HOW DO YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS EXPERIENCE TRANSITION FROM SPECIAL SCHOOL TO FURTHER EDUCATION?

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Overarching Abstract

Revisions to the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (2014) provide more opportunities for Educational Psychologists to work with the 16-25 age range, due to legislative changes in the Children and Families Act (2014). This has informed educational psychology (EP) research in relation to post-16 transition, given the additional barriers that young people (YP) with Special Educational Needs (SEN) face in accessing and maintaining Further Education.

With the aim of building upon the literature, a meta-ethnographic approach was utilised to systematically review six studies, all drawing upon qualitative methodologies. Findings suggest that, for YP, relationships with others and their environment act as a mediating factor in navigating their transition to post-16 education. In conclusion, further research was required to understand how YP experienced relationships during transition.

An empirical research study is then presented which explores the experiences of four YP who transitioned from a specialist school to Sixth Form college. By drawing upon an idiographic approach, underpinned by a qualitative methodology, semi structured interviews were employed and analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis. Findings suggest that relationships at college are different in nature to those at school. Further, YP have perceived passivity in relation to others regarding decision-making and a sense of sharing an experience as well as feelings of separation. There are tentative links between the role of teachers and autonomy in decision-making to understanding how relationships in college help to prepare YP for adulthood. To conclude, implications for EP practice are considered in relation to the development of the role.

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How do Young People with Special Educational Needs Experience the Transition from School to Further Education?

Abstract

Within the Further Education (FE) system, participation rates are low. In an attempt to increase this for groups of disadvantaged young people (YP), Government initiatives have been employed. They include raising the participation age to eighteen, A Level reform, enhancing the quality of apprenticeships and work-based learning and placing emphasis on English and Maths qualifications. Additionally, The Department for Education has committed to supporting disadvantaged groups in their transition from school to FE, emphasising the link between transition experiences and retention. The aim of this systematic literature review is to answer the above broad research question.

A meta-ethnography was undertaken leading to construction of a line of argument. This was based on a systematic search of the databases Psychinfo, Scopus and British Education Index as well as hand searches of relevant journals and citation searches of final articles. Title and abstract filtering were used to establish relevance to the subject area and six articles were chosen to be included in the review. The findings of the meta-ethnography are my constructions and interpretations of the synthesised data. Four overarching themes were constructed with sub themes within each. These were: a new social world - new beginnings and peer relationships; motivation - feeling valued, motivation to progress and aspirations; challenges - uncertainty and adjusting to change; support - expectations of support and teacher support. These themes appear to be important to YP in their transition and they are mediated through development of relationships with others and the environment. The themes are situated within psychological theory and policy literature, in particular, the Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Framework.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 The Political Context of Further Education

The purpose of Further Education (FE) has been widely debated. Foster (2005) argued that the purpose of FE should be focussed on skills and employability though at the time of writing, the whole sector did not have a common or shared purpose. Recently, a Post-16 Skills Plan (Department for Education, 2016) has been proposed which will implement the largest FE reform since the introduction of A Levels. Current vocational qualifications will be replaced with technical qualifications (T Levels) across fifteen skills pathways and will commence in 2019. It is intended this new qualification structure will enable YP to be skilled in the needs of industry and business which may increase productivity, something emphasised due to Brexit (Hazell, 2017).

This suggests the role of the FE sector is to create a skilled workforce that can meet the needs of a changing and shifting economy. Nash, Ecclestone, and Fox (2007) argue against this idea and advocate for a purpose that is centred on knowledge and developing learning, rather than the current skills agendas which drive vocational curricular. The implications of policy agenda on the education of YP in FE settings may have an impact on retention and attainment.

There has been concern over participation rates for post-16 learners (Croll, Attwood, & Fuller, 2009). The Tomlinson Report (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2004) which provided advice for a reform of curriculum and assessment for 14-19 learners, noted that post-16 participation was low. The Department for Education and Skills (2007) similarly noted that post-16 participation rates for YP from lower socio-economic groups are much poorer than those from higher socio-economic groups and compared to other developed countries, the UK has lower FE participation rates.

Government initiatives have been implemented to tackle this. These include raising the required participation age for education, training or employment to eighteen. It was proposed that this would be achieved by reforming the pre-existing A Level qualification, improving the quality of apprenticeships and traineeships and continuing to reform vocational qualifications with an emphasis on maths and English (Department for Education and Skills, 2007).

To increase participation rates, the Department for Education and Skills (2007) committed to supporting YP in their transition, particularly those who face barriers to participation. These groups include YP with special educational needs (SEN), those in or leaving care and others including those with poor mental health, substance misuse behaviours or family problems. Following this, Ofsted (2011) conducted a survey which suggested the transition arrangements within FE at the time may not be fully effective and advised they should be reviewed.

This section has highlighted the transient nature of Governmental policies and initiatives that underpin FE and placed transition in a political context. It is now appropriate to explore how this affects practice at a local authority (LA) and school level.

1.1.2 Transition to Post-16 Education: Policies and Procedures

Statutory guidance on supporting transition for children and YP with SEN is in the SEND Code of Practice which is designed to inform best practice (Department for Education, 2015). Most notably, the Code ensures that education staff support transition planning for Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) (National Development Team for Inclusion, 2013) from when a young person is in year nine of their school career (Department for Education, 2015) by supporting exploration of post-16 aspirations. In year ten, YP and their families should be supported to think about specific courses or post-16 settings. Following on from this, in year eleven, post-16 options should be confirmed and should include a contingency plan if planning changes. If YP have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), from year nine onwards, outcomes within the plan will reflect the PfA agenda by focussing on post-16 options and this should be included during the review process.

Three principles underpin the Code of Practice (Department for Education, 2015, p. 19), which states LA's must have regard to:
- The views, wishes and feelings of the child or young person, and the child's parents
- The importance of the child or young person, and the child's parents, participating as fully as possible in decisions, and being provided with the information and support necessary to enable participation in those decisions.

- The need to support the child or young person, and the child's parents, in order to facilitate the development of the child or young person and to help them achieve the best possible educational and other outcomes, preparing them effectively for adulthood.

These principles are reflective of person centred practice ensuring that children, YP and their families have more control and choice over their education. The Department for Education and Skills (2007, p. 39) state that "Making a good transition and a successful start to learning is key to continuing with the course and attaining" which suggests a relationship between attainment and transition.

Consequently, this systematic review aims to explore how YP experience their transition to FE. This aim takes into consideration statutory guidance available and how this is implemented. In order to clarify the meaning of terms used within FE, it is crucial to discuss this to arrive at a shared understanding.

1.1.3 Terms Used Within FE Literature: Shared Understanding

The terms post-16, post compulsory education and Further Education are used interchangeably in literature and Government papers. Post-16 or post compulsory education usually refers to the education and/or training of YP once they have completed compulsory schooling. However, the introduction of the fourteen to sixteen year old provision in September 2013 allows colleges to enrol key stage four students on vocational courses alongside English and Maths qualifications. This is made more complex by raising the participation age, as YP are required to remain in education or training until the age of eighteen unless they are employed. This assumes compulsory education will end when a young person reaches eighteen years of age. It is therefore, unhelpful to use the term post compulsory education and post-16 since learners can be enrolled in FE from the age of fourteen.

For the purpose of this systematic review, the term Further Education (FE) will describe the education of YP not in a secondary school setting and aged up to eighteen. This is to encompass the range of avenues that YP can access qualifications including but not limited to Further Education and Sixth Form colleges, work based learning centres, apprenticeships and traineeships. Where the term 'post-16' is used, this is to emphasise the language in the original source.

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In this systematic review, the term 'vulnerable groups' refers to YP who experience barriers to their learning. Vulnerable groups include YP with special educational needs (SEN), social, emotional or mental health difficulties, behaviour that challenges, physical disabilities, looked after children or care leavers and those at risk of becoming not in education, employment or training (NEET) due to various factors. Additionally, the term transition as described in the Oxford dictionary refers to 'The process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another'. This broad definition will be used to encompass the various settings that FE has to offer YP.

1.2 Method

My aim for this review is to gain a better understanding of YP's experiences of transition from school to FE. This involves consideration of my axiological commitment which positions the young person as expert in their own life and privileging their lived experiences as well as the axiological positioning of the authors in the studies. I acknowledge that my values and beliefs are embedded within my view of the world and that I am aware of my biases and bring them to the forefront during this process to enable transparency (O'Reilly & Kiyimba, 2015).

With this in mind, qualitative analysis and synthesis is most useful in order to understand and reconstruct themes within a data set (Howell Major & Savin-Baden, 2010).

A meta-ethnography was deemed to be the most appropriate method of analysis, allowing me to extend beyond describing and summarising data by using translation and synthesis to create a new understanding of the phenomena being studied through privileging the lived experiences of individuals (Barnett-Page & Thomas, 2009). Britten et al. (2002) suggest that the qualitative nature of studies that are synthesised are indicative of the process of induction and interpretation of a meta-ethnography. This framework for analysis, developed by Noblit and Hare (1988) involves seven distinct phases.

Table 1 Seven phases of a meta-ethnography

Phase 1: Getting started
Phase 2: Deciding what is relevant to the initial interest
Phase 3: Reading the studies
Phase 4: Determining how the studies are related
Phase 5: Translating the studies into one another
Phase 6: Synthesising translations
Phase 7: Expressing the synthesis

1.2.1 Phase 1: Getting started

Noblit and Hare (1988, p. 26) describe getting started as "*identifying an intellectual interest that qualitative research might inform.*" I have interpreted this statement as providing a rationale for the research question. My interest in the concept of transition emerged from my experience of supporting YP who were experiencing transition to an FE setting. Those experiences were not acknowledged by management when restructuring transition processes and procedures and their voice was missing from the process.

It is clear that the FE sector struggles with retention and various governments have responded with initiatives as described earlier. Raising the participation age now requires FE settings to work even harder and the DfES (2007) has committed to providing support to settings and YP in relation to the transition of vulnerable groups. My experience working within the FE sector has piqued my interest in how YP experience their transition within policies underpinning FE professional practice. If educational researchers are able understand how YP experience their transition, then opportunities may arise to examine this in relation to the effectiveness of policies and initiatives (National Development Team for Inclusion, 2013) in place. This understanding could provide some transparency on what aspects of transition either challenge or support improved transition procedures.

In collaboration with my placement supervisor, I have chosen one group of YP to focus on within this systematic review - those with special educational needs. It was intended that by narrowing the term 'vulnerable groups', opportunities were provided for more in depth systematic reviewing. This systematic review aims to answer the following question:

How do young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) experience the transition to Further Education?

1.2.2 Phase 2: Deciding what is relevant to the initial interest

A traditional systematic search (Noblit & Hare, 1988), was conducted to ensure I encompassed all research within the domain of YP's experience of transition. A comprehensive exploration of search terms used in literature, Government papers and the Preparing for Adulthood website was completed to gain a better understanding of what terms and themes may yield the best results (Appendix I). This was not to inform the search terms, but to help me gain perspective and deepen my knowledge of current trends in the language used within FE. Wittgenstein (1953) developed the concept of language games which postulates that word meanings are inextricably linked to social practice. Therefore, the meanings of words may be different depending upon the social context within which they are used (Burr, 2015). This is particularly relevant to language use within FE such as transition, destination, attainment, inclusion or retention as such terms have additional and distinct meanings when used within this context.

The chosen terms used to search each database were "Further Education" OR "Post 16" and "Transition" OR "School to Work Transition" and Special Education* Needs" OR "SEN". A systematic search of Psychinfo, British Education Index and Scopus databases was conducted between September and November 2016. A hand search of Educational and Child Psychology was completed. Overall, the search produced 245 articles which were filtered by title based on relevance to the research question (See Table 2). This yielded 53 results and citation searches were performed on Google Scholar to ensure an adequate search. Following this, I read the abstracts of each paper to disregard those which did not reflect the inclusion criteria. After

abstract filtering, and applying inclusion criteria (Table 3), six articles were identified for detailed analysis.

Table 2 Systematic Search Results

Source	Number of Initial Search Results	Results after Title Filtering
British Education Index	34	5
Psych Info	184	37
Scopus	22	9
Journal of Educational and Child Psychology: Post SchoolPsychological Services	3	2
Citation Searches for all results on Google Scholar	3	3
Total	245	56

Table 3 Inclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Reasons
Research took place in England or Wales	To represent current policies in UK education.
Written in English	For comprehension reasons
Privileges lived experiences	To enable the research question to be answered

1.2.3 Phase 3: Reading the studies

This phase involves repeated reading of the chosen studies in order to become as familiar as possible with them (Noblit & Hare, 1988). It was possible to establish if theoretical frameworks had been used to provide an understanding of the author's philosophical positioning as well as demographic data. I developed a mapping Table (Table 4) summarising participant information, settings and methods of data collection and analysis. This allowed the creation of a list of key themes from each of the papers. The key themes within the studies were similar and from reading

I was able to see how they may be related. Themes such as friendships, support and challenges were significant across most studies.

In order to determine quality of the studies, I drew upon Long and Godfrey's (2004) evaluation tool for qualitative research. This tool was used as it appeared to allow critical examination of the studies in detail, whilst remaining congruent with the qualitative nature of the studies. This tool focuses on evaluation that can be split into four areas (Appendix VI):

- Context
- Ethics
- Data collection, analysis and potential researcher bias
- Policy and practice implications.

Quality evaluation identified that one paper, Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002) was weaker than the others as there appeared to be limited information regarding setting rationale, type of analysis or ethical considerations. As this was published in a peer reviewed journal, I made the assumption that it met the quality criteria for peer reviewed publishing guidelines and therefore, included it in the current study despite identifying quality limitations.

Table 4 Mapping table of demographic information

Study	Sample	Setting	Method of Data Collection and Analysis	Theoretical Position
Hickey (2016)	N=5 YP aged 16 – 19 were selected using a purposive sampling method. All YP were currently attending a FE college and had all attended a specialist secondary school for pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD).	FE college.	Semi structured interviews with YP in September when YP had just transitioned to college. Additional interviews in November after initial settling in period. Interviews analysed using cross case analysis	Pragmatic approach to eliciting the voice of YP with SLD.
Study Research Questions	Research Question 1: How do YP with SLD experience their initial transition from post-16 school to FE? Research Question 2: What do YP identify as supportive and challenging factors when beginning college?			
Esbrand (2016)	N=3 YP aged 17 were selected using purposive sampling. All YP were identified as having moderate learning difficulties which included a hearing impairment and speech and language difficulties. One YP in addition to this had dyslexia.	A school which taught children and YP between the ages of 4 and 17 years old, who were identified as having moderate learning difficulties.	Semi structured interviews with YP across two stages: one before the YP left their sixth form unit and the second after they had transitioned to their new college. Interviews were analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)	Relativist ontological position and constructivist epistemological position. Acknowledgment of multiple perspectives

Study	Sample	Setting	Method of Data Collection and Analysis	Theoretical Position
Study Research Questions	Research Question 1: What are the experiences of YP with moderate learning difficulties as they transition from a special educational needs school to post-school educational provision? Research Question 2: What are parents/carers experiences and understandings of their son's or daughter's experience of transition to post-school educational provision from a special a school for children and YP with learning difficulties?			
Shephard (2015)	N=6 YP with a diagnosis of Autism in year eleven of their specialist secondary school. All YP had statements of special educational needs and additional learning difficulties of different degrees. All YP were going on to mainstream FE colleges.	Three special schools in three different LA's. 2 YP interviewed in school.	Case study approach using Qualitative Longitudinal Research (QLR) to measure and explore changes. First interview conducted in June 2013 and second in Spring 2014. Uninterrupted interviews (observations/ACC methods/ Collages and card sorts/ walking interviews)	Critical realism. Disability Theory. Capability Theory.
Study Research Questions	Research Questions: 1. To interrogate the experience of transition from the point of view of YP with Autism in order to learn from their experiences to inform professionals and participants in the transition process. 2. To develop appropriate methods in order to engage YP with Autism and ensure that their voices were heard in the research.			
Keil and Crews (2008)	N=5 YP. 1 blind and 4 partially sighted.	Wales. 3 Sixth form and 1 Further Education colleges.	Case study design arising from a three year qualitative study divided into three stages. Stage 1: face to face and telephone interviews with 5 YP, their parents and teachers	No explicit theoretical positioning reported. Used SEN Code of Practice Transition Process Model as a framework.

Study	Sample	Setting	Method of Data Collection and Analysis	Theoretical Position
			Stage 2: Follow up telephone interviews with the 5 YP at regular intervals during 2 year period following transition. Stage 3: 2 further interviews carried out with the 5 participants at the end of the first and second academic terms following transition.	
Study Research Questions	**Research Questions:** Stage 1: • Identify the factors leading to or preventing a successful transition from school further education at the age of 16 for YP with visual impairments in Wales • Describe the experiences of YP with visual impairment on their transition from school to school sixth forms or colleges of further education at the age of 16 Stage 2 and 3: • Describe the YP's experiences based upon their own accounts and perceptions during the two-year period following transition at 16 to just beyond the next transition stage at the age of 18.			
Dyson, Meagher, and Robson (2002)	502 YP from an original study named 'The Routes Project'. A study which aimed to understand the processes of transition as they impact on disadvantaged YP in the North East of England.	From original study, 76 YP reported attending a special school or other form of special education such as PRU's. Post-16 destinations include unemployment, employment and a	The Routes Project – Set of extended interviews with 502 YP based on the questionnaire used in the National Youth Cohort Studies. 3 Case Studies taken from this sample to represent a range of experiences.	No explicit theoretical positioning reported. Type of analysis not stated.

Study	Sample	Setting	Method of Data Collection and Analysis	Theoretical Position
	3 YP from original sample who all attended schools which catered for a wide range of special educational needs. For Leanne and Rob, this was in relation to "learning difficulties" (p6) and for Jimmy, this was in relation to "moderate learning difficulties" (p7). There appears to be differences in how the YP in this study construct their difficulties in comparison to the author. Leanne aged 18 who identified she had asthma but no other disability. Rob aged 19 who identified himself as having a disability, described as back problems.	number of Youth Training schemes.		

Study	Sample	Setting	Method of Data Collection and Analysis	Theoretical Position
	Jimmy aged 19 who did not regard himself as having a disability. These 3 YP were chosen to reflect a range of experiences from original sample.			
Study Research Questions	Research Aims/Questions: • The original study named The Routes Project aimed to understand the processes of transition as they currently impact on disadvantaged YP in the North East of England. • No specific aims stated in this follow up paper.			
Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	19 YP (4 females and 15 males with age range of 19-23 years) with a history of Specific Language Impairment (SLI) who attended the same residential specialist school. All YP had taken part in telephone surveys 2 years prior to investigate transition experiences since leaving school.	Since residential specialist school, participants transitioned to either a specialist sixth form or FE college. From this, destination pathways included FE, Not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), employment and University.	Face to face interviews using Ball et al's (2000) conceptual framework of transition. Venues included home, home town, previous specialist school or venue of choice.	No explicit theoretical position reported. Particular emphasis on exploring the perspective of the young person and lived experiences to support findings based on statistics.

Study	Sample	Setting	Method of Data Collection and Analysis	Theoretical Position
Study **Research** **Questions**	Research Aims: To investigate, from the perspective of young adults with a history of SLI, the factors they perceived had enabled their transition to date and those factors that had presented a challenge			

1.2.4 Phase 4: Determining if and how the studies are related.

This phase involved creating Table 5 to identify key themes and mapping them across the studies to determine if they were related. Original participants' and authors' own words were used where possible to ensure authenticity of voices was preserved and these are in italics in Appendix III. From this Table, I determined which key themes arose across which papers. Due to time restrictions, only themes that were mapped across three studies were chosen for translation and synthesis. The nature of the findings across the studies was similar and I consequently believed I would be able to develop a line of argument. The theme of relationships appeared to be significant through all studies and from this key themes were constructed. The key themes chosen for translation included preparing for transition, starting at college, supportive factors, challenging factors, moving towards adulthood, introducing YP and their social worlds, education and qualifications, involvement and support and finally, independence and vulnerability.

1.2.5 Phase 5: Translating the studies into one another

This phase required a comparison of first and second order constructs (Appendix III page 96) which led to interpretation and creation of third order constructs. This resulted in interpretation and construction of new themes.

1.2.6 Phase 6 Synthesising translations

From the previous phase, I was able to construct a new understanding of how YP participating in the studies experienced their transition to FE. Interpretations of the data were treated as new meanings and from these I was able to develop a line of argument (Noblit & Hare, 1988). Appendix II and IV offer a detailed understanding of those interpretations, alongside a summary in Table 5.

Table 5 Summary of Overlapping key themes and Third Order Interpretations

For a full review please see Appendix II and IV

Key Theme in Original Studies	Studies which key theme is mapped across	Third Order Construction	Over-arching Theme
Starting at College	Hickey (2016), Shephard (2015) and Esbrand (2016)	New Beginnings	A New Social World
Introducing Young People and their Social Worlds	Hickey (2016), Shephard (2015) and Esbrand (2016)	Peer Relationships	
Preparing for Transition	Hickey (2016), Shephard (2015) and Keil and Crews (2008)	Uncertainty	Challenges
Challenging Factors	Hickey (2016), Shephard (2015), Keil and Crews (2008) and Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Adjusting to Change	
Supportive Factors	Hickey (2016), Shephard (2015), Esbrand (2016) And Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Feeling Valued	Motivation
Moving Towards Adulthood	Hickey (2016), Shephard (2015) and Esbrand (2016)	Aspirations	
Education and Qualifications	Shephard (2015), Carroll and Dockrell (2012) And Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Motivation to Progress	

Involvement and Support	Hickey (2016), Shephard (2015), Carroll and Dockrell (2012), Keil and Crews (2008) and Esbrand (2016)	Teacher Support	Support
Independence and Vulnerability	Shephard (2015), Keil and Crews (2008) and Esbrand (2016)	YP's Expectation of Support	

1.2.7 Phase 7: Expressing the synthesis

The synthesis of the data has been detailed above and offers an understanding of my line of argument. Themes have been constructed as follows:

- A New Social World: New beginnings and peer relationships
- Challenges: Uncertainty and adjusting to change
- Motivation: Feeling valued, motivation to progress and aspirations
- Support: Teacher support and expectations of support

Relationships were not constructed as an overarching theme, but appear to be important from the voices of the YP in the research and to mediate the four over-arching themes (see Table 6 and Figure 1).

Table 6 Summary Table for Line of Argument

For a full review see Appendix V

Over-arching Themes	Sub themes	Author and page number
A New Social World and Motivation	Aspiration and Peer Relationships	Esbrand (2016, p. 97)
Motivation and Challenges	Motivation to Progress and Adjusting to Change	Shephard (2015, p. 142)
Motivation and Support	Feeling Valued and Teacher Support	Esbrand (2016, p. 81)
	Expectations of Support and Feeling Valued	Carroll and Dockrell (2012, p. 571)
	Feeling Valued and Teacher Support	(Hickey, 2016, p. 91)
	Teacher Support and Motivation to Progress	Carroll and Dockrell (2012, p. 572)
A New Social World and Challenges	Uncertainty and Peer Relationships	Shephard (2015, p. 125)
	New Beginnings and Adjusting to Change	Hickey (2016, p. 89)
	New Beginnings and Adjusting to Change	Esbrand (2016, p. 72)
	Adjusting To Change and Peer Relationships	Hickey (2016, p. 93)
A New Social World and Support	New Beginnings and Teacher Support	Shephard (2015, p. 127)
Support and Challenges	Teacher Support and Adjusting to Change	Esbrand (2016, p. 85)
	Teacher Support and Uncertainty	Shephard (2015, p. 126)
	Teacher Support and Uncertainty	Shephard (2015, p. 158)
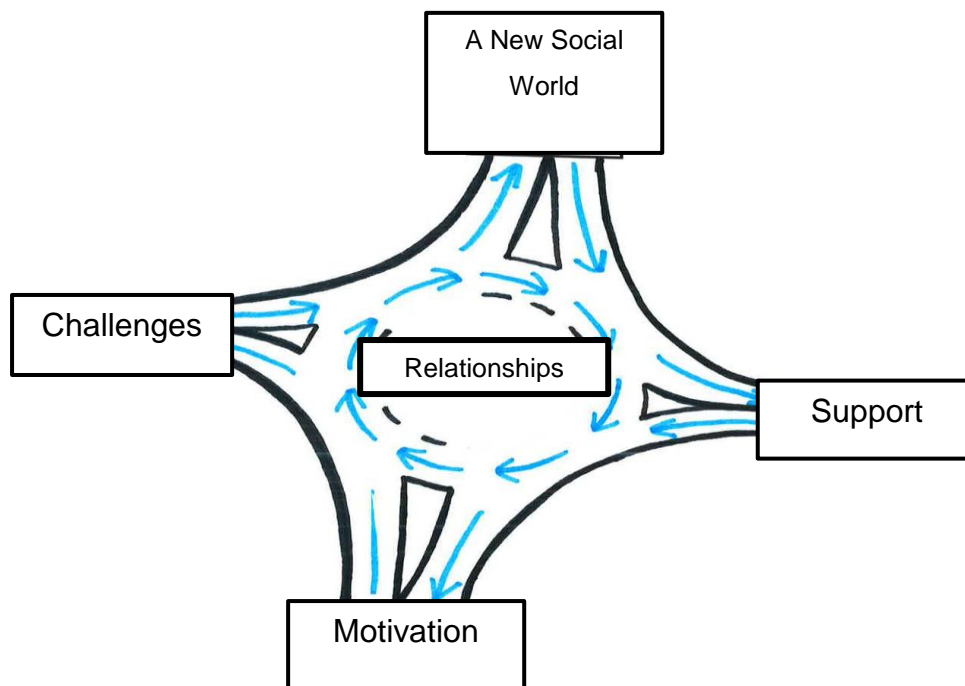
Figure 1 Visual representation of line of argument: The Traffic Roundabout Metaphor

There are strong mediating links between A New Social World and Challenges. Similarly, there are strong mediating links between Motivation and Support. Appendix V offers examples of how the four overarching themes are mediated through relationships and Figure 1 offers a visual representation of this. In order to represent the concept of transition visually, I have used a traffic roundabout. This idea stems from the literal definition of transition as going from one place to another, incorporating the idea of movement. The centre of the roundabout represents relationships and the four junctions represent themes. In order to exit the roundabout from a given destination, YP must go around the centre, which emphasises that relationships are central to understanding how they navigate and make sense of their transition. The following offers a written account of examples of how I perceive the constructs to be linked by relationships.

A New Social World and Challenges

One young person demonstrated how sub themes of uncertainty and peer relationships were linked. "It depends cos if I meet new friends then I could like be with them…erm…and this one again, if I had friends, I would enjoy the social activities" (Shephard, 2015, p. 125). It appears this young person is clear the relationships she develops will affect whether she enjoys social activities at college, but the use of the word "if" rather than "when", suggests some uncertainty regarding whether she thinks she will make friends. Within the sub theme of peer relationships, making new friends was frequently reported by YP as being important to them. I have constructed the sub themes of uncertainty and peer relationships and suggest they are mediated through the relationships that develop during time at college.

The first order constructs used to construct the subtheme of new beginnings suggest that YP made comparisons between the physical environments of school and college as some report, "It's the same as school but some is different, the rooms have changed" (Hickey, 2016, p. 89). Other YP report on how college was like a new lifestyle with new friends "I'm making new friends and new like, it's a new lifestyle basically…" (Esbrand, 2016, p. 72). These experiences suggest that YP in the research are navigating this new social world and having to adjust to change, mediated by relationships with peers and their physical environment. They are able to make sense of the college experience by comparing their past and current experiences and using the relationships they develop as a mediating factor regarding how well they think it is going.

Support and Motivation

The overarching theme of motivation includes the sub theme feeling valued. Within this sub theme, all YP reported on what made them feel valued, which included being listened to, being made to feel welcome by teachers and being supported by parents during their transition. This sub theme links to expectations of support, part of the overarching theme Support. Within the expectation of support, YP reported on how well they were prepared for college by parents and what they expected or were experiencing regarding the support they were receiving or expected to receive. Relationships appear to mediate how valued YP felt as some

YP report "…they make you feel welcome and it's ok" (Hickey, 2016, p. 91) and "I would say the number one person who has supported me throughout this is my dad. He always believed in me…" (Carroll & Dockrell, 2012, p. 571). Interestingly, in the subtheme of expectations of support, self-advocacy and independence were reported by YP once relationships had been developed with teaching staff.

1.3 Discussion

My line of argument has developed from a synthesis of qualitative research studies, which suggests relationships is a factor linking and mediating four overarching themes. In order to place my line of argument into a psychological context, it is important to consider if there is a theory available that could be applied to aid understanding of my model of the phenomenon being studied.

The concept of adolescent development is intricately woven into transition from school to FE. It is ill informed to consider transition to FE as a standalone topic, without considering adolescent development alongside it. There are many theories of adolescent development and theorists are from different theoretical orientations such as psychodynamic (Blos, 1966; Freud, 1950), cognitive (Piaget, 1972), psychosocial (Erikson, 1963), sociocultural (Vygotsky, 1978) or ecological (Bronfenbrenner, 1992). The philosophical positions of developmental theorists are diverse and can be placed on a continuum from endogenous, where emphasis is placed on internal influence to exogenous where emphasis is placed upon external environmental factors (Green & Piel, 2016). The majority of these theories could be described as stage theories, which dictate phases between childhood and adulthood. Viewing adolescence as linear stages or phases that need to be achieved may be perceived as too deterministic to be applied to my line of argument (Worth, 2009). However, the very nature of the word transition encompasses change from one state or place to another and such theorists provide a useful starting point in understanding some of the key themes within adolescent development. For the purpose of this meta-ethnography and the outcomes from the synthesis, it may be helpful to consider theories that prioritise relationships as a significant factor in development and sit this alongside policy literature.

1.3.1 Application of Policy Literature and Psychological Research

Supporting YP in preparing for adulthood is high on Government agendas as emphasised in the SEND and Disability Code of Practice and the PfA framework (National Development Team for Inclusion, 2013). The PfA framework illustrates five key messages across four pathways which is understood to support the transition to adulthood for YP with SEN as seen in Figure 2. The PfA framework is person centred and postulates that YP should have full participation in planning their future.
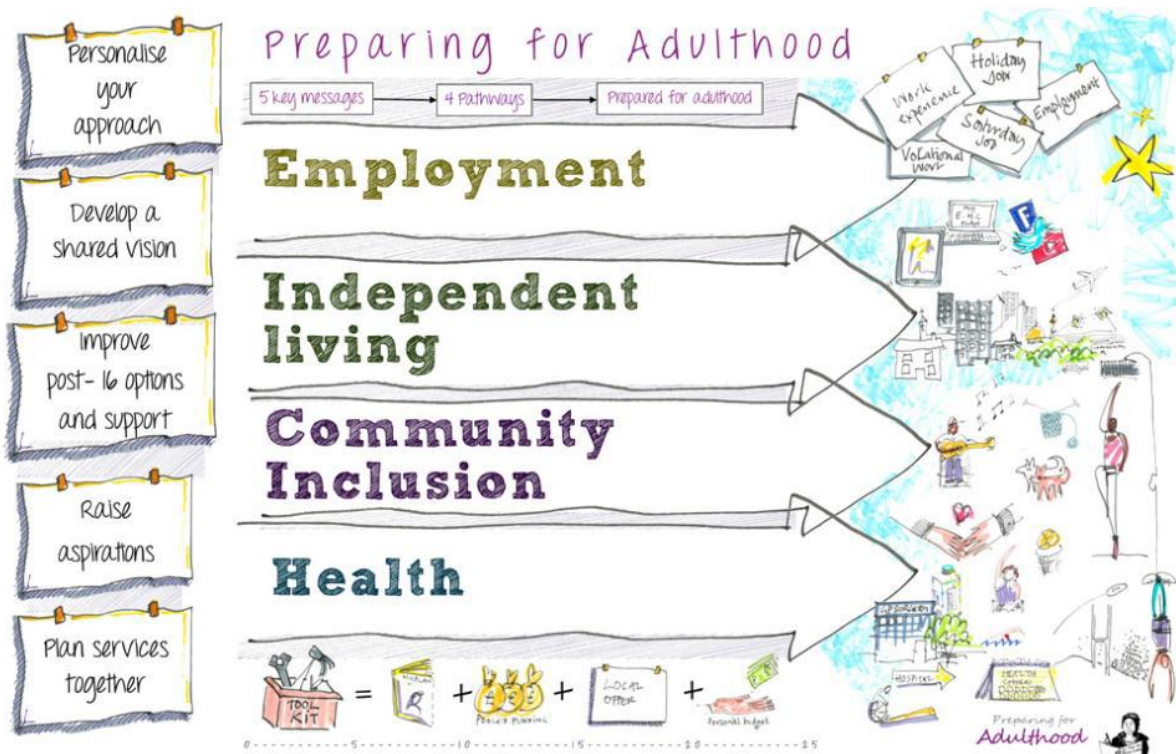
Figure 2 Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) framework

(National Development Team for Inclusion, 2013)

One of the key messages within the PfA framework is to raise aspirations: cautiously I suggest this relates to the motivation theme in my line of argument. Motivation is an overall theme used to describe three subthemes; feeling valued, motivation to progress and aspirations (see Appendix IV). Theories of motivation are wide ranging within the field of organisational psychology (Gagne & Deci, 2005; Minor, 2015). Self Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000) is a metatheory

of motivation (made up of six smaller theories) and postulates that humans actively strive toward growth through achieving positive experience of basic psychological needs; autonomy, competence and relatedness. Some principles of SDT could apply to the theme of motivation within my line of argument. The sub theme of feeling valued is perhaps similar to the psychological need of relatedness in SDT as YP felt connected to others such as their parents and teachers and felt valued. One of the constituent theories of SDT is Relationship Motivation Theory (RMT), which argues that humans aim to make connections with those who value them and are sensitive to the needs of the individual (Legault, 2016). According to RMT, relationships can flourish when there is unconditional positive regard for the other (Legault, 2016). This needs to be felt by both parties in a reciprocal interaction, though it is unknown if the YP in the research had unconditional positive regard for their parents and teachers and this could be explored further.

Another basic need in SDT is to be self-directed, described by Ryan and Deci (2000) as autonomy, which could be linked to the sub theme of aspirations. YP in the research described what they would like to achieve in their future with regards to where they would like to live and what educational courses they may do further. The concept of autonomy has been linked to independence (Santrock, 2007), a concept underpinning PfA which is understood as having the maturity to make decisions. Power, Power, Light Bredemeir, and Light Shields (2001, p. 101) argue that autonomy goes beyond independence and suggest 'autonomy as a legislating activity implies that the individual will make decisions as a free and rational person'. It is clear that the YP have hopes and dreams for their future, though it is unclear if they will be able to make autonomous decisions as the legislation expects.

The third psychological need of competence within SDT could be applied to the subtheme of motivation to progress, in which YP's motivation was affected by inconsistencies between their current attainment levels and course levels they had been enrolled on. YP recognised the value of qualifications for their preferred future but some found the work too difficult and they suggested this contributed to their non-completion of studies.

SDT has been applied to the theme of motivation in my line of argument to explore how this theory aligns with my interpretation of the original data. The subthemes of aspirations, feeling valued and motivation to progress can be applied

to the psychological needs of autonomy, relatedness and competence in SDT and it is now appropriate to explore how this relates back to policy literature.

The PfA framework provides casework evidence of strategies and methods that professionals can use to communicate five key messages. The key message about raising aspirations states this should be achieved by information sharing with regards to what has already worked for other YP. It may be useful to consider how education staff can raise aspirations using SDT to underpin how they interact with YP and what they are promoting.

Aspirations have been linked to perceived social and educational self-efficacy (Bandura, 2005) and it appears that some YP in the research found work too difficult given their SEN, which may have affected their educational efficacy. The reasons why these YP were enrolled on programmes that were not appropriate to their current attainment levels seems to remind us that YP need to be actively involved in decision making, reflecting the PfA guidance on sharing clear information and planning services together. If YP are enrolled on a course where they are able to feel success, this may help them to feel competent or motivated to be prepared for the employment pathway of the PfA framework.

Relatedness in SDT has been applied to the sub theme of feeling valued which may help towards preparing for the community inclusion pathway in PfA. Education staff could work with YP from a humanist approach, for example; emphasising values, ethics or morals to develop active listening skills and empathy to support them in developing authentic relationships. In this sense, education staff should not only ensure YP feel valued and welcome in college, but help them to develop the skills they need to make other people feel valued, emphasising two way reciprocal relationships.

As suggested earlier, it is useful to apply psychology to my line of argument that highlights the importance of relationships in human development. Another appropriate theory is Relational Cultural Theory (RCT: Miller, 1986) which developed as an alternative view to behaviourist developmental approaches widely used and applied at that time (Jordan, Kaplan, Miller, Stiver, & Surrey, 1991). RCT's underpinning principles are embedded in the notion that psychological development and psychological health are established through mutually empowering and empathic connections and that human beings are constantly pursuing connections with others (Jordan, 2017).

RCT argues that human development is not about moving from one phase to another as identified in other models of development; rather, it postulates that individuals 'grow through and toward connection throughout the life span' (Jordan, 2017, p. 63). From this point of view, development is reached through mutual empathy and is important in growth fostering relationships.

Miller (1986) defined five good things that occur as a result of mutually empowering and empathic growth-promoting relationships. They are:

- Increased zest (Vitality)
- Increased ability to take action (Empowerment)
- Increased clarity (A clearer picture of one's self, the other and the relationship)
- Increased sense of worth
- A desire for relationships beyond that particular relationship (Jordan & Hartling, 2002, p. 49).

RCT provides an argument for why relationships appear to be an important factor in how YP experience their transition. The idea of development as a continuous search for meaningful relationships appears to reflect the voice of YP in the studies. This leads me to believe that this is important to them and should be considered further within policy literature.

1.4 Conclusion and Implications

1.4.1 Summary

Recently, various Governments have committed themselves to supporting YP through transition from school to FE. From this meta-ethnographic systematic review, I have constructed a new understanding of how YP with SEN experienced their transition to FE. It is intended that the model created will provide a view of transition that may be applied to practice within the realms of the PfA Agenda.

Within this framework, relationships are neither explicitly mentioned nor promoted as an important factor, though there are underlying important key

messages of collaboration, empowerment of YP and person centred approaches (Corrigan, 2014; Michaels & Ferrara, 2006). There is an assumption that in order to support in this way, the relationships need to be effective and positive.

YP in the studies have reported how relationships they developed helped them to navigate their way around starting college, helped them to make sense of a new social environment and supported them to feel motivated; however, this is not explicitly reflected in the current practices informed by Government policy agendas. Within the systemic context of FE agendas, I am led to wonder if the voice of YP is informing professional practice and if so, to what extent.

1.4.2 Implications for Practice and limitations

The findings of this review offer that the development of relationships as a mediating factor in what could be described as a turbulent and confusing time for YP with SEN requires further consideration. It must be noted that the nature of meta-ethnography has limitations due to the influence of my biases, values and beliefs when translating, synthesising and interpreting the data. Although I have aimed to justify the decisions I have made and be as transparent as possible through the process, I acknowledge that my line of argument is not a concrete concept, rather, one understanding of the proposed research question. Though the review is subjective in nature, I have attempted to map claims against psychological theory and policy literature.

Chapter Two

Moving from Meta-ethnography to Empirical Research

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to offer an understanding of the link between my literature review and empirical research by making my philosophical stance as a researcher explicit. This will be achieved by explaining how I became interested in transition and will explore this concept further. Following this, I will make clear my ontological and epistemological position which underpins my thinking and impacts upon how my research is conceptualised and the methodological and analytical decisions I have made throughout this process. Finally, I examine my role as a researcher in the research process by exploring the relationships between existing knowledge, my experiences and an acknowledgement that I, as a researcher, am 'entangled in the politics and practices of the social world' (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 126)

2.1.1 Developing a Research Focus

Prior to my training, I worked within the FE sector in various roles including teaching and support. My last role involved working within an FE college in pastoral support. Part of this role included supporting year eleven students who had accepted offers onto courses within the college. Transition planning in this sense always felt as though transition was being *done to* the students, rather than *with them* and I felt that whilst their voices could be an integral part of transition, they were not being heard or listened to. Further, I have a keen interest in adolescent development and how YP navigate their way through the social world. I have had many conversations with teachers about what is important to YP during transition and the discussions are often focussed on teaching and learning, understanding school rules or being able to behave appropriately; generally the student's ability to *fit in* within the school structure. As one teacher commented, very succinctly "school is for learning, you can see your friends after school". This perception of school and learning is far removed from my view of school and learning; I often think that schools and colleges are social playgrounds where children learn how to interact, how to manage social

situations and create ways of being in a social world. This is where my interest in transition stemmed from; thinking about how YP understand and make sense of going somewhere else to continue their education. My passion, however, came from my experiences of working with inspiring YP managing and negotiating their own way of starting college, despite challenges and difficulties.

2.1.2 Transition as a Concept: A Relational Approach

Given the social nature of college and the importance placed upon relationships by YP in my meta-ethnography, it is useful to deconstruct the nature and understanding of the concept of transition. This will allow reconstruction (Gergen, 1973, 2001) through critically questioning assumed knowledge that underpins mainstream understandings of transition and create a shared understanding between the reader and I.

The concept of transition in Western Culture is rooted in individualistic values and practice (Leake, Black, & Roberts, 2004). For example, there appears to be emphasis upon YP to develop their independence as they progress into adulthood. This is evident throughout typical school transition practices; for example, solitary visits to other colleges, filling out individual forms, the development of individual transition plans, or YP being encouraged to work towards achieving certain grades or levels to obtain a place at a chosen institution. Therefore, transition is positioned as an individual process, independent of the social context into which it is woven. Wortham and Jackson (2012, p. 2) apply this understanding by critically examining assumptions about knowledge in education, for example, 'an emphasis on the individual as separate from the world'. Wortham and Jackson (2012, p. 11) argue that 'an individual's values, desires, preferences and identities are mediated through tools and artefacts provided and made meaningful by others'. This can include meaning attached to language; for example, the word transition has been used to define this process; moving or changing from one state or place to another. In order to create a shared understanding, I am making an assumption that transition is a process which children and YP go through at various stages of education. However, this process cannot be viewed as solitary or individualist and we must take into consideration the interactions between people and their environment that take place within such a social context.

This view is reflected in my meta-ethnography findings in which YP experienced things such as new beginnings and adjusting to change during their transition. Interestingly, these things were made easy or more difficult by the relationships they had developed with people and their environment, thus relationships acted as a mediating factor and impacted upon how they experienced their transition. Therefore, the emphasis of transition should not be on the self as independent of the social structures within which it interacts, but could be assumed to be shaped by political and social history and given tools such as language to aid meaning making. In essence, my view of transition is one that considers not only the physical transition of school to college, but the psychological, the societal, and the political meanings that are attached to this word. This reasoning informed my empirical research question which aimed to explore how YP made sense of the relationships that acted as a mediating factor during transition.

2.2 My Philosophical Stance as a Researcher

2.2.1 Ontology and Epistemology

To ensure philosophical coherence throughout a piece of research, it is crucial that a researcher's ontological and epistemological stance informs the research process. Ontology is 'concerned with the nature of the world' (Willig, 2013, p. 61) and asks 'What is there to know?' This question is most concerned with assumptions about the nature of reality, what exists in the world (Grix, 2002) and what it means to be human. I have approached my research from a realist ontology as I am making an assumption that transition is a social and psychological process which exists independent of knowledge about it.

Epistemology is most concerned with 'How can we know what there is to know?' (Willig, 2013) and what counts as knowledge (Tuli, 2010). My epistemological stance is relational; although I am assuming there are real things that exist in the world, I believe that we are only able to access or 'know' these things through individual interpretation of others construction of meaning (Scott, 2005). Thus, I have adopted a critical realist stance (Bhasker, 1975) to approach this research. Here, I do not ascribe to generalise what is found to the wider population, rather I

aim to understand transition as others experience it (Tuli, 2010). I believe this philosophical stance is compatible with my research question and recognises the role of multiple and subjective realities which are given meaning through interpretation but recognises fallibility of this interpretation (Scott, 2005). Therefore, I am assuming that I am only able to explore YP's realities; their lived experiences of transition, through my interpretation of meaning that is constructed by the YP included in the research.

2.2.2 Methodology and Analysis

The methodology of my research is informed by my ontological and epistemological beliefs (Scott, 2005). It was essential that the approach I used could explore transition from the perspectives of YP in the research and acknowledge that realities are multiple, fluid and dependent upon context (Yilmaz, 2013). This led to choosing a qualitative methodological approach to answer my research question which appears to be compatible with a critical realist stance.

To analyse my data, I chose to use Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA, Smith, Flowers, & Larkin, 2009) to '…gain a better understanding of the nature and quality of phenomena as they present themselves' (Willig, 2013, p. 258). In comparison to other methods of analysis, for example, thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006), I felt that IPA was more compatible with my research question and my theoretical conception of my research (See Appendix XIV). I felt that in order for me to interpret how YP make sense of relationships during transition, I would need an approach that considered and allowed me to engage in a double hermeneutic. In line with my research question, 'IPA is concerned with meaning and processes, rather than with events and their causes' (Larkin & Thompson, 2012, p. 102) and thus, IPA allows me to make sense of the YP's sense making regarding their relationships (Smith et al., 2009). Relevant to a critical realist approach, IPA 'accepts the impossibility of gaining direct access to research participants' life worlds' (Willig, 2013, p. 260) and relies upon my interpretation as a researcher by drawing upon phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Smith, 1996).

2.2.3 Axiology and Ethicality

Given my qualitative methodological approach and interpretive analysis method, it is important I take my own values into consideration and how these affect the research process, particularly regarding ethics. I acknowledge that I am bound into the research process, from design to implementation and beyond and consequently, my decisions have been guided by my experiences. It is important that this is critically examined and made explicit to enhance transparency. This is known as axiology and will be explored in relation to my personal experiences and in addition how this impacted upon ethicality.

Personal Experience and Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an essential component of qualitative research and allows the researcher to challenge understandings of knowledge construction, emphasising a subjective understanding of knowledge creation (Berger, 2015). Berger (2015) offers three types of reflexivity positions; shared experiences with the participants, moving from outsider to insider during the research and finally, one that has no personal experience of the phenomena being studied. I have never had the experience of transitioning to college, instead, I was a young carer for my brother after leaving school and went on to complete an Access to Higher Education course at aged 22. However, my work with YP in my last role, did give me some insight into the process. Having supported YP through the process of transition, I brought my own assumptions to the research process and this guided me to address some topics in more detail and be sensitive to some areas of conversation introduced by the YP. I have always been interested in post-16 decision making and I can recall how tutors I have worked with previously expected students to behave in the way they deem appropriate because "it's their choice, they want to be here, no one is forcing them". As it stands, YP are now required to be in education, training or employment until aged 18 years. Therefore, some tutors' attitudes did not appear to be congruent with the systems within which they were teaching. This may have guided some of my interview questions regarding how YP came to be at the college and how involved they were in decision-making. For example, during interviews I opened up dialogue of consideration of other colleges, even though this was not a prompt in the interview guide. In addition to this, my experience of not attending college may have allowed

me to understand and engage with the YP's lack of autonomy regarding college options. I feel that I shared an experience with these YP and this undoubtedly guided how I interacted with them. This suggests that I had some inside knowledge of college destinations and options, but the projection of this into my research questions may have been imposing and it is crucial that I acknowledge this, making it explicit.

Guiding Theory

Self-determination Theory (SDT:Ryan & Deci, 2000) has been applied to my meta-ethnography and empirical research and it is useful to explain why this decision has been made. My research has been conceptualised within a critical realist philosophical paradigm and utilises IPA as a framework to guide and warrant research decisions. There is considerable emphasis on phenomenology when conducting a piece of IPA research. Similarly, humanistic psychology has roots in phenomenology and SDT as a guiding theory reflects the theme of person centred approaches evident throughout my research (Rowan, 1998). There is a strong theme of decision making in the findings in chapter one and three and this has been linked to the concept of independence in the PfA agenda and the need for autonomy in SDT. My understanding of independence rejects the idea of YP living independently to others, and supports the idea of living independently in relation to others, placing emphasis on relationality and interaction. For example, in terms of decision making, this could mean knowing where to go to find support and who can support, being empowered to make decisions regarding the self and having opportunities to make decisions in relation to others. It is my intention that by drawing upon psychology that reflects person centred practice within a phenomenological paradigm, philosophical coherence would be enhanced.

YP and decision-making

I originally planned to gain informed consent from the research participants only. This was because participants were over 16 years old and deemed by the college principal to not lack capacity, according to the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Therefore, in accordance with the British Psychological Societies Code of Human Ethics (British Pschological Society, 2014), I did not require parental consent and this was explored with a senior member of the Ethics Committee. During this

discussion, it was noted that if I attempted to gain parental consent for participants over the age of 16, I would be assuming that they do not have capacity to consent for themselves and therefore, ethical clearance could not be granted by the University. I was pleased with this decision as I felt that these YP should be able to have sole responsibility for whether they wanted to take part in the research. However, during discussion with the college principal, she felt that parental consent was required as a caution as the YP were under 18 years of age and therefore, were classed as children under the law. Additionally, it is important to note that YP had additional needs and were potentially vulnerable. However, Morrow and Richards (1996) note that an overtly protective position towards vulnerable children may impact children's potential to engage with and contribute to research. Although these YP may be vulnerable, they are competent human beings who have a voice and in the hope of gaining informed consent, it was important that they demonstrated autonomy in their decisions and I respected their competencies (Morrow & Richards, 1996). Discussions with my supervisor and the senior members of the Ethics Committee suggested that in this case, it would be appropriate to gain parental consent. In addition to this, the college principal could deny me access to participants and therefore, I was granted permission to follow their advice and gain parental consent in addition to consent from YP.

Power

One of IPA's central tenets is the capacity to give voice to participants (Larkin, Watts, & Clifton, 2006), to allow their experiences to be heard. Additionally, the method recognises the role of interpretation and the researcher's active involvement in the research. It is essential then, that issues of power are addressed throughout this process, as power and status between adults and children require consideration when researching with children (Christensen & Jones, 2000; Morrow & Richards, 1996). Christensen (2004) offer that research with children requires consideration of different methodological approaches and ethical issues from those which are used with adults. It is then appropriate to explore power dynamics between myself, the YP and the member of staff present in the interviews. It was my intention to reduce power between myself and the YP during the interview process with the aim of creating equality within the constraints of the interview context. I introduced myself by my first name and gave an overview of why I was in their environment hoping

they felt informed and in control. I was aware that these YP may have come into contact with educational psychologists previously and I did not know or understand their preconceptions of the EP role or purpose. This became clear to me early in the research process during a phone call with a parent who asked if any of the information would be contained on their child's educational psychology file. It was then that I made connections between how my role may be perceived in relation to the research. Further, I was unaware of their feelings about me being in their environment and what this meant for them. Thus, it was important to make clear my rationale for being there to avoid confusion. There was a member of staff present during the interviews and this undoubtedly had an impact on how the YP presented themselves and how they interacted with me. For most, the staff member's presence appeared to be a positive influence that helped them feel safe with me. The TA also had inside knowledge regarding some college practices and she was able to explain what these were. I felt my interactions were authentic with the YP and I was able to build rapport with them, though acknowledging this was within the constraints of a single visit.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter has offered an understanding of how my research has been theoretically conceptualised and documents the progress from meta-ethnography to empirical research. I have offered an account of personal experience and located my interest of transition within this. An understanding of transition has been proposed that rejects individualistic values that traditionally underpin the concept and instead, acknowledges the complexities of YP living in a social world. I have approached my research from a critical realist philosophical stance and explained the consequent methodological and analytical decisions I have made. In addition to this, I have critically reflected upon how my past experiences and biases may have impacted upon the research process with the aim of enhancing reflexivity and being as transparent as possible.

Chapter Three: Empirical Research

How do young people with Education, Health and Care Plans make sense of relationships during transition to further education and how might this help to prepare them for adulthood?

Abstract

The Department for Education and Skills (2007) has suggested that the key to attainment is a good transition. Within the context of low post-16 participation rates and inadequate transition procedures, this empirical research aims to explore the lived experiences of YP who have transitioned from and to specialist settings. This is achieved by answering the following research questions:

How do young people with Education, Health and Care Plans make sense of relationships during transition to Further Education?

How might young people's constructions of relationships help to prepare them for adulthood?

Informed by a meta-ethnographical review, an idiographic approach was used to interview four YP in a specialist Sixth Form college in a LA in the North East of England. Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis was used to analyse data and two super-ordinate themes were constructed. The first theme People, contains the following subthemes; School feeling like a family, decision making, separation/ being in it together and teachers as mentors. Findings suggest that relationships developed within school are different in nature to those developed in college. The second theme Purpose of College, contains the following subthemes; College as a stepping stone and learning independent skills.

There are tentative links between YP's autonomy in decision making and the role of teachers as mentors to preparing for adulthood. Implications for educational psychology practice are discussed and limitations of the study are acknowledged.

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Context

Post-16 transition for Young People (YP) with Special Educational Needs (SEN) is mentioned repeatedly throughout Government documents (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2004; Department for Education, 2015, 2016; Department for Education and Skills, 2007; Ofsted, 2011) highlighting the importance within recent and current political agendas of improving educational outcomes for YP. The Department for Education and Skills (2007, p. 39) note the key to continuing with an academic course is a 'good transition'. Further, Ofsted (2011) identified that post-16 transition procedures were not effective. Consequently, I was interested in what makes a good transition and what is important to YP during their transition to Further Education (FE), aiming to link policy and practice.

To explore this further, I completed a meta-ethnography which aimed to answer the following question: How do Young People with Special Educational Needs Experience the Transition from School to Further Education?

The outcome suggested four overarching ideas, (as themes, with sub themes) were important to YP: a new social world - new beginnings and peer relationships; motivation - feeling valued, motivation to progress and aspirations; challenges - uncertainty and adjusting to change; support - expectations of support and teacher support. Additionally, it appeared YP managed and understood these through relationships they developed with people around them. This outcome informed my empirical research question and I was interested to explore relationships further.

This empirical research aims to answer the following questions:
Research Question One: How do young people with Education, Health and Care Plans make sense of relationships during transition to further education?
Research Question Two: How might young people's constructions of relationships help to prepare them for adulthood?

Due to the idiographic nature of the question, I aim to explore the lived experiences of YP with SEN who have transitioned to FE.

3.1.2 Relationships and Transition

Transition is defined as moving from one state or place to another (Oxford University Press, 2018), representing psychological and physical transition. In the UK education system, there are three main transitional points; early years to primary, primary to secondary and secondary to post 16. There are psychological and physical considerations to be explored during school to post-16 transition, given the major psychological shifts during childhood to adulthood (Jindal-Snape & Miller, 2008). Polat, Kalambouka, and Boyle (2002) note that this is even more challenging for YP with SEN, who they describe, within the context of inclusion, as being on society's margins. Hughes, Banks, and Terras (2013) conducted a systematic review of the impact of primary to secondary transition on psychosocial adjustment and suggested children with SEN could be more vulnerable to low academic self-esteem and are more concerned about bullying. Weaknesses in anti-bullying procedures concern YP during transition from school to college (Mallinson, 2009).

There is a significant body of literature exploring the impact of school transition on YP with SEN, and a proportion of this is devoted to YP with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD: Adreon & Durocher, 2007; Murin, Hellriegel, & Mandy, 2016; Stoner, Angell, House, & Bock, 2007). Some of this research focuses specifically on the psychological transition from school to adulthood (Hendricks & Wehman, 2009; Wehman, Schall, Carr, Targett, & Cifu, 2014) for YP with ASD; there is a general consensus that YP face significant barriers in multiple areas during transition. However, research suggests that YP believe the quality of relationships with peers and adults is an important factor in navigating and supporting transition (Carroll & Dockrell, 2012; Craig, 2009; Esbrand, 2016; Hickey, 2016; Shephard, 2015). Relationships with adults are important to YP, especially when they feel adults are advocating for them with regards to looking for academic courses or helping them to find information (Craig, 2009). Additionally, making new friends is of concern to YP, whilst new friendships at college help YP as they are able to share issues with them (Craig, 2009). Relationships have been constructed as separate themes in some research (Craig, 2009; Hickey, 2016). This appears to be different to the outcome of my meta-ethnography which places relationships as central to YP understanding and navigating their transition.

3.2 Method

3.2.1. Data Generating Methods

     I contacted two FE colleges and explained my research to senior members in each during a one to one meeting. These colleges were chosen as it was likely that some students would have Education, Health and Care Plans. Both colleges indicated they would like to take part. Information packs were sent out via email; however, the FE college did not have time to take part and therefore, the special Sixth Form college was the only college subsequently involved. After meeting again with this college's principal, I sent individual research packs out with the intention that the principal would send them to five YP identified at the initial meeting. Obtaining consent forms from the YP seemed problematic and so, I telephoned the parents of each YP to explore with them, whether they wanted their children to take part. One parent did not want their child to take part and four parents recalled getting the information packs but they had been lost in the last few weeks. I then sent more information packs, with stamped addressed envelopes to the YP's homes and these were returned within the week.

     An individual semi-structured interview was chosen as the method of data collection to enable YP to tell their story, as Smith et al. (2009, p. 57) note, 'a qualitative research interview is often described as a conversation with a purpose'. An interview guide was constructed and consisted of eight questions based upon themes from the literature review (Appendix XII). Each question was designed in relation to my data analysis method and thus, questions were open ended and as free as possible from preconceptions (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014).

3.2.2. Finding the participants

    Purposive sampling, choosing participants who are able to offer rich insights into the phenomenon being studied (Quinn Patton, 2015) was used to find participants in order to ensure that YP were in a position to provide meaningful understandings of their experience of transition (Smith et al., 2009). This method was chosen as this research did not aim to represent the wider population; rather it encouraged exploration of the phenomena being studied (Smith et al., 2009). The following participant criteria were used:

- YP who have an Education, Health and Care Plan.
- YP who have transitioned to college in the last two years.
- YP who are able to communicate in English without the need for a translator or interpreter.

After initial meetings with the college principal, five YP were identified as meeting the criteria to be invited to take part in the research. Four of those gave their consent to take part. The YP had all transitioned to the Sixth Form in the last two years and were described by the principal as having moderate learning difficulties including diagnoses of Autism and Downs Syndrome.

3.2.3. Participatory Methods

It was important that I was able to engage YP in the research and increase participation in the conversation. For this reason, various visual tools were examined to aid participation and from this, I decided to adapt Clark, Laing, Tiplady and Woolner's (2013) 'Fortune Lines'. Fortune lines allow participants to chart how they were feeling at various events over a period of time. This visual tool appeared to fit with the concept of transition as "the process or a period of changing from one state or condition to another" (Oxford University Press, 2018). However, the range of emotions available (Happy, neutral, sad faces) did not appear to represent the range of emotions that YP feel throughout transition such as angry, confused, worried, nervous or excited. Emojis have been used as measures/indicators of emotion in research (Jaeger, Vidal, Kam, & Ares, 2016; Kaye, Malone, & Wall, 2017; Wall, Kaye, & Malone, 2016) and participants were asked to plot these on a horizontal axis for key events from the end of school to a year after leaving college (See Appendix XVI). The use of fortune lines was not intended to be included in the analysis, rather a way of opening up dialogue about different events during transition. I recognised that a face to face conversation may be uncomfortable for YP and I felt that the use of a fortune line may make them feel more secure, for example, if the conversation became difficult, focus on the fortune line could provide some space for the YP to think and reflect upon what they wanted to talk about or not talk about.

3.2.4. Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis

The first stage of IPA involves verbatim transcription of the interview data. This task took approximately four hours for every 30 minutes of data. Whilst this was time consuming, it was very useful, as it helped me to become familiar with my data, allowing me to submerge myself in the voices of the participants.

I followed recommendations by Smith et al. (2009) and began reading each transcript, alongside the recording, to listen for any non-verbal cues and immerse myself in the conversations. Whilst doing this, exploratory comments were made in one margin regarding descriptive, linguistic and conceptual content (See Appendix XIII for an example). Once this had been considered, I was able to produce a list of emergent themes of each transcript and use cross comparison to produce Master and Super-ordinate themes (See Appendix XV). Analysis was completed case by case to start with, followed by cross comparison for the first research question and then repeated for the second.

3.2.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethicality was reflected through using the British Psychological Society (BPS) Code of Human Research Ethics and Professional Practice Guidelines and the Health and Care Professions Council Standards of Proficiency (British Psychological Society, 2009, 2017; Health and Care Professions Council, 2015). The following ethical issues were considered: informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, debriefing, protection from harm and right to withdraw. Ethical clearance was sought from Newcastle University's Ethics Committee and granted on 18th May 2017 and a revised request was granted on 13th October 2017 (See Appendix VII and VIII).

I gained written informed consent from parents and participants (See Appendix X) prior to interviews by sending out information packs to home addresses. The participants had various levels of understanding and it was crucial that I explained my role and why I was in their environment in a clear accessible way and gave them the opportunity to withdraw (See Appendix IX and XI). This was particularly important as the principal of the college, who acted as a gatekeeper, introduced the research to them and her power over less powerful groups of students may have impacted upon the participants' decision to give consent.

Consent was also gained verbally from the participants before commencing interviews to ensure this was an on-going process (Miller & Bell, 2012).

Given that only one college and four participants took part in the research, confidentiality was important. To be as transparent as possible, it was important that I explained to participants what information would be included in the final write up and reassure them that their responses would be anonymised as much as possible, given pseudonyms and their data would be kept confidential. This was also explained to the member of staff that accompanied the participants.

I did not anticipate that this research would cause harm to participants, although I was aware that talking about their transition may be considered as sensitive. Due to this, I asked for a member of staff to be present to provide emotional support if needed.

3.3 Findings

3.3.1 Findings for Research Question One

How do Young People with Education, Health and Care Plans make sense of relationships During Transition to Further Education?
For Research Question one, one super-ordinate theme was constructed with subthemes within and is presented below.

3.3.1.1 Super-ordinate Theme One: People

The impact of others was evident throughout all interviews. The following four subthemes were identified as important to YP during transition.

School feeling like a family	Decision-making	Separation/Being in it together	Teachers as mentors
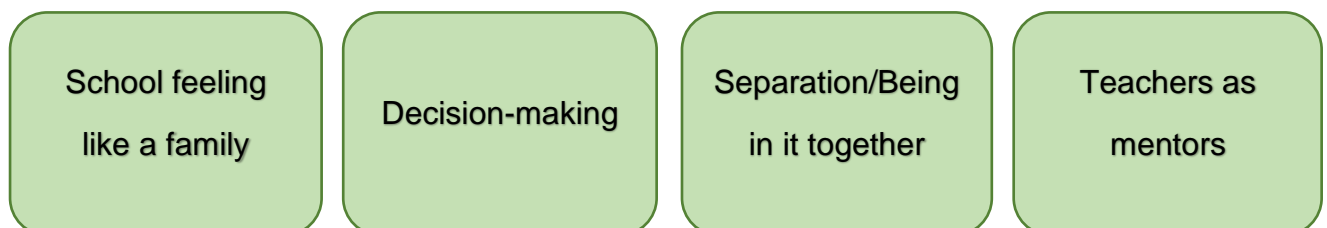
Figure 3 Visual Representation of Analysis for Research Question One

Subtheme One: School feeling like a family

All YP reported positive relationships with school staff and friends at school prior to starting college.

> *"Like all the teachers are like nice and…really fun…" (Abigail)*
>
> *"… they* (school friends) *were happy, trustful, respected…me and I respected them back…" (Liam)*

Common to YP's talk was emphasis on how they sensed a belonging to the school community. Chloe made sense of this by relating it to family, demonstrated by using language associated with family names such as "sister" and "mammy".

> *"… they used to just always like talk to you and make you feel as if like, you belong there basically, like make you feel wanted. Like if you get in trouble or something…they won't shout at you or put you straight in detention they talk to you first and make you like, come to sense with you, just like, families do anyways…"*
>
> *"they treat us like we were like family so we always used to call them … (names TA) our like school mammy… we call (names TA), our TA, we used to just call her our sister and things" (Chloe)*

Jake felt like part of the staff team because he felt trusted by teachers. The suggestion that Jake "didn't bother telling them" emphasises this and how he didn't think his undercover status would be detected.

> *"Basically I was like, a miniature member of staff (laughs)…except I didn't bother telling them" (Jake)*

Subtheme Two: Decision-Making

  YP reported perceived passivity in relation to others regarding decision-making during their transition; more specifically, how they came to be attending the sixth form.

> *"Erm, well, erm, we got a letter about it before and I got a place in here so"*
> *(Abigail)*
>
> *"Erm, coz, erm, my mam and my dad were thinking…we were looking at different colleges, we went to AB and then we came here and we thought, er, AB, the adults look a bit taller and we were for this one and I just came here coz it would be easy option…I'm just playing it by that" (Jake)*

Chloe had limited choices in what college she attended due to her being moved to college at the end of year ten and needing to complete her GCSEs.

> *"erm yeah, because I was only in year eleven, I had to do year eleven over here, I didn't really have a choice which college I went to…" (Chloe)*

Subtheme Three: Separation/Being in it together

  When recalling how they felt about transition, some YP remembered feeling separated from their friends.

> *"… I'm not able to go over there to see them, so I just stay over here" (Abigail)*
> *"… I was a bit emotional… sometimes because I didn't want to leave my friends and my teachers so" (Abigail)*
> *"erm, in this college yeah, coz people just don't understand what like er like basically just don't know how to keep their mouths shut" (Chloe)*

This became even more difficult when the YP or their friends were leaving at different times.

> "*coz some of them went earlier and go before me*" (Liam)

In contrast, Jake felt as though he had a shared vision with others during his transition and a sense of sharing an experience.

> *"… the only person I knew was er my best friend and she was in a wheelchair included and…she didn't know anyone either and me and her took this together like one big step forward to our future like ahead" (Jake)*

YP appeared to feel reassured by knowing that they would be reunited with existing friends.

> *"… I knew a lot of people from (names buildings part of special school)… felt perfect" (Jake)*
>
> *"… I wasn't nervous with like the people, because I knew them anyways because obviously, they were over there before they came here" (Chloe)*

Liam and Chloe explained why this was important to them.

> *"…I can talk to them (friends) without worrying about anything and…I can hang around with them" (Liam)*
>
> *"… I thought it would be a bit more chilled back…because I've got like other friends in college before I had been in college, they said it was dead chilled back, chilled out so" (Chloe)*

Subtheme Four: Teachers as Mentors

All YP reported on what they valued about teachers at college. The term teachers was used to represent all college staff including teachers, teaching assistants and those with pastoral responsibilities. Teachers trusting and respecting YP was important.

> *"Coz I know I can trust her (TA) and talk to her about anything, coz like, if I'm worried about anything or if I need the question asking out again or yeah" (Liam)*
>
> *"… I like the most about (names tutor teacher), is that is that she talks nice to the students" (Abigail)*
>
> *"like she just sits, like if I'm upset or something, she'll just sit with me, like the other day, she sat me down in this conference room and she just started like talking to me, like making me feel better and things and she's just like there a lot" (Chloe)*

Jake's account of his relationship with his teacher signifies the importance of promoting choice and autonomy.

> *"… and a couple of them are like er, helping each other and they let us have like a choice er to do different things and er and like have different impact on some people" (Jake)*

3.3.2 Findings for Research Question Two

How might YP's constructions of relationships help to prepare them for adulthood? For Research Question two, one super-ordinate theme was constructed with two subthemes as presented below.

3.3.2.1 Super-ordinate Theme One: Purpose of College

Most YP needed prompts from the TA to be able to think about how college helps to prepare them for adulthood. For example, when I asked Jake how college helps him get ready to be an adult, he replied with,

> *"(laughs) I'm only eighteen"*

However, two sub themes were constructed within the super-ordinate theme of Purpose of college. These offer an explanation of how the relationships YP develop with others and their environment helps or hinders them in preparing for adulthood.

Subtheme one: College as a Stepping-stone

Reports from YP expressed how they felt Sixth-form college was a stepping-stone in order to get to their next destination. A common feature was supplementing the words "Over here" for college and "Over there" for school. This was a common feature and Jake reframed my use of "college" into "…over here".

YP considered college to be an extension of school and something to complete in order to progress or achieve the required grades to continue their education. Examples of this included YP's focus on the theme of time.

> *"…I hope to like do like do a whole year of this and then finish and then go to my next college" (Jake)*
>
> *"… I want obviously to go to college and things and get the grade that I want for my childcare…" (Chloe)*
>
> *"… coz I get more grades here, until like I moved somewhere else for better grades" (Liam)*

Chloe was not able to complete school as she was moved to college at the end of year ten and Abigail had difficulty remembering what year she was in and how long she had been at college.

> *"I'm in year, thirteen yeah, but I missed a year so when I was in school over there…so I jumped Year eleven and came straight to college"*
>
> *"Year twelve I think…Erm…I don't know" (Abigail)*

Jake reported how fast his school years had gone and how he felt this had a physiological impact on him, indicating the strength of his feelings.

> *"Erm, like shocked, coz it's been so fast, like, like my year eleven, coz I've been to year seven to like year eleven and it's been so fast you can't even count the days" (Jake)*
>
> *"My chest was to my heart shall I say" (Jake)*

Subtheme Two: Learning Independent Skills

Some YP were able to report on how people in college help them to get ready for adulthood and this was in relation to learning independent living skills.

> *"…learn how to manage money and time" (Jake)*
>
> *"… getting on time" (Liam)*

Additionally, Chloe and Liam report how the relationships they have with people in college help to prepare for adulthood by teaching ways of making better choices and being responsible.

> *"… they treat us like adults… it's not like over there where they like…give ya a detention, they'll give you like chats to see sometimes…" (Chloe)*
>
> *"… it's more relaxed in here, like in there you had to do the things that the teachers say but now, it's more like…if you do that again you get a you only get one more chance…" (Chloe)*
>
> *"… not being silly… I guess… being responsible, looking after my own things sometimes" (Liam)*

Promoting choice and autonomy was commented on by YP and this in relation uniform and meals.

> *"yeah coz at college you can wear your own clothes and things so you don't have to be all suffocated in like uniform" (Chloe)*
>
> *"… school dinners and whatever and…like have more of a different impact" (Jake)*

Work support was mentioned as important for Chloe in ensuring her move to her next college.

> *"… well they push you on to do like the work…because if you don't get all the work out the way then that means when you leave you'll have to come back …" (Chloe)*
>
> *"… she'll help me like fill out forms if I need to… so she's been helping me do a C.V and stuff like that so basically helping me to do like try and find my own job and work…" (Chloe)*

Summary

Research Question One

The relationships that YP develop at school serve a different purpose than those at college. It appears that school based relationships are compared with a family unit, offering security and safety and this is reflected in how some YP used language to name these types of relationships. Relationships at college appear to relate more to independence, for example, feeling trusted, valued, respected and given opportunities to demonstrate responsibility and autonomy. During transition, YP reported perceived passivity in decision making in relation to others which implies that YP had limited, if any choice in sixth form options. There was also reference to being separated from friends, as other students were leaving at different times, but YP had a sense of being in it together, as they would be reunited with existing friends.

Research Question Two

YP appear to have a general consensus regarding the purpose of Sixth-form college, which is to act as a stepping-stone to another FE college. They believe they are required to be at the Sixth-form to achieve the grades they need for further courses in other institutions. It is then questionable how active these YP are within this process and how this has impacted upon their understanding of being prepared for adulthood. YP constructed school based relationships as safe and secure, similar to a family unit, though they did not talk about being empowered to make decisions regarding their future, in contrast, it appears these decisions had been made for them. It may be a lack of autonomy in decision making had an impact upon how they viewed college. When thinking about future destinations, YP appeared to have more autonomy to decide where they wanted to go and this is reflected in how the nature of their next college course choice is directly linked to their aspirations. It could be

that college based relationships allowed YP to feel more in control of their choices through the process of empowerment.

YP were able to comment on how they have learnt skills that are associated with independent living, such as time and money management and looking for work through their relationships with teachers.

3.4 Discussion

By drawing upon a qualitative methodological paradigm and utilising IPA, this study has offered a way of understanding transition through the lived experiences of four YP in a specialist Sixth Form college, aiming to answer the following questions:

- How do Young People with Education, Health and Care Plans make sense of relationships during transition to Further Education?
- How might YP's constructions of relationships help to prepare them for adulthood?

3.4.1 The role of Teachers in Preparing for Adulthood

The findings offered in the previous section suggest YP experience relationships during transition differently at school and college. Additionally, 'the school psychological environment' (Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996) is important in understanding how YP experience relationships.

School relationships appear to be significant to YP, with an emphasis on feeling a sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This may suggest that YP felt safe, accepted and valued within their school community. Sense of Belonging, a psychological theory of motivation is defined as 'the extent to which individuals feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in their social environment' (Prince & Hadwin, 2013, p. 238). Interactions between teachers and students have been shown to have a positive effect on student sense of belonging, creating a safe and secure foundation where students can experience efficacy and academic success (Roeser et al., 1996). Additionally, if psychological needs of safety and belonging are met, YP may feel more prepared for transition which can be a risky or frightening change. Safety and belonging needs are frequently cited within

psychological needs theories (Griffin & Tyrrell, 2003; Maslow, 1943; McClelland, 1961; Rogers, 2000).

In the current study, this develops and progresses into a more mature understanding of the concept of relationships with teachers at college. In this context, YP value feeling trusted and respected through efforts from teachers to promote autonomy and choice. Additionally, relationships with teachers in college appear to develop into a mentoring role whereby, positive interactions are acknowledged and valued by YP. This is reflected in the construct of relatedness as one of three universal needs in Self-Determination Theory (SDT; Deci & Ryan, 2002).

Relationships with teachers appeared to support YP in preparing for adulthood by providing a safe space to learn independence skills. One aspect of this was interpersonal skills such as, making good choices and being responsible. The second aspect was focussed on work support; looking for work and challenging YP to complete college work. This was supported by YP's perceptions that teachers treated them as adults and gave opportunities to demonstrate this throughout college.

3.4.2 The Role of Autonomy in Preparing for Adulthood

Findings suggest YP had limited opportunities to engage in decision-making regarding college options when leaving school. Dee (2002) suggests that post-school transition decision-making for YP with SEN is intrusive as they are subjected to more formal scrutiny and debate than others. Further, Dee (2002) identifies a mode of decision making that could be relevant to the YP in this study; decisions made by default. Only one young person in the study reported looking at other colleges before transitioning to the Sixth Form and for others, the decision appeared to be made by school, with some parental input.

Additionally, YP perceived college as a stepping-stone to another course, indicating an understanding of college as a natural extension of school, or possibly the default destination. When recalling what was important to YP during transition, they prioritised completing work so they were able to leave, with similar perceptions to leaving college. The idea that this was important to them, rather than for them highlights YP's understanding that it was a natural progression. YP appeared to

perceive themselves as having more choice in further college destinations and they all had aspirations for employment. It may be that for future college decision-making, they felt motivated due to perceived increased autonomy (Baumeister & Leary, 1995), another universal need in SDT. The idea of a natural extension to school was evident in the language used; YP frequently named school as "over there" and college as "over here". The school and college are located on the same site and this language could have historical underpinnings, though it still appears relevant in understanding how YP are prepared for adulthood.

An assumption of Humanistic psychology is, as humans, we are consciously and unconsciously aware and by being aware, are able to make choices (Bugental, 1964). Additionally, humans are contextualised as always in relationships with others, whether actual or potential. By drawing upon these assumptions it may be possible to apply aspects to YP's experiences within a Humanistic perspective by focussing upon autonomy and connectedness to others, emphasised in SDT.

3.4.3 Limitations

By engaging in an idiographic approach, I do not aim to generalise findings to the wider population, for example, argue that this is how all YP experience transition, nor produce a theory of how YP make sense of relationships. However, Smith et al. (2009, p. 29) note that ideography locate generalisations '…in the particular, and hence develops them more cautiously'. Additionally, I have attempted to theoretically generalise my claims within 'existing professional and experiential knowledge' (Smith et al., 2009, p. 4) by drawing upon psychological literature.

A further limitation of this research is an acknowledgment that my participant recruitment procedures do not accurately reflect how my research is conceptualised. The principal of the college was the key person for recruitment and she was able to guide me in choosing participants that could offer in depth experiences of transition. This gatekeeper role is not congruent with the emphasis placed upon YP to be autonomous, though I was bound into thinking about practicalities of the research. It may have been more appropriate for me to go into classrooms, explain my research to YP and invite them to take part. This way of recruitment would have been more appropriate and gives opportunities for YP to demonstrate their autonomy.

3.4.4 Implications for Educational Psychology

Changes to the SEN Code of Practice (2014) now provide opportunities for Educational Psychologists to work within the 0-25 age range, allowing more scope for EPs to practise within FE. This is reflected in post-16 transition research within Educational Psychology literature (Atkinson, Dunsmuir, Lang, & Wright, 2015; Morris & Atkinson, 2018). Prior to this, Craig (2009) suggested that EPs are in a good position to provide support with writing and reviewing policies, offering training and conducting research to ensure good practice within LA's. Mallinson (2009) argued to support the application of psychology within post-16 education by offering challenge to unsuccessful practices and negative attitudes. It appears that the EP role within post-16 Education, in particular transition, may be most useful at a group or systemic level by drawing upon skills used in consultation, training and research and in addition to child and adolescent development knowledge. The purpose of EP work in this context is using these skills and understandings to surface YP's voice and choice at transition (White & Rae, 2016) which, could be linked to Mallinson's (2009) idea of challenging unsuccessful practice. EPs also have a role in the Education, Health and Care Planning process, which from year nine, should implement a Preparing for Adulthood focus. In agreement with Mallinson (2009), challenge could be offered to school staff regarding FE destinations within the statutory review process. Further, EPs have an advocacy role in ensuring that YP's voices are heard (Morris & Atkinson, 2018) and as highlighted through this research, involved in all aspects of decision making to develop autonomy (Corrigan, 2014; Michaels & Ferrara, 2006). Table 8 offers opportunities for EP practice and aims to draw upon existing literature regarding the EP role; supporting the claims offered in the current research.

Table 7: Opportunities for EP Practice

Claims from this research	The role of EPs	Applied Psychological concepts	Psychological theories	Psychological Perspective
YP develop safe and secure relationships at school, enhancing a feeling of sense of belonging.	Training and research within school settings. Supporting schools to develop inclusion policies	• School ethos/ psychological environments • Inclusive practice • Sense of Belonging • Psychological safety	Self-determination theory Rogers Core Conditions Maslow's hierarchy of need Human Givens	Humanistic Psychology
YP appear to be passive in their decision-making regarding post school options which could affect how they view the purpose of college and impact upon motivation	Consultation and training with a focus on advocacy for YP within transition and statutory processes	• The role of autonomy in decision-making • Agency • Empowerment		
Relationships with college staff enable YP to make good choices and become responsible through feeling trusted and respected	Training with college staff and research within colleges. Supporting college staff in understanding adolescent development	• The role of Reciprocity in relationships • Authenticity • Relatedness		

3.5 Conclusion

In order for YP to have a 'good transition', educators need to know what that means, not only to Government, but also to the YP who experience transition. As identified earlier, YP with SEN face greater barriers to successful transition, though, they have been able to tell researchers what is important to them. By listening to these voices and providing opportunities to engage YP in research, I hope to not only add to educational psychology literature, but contribute to the knowledge base within my placement LA. This research has highlighted the importance of relationships during transition and offered an understanding of how YP make sense of these. Findings suggest that YP experience relationships differently at school and college and this may have an impact on preparing for adulthood. Drawing upon

humanistic psychology principles, opportunities are afforded to explore YP's sense-making regarding relationships in terms of personal growth, or self-actualisation (Deci & Ryan, 2002; Rogers, 1951) to emphasise interactions with others and how this affects transition. Humanism has contributed to educators' understanding of motivation and relationships (Jarvis, 2005). I propose the foundations underpinning the perspective can be applied to understanding YP's sense-making of relationships during transition.

Further, there are increasing opportunities for EP's to use their knowledge and skills within Further Education. However; only by drawing upon research that privileges YP's experiences will we uncover what is important to them during transition and how as a profession we can support appropriately person-centred processes and practices. This study has aimed to capture the voice of YP and place this within a psychological context and along with other researchers, encourage EPs to begin shaping their role within Further Education.

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Appendices

Appendix I: Table of Search Terms

Source	Terms used in the literature	Notes
Interventions for Preparing for Adulthood Agenda. Four key areas: Employment, Independent Living, Health and Community Participation		
www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk	**Supported Internships** During the course of the last two years we have been working closely with **pathfinders** and have refined our original ten key messages to the following five elements that are essential to improving life chances for disabled YP. 1. Develop a **shared vision** of improving life chances with YP, families and all key partners. 2. **Raise aspirations** for a fulfilling adult life, by sharing clear information about what has already worked for others. 3. Develop a **personalised approach** to all aspects of support using **person centred** practices, **personal budgets** and **building communities**. 4. Develop **post-16 options** and support that lead to employment, independent living, good health, friends, relationships and community inclusion. 5. Develop **outcome focused multi-agency commissioning strategies** that are informed by the voice of YP and families. - **Social skills for the workplace** - **Employability skills** - **Travel training** - **Managing own medication**	Supported internships enable YP aged sixteen to twenty four with a statement of SEN, a Learning Difficulty Assessment or an Education, Health and Care plan to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace.

	• **IT skills** • **Transition assessment** • **Post-16 curriculum design** • **Planning for life**	
Kingsnorth, S, Healy, H and Macarthur, C. (2007). *Preparing for Adulthood: A Systematic Review of Life Skill Programs for Youth with Physical Disabilities*. Journal of Adolescent Health, 41 (4), 323-332.	**Life Skill Program/programmes**	Aim - to determine the effectiveness of life skill programmes emphasising independent functioning in preparation for adulthood among youth with physical disabilities
MacDonald, M. (2015). SEND Pathfinder Information Pack, Version 5, Preparing for Adulthood. Retrieved from *https://www.mottmac.com/download/file/6739?cultureId=127*	**A Good Practice Toolkit –** for staff supporting YP aged fourteen – twenty five as they transfer from a statement to EHCP. The toolkit includes information on the transition to the new system, person centred practices and the preparing for adulthood review process. **Work Experience -** Engaging employers to find work experience for YP with learning difficulties and/or disabilities: a guide for post-16 providers	
Preparing for Adulthood Programme. (2013) *Delivering support and aspiration for disabled young people Learning from pathfinder areas about how to deliver the special educational needs and disability reforms for 14-25 year olds.*	The PfA team previously worked on key transition programmes including the **Transition Support Programme, Valuing People Now, Valuing Employment Now** (Getting a Life project, Jobs First, Aspirations for Life and Project Search) and **Learning for Living and Work.** The four Preparing for Adulthood life outcomes are based on what disabled YP say is important to them: 1. **Paid employment** (including self employment) 2. **Good health** 3. **Independent living** (choice and control over your life and support and good housing options)	This guide shares learning from the pathfinder areas that have been trialling the SEND reforms. It sets out what works, what doesn't, and how to get started. We hope you find it useful, and wish you success in transforming life chances for all disabled YP where you live.

www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/media/312574/pfa_delivering_oct_2013.pdf	4. **Community inclusion** (friends, relationships and community)	
	The five key messages. The pathfinder areas found that five elements are essential to improving life chances for disabled YP: 1. **Develop a shared vision** 2. **Raise aspirations** 3. **Personalise your approach** 4. **Improve post-16 options and support** 5. **Plan services together**	
	Short breaks can be used to raise aspirations and help disabled YP prepare for adulthood. Schools and colleges can be ambitious and creative with **work experience** opportunities to help YP develop the skills they need for independent living as well as work, such as **independent travel skills**. Many colleges are developing **supported internship programmes** to embed employment experience into courses for disabled YP. Use the **Getting a Life Pathways** as a starting point. They set out what each different agency can do to support disabled YP to achieve their goals, and how **person-centred support planning** can help bring all this together	
	Case study from Hartlepool. Eleanor went to a mainstream secondary school where her teachers, with the help of the educational psychologist, set up a **circle of friends**. Her friends have stayed in touch beyond school, and were incredibly helpful when Eleanor started planning for employment.	
	Personalisation is a term used to refer to a number of things that can help people have more choice and control over their lives. We explain three of these, and what the pathfinders have learnt about putting them into practice, below: • **Person centred practices**	

	• **Personal budgets, and** • **Developing community capacity.**	
Measurable Outcomes for post-16 Education		
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. (SEP 2015). *Adult further education: outcome based success measures - experimental data 2010 to 2013.* Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: London.	• **Sustained positive destination** – proportion of all adult learners who progress to a sustained destination into learning or employment (or both) following completion of their FE learning. • **Sustained employment** – learners must be in paid employment in five out of six months between October and March in the following academic year. • **Sustained learning** – learners must be learning in all six months between October and March in the following academic year. • **Sustained employment for benefit learners** – as for sustained employment, but only for learners claiming benefits (subject to more stringent labour market requirements) the day before their training started.	The Department for Business Innovation & Skills (BIS) launched a consultation on Adult Education Outcome Based Success Measures. This consultation sets out more detailed proposals on how the measures will be used by central government for accountability and intervention, alongside achievement rates as part of Minimum Standards. It also sets out proposals for presenting and publishing the measures. This report updates and builds on the outcome based success measures previously published in August 2014. This publication presents experimental outcome based measures covering the destinations (into employment and learning) and progression of **post-19 learners**. It covers learners completing funded further education training in 2010 to 2011, 2011 to 2012 and 2012 to 2013. The measures make use of datasets already held by government to observe learning and employment activity in the academic year after learners complete their training.
Department for Business, Innovation	• **Learner destinations** (into further learning and into or within employment including apprenticeships)	**Currently in use**

and Skills (April 2016). *Adult Further Education. Government Response: Outcome Based Success Measures – next steps.* Department for Business, Innovation and Skills: London.	• **Learner progression** (to a higher level qualification) • **Earnings** following completion of the course.	This paper provides a summary of responses to the second consultation on outcome based success measures for **post-19** education and provides an update on the next steps.
Department for Education. (2015). 16-19 Accountability Headline Measures: Technical Guide for changes in 2016.	• **Progress:** Value added progress measure for academic and applied general qualifications. Completion and attainment measure for technical levels • **Attainment.** Students to average at grade C. • **English/Maths progress measure** • **Retention.** 93% of all students retained to end of studies • **Destinations.** 80% of students going on to education, employment or training.	**Currently in use**. The new accountability measures will give a significant refresh to the performance tables published for school sixth forms and colleges. **16 -19 Accountability Headline measures** will be pulled out, displaying the key indicators of a school or college's performance more clearly. Provides 5 headline measures to determine how school/college is performing for **16-19** education, rather than looking at grades alone.
Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (Feb 2015). Achievement and Retention in Post-16 Education.	• **Retention and completion** (A/AS Levels) • **Retention and completion** (FE) • **Success and achievement** (A Levels) • **Success rates** (FE) • **Success rates** (Apprenticeships) • **Costs of non-completion and non-achievement** (FE) • **Costs of non-completion and non-achievement** (FE) • **Costs of non-completion and non-achievement** (Apprenticeships) • **Proportion of young people starting more than one post-16 destination** • **Level of NEETs**	Report provides statistics on drop out/success rates for post-16 in England. Provides twelve indicators which are assumed to provide a summary of effectiveness of education.

	• **Cost of NEETs**	
	• **16-18 year olds in employment without training**	
Population Group		
Preparing for Adulthood Programme. (2013) *Delivering support and aspiration for disabled young people Learning from pathfinder areas about how to deliver the special educational needs and disability reforms for 14-25 year olds.* www.**preparingforadulthood**.org.uk/media/312574/pfa_delivering_oct_2013.pdf	Preparing for Adulthood is the strand of the SEND reforms which aims to support **disabled YP** to move into adulthood with fulfilling lives. It focuses on **YP aged fourteen to twenty five**	This guide shares learning from the pathfinder areas that have been trialling the SEND reforms. It sets out what works, what doesn't, and how to get started. We hope you find it useful, and wish you success in transforming life chances for all disabled YP where you live.
MacDonald, M. (2015). SEND Pathfinder Information Pack, Version 5, Preparing for Adulthood. Retrieved from *https://www.mottmac.com/download/file/6739?cultureId=127*	Preparing for adulthood is a key theme across all elements of the reforms including the Local Offer, 0–25 coordinated assessment and Education Health and Care (EHC) plan, multi-agency working, personal budgets, and joint commissioning. When implementing 0-25 SEND reforms. YP with a **Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or Care Co-ordination Plan.**	

Search Terms. What is the effect of X on Y for Z		
Interventions for Preparing for Adulthood Agenda. Four key areas: Employment, Independent Living, Health and Community Participation (X)	**Measurable Outcomes for post-16Education (Y)**	**Population Group (Z)**
Transition support programme - Transition **assessment** **Valuing** people now - Valuing **employment** now - Learning for living and work **Life skills** programme **Good practice toolkit** **Short breaks** **Work experience** **Supported internships** - Getting a life **pathway** **Circle of friends** **Travel** training **Post-16 curriculum design** **Person centred** **Personal budgets** **Raising aspirations** **Personised** approach - Shared vision **Social skills** training	**Sustained** positive **destination** - Sustained **employment** - Sustained **learning** - Sustained employment for benefit learners - Learner **destinations** - Learner **progression** **Earnings** **Progress** **Attainment** **English/Maths progress** measure **Retention** **Completion** - Not in training, education or employment **(NEET)**	- YP aged **fourteen to twenty five** **Disabled** YP - YP with **statement** of special educational needs - YP with **education, health and care plan** - YP with **care co-ordination plan/one plan**

Appendix II: Overlapping Key Themes

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
Preparing for Transition	All YP reported on their feelings before beginning college. Feelings were positive and negative. Feelings were associated with feeling scared about starting college. "*I felt scared because, because it's my first year here…I was excited. But just a little bit scared because it's my first year here.*" (p88).	"Beth especially enjoyed socialising which was demonstrated initially in her collage as she chose it as one of her key interests…she appeared to be very socially skilled." "Making friends and being accepted socially were clearly going to be key for Beth…" "*It depends cos if I meet new friends then I could like be with them…erm…and this one again, if I had friends, I would enjoy the social activities.*"	"The transitions for all five participants had been planned in accordance with the guidelines laid out in the Code of Practice…At the very last minute Mark decided instead he would go to an FE college…There was therefore no contact between the college and Marks school, the QTVI, his parents or careers advisor during the transition period…This led to further administrative complications, which delayed the provision of his laptop computer.	None	None	None	Uncertainty

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
		Beth also expressed some uncertainty around communication between her and her teachers. "Err…….maybe…teachers talking to fast or something or teachers no seeing when I'm worried and me not being able to say to them that I'm upset or something…Or that I can't say to them when I'm feeling weird or something" p126	After only two months, Mark dropped out of college."				
Adjusting to Change	Many references to change were voiced by YP. "It's the same as school but some of it is different". (p89)	None	None	None	None	Saying goodbye, settling in and double placements were subthemes of adjusting to change.	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
	"College is much bigger than school". (p89).					Young person's voice was not prioritised in this theme, but voices of the adults around them were.	
Starting at College	YP made links between their previous school and college to make sense of their experience. "*It's the same as school but some of it is different. The rooms have changed.*" (p89). "*College is much better than school. It's different. Yes. It's just*	Beth was anxious about starting college. "Also the thing I'm a bit worried about is apparently the media class, they have to change classes all the time or something, because…because …I've forgotten why but yeah…cos…someti mes it can be a bit busy and there's no classroom to be in so they're apparently scattered around a bit…but hopefully if	None	None	None	One YP, Ricky, reported a positive view of starting college. "*I'm making new friends and new like, it's a new lifestyle basically and I still see Willow School people*". (p72). Another YP, Sabina reported that she had a	New Beginnings

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
	changed." (p89). "*It's like a brand new family when I started.*" (p120)	I like get the right support at college, I'll be able to find my way and all that…" p127				"*…new boyfriend.*" (p75).	
Supportive Factors	YP felt welcomed and included at college. "*What's good? They make you feel welcome and it's ok*". (p91 YP felt that support from teachers helped their transition. All 5 YP could identify people who had helped them. "*Erm…the teachers.*	One young person commented on support that she was receiving in college. "My main tutors are really nice and funny and they say I'm doing well with my work which is good" (p161)	None	None	Parents were viewed as supportive factors in the YP transition. *"I would say the number one person who has supported me throughout this is my dad. He always believed in me and never put*	As Ricky felt listened to by a number of adults this for him may equate to being supported by others with his move to college. *Interviewer: "OK so when you had the conversations about what you want to do when you leave school do you think people*	Feeling Valued

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Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
	They're very nice and helpful and that's good for me." (p91).				*me under pressure saying that you must pass."* *"They helped me by driving me to interviews and getting me ready, preparing me…getting me set up first equipment wise, travel wise and enrolment…"*	*listened to you or not?"* *Ricky: "No they did listen."* *Interviewer: Who listened to you?"* *Ricky: "practically everyone"* *Interviewer: "yeah, who did?"* *Ricky: "mum, head teacher, tutor."* (p81)	
Challenging Factors	YP struggled with feeling tired and getting used to the length of the college day.	Leaving school and friendships behind seemed to be a challenging factor in transition.	"As previously noted, a key finding from stage 1 of the study was a weakness of the transition process model	None	Academic challenges. *"…I was ok, there were a few occasions where I*	None	Adjusting to Change

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Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
	"*Yes. Have to go to sleep and get up early. College is…long. Yes. College. Tired.*" (p106) "But when I come in, in the morning I get tired. Because this is college." (p94) Though some YP talked about lost friendships and leaving friends behind. "I miss my friends. *Do you know R? I miss him. Buts he's not coming here.*" (p100) "I miss my old school now. I still miss it here. Because	"*Quite sad actually because it's like you're going, you're moving yeah and you won't see em, but you can always pop back and say hi.*"	(as laid out in the Code of Practice) in its lack of flexibility in allowing for last minute changes of mind." "…as we continued to follow the five YP into their next transition stage, we found that only one of the five continued to follow without deviation, the pathway mapped out in their original transition plan…"		*struggled with the academic side of things*". (p573).		

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
	my friends are over there and all my teachers and I don't get to see them. I miss my friends and teachers…" (p93) Some YP didn't understand why their school friends were not at college with them. "*Yeah Archie, have you met him? He's a good friend. I don't know where he's gone now. Hes gone to a different one I think maybe. I like Archie. He*						

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
	would love it here." (p118)						
Moving Towards Adulthood	YP in the study reported on their aspirations for adulthood. "*I'll probably get a flat to start with and move up to a house if I get enough money…*" (p96)	YP were able to communicate their ideas for their desired future and some were able to plan for how they would be able to achieve it. "*I'd probably like to begin with I'd like to share a flat with friends or something, I wouldn't want to be on my own as I'd feel quite vulnerable and scared and alone whereas…yeah…with friends it would be much more company and fun*" "*I'm gonna do a two years course and then I'm gonna try and do apprenticeship and*	None	None	None	Aspirations was a subtheme constructed by the original author. All YP talked about what they wanted to do with their lives. "*I'm gonna do a two years course and then I'm gonna try and do apprenticeship…*" (p92). One young person expressed that getting a house will make her happy. When the	Aspirations

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
		eventually when that's up I'm gonna look for a job in cookery." *"I think I need to do, like carry on with maths and that…cos I'm not ready."* *"The times up really and plus you're 17 and your like, I'm 17 and I'm nearly like 18 in January and it's like you're too grown up for school now and you need to go to college and do something with your life."* "Get a house for myself." "Go down town, sleepover and my				researcher asked why this would make her happy she replied "my friends coming round" p97.	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
		boyfriend allowed to sleep over." "Cos I'm old enough." "Cos I'm older and cool."					
Introducing Young People and their Social Worlds.	College provided YP with a wider social network of friends. "*I've made new friends here. I have lots of new friends here.*" (p88).	Opportunities to maintain friendships were important to YP. "I've got a few out of school as well so I meet them on Saturdays after my swimming so I do have a few after school, yeah."	None	None	None	Relationships were mentioned by all YP when asked how they are settling in to college.	Peer Relationships

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
Personal characterist-ics of the young people	None		None	Links were made between difficulties in post school activities and personal characteristics, for instance, difficulty coping with social relations, tendencies to be disruptive and tendencies to alienate people	"The participants saw themselves as playing a very active role in their own transition, drawing on aspects of their character and resources around them." "*I got myself onto the course, taught myself basically all the stuff that I needed to learn, just like determinati*	None	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
					on basically. A lot of people didn't pass the course."		
Education and Qualifications	None	Academic ability and level of college course were not matched due to YP perceived as needing a less stressful time to settle in to college. Jake: "*Well I would say it's easier because its lower quality but…because last year I was doing GCSEs, this year it's like entry level…but I'm doing functional skills 2 in English*	None	Some transitions were turbulent – 'fractured' in Coles' (1995) terms – in that their movements between activities do not take the form of a stepwise progression, but rather of a game of snakes and ladders in which forward progress is immediately followed by a major setback.	Some YP thought their Language impairment made it too difficult for them to progress. "*I did try to do it [move to level 2 Horticulture] but my reading was not high enough so I gave up on it." (p573).*		Motivation to Progress

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
		which is equivalent to a C but I would say its slightly easier...it's always good to make the most of the course because the course is actually helpful to me at college."		*"I was just looking for something to do, because I hate sitting around." "What I wanted more than anything was qualifications."*	*"But in the exam it is hard to remember a certain number of voltages and currents, cables and things like that. That is what failed me really, I can't remember it." (p574).*		
Involvement and Support	Most YP voiced that they received support from teachers. "*Erm.. the teachers. They're very nice and helpful…*" (p91). "*…Craig helps me.*	The YP in the research had different academic and social abilities and required different levels of support once they arrived at college "*My main tutors are really nice and funny and they say*	Whereas the statements of the three sixth formers remained active, and they continued to be supported by their LA Visual Impairment Advisory Service, this specialist support was no	None	Tutors were described as playing a key role in helping to make decisions about future courses and careers" The careers service	One young person, Sabina, initially focussed on support from adults and teachers around her, but since moving to college feels	Teacher Support

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
	Sometimes he helps me in class when we do work." (p98).	*I'm doing well with my work which is good. And I have a support worker who's really nice which is also good."* *"I know I've got college to go to and I know that it can help me more and more."* One young person was described by the researcher as very attached to his learning support assistant and expressed anxiety about not having her with him every day and concern about the following year. The young person was asked what it is like when his LSA is not there.	longer available to the two FE college students." "Following transition, the VIS service continued to provide and fund specialist equipment for the three sixth formers, while the college students had to apply for new equipment." "Both Mark and Sian experienced delays in receiving their new equipment, which were linked to bureaucratic hold-ups as well as to resource constraints experienced by the college."		were perceived to be helpful by some, but not by others. *"They didn't help me. I didn't know who to see basically, it was pretty much up to me."* (p573). *"One of the teachers done construction for us and he took me to aside privately and said you could be a great bricklayer. He built my confidence up and I can do*	she does more things on her own.	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
		"Eric: *It's boring.* Sally: *You have another LSA don't you?* Eric: *But it's not that fun – you're fun because I can wind you up*" (p158)			*much better*" (p572)		
Independence and vulnerability	None	Travel preparation provided by parents seemed to help develop independent skills. "*I think they prepared me well, basically school didn't really prepare me in terms of transport, I actually had, well they did do some trips with me like as a group in the class, but in terms of independent travel they didn't really, they should*	"The culture in FE was for self-advocacy, with the students themselves requesting extra help, such as having work enlarged when they felt this was necessary." "*It was between me and the teacher*"		None	One young person, Sabina, initially focussed on support from adults and teachers around her, but since moving to college feels she does more things on her own.	YP's Expectations of support

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
		have helped me more with independent travel and said we had to get a carer from Crossroads and my parents to help me with that so they should have helped me with that."					
Parents as enablers of transition	None	None	None	None	"Parents were mentioned by all of the participants as key sources of assistance during transition providing financial, emotional and practical support" "*He (dad) always believed in*	None	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
					me and never put me under any pressure saying that you must pass" (p571)		
Key Professionals and Advice	None	None	Experiences of the sixth formers highlighted the importance of continued support from specialist teachers. "Mark perceived his relationships with the academic staff at college as confrontational and unsympathetic".	None	"…key professionals and the advice were described both as playing a pivotal role in transition but also as having made it more difficult at times". "*I wished people had shown me other sorts of courses I*	None	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
					could have done because I don't think I was really given a wide selection…" (p572).		
The Experience of SLI	None	None	None	None	Students reported on the challenges of SLI since leaving school. *"But in the exam, it is hard to remember …"* (p574). *"I didn't get things quickly, I wasn't accurate with the learning*	None	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
					side of it" (p574)		
Turbulence, Transition and Progression	None	None	Students in the FE settings experiences turbulent transitions due to a lack of resources.	"Their transitions are turbulent – 'fractured' in Coles (1995) terms – in that their movements between activities do not take the form of a stepwise progression, but rather of a game of snakes and ladders in which forward progress is immediately followed by major setback"	None	None	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
Experiences of Special School	None	None	None	"The first was the sense that teachers had no concern or respect for them as people" "…*cos I didn't like the attitudes of the teachers. They just had a bad attitude towards us…*" "The second issue for them was that school seemed to have little relevance to or concern for their need to learn and progress." "*I've learned a lot more since [school]. Like, I think I've learned a lot more on YTS than I did in school 'cos they take their time…*"	None	None	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
Purposefulness, purposelessness and personal problems	None	None	None	Links were made between difficulties in post school activities and personal characteristics, for instance, difficulty coping with social relations, tendencies to be disruptive and tendencies to alienate people	None	None	
Inequalities between Specialist Provision at School versus College	None	None	Comparison between case studies led to identification of inequalities in specialist provision between FE and sixth form colleges. This was evident in two key areas: Specialist Equipment – Sixth form students	None	None	None	

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
			continued to receive specialist equipment, whilst the FE students had to apply for new equipment which was delayed Role of Specialist Teachers/TA's – There was a difference in mentoring support between sixth form and FE students. In the FE college, there was no one person believed to be responsible for providing resources and support for students with VI.				

Key Themes from studies	Hickey (2016)	Shephard (2015)	Keil and Crews (2008)	Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	Esbrand (2016)	THIRD ORDER CONSTRUCTS
The Process Model of Transition	None	"All three schools had transition arrangements in place"	Recognised difficulty in outcomes when students wanted to deviate from the transition plan	None	None	None	

Appendix III: First and Second Order Constructs

Paper	Second Order Constructs	First Order Constructs
Hickey, S. (2016).	**Overarching theme: Initial experiences of the YP on starting college** **Sub theme 1: Feelings about college.** "All of the YP reported at both T1 and T2 positive feelings about college since they started in September." "Two of the five young people reported feeling sad or scared beginning at college, but reported more positive reactions to college once they had begun there."	"I felt scared because, because it's my first year here. I was excited. But just a little scared because it's my first year here." "Me, me feel sad." "I feel happy at college." "It's college. It's learning. That's good." "I made all new friends. And I learn the drums, do jobs, learn the computers. Learn a lot here really."
	Sub theme 2: Social opportunities "Four out of five young people reported that college provided them with a wider social network of friends and social opportunities"	"I've made new friends here. I have lots of new friends here." "Why do you like it? I like it…I like college…friends…Here [names the college provision]."

		When asked what her favourite thing about college, Rema replied "Friends…Yes. Friends."
	Sub theme 3: Making sense of the college experience "All five young people talked about their experiences of their previous school setting when asked about their experience of college. They made sense of their college environment and experience by making links between their experiences at school and their experience of college"	"It's the same as school but some of it is different. The rooms have changed." "Same. Same here, same here, same here. Classroom is different. School". "Not a lot has changed. Computers are the same." "There's no library at [names old school]. And… we weren't allowed to use the photocopier." "College is much better than school. It's different. Yes. It's just changed." "It's big. There's a lot of chairs and enough people. We get drinks in the morning. I come in here…to play the drums. At lunch timeI play the drums. It's good."
	Overarching theme: Supportive factors **Sub theme 1: Sense of belonging** "Four young people talked about feeling like they belonged at college."	"Welcome. Seeing new people and Kitkats." "Since I came here, everyone is nice to me."
	Sub theme 2: Feeling supported "All five young people could identify people who had helped them…the college staff particularly the teaching	

	staff, were cited by all the young people as a supportive factor."	"Erm…the teachers. They're very nice and helpful and that's good for me."
	At the first interview just after transition, YP felt supported if they transitioned with a familiar young person. However, at the second interview, none of the YP made reference to this, citing new friendships as supportive.	"The teachers help me. Understand and that."
		"Dad liked it here."
	Family support also seen as supportive.	"My mum. She tried college and said its ok."
		"…I didn't look there. I didn't visit there. My mum didn't want me to look at [names provision in another borough]. So my mum wanted me to put here. And I feel fine about it and I'm happy about it."
	Overarching theme: Challenging factors	
	Sub theme 1: Loss and endings	
	"…three of the five young people reported experiencing lost friendships, being unsure of where their friends from school were now or being unclear about why their friends were not at college with them."	"I don't see them. I didn't see them."
	"Two of the young people had a strong sense that it was necessary to leave school and move on to college…"	"I miss my old school now. I still miss it here. Because my friends are over there and all my teachers and I don't get to see them. I miss my friends and teachers."
		"Why? College… left at school. Yes time…college. Left at school. Friends."
	Sub theme 2: Feeling tired.	
	At the first interview, four out of five YP reported on the length of the college day. At the second interview, none of the YP reported feeling tired at college.	"But when I come in, in the morning I get tired. Because this is college."
		"Em [yawning] At college, I tired."
Shephard, J. (2015).	**Overarching theme 1: Introducing the YP and their social worlds.**	
	Sub theme 1: The significance of the social	"I've got a few out of school as well so I meet them on Saturdays after my
	"Given that Autism is primarily a condition that affects communication and interaction with others, it was	

perhaps noteworthy that all the YP mentioned their social lives to a greater or lesser extent…"

"It was very clear from these individual accounts that social lives were very important to these young people in many different ways. Despite some of the difficulties in meeting up with peers independently and organising social lives, they found ways…"

swimming so I do have a few after school, yeah."

When Beth was asked about her future she talked about it in terms of being sociable.

"I'd probably like to begin with I'd like to share a flat with friends or something, I wouldn't want to be on my own as I'd feel quite vulnerable and scared and alone whereas…yeah…with friends it would be much more company and fun.

"I mostly just go on my computer and draw and talk to my friends on skype."

Sub theme 2: Experiences of school
"…Social interaction issues pervaded the accounts of life at school, not that the children had not been sociable but that mainstream school environments had not been able to adapt to their developing, sometimes different, social abilities."

"No, that's…er…I was in middle school and I did actually find mainstream quite hard and I…they…and my mum like moved schools for me because I kept getting bullied and that and teachers didn't really understand".

Overarching theme 2: Preparing for transition
"This section examines the formal transition processes in place initially from the schools' and careers advisors' perspectives which helps to offer an insight into the 'actual' level of reality but it goes on to examine the 'empirical' level as experienced by the young people with autism…"

Not relevant as not young person's perspective

	Sub theme 1: Schools, YP and parents	Not relevant as not young person's perspective
	Sub theme 2: YP's and parents experiences of preparing for transition "Beth especially enjoyed socialising which was demonstrated initially in her collage as she chose it as one of her key interests…she appeared to be very socially skilled." "Making friends and being accepted socially were clearly going to be key for Beth…"	"It depends cos if I meet new friends then I could like be with them…erm…and this one again, if I had friends, I would enjoy the social activities."
	Sub theme 3: Managing time "In fact, it seemed as that the long summer holidays were more of a concern for parents than the young people themselves…"	"…I can do things on my own. Im quite relaxed when im at home. I just do my own thing generally, yeah, just do my own thing. Sometimes go on the trampoline, sometimes go on my laptop, sometimes watch television, just do a mix of things really."
	"…parents worried that this lack of structured time (part time time table at college) could lead to greater anxiety for their children…"	Not relevant as not young person's perspective.

	Overarching theme 3: Starting at college **Sub theme 1: Managing time** "Frankie talked about how he managed his free time during the week and thought he might prefer to be at college when he did not have anything to do at home sometimes."	Frankie: "Yeah, sometimes but sometimes I don't have anything to do (at home)." Interviewer: "Would you rather be at college every day?" Frankie: "Maybe."
	Sub theme 2: Academic progress "Jake, who had done well at GCSE level and was technically qualified to go on to at least a level 2 course at college, chose, following advice…to go onto a foundation level qualification." This was so Jake could receive more support as the lower level qualification was in the special needs department.	Interviewer: "How are you finding all the work this year? Are you finding it easy, easier than school? Jake: "Well I would say its easier because its lower quality but…because last year I was doing GCSEs, this year its like entry level…but im doing functional skills 2 in English which is equivalent to a C but I would say its slightly easier...its always good to make the most of the course because the course is actually helpful to me at college."
	Sub theme 3: Social interaction "Some of Eric's social difficulties were about being able to tolerate other people and regulate his own responses."	"If you could mute people I would invent a mute for people so I can mute Sandra (peer)."

	"Both Jake and Eric (participants) needed some support with understanding social situations with their peers; Eric had been excluded as a result of possibly mutual misunderstanding; Jake had experienced an unsettling time following his break up with a friend."	"Someone did punch me in the face once and I punched him back um, he got suspended and he came back early and I got suspended for weeks and weeks for no reason." "Uuuuummmmm, I've had a few problems, a few break ups but it seems to be, at the moment going well with friendship side of things."
	Overarching theme 4: Independence and vulnerability **Sub theme 1: Support at college** "…the young people in the research had different academic and social abilities and required different levels of support once they arrived at college"	"My main tutors are really nice and funny and they say I'm doing well with my work which is good. And I have a support worker who's really nice which is also good."
	Sub theme 2: Support for parents	Not relevant as not young person's perspective.
	Sub theme 3: Ongoing support towards adulthood	Not relevant as not young person's perspective.
	Sub theme 4: Travel training "Jake talked about his experiences with travelling to college and how it had mostly been successful but the difficult days had certainly made an impression on him.	"I think they prepared me well, basically school didn't really prepare me in terms of transport, I actually had, well they did do

	He was clear that his parents had done the work on preparing him for independent travel and perhaps the school could have done more."	some trips with me like as a group in the class, but in terms of independent travel they didn't really, they should have helped me more with independent travel and said we had to get a carer from Crossroads and my parents to help me with that so they should have helped me with that."
	Overarching theme 1: Adjusting to change **Sub theme 1: Saying Goodbye** "Two points could be drawn from this extract: firstly the idea of knowing what will happen once he has left school appears to provide Ricky with a sense of reassurance, thus lowering any anxiety that he may have experienced had he not known what his post school arrangements were. Secondly, the practical manner in which Ricky talks about his reasons for going to college may also provide him with comfort as he implicitly suggests that the support that he will be receiving from college will help him more when it replaces the support that has been provided by his school." "…it became apparent that Ricky was not as enthusiastic about leaving school as he had claimed to be, which was evident when he said the following…"	"I know I've got college to go to and I know that it can help me more and more." "Quite sad actually because it's like you're going, you're moving yeah and you won't see em, but you can always pop back and say hi."

	Sub theme 2: Double placement "Ricky's response demonstrates that the double placement had a functional purpose for him as it helped him to become familiar with college, which in turn supported his transition to it."	"With sixth form you're only there for two days and you're in college the rest of the week, and its like you're getting used to college."
	Sub theme 3: Settling in "The experience of making new friends appears to be an important aspect of being at college for Ricky, and for him signals a new beginning in his life."	"I'm making new friends and new like, it's a new life basically, and I still see Willow School People."
	"When Sabina was asked about how college had been going for her the first thing she mentioned was her new relationship."	"I got a new boyfriend (laughs)."
	"When encouraged to talk about how he felt at college, Sam said, Love it. Although he does not use many words to explain himself, his choice of words succinctly convey his positive feelings towards moving to college."	"Love it."
	Overarching theme 2: Involvement and Support **Sub theme 1: Participation in meetings**	

	Sub theme 2: Choice "Sabina's response illustrates that she feels her wish to pursue this career pathway at college is being blocked by her teachers at school."	Interviewer: "Fixing cars? You want to be a mechanic?" Sabina: [nods head yes] Interviewer: "So why don't you fix cars at college? Sabina: "They won't get me job there." Interviewer: "They won't?" Sabina: "Get me job." Interviewer: Who won't let you get a job?" Sabina: "Mrs Bronze"
	"Ricky appeared to be positive about being able to make his own choices related to his post school arrangements."	Interviewer: "Did your school involve you or did they make all of the decisions?" Ricky: "They gave you a choice."
	Sub theme 3: Support from professionals "As Ricky felt listened to by a number of adults this for him may equate to being supported by others with his move to college. This extract also reveals that he may have also felt as though he was actively involved during the process."	Interviewer: "OK so when you had the conversations about what you want to do when you leave school do you think people listened to you or not?" Ricky: "No they did listen." Interviewer: Who listened to you?" Ricky: "practically everyone" Interviewer: "yeah, who did?" Ricky: "mum, head teacher, tutor."

"Since leaving school it is apparent that Sabina has adopted a newfound sense of independence, which is illustrated in her response towards receiving support."	Interviewer: "OK so the last time we met with each other you told me that the teachers help you at school, who helps you at college now?" Sabina: "No my own."
Sub theme 4: Access to services "During his first interview, Ricky talked about his experience of meeting with a Connexions advisor in year 9 to talk about what he would like to do in the future and commented that he would have preferred this support in year eleven."	"Because I had different things, like I wanted to be a car mechanic in year nine but in year eleven I changed the thing."
Overarching theme 3: Moving towards Adulthood	
Sub theme 1: Aspirations Ricky "has spent time thinking about his future and has a clear image in his mind of what it will look like and a plan for how he will go about achieving it, which he is able to communicate to others clearly."	"I'm gonna do a two years course and then I'm gonna try and do apprenticeship and eventually when that's up I'm gonna look for a job in cookery."
"Ricky's appraisal of his current skills set and his ability to identify the support he requires going forward demonstrates that he has adopted a rather realistic approach of working towards achieving the goal that he has set himself."	"I think I need to do, like carry on with maths and that…cos I'm not ready."
"Such comments illustrate that she has thought about different ideas and is able to voice her views about what she would like to do in the future,"	"I'm older I'm gonna ambulance when I got older." "I wanna Doctors when I go older."

	"This idea appeared to be important to Sam as he maintained that this is his career choice during his second interview and may indicate that he has given some thought to this and is serious about it."	"be a castle hire." (bouncy castle hire)
	Sub theme 2: Preparing for the future "Ricky's focus on the development of practical life skills such as money management and independent living skills illustrates that they are proficiencies that he recognises are necessary for the future."	"they did do things like they uh helped us with our money and all that and make sure that you're independent like living."
	"This comment indicates that she is aware of what she will be studying at college, however she did not at any point during her interview make a connection between her new life skills course at college and her future. This may reflect that fact that she does not see the two as being linked in any way."	"Me doing life skills, me doing cookery my friends there. Me making cookering."
	Sub theme 3: Growing up and independence "It is evident that Ricky has adopted a social view of adulthood, which suggest that being 18 years old results in increased independence and that being grown up and continued education or participation in other activities is a part of transition."	"The times up really and plus you're 17 and your like, I'm 17 and I'm nearly like 18 in January and it's like you're too grown up for school now and you need to go to college and do something with your life."
	"It is clear that increased autonomy is something that Sabina values and feel she will have more of if she moves into her own accommodation."	"Get a house for myself." "Go down town, sleepover and my boyfriend allowed to sleep over."
	"It is evident that since leaving school and moving to college Sam believes that he is more independent and no	"Cos I'm old enough." "Cos I'm older and cool."

	longer in need of adult supervision when walking to college."	
Keil and Crews (2008)	**Findings from Stage 1:** **The process model of transition** "The transitions for all five participants had been planned in accordance with the guidelines laid out in the Code of Practice…At the very last minute Mark decided instead he would go to an FE college…There was therefore no contact between the college and Mark's school, the QTVI, his parents or careers advisor during the transition period…This led to further administrative complications, which delayed the provision of his laptop computer. After only two months, Mark dropped out of college." **Inequities between specialist provision at school versus college** "Whereas the statements of the three sixth formers remained active, and they continued to be supported by their LA Visual Impairment Advisory Service, this specialist support was no longer available to the two FE college students." **Specialist equipment** "Following transition, the VIS service continued to provide and fund specialist equipment for the three sixth formers, while the college students had to apply for new equipment." "Both Mark and Sian experienced delays in receiving their new equipment, which were linked to bureaucratic hold-ups as well as to resource constraints experienced by the college."	"It was between me and the teacher"

	Key role of QTVI (Qualified teacher of visually impaired) "The culture in FE was for self-advocacy, with the students themselves requesting extra help, such as having work enlarged when they felt this was necessary." "…there was some confusion about who was responsible for ensuring timely provision of specialist equipment." "The second tutor was quite clear that the disability co-ordinator, and not the tutor was responsible for over-seeing the provision of equipment." Findings from stage 2 and 3: "As previously noted, a key finding from stage 1 of the study was a weakness of the transition process model (as laid out in the Code of Practice) in its lack of flexibility in allowing for last minute changes of mind." "…as we continued to follow the five young people into their next transition stage, we found that only one of the five continued to follow without deviation, the pathway mapped out in their original transition plan…"	
Dyson, Meagher and Robson (2002)	**Turbulence, transition and progression** "…there are some for whom the process of transition at least is relatively straight forward. Leanne is a case in point; she was happy with her school, happy with her YT placement and confident that she was moving purposefully towards the labour market." However, this is not the case for other YP such as Rob or Jimmy…Their transitions are turbulent – 'fractured' in	"It gives us more opportunities to look forward to the future, give us more opportunities of what jobs I've got, like it gives you more – I can't think of the word now – more ability to know what you want to do." "I was sort of forced into it by the school. Im an identical twin and the school

Coles' (1995) terms – in that their movements between activities do not take the form of a stepwise progression, but rather of a game of snakes and ladders in which forward progress is immediately followed by a major setback."	couldn't handle the pair of us together – we were quite well known for both causing havoc – and they needed rid of us and they thought I would get furthest…they didn't want me staying on until sixth form." (Robs account of moving onto a YT programme) "…the kitchen manager took a dislike to me because I knew what I was looking to do and I wasn't afraid to show my opinion." "I was just looking for something to do, because I hate sitting around." "What I wanted more than anything was qualifications."
Experiences of special school "There seemed to be two main issues for such young people. The first was the sense that their teachers had no concern or respect for them as people…The second issues for them was that school seemed to have little relevance to or concern for their need to learn and progress." "What is surprising is that their complaints about their schools – the negative attitudes of teachers, the irrelevance of the curriculum, the failure to tailor teaching to individual needs – are just the sort of criticisms that one might have expected to hear about mainstream schools…This is not an issue about inclusion versus	"Cos I didn't like the attitude of the teachers. They just had a bad attitude towards us…I was the only in the class who couldn't write so I was the thick one of the class so they used to take the mickey." "I've learned a lot more since [school]. Like, I think ive learned a lot more on YTS than I did in school cos they take their time, not like in school where you learn one thing one day and one thing the next, so it just goes in one ear and out of the other…"

	segregation. Rather it is an issue to do with the quality and effectiveness of special education in both settings…"	"I couldn't read. I couldn't spell. I didn't really get on with the teachers. They was putting down the classes all the time and really upsetting us, really making us feel uncomfortable." "I was 11 years old when I stopped going to school."
	Purposefulness, purposelessness and personal problems. "However, some of them at least have only limited personal resources through which to realise their purposes and yet face extremely adverse personal circumstances. Their situation is then exacerbated by the unsupportive post school system in which they find themselves – a system where opportunities do not necessarily match personal preferences, where the training element of schemes seems weak or non-existent, where the transition from school to work is likely to be extended, if it happens at all and where there seem to be no mechanisms for keeping young people on track or preventing them from shifting rapidly between activities."	"Odd jobs. I've been in and out of children's homes since I left school. In and out of jail." "My job was not to stand there all day to watch for thieves coming in…My job was to help out in the storeroom, get qualifications for that, learn how to use the till and stack shelves." "…even if they were just doing one day courses, at least there was something to show for what I was doing."
Carroll and Dockrell (2012)	**Personal characteristics of the young people** "The participants saw themselves as playing a very active role in their own transition, drawing on aspects of their character and resources around them."	"I got myself onto the course, taught myself basically all the stuff that I needed to learn, just like determination basically. A lot of people didn't pass the course." "I always had the right motivation, the right mentality to look for work, look for jobs and go the right way about it."

		"I had to ring, I found the advert in a local newspaper and then I just rang them up and they sent me an application form. It took me ages to get the job. I tried for loads of care homes but they just said no."
	Parents as enablers of transition "For Sandeep, the emotional and moral support offered by his father throughout his post-16 education experience at FE college and university was invaluable."	"I would say the number one person who has supported me throughout this is my dad. He always believed in me and never put me under pressure saying that you must pass."
	"For Brandon, his parents had helped to ease the transition from special school to local college in the first few weeks."	"They helped me by driving me to interviews and getting me ready, preparing me…getting me set up first equipment wise, travel wise and enrolment…"
	Key professionals and advice "…key professionals and the advice provided were described both as playing a pivotal role in transition but also as having made it more difficult at times."	"One of the teachers done construction for us and he took me aside privately and said you could be a great bricklayer. He built my confidence up and I can do much better." "I would say Connexions they helped and I think they were the ones who helped me get into college. After school I went to Connexions and they told me about

		different courses and they told me what to do." "I wished people had shown me other sorts of courses I could have done because I don't think I was really given a wide selection to be honest…I went to Connexions and I just didn't get anything from them…I don't feel that they were helping me enough."
	Education and qualifications "…a lack of appropriate qualifications and the academic challenges experienced by some had proved a barrier at certain points in their post-16 careers."	"I was OK, there were a few occasions where I struggled with the academic side of things."
	"For Simon and Lawrence, the subject content of their courses often felt very demanding."	"They were giving me assignments about the sports industry but basically I didn't know much about it and I didn't have a clue what I was doing. I suppose if I had done another year of Leisure and Tourism I would probably have known more about that."
	The experience of SLI "Some of the young people were able to identify quite specifically what aspects of their history of SLI had presented challenges since leaving school including difficulties with reading and memory."	"I did try to do it [move to level 2 Horticulture] but my reading was not high enough so I gave up on it." "But in the exam it is hard to remember a certain number of voltages and currents, cables and things like that. That is what failed me really, I can't remember it."

	"Three of the employed participants discussed how they believed that an aspect of their language impairment had impacted in some way on their working lives."	"When I talk to people at work, sometimes I have to repeat myself but I don't mind doing that…at weekends I get tired of speaking normally so I let it go down." "I was looking at the CV and saying that I have got speech and language, I think they know it might become a bit too difficult."

Appendix IV: Third Order Interpretations

Key Theme	Interpretation of Key theme	Third order Constructs	
Starting at College	YP made sense of college by forming links between their new college experience and their previous school. This comparison allowed them to understand college and how it was different. YP used words such as 'new', 'same' and 'different' to describe their college experience. Other YP talked about how college was like a new family or lifestyle.	**New Beginnings –** Making sense of college and how it may be different to school allowed YP to feel they were embarking upon a new adventure into a new social world. Using comparison between college and school they were able to see how college may be an opportunity to develop new social circles or for some, a new lifestyle or way of being.	**A New Social World**
Introducing Young People and their Social Worlds	YP reported on maintaining and developing new friendships, suggesting the importance of relationships. For some YP, college allowed them to develop a wider social network. For others, maintaining their previous friendships developed in school was important. When some YP were asked how they were settling into college, they all mentioned friendships	**Peer Relationships –** Maintaining and developing friendships appears to be a significant factor to YP when considering their transition. Although YP are motivated to form new friendships and be part of their new social worlds, they still want to maintain contact with old friends.	
Preparing for Transition	YP were preparing for transition in various ways both physically and socially. Some reported their	**Uncertainty –** YP in the research had uncertainties about starting college. This was represented in the way they feel,	**Challenges**

	feelings regarding transition and others reported on their actions. For example, YP reported feeling scared about starting college and wondered if they would make new friends. Feelings about making friendships appeared to determine how happy they may feel at college. YP also demonstrated they made last minute decisions regarding placements.	the idea of making new friendships and which educational setting they wanted to be in. In preparation for transition, it appears that uncertainty was a factor that was impacting upon how they were feeling and their actions because of this.	
Challenging Factors	The transition to post-16 for YP presented some challenges that they had to overcome. Some YP found the new college routines a struggle and others reported on their feelings about leaving school and previous friendships behind.	**Adjusting to Change –** Change appeared to be an important theme within the 1st order constructs and YP were required to adjust to new routines, making new friends and more advanced academic challenges. Some YP were confused about some changes and did not understand why their friends were not with them in their new college. The procedures that support YP's transition also had difficulty adjusting to change, for example transition plans lacked the flexibility to account for YP's last minute decisions.	
Supportive Factors	YP reported on supportive factors that they believed helped them in their transition to post 16. This was reflected in the words they used such as supported, welcomed, included and listened to. YP felt this from the adults around them who	**Feeling Valued** – YP reported on how they were supported, welcomed, included and listened to which suggests they felt valued by the college as a collective organisation. It appears they feel like they belong and they are being valued and respected as members of	**Motivation**

	they report as 'everyone', 'them' and 'parents'. YP did not name specific people at their college, instead using a collective term to describe who helped them.	the college through the support that is offered.	
Education and Qualifications	YP in the research, particularly males, reported on the value of qualifications and how important they were for them. The ability to gain qualifications was linked to their perceived ability to be able to achieve and progress. For some, the level of qualification they were studying towards was not matched with their perceived ability level, which was higher or lower.	**Motivation to Progress –** YP showed motivation to progress academically and valued qualifications. However, an inconsistent approach to matching level of qualification to current attainment levels was hindering their progress and having an impact on their motivation.	
Moving Towards Adulthood	Within this theme, YP reported on aspects of their preferred future. Discussions about where they will live and who with, what they may do after their courses have ended and hopes for the future were prominent.	**Aspirations -** YP were describing aspirations for their preferred future. This suggests that they are able to establish links between college and adulthood and start preparing for adulthood by thinking about things such as housing and employment. They are also able to plan how this will be achieved by using college as a gateway to thoughts of adult life.	
Involvement and Support	YP reported on the theme of support and this relied heavily upon support from teachers both within class and with making decisions about	**Teacher Support** –Transitions appeared to be perceived as successful by those YP who received teacher or specialist support before and after the	**Support**

	courses. Specialist support was also mentioned such as SEN support workers.	transition. YP valued teachers who were supportive academically and emotionally.	
Independence and Vulnerability	The theme of independence appeared to be a contributing factor in YP's interviews. This was particularly relevant when discussing issues such as how to get to college and requesting extra help when needed. YP appeared to suggest that schools had not prepared them for independent travel, though they thought that may be different. One young person appeared to accept self-advocacy and commented that the support was between them and the teacher.	**Young Person's Expectation of Support** – The adults around the YP appeared to expect a certain level of independence of the YP, which was sometimes not matched with the YP's expectation of support. Some YP expected more support and others seemed to adjust or progress so their expectations of support were lower.	

Appendix V: Evidence for Line of Argument

Over-arching Themes	Sub themes	Author and page number
A New Social World and Motivation	**Aspiration and Peer Relationships** Sabina makes links between having her own house and how this will make her happy as her friends will be able to come and see her. Sabina aspires to be independent and the relationships she has with her peers mediates how happy she will feel.	Esbrand (2016, p. 97)
Motivation and Challenges	**Motivation to Progress and Adjusting to Change** Jake was qualified to go onto a level 2 course at college, but instead went on to a foundation course following advice from parents, careers advisors and teachers. The fact that Jake followed advice from people, indicates that he had a good working relationship with them. Although Jake found the course easier than school due to it being lower level of work than he had previously experienced, he seemed to embrace the course as he could see how it would help him the year after. Jake also stated that he thinks he will do well next year as he knows lots of people. Jake appeared to be motivated for his course and adjusted to the work being easier than expected by drawing upon the relationships he had developed with teachers, other professionals and his parents. He also appeared to express he could cope with the change to mainstream next year due to the amount of people he knows. This suggests that Jake is able to adjust to change and is motivated because of the advice from others and the probability of developing relationships next year.	Shephard (2015, p. 142)
Motivation and Support	**Feeling Valued and Teacher Support** Ricky expressed that people listened to him regarding pathway choices which suggests that he felt valued. The original author expressed that this helped Ricky to feel supported by the adults around him. Active listening is at the core of quality relationships and	Esbrand (2016, p. 81)

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	suggests that Ricky was able to feel valued by being listened to which therefore, helped him to feel supported.	
	Expectations of Support and Feeling Valued Expectations of support were reflected in the YP's voices. This was highlighted through how valued they felt, for example, one young person reported "A lot of people said to me that you are never going to do it but I just wanted to show people wrong so I did". It is clear that this young person did not feel valued by those around him and didn't expect much support. Another young person reported how her father had been the one that believed in her and supported her but never put pressure on her to pass. The relationship this young person has with her father may have mediated how valued she felt and her expectations of support she received.	Carroll and Dockrell (2012, p. 571)
	Teacher Support and Motivation to Progress Gary expressed that one teacher took him aside and told him he could be a great bricklayer. Gary reported that this built up his confidence and he felt he could do much better. Support offered by this teacher helped Gary to feel motivated through the relationship or interactions that Gary had with the teacher. Gary may have admired the teacher which impacted upon how motivated he felt by the teachers support.	Carroll and Dockrell (2012, p. 572)
	Feeling Valued and Teacher Support YP commented on how people said hello and welcome when they started college which made them feel that everyone was nice to them and that they were welcome in their new college. The teachers were described as nice and helpful and that they understand the students. It appears that the teacher's way of being with the students helped them to feel welcome and safe in their new college.	(Hickey, 2016, p. 91)
	Uncertainty and Peer Relationships	Shephard (2015, p. 125)

A New Social World and Challenges	Beth expresses that making friends would be a key theme in how she feels about college. Beth was not sure if she would make new friends but being accepted by her peers was something she prioritised during the activities with the researcher. This suggests that the relationships Beth develops will determine if she joins in social activities.	
	New Beginnings and Adjusting to Change YP reported on the change from secondary school to college by making comparisons between the physical layout. As well as getting used to their new college, they also had to adjust to change in routines, timetabling and the curriculum. YP were able to make sense of their new environment through the interactions with the physical space and by use of comparisons as they adjust to new college experiences. This suggests that the interaction between the YP and their environment was important when adjusting to change.	Hickey (2016, p. 89)
	New Beginnings and Adjusting to Change The move to college seemed to be a very positive experience for one young person who expressed that his new college experience was like a brand new lifestyle. Relationships appeared to be a prominent factor for this young person. The young person referred to his old school friends as "willow school people". The original author concluded that seeing familiar faces may be helped the young person to adjust to the transition.	Esbrand (2016, p. 72)
	Adjusting To Change and Challenges Lydia expressed her sense of loss of her old friends and teachers. She missed them and she was adjusting to the change in her new college setting. It is clear that Lydia had developed good relationships with her old teachers and peers and she was not sure why they weren't with her.	Hickey (2016, p. 93)

A New Social World and Support	**New Beginnings and Teacher Support** One young person made clear links between starting at college and how the support she receives will impact upon this. The size of the college and the various classroom changes made the young person feel worried but she expressed that if she got the right support she may find her way. It appears that the new layout of the college caused some concern and teacher support would help her find her way physically, but also emotionally through the relationship of support.	Shephard (2015, p. 127)
Support and Challenges	**Teacher Support and Adjusting to Change** One young person perceives herself to be more independent at college which is expressed through needing less support. The original author suggests that this young person perceives starting college as being older and more independent which may have impacted on how she is adjusting to the support she receives or her perception that she is now doing things on her own. The relationship the young person has developed with the college environment appears to mediate her independence and how she manages this.	Esbrand (2016, p. 85)
	Teacher Support and Uncertainty One young person was uncertain about the support she would receive from teachers in relation to them understanding how she was feeling. This suggests that teachers will need to have a good relationship with her to be able to understand if she gets upset or worried, especially when she finds it hard to express how she is feeling.	Shephard (2015, p. 126)
	Teacher Support and Uncertainty Eric relied upon his one to one support assistant and offered that she is better than others because he can "wind her up". This suggests that Eric feels safe enough with his support assistant to be able to joke and values the support he receives. Eric also felt anxious about the possibility of not having his support assistant the following year. It	Shephard (2015, p. 158)

	appears that the relationship between Eric and the support assistant that is provided to him mediates between how he perceives support and how he will manage with the uncertainty of different support staff.	

Appendix VI: Quality Evaluation Table

Bibliographic Details	Evaluative Study Overview			Phenomenon Studied and Context		Ethics	Data Collection, Analysis and Potential Researcher Bias	
Name, Date and Title of Study	Purpose	Key Findings	Summary	Setting Rationale	Appropriateness of Sample	Have Ethical Issues been Addressed	Data Collection Methods	Data Analysis Methods
Keil, S and Crews, N. (2008). Post-16 and Post-18 Transitions of YP with Visual Impairment in Wales. *The British Journal of Visual Impairment*, 26(2), 190-201.	To investigate the process of post-16 transition and beyond for blind and partially-sighted YP.	The study reports on the process model of transition and how it is does not make sufficient allowance for last minute decisions and relies on excellent communication between parties. The study also found that there are inequalities in support and resources between FE and Sixth Form colleges.	This qualitative study took place over three years and was conducted by the RNIB Wales research department. The authors express that there is currently concern over the quality of post-16 transition planning and provision of FE with sensory impairments. The study	The study took place in Wales and was in response to conferences held by the RNIB, RNID and Sense in 2002 and 2003. Participants came from mainstream schools with various levels of support and transitioned to Sixth Form colleges and mainstream FE colleges.	YP in this study transitioned at the age of sixteen in 2003 and again at the age of eighteen. One young person was blind and the remaining four were partially sighted. Detailed information on each participant and their previous school history is reported.	No reference to ethical issues. As this was published in a Journal, it is assumed that ethical practices were considered and adhered to.	Face to face and telephone interviews	Case study analysis using replication logic.

			followed five participants and used face to face and telephone interviews with YP, their parents and key informants to collect data. A case study method was used to test the process model of transition using a coding frame based on the main themes from previous interviews.					
Dyson, A., Meagher, N & Robson, E. (2002) Where have they gone? Issues in Transition and Progression for Special School Leavers, *Journal of Research in Special*	To understand how processes of transition impact upon YP who are described as disadvantaged from changes in labour markets.	Key themes were constructed to reflect participant experiences. These were turbulence, transition and progression, experiences of special school and purposefulness, purposelessness	A qualitative study which examined experiences of former special school students to understand how they experienced transition. The study	No information is reported on where the study took place or the rationale for study setting.	Seventy Six former special school students aged between sixteen and twenty five at time of interview. Three YP whose experiences were used as case studies.	No reference to ethical issues. As this was published in a Journal, it is assumed that ethical practices were considered and adhered to.	Semi structured interviews. Three interviews were chosen to be used as case studies to reflect a range of experiences.	Data analysis methods not reported. As the data collection method s from the interpretivist paradigm, it is assumed that

Educational Needs, 2, 1-14		and personal problems.	adheres to an interpretivist paradigm in the use of data collection methods. Analysis methods are unknown. The authors argue that YP continue to need support after the point of transition and focus on transition is not enough from services such as Connexions (now known as Youth Direction)					qualitative analysis was used, though it is unknown which type.
Carroll, C & Dockrell, J. (2012). Enablers and Challenges of Post-16 Education and Employment Outcomes: The perspectives of young adults with a history of	To explore the factors that contributed to enablers and challenges to YP's post-16 education and employment outcomes from a young	Findings identified five key themes. Two themes, personal characteristics and parents as enablers of transition were perceived as enablers. The remaining three	This study aims to access nineteen YP's views on their transition experiences. Participants ages ranged from	YP were offered a range of interview venues including their home, home town, their previous school or a	All YP in the study had previously completed a telephone survey two years prior. 13 progression pathways were identified and YP were invited to take part in this study to represent as many of	No reference to ethical issues. As this was published in a Journal, it is assumed that ethical practices were considered	Semi structured interviews were used to collect data. Arrangements were made to account for communication difficulties such as the	Braun and Clark's (2006) version of thematic analysis was used to analyse data. The authors provide

SLI. International Journal of Communication Disorders, 47(5), 567-577	person perspective	key themes, professionals and advice, education and qualifications and SLI were more complex. Some YP perceived them and enablers of transition whereas some YP perceived them as challenges.	nineteen to twenty three years and all have a specific language impairment and attended the same residential special school. Interviews were analysed using thematic analysis and five key themes were constructed. The study highlights the importance of YP developing agency within the curriculum. This was derived from YP perceiving themselves as key agents for change and	venue of their choice.	those pathways as possible.	and adhered to.	use of interview topics which the participants received prior to the interview, general to specific questions and the use of accessible language. The interview schedule was adapted from Ball et al (2000) and included aspects of transition to address work, education and training; leisure and social life and family home and domesticity.	detailed information on the analysis process.

			active in directing their transition.					
Esbrand, T. (2016). You can't always be at school, you need to move on: A multi-perspective study exploring the experiences of YP with learning difficulties and their parents during post-school transition. Unpublished thesis	To explore experiences of YP and their parents as they transition from a special school to a Sixth Form college	Three over-arching super-ordinate themes with sub themes: Adjusting to change (Saying goodbye, double placement and settling in); involvement and support (Access to services, support from professionals, choice and participation in meetings); moving towards adulthood (Aspirations, preparing for the future and growing up and independence)	A qualitative study using an idiographic approach to understand how YP transition to Sixth Form.	Interviews were conducted in the home setting between July 2015 and October 2015. Parent interviews took place separately from the YP.	Purposive sampling was used to enhance homogeneity of participants	Use of BPS ethical guidelines have be promoted throughout.	A bolder approach was used to collect data by interviewing participants before they left school and after they had transitioned to college. This was to explore participant's experiences over time.	IPA was used as analysis method. The participants two transcripts (from school and college) were joined together to form one transcript and analysed individually, then grouped as dyads.
Hickey, S. (2016). The Initial Experiences of YP with Severe Learning Difficulties Transitioning from Post-16 School to an FE college.	To explore the experiences of YP with severe learning difficulties of transition to FE and examine the challenging and	Key findings suggest that after initial transition YP made sense of the college experience by making comparisons with school. At the second interview, YP did not refer	A qualitative study that aims to explore experiences of transition using a case study design. Findings are presented	YP were interviewed in the college setting over two points in time.	Purposive sampling used to identify five YP using inclusion criteria.	Use of BPS ethical guidelines have be promoted throughout.	Five YP were interviewed; four were interviewed twice in the second and sixth week of college.	Thematic analysis was used inductively for analysis within a case study design.

Unpublished Thesis	supportive factors identified by YP.	to their old schools. YP reported feeling positive at college and it was seen as an opportunity to make new friends and extend their social circle. A frequent theme was related to loss of friendships when leaving school.	for each participant in relation to each research question.					
Shephard, J (2015). 'Hopefully if I like get the right support at college, I'll be able to like find my way and all that if you know what I mean?' Experiences of transition from special school to mainstream college for YP with autism. Unpublished thesis	To explore the lived experiences of YP with Autism as they transitioned to college as well as their parents and teachers using a longitudinal design.	Super-ordinate themes were constructed and presented as chapters (Introducing the YP, preparing for transition, starting at college, independence and vulnerability) and they are presented on a case by case basis with numerous sub themes within each. The study provides recommendations with regards to involving YP in transition planning, time	A qualitative study designed to understand the experiences of YP with Autism as they transition to college. This study employed a longitudinal design and participants were interviewed twice	YP and parents had the option of being interviewed at home or school for the first interview. For the second interview, this was broken down into two phases; an interview at home and then walking interviews at college	Three special schools in three different LA's were contacted in the first instance. Teachers and careers advisors were interviewed first and then YP and parents. YP were tracked to their chosen colleges and the second round of interviews began there.	Ethical issues addressed through adhering to BPS ethical guidelines	A longitudinal approach to data collection using interrupted interviews, beginning with observation and followed with collages and card sorts in interview One. Walking interviews were used at interview two	Thematic analysis using NVivo

		management, parental involvement and fostering peer relationships.						

Appendix VII *Ethical Approval*

Ethical Approval

Wendy Davison

Thu 18/05/2017 11:23

To:Katie Lawson (PGR) <K.Lawson4@newcastle.ac.uk>;

Cc:Richard Parker <richard.parker@newcastle.ac.uk>;

Dear Katie

Thank you for your application for ethical approval of your project "How do young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) experience the transition to post 16". I confirm that Dr Simon Woods has approved it on behalf of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee.

Please note that this approval applies to the project protocol as stated in your application - if any amendments are made to this during the course of the project, please submit the revisions to the Ethics Committee in order for them to be reviewed and approved.

Kind regards,

Wendy

Wendy Davison
PA to Lorna Taylor (Faculty Research Manager)
and Sue Mitchell (Research Funding Development Manager)
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
5th floor, Daysh Building
Newcastle University
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU

Telephone: 0191 208 6349
Fax: 0191 208 7001

Appendix VIII *Revised Ethical Approval*

RE: Katie Lawson: application for ethical approval

Reply all |
Fri 13/10/2017, 10:19

...

Inbox

You replied on 13/10/2017 10:32.

Hi Katie

Thank you for your request for ethical approval of the proposed changes to your project. I confirm that Daniel Zizzo is happy to approve your amendments on behalf of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Ethics Committee.

Best wishes,

Wendy

Wendy Davison
PA to Lorna Taylor (Faculty Research Manager)
and Sue Mitchell (Research Funding Development Manager)
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
5th floor, Daysh Building
Newcastle University
Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 7RU

Telephone: 0191 208 6349
Fax: 0191 208 7001

*Have you recently left School and started College? If so, would you like to tell me about your experience oh how this felt for you?*

My name is Katie Lawson and I am a Trainee Educational Psychologist at Newcastle University. I work in Stockton and I want to do some research into the experiences of young people as they move onto college from school. I really hope to do this research with students like you.

Why is this research important?

- To understand how you experienced your move from school to college

- Help teachers understand what it feels like to move from school to college

- Make sure other young people get the right support in the future
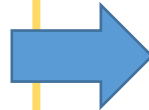
What would I ask you to do?

If you wanted to take part, it would involve you telling me about your experiences. This would be face to face and very informal. I would also record what we talk about on a voice recorder so I can listen back to it.

What would happen to the information I tell you?

All your information will be kept confidential, that means only I and the person helping me with my research will see or hear it **unless you tell me that you or someone you know is being harmed, harming someone or doing something illegal**.

It will also have passwords on it so we can be sure no one else will have access to it.

When I write the research into a report, I

Thankyou for this information

If you have any questions, you can send me an email, or ask your mum and dad to if they have any questions

K.Lawson4@newcastle.ac.uk

It is Your Choice if you want to take part in this study, you don't have to.

Young Person Consent form

Please circle YES or NO as applicable

- I have read and understood the information pack provided   YES / NO

- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and been given satisfactory responses

    YES / NO

- I am aware that I can withdraw from this study at any time, up until the formal report is completed.

    YES / NO

Face to face interviews will be carried out for the purpose of this research. Any data collected will be through note taking and recorded on a Dictaphone. This data will be kept securely and will only be accessible by the researcher and research supervisor.

- I agree that any data collected may be through interviews and you will allow this to be recorded

    YES / NO

- I am happy that I have had chance to ask any other questions I have, have received satisfactory answers and so am willing to take part in this study. I give my informed consent.

    YES / NO

Name: _____

Signature:_____ Date:_____

Parental Consent form

Please circle YES or NO as applicable

- I have read and understood the information pack provided to my child

  YES / NO

- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and been given satisfactory responses

  YES / NO

- I am aware that my child can withdraw from this study at any time, up until the formal report is completed.

  YES / NO

Face to face interviews will be carried out for the purpose of this research. Any data collected will be through note taking and recorded on a Dictaphone. This data will be kept securely and will only be accessible by the researcher and research supervisor.

- I agree that any data collected may be through interviews and you will allow this to be recorded

  YES / NO

- I am happy that I have had chance to ask any other questions I have, have received satisfactory answers and so am willing to take part in this study. I give my informed consent.

  YES / NO

Name: _____

Signature:_____ Date:_____

Appendix XI *Debrief Sheet*

Debriefing Form
## You have taken part in research which explores your move from school to college

You have recently taken part in research which explores your experience of moving from school to college. I want to say Thank-you for being part.

You were told that this research will:

- Help the researcher understand how you experienced your move from school to college

- Help teachers understand what it feels like to move from school to college

- Make sure other young people get the right support in the future
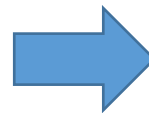
What I asked you to do

I asked if you wanted to talk to me about your experience. This was recorded on a Dictaphone. If you have any concerns or want to ask me anything about the recordings, you

What will happen next?

All your information will be kept confidential, that means only I and the person helping me with my research will see or hear it. It will also have passwords on it so we can be sure no one else will have access to it. If you would like your interview to be taken out of the research, just email me and I will be able to withdraw it.
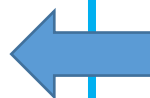
Thankyou for this information

If you have any questions, you can send me an email, or ask your mum and dad to if they have any questions

➤ K.Lawson4@newcastle.ac.uk

➤ Richard.parker@newcastle.ac.uk

Appendix XII *Interview Guide*

Question	Prompts	Type of question
1. Can you tell me how you came to be at this college?	Who decided that you would come to this college? What happened? How did you feel?	Narrative. This question will allow participants to tell their story of how they moved from school to college
2. Thinking back to when you were about to start college, what was important to you?	Why was this important?	Descriptive. This question will help participants think about what they think was important prior to their transition.
3. What did you think college would be like?	What is it like now?	Narrative. This question is designed to be as open ended as possible to allow participants to make sense of their experience.
4. Can you tell me about the people you knew at school and how you got on with them?	Who were you close to at school? Teachers, friends, support staff?	Narrative. This question will allow participants to reflect upon the relationships they had at school.
5. Can you tell me about the people you know at college and how you get on with them?	Who are you close to at college? Teachers, friends, support staff?	Narrative. This question will allow participants to reflect upon the relationships they have at college

6. Can you tell me what you hope to gain from college?	Why is this important to you?	Narrative. This question allows participants to think about what they want from college and what aspects of this are important to them.
7. Can you tell me about your hopes for the future?	What would you like to do when you leave college?	Narrative. This question allows participants to express their aspirations for the future,
8. Can you tell me how college is helping you get ready for adult life	How does college help you get ready for being an adult?	Narrative. This question will help participants to reflect on how college is helping them to get ready for adult life and what part of this is important to them.

Appendix XIII *Example of Analysis*

Emergent themes	Original Transcripts	Exploratory, linguistic and descriptive comments
	Interviewer: ok, so she was important to you. Was there anybody else that was important to you at that time?	
Differences between friends and classmates	Interviewee: I didn't know any, I didn't know any of my classmates when I was over there	Describes other pupils as "classmates" not friends. Jake has recognised the differences between these and therefore, has a good idea of what his concept of friendship means.
	Interviewer: ok	
Being it in together Shared vision	Interviewee: erm, the only person I knew was er my best friend and she was in a wheelchair included and erm she erm she er like she had like erm she didn't know anyone either and me and her took this together like one big step forward to our future like ahead.	Jake has made links between starting college and "our future" and he feels that it is a big step forward but he is taking it "together" with his friend.

	Interviewer: yeah ok. What about erm, members of staff at school, was anybody important to you then?	
Familiarity with teachers in school	Interviewee: er, er, probably my er now and then on a Monday aft, like on a Monday morning er my art like, my, when I was like in year ten, like half way through, er my mam asked er can somebody talk to N about his lifestyle and all that and my art teacher took me out now and then on a Monday morning and talked to me about (unclear) actually I think he's still got the folder… me and him er coz I'm a Christian and erm, this is like , erm, this is, no good, it's in my background like, erm, my art teacher, er thought this is somebody who needs help and I got it from him coz he, I like art coz I like drawing and doing creative stuff and the only way I can get it through is er talking to somebody who I know and get along with	Jake talks about his faith and how his behaviour at that time did not match up to this as it was "no good" Jake talks about the "only way" of getting through something is being able to talk to someone who he's knows and gets along with.

Jake makes reference to days of the week indicating this structure helps him make sense of his week |
| | Interviewer: ok, and was that teacher involved in your move from school to college? | |

Guidance	Interviewee: er, no coz he was in like, in er, he just had his old class (unclear) over here and he just helped me like get over my fears and learn the ropes	Jake talks about his teacher helping him "learn the ropes". In the context of his Faith and behaviour, he may mean that this teacher helped him to recognise a way of doing something or a way of being. Also the teacher helped Jake to "get over his fears" which indicates emotional support for fear/being scared.
	Interviewer: ok, sounds really supportive	
	Interviewee: hmm	
	Interviewer: ok, can I ask you Jake, what did you think college would be like, when you were at school, what did you think college would be like?	
Differences between school and college	Interviewee: Er, pause, er, probably a bit like different coz you can wear your own clothes and er, do whatever you want and including er, you have like different things over here	Different to school because you can wear your own clothes, make decisions about what you want to do. Jake is making reference to freedom

		and autonomy and being able to choose things in his life, as simple as what to wear.
	Interviewer: um hum, what did you think would be different?	
	Interviewee: er, different friends (pause) having a smaller playground	Jake makes reference to physical things in his surroundings, playground as well as people.
	Interviewer: Yeah	
Differences in timetable	Interviewee: (laughs) and er, seems a bit different over here, because the options on a Thursday are on a Friday	Jake makes reference to difference in timetables. This helps Jake to differentiate between college and school.
	Interviewer: Yeah, right ok, so different timetable?	
	Interviewee: Yeah	
	Interviewer: Erm and what is college actually like?	
Positive emotions about college	Interviewee: Happy, joyful, er, bit hilarious	Jake expresses positive emotions and makes reference to college being extremely funny.

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	Interviewer: a bit hilarious? (laughs) what's hilarious?	
	Interviewee: coz our class is like upside down basically, like everyone specially the head	Upside down in this context may mean disorder and confusion, given how hilarious Jake thinks college is.
	Interviewer: Can you tell me a bit about the teachers in college?	
	Interviewee: Erm, my maths teacher, honestly, if you were in my maths lessons you would	Jake may be trying to get across something about his maths teacher by using the word honestly.

Analysis Considerations

Not sure what to use?
Discourse Analysis
IPA
Thematic Analysis
Narrative
Cross case Analysis
Case Study Design
Content Analysis
IPA
☑ Larkin & Thompson (2011)

Assumptions

An understanding of the world
requires an understanding of
experience.

IPA researchers elicit and engage
with personal accounts of others
who are 'always already' immersed
in a linguistic, relational,
cultural and physical world.

How is this different from
Thematic Analysis?

So IPA is described as a
method which is interested in

how people make sense of their world experience

Thematic Analysis is described as a method for identifying analysing and reporting themes within data. TA organises and describes your data set in rich detail.

Current thinking - IPA would fit better IA terms of epistemological positioning. ie Interpretavist paradigm

Appendix XV *Over-arching themes and subthemes*

Analysis for Question One: How do Young People with Education, Health and Care Plans make sense of relationships During Transition to Further Education?

Overarching Theme One: People

Subtheme One: School Feeling Like a Family	
Explanation	**Original Quotes from Transcript**
All YP reported positive feelings about people at school. This was in relation to how school staff treated them and how teachers made them feel. These relationships appear to be of importance to YP and emphasise how they felt they belonged to school. YP made sense of this using the social structures that they know of; family and school structures.	"erm, they used to just always like talk to you and make you feel as if like, you belong there basically, like make you feel wanted. Like if you get in trouble or something, they would always talk to you and they won't shout at you or put you straight in detention they talk to you first and make you like, come to sense with you, just like, families do anyways, like basically just learn you right from wrong" (Chloe)
	"they're like, coz we were in like, a tutor with only about twelve people in it, coz we had year erm I'd say we had year tens and elevens mixed in one, and I was one of the year tens and erm so we were quite like a split group and er, and they treat us like we were like family so we always used to call them like Melissa, which is our teacher, our tutor that was over there, er

	we used to call her our like school mammy and then er and er we used to call our, we call (names SNA), our SNA, we used to just call her our sister and things" (Chloe)
	"yeah so thy treat us like we were family basically" (Chloe)
	"Basically I was like, a miniature member of staff (laughs)" (Jake)
	"Like all the teachers are like nice and I, they're all nice and is really fun and I get to hang out with my friends all day" (Abigail)
	"She's er one of my SNA's, we're really close"

Subtheme Two: Teachers as Mentors

Teachers in college appeared to have a wider role than teaching and learning. The role extends into mentoring and YP feel that their teachers are people who trust them, help them and guide them to make better decisions. This emphasises the pastoral role of teaching and supporting YP's emotional well-being.	Jake: "yeah. He would… and a couple of them are like er, helping each other and they let us have like a choice er to do different things and er and like have different impact on some people" Interviewer: "yeah, so do you feel like you have more of a choice in college?" Interviewee: "yeah"
	"Er, pause, erm, possibly er, my tutor, coz erm she like helped me like get along like she helped like, I helped her like, like me and her like erm, every time erm, to do a thing…she said like

	er, basically, she could trusted me to do like, go around and collect money and to do like different things" (Jake)
	"erm I like the most about (names tutor teacher), is that is that she talks nice to the students" (Abigail)
	"Coz I know I can trust her (TA) and talk to her about anything, coz like, if I'm worried about anything or if I need the question asking out again or yeah" (Liam)
	"er, er, probably my er now and then on a Monday aft, like on a Monday morning er my art like, my, when I was like in year ten, like half way through, er my mam asked er can somebody talk to N about his lifestyle and all that and my art teacher took me out now and then on a Monday morning and talked to me about (unclear) actually I think he's still got the folder… me and him er coz I'm a Christian and erm, this is like , erm, this is, no good, it's in my background like, erm, my art teacher, er thought this is somebody who needs help and I got it from him coz he, I like art coz I like drawing and doing creative stuff and the only way I can get it through is er talking to somebody who I know and get along with" (Jake)

	"er, no coz he was in like, in er, he just had his old class (unclear) over here and he just helped me like get over my fears and learn the ropes" (Jake)
	Interviewer: "Ok, is there anybody at college that helped you when you were feeling a bit worried about your maths test?" Jake: "teachers" Interviewer: "what did they do Jake?" Jake: "sat aside of me and helped me figure out the question and read the question out"
	Interviewer: "ok, so can you tell me a little bit now about the people at college who are Important" Chloe: "erm, the teachers mostly to be fair, well teacher and friends but I've only, well to be fair, coz like I fall out with quite a few of my friends so I've only got like two now coz some them go behind your back sometimes"
	"like she just sit's, like if I'm upset or something, she'll just sit with me, like the other day, she sat me down in this conference room and she just started like talking to me, like making me feel better and things and she just like there a lot" (Chloe)
	"yeah Nic, coz the other day I got upset because like family and things and so Nic just like took me in here and she give me a

	hug and things and said that it will be alright and things" (Chloe)

Subtheme Three: Separation/Being in it Together

YP appeared to be supported by peers and a feeling of shared experiences and having others to take their first steps onto college with. For some, Having friends already in college appeared to relieve anxiety about meeting new people and being able to have insider knowledge of what college may be like. For some YP, separation from friends in school was a significant factor and it took some time to adjust.	"erm, the only person I knew was er my best friend and she was in a wheelchair included and erm she erm she er like she had like erm she didn't know anyone either and me and her took this together like one big step forward to our future like ahead" (Jake)
	"Like, erm, like, sometimes, you can like, one minute you can have like a big impact onto yourself, including, you can always have a smile on ya, like have a bit of fun, coz including, I had some friends coming over here as well with me that had a big impact on me" (Jake)
	"Er like from primary school till er, she, she knows me and know her like basically like that (crosses fingers) and er and er, me and her had a big relationship" (Jake)

	"Er erm, err, friends like I knew a lot of people from (names buildings part of special school) and like and felt perfect" (Jake)
	"erm, in fairness I thought it would be a bit more chilled back, erm chilled out coz erm, because I've got like other friends in college before I had been in college, they said it was dead chilled back, chilled out so" (Chloe)
	"erm yeah, there's er, it was, I wasn't nervous with like the people, because I knew them anyways because obviously, they were over there before they came here" (Chloe)
	"and I can talk to them (friends) without worrying about anything and, er, trying to think of the words (long pause) I can hang around with them" (Liam)
	"Like, I don't know I'm not able to go over there to see them, so I just stay over here" (Abigail)
	"Well, I was a bit, ups, I was a bit, erm well I was a bit like, I was a bit emotional like sometimes because I didn't want to leave my friends and my teachers so, so now I came, now I'm over here…I'm fine." (Abigail)
	"Like, I didn't wanna leave my friends but like the other two are in here, but like the rest of them is in the other building" (Abigail)

	"erm, in this college yeah, coz people just don't understand what like er like basically just don't know how to keep their mouths shut" (Chloe)
	"coz some of them went earlier and go before me" (Liam)

Subtheme Four : Decision Making

For those YP who had more choice about what college to attend, parents appeared to be significant in making decisions. Some YP had limited choice or may not have been aware that they had a choice.	"Erm, coz, erm, my mam and my dad were thinking, erm, they were, er, we went to like, we were looking at different colleges, we went to AB and then we came here and we thought, er, AB, the adults look a bit taller and we were for this one and I just came here coz it would be easy option and then er, I'm just playing it by that" (Jake)
	Interviewer: "and can you tell me Abigail, who decided that you would come to this college?" Abigail: "Erm, well, erm, we got a letter about it before and I got a place in here so" Interviewer: "oh ok, did you look at any other colleges?" Abigail: "Erm, I don't think so"
	"erm yeah, because I was only in year eleven, I had to do year eleven over here, I didn't really have a choice which college I went to because I was only in year eleven then I had to do my GCSE's before and I'm doing my GCSE's this year" (Chloe)

Analysis for Question Two: How might YP's constructions of relationships help to prepare them for adulthood?

Overarching Theme One: Purpose of College

Subtheme One: Purpose Of College	
YP appeared to view college as a Stepping Stone to other courses or education. A common feature of this subtheme including the words "over here" for college and "over there" for school. YP rarely used the word college. In this sense college was not college, but an extension of school or something that needed to be completed before they could leave to go onto other courses. To support this argument further confusion or disruption appeared to be significant and this was in relation to time. There was confusion about what year YP were in and some issues with identification with different year groups. For some, there was some confusion over how long they had been at college. In addition to this, YP made sense of college by comparing the daily routine of school to their new routine in college	"Erm, I want obviously to go to college and things and get the grade that I want for my childcare and stuff like that" (Chloe) Interviewer: oh ok. Alright Jake, can you tell me, because you're in second year now at college, can you tell me what you hope to get from college? Is it you want? Jake: Er, pause, do well Interviewer: and what does that mean Jake: like I hope to like do like do a whole year of this and then finish and then go to my next college Interviewer: ok, what would doing well look like? How would you know that you have done well? Jake: If only there was a thumbs up on here (points to emoji's) and I could er, pick that one Interviewer: which one? TA: If there was a thumbs up

	Interviewer: oh a thumbs up, right. Can you tell me why it's important to you that you do well? Jake: Er, coz erm, just like, get coz if I get a higher grade I can er get my levels higher Interviewer: how come you came here? Liam: oh erm, coz I get more grades here, until like I moved somewhere else for better grades Interviewer: Ok Abigail, where were you before? Abigail: Erm, Just over there (points to special school) Interviewer: right ok, lovely…17 wow. Alright Abigail, can you tell me how you got to this college? Abigail: Erm, well I left over there to come over here Interviewer: Ok. And when you were thinking about coming to college, how were you feeling then? Jake: Erm, coming over here?
	"Erm, like shocked, coz it's been so fast, like, like my year eleven, coz I've been to year seven to like year eleven and it's been so fast you can't even count the days" (Jake)

	"and er, seems a bit different over here, because the options on a Thursday are on a Friday" (Jake)
	"Erm, including it was nice and sunny when I came here, it was like the perfect day to come to college" (Jake)
	Chloe: "I'm in year thirteen at the moment, I'm supposed to be in year twelve but erm, but, I'm only supposed to come, I was only supposed to come in er September" Interviewer: "oh right, so you're in year thirteen" Chloe: "I'm in year, thirteen yeah, but I missed a year so when I was in school over there, I er jumped a year, so I jumped eleven and came straight to college" Interviewer: "right ok, ok, and how did you come to be at this college?" Chloe: "erm, the teachers just thought I'd cope more in a college than over the err school"

Subtheme Two: Learning Independent Skills

YP were able to communicate that they were learning independent skills but for most, this was prompted by the TA during interview. Independent skills ranged from managing own behaviour, making good choices and being responsible to more practical aspects such as managing time and money. Although	"erm, they treat us like adults, they don't, they won't, it's not like over there where they like, where they'll like, I don't know, where they'll give ya a detention, they'll give you like chats to see sometimes, they give you detention straight over there, not all"(Chloe)

some YP found it difficult to make links between college and independent skills, it appears that the relationships they have developed with teachers impact upon how they feel about this.	"er, they let us, it's more relaxed in here, like in there you had to do the thigs that the teachers say but now, it's more like, it's more like, er, it's more like, if you do that again you get a you only get one more chance, it's more relaxed and you know, I don't really know how to describe it, but it's laid back here" (Chloe)
	"They er, well they push you on to do like the work that you can and like they make sure that you get all your work out the way because of you don't get all the work out the way then that means when you leave you'll have to come back and do some like coursework as well so" (Chloe)
	"erm, she like, shell help me like fill out forms if I need to, she'll, coz obviously, I been sending loads of C.Vs off for jobs and things… so she's been helping me do a C.V and stuff like that so basically helping me to do like try and find my own job and work and stuff like that" (Chloe)
	"yeah coz at college you can wear your own clothes and things so you don't have to be all suffocated in like uniform" (Chloe) "Like erm, school dinners and whatever and erm , like er have like have more of a different impact" (Jake)

	"Er, learn how to manage money and time" (Jake)
	Interviewer: Ok, is there anything else you want to say Liam about when you moved from school to college that you think is really important Liam: umm (pause) getting on time Interviewer: can you tell me a bit more about that Liam: like lessons and stuff Interviewer: ok, ok, yeah Liam: coz sometimes we learn time in maths Interviewer: right ok Liam: so that helps me with time
	"er, not being silly… I guess… being responsible, looking after my own things sometimes, er, ahh" (Liam)

Appendix XVI *Example of Fortune Line*

Shocked

big impact

getting work done happy

chilled

maths test want to cry

happy

getting ready to leave school

6 months after you leave college