instruction is given.

James can find change difficult and it helps to give him a warning a few minutes before a change in activity.

James seems to set high standards for himself and will become upset if he is unable to do something. He can also be reluctant to attempt the task.

James can be very empathetic and doesn't like others to be upset.

**What are the pupil's views?**

## **Summarising**

### **Observations**

*Art task* - James appeared to enjoy using his fingers to create leopard print with black paint on a sheet of paper. He was very precise in his actions and spent time spreading the paint between his fingers.

*Play time* - James played with two boys, running between the trees and hedges bordering the field to other areas of the playground. On the way back into the classroom, James told me that the other boys chase him all the time but that they love playing games. I felt that his production of language was a little unusual and he seemed to struggle to find the words to describe the issue he was having. On his return to the classroom, James was slow to change his shoes and needed several prompts from T1 to join the group.

*Carpet time* - James had his own place at the front of the carpet. He carefully studied the visual resources available (looking for differences between a cheetah and leopard) and struggled to find the right word to explain that one had shorter whiskers.

*Art task* - James struggled to commence the next task without additional adult prompting. When all necessary equipment was made available, James was able to draw around the leopard template and cut out the shape carefully, using his right hand to control the scissors. There are no apparent fine motor difficulties. James was fully immersed in the task and did not seem to notice the chatter of peers around him, but he did notice when T1 asked the class for their attention. He did not register the instruction to look at a book but noticed that this was what his peers were doing and moved to get a book of his own. At the end of the lesson, James was slow to get his possessions together for home time.

*Story time* - James listened carefully to the story as it was read aloud by T1. He evidently comprehended the information well as he was able to answer questions about the story. It seemed to help that there were no other noises or distractions during this activity.

### **Current Conclusions**

James demonstrates many strengths, including his mathematical and musical ability, his fine motor skills and his caring nature. The difficulties James experiences seem indicative of sensory processing difficulties. It would appear that he:

- Seeks visual information
- Is sensitive to noise and has difficulty making sense of auditory information (e.g. verbal instructions, particularly where he needs to filter out other sounds)
- Seeks touch (e.g. placing a hand on adults, dragging his shoes on the floor, touching some objects to his lips, spreading paint on his fingers)

In addition, James sometimes seems to have trouble finding the words he needs to explain himself, indicating that it may be beneficial to further assess his speech and language skills.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Agreed Actions</b> (to include follow up arrangements)	<b>Responsible</b>
	School staff will be mindful of James' sensory needs, e.g. ensuring that verbal information and instructions are presented in a quiet environment, providing James with a quiet space to produce his ideas and reinforcing auditory information with visual prompts where possible.	School

	Parents will ask for a GP referral for a Speech and Language Therapy assessment (including word finding and pragmatic language skills)	Parents
	SENCo will make a referral to the EMS for Communication and Interaction so that a sensory profile can be completed and a visual support system can be implemented (to facilitate understanding and organisation, e.g. during transition times between break and lessons)	SENCo
	<p>T1 will support James to complete writing tasks by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• try to ensure that all writing tasks are 'closed'</li> <li>• using 'stop' instead of 'finish'</li> <li>• providing visual prompts of key words to be included in sentences</li> <li>• Use a mind map to record initial ideas</li> <li>• continuing to use a visual work plan to break down the steps of a task into small steps and to support James to organise the equipment he needs (an example has been included with this record)</li> <li>• Putting writing tasks into context, e.g. making them into a game or personal challenge and encouraging James to share his completed work with SENCo.</li> </ul>	T1
	It would be helpful to arrange a meeting for the end of the summer term to review progress	All

### **Current conclusions**

Are further follow up sessions with the Educational Psychologist needed? Yes  
Reasons for ceasing Educational Psychologist involvement:

### **Next Meeting:**

**Educational Psychologist:** EP1

**Signed:**

**Date:** 17/04/2013

**Circulation:**

## Appendix 23: Thematic Analysis

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
Effectiveness (1)          Helpfulness (6)   Helpfulness/usefulness (15)   Value (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As first point of contact</li> <li>Effective way of working</li> <li>Overall effectiveness</li> <li>An effective one</li> <li>Talking about what it is meant to achieve</li> <li>More successful if positive relationships with staff</li> <li>School staff or parents</li> <li>Useful</li> <li>Really helpful process</li> <li>Very helpful consultation</li> <li>Likely to be useful (as thinking)</li> <li>Conversations about what they valued</li> <li>Valued it quite strongly</li> <li>Something that was valuable</li> <li>Needs to be of value</li> <li>To understand the value</li> <li>Value placed on the experience</li> <li>Need to value it</li> <li>Perceive it to be of value (then more involved in the process)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The process evolves through a positive, enquiring relationship</li> <li>Consultation is an effective way of working together</li> <li>Consultation is an effective first point of contact in response to a request for involvement</li> <li>Consultation is perceived as useful and helpful by those involved</li> <li>Understanding about the process affects how consultees value the process and how they perceive their role in the process</li> <li>Consultees need to understand the value of consultation in order for them to perceive it as effective</li> <li>Consultation is a process not a one off event</li> <li>Consultation aims to develop a shared understanding of how people will work together to address concerns</li> <li>Consultees may be familiar with the process without necessarily being able to name it as consultation</li> <li>A greater understanding of the process leads to a greater value being placed on that process</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective process</li> <li>Valuing the process</li> <li>Understanding the process</li> </ul>	Understanding what consultation is

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
<p>Shared understanding (5)</p> <p>Shared understanding (14)</p> <p>Shared Understanding (7)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>About issues</li> <li>Not questioned the approach</li> <li>Acceptance</li> <li>Familiarity with the approach</li> <li>Why we are doing it in this way</li> <li>Parents share concerns</li> <li>Picture of what the concerns are</li> <li>Of the issues/concerns</li> <li>Open to the process</li> <li>Not a shared understanding</li> <li>Help if they know what was happening</li> <li>There is a need (to be explicit)</li> <li>Reassuring if people know what's happening</li> <li>More comfortable with the process</li> <li>Problems if lack of shared understanding</li> <li>Explaining to new staff</li> <li>Reassurance</li> <li>Need it if not sure what is happening</li> <li>Revisiting the process/being explicit</li> <li>Used to that way of working</li> <li>What they understand</li> <li>They are part of the process too</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff familiar with the process understand their role in the problem solving process</li> <li>There is a need to make consultees aware of what is involved in the process to increase their understanding</li> <li>Consultees do not always have a shared understanding about the process or purpose of consultation</li> <li>The consultee is involved in this process more than any other models</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raising awareness</li> </ul>	



Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
<p>Process (22)</p> <p>Starting point (3)</p> <p>Process (5)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wasn't (initially) deeper understanding</li> <li>Communication with settings</li> <li>Making sure settings were sure</li> <li>Joined up idea of service delivery</li> <li>Different views regarding value of consultation</li> <li>On-going dialogue</li> <li>Need to be more explicit re model</li> <li>Seemed to understand</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consult teacher first</li> <li>Joint consultation with parents</li> <li>Observation as part of process</li> <li>Consultation-observation-consultation, fuller picture</li> <li>Get more from the process if more time</li> <li>Observation needed</li> <li>Strategies from observation</li> <li>Effective first point of contact</li> <li>Initial way to start</li> <li>Initial consultation is enough</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evolve from good relationship-positive and enquiring</li> <li>A model</li> <li>Not explaining process to schools</li> </ul>			

<b>Code</b> Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	<b>Issues Discussed</b> Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	<b>Themes Identified/Basic Themes</b>	<b>Organising Themes</b>	<b>Global Themes</b>
Process (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flag up what the process will be</li> <li>Describe what I do</li> <li>More comfortable if understood</li> <li>Describe the structure</li> <li>Stating the obvious</li> <li>Structured properly</li> <li>Outline the process</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A process-clear on the process</li> <li>Not a one off meeting, leads on to something else</li> <li>Can be the process in itself</li> <li>Or a starting point</li> <li>Purpose/aims/process</li> <li>Uncertainty about the process</li> <li>Initial meeting</li> <li>Process not a one off</li> <li>Fully understood the process</li> <li>More involved in it if valued</li> <li>Revisiting the process</li> <li>Support new staff</li> </ul>			

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
<p>Problem owner (9)</p> <p>Understanding (18)</p> <p>Expert view (16)</p> <p>Expert view (9)</p> <p>Resolving own issues (10)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't become the problem owner</li> <li>Support without taking ownership</li> <li>Knowing what expectations are</li> <li>Different staff have different expectations</li> <li>Expert view being useful</li> <li>Value expert view</li> <li>Not about an expert view</li> <li>Brought in an expert</li> <li>Suggestions-not a theme of consultation</li> <li>Wouldn't say we are the experts</li> <li>Value expert opinion</li> <li>Know the area well</li> <li>Follow up</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Could revert to an expert model without a good relationship</li> <li>Giving them an opinion/advice</li> <li>Corrupting the consultation</li> <li>Offer advice</li> <li>Having to direct more</li> <li>Other agencies giving advice</li> <li>Waiting for the consultee to work it out</li> <li>Understanding their position in it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation involves working together, with the problem owner, who continues to own the problem throughout the process</li> <li>Asking questions rather than telling answers is perceived as a powerful tool</li> <li>The process involves working together without the EP taking ownership</li> <li>Consultation is a collaborative problem solving process</li> <li>The process is about devising solutions jointly</li> <li>Consultation is a joint process involving people coming together to agree on the actions needed to move things forward</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EPs recognise when giving advice might be appropriate within the consultation process</li> <li>The 'expert view' is still perceived as being useful by some consultees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitating</li> <li>Giving Advice</li> </ul>	Directive versus non-directive

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
EP role (22)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking questions not telling answers</li> <li>Powerful tool</li> <li>You can always tell them at the end</li> <li>Don't always use consultation, more directive</li> </ul>			
Expert model (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not an expert model</li> <li>Not going to solve a problem</li> <li>Not coming in as an expert</li> </ul>			
Problem owner (12)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not having problem passed on</li> <li>Who owns the problem, problem holder owns it</li> <li>Support to make progress</li> <li>Collaborative</li> </ul>			
Collaboration (8)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint process</li> <li>Shared discussion</li> <li>Coming together</li> <li>Jointly coming up with solutions</li> <li>Collaborative</li> </ul>			
Collaboration (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work ethic on both parts</li> <li>Consultee working as hard as EP</li> </ul>			

<b>Code</b> Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	<b>Issues Discussed</b> Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	<b>Themes Identified/Basic Themes</b>	<b>Organising Themes</b>	<b>Global Themes</b>
Collaborative problem solving (6)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working with others in collaboration</li> <li>• Collaborative problem solving</li> <li>• Thinking about a problem jointly</li> <li>• Problem solving forum</li> <li>• Consultees part of it as well</li> <li>• Support the individual through the problem solving process</li> <li>• All able to contribute</li> </ul>			

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
<p>Interpersonal relationships (19)</p> <p>Interpersonal relationships (11)</p> <p>Relationships (11)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relationships play a part</li> <li>Challenges of different EPs</li> <li>Knowing the context</li> <li>Insight into things</li> <li>Feeling comfortable talking</li> <li>Positive relationships lead to a more successful consultation</li> <li>Relationships play an important part</li> <li>Really important</li> <li>The core of what we do</li> <li>Effective relationships are crucial</li> <li>Process would fall down if not an effective relationship</li> <li>Need a good relationship</li> <li>A positive and enquiring relationship helps the process to evolve</li> <li>Positive relationships are the key to challenging assumptions</li> <li>Consultation is easier when you have a relationship</li> <li>Interpersonal skills</li> <li>Important aspect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The more successful consultations are those where there are positive relationships with consultees</li> <li>Relationships are a crucial part of the process</li> <li>An effective relationship is perceived as the core of what we do</li> <li>It takes time for consultees to feel comfortable talking to EPs</li> <li>Changing EPs can be challenging</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Working Together</li> <li>Consistency and stability</li> </ul>	Relationships

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
Talking (7)  Language (3)  Dialogue (13)  Questioning (14)  Questioning (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Time to talk</li> <li>Discussion</li> <li>Emotions found in language</li> <li>To do with language</li> <li>Information at that point</li> <li>Narrative approach</li> <li>Elicit, reflect, illuminate</li> <li>Ordinary language</li> <li>Something to do with talking</li> <li>Open dialogue</li> <li>Open interchange</li> <li>Ideas come from the dialogue</li> <li>Use of questioning as a prompt</li> <li>Kind of questions</li> <li>Useful to ask</li> <li>Use in different situations</li> <li>Information gathering</li> <li>How you ask people about themselves</li> <li>Circular questioning</li> <li>Different types of questions</li> <li>Talk about emotions</li> <li>Information (time, when, how)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Value for staff of having time to talk about concerns</li> <li>Importance of listening to the emotions conveyed in the language</li> <li>Need for open dialogue and interchange</li> <li>Different approaches lend themselves to different types of questions being asked</li> <li>Having a prompt of different types of questions to ask can help facilitate the process</li> <li>Asking questions in a structured way helps people to focus on issues they want to address</li> <li>Consultation can help to change perceptions with regard to a concern</li> <li>The questions you ask are important to help people develop an understanding of the situation</li> <li>How you ask questions helps people to develop an understanding of themselves and their role</li> <li>It is important to ask questions to challenge practice and challenge assumptions</li> <li>It is important to be able to understand and discuss the perceptions of all those involved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Open discussion</li> <li>Structured discussion</li> <li>Challenge assumptions</li> </ul>	Shifting the perceptions of others

<b>Code</b> Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	<b>Issues Discussed</b> Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	<b>Themes Identified/Basic Themes</b>	<b>Organising Themes</b>	<b>Global Themes</b>
<p>Questioning (5)</p> <p>Perceptions (2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Asking the right questions is key</li> <li>How you question people</li> <li>Questioning technique</li> <li>Asking questions not telling answers</li> <li>Right questions at the right time</li> <li>Methods of questioning</li> <li>Styles of questioning</li> <li>Challenge practice, challenge assumptions</li> <li>Ask particular questions</li> <li>Types of questions you ask</li> <li>Not just clarifying questions</li> <li>Question the situation</li> <li>Comfortable with the process</li> <li>Familiar with it</li> <li>Fixed on one aspect</li> <li>Yours and others perceptions</li> <li>Point of view</li> <li>In context</li> <li>Shift the focus</li> <li>Shift in perceptions of issues</li> <li>Not have much influence on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consultation may lead to referrals to other agencies</li> <li>Different perspectives can be used within the consultation process to facilitate the discussion</li> <li>Other forms of involvement may arise from consultation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Supporting techniques</li> </ul>	



Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
Self-awareness (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand things a bit better</li> <li>• Better illuminated</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of themselves</li> <li>• Develop an understanding of their circumstances</li> <li>• Think about things in a different way</li> <li>• Think really hard</li> </ul>			
Perceptions (14)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shift thinking</li> <li>• Question own assumptions</li> <li>• Shed light on areas they are unaware of</li> <li>• Question current practice</li> <li>• Allows another voice to be heard</li> <li>• Perceptions of staff re the problem</li> <li>• Move on from primary concern to other areas</li> <li>• Fresh perspective (EP brings)</li> </ul>			
Solution focussed (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution focussed (s/f) approach</li> <li>• Jointly come up with solutions</li> <li>• Part of the solution</li> </ul>			
Perspectives (13)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solution focussed</li> <li>• PCP</li> <li>• Narrative</li> </ul>			

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
Other techniques (10)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation as part of process</li> <li>• Observation goes hand in hand with consultation</li> <li>• Open to something different afterwards</li> <li>• Might not need to do anything else</li> <li>• Not much experience of the approach</li> </ul>			
Referrals on (28)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions followed up</li> <li>• Role for other services</li> <li>• Speech and language assessments</li> <li>• Other support services</li> <li>• BRIEF assessment</li> <li>• Observation</li> </ul>			
Other techniques (20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk assessment</li> <li>• Something 'official'</li> </ul>			
Solution focussed (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• S/f way of working</li> <li>• Underpinning ethos</li> <li>• Collaborative problem solving</li> </ul>			
Other techniques (9)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work following the initial consultation: 1:1, observation, meeting parents, assessments, pupil views, follow up meetings</li> </ul>			

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
Move things forward (11)  Changes (21)  Differences (23)  Planned actions (7)  Progress (15)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moving things forward</li> <li>• Agreed actions</li> <li>• Focus on, to move things forward</li> <li>• Additional things to try</li> <li>• Actions that come out of discussion</li> <li>• What would change</li> <li>• What things would look like if improved</li> <li>• Clarifying changes</li> <li>• Make certain things happen</li> <li>• What CT wanted to be different</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identified gaps</li> <li>• Identified existing strategies</li> <li>• A plan at the end of it</li> <li>• Something to work with</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review meeting to note progress</li> <li>• People moved forward quite comfortably</li> <li>• Move forward</li> <li>• Asking the right questions helps move things along</li> <li>• Change the situation</li> <li>• Help people move forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need to focus on priorities rather than trying to address lots of different issues</li> <li>• Talking through concerns in a structured way helps consultees to focus on priorities</li> <li>• Consultation asks consultees to think about what things would look like if the situation improved</li> <li>• Clarifying what things would look like if improved gives an insight of what the targets/actions need to focus on</li> <li>• Demonstrating progress is important</li> <li>• It is about helping people move forward</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritising</li> <li>• Imagined outcomes</li> <li>• Progress</li> </ul>	Making a difference

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Themes
<p>Focus (20)</p> <p>Focus/structure (16)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exactly what the teacher want to focus on</li> <li>Rather than addressing lots of issues</li> <li>Insight into focus</li> <li>What they are prioritising</li> <li>Actions</li> <li>More factors playing in to concerns</li> <li>Two areas really wanted to address</li> <li>Problems all over the place</li> <li>Consultation worked through in a structured way</li> <li>Helped them to focus</li> </ul>			

## Appendix 24: Thematic Analysis of Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Theme
Usefulness (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback from staff</li> <li>Really helpful</li> <li>Really useful</li> <li>Makes consultation more effective</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TME works well as part of the consultation approach</li> <li>TME is a useful tool</li> <li>It is a helpful process which supports all involved</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective</li> </ul>	Target Monitoring and Evaluation (TME)
Usefulness (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An easy win</li> <li>Simple tool</li> <li>Very valuable</li> <li>Really useful</li> <li>Perceived as helpful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The TME process enables people to demonstrate how the situation has moved forward</li> <li>The structured approach helps to demonstrate progress</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress</li> </ul>	
Useful (1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A helpful way</li> <li>Quite useful actually</li> <li>Useful tool</li> <li>Quite helpful</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The TME process adds value to what we do</li> <li>The focus and expectations of the target setting are clarified</li> <li>The target setting process is tangible and can be shared with other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accountability</li> </ul>	
Moving forward (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where to move to</li> </ul>			
Moving forward (2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What would you be happy with next time I come</li> <li>Where now/where are we hoping to get to</li> <li>He'd moved on</li> <li>Identify and review priorities</li> <li>Can see the movement</li> </ul>			

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Theme
Moving forward(5)  Outcomes (3)  Adding value (6)   Clarifying (2)   Tangible (3) Accurate picture (4)   Structured approach (4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Move forward with the situation</li> <li>• In a positive direction</li> <li>• Reflect that progression</li> <li>• Making progress</li> <li>• Have an outcome at the end</li> <li>• What they've achieved</li> <li>• Developing towards a goal</li> <li>• Evaluating our practice</li> <li>• Evaluating impact</li> <li>• Auditing our work</li> <li>• Value added to what we do</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarified the focus</li> <li>• Pin down the target</li> <li>• Emphasise that was agreed</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share with others</li> <li>• Put some figures on it</li> <li>• Really accurate</li> <li>• Took time to decide</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structured approach to target setting</li> <li>• Target setting over a period of time</li> <li>• Baseline/aim for/expectations/outcomes</li> <li>• Where are we now, where would we like to be, set targets</li> </ul>			

Code Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3 (numbers refer to the codes used on each individual transcript)	Issues Discussed Red: EP1, Green EP2, Blue: EP3	Themes Identified/Basic Themes	Organising Themes	Global Theme
Process (2)  Tangible (7)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fits with the consultation process</li> <li>Keeps it as a process, not just talking about problems</li> <li>Can share with staff, parents, other professionals</li> <li>What we wanted to do, how developed</li> <li>Who is working on it, what achieved</li> </ul>			