Using Person Centred Planning
with Children and Young People:

What are the outcomes and how is it experienced at a time of transition from primary to secondary school?

Laura Michelle Partington

130559427

Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology

School of Education, Communication and Language Sciences

Newcastle University

1st July 2016

Declaration

This work is submitted for the award of Doctorate in Applied Educational Psychology (DAppEdPsy). It contains no material that has been submitted or assessed for any other award or qualification. It is all my own work and to the best of my knowledge contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made.

Laura Partington

April 2016

Overarching Abstract

Use of person centred planning (PCP) is advocated for use with children and young people (CYP) in the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2015). This is despite limited evidence of its outcomes and effectiveness. A systematic literature review explored the question: *What are the outcomes of person centred planning for children and young people at the centre of the process?* Thematic synthesis of data in six papers revealed a wide range of direct and indirect outcomes for CYP, including those described as internal (impacting thoughts, feelings, beliefs, and understanding) and external (impacting observable actions and behaviour). The range of outcomes is thought to reflect the personalised nature of PCP and the uniqueness of the experience for the person at the centre. None of the reviewed studies sought the views of CYP exclusively. An empirical study was designed to understand individual experiences of CYP when PCP was used during their transition to secondary school. The study was designed to reflect the principles of PCP throughout the research process. Data obtained from semi-structured interviews, supported by use of visual methods, were subjected to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Four superordinate themes emerged: *significance of transition*; *practical benefits of PCP*; *emotional impact of PCP*; and *other people*. Findings are discussed with reference to existing literature, and implications for future research and educational psychology practice are presented.

Acknowledgements

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1. What are the Outcomes of Person Centred Planning for Children and Young People who are at the Centre of the Process? A Systematic Review of the Literature

Abstract

The Children and Families Act 2014 brought into legislation an emphasis on placing children and young people at the centre of planning and decision making about their education. The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Code of Practice (2015) emphasised person centred planning (PCP) as a way to do this, despite a lack of research evidence into its outcomes and effectiveness. This chapter presents a systematic review of literature, which aimed to explore the outcomes of PCP for children and young people who are at the centre of the process. Searching online databases yielded seven relevant papers: six which presented some qualitative data and one presenting purely quantitative findings. Thematic synthesis was conducted on the qualitative data from six papers. Findings suggested the outcomes of PCP are varied, but can be broadly grouped into outcomes that are direct for the individual at the centre and indirect, by impacting those around them. Both types can be further sub-divided into outcomes that are internal (affecting thoughts, beliefs and attitudes) and external (affecting observable actions and behaviour). Findings are discussed with reference to the quantitative data from the seventh relevant paper. Implications for future research and practice are explored.

1.1 Introduction

Context and rationale for the review

The decision to research Person Centred Planning (PCP) arose from a professional interest in this way of working, which developed during my doctoral training as an Educational Psychologist (EP) in England. In particular the humanistic roots of this approach (e.g. Rogers, 1951, 1961) and the principles of seeing a person before their label (C. L. O'Brien & O'Brien, 2000), valuing individuals' strengths (Sanderson, 2000), and empowering people to take a lead in their own lives (Beadle-Brown, 2006) resonated strongly with me. These ideas align closely to the British Psychological Society's principle of respect (BPS, 2009), and reflect some of the goals in my own developing practice.

The commencement of my second year of training coincided with a significant change in education legislation: the introduction of the Children and Families Act (CFA) 2014. Part 3 of the Act relates to '*Children and Young People in England with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities'* and states in Section 19 that Local Authorities (LAs) must have regard for: the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people (CYP); the importance of CYP participating as fully as possible in decisions; and CYP having the information and support necessary to enable such participation.

At the same time, a new Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (CoP) (DfE & DoH, 2014; updated 2015) was published to provide statutory guidance on the duties, policies and procedures relating to part 3 of the CFA 2014. In particular, it emphasised positioning CYP and their families at the centre of planning and decision making about their educational provision and long term outcomes. Use of a 'person-centred approach' was highlighted as a way to do this.

Through my developing interest in person centred (PC) ways of working with CYP, I became aware of an apparent lack of research in this area (Claes, Van Hove, Vandevelde, van Loon, & Schalock, 2010). I was struck by the directive in the CoP to work in this way, given this limited evidence base. Further exploration of PCP therefore seemed timely within this wider context of legislative change. Conducting research in this area would not only serve to address the apparent gap in literature, but would also offer a practical way to better understand an approach that already

appealed to my personal and professional principles and therefore could inform my own psychological practice.

The remainder of this introductory section provides a definition and description of PCP and a summary of existing research exploring its application to education. It concludes by briefly describing my development of the research question for this review.

Person-Centred Planning

In the previous section, I referred both to '*Person Centred Planning'* and '*Person Centred Approaches'*, reflecting the differing terminology within cited documents. This section makes a distinction between these terms and offers a definition of PCP.

> Person centred planning discovers and acts on what is important to a person. Person centred approaches design and deliver services based on what is important to a person (Murray & Sanderson, 2007, p. 22).

This definition presents PCP as a dynamic process of discovery and action, completed at an *individual level* with the full and active participation of the focus person. Things that are important to them are identified and steps are taken to help them work towards their goals. In contrast, PC approaches are adopted at *service level*. They are used by those delivering services, to ensure provision is developed to meet individual needs.

For the remainder of this paper, all subsequent use of terminology will reflect this distinction. Since my research interest is at the individual level, the focus will be on PCP.

The term PCP originated in the USA and has been in general use since the mid-1980s (Claes et al., 2010). It arose from a broad social philosophy about inclusion of people with learning disabilities. It is based on the belief that individuals should be supported to participate in their local communities and empowered to achieve personal goals. PCP is recognisable by five key features (J. O'Brien & Pearpoint, 2007; Sanderson, 2000), presented in table 1.

Five features of PCP (as described by Sanderson, 2000)
The person is at the centre
Family members and friends are partners in planning
The plan reflects what is important to the person, their capacities, and what support they require
The plan results in actions that are about life, not just services, and reflect what is possible, not just what is available
The plan results in ongoing listening, learning, and further action

Table 1: Five features of PCP

Several methods of PCP have been developed. (e.g. Holburn, Gordon, & Vietze, 2007; J. O'Brien & Lovett, 1992; Pearpoint, O'Brien, & Forest, 1993; Smull & Harrison, 1992; Vandercook, York, & Forest, 1989). These authors have all created frameworks to enable inclusion and participation of individuals to be effectively realised. These frameworks differ in their approaches but are all grounded in the same five principles, sharing a common philosophy of respect for the individual and commitment to a process of ongoing collaboration and future planning (C. L. O'Brien & O'Brien, 2000).

In the UK, use of PCP has become increasingly prominent since the publication of the government White Paper *Valuing People* (DoH, 2001b). This advocated use of PCP to promote the full inclusion and participation of individuals recognised as having learning disabilities, to enable them to work towards their own preferred future. With the release of this document, the government offered the following definition:

> Person centred planning is a process for continual listening and learning, focusing on what is important to someone now and in the future, and acting upon this in alliance with their family and friends. (DoH, 2001a, p. 12).

The principles highlighted in this definition; listening to what is important and collaborating with others to achieve it; reflect the five features in table 1. Subsequent use of the term 'PCP' in this paper refers to a process that captures this inclusive ethos and encompasses all five features. My use of the term does not presume

application of any specific approach, but instead refers to any personalised planning process that includes all of these underlying elements.

Person Centred Planning in Education

The application of PCP to work with CYP in an educational context is fairly recent. Research has focused largely on use of PCP to facilitate transition of CYP from school to adult life (e.g. Craig, 2009; Kaehne, 2010; Michaels & Ferrara, 2006; Taylor-Brown, 2012), or on the engagement and participation of CYP in the PCP process (e.g. Taylor, 2007; Whitney-Thomas, Shaw, Honey, & Butterworth, 1998).

Although providing important and valuable information to those interested in this way of working, these studies all focus on the process of PCP. Less attention has been devoted to examining its outcomes and affects.

A systematic review by Claes et al (2010) set out to review the literature considering the effectiveness of PCP as an approach to support people with learning difficulties. Only a small number of studies were identified, most of which involved adult participants. Research conducted with CYP made up a small proportion of this already limited collection of papers.

Review question

Despite little research evidence of its effectiveness as an approach, PCP has been recommended for use with CYP in the SEND Code of Practice (DfE & DoH, 2015). Of the research that has addressed effectiveness and outcomes, most has been conducted with adult populations. Research involving CYP in this area is scarce.

In light of this, the goal of this paper is to systematically review existing research to gain a clearer picture of what is known about the outcomes of PCP for CYP. The review therefore addresses the question: *What are the outcomes of person centred planning for children and young people who are at the centre of the process?*

The following section outlines the method adopted in this review. It begins with an explanation of how the question informed the overall approach. Stages of the review process (searching, selecting papers, mapping, quality assessment, and synthesis) are then described in turn.

1.2 Method

Gough, Oliver and Thomas (2012) suggested methods to systematic reviewing exist along a continuum; with aggregative approaches at one end and configurative approaches at the other. Aggregative reviews are those that add together the findings of similar studies, often with the goal of answering a specific research question to test a hypothesis or discover what works. In contrast, configurative reviews organise findings of studies that may be quite different from each other, often with the goal of answering a more open question about experiences or meaning (Gough et al., 2012).

In practice, many reviews include elements of aggregation and configuration, and therefore could be placed somewhere between these two on the continuum (Gough et al., 2012). A position within this middle ground is where I perceive the present review to exist.

By aiming to identity the outcomes of PCP, the review question adopts two main assumptions. First, it assumes that PCP is an objectively identifiable approach. Second, by adopting the generic term 'outcomes', without specifying what these may be, the question assumes that the process of PCP will be experienced differently by each individual. These assumptions reflect an epistemological position of critical realism (Bhaskar, 2008). It is from this position that the present review has been conducted.

Searching

First, I conducted a search of electronic databases using terms derived from the review question, as presented in table 2 below. Petticrew and Roberts (2006) suggested framing the question by using terms to describe the *population*, *intervention*, *comparison*, *outcomes,* and *context* that are of interest. As this review was not concerned with comparing PCP to any other intervention, or with measuring any pre-defined outcomes, the third and fourth elements were excluded.

Population	Intervention	Context
children adolescents students young people teenagers families	person centred planning person centered planning person-centred planning person-centered planning	school education college university

Table 2: Search terms used in initial database searches

Searches were conducted in eight electronic databases: ERIC; Scopus; Ovid; ProQuest; British Education Index (BEI); Education Abstracts; Informa; and RCN Publishing Company. I decided to include two health databases because much research involving PCP has focused on supporting individuals with complex health and social care needs (Mansell & Beadle-Brown, 2004). If any studies in this area had been conducted with CYP, I hoped this would identify them. In fact, searching these two databases yielded no new, relevant results.

Selecting papers

Search results were screened for relevance. Those not reporting use of PCP were automatically disregarded. I then conducted tree searches by screening reference lists for additional studies referring to PCP in the title. After completing this stage, eighty-two papers had been identified.

To identify the papers most relevant for answering the review question, I applied four criteria to qualify studies for inclusion in the review. These are outlined in table 3. Some papers were excluded when titles alone revealed that criteria were not met. I then read abstracts of the remaining papers and applied the criteria to include or exclude papers as appropriate. This narrowed the selection to seven papers.

I decided not to exclude any studies based on research design. It seemed unhelpful to further narrow the already limited evidence base. My intention was to allow existing research, whatever form it may take, to contribute to answering the review question.

Inclusion criteria	
Participants	Children of school age (≥ 5 years) and young people up to age 25
Research method	Any method using PCP as an intervention, or part of an intervention, with CYP
Context	A school or other educational setting (e.g. college, university)
Outcomes	Outcomes of PCP for CYP are reported

Table 3: Criteria for the inclusion of studies in the systematic review

Given the limited amount of research identified, I considered revisiting databases. Since PCP takes many forms (e.g. Personal Futures Planning; Whole-Life Planning; Essential Lifestyle Planning), I wondered whether using these as discrete search terms could yield further results, for example in the event that studies' titles or keywords contained the name of the specific intervention, but not the generic term, 'PCP'. This would yield what Petticrew and Roberts (2006) refer to as more *specific* search results, by narrowing the scope to identify only papers relating to each named approach. However, this process would have been time consuming and difficult to conduct exhaustively, given the multitude of PCP approaches that have been developed. Therefore, with time and resource constraints under consideration, I decided to include only papers already obtained using the generic search term. No further searching took place. I therefore acknowledge that some potentially relevant studies, if they are linked only to the specific name of an approach and not the generic term 'PCP' in the databases, may have been overlooked.

The seven papers identified were taken forward to the next stage in the review process: mapping.

Mapping the research

Mapping was used to organise and summarise the research papers. I read each paper thoroughly and extracted relevant contextual information.

Gough and Thomas (2012) suggested information gathered through mapping in this way can inform the strategy used in a subsequent synthesis. The type of data reported in each study can help determine the most appropriate method of synthesis to answer the research question. This was the primary goal of mapping at this stage.

Oliver and Sutcliffe (2012) suggested that mapping can also provide a useful picture of similarities and differences between studies. Knowing the extent to which differences in findings mirror differences in context can be important later in the process, to understand the generalisability and transferability of findings. Gathering information for this purpose was also a consideration. Table 4 (presented over the next four pages) contains descriptive information about the participants, context, and methodological approaches to each study, enabling comparisons to be made in each of these areas. Some key similarities and differences are as follows:

In four studies, PCP was an intervention in itself and outcomes were attributed to this. In the remaining three studies, PCP was either combined with another approach (e.g. functional analysis) or was one part of a larger intervention process. In these instances, it is unclear whether outcomes reported arose directly from PCP, from other part(s) of the intervention, or from a combination of the two. This will be addressed further in the discussion.

Six studies were conducted in the USA with American participants. The remaining study was conducted in the UK with British participants. Five studies were small and involved nine or fewer CYP at the centre of a PCP process. One of these was a case study of a single child. The two remaining studies were larger, involving 47 and 403 participants.

Only one author (Corrigan, 2014) stated the purpose of her study as measuring outcomes of PCP in the broad sense considered by the present research question. In the other studies, consideration of outcomes for CYP was just one part of the findings.

Five have been described as 'views studies'. This label was applied when data collected for a study were qualitative in nature and reported the views of individuals or groups. One of the two remaining studies (Hagner et al., 2012) adopted a purely quantitative approach to data collection and analysis. The other (Kennedy et al., 2001) used a mixed approach. In this case although the primary data collected were numerical, descriptive details are reported alongside to provide context in the interpretation.

Study	Sample	N	Context	Purpose	Study method	Intervention	Data collection	Outcome measures
Artesani & Mallar (1998)	Six year old boy, with diagnoses of ADHD and an unstable seizure disorder	1	One general (mainstream) school in New England, USA	To report the outcome of implementing a behaviour support plan, developed by combining PCP with Functional Analysis (FA).	Case study	FA of behaviour, followed by PCP meeting. Combining information from both, a positive behaviour support plan was created & implemented.	Observation Discussion with support staff	Incidents of challenging behaviour Quantity & quality of academic work Frequency of participation in group activities Individuals' satisfaction with the effectiveness of the plan
Corrigan (2014)	CYP age 5-15 Adults including: - parents - school staff - EPs - other agency professionals Opportunistic sample	6 43	Schools in South West England: 2 mainstream 4 alternative provision	To report the outcomes of PCP for CYP over time	Action research	PC planning meeting, followed by a PC review meeting 6-19 weeks later.	Self-report questionnaires completed by all stakeholders	1) Rating responses to questions about 'essential outcomes' of PCP 2) Response to open ended questions about the experience. 3) Progress towards targets set at the first meeting (Target Monitoring & Evaluation (TME))

Table 4: Map of the included studies by context and research design

Study	Sample	N	Context	Purpose	Study method	Intervention	Data collection	Outcome measures
Croke & Thompson (2011)	CYP age 15-20, with various disabilities. Parents and staff Sampling strategy not reported	403 ?	Bronx, New York	To evaluate the City University of New York's (CUNY) Youth Transition Demonstration Project (YTDP)	Views study	20 month intervention consisting of: - Workshops for YP & parents - Benefits counselling - PCP - After school job placement - Follow up services	Observation notes & transcriptions from PCP meetings Semi structured interviews gathering perceptions of PCP	Responses to interview questions about experiences of PCP
Everson & Zhang (2000)	Members of the *'Circles of Support'* for focus individuals (who attended school, although specific ages not stated).	9	USA (no specific details)	To explore longitudinal satisfaction with PCP activities and outcomes	Views study	2-day workshop on personal futures planning for individuals & supporters, with individualised follow-up support to implement the planning.	Focus group held 1 year later. Data comprised: Narrative note taking Transcriptions of the recorded conversations	Reported satisfaction with PCP activities and outcomes

Table 4: Map of the included studies by context and research design

Study	Sample	N	Context	Purpose	Study method	Intervention	Data collection	Outcome measures
Hagner, Helm & Butterworth (1996)	CYP from 4 different schools. Age 16-22 purposeful sampling	6	Massachu-setts, USA. Part of a state-wide transition project supporting transition from school to adult life.	To discover: What is the initial impact of PCP on the lives of the individuals?	Views study	YP experienced PCP in their school setting. Researchers attended meetings over a 6-month period.	Open-ended interviews with "key planning participants" (recorded & transcribed) 6 months after first meeting	Changes that occurred for CYP after PCP
Hagner et al. (2012)	CYP with a diagnosis of ASD Age 16-19	47	New Hampshire and Maine, USA	How does a family-centred intervention affect: Expectations for adult life? Self-determination for CYP? Career decision making ability?	RCT	3-part intervention: Group training on PCP for families PC transition planning Follow up assistance to implement plans	Questionnaires completed at enrolment & 12 months later (after the intervention for group 1, before the intervention for group 2)	Mean scores measuring: Student & parent expectations for the future Self-determination Vocational decision-making ability

Table 4: Map of the included studies by context and research design

Study	Sample	N	Context	Purpose	Study method	Intervention	Data collection	Outcome measures
Kennedy et al. (2001)	Children 'at risk of restrictive educational placements because of their behaviour' Age 6-8	3	USA "A suburban elementary school in a working to middle class neighbourhood"	To combine positive behaviour supports and PCP to see if problem behaviour could be reduced and mainstream education participation could be increased.	Repeated measures (Pre-test / post-test)	Implementation of a behaviour support plan, informed by use of PCP and PBS (4-step process)	Baseline measures taken (existing supports before the plan & occurrence of unwanted behaviours) Measures taken again after implementation of plans	Number of occurrences of problem behaviour Proportion of time spent in general (mainstream) setting

Table 4: Map of the included studies by context and research design

Mapping the studies in this way enabled identification of subgroups, with two different divisions possible for synthesis and interpretation of findings. The first option was a 5+2 grouping. This would synthesise the five 'views studies' and present a mainly configurative summary, given the qualitative data set. The remaining two studies would be separated and the extent to which their findings aligned with the synthesis would be explored subsequently. Alternatively, a 6+1 grouping would be possible. This would include the findings of Kennedy et al (2001) in the main synthesis; since a narrative description of findings is provided and could be treated as 'qualitative' data.

In order to include as much data as possible in the synthesis, the second option was chosen, meaning six studies were taken forward for in-depth synthesis of findings. The work of Hagner et al. (2012) is revisited later in the review, in light of the synthesis findings.

Quality assessment

Quality assessment of qualitative research is a contentious issue (Thomas & Harden, 2008) and there has been considerable debate about how it should be conducted, and whether it is appropriate at all (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Researchers have utilised a range of tools and frameworks for this purpose, (for some examples, see Dixon-Woods et al., 2006; Gough, 2007; Pawson, Boaz, Grayson, Long, & Barnes, 2003; Spencer, Ritchie, Lewis, & Dillon, 2003; Thomas et al., 2003), although there remains little consensus about the best procedures to use.

The diverse nature of studies included in this review meant that a single tool was unlikely to pose questions appropriate for assessing each study's design and methodology. The decision was therefore taken to adopt the EPPI-Centre Weight of Evidence (WoE) tool, described by Gough (2007). This enabled judgement to be made both about the generic quality of each study in its own right, and its appropriateness and relevance for answering the review question. These judgements were then combined to produce an overall WoE. A summary of the weighted judgements is presented in table 5. Most studies were judged to have *Medium* or *Medium/High* WoE. Only one study was rated *High* (Corrigan, 2014) and one was rated *Medium/Low* (Artesani & Mallar, 1998).

The subjective nature of these judgements is acknowledged, since I made them independently as a single researcher. However, to ensure as much rigour as

possible, a consistent decision-making process was applied to ensure judgements were based on the same criteria. Details of this procedure are provided in appendix i (Appendix i: p.65).

	WoE A: Soundness of the Study	WoE B: Appropriateness of the study for answering this review question.	WoE C: Relevance of the study for this review question	WoE D: Overall weight of evidence
Artesani & Mallar (1998)	Low	Medium	Medium	Medium/Low
Corrigan (2014)	High	High	Medium	High
Croke & Thompson (2011)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Everson & Zhang (2000)	High	Medium	Medium	Medium/High
Hagner, Helm & Butterworth (1996)	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium
Hagner et al (2012)	High	Medium	Medium	Medium/High
Kennedy et al (2001)	High	Medium	Medium	Medium/High

Table 5: Weight of Evidence summary table

It has been suggested that the quality of qualitative research in a review cannot be fully determined until the synthesis stage is complete (Noblit & Hare, 1988; Pawson, 2006) and that useful, usable information can exist in studies considered methodologically weak (Dixon-Woods et al., 2006; Pawson, 2006). Therefore, the purpose of quality assessment at this stage was not to exclude any papers from the review. Instead, it was intended to provide further context for the studies when understanding and interpreting the findings of the synthesis. The value of each study became more apparent in light of its overall contribution to the findings.

Synthesis

Thomas, Harden and Newman (2013) described synthesis as the stage of a review that transforms primary data to create a "connected whole" (p.180). They asserted that synthesis must move beyond original studies to create understanding about the collective body of knowledge. How this is done is determined by the nature of the research question and the available data.

Thematic synthesis has been described by Barnett-Page & Thomas (2009) as an approach arising from a critical realist position. This matches assumptions implicit in this review question and mirrors my own epistemological view. The approach also lends itself to the position of this review at a mid-point between aggregation and configuration, containing elements of both systematic identification of themes and inductive interpretation of their meaning (Thomas et al., 2013). It is an approach capable of synthesising data of several different types (Thomas & Harden, 2008), which seemed appropriate here since papers include heterogeneous case study, interview, focus group, and narrative description data. Thematic synthesis was therefore adopted to synthesise findings of the six 'qualitative' studies in this review.

Data were systematically coded, line by line. (In each study, 'data' were considered to comprise all parts of written text describing findings that related to outcomes of PCP). Thomas et al. (2013) suggested codes can be pre-specified or generated inductively during the process. Since the question driving this review did not assume any prior knowledge of the outcomes of PCP, codes were generated inductively to capture the meaning of each line of text. As coding began on each new study, existing codes were applied where appropriate, and additional codes were generated if new meaning emerged. When coding of the final study was completed and a full list of codes had been created, I re-read each paper in light of this longer list of codes. This was to determine whether codes more recently generated were applicable to data from studies read earlier in the process, and was intended to ensure rigour and consistency in coding across all studies.

Initially, sixty-three codes were generated from the studies. When reviewed, several were similar enough to be grouped or merged and some, which described information not related to outcomes of PCP, were eliminated. This created seventeen themes, which were contributed to by data from two or more of the studies. Table 6 demonstrates the relative contribution of the six studies to the seventeen themes.

Themes were organised into two main groups: those representing *direct outcomes* and those representing *indirect outcomes* of PCP for CYP. Themes grouped as 'direct outcomes' were those referring to an impact on CYP themselves. Themes grouped as 'indirect outcomes' were those referring to an impact on people around an individual child or young person, for example family members or professionals.

Themes categorised as direct and indirect outcomes can be further organised into two subgroups. The first subgroup refers to *Internal* (or 'thinking') outcomes. These are defined as occurring internally to an individual, for example in changes to thoughts, feelings or understanding. The second subgroup is labelled *External* (or action) outcomes. These are changes external to the individual and are observable by others.

Figure 1 presents the seventeen themes, organised into these subgroups. A detailed description of the findings from the synthesis is provided in the following section.

Theme	Study						No. of studies contributing to the theme
	Artsesani & Mallar (1998)	Corrigan (2014)	Croke & Thompson (2011)	Everson & Zhang (2000)	Hagner, Helm & Butterworth (1996)	Kennedy et al (2001)	
Practical support for CYP can be specific and targeted	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	6
People around CYP are satisfied	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		5
CYP have increased sense of ownership / empowerment		✔	✔	✔	✔	✔	5
People better understand the needs & goals of CYP	✔	✔	✔	✔	✔		5
Benefits to the academic work or learning	✔	✔		✔	✔		4
Increased independence / reduced need for support	✔		✔	✔	✔		4
Improved relationships and social experiences	✔	✔		✔	✔		4
Improved communication		✔	✔	✔	✔		4
Improved behaviour	✔	✔				✔	3
CYP are satisfied	✔	✔			✔		3
Progress is slow or support needs continue	✔	✔			✔		3
Sense of hope & thinking forward		✔	✔		✔		3
Increased or maintained time spent in mainstream school				✔	✔	✔	3
Unexpected developments & opportunities	✔				✔		2
Others anticipate long term benefits for CYP	✔		✔				2
Increased participation in leisure activities				✔	✔		2
Development of life skills				✔	✔		2
Contributions by each study	11	11	8	11	15	4	

Table 6: Contribution of studies to each theme
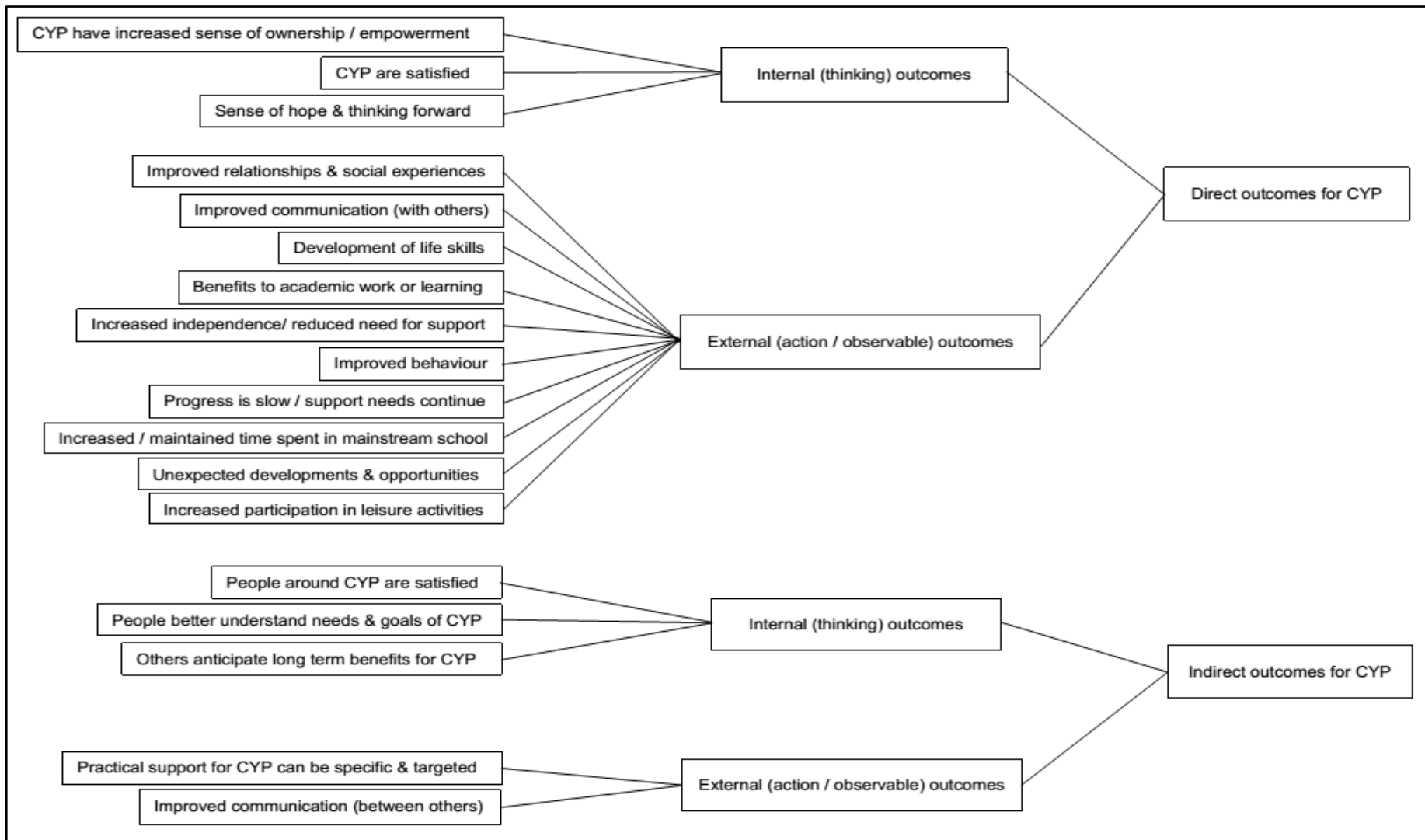
Figure 1: Themes representing the outcomes of PCP for CYP

1.3 Findings

This section describes in turn the themes emerging from the thematic synthesis that identify direct and indirect outcomes of PCP for CYP.

Direct outcomes for CYP

Thirteen themes emerged that could be considered direct outcomes of PCP for CYP, because a change occurred directly for the individual at the centre of the process. These changes can be separated further into two categories: *Internal outcomes* (those affecting thoughts, emotions or understanding) and *External outcomes* (those affecting observable actions, behaviour or environmental changes).

The themes describing *Direct, Internal outcomes* for CYP were identified as follows:

> (1) increased ownership or empowerment;
> (2) individual satisfaction;
> (3) a sense of hope and thinking forward.

The first theme was identified in five of the reviewed studies. The absence of the only study not contributing to this theme (Artesani & Mallar, 1998) may be explained in part by the nature of its data. This was a case study of an individual child, whose own views were not directly sought after PCP had been implemented. It is unlikely that comments from adults supporting a child would address his sense of ownership, as this is perhaps a difficult thing to infer, particularly for someone not specifically looking for it.

The second and third themes were each identified in three different papers; half of the included studies.

Ten themes describing *Direct, External outcomes* for CYP were identified:

> (1) improved relationships and social experiences;
> (2) improved communication[1] (with others);
> (3) development of life skills;
> (4) benefits to academic work or learning;

---

[1] *Improved Communication* has been grouped both as a direct external outcome (for the improved communication between CYP and others) and as an indirect external outcome (for the improved communication between others around CYP).

(5) increased independence / reduced need for support;

(6) improved behaviour;

(7) progress is slow / support needs continue;

(8) increased / maintained time spent in mainstream school;

(9) unexpected developments & opportunities;

(10) increased participation in leisure activities.

Four of these themes (improved relationships & social experiences; improved communication (with others); benefits to academic work/learning; increased independence/reduced need for support) were identified in four studies, making them the most commonly occurring.

Indirect outcomes for CYP

Five of the emergent themes have been described as indirect outcomes of PCP for CYP. This is because changes occurred for people in a child or young person's support network, following use of PCP. Again these can be separated into *Internal* and *External outcomes*.

Three themes describing *Indirect, Internal outcomes* were identified, representing changes in the thoughts or attitudes of people within an individual's support network:

(1) people around CYP are satisfied;

(2) people better understand the needs and goals of the CYP;

(3) people anticipate long term benefits for the CYP.

The theme that occurred most frequently, having been identified in five studies, was the second. The presence of this in so many studies suggested that increased understanding of need is particularly prominent for people involved in a PCP process.

The two remaining themes described *Indirect, External outcomes* of PCP. They were:

(1) practical support can be specific and targeted;

(2) improved communication[1] (between others).

The first of these was identified in all six papers. Every study reported that engaging in the PCP process enabled the support for CYP to be specifically tailored to their unique situation. The second theme was present in four studies, suggesting

improved communication between members of an individual's support network is a common outcome of PCP.

1.4 Conclusions and Implications

This section provides critical reflection on the relative contribution of each study to the emergent themes, and considers the findings in light of the perceived 'quality' of each study. Reflections on the quantitative findings from the seventh study (Hagner et al., 2012), are included and consideration is given to how these findings make sense in light of the thematic synthesis. Finally, attention is turned to answering the review question, addressing the limitations of this review and considering the implications for future research and practice.

Study contributions and quality assessment

The study that contributed most to the synthesis was the work of Hagner, Helm and Butterworth (1996), with data contributing to fifteen of the seventeen themes. In this sense, it proved an extremely useful paper for understanding the outcomes of PCP. Interestingly, the WoE judgements do not seem to correlate with the relative contribution of the studies to the overall synthesis. The only study considered to have 'High' WoE (Corrigan, 2014) contributed no more to the synthesis than the only study judged to have 'Medium/Low' WoE (Artesani & Mallar, 1998). This reflects the caution expressed by Dixon-Woods et al. (2006) about excluding papers from synthesis on the basis of lower quality judgements, supporting the decision not to use judgements for this purpose at an earlier stage in this review. It also supports the proposal of some authors that the perceived quality of a study and its usefulness for answering a review question are not necessarily related (Pawson, 2006).

There appear to be no obvious patterns between studies' relative contributions to the synthesis and their WoE judgement, sample size, location, overall design, or methods of data collection.

Links to quantitative findings

Reflecting back on the work of Hagner et al (2012), which was excluded from the thematic synthesis because of the quantitative nature of the findings, there is an

interesting overlap. This study found that after a process of PCP, the mean self-ratings by students of their future expectations, self-determination, and career decision-making ability all increased by statistically significant amounts when compared to ratings obtained before the PCP process (p = 0.011; p = 0.001; and p = 0.006 respectively). Within the context of the synthesis findings, these could all be considered to fit within the model under direct, internal outcomes. This is because they are all outcomes experienced by a young person directly, and all affect their thinking or attitudes towards themselves and their future.

Hagner et al (2012) also found that after PCP, parents' mean ratings of future expectations for their child increased by a statistically significant amount, when compared to ratings obtained before the PCP process (p = 0.016). This finding, if viewed in the context of the synthesis, could be categorised as an indirect, internal outcome. This is because it represents a change for someone supporting a young person, and the change is to their thoughts or attitudes.

Answering the research question

Having considered the findings of this review, and made links to the seventh study that met the inclusion criteria, it seemed appropriate to revisit the review question and consider the extent to which it was answered by the synthesis.

Has greater understanding of the outcomes of PCP been achieved? Synthesis of data presented in six included studies produced seventeen themes reporting a range of outcomes, both direct and indirect, for CYP at the centre of a PCP process. However, because of differences in the way these studies reported their findings, it is not clear in many cases whether the outcomes identified were applicable to all participants, or a selection. Some researchers, particularly those working with smaller sample sizes, reported outcomes individually for each child but others made generic statements about outcomes, which were not broken down to the individual level. This may reflect an issue identified through making Weight of Evidence judgements (see p.15 for summary table) that only one author (Corrigan, 2014) stated that one of her study's aims to was to consider outcomes. In each of the other papers, examining outcomes was not a primary focus. This may explain the variation, and in some cases lack of detail, in reporting them.

It is noteworthy however that so many different outcomes were identified from a small selection of papers, suggesting the outcomes of PCP experienced by CYP can be quite different for individual participants.

There could be several explanations for this. For example, the included studies utilised a range of PCP approaches. It is possible that the different planning approaches, or even the different style and technique of planning facilitators within those approaches, may have led to different types of change. Espiner and Hartnett (2011) identified the role of facilitator as vital in ensuring the success of PCP, so it is possible that facilitator experience, training, or style of communication may all have influenced participants' experience of the process and subsequent outcomes identified.

On reflection, the breadth of these findings perhaps makes most sense when considering the diversity of personal circumstances and range of needs presented by the participants in the studies. Since the essence of PCP is personalisation (Beadle-Brown, 2006) and responsiveness to individual need (Sanderson, 2000), it is to be expected that each individual involved would experience the process, and therefore the outcomes, in a unique way. Perhaps the wording of the original question ('*What are the outcomes…*') adopted an assumption of greater generalisability than is appropriate when considering an activity that by nature is intended to be personalised and unique each time it is used.

However, the outcomes identified by this review do have in common the fact that they can all be organised within the same overarching categories. Outcomes may be direct or indirect for the focus individual, and may create internal or external change, impacting thoughts and attitudes, or actions and behaviour respectively. The precise details of how these outcomes are experienced occur in response to individual needs, hopes, goals and circumstances.

Limitations of the systematic review

Several limitations of this review are acknowledged. Firstly, as the generic search term 'person centred planning' (and the related, American spelling) were used when searching databases, it is possible that some potentially relevant studies were not identified. This may have occurred if some papers referred to the name of a specific

type of planning (e.g. Personal Futures Planning) in the title or key words, and not the generic term 'PCP'.

Secondly, several studies applied PCP as part of a wider intervention, which included one or more additional elements. It is possible that outcomes described in these studies occurred as a result of another part of the intervention, or the specific combination of PCP with something else. It is impossible to determine in these cases how many of the outcomes would still have occurred if the CYP had experienced the PCP process only.

Thirdly, the majority of the included studies were conducted in the USA with American participants. This may have implications for the transferability of findings to work with CYP in the UK, who are being educated within a different system and receiving different support services from those referenced in the American studies. This differing context may lead to different sets of outcomes for this group.

Finally, it is important to acknowledge that many of the studies used PCP as one part of a wider intervention. It is therefore not possible to determine which outcomes can be attributed directly to PCP, and which are attributable to other experiences the CYP had as part of their broader experiences. It is necessary to exercise caution when the findings of this review are considered in this context.

What next? Implications for research and practice

To further increase understanding of how CYP experience PCP and its outcomes, further research is needed. Interestingly, of the studies included in this review, all sought the views of adults about the outcomes of PCP for CYP, but none focused exclusively on the views of CYP themselves. Given the individualised nature of PCP, it would make sense for future research to privilege the views of this group.

Interestingly from an Educational Psychological perspective, there is little research exploring PCP with CYP in the context of the UK education system. There is some limited evidence of person-centred practice in relation to transition (Craig, 2009; Kaehne, 2010; Taylor-Brown, 2012). However, this mainly focuses on adolescents preparing for post-school education or transition to adult services. Research focusing on use of PCP with younger children during earlier periods of transition is limited.

Further work exploring use of PCP with this group may be useful. If positive outcomes and experiences of PCP can be demonstrated for younger children, there may be implications for the way educational support is planned and provided for this group in the future.

Chapter 2. Bridging Document: My Journey from the Systematic Review to the Empirical Study

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains a descriptive and reflective commentary of my research journey from the conclusion of the systematic review through to the development and execution of the empirical study. It also identifies the psychological underpinnings of my work and the epistemological position from which it developed. Like the rest of this paper it is written in a first person voice, articulating the thoughts and reflections that led me through this process and as such openly acknowledging my active role as researcher.

2.2 Moving forward from the systematic review

Whilst completing the systematic review, one of the most striking things I observed was the apparent lack of internal consistency in the reviewed studies. Despite the review looking at outcomes of PCP for CYP, none of the included studies focused exclusively on gathering the views of the CYP themselves about their experiences. Although investigating PCP, an approach encapsulating values such as respecting an individual and placing them at the centre of planning and decision making about their lives, researchers appeared not to consider and reflect these values in their process of data collection. All researchers consulted with adults involved in the process to learn something about outcomes, but not all sought the views of the CYP. Of those that did, none reported CYP's views separately from adults', or suggested priority of their views as the individuals at the centre of the process.

Since the essence of PCP is personalisation, it seems logical that research to discover more about its use with CYP should adopt methods suited to exploring individuals' lived experiences and involve the direct participation of the CYP at the centre of the process. I wanted my empirical study to reflect the values and principles of PCP in the research process itself, by gathering the views of the child participants in a person centred way.

2.3 Link to transition

During the second and third years of my doctoral training as an Applied Educational Psychologist, my professional practice placement has been in a small Local Authority (LA) in the North East of England. Within this LA, work has been ongoing to evaluate and improve children's experiences of the primary to secondary school transition. As a result, staff in individual schools have been reflecting on their own transition arrangements. As part of my casework allocation, I have regularly worked in one secondary school, St Peter's [2], where the Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo) raised concerns that some Year seven (Y7) pupils were struggling to settle in. He expressed concern about the lack of quality information received from some primary schools about individual pupils and wondered whether different transition procedures could have improved pupils' experiences.

I have an interest in person-centred ways of working, which I believe arises from my personal and professional values about respecting all individuals (BPS, 2009), and a commitment to advocating children's right to express their views in matters affecting them (UN, 1989). My previous experience as a primary school teacher also demonstrated to me the value of children's participation in decision-making, which seemed to lead to increased ownership and responsibility.

Research has demonstrated that consulting with children has a range of benefits for them. For example Roller (1998) identified: increased motivation and independence; development of meta-learning skills (e.g. reflection, planning and monitoring); increased awareness of personal strengths and difficulties; and taking greater responsibility for progress. I am therefore conscious of seeking to gather and act upon children's views wherever possible in my practice and have found person-centred tools to be respectful, child-friendly way to do this.

This led me to wonder whether PCP may be one way to provide the richer information sought by secondary schools about some prospective pupils at transition. I developed the following research question from these general areas of interest and curiosity: *What are Y6 children's experiences of using PCP to inform their transition to secondary school?*

---

[2] The name of the school has been changed to protect anonymity

2.4 Designing the study

After considering a range of PCP formats that could be useful for supporting Y6-Y7 transition, I decided to adapt the 'Making Action Plans' (MAPs) format (described by Falvey, Morest, Pearpoint, & Rosenberg, 1997; Sanderson, Kennedy, Ritchie, & Goodwin, 1997). This seemed a useful approach for several reasons. Firstly, the idea of using a MAP to help plan a journey could be an accessible, child-friendly way to support children in thinking about planning their move to secondary school. Secondly the process of creating a MAP follows a clear structure, which involves exploring an individual's dream and nightmare futures and developing a clear action plan to help them work towards the dream and avoid the nightmare. This also seemed appropriate when considering transition, as children are readily able to identify positive and negative perceptions when they are preparing to go to secondary school (Brown & Armstrong, 1986), which could translate well into contrasting visions of the future.

2.5 Underpinning psychology

The idea of visualising possible futures has roots in personal construct theory (Kelly, 1955). This approach arises from the basic principle that individuals strive to make sense of their experiences. By reflecting on experiences that have passed, an individual is able to anticipate future events and circumstances (Butler & Green, 2007). In the creation of a MAP, children are required to reflect on previous experience of 'good days' at school and identify characteristics common to those experiences. In doing so, they are also aware of the opposite: characteristics of 'bad days'. By evaluating these past experiences, they are able to project two possible futures and imagine what life at their new school might be like if all days were either 'good' or 'bad'. This allows the creation of the dream and nightmare futures and provides a clear focus for subsequent action planning.

PCP has roots in humanistic psychology (Rogers, 1951, 1961, 1979) and I have been mindful of this perspective throughout the research journey. In particular, the principle of holding 'unconditional positive regard' for another (Rogers, 1957), although initially developed in the context of a client-therapist relationship, is central to the way PCP strives to value the whole person and focus on what is important to

them (Sanderson, 2000). It also places an individual as the expert in their own life and experiences (Rogers, 1961).

Positive psychology evolved as an alternative to the mainstream models of deficit and remedial approaches that had traditionally dominated psychological literature (Gillham & Seligman, 1999; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). It built on the humanistic principle that people are driven to reach positive outcomes (Rogers, 1961) and strive towards self-actualisation (Maslow, 1968). Within the MAPs process, stating and planning to work towards a positive future, whilst recognising and celebrating an individual's existing skills and strengths, could be described as fitting within both humanistic and positive psychological frameworks. Applying this within an educational context represents an important step forward in a system that has traditionally focused on developing achievement in literacy and mathematics, rather than the development of a whole person and individual well-being (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, & Linkins, 2009).

I felt that in preparing for transition to secondary school, use of MAPs could provide an opportunity to plan the support individual pupils would need to work towards the positive futures they envisaged for themselves.

2.6 Ontology, epistemology and methodology

As I planned this empirical study, I found Willig's (2013) three epistemological questions provided a useful way to structure my thinking. These three questions were originally developed as a framework for evaluating existing research, in particular the extent to which a research methodology is congruent with its epistemological basis. However, slight adaptations enabled me to think about the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of the research I was about to undertake. Table 7 demonstrates how the questions that guided my thinking were derived from Willig's (2013) original work. The remainder of this section presents each question in turn to demonstrate how the empirical study was formulated from my epistemological position.

Willig's three epistemological questions for evaluating qualitative research	Three epistemological questions that informed the design of my research
What kind of knowledge does the methodology aim to produce?	What kind of knowledge does my research question aim to produce?
What kinds of assumptions does the methodology make about the world?	What kinds of assumptions does my research question make about the world?
How does the methodology conceptualize the role of the researcher in the research process?	How do I conceptualize my role as researcher in the process of addressing this research question?

Table 7: Three epistemological questions, adapted from Willig (2013)

What kind of knowledge does my research question aim to produce?

My research question addresses Y6 children's experiences of transition. When developing it, I hoped to discover what the transition experience was like for children when PCP formed part of the process. The question considers *experiences* because I developed it with an acceptance, and expectation, that individuals would experience the process in different ways, given the personalised nature of PCP and the unique beliefs, history and personal circumstances of each individual. For these reasons, the knowledge my question aims to produce can be described as phenomenological (Willig, 2013).

What kinds of assumptions does my research question make about the world?

"A realist approach to knowledge generation assumes that there are processes of a social and/or psychological nature which exist and which can be identified." (Willig, 2013, p.15). The wording of my research question assumes the existence of an identifiable social process called 'transition', during which children move from primary to secondary school at age eleven. It also assumes the existence of PCP, an approach to planning that can be identified by five key features (see table 1, p.4). For these reasons, the research question can be described as having realist assumptions. The phenomenological knowledge sought by the research question assumes that the processes of transition and PCP will be experienced in different ways by different individuals. This reflects a position of critical, rather than naïve realism (Willig, 2013).

How do I conceptualise my role as researcher in the process of addressing this research question?

In seeking to understand children's experiences, I adopt the position that for each child, the processes of transition, and of PCP within that process, will have been experienced meaningfully. The way they experienced these processes will have been shaped and informed by their life circumstances, prior experiences and existing assumptions. When their experiences are shared with me, the accounts they give will be influenced by the meaning they have already assigned to them. I in turn, as a "person in context" (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006, p.106) will assign meaning to their accounts based on my own circumstances, experiences and assumptions. This reflects a double hermeneutic; during this research I will be actively making sense of each participant as they make sense of their experience (Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009).

2.7 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

IPA is an idiographic, qualitative approach to exploring how individuals make sense of their personal, lived experiences (Smith, 2004). Hefferon and Rodriguez (2011) identified increased use of IPA in psychological research and emphasised the importance of quality control, in particular ensuring the method is appropriate for answering the research question and achieving the goals of a project. There are several reasons for my use of IPA in this study. These are outlined below with reference to the ontological and epistemological information outlined in the previous section.

IPA is phenomenological. It recognises that individuals are immersed in their context and this immersion influences the way experiences are perceived and sense is made of the world (Smith et al., 2009). It is a useful approach to understanding experiences that hold particular significance for participants. Smith et al. (2009) suggested it is particularly useful for understanding more about experiences "where the individual is prompted to contemplate, take stock, worry, and try to make sense of what is happening" (p.188). It therefore fits with the quest of my research question to create phenomenological knowledge in understanding how children experience PCP as part of their process of transition to secondary school, as previous research

suggests this is a time of emotional and social significance in children's lives (Galton, 2010; Jindal-Snape & Foggie, 2008; Jindal-Snape & Miller, 2008).

My desire to understand individuals' experiences meant generalisation was not a goal of my research. By exploring the lived experiences of a small number of individuals, I hoped to understand in rich detail what PCP of secondary transition was like for them. IPA fits with this intention because of its commitment to idiography and focus on the details of each participants' experience (Smith et al., 2009).

IPA also fits with the way I perceive myself as researcher in this process. I did not expect that by speaking to children, I could gain direct access to their worlds. Their understanding, and mine, were developed as a consequence of the personal circumstances in which we were embedded. IPA positions me as researcher in a process of active sense making, engaged in a double hermeneutic (Smith et al., 2009).

In addition to these epistemological reasons for selecting IPA, there seemed some theoretical overlap with the psychological literature underpinning PCP. Like in humanistic psychology, IPA positions the individual as an expert in their own lived experience. Since a significant goal of my research was to reflect the values of PCP in the research process, this theoretical congruence provided further rationale for its application in this study.

2.8 Reflexivity

Willig (2013) emphasised the importance of identifying and acknowledging both personal and epistemological reflexivity in research. In this section I outline something about my personal position at the outset of this research journey, and offer some reflections on the influence of this position on this research.

It has been important to acknowledge throughout this process that my interest in using PCP with CYP arose from strong belief in the values underpinning it. I consider several personal experiences to have shaped this. For example, during my own childhood I was encouraged and supported by my parents to set and strive for personal goals and ambitions. At the time, as this was the context I was immersed in and all I knew, I took this enabling environment for granted. It was only as an adult, when working as a primary school teacher, that I observed, and really understood,

that not all children benefited from the same supportive, enabling environment that I had and may experience far greater levels of challenge in trying to set and work towards personal goals.

I developed a strong interest in finding ways to empower children who were not easily able to express their rights to have their views heard, to develop ambitious goals, and to be enabled to create the future they wanted. When I began training as an EP, I was introduced to the concept of PCP and became interested in its use as a way of respectfully enabling individuals, whose voices may not typically be heard, to be actively involved in planning and working towards their preferred futures.

I recognised when embarking on this project that my belief in PCP as an approach arose from a value-based position, rather than an evidence-based one. I had to be prepared that the information I gathered about participants' experiences had the potential to challenge my beliefs about PCP and its potential to empower. I wanted to remain open to this possibility, whilst acknowledging that my past experience and existing understanding of the approach would unavoidably influence my interpretation of the data as a "person in context" (Larkin et al., 2006).

2.9 Ethical Issues

In conducting this research with children, I wanted to remain particularly sensitive to ethical issues at many levels. This included sensitivity to potential implications of my research for them as individuals, as well as considering more general issues, such as consent, confidentiality and data protection.

To structure my ethical decision making during the research process, I utilised the Seedhouse's ethical grid, as presented by Stutchbury and Fox (2009). This enabled me to consider a situation at four levels (external, consequential, deontological and individual) and provided a useful framework in which to understand ethical issues that arose.

One ethical consideration concerned placing children into a process of PCP (a new and unfamiliar experience) during what would already be an emotionally significant time as they prepared for transition to secondary school. By considering this issue at each of the four levels in the grid, I concluded on balance that the possibility of

additional of distress was outweighed by the possibility of additional benefits from planning transition in depth.

As participation in this study involved work at multiple stages (preparation work and a PCP meeting in the summer term, and an interview in the autumn), I felt it was important to revisit the issue of consent at each stage. I wanted to ensure that consent to participate remained free and informed at each stage, a process referred to as 'processual consent' (Rosenblatt, 1995).

I was also sensitive to the power imbalance that children may perceive to exist between themselves and me, as an adult researcher (David, Tonkin, Powell, & Anderson, 2005). This was a particular consideration in the school-based context of this study, a setting in which children typically follow rules and processes placed upon them by adults.

Previous research has suggested PCP can serve to reduce this power imbalance (Taylor-Brown, 2012), so I wanted to make clear to each child participant that they would own the PCP process. I took several steps to demonstrate this. For example, children were prepared for the PCP meeting beforehand and had seen, and had a role in creating, the visual graphic. They were able to decide who was invited to their meeting, to decide what drinks and snacks would be served, and to assist in setting up the room before the meeting commenced. During the PCP meeting, the child was always invited to speak first and adult contributions had to follow theirs.

I took a similar approach at the data collection stage. Children were invited to lead the discussion and this was facilitated by bringing along photographs that they had created during the PCP meeting. Rather than a traditional interview following my own agenda as researcher, I aimed to follow the agenda of each child by inviting them to share and discuss the things that had been important to them about their experiences.

2.10 Summary

This bridging document has enabled me to articulate some of the thinking that informed the methods and design and of my empirical study, following on from the conclusion of the systematic literature review. I have outlined the theoretical and epistemological underpinnings of my research and explored some issues of

reflexivity and ethicality. Chapter three contains my report of the empirical research project.

Chapter 3: How did Year 6 Pupils Experience Person Centred Planning to Support their Transition into Secondary School? An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Abstract

A systematic literature review found the outcomes of person centred planning (PCP) for children and young people are varied; not surprising given the essence of the process is personalisation. Of the reviewed studies, none sought to understand the experience purely from the point of view of children at the centre of it. This research aimed to gather phenomenological knowledge about the experiences of three Year 6 children when PCP was used to plan their transition to secondary school. PCP meetings, adapted from the MAPs (Making Action Plans) format, were held at children's primary schools in the summer term of Year 6. Children took photographs to capture their experiences. Children were interviewed about the process in early September, after they had made the transition to secondary school. Photographs and a visual graphic created at the meeting mediated the discussion. Data were transcribed and subjected to Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA). Four superordinate themes emerged from the analysis: significance of transition, practical benefits of PCP, emotional impact of PCP, and other people. Themes are discussed with reference to existing literature. Implications for future research and for educational psychology practice are considered.

3.1 Introduction

Transition

Transition can be defined as "moving from one context and set of interpersonal relationships to another" (Jindal-Snape, 2010b, p.16). In the UK, children experience several educational transitions as they progress through their formal schooling. The transition from primary to secondary school is perhaps one of the most significant and has been described as one of the most difficult times in a child's educational career (Zeedyk et al., 2003). This move usually includes relocation to a bigger school site, which can bring challenges from changing relationships, new expectations, and an unfamiliar environment (Tobbell, 2003). It is a time that children's academic progress can slow (Galton, Gray, & Ruddock, 1999), pupils can become marginalised and disaffected (Humphrey & Ainscow, 2006), and children often worry about peer relationships and bullying (Topping, 2011).

Research has suggested the first year of secondary school (Year seven, or Y7) represents a 'critical period' in the development of self-esteem, particularly for lower-attaining pupils (Humphrey, Charlton, & Newton, 2004). Other studies have indicated negative experiences at a time of transition can initiate or accelerate disengagement from school (Anderson, Jacobs, Schramm, & Splittgerber, 2000), and can continue to influence educational and psycho-social outcomes at ages fifteen and eighteen (West, Sweeting, & Young, 2010). However when managed well, transition can be a positive experience leading to increased self-confidence and connection to peers (Zeedyk et al., 2003), increased opportunities and a sense of progression (Jindal-Snape, 2010b), and feelings of excitement (Galton, 2010).

This and other evidence has led many Local Authorities (LAs) across the UK to develop policies for the effective management of transition from primary to secondary school, to ensure the best possible outcomes for children (e.g. East Lothian Council, 2010; East Sussex County Council, 2007; Rochdale School Improvement Team, 2011). This research was conducted in a LA in the North East of England, where work is ongoing at the time of writing to develop practice around transition and create a policy of this sort.

Person centred planning

Person centred planning (PCP) is an approach used to support individuals to plan their own future and organise the support they need to make it happen (Sanderson et al., 1997). A full definition is provided in chapter 1 (see p.3).

When used within education, research suggests PCP can enable participation in meetings, both for CYP (Whitney-Thomas et al., 1998) and the adults supporting them (Miner & Bates, 1997). It can make important topics accessible to CYP through use of visual methods (Hayes, 2004) and by reducing the power imbalance present in traditional meetings (Taylor-Brown, 2012). It enables discussion about the future and produces clear action plans (Smart, 2004).

The systematic review described in chapter 1 demonstrated that PCP can produce a range of outcomes, both direct and indirect for CYP, and influence both internal (thoughts, feelings and beliefs) and external (actions and behaviour) processes. As transition to secondary school is a time of considerable change in environment, social relationships and emotional wellbeing, using an approach that can produce personalised outcomes in all these areas may be a supportive mechanism for CYP during this process.

Using PCP to support transition

Previous research has explored PCP to support transition for older teenagers, for example moving from school to post-school education (Kaehne, 2010; Kaehne & Beyer, 2014; Michaels & Ferrara, 2006; Smart, 2004; Taylor-Brown, 2012), or from child to adult services in health and social care settings (Kirk, 2008).

The current emphasis on PCP in the new Code of Practice (CoP) (Department for Education & Department of Health, 2015), provides a timely opportunity to explore its use with younger children at the pivotal transition period between primary and secondary school.

In a recent study, White and Rae (2016) interviewed students, parents and carers about their experiences of a person centred review (PCR) used to support an upcoming transition. Most participating students were in Year six (Y6), the final year of primary school. Thematic analysis of interview data revealed four main themes in the students' comments:

- Young people liked gaining information through the PCR,
- Young people liked the opportunity for their voices to be heard,
- Child friendliness of the review (there were conflicting comments in this area, with some children suggesting the meeting was child-friendly and others suggesting it was not),
- A positive experience for the young people.

Adults' comments were more varied, with seven themes emerging from their interview data. There were some similarities to the children's views, particularly in comments about sharing information and the child-centredness of the experience, suggesting these were perceived as two benefits of the approach.

White and Rae's (2016) findings suggested experiences of PCRs at a time of transition were generally positive for both children and parents. They concluded that further use of PCRs could enable meaningful participation of CYP and opportunities for collaborative working between schools and parents to achieve child-focused outcomes.

Aims and rationale of the present study

If schools are to develop collaborative ways of working during periods of transition, further exploration of children's experiences during this process would provide important insight. Within the context of a LA where work is ongoing to develop Y6-Y7 transition procedures, and the wider national context emerging from a new CoP, using PCP to support transition at this time was a logical development. I wanted to explore how children experience the Y6-Y7 transition when supported by a process of PCP.

Since PCP has its roots in humanistic psychology (Rogers, 1951, 1961) and places the focus person as the expert in their own life, I wanted to adopt a research method reflecting these principles. This was not an approach I had identified in any of the systematically reviewed literature in chapter 1, however my personal commitment to empowering children and enabling their views to be heard, along with my epistemological position respecting the uniqueness of individuals' experiences, drove the selection of my research methodology.

Interpretative Phenomenological analysis (IPA) "is a qualitative research approach committed to the examination of how people make sense of their major life experiences" (Smith et al., 2009, p.1). It is idiographic and used to explore in detail the sense that an individual makes of a particular experience. It therefore seemed a useful approach to exploring the unique, personalised experiences of individuals, by enabling them to take a lead in sharing what is meaningful to them about their experience.

This research addressed the question: *How did Year 6 pupils experience the transition to secondary school, when PCP was used to support them through the process?*

3.2 Method

Description and selection of participants

The research was conducted with the support of St Peter's secondary school, in a LA in the North East of England. School leaders were keen to enhance transition procedures and were interested in exploring PCP as a way to do this.

Routine handover discussions between Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCos) from St Peter's and its feeder primaries identified pupils who may benefit from more in-depth planning than would typically occur during the transition process.

Information about the research was provided to six children identified through these discussions, and their parents or carers (appendices ii and iii, p.66 and 68, contain child and parent information sheets). Four children and their families expressed an interest and were invited to a meeting to discuss the project further. One family decided not to go ahead, leaving three participants (two males and one female). All were Y6 pupils, aged eleven years, and preparing for transition into Y7 at St Peter's in September 2015. Informed consent was obtained from each pupil and their parent or carer.

The Person-Centred Process

The PCP experience involved two stages for participants: an initial meeting with me and a PCP meeting, both completed in the summer term of 2015. A third stage, in September 2015, invited each participant to reflect on their experiences. This section

describes stages one and two. The third stage is outlined in a later section: data collection and analysis.

Stage 1: initial meeting

At this stage I worked individually with the children. This served two purposes, enabling me to ensure that each child:

- understood the process and had given fully informed consent to participate;
- was adequately prepared for their upcoming PCP meeting.

First we discussed the information sheet and addressed any outstanding questions or concerns. Then we sketched and personalised the outline of the graphic that would be displayed during their PCP meeting (an example of a completed graphic, as it looked after the PCP meeting, is presented in figure 2, p.44). To provide a sense of ownership over the process, children decided who they would like to invite to their meeting and selected the drinks and snacks that would be served.

Stage 2: person-centred planning meeting

Meetings were held at participants' primary schools, which provided a comfortable and familiar setting. All those attending had been selected by the child and typically included their Y6 teacher and/or teaching assistant, parent(s), and other close family members (e.g. sibling, grandparent). One member of staff from St Peter's also attended, either from the school's SEN team, or the pastoral head of Year 7. Children knew who the secondary representative would be and met them before the meeting began.

The format was adapted from the MAPs (Making Action Plans) approach (described by Falvey et al., 1997; Sanderson et al., 1997) and comprised six areas of discussion (see table 8 for a summary). These were reflected on the graphic (see example in figure 2, p.44)22 and provided the structure for the meeting. Each meeting began by exploring the child's story. This was a discussion of events and experiences that the child believed had contributed to their development as a person. As with each stage of discussion, the child was invited to speak first and share the things they felt were important. Others in attendance were invited to speak afterwards if they had anything

they wanted to add. Items raised by others in the room were only recorded on the map with the child's agreement and permission.

After discussing the child's story, time was spent exploring two possible futures: the dream and the nightmare. The child's visions for these were generated by reflecting on what had made good and bad days at school in the past. They then used these ideas to project forward and imagine what secondary school would be like if every day was a good day (in the dream future) and if every day was a bad day (in the nightmare).

Section of the MAP	Summary
The child's story	What things in the child's life have made him who he is today?
Dream future	What will life be like at secondary school if every day is a good day?
Nightmare future	What will life be like at secondary school if every day goes badly?
Strengths, skills, gifts & talents	What is the child good at? What do people like and admire about him?
Needs	What will the child need in order to achieve the dream and avoid the nightmare?
Action Plan	Who will do what, by when?

Table 8: Stages of the PCP meeting

This was followed by a reflection on the current situation, which was the only part of the process where the child did not speak first. Instead, others were invited to share the things they like and admire about the child, including their strengths, skills and qualities. This created a positive picture of the present, from which the child could move forwards in their educational journey.

The fifth area of discussion considered the child's needs. This was an opportunity to think specifically about what the child would need in order to move from the present, with all the skills and qualities they already possess, to the dream future they had identified. Some identified needs were quite concrete. For example, when one child's dream future included getting to school on time, he identified a need to 'get up early'. Others were less easily defined. For example, another child's dream mentioned feeling included in a group of friends. He identified that for this to happen he would need opportunities to meet new people who were like him.

The final part of the meeting was action planning. The action plan was recorded on a separate piece of paper and addressed each need in turn. In order for a need to be met, agreement was made about *who* would do *what* and *by when* it would happen. Actions were recorded within the structure of these three headings, to create a plan that was clear and specific.
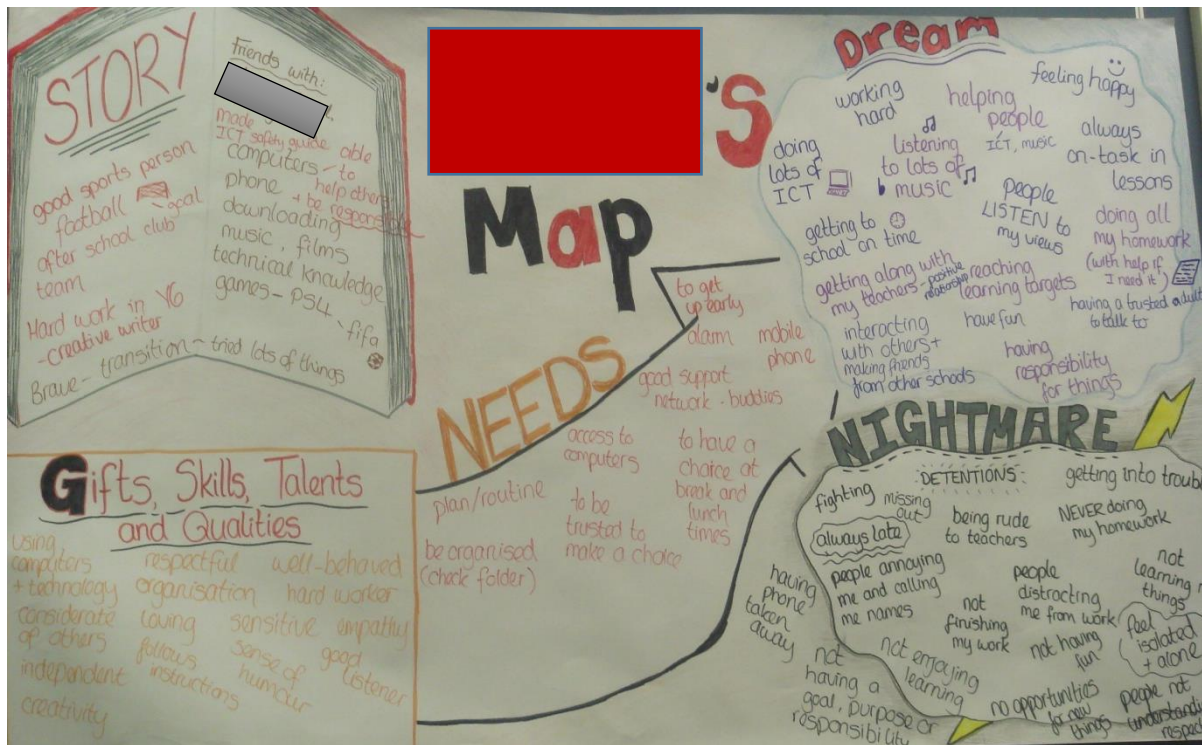
Each meeting lasted approximately 1 hour; fairly brief for the MAPs approach (Sanderson et al., 1997). This was for pragmatic reasons with the need to gather parents, pupils, and staff from primary and secondary schools at a mutually convenient time and location.

I facilitated each meeting. This decision was made after identifying in previous research several cases of inconsistent facilitation and participant experiences that deviated from key principles of PCP (examples include: Croke & Thompson, 2011; Hagner et al., 1996; Miner & Bates, 1997). By facilitating myself, I could ensure a level of consistency and prioritise faithfulness to the core person-centred principles.

Use of visual methods

The use of visual images in research is based on a belief in working *with*, rather than *on* CYP (Thompson, 2008) and sits well with humanistic principles that place individuals as experts in their own experiences. Liebenberg (2009) argued visual research methods can be a way to "raise the voice of participants above our own" (p.444) as researchers, and place them as primary informants on their lived experiences. Rose (2012) suggested that photographing experiences can enable participants to reflect later on things they have been immersed in. I therefore decided to include visual methods in this research process.

At the beginning of their PCP meeting, each child was given a camera and asked to photograph anything important or interesting to them during the process. It was explained that the pictures would inform the interview later on and help us to discuss what the meeting was like for them. This was a further way to demonstrate each child's ownership of their PCP meeting, and to emphasise the importance of capturing the experience from their perspective.

Data collection and analysis

I interviewed each participant in September 2015. Interviews were mediated by use of visual stimuli, gathered from the PCP meetings (photographs taken by the child and the graphic from their meeting). This was to enable children to lead the process (Woolner, Thomas, Todd, & Cummings, 2009) by deciding which images to discuss. Images also provided items for our joint attention, which reduced the formality and intensity present in traditional, formal interviews.

I began each interview by asking the child which image they would like to revisit, enabling them to lead the discussion from there. I hoped this would give children agency in the process (Pyle, 2013) and demonstrate the value of their perspective (Whiting, 2015). I also used a semi-structured interview schedule as necessary (see appendix iv, p.69), when further prompting was needed to continue the conversation.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim. Individuals' and schools' names were changed to protect anonymity. IPA was applied, as this was consistent with the epistemological position assumed by the research question, the phenomenological

nature of the subject matter, and the humanistic principles underpinning the use of PCP.

IPA was conducted as outlined by Smith et al. (2009). Table 9 summarises the process.

Step 1: Reading and re-reading	Immersion in, and active engagement with, the data of each individual transcript.
Step 2: Initial noting	Commenting on key features or interesting points within the data. Comments are descriptive, linguistic and conceptual.
Step 3: Developing emergent themes	Analysis of larger data set, which now comprises original transcript and exploratory comments, to identify themes.
Step 4: Searching for connections across emergent themes	Grouping and organising themes by considering how they might fit together. Create a graphic representation of the themes and how they fit together.
Step 5: Moving on to the next case	Bracket the findings from analysis of the first case and repeat the process with each subsequent transcript.
Step 6: Looking for patterns across cases	Looking across the themes from each case to identify similarities, differences and relationships between them. Identify any higher order connections present the final result.

Table 9: Stages of IPA identified by Smith et al. (2009)

3.3 Findings and Discussion

This section presents findings of the IPA. Four superordinate themes and eight sub-themes emerged. Table 10 contains a summary and is followed by a narrative description of each theme, supported by extracts from interview transcripts and set within the context of wider theory and research. A full summary table, including relevant quotations for each theme is presented in appendix v, (p.72).

Superordinate theme	Sub themes
Significance of transition	emotional impact
	social implications
Practical benefits of PCP	getting organised
	receiving information
Emotional impact of PCP	positive reactions
	anxiety and nervousness
Other people	secondary staff getting to know them
	PCP as support for others

Table 10: Summary table of themes

Superordinate theme: significance of transition

This theme reflects participants' general experiences of transition. Although there is little reference here to PCP, I have included this theme because it highlights the importance of the transition process for these children.

Theme: emotional impact

All participants identified emotional aspects of their transition experience.

> *Jake: Well I thought it was like a big thing wh-what would change like I was sad leaving primary erm, but I was, I was just brave to do it like to go to secondary.*

His reference to transition as 'a big thing' and to himself as 'brave' conjured an image of Jake facing a challenge and drawing on his courage to tackle it. There was power in his statement that although he was sad, he was able to be brave, perhaps suggesting some realisation of his own strength or resilience.

Unlike Jake's reflection on his own emotional response, Emily and Liam recognised the emotional impact of transition for others. This echoed ideas expressed by Akos (2010) and Tobbell (2003), who used Bronfenbrenner's (1979, 1993) ecological systems model to explain the bi-directional influences between a pupil's educational transition and their relationships with others.

Emily reflected on her mum's reaction:

> *Emily: When we got home [from the meeting] my mum said erm…secondary's a big school are you sure you'll be all right and I went yeah I'll be fine, and like, I don't think she was ok with it because then she went upstairs and said I'm just gonna read a book, and she stayed up there for two hours. Straight.*

This reaction after the meeting highlighted to Emily that her transition may impact on others as well as herself. Liam also recognised the emotions of others, referring to staff he had worked closely with at primary school.

> *Liam: They were sad [pause] sad I was leaving*

There was a sense of reflective recognition from Liam that although he was the one moving to another school, the change also affected those closest to him.

Theme: social implications

This theme reflected children's thoughts about the social implications of transition. Jake's comment suggested feelings of self-consciousness as he compared himself to his peers.

> *Jake: Like I had to, when I first had to do my tie, when they gave me my tie, erm I looked like confused when everyone tried to do it a few people did it, a few people already learnt to do it before in the summer holidays but I didn't really get time 'cos I was doing loads, loads of things, and I struggled a bit. I could sort of do a tie but it just, a bit of it gets messed up.*

The time he spent describing this experience suggested the apparently small detail of having to wear a tie was a significant issue. His comment that he 'struggled a bit' when others could do it may demonstrate developing awareness of his place within a new social group, perhaps reflecting the "intense self-comparison" early adolescents make at times of transition (Akos, 2010, p.126). Pupils are aware of social groupings when they first arrive at secondary school, and place great importance on the necessity to 'fit in' (Tobbell, 2003) and the importance of positive peer relationships for a successful transition has been strongly emphasised (Jindal-Snape, 2010a). Keay, Lang and Frederickson (2015) suggested, "peer group acceptance predicts involvement, contentment in, and perceptions of their new school" (p.280).

In contrast to Jake's concern and self-consciousness, Emily reflected on the social benefits of moving to a new school:

> *Emily: It's good here because erm it's learning me into a different environment of people, and how they act.*

She seemed to suggest the opportunity to mix with new people and learn about how they act was positive, perhaps increasing her ability to socialise with a wider group of people. The conflict that can occur between children's expectations (based on their experience in the primary school) and staff expectations in a secondary environment is acknowledged by Tobbell and O'Donnell (2013). It seemed positive that Emily recognised differences in her new environment and enjoyed learning about how it works.

Liam's comment also referred to new relationships and suggested a social benefit had arisen directly from his PCP meeting:

> Liam: Now everyone knows that I like doing them stuff
> Interviewer: and why is it important that people know that?
> Liam: So they can ask me what to do about, if they're stuck

He perceived people knowing more about him as a social advantage. The 'stuff' he referred to here was his technical knowledge and skill in using computers. He believed it beneficial for people to know about these skills so they could seek him out to help with technical problems. By having the opportunity to share this information, he had defined a role for himself in his new environment. By making himself and his skills useful to others he became someone of value in his new social context.

Superordinate theme: practical benefits of PCP

All participants referred to practical ways that their PCP meeting helped them prepare for transition.

Theme: Getting organised

Each participant suggested their PCP meeting enabled, or contributed to, their personal organisation. For Jake, the meeting provided an opportunity for him to consider the things he needed to do to be ready for secondary school.

> Jake: It was good thinking about, erm like, thinking like what I have to do and stuff and what I have to like, like what I have on the action plan I like I have to know everything [pause] like I've gotta bring my homework…and erm, get all my equipment and get a water bottle.

Coffey (2013) suggested that by identifying what to bring on the first day at a new school, children are able to take initiative to prepare themselves. Jake's repetition of *'I'* (in particular '*I have to*' and '*I've gotta'*) suggested he began to take responsibility for his secondary school preparations, after the meeting informed him about what he would need.

Liam presented a similar view in this exchange:

> *Interviewer: Why do you want to look at this section [of the map]?*
> *Liam: 'Cos that's what I needed, to get organised.*
> *Interviewer: What did you think about having that part on the map?*
> *Liam: Good*
> *Interviewer: Why?*
> *Liam: So I knew what to get*

Again, references to *'what I needed'* and *'so I knew what to get'* suggested Liam felt some sense of ownership in the process of preparing for Year 7.

Emily also hinted that the meeting assisted her organisation, but of her thoughts rather than of practical items or provisions.

> *Emily: It helped me written all down my thoughts, and that got me out of my worrying.*

The opportunity to record her thoughts within the structure of the meeting seemed an important step in helping Emily feel better about transition.

Theme: receiving information

Participants all referred to receiving information as being a valuable part of the PCP process.

> *Jake: It helped me because I needed to know stuff about secondary school.*

This aligned with White and Rae's (2016) finding that children and parents perceived hearing about secondary school as a benefit of person-centred reviews. Emily explained why receiving information at the meeting was important to her:

> *Interviewer: Do you think anything about going into Year Seven would've been different if we hadn't had this meeting?*
> *Emily: Erm, yeah, because I'd still be worried about everything, and like, I wouldn't know what to do, and I wouldn't have anyone to help me.*

The act of information sharing at the meeting seemed to ease her worrying. Her reference to 'knowing what to do' was also echoed by Liam:

> Liam: It was good because they were [pause] I didn't know what I was going to do in Year Seven.

All participants suggested potential anxiety arising from 'not knowing'. Evangelou et al. (2008) identified a link between children receiving relevant information to prepare for transition and experiencing a smooth transition process. Since participants in this research all expressed value in information sharing at their meeting, there are perhaps implications for considering the general procedures of information sharing used by St Peter's with prospective Y7 pupils.

Superordinate theme: emotional impact of PCP

This theme comprises statements made by participants about the emotional impact of their PCP meeting. Comments reflected both positive and negative emotional responses.

Theme: positive reactions

This theme mirrors White and Rae's (2016) finding that children experienced person centred reviews positively, which enabled them to feel they were important. Emily shared how it felt to be at the centre of the planning process:

> Emily: It felt like I was special and erm, that everybody cared about me.

This suggests a realisation that other people were interested in her and wanted to support her during transition. Jake's comment simply summarised a sense of contentment with the process and his experience of it.

> Jake: I just felt [pause] good, I felt happy.

Theme: anxiety and nervousness

This theme demonstrates that the positive responses described above did not occur in isolation. Instead, they were part of a spectrum of emotions experienced in response to PCP meetings. All participants described some degree of anxiety or

nervousness in relation to their meeting; something also reported by White and Rae's (2016) participants. Jake described his initial nervousness:

> *Jake: I was nervous of erm the people coming in because I was, I wasn't, I was excited for the people coming but I was nervous when they were coming in, just in case they didn't like it, or they did. So when they were happy, after that…I felt, I didn't feel nervous and that.*

Jake's nerves seemed to relate to the potential reactions of those attending his meeting. When he realised they were reacting well, his nerves subsided.

Emily's feelings seemed stronger, as she described it being 'scary':

> *Emily: It felt pretty scary 'cos I didn't wanna leave, erm primary I wanted to stay there for a couple more years or something like that because it's quite scary when you're moving up to a big school and you don't know what the teachers are gonna be like or how they act.*

When reading this comment in isolation, it is not clear that Emily was describing her feelings about the PCP meeting. It could easily be a description of feelings about the whole transition experience, which suggests similar emotional responses to the two.

Liam described the strongest emotional response to the meeting:

> *Liam: It was terrifying*
> *Interviewer: Terrifying? Why?*
> *Liam: 'Cos I didn't know what was gonna happen … I was having second thoughts about going*

His comments, and Emily's, echoed an earlier theme about the significance of 'knowing' and demonstrate powerfully the emotional implications of 'not knowing'. That these participants associated words relating to fear and terror with 'not knowing' seemed significant, and increased my understanding of why the earlier theme, *Receiving Information'* was such an important practical benefit of PCP meetings. Again, although these comments related to the meetings, there were similarities to remarks made by Tobbell's (2003) participants when describing a general transition process. Combined with White and Rae's (2016) findings, there is growing evidence of the importance of information for children to feel prepared for transition.

Superordinate theme: other people

This theme reflects participants' awareness of others during the transition process and the value of the PCP meeting for them. Comments reflected two general themes: the opportunity for members of St Peter's staff to know their new students, and the meeting as a source of support for other people.

Theme: secondary staff getting to know them

This theme demonstrates the importance participants placed on someone knowing them when they arrived at secondary school. There are several examples in research of the benefits of this. In particular, Tobbell's (2003) participants suggested it was difficult to form relationships with staff at secondary school, because there are so many different teachers.

Jindal-Snape and Miller (2008) assert that information shared between primary and secondary schools at transition should include personal and social information about individuals. It is this type of information sharing that Jake seemed to refer to:

> *Jake: I wanted to spend some time to, I wanna spend some time to say, like know stuff*
> *about me and that. I wanna like know people know me and that. [pause] Tell, …and*
> *like, write things down what I, what I'm about and stuff.*
> *Interviewer: Why is that important that people know you?*
> *Jake: Well it, well like teachers they need to know what I, I'm like. The need to know if*
> *I'm like good behaved*
> *Interviewer: mhm*
> *Jake: …and they need to know if I'm nervous and getting lost and everything and they*
> *just need to know.*

His comments suggested he felt reassured by knowing someone from St Peter's knew more about him. Previous research has suggested this cannot be taken for granted. In fact, Chedzoy and Burden's (2005) participants indicated there were more teachers at secondary school who didn't know them than teachers who did.

Liam was also conscious of others receiving information about him and felt this would ensure he was supported.

> *Interviewer: What was it like having all those people coming together to make this, and*
> *to share all this information?*
> *Liam: Good because they knew that I like all of this stuff.*

Interviewer: Why is it good for them to know what you like?
Liam: So they can help me.

Emily also valued her meeting as an opportunity for staff at St Peter's to know more about her. Rather than seeking support, she seemed to prioritise being understood.

Emily: I told the teacher that it was hard to make friends at primary, erm, and it was, and she understands why I'm sometimes sitting alone in the dinner hall by myself.

She seemed reassured by knowing an adult at her new school would understand her actions. Coffey (2013) suggested having a link person at secondary school can be an important way of supporting transition. The member of St Peter's staff attending the PCP meetings seemed to fill that role for these participants.

Theme: PCP meeting as support for others

When sharing their perceptions of others' experiences of their PCP meeting, each participant identified something about the process as being supportive. Emily acknowledged that other individuals had concerns about how she would manage transition, and thought the experience may have been beneficial for them.

Interviewer: Do you think having the meeting changed anything for anyone else who was there?
Emily: Errrrm. Miss Smith. Because she was quite worried about me going in secondary.

Liam believed his meeting provided an opportunity for family members to become better informed:

Interviewer: What about mam and nana, what do you think they thought about it?
Liam: Good because we done it…now they know that, all of that stuff.

This extends points raised earlier about the meeting as an opportunity to receive information, demonstrating that adults too can benefit from increasing their knowledge about what to expect from their child's transition. Parents in White and Rae's (2016) study seemed to appreciate this about the meetings they attended and described the experience as reassuring, both for themselves and their children. Liam's comment seemed to reflect this reassurance for his family members.

Jake also suggested his PCP meeting had been a valuable experience for those who attended.

> *Jake: I hope they just were ha- worth coming to the meeting and happy about sharing my ideas and plans.*

He seemed to perceive it worthwhile to involve others in discussing his hopes and plans, and expressed hope that they shared this view. Coffey (2013) emphasised the importance of parents becoming involved in their child's transition, suggesting those who do are more likely to remain involved in their child's subsequent educational journey.

3.4 Conclusions and implications

This section presents some conclusions about this study, including limitations, impact of the work so far and possible implications for future research and EP practice.

Limitations

As an idiographic study, this research did not aim to generate findings to be generalised beyond the population of participants who contributed to it. The findings reflect my understanding of the experiences of those individuals. I do not claim that the themes presented here are a direct representation of the participants' experiences, nor do they provide the reader with direct access to the meaning and understanding children attached to those experiences.

What this study does provide is some specific insight into the way three individuals experienced a process of PCP during a time of transition to secondary school. Smith et al. (2009) used the idea of a hermeneutic circle to illustrate how understanding individual cases in detail can influence how we perceive and understand an issue more generally. Similarly, considering an issue in its broadest, general sense can influence how we understand the specifics of individual experiences. It is by contributing to this process that the present study can increase what is known about use of PCP with children who are undergoing a process of transition from primary to secondary school. By understanding something about the experiences of these three individuals, the way we consider transition to secondary school, and use of PCP at that time, may be slightly altered in future.

A further limitation arose from the time constraints on this piece of work, as part of a professional doctoral training programme. If it had been possible to revisit the participants to follow up this work, perhaps after six or twelve month intervals, I may have had opportunities to understand more about the impact of this work on their transition experience. As the data collection phase was completed in September, soon after the children started attending St Peter's, their comments were only able to reflect the impact on their immediate move from one school to the other. As transition is an ongoing process, extending beyond this immediate change of location, subsequent follow-up could have provided useful information about the longer-lasting impact of PCP on the children's experiences of transition.

Impact

As PCP involves a process of ongoing listening, reflecting and responding to need (Sanderson, 2000), I wanted to ensure the children's transition support reflected this and did not stop along with the research process. Following the PCP meetings, I spent time working with the SENCo at St Peter's to discuss how the children's MAPs might be revisited and used in future, to continue reviewing their dream, their needs and the support in place. Although the specific way this is followed up is beyond my control, I am optimistic that the level of enthusiasm for the PCP approach expressed in these discussions will drive this work forwards.

Further impact seems to have been made at the primary school level. Several months after the PCP meetings took place, a member of staff from one of the feeder primary schools involved in this work approached their school EP to ask if she could facilitate something similar for another pupil in the next Year 6 cohort. This suggests that participation in this process has shifted thinking for some primary staff about how children can be supported for their transition to secondary school.

Future research and practice

The aim of this research was to gather phenomenological information about children's experiences of PCP in a person-centred way. The findings provide a different type of information to that presented in the systematically reviewed papers in chapter 1. More has been revealed here about children's emotional responses to PCP than in the reviewed studies, which presented many external, observable

outcomes and less insight into the direct experiences of individual children. I believe there is scope for future research exploring children's views and experiences of PCP, to further develop this knowledge base. At a time when the SEND CoP advocates use of PCP with CYP, and literature in this area is limited, new research seems timely and appropriate.

At times of educational transition, which can be emotionally and socially demanding for children, there may be particular benefits to further exploring use of PCP. Researching children's experiences could be beneficial to educational psychologists (EPs) and other professionals working to shape transition policies and develop practice to benefit children during transitional periods.

For EPs in particular, this research may have several implications for the way we work with children and families during the period of transition to secondary school. Firstly, given the emphasis participants placed on information sharing, and the support for this offered by White and Rae's (2016) participants, there may be a role for EPs in working with schools to develop policies and procedures that ensure high quality, person-centred information is shared between primary and secondary schools.

Increasing opportunities for parental involvement may also be beneficial, since parents being better informed was a perceived benefit of PCP in this study. EPs are well placed to facilitate collaboration between children, parents, and representatives from primary and secondary schools to ensure that communication, information sharing and subsequent transition planning are as comprehensive and supportive as possible for children.

Finally, there may be scope for EPs to seek children's views about what is important to them during periods of transition, and use this information to inform transition planning and support in the future.

References

Akos, P. (2010). Moving Through Elementary, Middle and High Schools: The Primary to Secondary Shifts in the United States. In D. Jindal-Snape (Ed.), *Educational Transitions: Moving Stories from Around the World*. New York: Routledge.

Anderson, L., Jacobs, J., Schramm, S., & Splittgerber, F. (2000). School transitions: beginning of the end or a new beginning? *International Journal of Educational Research, 33*, 325-339.

Artesani, A. J., & Mallar, L. (1998). Positive Behaviour Supports in General Education Settings: Combining Person-Centered Planning and Functional Analysis. *Intervention in School and Clinic, 34*(1), 33-38.

Barnett-Page, E., & Thomas, J. (2009). Methods for the Synthesis of Qualitative Research: A Critical Review. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 9*(59). doi:10.1186/1471-2288-9-59

Beadle-Brown, J. (2006). Person-Centred Approaches and Quality of Life. *Tizard Learning Disability Review, 11*(3), 4-12.

Bhaskar, R. (2008). *A Realist Theory of Science* (2nd ed.). London: Routledge.

BPS. (2009). *Code of Ethics and Conduct: Guidance published by the Ethics Committee of the British Psychological Society*. Leicester: BPS.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The Ecology of Human Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1993). The ecology of cognitive development: Research models and fugitive findings. In R. H. Wozinak & K. Fischer (Eds.), *Scientific environments*. Hillsdale: Erlbaum.

Brown, J., & Armstrong, M. (1986). Transfer from junior to secondary: the child's perspective. In M. Youngman (Ed.), *Mid-schooling Transfer: Problems and Perspectives*. Windsor: NFER-Nelson.

Butler, R., & Green, D. (2007). *The Child Within: Taking the Young Person's Perspective by Applying Personal Construct Psychology* (2nd ed.). Chichester: Wiley.

Chedzoy, S., & Burden, R. (2005). Making the Move: Assessing student attitudes to primary-secondary school transfer. *Research in Education, 74*(1), 22-35.

Claes, C., Van Hove, G., Vandevelde, S., van Loon, J., & Schalock, R. (2010). Person-Centered Planning: Analysis of Research and Effectiveness. *Intellectual and Developmental Disbilities, 48*(6), 432-453.

Coffey, A. (2013). Relationships: The key to successful transition from primary to secondary school? *Improving Schools, 16*(3), 261-271. doi:10.1177/1365480213505181

Corrigan, E. (2014). Person Centred Planning in Action: exploring the use of person centred planning in supporting young people's transition and re-integration to mainstream education. *British Journal of Special Education, 41*(3), 268-288.

Craig, L. (2009). Post-school transitions: Exploring practice in one local authority. *Educational and Child Psychology, 26*(1), 41-51.

Croke, E., & Thompson, A. (2011). Person centred planning in a transition program for Bronx youth with disabilities. *Children and Youth Services Review, 33*, 810-819.

David, T., Tonkin, J., Powell, S., & Anderson, C. (2005). Ethical aspects of power in research with children. In A. Farrell (Ed.), *Ethical Research with Children*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Department for Education, & Department of Health. (2014). *Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years. Statutory guidance for organisations who work with and support children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities* Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Department for Education, & Department of Health. (2015). *Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years. Statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities* Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/398815/SEND_Code_of_Practice_January_2015.pdf

Department of Health (DoH). (2001a). *Planning with People: Towards Person-Centred Approaches. Guidance for Implementation Groups*. London: DoH.

Department of Health (DoH). (2001b). *Valuing People: a new strategy for learning disability for the 21st century*. London: DoH.

Dixon-Woods, M., Cavers, D., Agarwal, S., Annandale, E., Arthur, A., Harvey, J., . . . Sutton, A. (2006). Conducting a critical interpretive synthesis of the literature on access to healthcare by vulnerable groups. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 6*(35). doi:10.1186/1471-2288-6-35

East Lothian Council. (2010). *Transition Arrangements for Children and Young People with Additional Support Needs: Policy and guidance for schools and education staff* Retrieved from http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/5965/transition_arrangements_for_children_and_young_people_with_additional_support_needs

East Sussex County Council. (2007). Good Practice in Transition. Retrieved from https://czone.eastsussex.gov.uk/specialneeds/transition/Documents/Good%20practice%20for%20transition.pdf

Espiner, D., & Hartnett, F. (2011). I felt I was in control of the meeting': facilitating planning with adults with an intellectual disability. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities, 40*(62-70).

Evangelou, M., Taggart, B., Sylva, K., Melhuish, E., Sammons, P., & Siraj-Blatchford, I. (2008). *What Makes a Successful Transition from Primary to Secondary School?* Nottingham: DfES.

Everson, J., & Zhang, D. (2000). Person-Centered Planning: Characteristics, Inhibitors, and Supports. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 35*(1), 36-43.

Falvey, M., Morest, M., Pearpoint, J., & Rosenberg, R. (1997). *All My Life's A Circle Using the Tools: circles, MAPS & PATHS*. Toronto: Inclusion Press.

Galton, M. (2010). Moving to Secondary School: What do Pupils in England say about the Experience? In D. Jindal-Snape (Ed.), *Educational Transitions: Moving stories from around the world*. New York: Routledge.

Galton, M., Gray, J., & Ruddock, J. (1999). *The Impact of School Transitions and Transfers on Pupil Progress and Attainment*. Norwich: HMSO.

Gillham, J., & Seligman, M. (1999). Footsteps on the road to a positive psychology. *Behaviour Research and Therapy, 37*(1), 163-173.

Gough, D. (2007). Weight of Evidence: a framework for the appraisal of the quality and relevance of evidence. *Research Papers in Education, 22*(2), 213-228.

Gough, D., Oliver, S., & Thomas, J. (2012). *An Introduction to Systematic Reviews*. London: Sage.

Gough, D., & Thomas, J. (2012). Commonality and Diversity in Reviews. In D. Gough, S. Oliver, & J. Thomas (Eds.), *An Introduction to Systematic Reviews*. London: Sage.

Hagner, D., Helm, D. T., & Butterworth, J. (1996). "This is Your Meeting": A Qualitative Study of Person-Centered Planning. *Mental Retardation, 34*(3), 159-171.

Hagner, D., Kurtz, A., Cloutier, H., Arakelian, C., Brucker, D., & May, J. (2012). Outcomes of a Family-Centred Transition Process for Students With Autism Spectrum Disorders. *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities, 27*(1), 42-50.

Hayes, J. (2004). Visual annual reviews: how to include pupils with learning difficulties in their educational reviews. *Support for Learning, 19*(4), 175-180.

Hefferon, K., & Gil-Rodriguez, E. (2011). Interpretative phenomenological analysis. *The Psychologist, 24*(10), 756-759.

Holburn, S., Gordon, A., & Vietze, P. (2007). *Person-centered planning made easy: The PICTURE method*. Baltimore: Brookes.

Humphrey, N., & Ainscow, M. (2006). Transition club: Facilitating learning, participation and psychological adjustment during the transition to secondary school. *European Journal of Psychology of Education, 21*(3), 319-331.

Humphrey, N., Charlton, J., & Newton, I. (2004). The Developmental Roots of Disaffection? *Educational Psychology, 24*(5), 579-594.

Jindal-Snape, D. (2010a). Moving On: Integrating the Lessons Learnt and the Way Ahead. In D. Jindal-Snape (Ed.), *Educational Transitions: Moving Stories from Around the World*. New York: Routledge.

Jindal-Snape, D. (2010b). Setting the Scene: Educational transitions and Moving Stories. In D. Jindal-Snape (Ed.), *Educational Transitions: Moving stories from around the world*. New York: Routledge.

Jindal-Snape, D., & Foggie, J. (2008). A holistic approach to primary-secondary transitions. *Improving Schools, 11*(1), 5-18.

Jindal-Snape, D., & Miller, D. (2008). A Challenge of Living? Understanding the Psycho-social Processes of the Child During Primary-Secondary Transition Through Resilience and Self-esteem Theories. *Educational Psychology Review, 20*, 217-236.

Kaehne, A. (2010). Multiagency Protocols in Intellectual Disabilities Transition Partnerships: A Survey of Local Authorities in Wales. *Journal of Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disabilities, 7*(3), 182-188.

Kaehne, A., & Beyer, S. (2014). Person-centred reviews as a mechanism for planning the post-school transition of young people with intellectual disability. *Journal of Intellectual Disability Research, 58*(7), 603-613.

Keay, A., Lang, J., & Frederickson, N. (2015). Comprehensive support for peer relationships at secondary transition. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 31*(3), 279-292.

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

Kennedy, C., Long, T., Jolivette, K., Cox, J., Tang, J. C., & Thompson, T. (2001). Facilitating General Education Participation for Students with Behaviour Problems by Linking Positive Behaviour Supports and Person-Centered Planning. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioural Disorders, 9*(3), 161-171.

Kirk, S. (2008). Transitions in the lives of young people with complex healthcare needs. *Child: care, health and development, 34*(5), 567-575.

Larkin, M., Watts, S., & Clifton, E. (2006). Giving voice and making sense in interpretative phenomenological analysis. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 3*(2), 102-120.

Liebenberg, L. (2009). The visual image as discussion point: increasing validity in boundary crossing research. *Qualitative Research, 9*(4), 441-467.

Mansell, J., & Beadle-Brown, J. (2004). Person-Centred Planning or Person-Centred Action? Policy and Practice in Intellectual Disability Services. *Journal of Applied Research in Intellectual Disabilities, 17*, 1-9.

Maslow, A. (1968). *Toward a Psychology of Being* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Van Nostrand.

Michaels, C., & Ferrara, D. (2006). Promoting Post-School Success for All: The Role of Collaboration in Person-Centered Planning. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation, 16*(4), 287-313.

Miner, C., & Bates, P. (1997). The Effect of Person Centered Planning Activities on the IEP / Transition Planning Process. *Education and Training in Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, 32*(2), 105-112.

Murray, P., & Sanderson, H. (2007). *Developing Person Centred Approaches in Schools.* Stockport: HSA Press.

Noblit, G., & Hare, R. D. (1988). *Meta-ethnography: Synthesizing Qualitative Studies.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

O'Brien, C. L., & O'Brien, J. (2000). The Origins of Person-Centered Planning: A Community of Practice Perspective. Retrieved from http://www.nasddds.org/uploads/documents/The_Origins_of_Person_Centered_Planning_Obrien_and_Obrien.pdf

O'Brien, J., & Lovett, H. (1992). *Finding A Way Toward Everyday Lives: The Contribution of Person Centred Planning.* Harrisburg, PA: Pennsylvania Office of Mental Retardation.

O'Brien, J., & Pearpoint, J. (2007). *Person-Centered Planning with MAPS and PATH: A Workbook for Facilitators* (4th ed.). Toronto: Inclusion Press.

Oliver, S., & Sutcliffe, K. (2012). Describing and Analysing Studies. In D. Gough, S. Oliver, & J. Thomas (Eds.), *An Introduction to Systematic Reviews*. London: Sage.

Pawson, R. (2006). Digging for Nuggets: How 'Bad' Research Can Yield 'Good' Evidence. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 9*(2), 127-142.

Pawson, R., Boaz, A., Grayson, L., Long, A., & Barnes, C. (2003). *Types and Quality of Knowledge in Social Care*. London: Social Care Institute for Excellence.

Pearpoint, J., O'Brien, J., & Forest, M. (1993). *PATH: A workbook for planning positive possible futures and planning alternative tomorrows with hope for schools, organizations, businesses and families* (2nd ed.). Toronto: Inclusion Press.

Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2006). *Systematic Reviews in the Social Sciences: A Practical Guide*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Pyle, A. (2013). Engaging young children in research through photo elicitation. *Early Child Development and Care, 183*(11), 1544-1558.

Rochdale School Improvement Team. (2011). *Transition Policy Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 3* Retrieved from http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/pdf/2011-06-03_KS2_KS3_Transition_Policy.pdf

Rogers, C. (1951). *Client-centred therapy*. New York: Houghton-Mifflin.

Rogers, C. (1957). The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change. *Journal of Consulting Psychology, 21*(2), 95-103.

Rogers, C. (1961). *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers, C. (1979). *Carl Rogers on Personal Power: Inner Strength and its Revolutionary Impact*. London: Constable.

Roller, J. (1998). Facilitating Pupil Involvement in Assessment, Planning and Review Processes. *Educational Psychology in Practice: theory, research and practice in educational psychology, 13*(4), 266-273.

Rose, G. (2012). *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.

Rosenblatt, P. (1995). Ethics of qualitative interviewing with grieving families. *Death Studies, 19*, 139-155.

Sanderson, H. (2000). Person Centred Planning: Key Features and Approaches. Retrieved from http://www.familiesleadingplanning.co.uk/documents/pcp%20key%20features%20and%20styles.pdf

Sanderson, H., Kennedy, J., Ritchie, P., & Goodwin, G. (1997). *People, Plans & Possibilities: exploring person centred planning*. Edinburgh: SHS Ltd.

Seligman, M., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2000). Positive Psychology: An Introduction. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 5-14.

Seligman, M., Ernst, R., Gillham, J., Reivich, K., & Linkins, M. (2009). Positive education: positive psychology and classroom interventions. *Oxford Review of Education, 35*(3), 293-311.

Smart, M. (2004). Transition planning and the needs of young people and their carers: the alumni project. *British Journal of Special Education, 31*(3), 128-137.

Smith, J. (2004). Reflecting on the development of interpretative phenomenological analysis and its contribution to qualitative research in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology, 1*(1), 39-54.

Smith, J., Flowers, P., & Larkin, M. (2009). *Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis Theory, Method and Research*. London: Sage.

Smull, M., & Harrison, S. (1992). *Supporting people with severe reputations in the community*. Alexandria, VA: National Association of State Mental Retardation Program Directors.

Spencer, L., Ritchie, J., Lewis, J., & Dillon, L. (2003). *Assessing quality in qualitative evaluation*. London: Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office.

Stutchbury, K., & Fox, A. (2009). Ethics in educational research: introducing a methodological tool for effective ethical analysis. *Cambridge Journal of Education, 39*(4), 489-504.

Taylor, K. (2007). The Participation of Children with Multi-Sensory Impairment in Person-Centred Planning. *British Journal of Special Education, 34*(4), 204-211.

Taylor-Brown, M. (2012). How did young people identified as presenting with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties experience a person-centred transition review meeting? *Educational and Child Psychology, 29*(3), 54-66.

Thomas, J., & Harden, A. (2008). Methods for the Thematic Synthesis of Qualitative Research in Systematic Reviews. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 8*(45). doi:10.1186/1471-2288-8-45

Thomas, J., Harden, A., & Newman, M. (2013). Synthesis: Combining results systematically and appropriately. In D. Gough, S. Oliver, & J. Thomas (Eds.), *An Introduction to Systematic Reviews*. London: Sage.

Thomas, J., Sutcliffe, K., Harden, A., Oakley, A., Oliver, S., Rees, R., . . . Kavanagh, J. (2003). *Children and Healthy Eating: A systematic review of barriers and facilitators*. London: EPPI-Centre.

Thompson, P. (2008). Children and young people: voices in visual research. In P. Thompson (Ed.), *Doing Visual Research with Children and Young People*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Tobbell, J. (2003). Students' experiences of the transition from primary to secondary school. *Educational and Child Psychology, 20*(4), 4-14.

Tobbell, J., & O'Donnell, V. (2013). The formation of interpersonal and learning relationships in the transition from primary to secondary school: Students, teachers and school context. *International Journal of Educational Research, 59*, 11-23.

Topping, K. (2011). Primary-secondary transition: Differences between teachers' and children's perceptions. *Improving Schools, 14*(3), 268-285.

UN. (1989). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. New York: United Nations.

Vandercook, T., York, J., & Forest, M. (1989). The McGill Action Planning System (MAPS): A strategy for building the vision. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 14*, 205-215.

West, P., Sweeting, H., & Young, R. (2010). Transition matters: pupils' experiences of the primary-secondary school transition in the West of Scotland and consequences for well-being and attainment. *Research Papers in Education, 25*(1), 21-50.

White, J., & Rae, T. (2016). Person-centred reviews and transition: an exploration of the views of students and their parents/carers. *Educational Psychology in Practice, 32*(1), 38-53.

Whiting, L. (2015). Reflecting on the use of photo elicitation with children. *Nurse Researcher, 22*(3), 13-17.

Whitney-Thomas, J., Shaw, D., Honey, K., & Butterworth, J. (1998). Building a Future: A Study of Student Participation in Person-Centered Planning. *Journal of the Association for Persons with Severe Handicaps, 23*(2), 119-133.

Willig, C. (2013). *Introducing Qualitative Research in Psychology* (Third ed.). Maidenhead: McGraw Hill Education.

Woolner, P., Thomas, U., Todd, L., & Cummings, C. (2009). *How do visually mediated encounters differ from traditional interviews?* Paper presented at the 1st International Visual Methods Conference, 15th-17th September 2009, Leeds University, UK. http://www.ncl.ac.uk/cflat/news/documents/Leeds2009WoolnerThomas.pdf

Zeedyk, M. S., gallacher, J., Henderson, M., Hope, G., Husband, B., & Lindsay, K. (2003). Negotiating the Transition from Primary to Secondary School. *School Psychology International, 24*(1), 67-79.

Appendices

Appendix i: Criteria for making Weight of Evidence (WoE) judgements (adapted from Harden & Gough, 2012).

Judgement	Rationale
WoE A: Soundness of study	
High	• Explicit and detailed methods and results sections describing data collection and analysis • Interpretation clearly warranted from findings; findings clearly supported by data.
Medium	• Satisfactory methods and results sections describing data collection and analysis (e.g. procedures named, but not fully described). • Some warrant for findings
Low	• Criteria for *Medium* not satisfied
WoE B: Appropriateness of study for answering this review question	
High	• PCP implemented, and outcomes measured in a way that is reliable and valid. • Outcomes can be attributed the PCP process
Medium	• Some information gathered about the outcomes of PCP. • Outcomes are at least partly attributed to the PCP process.
Low	• Criteria for *Medium* not satisfied.
WoE C: Relevance of the study for answering this review question	
High	• Clear sampling strategy to select participants who are children and/or young people, aged up to 25 years. • Participants are in education, and experienced a PCP process in this context. • Identifying outcomes of PCP was a main or primary focus of the study.
Medium	• Participants appear to be children or young people, but ages are not specified or sampling strategy not identified. • Participants are in education. • Participants experienced a process of PCP, but this did not necessarily occur within the context of their education. • Identifying outcomes of PCP was not the main purpose, but was done as one part of a broader remit.
Low	• Criteria for *Medium* not satisfied.
WoE D: Overall Weight of Evidence	
High	• *High* in every category, or • *High* in two categories and 'Medium' in the third.
Medium	• *Medium* in all categories • Different ratings in each category, resulting in a *High - Low* spread across all three • *Medium* in two categories (specify in final rating whether *High* or *Low* in the third by noting *Medium/High* or *Medium/Low*) • Other combinations not meeting the criteria for a *High* or *Low* rating
Low	• *Low* in all categories • *Low* in two categories and *medium* in the third

Appendix ii: child information sheet and consent form

Dear _____

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist doing some research with children in Year 6 and I understand that you might be interested in taking part.

My research is about Person Centred Planning, and finding out what children think of it. Person Centred Planning is a way of making plans for an individual. It means that a child's views are the most important thing when decisions are made about their future. I would like to use Person Centred Planning with children who are about to go into Year 7. I want to find out what children think of this approach and if they find it helpful.

If you decide you would like to be involved, so we can use Person Centred Planning before you go into Year 7, there will be three stages in the process:

Stage 1: Initial meeting - I will meet you at school to explain how Person Centred Planning works. We will discuss your hopes and ideas for the future and your thoughts about moving into secondary school.

Stage 2: Person Centred Planning - You and I will have a Person Centred meeting with your parents/carers; staff who know you well; and anyone else you would like to invite. We will talk about planning for Year 7 and things we can all do to help you work towards your goals. Important points will be recorded visually on a large piece of paper. This will create an action plan and will help everyone know what to do after the meeting.

Stage 3: Interview – In September, I will come to speak with you again. I will be interested to know how you thought the meeting went and what has happened since. Our conversation will be recorded on a voice recorder. Afterwards, I will listen to the recording so I can type up our conversation and analyse the information. Everything I type will be anonymous, so I will not use your name or say which school you go to. Nobody else will listen to the recording and I will not share the things we talk about with anyone else. Once my research is finished, the voice recording will be deleted and the document will be shredded.

After the research is finished, I would like to contact you again to tell you what I found out, and explain how your involvement helped.

If you decide that you no longer want to be involved in the research, you can withdraw at any time, including after our interview. You do not need to give a reason. You can do this by contacting me in one of the ways listed below.

This form is to say you would like to be involved in this research. If you would like to take part, please sign and date the attached consent form.

If you think of any questions or worries about this research and would like to contact me, you can get in touch by using the email address or phone number below.

I am looking forward to hearing from you and hopefully working with you soon.

Laura Partington   **Email:** l.m.partington@newcastle.ac.uk

Participant number:

I confirm that I would like to take part in research exploring children's views on Person Centred Planning.

I understand that this involves three stages:

1. Meeting with Laura at school
2. Attending a meeting with my parents/carers, members of staff who know me well, and any other people I choose
3. Speaking with Laura about my experience of the meeting and having our conversation recorded.

I understand that the purpose of the research is to use Person Centred Planning to support children as they move into Year 7, and to find out children's views about it.

I understand that as part of the research Laura Partington needs to keep the information we discuss and that this will be kept anonymous.

I understand that if I change my mind and no longer want to take part, I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. I have been given Laura's contact details in case I change my mind, or in case I have any questions about taking part.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please detach the front page and keep for your reference.
Please return this page to school.

Newcastle University

Dear parent/carer of _____

I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist undertaking a piece of research as part of my doctoral studies. The research is with children in Year 6 who are about to transition into Year 7 and your child has been identified as someone who may benefit from taking part.

My research is about Person Centred Planning, and finding out what children think of it. Person Centred Planning is a way of making plans for an individual. It involves people working together and putting a young person's views first when decisions are made about their future. I would like to use Person Centred Planning with children who are about to transition into Year 7. I want to find out what children think of this approach and whether they think it is a helpful way to support them.

If your child decides to take part, I will use Person Centred Planning to support them as they transition into Year 7. The process will involve three stages:

Stage 1: Initial meeting - I will meet your child at school to explain how Person Centred Planning works. We will discuss their hopes and ideas for the future, and their thoughts and feelings about moving into secondary school.

Stage 2: Person Centred Planning – A Person Centred meeting will be held for your child. You will be invited to attend this, along with your child; members of staff who know your child well; and any other individuals your child would like to support them. We will talk about planning your child's transition to Year 7 and think about things everyone can do to help them work towards their goals. Important points will be recorded visually on a large piece of paper. This will create an action plan and will help everyone know what to do after the meeting.

Stage 3: Interview – In September, I will arrange to speak with your child again. I will be interested to know how they thought the meeting went and what has happened since then. This conversation will be recorded on a Dictaphone. Afterwards, I will listen to the recording so I can transcribe the conversation and analyse the information. Everything will be recorded anonymously, so I will not use your child's name or say which school they attend. Once the study is completed, the recording will be deleted and the document will be shredded.

I would also like to meet with your child at the end of the project, to share what the research found and explain how their involvement helped.

Your child has been given their own information sheet, and a consent form to sign if they would like to take part. If they decide they no longer wish to be involved, they can withdraw from the study at any time, including after the interview. They can do this by contacting me in one of the ways listed below. They do not need to give a reason. You and your child can also contact me at any time if you have any questions or comments about the research.

The attached document is to confirm you are happy for your child to be involved in this research. If you would like your child to take part, please sign and date the attached consent form, and return it to school.

I look forward to hearing from you, and hopefully working with you and your child soon.

Laura Partington   **Email:** l.m.partington@newcastle.ac.uk

Newcastle University

Participant number:

I, parent/carer of _____ confirm that I would like my child

to take part in research exploring the views of young people on Person Centred Planning.

I understand that the process involves three stages for my child:

1. Meeting with Laura at school.
2. Attending a meeting with Laura, myself, members of staff who know them well, and any other people my child would like to support them.
3. Speaking with Laura about their experience of the meeting and having that conversation recorded.

I understand that the purpose of the research is to use Person Centred Planning to support young people with a transition at school, and to find out young people's views about the process.

I understand that as part of the research Laura Partington needs to keep the information from conversations with my child. However this will remain anonymous.

I understand that if my child no longer wants to take part, they have the right to withdraw from the research at any time. My child and I have been given Laura's contact details.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please detach the front page and keep for your reference.
Please return this page to school.

Appendix iv: Semi-structured interview schedule

I want to find out what the person centred meeting was like for you, and what you thought about having it when you were getting ready to leave primary school and move into year 7.

I've brought with me the photos you took at the meeting and the poster that we had on the wall. I'm hoping that looking at these will help you to remember what it was like and to tell me as much as you can about it.

Some of the questions I ask might sound a bit odd, but it's because I want to find out your views about exactly what it was like for you. There are no wrong answers to any of these questions. It would be really helpful if you can give me as much information as possible.

Which one would you like to talk about first? What can you tell me about this picture?

      Why did you take this picture?

      What was it like to be there?

      What does this picture make you think about?

      How does it make you feel?

      What was it like to be able to take pictures of the meeting?

      Which other picture would you like to talk about?

What's it like seeing this (the poster) again?

      Are there any parts of it that you are especially interested to look at again?

      Can you tell me more about it?

      What was it like having this made all about you?

      What did you think about making this as part of the meeting?

      What did you think about this (the action plan) part of it?

Please tell me as much as you can about what the meeting was like for you.

      How did you feel before the meeting? (Why do you think you felt that way?)

      What was it like when you first arrived for the meeting?

      What did you think during the meeting? (What made you think about that?)

      How did you feel?

      Was it how you expected? (Why/why not?)

What was it like after the meeting?

      How did you feel?

      What did you think about?

      Did you talk about the meeting with anyone afterwards? What did you say?

What was it like having the meeting when you were getting ready to go into Year 7?

    Did it change anything for you about moving into Year 7?

        What do you think made that happen?

    Did it change anything for anyone else?

        Why do you think it changed for them?

    Before the meeting, how were you feeling about going into Year 7?

    What about afterwards?

How do you think other people found the meeting?

    What makes you think that?

    How did that feel (*the thing the other person did / said*)?

Do you think the meeting changed anything for any of the other people there?

    What changed?

    How do you think they felt about that?

    How do you feel about that?

Do you think anything about going into Year 7 would have been different if we hadn't had the person centred meeting?

    Why do you think that?

Were there any differences between this and other things you did to get ready for Year7?

    What was different?

    What did you think about that?

Is there anything else you would like to tell me about this before we finish?

Appendix v: Summary table of themes emerging from IPA

Superordinate theme	Theme	Quotations	Page / line
Significance of transition	**Emotional impact**	*J: Well I thought it was like a big thing wh-wh-what would change like I was sad leaving primary erm, but I was, I was just brave to do it like to go to secondary.*	5 / 21-22
		E: When we got home [from the meeting] my mum said erm…secondary's a big school are you sure you'll be all right and I went yeah I'll be fine, and like, I don't think she was ok with it because then she went upstairs and said I'm just gonna read a book, and she stayed up there for two hours. Straight.	9 / 14-17
		L: They were sad [pause] sad I was leaving	11 / 30
	Social implications	*J: Like I had to, when I first had to do my tie, when they gave me my tie, erm I looked like confused when everyone tried to do it a few people did it, a few people already learnt to do it before in the summer holidays but I didn't really get time 'cos I was doing loads, loads of things, and I struggled a bit, I could sort of do a tie but it just, a bit of it gets messed up.*	7 / 11-14
		E: It's good here because erm it's learning me into a different environment of people, and how they act.	5 / 10-11
		L: Now everyone knows that I like doing them stuff *I: and why is it important that people know that?* *L: So they can ask me what to do about, if they're stuck*	6 / 7-9

Superordinate theme	Theme	Quotations	Page / line
Practical benefits of PCP	**Getting organised**	*J: It was good thinking about, erm like, thinking like what I have to do and stuff and what I have to like, like what I have on the action plan I like I have to know everything [pause] like I've gotta bring my homework…and erm, get all my equipment and get a water bottle.*	3 / 1-5
		I: Why do you want to look at this section? *L: 'Cos that's what I needed, to get organised.* *I: What did you think about having that part on the map?* *L: Good* *I: Why?* *L: So I knew what to get*	3 / 24-29
		E: It helped me written all down my thoughts, and that got me out of my worrying.	10 / 23
	Receiving information	*J: It helped me because I needed to know stuff about secondary school.*	7 / 31
		I: Do you think anything about going into Year Seven would've been different if we hadn't had this meeting? *E: Erm, yeah, because I'd still be worried about everything, and like, I wouldn't know what to do, and I wouldn't have anyone to help me.*	10 / 17-20
		L: It was good because they were [pause] I didn't know what I was going to do in Year Seven.	10 / 23
Emotional impact of PCP	**Positive reactions**	*E: It felt like I was special and erm, that everybody cared about me.*	6 / 15
		J: I just felt [pause] good, I felt happy.	8 / 26
	Anxiety and nervousness	*J: I was nervous of erm the people coming in because I was, I wasn't, I was excited for the people coming but I was nervous when they were coming in, just in case they didn't like it, or they did. So when they were happy, after that…I felt, I didn't feel nervous and that.*	11 / 5-8
		E: It felt pretty scary 'cos I didn't wanna leave, erm primary I wanted to stay there for a couple more years or something like that because it's quite scary when you're moving up to a big school and you don't know what the teachers are gonna be like or how they act.	7 / 25-27
		L: It was terrifying *I: Terrifying? Why?* *L: 'Cos I didn't know what was gonna happen … I was having second thoughts about going*	8 / 14-16

73

Superordinate theme	Theme	Quotations	Page / line
Other people	Secondary staff getting to know them	J: I wanted to spend some time to, I wanna spend some time to say, like know stuff about me and that. I wanna like know people know me and that. [pause] Tell, …and like, write things down what I, what I'm about and stuff. I: Why is that important that people know you? J: Well it, well like teachers they need to know what I, I'm like. The need to know if I'm like good behaved Interviewer: mhm J: …and they need to know if I'm nervous and getting lost and everything and they just need to know.	5 / 3-9
		I: What was it like having all those people coming together to make this, and to share all this information L: Good because they knew that I like all of this stuff. I: Why is it good for them to know what you like? L: So they can help me.	13 / 24-29
		E: I told the teacher that it was hard to make friends at primary, erm, and it was, and she understands why I'm sometimes sitting alone in the dinner hall by myself.	4 / 31-32
	PCP as support for others	I: Do you think having the meeting changed anything for anyone else who was there? E: Errrrm. Miss Smith. Because she was quite worried about me going in secondary.	8 / 21-22
		I: What about mam and nana, what do you think they thought about it? L: Good because we done it…now they know that, all of that stuff.	12 / 14-17
		J: I hope they just were ha- worth coming to the meeting and happy about sharing my ideas and plans.	6 / 18-19