

What is really going on in the group supervision of Emotional Literacy Support Assistants  
(ELSAs) - an exploratory study using thematic analysis.

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## **Abstract**

This research explores the content of group supervision sessions for Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) to further understand ‘what is really going on’. There has recently been a re-emergence of interest in group supervision and Educational Psychologists are increasingly involved in this work (Dunsmuir, Lang and Leadbetter, 2015, p.9). There is currently a paucity of research in the UK that has directly explored the content of group supervision sessions; research to date has tended to survey supervisory practice or focus on eliciting the views of participants about supervision through the use of questionnaires and focus groups. This research addresses this gap and begins a process of exploration into what really happens within group supervision sessions.

Within the local authority in which this research was carried out, group supervision is regularly provided to ELSAs by Educational Psychologists (EPs). The core aims are to support ELSAs with their professional development and to ensure that they practice safely and appropriately. This research involved the recording and subsequent transcription of three group supervision sessions. Themes within the data were then identified using an inductive approach to thematic analysis. This allowed for a rich and complex picture to emerge allowing an insight into what was actually happening within the group supervision sessions. Eleven main themes and forty-six sub-themes were identified whilst exploring the contributions of both the ELSAs and the EPs.

The identified themes were found to be consistent with Hawkins and Shohet’s (2012) functions of supervision which is a commonly used framework for supervision within educational psychology in the UK (Dunsmuir *et al.*, 2015, p.9). The findings were then

considered in the light of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) along with an approach to support this process – ORID (Marsick and Maltbia, 2009) and a psychodynamic understanding about group processes (Bion, 1961).

The research suggested that within the group supervision sessions ELSAs were exploring their skills, knowledge and understanding of the casework in which they were involved along with experiencing a degree of emotional support. It was also evident that both the ELSAs and the EPs were exercising an element of ‘quality control’ within their work. The research also highlighted the need for a greater attention to group processes, particularly those of an unconscious nature, in order to develop the supervision that ELSAs receive. It is suggested that a psychodynamic perspective may be helpful in achieving this goal.

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## **Chapter 1 - The context to this research**

### **1.1 Overview**

This chapter outlines the political and social context regarding the mental health of children and young people in the UK. The Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) project is then introduced and an outline of the training, type of work and the requirements of the supervision that are necessary for ELSAs to practice safely are provided.

### **1.2 Terminology**

An ELSA is an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant who has completed a structured, published training programme (Burton, 2009) on aspects of emotional literacy. The vast majority of ELSAs also tend to be Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) within their schools although occasionally, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) or other school staff have completed the training.

Within this research, the term 'group supervision' will be used to refer to the 'professional supervision' provided to ELSAs by Educational Psychologists (EPs). Within the current ELSA literature, the term 'professional supervision' is used to describe the type of ongoing supervisory support provided to ELSAs following their training. This term is used to distinguish sessions from managerial supervision which also involves line management responsibilities.

### **1.3 Children and young people's emotional and mental health needs - the national context**

In 2003 the Labour government, led by Tony Blair, introduced the Every Child Matters (ECM) agenda (DfES, 2003) which challenged all services, including schools, to widen their focus to meet five identified outcomes: to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy and achieve, to make a positive contribution and to achieve economic well-being (DfES, 2003, p.6). The need for this change was supported by an increasing awareness of mental health issues amongst young people. National statistics indicated that in 2004, one in ten children and young people (10 per cent) aged 5–16 had a clinically diagnosed mental disorder (Green, McGinnity, Meltzer, Ford, and Goodman, 2005, p.8)<sup>1</sup>.

Following ECM, the report 'Healthy minds: Promoting emotional health and well-being in schools' (Ofsted, 2005) suggested schools had a low level of awareness regarding emotional health and well-being noting that, 'Most training tended to focus on strategies for managing pupils' behaviour rather than on promoting positive approaches to relationships and resolving conflicts.' (Ofsted, 2005, p.1). To address this need, the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) published a resource entitled 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL): Improving behaviour, improving learning' (DfES, 2005) which was later described as 'a comprehensive, whole-school approach to promoting the social and emotional skills that underpin effective learning, positive behaviour, regular attendance, staff effectiveness and the emotional health and well-being of all who learn and work in schools' (DCSF, 2007a, p.4).

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<sup>1</sup> This report uses the term 'mental disorders', as defined by the ICD-10, to imply a clinically recognisable set of symptoms or behaviour associated in most cases with considerable distress and substantial interference with personal functions

The end of Tony Blair's government and the ushering in of the Labour government led by Gordon Brown in July 2007, saw the creation of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF). In December 2007, the publication of *The Children's Plan – Building Brighter Futures* (DCSF, 2007b) outlined one of their aims – 'to make this the best place in the world for our children and young people to grow up' (DCSF, 2007b, p.3). In many ways the Children's Plan continued the agenda set out by ECM in 2003 with five principles underpinning the plan: the need for government to support parents and families to bring up children, the beliefs that all children have the potential to succeed, that all children should enjoy their childhood and that services need to meet the needs of children, young people and families with an overall focus on prevention of difficulty. The subsequent Children and Families Act 2010 detailed changes to support some of these aims and focussed on how schools operated together and developed an expectation for alternative provisions for children and young people. It also made a number of provisions regarding Family Court proceedings and how they are reported. However, the reach of this Act was limited by the impending election which subsequently led to another change of government in May 2010 – the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition led by David Cameron.

In March 2011, the Conservative/Liberal Democrat coalition government began a consultation and set out an agenda for reforming the ways in which support was provided for children and young people with disabilities and/or special needs. The Department for Education produced another Green Paper entitled, 'Support and aspiration: a new approach to special education needs and disability' (DfE, 2011) with the aim to ensure that, 'Every child deserves a fair start in life with the very best opportunity to succeed' (DfE, 2011, p.14).



At this time, the long term benefits of ensuring children and young people's emotional well-being were also further highlighted by the Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2012 (DoH, 2013) which indicated that research had identified associations between unmet emotional needs throughout childhood and poorer life outcomes in adulthood (DoH, 2013, Chapter 10, p.4). The report highlighted the fact that mental health difficulties in childhood often persist into adulthood and that they can be a significant cost to the public purse (Chapter 10, p.4).

It was also being suggested that rates of mental health issues amongst children and young people were increasing. The Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2012 (DoH, 2013) cited data from studies carried out in 2007 suggesting that rates of self-harm and attempted suicide had increased leading to an increase in hospital admissions (Chapter 10, p.3) and YoungMinds, a leading UK charity for young people's mental health and well-being in the UK, suggested that there had been a significant increase of hospital admissions due to self-harm in the last ten years (YoungMinds, 2011). However, a number of different organisations reported a lack of reliable data about the mental health and well-being of children and young people. A House of Commons Health Committee report (2014, p.11) and a National Health Service (NHS) report reviewing mental health services (NHS England, 2014, p.14) both noted that the most recent figures regarding the prevalence of common mental health problems in children and young people was from Green *et al.*'s (2005) survey carried out by the Office for National Statistics. This led the British Psychological Society, in their contribution to the House of Commons Health Committee inquiry (2014), to state, 'We do not know the scale of the problem...we simply do not have accurate information from which to gauge the state of children and young people's mental health nationally' and they went on to highlight the fact that this has impacted on the ability of services to plan appropriately to meet the needs of children and young people (House of Commons Health Committee, 2014, p.12).

As these issues were being further explored, the Children and Families Act 2014 provided the legislative requirements to implement many of the changes outlined in the earlier Green Paper, 'Support and aspiration: a new approach to special education needs and disability' (DfES, 2011). This new approach aimed to join up the support provided by education, health and social care and increase the requirement for services to work with children, young people and their families. This included greater transparency by ensuring that available services were made known to all through a 'local offer' and by offering families a greater determination as to how the available services could be accessed and used i.e. through the allocation of personal budgets. To reflect this new way of collaborative working between services, the Children and Families Act 2014 also enabled the introduction of the new Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) which replaced the Statements of Special Educational Needs. These EHCPs also encompassed a new, wider age range of 0 to 25 years.

Alongside these changes, the new 'Special Educational need and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years' was also published in 2014, with subsequent amendments in 2015 (DfE, 2015). This provided statutory guidance relating to the Children and Families Act 2014 and applied to all children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). This new code of practice also incorporated a new description to replace the previous 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social development' category contained within the previous Special Educational Needs Code of Practice (DfES, 2001 p.87) and included, for the first time, the use of the term 'mental health'. The new description - 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties' (DfE, 2015, p. 98) - no longer deemed behaviour to be a special education need with the suggestion that a child or young person's challenging behaviour is likely to be a reflection of an unmet social, emotional or mental health needs.

Following concerns about the provision of good mental health care services in the UK (NHS England, 2015, p.3) a joint NHS England/Department of Health and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing taskforce was created to draw on a range of professional expertise to provide a 'comprehensive view to understand the wide-ranging issues affecting our mental health service' (NHS England, 2015, p.3). Amongst many of the issues highlighted in their report (NHS England, 2015) were those about the role of schools in supporting children and young people's mental health and the necessity for staff across the board – in Health, Education and Social Care – to be appropriately trained. The report included a range of proposals that sought to improve access to provision, promote resilience and early intervention, to support the most vulnerable, to increase accountability and develop the workforce. Under the report's heading of 'Next Steps in 2015/16', several recommendations were identified which related specifically to schools. The first highlighted the need for joint training and provision within mental health services and schools so that children can more easily access appropriate services (p.20) and the second highlighted the need for whole school approaches to promote mental health and well-being and a identified a potential role for counsellors within school settings (p.20). There was also an overarching 'aspiration' for the following:

A requirement for all partners, commissioners or providers, to sign up to a series of agreed principles covering: the range and choice of treatments and interventions available; collaborative practice with children, young people and families and involving schools; the use of evidence-based interventions; and regular feedback of outcome monitoring to children, young people and families and in supervision. (p.18)

In this proposal there was a rare reference to the potential of supervision although this reference appears to be coupled with the notion of ‘outcome monitoring’ and is perhaps indicative that supervision is seen as a managerial process with an emphasis on outcomes and improved accountability. This will be further explored in Chapter 2 when the functions of supervision are considered.

The report also acknowledged that many schools provide early support when children and young people encounter mental health problems. The authors of the report recognised that work in this area already happens in secondary schools reporting that 93% of secondary schools implement programmes to promote positive mental health, 86% have access to trained/qualified counsellors and 98% have pastoral care services (p.36). Although not cited in the report, ELSA intervention is one such example of early support.

Despite the recognition of emotional well-being in the ECM agenda in 2003, it is lamentable that ten years later reports (DoH, 2013; NHS England, 2015), continued to highlight the lack of consistent provision for children and young people’s mental health suggesting that, amongst other things, staff needed appropriate training and schools needed to further develop their curricula so that Personal Social, Health and Economic education (PSHE) could successfully promote mental health and well-being. The more recent changes to the legislation in the Children and Families Act 2014 reflect a continuing acknowledgment and emphasis on mental health and well-being along with the provision of EHCPs which require education, health and social care to work together. However, the continued absence of any significant progress in providing services for, and meeting the need of, children and young people’s mental health speaks for itself.

## **1.4 The ELSA project – a local context**

The ELSA project was conceived in a city authority and was subsequently developed across a large county authority, both within the South of England. It was following the ECM agenda that Sheila Burton, along with her colleagues, developed the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) project.

Over recent years there has been increased recognition of the impact of social and emotional aspects of learning on academic attainment in schools. The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters) recognised that schools need to be concerned with the all-round development of children. (ELSA Network, 2016)

She recognised that in order for children's individual needs to be recognised and met, additional support would be necessary to develop their emotional literacy skills.

All children should be nurtured in accordance with their individual needs. There will always be children and young people in schools facing life challenges that detract from their ability to engage with learning, and some will require greater support to increase their emotional literacy than others. (ELSA Network, 2016)

### **1.4.1 The background to the ELSA project**

The Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) project is ... designed to build the capacity of schools to support the emotional needs of their pupils from within their

own resources. It recognises that children learn better and are happier in school if their emotional needs are also addressed (Burton, 2009, p.12).

Burton also recognised that the work of ELSAs requires the support of EPs, 'who apply psychological knowledge of children's social and emotional development to particular areas of need and to specific casework.' (Burton, 2009, p.12). EPs deliver the initial training, offer continued support and provide regular group supervision in order for ELSAs to work safely.

#### **1.4.2 The ELSA model**

ELSAs currently receive six days of training from EPs on different aspects of emotional literacy which cover the following areas:

- Building resilience and self esteem
- Managing emotions
- Social and friendship skills
- Supporting children through loss and bereavement and family break up
- Use of story in ELSA work
- Active listening and reflective conversations
- Use of puppets in ELSA work

Following some initial experience, ELSAs are also able to access additional training opportunities in specific areas. These topics include:

- Attachment and relationships

- Counselling skills
- Solution focused approaches
- Working with worries

This training enables ELSAs ‘to plan and deliver programmes of support to pupils in their school who are experiencing temporary or longer term additional emotional needs. The majority of ELSA work is expected to be delivered on an individual basis, but sometimes small group work will be appropriate, especially in the areas of social and friendship skills’ (Burton, 2009, P.13).

Examples highlighting the type of activity carried out by ELSAs are provided in Appendix A.

### **1.4.3 Supervision for ELSAs**

It is recognised that ELSAs should receive regular professional supervision to ensure safe practice and to allow for continued development (ELSA Network, 2016). This supervision is currently purchased by schools and is facilitated by an EP. Sessions take place once every half term and are two hours in duration with a maximum of eight ELSAs in each supervision group. It is intended that the supervision ‘provides opportunity for reflective practice, supportive challenge and personal support’ (ELSA Network, 2016). ELSAs are also able to access additional support from the EP facilitating their supervision group via email or telephone. Whilst ELSAs receive their professional supervision from EPs they receive their line management from within their own schools, usually from Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) although a number of ELSAs are directly accountable to their

Headteachers. The line manager has direct responsibility for the ELSAs work within school and supports them in identifying and prioritising their work.

#### **1.4.4 Summary of chapter**

This chapter has highlighted the national context that gave rise to the development of the ELSA project and the continued need for such intervention. It then described the development of the ELSA project highlighting the need for regular group supervision so that ELSAs can carry out their work safely and develop their skills. There is currently no published research specifically exploring the content of group supervision sessions for ELSAs and this exploratory research aims to begin to explore these sessions so that a greater understanding about the nature of the supervision can be developed.



## **Chapter 2 – The literature review**

Within this chapter definitions of supervision will be outlined and the functions of supervision explored in light of some of the models of supervision that are used within the field of educational psychology in the UK. A literature review exploring the use of group supervision within educational contexts will then be considered. The purpose and rationale for this research will be discussed.

### **2.1 Definitions of supervision**

There are numerous definitions of supervision and two main factors - the professional discipline and/or the cultural context – appear to have the most influence on how it is defined. Cutliffe and Lowe (2005, p.477) highlighted that within the North American literature definitions of supervision primarily focus on the training context (often within the counselling discipline) with an emphasis on the supervisor taking an expert role and having both a managerial and development foci. Within the European literature, there is a greater emphasis on the development of practitioners' skills throughout the duration of their professional practice (Scaife, 2009, p.2). Given that this research focuses on supervision which occurs throughout the duration of professional practice it is intended to consider the definitions emerging from a European perspective, particularly those from the UK.

Hawkins and Shohet are often quoted in the literature within the field of educational psychology in the UK (Dunsmuir, Lang and Leadbetter, 2015; Rawlings and Cowell, 2015; Soni, 2015; Corlett, 2015) and they suggest the following holistic definition of supervision:

Supervision is a joint endeavour in which a practitioner with the help of a supervisor, attends to their clients, themselves as part of their client practitioner relationships and the wider systemic context, and by so doing improves the quality of their work, transforms their client relationships, continuously develops themselves, their practice and the wider profession.

(Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.60)

In the field of counselling within the UK, Page and Wosket (2001, p.15) refer to the derivation of the word as in the Collins dictionary (1986): '*super* meaning above or over and *visio* meaning sight' but also highlight that although the term supervision often refers to an element of managerial practice it is also concerned with standards of practice and measures of effectiveness. Interestingly, Page and Wosket (2001, p.16) do not venture on to provide a specific definition accepting the ambiguity of the term to describe what is considered to be a complex process.

Scaife (2009, p.8) also avoids giving a specific definition of the term supervision, preferring to list the main features that should characterise the process – a focus on ensuring a good quality of service delivery and the well-being of clients; a clear supervisory agreement that can form the basis of a trusting relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee in which an open discussion of roles and responsibilities are explored; a clear focus on the needs of the supervisee and a recognition that supervision can fulfil formative, restorative and normative functions (see section 2.2).

Milne (2009, p.10) takes a different approach and laments the lack of specificity that accompanies definitions of supervision. He highlights the need for definitions to have four

criteria – ‘precision’, ‘specification’, ‘operationalism’ and the need to be supported by empirical research. Milne (2009, p.10) comments that many of the often used definitions are therefore ‘problematic’ and he offered the following definition on the basis of his four criteria:

The formal provision, by approved supervisors, of a relationship-based education and training that is work-focused and which manages, supports, develops and evaluates the work of colleague/s (**precision**). It therefore differs from related activities, such as mentoring and therapy, by incorporating an evaluative component (**precision by differentiation**) and being obligatory. The main methods that supervisors use are corrective feedback on the supervisees’ performance, teaching, and collaborative goal-setting (**specification**). The objectives of supervision are ‘normative’ (e.g. case management and quality control issues), ‘restorative’ (e.g. encouraging emotional experiencing and processing) and ‘formative’ (e.g. maintaining and facilitating the supervisees’ competence, capability and general effectiveness) (**specification by identifying the functions served**). These objectives could be measured by current instruments (e.g. ‘Teachers’ PETS’: Milne *et al.*, 2002: **operationalisation**).

(Milne, 2009, p.15)

Milne’s definition perhaps encapsulates the difficulty; that the process of supervision is so complex and multi-faceted that trying to capture all of its complexity in a simple, accessible definition is perhaps a tortuous task.

Dunsmuir and Leadbetter (2010, p.3) took a more pragmatic approach when defining supervision in the guidelines for professional supervision for EPs. Their definition is closely

aligned with the functions of supervision (see section 2.2) and provides a simple, clear description of what they understand good supervision should seek to achieve.

Good supervision has an important role in assuring quality standards of service delivery and supporting service development. It should address both the well-being and professional development of the supervisee but also attend to outcomes for children, young people and their families. (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010, p.3)

Furthermore, these guidelines specifically differentiate between professional supervision and line management supervision noting that the latter is concerned with appraisal, monitoring of performance, operational issues, quality assurance and evaluation of outcomes whilst the former is concerned with ‘all other aspects of an EPs work’ (ibid, p.5).

Whilst the definitions considered above have incorporated the main features of the supervisory process they do not specifically define group supervision. There are considerably fewer definitions of group supervision in the literature and those offered tend to accept an already established definition of supervision whilst recognising that it takes place within a more complex situation - that of a group.

### **2.1.1 Definitions of group supervision**

Bernard and Goodyear (2009, p.111) defined group supervision as:

the regular meeting of a group of supervisees with a designated supervisor, for the purpose of furthering their understanding of themselves as clinicians, of the clients

with whom they work, and/or of service delivery in general, and who are aided in this endeavour by their interaction with each other in the context of the group process

Others, such as Page and Wosket (2001, p.158) offered a more general definition:

Group supervision in general terms refers to supervision where there is more than one supervisee participating, each presenting different clients.

Proctor (2008, p.3) used a metaphor in her description and described group supervision as ‘an enactment’ and alluded to a cast of ‘characters’ with those on-stage (the supervisor and the supervisees) being influenced by those off stage (the organisation or professional context).

The complexity of group supervision is further explored when models of supervision are considered in Section 2.3.

## **2.2 The functions of supervision**

Supervision is a multi-functional process but how these functions have been conceptualised depends upon the discipline from which they were developed. The table on the next page provides the most commonly used terms to describe the three main functions of supervision and the disciplines from which they were derived are noted in the subsequent paragraphs.

**Table 1**

The three main functions of supervision (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.62)

Kadushin (1976)	Proctor (1998b)	Hawkins and Smith (2006)
Educational	Formative	Developmental
Supportive	Restorative	Resourcing
Managerial	Normative	Qualitative

Kadushin, 1976 (as cited in Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.62) has written widely about supervision within the social work discipline where the focus tends to be on the role of the supervisee and the work that they carry out. Whilst Proctor, 1988b (as cited in Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.62) worked within the counselling discipline where the focus of supervision tends to centre on the best interests of the client. Finally, Hawkins and Smith's work (2006, p.151) developed from coaching supervision and recognises both the role of the supervisor and the supervisee; their work is often used within the field of educational psychology. They describe the functions of supervision in the following way:

- Developmental – the development of skills, understanding and the capacity of the supervisees through reflection on their work
- Resourcing - explores the way in which workers respond to the emotional impact of their work
- Qualitative – provides 'quality control' of the work being carried out; this may include ensuring that ethical standards are maintained

It also needs to be recognised that these functions are fluid within supervisory processes – their interactions will vary and change depending upon the need of the supervisee at any given time (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.64).

## **2.3 Models of supervision**

There are a number of models of supervision and it is not possible to consider them all in detail here. However, a brief outline of developmental models of supervision will be made because, although originating from America, they represent the earlier attempts to capture the supervisory process and perhaps precipitated others to offer different perspectives and models of supervision. One of these alternatives will also be considered here – the Seven-eyed process model of supervision by Hawkins and Shohet (2012).

### **2.3.1 Developmental models of supervision**

The developmental models of supervision originated from the work with trainee counsellors in America and perhaps the most well-known is that by Stoltenberg and McNeill (2009) – the Integrated Model of Supervision (IDM). A full exploration of these models is beyond the scope of this work but a generic outline of the different levels, adapted from Hawkins and Shohet (2012, p.77), is provided in Appendix B.

Such models have the following key features:

- supervisees move through developmental stages as they gain experience

- transition through these developmental stages is not a linear process; the developmental pathway may be irregular
- the supervisor has the responsibility to adjust their supervisory style to the level of the supervisee in order to enable the supervisee to move through a set of levels
- the supervisee is required to develop a set of skills until they reach a level of expertise

In essence this relies on an effective working relationship between the supervisor and the supervisee; other models (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012) have recognised this as being more integral to the supervisory process and hence have focused on the supervisory relationship within the supervisory process.

### **2.3.2 Seven-eyed supervision: A process model - Hawkins and Shohet (2012)**

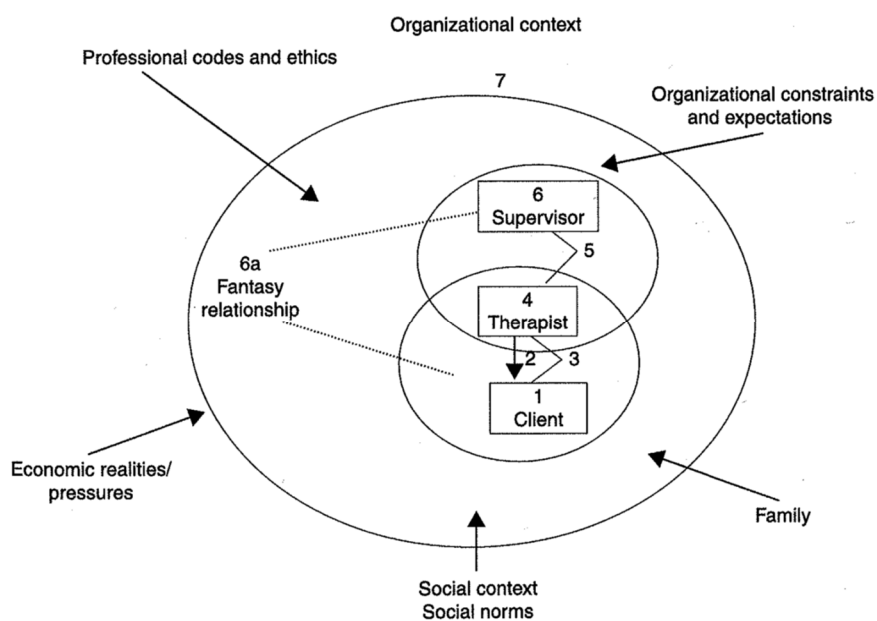
Hawkins and Shohet's seven-eyed supervision model can be applied across a range of 'helping professions' and it is also often used by Educational Psychology Services within the UK (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010, p.7; Rawlings and Cowell, 2015) hence its inclusion here.

Hawkins and Shohet (2012, p.86) proposed that supervision situations contain at least five elements: a supervisor, a supervisee, a client and work context and a wider systemic context. They suggest that there are 'two interlocking systems or matrices' involved – the client/supervisee matrix and the supervisee/supervisor matrix. Within this, two supervision styles can be adopted:



- thinking about the material directly from the client i.e. reports, notes and recordings etc.
- thinking about how the system is reflected in the ‘here and now’ experience of the supervision process

**Figure 1.1** The seven-eyed model of supervision (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.87)



Hawkins and Shohet (2012) suggested that the two supervision styles indicated above can each then have their different areas of focus which all operate within the client/supervisory matrices:

1. a focus on the client and how they present
2. an exploration of the strategies and interventions used by the supervisee
3. an exploration of the relationships between the client and the supervisee
4. a focus on the supervisee

5. a focus on the supervisory relationship
6. a supervisor focusing on their own process
7. a focus on the wider contexts in which the work happens i.e. how the client/ supervisory processes interact with the wider organisation, the professional code and ethics, the social, cultural, political and economic contexts etc.

(adapted from Hawkins and Shoheit, 2012, p.87)

The different emphasis between the developmental model with a focus on skill development and this process model in which the skills developed by the supervisee are more closely bound up within a complex process itself is evident. Supervision within groups adds a further layer of complexity and this will be considered next.

## **2.4 Types of group supervision.**

### **2.4.1 Inskipp and Proctor's typology for group supervision groups**

Inskipp and Proctor (cited in Proctor, 2008, p.32) identified four different types of supervision groups which are described below:

1. Authoritative Group Supervision – the supervisor manages the group and provides individual supervision on rotation within the group whilst other supervisees learn through observation

2. Participative Group Supervision – the supervisor both manages and supervises the group whilst inviting group members to be co-supervisors

3. Co-operative Group Supervision – the supervisor takes on a facilitator's role and supports supervisees to co-supervise each other

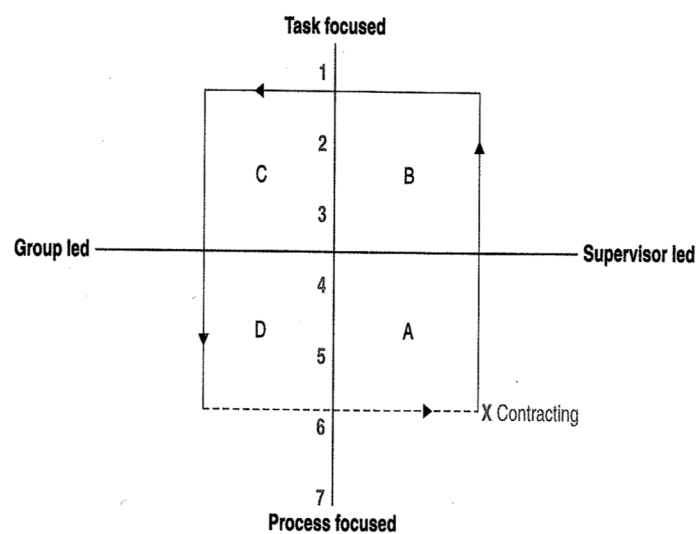
4. Peer Group Supervision – group members supervise each other within the group context

The decision as to which one of these four approaches to adopt will be dependent on the context and the needs of the supervisees (or their commissioning organisation). The ELSA group supervision being explored within this research is best described as being participative group supervision in that the group is managed and supervised by an EP who also actively encourages ELSAs to contribute and co-supervise.

## 2.4.2 Hawkins and Shohet's group supervision styles and foci

Hawkins and Shohet (2012, p.180) proposed a model of four quadrants to represent the different supervision styles and foci.

**Figure 1.2** Model of group supervision styles



(Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.181)

The four quadrants reflected different supervision styles:

Quadrant A – the group is led by the group supervisor and focuses on group processes

Quadrant B - the group is led by the group supervisor and focuses on the content of the cases brought for discussion

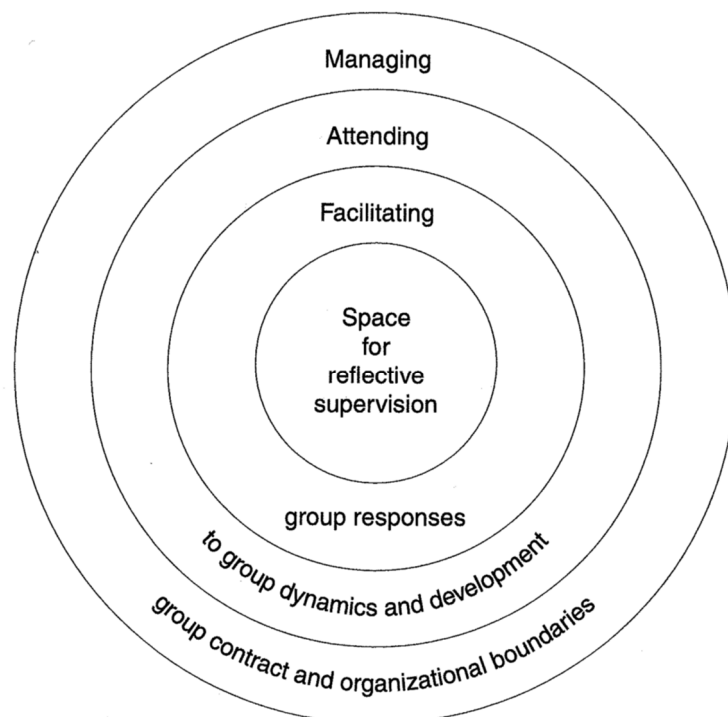
Quadrant C – the group members also take a supervisory role and focus on the content of the cases brought for discussion

Quadrant D – the group members take responsibility for group processes

As in their seven-eyed model, this model of group supervision has a greater focus on supervisory processes and Hawkins and Shohet (2012, p.181) suggested that good supervision ‘will cycle through all four quadrants’ in response to the needs of the group and they noted that as groups become more established and more experienced they are likely to operate more within quadrants C and D.

### 2.4.3 The contexts of group supervision

Hawkins and Shohet (2012, p.182) suggested that group supervisors also need ‘to manage a number of simultaneous processes’ within a number of different contexts which they represented within a model of concentric rings reproduced below:

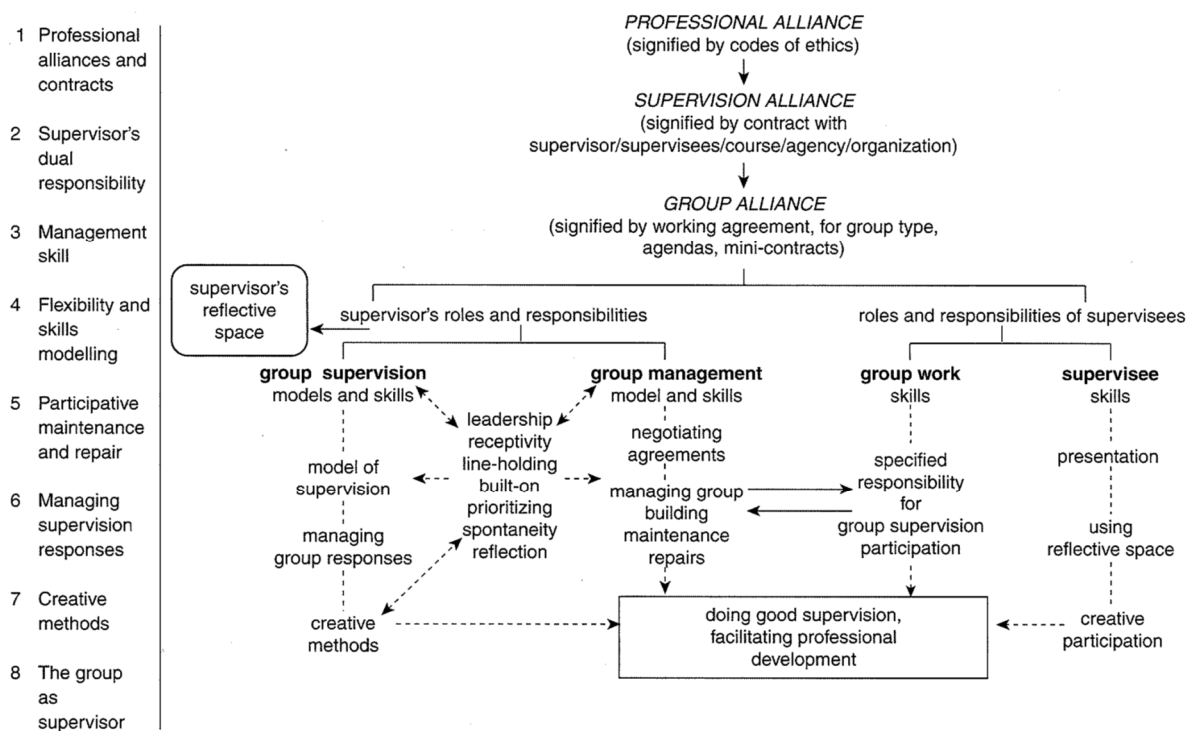


**Figure 1.3** The concentric rings of the group supervision process (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.182)

This model helpfully highlights the additional areas that need to be considered over and above those for individual supervision. The provision of a ‘space for reflective supervision’ (ring one) is similar to that for individual supervision as is the need for an appropriate contract (ring four). However, within group supervision there is also a need to utilise the group responses (ring two) and to consider and respond to group processes (ring three). Although the supervisor/supervisee relationship also needs to be thought about within individual supervision the group processes highlighted here are arguably inherently more complex, if only by virtue of the number of relationships within a group and the dynamics that are inevitably created.

## **2.5 The Group Supervision Alliance Model**

The Group Supervision Alliance model developed by Inskipp and Proctor (1995 & 2001 cited in Proctor 2008, p.8) focuses ‘on the ‘why’ and the ‘how’ of making good supervision alliances at each stage of the process’ (Proctor, 2008, p.xiii). In the development of this model, Proctor acknowledged that as practitioners they had ‘borrowed and developed various useful models’ (ibid. p.xiv) from their supervisory work which, along with some additional frameworks to plug the identified gaps in their thinking, they then subsumed into a model of group supervision. When exploring the definitions of supervision, it was noted that attempts to describe and capture the numerous process involved in supervision led to complex definitions (Milne, 2009, p.10). It therefore is not surprising that a model of group supervision is inherently complex. This is self-evident when one looks at the schematic for the Group Supervision Alliance Model detailed overleaf.



**Figure 1.4** The Group Supervision Alliance Model (Inskipp and Proctor, 1995 & 2001 cited in Proctor 2008, p.9)

The following briefly summarises the different elements of the model. Please refer to Proctor (2008, p.10) for a fuller description of these stages.

#### 1. Professional alliances and contracts

- the supervision contract which details the ‘specific tasks, rights and responsibilities’ for all involved
- the group alliance - the process by which the group, both supervisor and supervisees, recognise the shared task of supervision through the creation of a working contract which sets out the agreed ground rules, responsibilities and learning requirements for the group members

## 2. Supervisor's (and supervisee's) dual responsibility

The supervisor

- to ensure that the supervision within the group is appropriate – a 'quality control' function which may contain both developmental and managerial aspects depending upon what is requested
- to ensure that the group is appropriately managed and led to ensure a helpful group alliance is created

The supervisee

- to be able to use the supervision appropriately
- to develop appropriate group work skills, as per the agreed working contract

## 3. Management skill

- the supervisor's ability to manage the dual responsibilities identified above which can be conflicting in nature

## 4. Flexibility and skills modelling

- the ability of the supervisor to respond to the agreed needs of the group adopting different approaches to the supervision and modelling these as appropriate

## 5. Participative maintenance and repair

- the supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the group addresses difficulties along the way so that the group can maintain the primary task of supervision



## 6. Managing supervision responses

- this is required when the group members also co-supervise (refer back to ‘Participative Group Supervision’ in section 2.4.1) and the supervisor’s role is to ensure that the supervisory responses are appropriate

## 7. Creative responses

- the supervisor has a responsibility to ensure a range of approaches are used within supervision to ensure a range of responses are elicited from supervisees

## 8. The group as a supervisor

- Proctor suggests that ‘the group is a great deal more than the sum of its parts’ and that potentially the ‘group *is* the supervisor’ (Proctor, 2008, p.12)

As acknowledged by Proctor (2008 p.xiv) when describing her approach to assembling this model, it attempts to draw together many of the aspects of the supervisory processes. The complexity of capturing all the elements of group supervision is self-evident and, in attempting to do so, Proctor (2008, p xiv) wondered ‘whether it would be better left implicit’. This acknowledgement of its complexity may also explain why research focusing on outcomes has been so limited.

Whilst the models outlined here are helpful in exploring and understanding the practice of supervision they have not led to any significant body of research focusing on outcomes and much of the work on supervision remains descriptive. In part, this is what motivated Milne (2009, p.10) to more rigorously define supervision; in the hope that it would provide a springboard for more rigorous outcomes based research (2009, p.46). Within the field of

education psychology this does not yet appear to be the case. The literature pertaining to group supervision within educational settings in the field of educational psychology will now be considered.

## **2.6 Literature review**

### **2.6.1 Systematic search**

The initial search of literature used within this research:

- an EBSCO host database search using PsychINFO (see section 2.6.2)
- a search of Department for Education (DfE) websites
- a search of 'grey literature' (Ridley, 2012, p.45) including unpublished theses and dissertations using Google and Google Scholar
- identification of key texts on supervision and searches for publications of key authors in the field

Following this initial search of the literature and the researcher's familiarity with it, it was decided to limit the electronic search to academic journals in the UK between 1990 and 2015. This time span encompassed the publication of two special editions of the Educational and Child Psychology journal in 1993 and 2015 that focussed on supervision and group supervisory activities. It was felt that this would provide both a historical context of the research in this area along with the more recent research reflecting the current practice of group supervisory activities within educational settings and the discipline of educational psychology. The researcher was also aware that only one article relating specifically to ELSA supervision practice had been published and therefore this term was not specifically used

within the electronic search terms; the wider terminology used to describe activities of a similar nature was used in order to identify the appropriate published research.

### 2.6.2 Electronic database search

A systematic search using PsychINFO in January 2016 using the search terms below generated a considerable number of articles (7,057).

Main search terms used		
'group supervision' OR 'group consultation' OR 'collaborative problem solving' OR 'group support' OR 'group discussion' OR 'professional supervision'	AND	'school' OR 'education' OR 'teaching assistant' OR 'teacher'
Limiters		
UK* OR Britain* OR England* OR Wales* OR Scotland* OR Northern Ireland OR Ireland 1990 – 2015 Academic journals		

When the search was limited to research in academic journals in the UK between 1990 and 2015 a total of 644 articles were generated. Through an examination of the titles of these articles and consideration as to their relevance to the purpose of this research this search was further reduced to 16 articles. It was decided to limit this review to peer-reviewed academic literature.

The identified articles from the above search included those that were about 'group supervision' or similar types of activities which were carried out by EPs within educational contexts although articles that referred to work carried out by EPs in similar types of settings, for example, in Children Centres, were also included.

Exclusion criteria included research taking place outside the UK because it was felt that the different cultural factors made this research less relevant. Group supervision activities taking place within other professional disciplines, for example, counselling, social care or health professions were also excluded. This was because the scope of this work is necessarily limited and the aim of the literature search was to be purposeful (i.e. relevant to the field of educational psychology) rather than exhaustive (inclusive of all professional fields).

It is increasingly recognised that electronic database researches have their limitations and that techniques such as 'snowballing' are very worthwhile to ensure all relevant research is identified. 'Snowballing' is a technique through which references are followed up from the bibliographies of the texts that have been read (Ridley, 2012, p. 56). In a paper exploring the effectiveness and efficiency of search methods, Greenhalgh and Peacock, (2005) reported that 51% of the relevant articles were identified by 'snowballing' whilst only 30% were obtained through database and hand searches. It was also recognised that 24% were identified by personal knowledge. The benefits to using 'snowballing' techniques were also recognised by Jalali and Wohlin (2012) particularly when the search terms were more general. Given that there are a number of different, loosely defined terms for the activities that might fall under the umbrella of 'group supervision' (as indicated in the identified search terms used) this provides further justification for the use of 'snowballing' to identify relevant literature within this review.

### **2.6.3 An overview of ‘supervision’ and ‘group supervision’ within the field of Educational Psychology in the UK**

Dunsmuir, Lang and Leadbetter (2015) suggested that supervision within the caring professions has become increasingly important over the last decade (p.8). Within the field of educational psychology this has no doubt been bolstered by the publication of professional practice guidelines for professional supervision by the British Psychological Society (BPS) (Dunsmuir and Leadbetter, 2010). In the introduction to these guidelines the authors stated that they had been produced in response to the changing context in which EPs work – one in which they may be supervised by more than one manager, including those from a different professional background and, of particular relevance to this research, they also recognised that ‘increasingly EPs are supervising other professionals who come from a range of backgrounds other than educational psychology’ (p.3).

There is currently a relatively small body of research about supervision within the field of educational psychology in the UK with two academic, peer reviewed journals being the main sources of relevant published research – the Educational and Child Psychology Journal published by the BPS and Educational Psychology in Practice published by the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP). Interest in this area has also been punctuated by two special editions of the Educational and Child Psychology journal, one in 1993 (Volume 10, Number 2), and another, more recently, in 2015 (Volume 32, Number 3). The papers published in the first special edition in 1993 focused on the development of fieldwork supervision for Educational Psychologists in Training (EPiTs) with the initial paper summarising the results of a survey carried out in 1984-5 by the Supervision Working Party set up by the DECP in order to explore fieldwork supervision for Educational Psychologists

in Training.’ (Lunt, 1993). As a collection, the papers appeared to be aimed at developing a more detailed understanding of the practice of supervision within educational psychology rather than exploring the process of supervision itself. Prior to the 2015 special edition, the research continued to be quite limited and focused on three main areas – the supervision of trainee EPs, the supervision of qualified EPs and the supervision of other professional groups. It continued to tend to explore the use and practice of supervision within services and training, different models of supervision and different psychological perspectives underpinning the supervisory process. Research into group supervision only featured on one occasion.

This changed with the publication of the 2015 special edition and perhaps reflected the recent growing interest in the supervision of other professional groups by EPs, as noted by Dunsmuir *et al.* in 2015. Out of the ten articles published in this edition four articles specifically use the term ‘group supervision’ within their titles and focused on group supervision activities in practice (Hulusi and Maggs, 2015; Rawlings and Cowell, 2015; Soni, 2015; Bartle and Trevis, 2015). Three of these four articles also discuss group supervision involving other professional groups – teachers (Hulusi and Maggs, 2015), learning mentors (Soni, 2015) and staff from a specialist educational setting (Bartle and Trevis, 2015). The fourth considered the experience of EPs taking part in group supervision (Rawlings and Cowell, 2015).

The use of the term ‘group supervision’ also indicates a change in both terminology and practice. Whilst the term is used more readily within other professional disciplines – psychology, counselling, therapeutic approaches and social work – it is only just beginning to

be used within the field of education (Department for Education, 2014<sup>2</sup>). However, psychological support and problem solving approaches offering similar functions to supervision have been offered by EPs within educational settings, but they have not been labelled as such i.e. group consultations (Stringer, Stow, Hibbert, Powell and Louw, 1992; Bozic and Carter, 2002) and Work Discussion Groups (Jackson, 2002, 2008). It is suggested that the term supervision may have been avoided within educational contexts due to the perceived managerial and inspectorial overtones suggested by the literal meaning of supervision – ‘to oversee’.

This review seeks to critique the literature about group supervision within the field of educational psychology and includes the other approaches that offer a similar function(s) to that of supervision i.e. the development of professional skills, the understanding of the emotional impact of their work and ensuring the quality of the work (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.64).

#### **2.6.4 ‘The intervening period’ – 1994 to 2014**

A number of articles about supervision were published in educational psychology journals over this time period and although none were specifically about group supervision they will be briefly considered because they highlight some points of interest within the wider area of supervision.

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<sup>2</sup> ‘Providers must put appropriate arrangements in place for the supervision of staff who have contact with children and families. Effective supervision provides support, coaching and training for the practitioner and promotes the interests of children’ DfE (2014) is a rare exception in that it explicitly includes the purpose of supervision and thereby it’s potential value.

In 1999, Nolan published an article which explored how supervision of qualified EPs was organised and valued within an EP service. Views were also gained across the country through the use of a survey. Nolan concluded that the provision of supervision for EPs was improving. She also drew attention to the need for EP services to draw on models of supervision and recognised that, 'There is no established model of supervision used by all EPSs<sup>3</sup>. Instead individual EPs draw upon different areas of psychology to inform their supervisory practice' (p.101)

Nash (1999) acknowledged the lack of focus on 'the learning process of supervisors' and attempted to begin to address it by providing a developmental account of her supervisory work with EPiTs drawing on solution-focused techniques and Caplan's mental health model of consultation (1970, as cited in Nash, 1999, p.109). However, this was primarily a self-reflective account which did not set out to independently evaluate the success or impact of the supervision, thereby calling into question whether or not the process achieved what it set out to do. Nonetheless, the article did begin to open up a discussion about the process of supervision.

This theme was continued by Carrington (2004) who sought to 'shift our perspective' and highlight 'supervision as a reciprocal learning process' (p.31). She provided a personal account of her experiences and professional development whilst being a supervisor of an EPiT concluding that the supervisor's experience can be 'enriching' and is often overlooked. It was, however, perhaps a stretch to suggest that, 'Although the paper will be focusing on the supervision of Educational Psychologists in Training (EPiTs), the issues raised have applications to all levels of the profession' (p.31). This statement supposed that similar

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<sup>3</sup> Educational Psychology Services



experiences would be gained from the supervisory process whether or not it involved EPiTs or those with more experience. It is well documented, and perhaps expected, that the supervision required by trainees of any given profession is likely to emphasise a developmental function (Hawkins and Shoheit, 2012, p. 65). The juxtaposition between the supervisee's level of knowledge and experience and that of the supervisor itself might, in part, explain the enriching nature of the experience for the supervisor. Clearly, more research is required to further explore and understand the learning processes occurring between participants of differing levels of experience when engaged in supervision.

Atkinson and Woods (2007) sought to develop a model of effective fieldwork supervision focusing on the needs of trainee EPs and noted that, 'there is a marked paucity of up-to-date general empirical data on effective fieldwork supervision' (p.301). Their research was based on the responses to a questionnaire asking qualified supervisory EPs to rank ten statements referring to 'enabling factors' or 'barriers' to effective supervision. The model considered the supervisory partnership between the qualified EP and the trainee and a triad of functions – guidance, problem solving and support - within the contexts of three organisational influences; those of the educational psychology service, the local authority and the higher education institution (see Appendix E for their diagrammatic representation of the model). The model was developed from the perspectives of the supervisory EPs. They attempted to offer some validation of it through a suggestion that it has similarities to, and is 'congruent with other theory and research in the area of supervision' (p.308). The limitations of this model are perhaps identified by the authors themselves when they acknowledged that surveying trainee psychologists or engaging in direct observation of trainee-supervisor interactions may have produced a wider view of the area (Atkinson and Woods, 2007, p.306). There is also the concern that the questionnaires themselves were developed through the use

of focus groups which involved supervising EPs meeting to discuss their ideas and experiences about the ‘facilitators’ and ‘barriers’ to effective supervision based upon their direct experience of supervising trainees or being supervised as a trainee. Given that the literature suggests that EPs theoretical knowledge about supervision can be varied and that their practice does not always adhere to any specific model of supervision (Nolan, 1999) it calls into question the validity of the developed questionnaire. However, the paper usefully provided a model of fieldwork supervision which could be explored in further research.

With the exception of Nolan (1999) the research on supervision throughout this time period tended to focus on that of EPiTs with some emerging interest in supervisory processes (Nash, 1999 and Carrington, 2004). Only one paper within this time frame specifically explored group supervision and that was the paper by Osbourne and Burton in 2014 which was about ELSAs’ views on group supervision and this will be examined in more detail after some brief consideration of two other formats of group support offered within educational contexts – group consultation and Work Discussion Groups (WDGs).

### **2.6.5 Group consultation approaches**

A number of approaches (Stringer, Stow, Hibbert, Powell and Louw, 1992; Bozic and Carter, 2002) drew on Hanko’s collaborative consultation approach. Hanko, a psychodynamically orientated education consultant, sought to ‘deepen teachers’ understanding of emotional and social factors that affect all learning, and to augment teachers’ abilities to address them within the ordinary teaching day’ (2002, p. 387). To achieve this Hanko (2002) suggested using collaborative consultation which she viewed as a process of respectful questioning to further clarify the presenting problem so that a situation can be considered from a different

perspective; thereby allowing the consultee to consider appropriate strategies to address the problem. She suggested enabling the group to develop the following skills:

- *asking answerable questions* (which may widen insights about a pupil's needs displayed in his behaviour, and how s/he might respond to intended interventions in the course of an ordinary teaching day); asking such questions in a genuinely exploring, non-judgemental and thus supportive way;
- from the answers to such questions *discovering the teacher's strengths* and *building on them*, and, through the sharing process, accepting and supplementing (rather than supplanting) the teacher's existing expertise with that of the other colleagues and the supporting consultant as co-equals;
- *generating information that can help to highlight the issues* relating to the situation that is being explored in any one session.

(Hanko, 2002, p.381)

The overlap between the above skills and those required to offer 'supervision' is self-evident and, as such, supports the decision to consider this work a form of 'group supervision'.

Stringer *et al.* (1992) were inspired by Hanko's work to develop a programme of group consultation in schools. Their consultation model followed a problem management framework which had a number of stages – a brief outline of the concern, an opportunity for group members to ask questions to elaborate and explore the concern more thoroughly, towards the end of this section a space for the consultee to summarise their thoughts was provided before the session concluded with a review of the process. School staff were then

offered a training programme so that they could develop the skills required to facilitate their own groups within their schools with the additional support of being able to attend a 'Facilitators Support Group' organised by the EPs. A range of questionnaires were used to evaluate this programme and they elicited feedback to suggest that the consultation programme had promoted greater cohesion amongst the staff groups and uninterrupted opportunities to discuss concerns. The positive outcomes from belonging to such a group suggested that a transfer of consultation skills can occur through appropriate training so that non-specialists can offer appropriate facilitation for their colleagues.

Bozic and Carter (2002) also used Hanko's group consultation model and drew from the work of Stringer *et al.* (1992) to deliver a series of group consultations in four different schools. A questionnaire was developed to answer three research questions which centred on whether the sessions were a good use of time for staff, exploring what the staff considered the main effects of their participation in the group to be and asking for a view on the necessity of an external consultant to run and maintain the group. It is worth noting that the small sample used was also self-selecting and this may have introduced biases in the outcomes; further research using a larger, more randomly selected sample is required. However, the outcomes supported and added to the findings by Stringer *et al.* (1992). Staff reported that they were encouraged to think more deeply about the way they worked with individual children, became more aware of the strategies that could be used in the classroom and more confident to try something new as a result of being in the group. They also reported 'a reduction in feelings of isolation and self-blame regarding teaching problems' (Bozic and Carter, 2002, p.194). Following on from the work of Stringer *et al.* (1992), Bozic and Carter (2002, p. 198) noted that whilst participants preferred to have the support of an external consultant it was also the case that, over time, staff-led groups increased in their confidence perhaps

corroborating the assertion made by Stringer *et al.* of the need for a 'Facilitator Support Group'. The increase in confidence may also suggest that participants increased exposure to deeper/different ways of thinking increased their confidence in applying such approaches; what it does not necessarily do (unless participants follow this up outside of the sessions) is develop their understanding of why such approaches are helpful and when they are best deployed i.e. it does not necessarily develop their understanding of the psychological theory. More research comparing EP facilitator led groups with school based staff facilitated groups may be needed to empirically explore this issue.

Farouk (2004) combined Hanko's approach with that of process consultation (Schein, 1988 as cited in Farouk, 2004) because he felt that 'the influence of a school's culture and the interactions that occur within a group had been given insufficient consideration in Hanko's approach' (p. 207). Farouk highlighted the need to consider 'the group' which he suggested, far from acting as a single voice 'consists of individuals whose opinions and perceptions interact in a dynamic and at times unpredictable way' (p. 209). He also drew comparisons to the fact that Hawkins and Shohet (1989, as cited in Farouk, 2004) make a similar point in relation to group supervision, 'where in the worst case scenario the group is so taken up with its own dynamics that no constructive work can take place' (p. 209). This theme is picked up within this research in the discussion section (5.5.2) in light of Bion's work (1961) on groups. Farouk also emphasised the need to understand a school's culture – 'their internalised norms, beliefs and values' (p. 209) because these will also influence the group. He also highlights the underpinning psychologies within his approach – psychodynamic approaches and interactional systemic thinking (as used by Hanko) and an understanding of group dynamics (as used by Schein) adding an application of solution-focused questioning to avoid teachers from becoming problem focused. Farouk explores the complexity of the interpersonal

relationships between group members discussing the need for the facilitator to have a detailed knowledge of the processes that may be occurring and how they might be managed. Farouk strongly presents the need for facilitators to have a thorough understanding of complex psychology in order to support teachers to reflect upon their relationships with children and the strong emotions that often accompany such work. With this in mind, it would not be a task that could be fulfilled by a member of school staff – a position at odds with that of Stringer *et al.* (1992) and Bozic and Carter (2002).

### **2.6.6 Work Discussion Groups**

Jackson (2002) first reported on this approach as part of a Mental Health in Schools Outreach Project in London. WDGs were developed within the psychoanalytic tradition and are not designed to offer ‘expert management solutions’ or ‘behaviour management strategies’ for difficult pupils but rather ‘focus on helping staff develop and enhance their observational skills, together with exploring a deeper understanding about the underlying meaning of behaviour and the complex dynamics that are generated between pupils and teachers in schools’ (Jackson, 2002, p.131). Staff feedback about the impact of work discussion groups, elicited through questionnaires, suggested that they offered a supportive function which allowed new ways of working to develop as a result of a deeper understanding about the meaning of behaviour (Jackson, 2002, p.141; Jackson, 2008, p.79). Once again, the parallels to ‘group supervision’ are self-evident and in Jackson’s (2008) concluding comments he suggested that WDGs allowed staff to become ‘much more aware’ of the needs of their pupils (Jackson, 2008, p.80) and to ‘remain calmer with provocative students’ and ‘much more positive about their work’ (Jackson, 2008, p.80) - outcomes that can clearly be mapped onto

the developmental and resourcing functions of supervision that were highlighted in section 2.2 (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p. 62).

### **2.6.7 Group supervision**

More recently, the term 'group supervision' has gained increasing acceptance within educational contexts. Osbourne and Burton (2014) sought to gain ELSAs' views regarding the quantity and quality of their group supervision along with their perception of its impact. Responses to their questionnaire indicated that the group supervision ELSAs received provided them with both practical support (advice/new ideas) and emotional support (reassurance/'off-loading'); they also noted positive relationships with supervisors who clarified their needs and supported them to be involved in reflecting on their work. Osbourne and Burton (2014, p.146) suggested that participants recognised advantages to receiving group supervision and identified two main themes, those relating to the sharing of ideas, experiences and resources and those relating to a support function. No significant disadvantages were identified. The group supervision was reported to be of particular benefit in developing the ELSAs' personal and professional development and increasing their confidence in their work; some felt that it also increased the status of their work in school. Osbourne and Burton (2014, p.152) concluded that the perceptions of ELSAs were that the functions of supervision, as outlined by Hawkins and Shohet (2012 p. 62) and described in the paper as being: 'to develop the supervisee's skills and competence, to safeguard the individuals they work with by improving the quality of their work, and to sustain and support the supervisee', were being met by the provision of group supervision. Although encouraging, the research is limited (as acknowledged in the paper) in that it only elicited the views of the participating ELSAs and did not request the views of the EP supervisors which

omits an acknowledgement of the reciprocal processes within supervision (Carrington, 2004). Whilst the use of self-report questionnaires is recognised as a manageable, cost effective way to gather views it should also be acknowledged that responses are ultimately dependent on the respondent's ability to answer the questions with a degree of insight and objectivity – other influences i.e. the need to appear successful at the task or supportive of a project may influence their judgements thereby introducing bias. It is for this reason that this research looks beyond the use of questionnaires and actually explores the supervisory material generated during the sessions from both the ELSA and EP perspectives in an attempt to establish the content of ELSA's group supervision.

The 2015 special edition of the Educational and Child Psychology Journal (Volume 32, Number 3) continued the emerging interest in 'group supervision' and contained four papers that referred directly to 'group supervision' in non-clinical contexts (Hulusi and Maggs, 2015; Rawlings and Cowell, 2015; Soni, 2015 and Bartle and Trevis, 2015).

Hulusi and Maggs (2015) further developed Jackson's work (2002, 2008) using WDGs and they were minded to stress that WDGs are significantly different to other forms of group support in that they are not solution orientated but focus on group processes, interpreted through a psychodynamic lens – working with both conscious and unconscious meaning to explore the primary task of the group and what factors might be influencing the thoughts and behaviours of the group members. As with Jackson (2008), they concluded that WDGs offer an opportunity for psychodynamic thinking to be applied within school settings which can allow teachers to 'make sense of the apparently irrational experiences that they frequently face in their day-to-day work.' (p.38). Through their experience of running the WDGs, Halusi and Maggs (2015) suggested that the unfamiliarity with psychodynamic thinking in schools



can give rise to defensive behaviours and a wariness of such approaches. This is perhaps not a surprise considering it is likely to challenge the dominant behaviourist and solution orientated approaches adopted in most schools.

Rawlings and Cowell (2015) used Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) to gain 'a greater understanding of how EPs consider and interpret their experience of group supervision' (p.53). In their study, EPs described group supervision as an opportunity to develop professional practice and to develop their own supervision skills through the observation of supervision. They also highlighted the value of thinking psychologically and feeling personally supported as part of the group acknowledging the reciprocal processes within supervision (Carrington, 2004). It is of note that this research is one of a few studies that has focussed on analysing the content of the supervision session itself although the use of semi-structured questionnaires to gain the views of participants inevitably means that what is explored is their experience of the session and not what necessarily is taking place within it.

Soni's (2015) case study explored the use of group supervision with learning mentors and elicited their views on the outcomes of group supervision through the use of focus groups and questionnaires. An analysis of session records was also carried out. As in Osbourne and Burton's paper (2014), Soni found evidence of outcomes linked to all three functions of supervision – educative, supportive and managerial functions (Kadushin, 1976, cited in Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p. 62) although she specifically reported an emphasis on the educative function and a reduced focus on the managerial function. Such findings have potential implications for practice – either facilitators of group supervision will need to raise the profile of the managerial aspects of group supervision or these needs will need to be addressed more fully elsewhere either through other individual supervisory arrangements (if

offered) or by appropriate line management processes. Soni also identified the 'professional contract' as an important factor and it was evident that the negotiation with managers and the formal record of sessions was helpful in maintaining this relationship. Participants of the research also highlighted the benefits of being a homogenous group – the importance of those taking part having a similar role has been identified by other researchers suggesting that it supports the development of a shared task within supervision (Caffrey *et al*, 2014, cited in Soni, 2015).

Bartle and Trevis (2015) provided group supervision to key workers within a specialist educational setting. The key workers were non-teaching staff who provided pastoral care to the young people in their care. They offered their supervisees one of four approaches to group supervision:

- a collaborative problem-solving and reflective learning approach
- a solution circle approach (Forrest and Pearpoint, 1996, cited in Bartle and Trevis, 2015) which drew on solution focused thinking
- a process consultation approach, similar to that adopted by Farouk (2004)
- a reflective team approach, adopted from family counselling, in which the group comment on an individual consultation between the consultant and the consultee

Focus groups were then used to elicit views from participants of the sessions and the data was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings supported those in other studies and the following was identified:

- participants recognised the value of being honest and open

- they appreciated that they were all treated as ‘equals’
- the sessions provided opportunities for open communication
- opportunities to ‘struggle’ with ‘taken for granted knowledge’
- participants developed their self-awareness

With regard to the perceived impact of the group supervision, participants recognised that it was helpful to be able to share their experiences (as noted in Osbourne and Burton’s research, 2014) and they recognised a change in their practice as a direct result of discussions within the supervision sessions. The applied social constructionist thinking that was used within their sessions also encouraged staff ‘to understand the young person’s needs through a lens of their own constructions and those of others’ (Bartle and Trevis, 2015, p.87). However, in order for this to be both helpful and successful, the authors indicated that it required the skills of an applied psychologist. This has emerged as a common theme within these papers (Farouk, 2004; Jackson, 2008; Bartle and Trevis, 2015; Hulusi and Maggs, 2015).

Bartle and Trevis (2015) also recognised that future research should ‘develop knowledge around group supervision processes and involve triangulating data to consider the impact on young people’ (p.87). They draw their paper to a close by suggesting that the study provides clear evidence that group supervision is ‘valued and has a positive impact’ (p.87).

## **2.7 Concluding comments**

The recent interest focusing on group supervision activities has also began to focus more clearly on the processes involved and the role of both the supervisors and supervisees. A significant amount of the research utilises questionnaires and focus groups focusing on

participants' perceptions about what is going on within supervision. It is hoped that this research – with a focus on directly exploring the content of group supervision sessions - will add to the emerging body of research on group supervision within educational settings.

## **Chapter 3 - Research method**

Within this research thematic analysis was chosen as the methodology because it is an accessible and clearly delineated approach that has allowed the identification of themes within a rich and complex set of naturalistic data gained from recording three group supervision sessions.

### **3.1 The research tradition to which this research belongs**

Robson and McCartan (2016, p.20) highlight the typical features of qualitative research, some of which are noted below and characterise this research.

This research took place in the naturalistic setting – a workplace - using a small number of group supervision sessions from which data was collected. An inductive approach to the analysis was used, which grounds the analysis in the data itself (see section 3.8.3 for further details) and themes were identified. This research then presents these themes/findings in a descriptive manner without the use of numerical data or statistics. It is also acknowledged that in this research, as in much qualitative research, the generalisability of findings is limited to some degree (see section 3.7 for further discussion of issues around generalisability).

Qualitative research also accepts the ‘existence and importance of the values of researchers’ and it values their ‘openness and receptivity’ (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.20). The researcher’s reflexivity is also acknowledged to play a role within qualitative research (see section 3.7.4 for further explanation of this concept). This is also true for this piece of research.

This research therefore fulfils the requirements for being a qualitative piece of research.

### **3.2 The purpose of the research and the research question**

Robson (2002, p.59) suggested that exploratory research seeks ‘to find out what is happening, particularly in little-understood situations’, ‘to ask questions’, ‘to seek new insights’ and ‘to assess phenomena in a new light’. Furthermore, such research is often used ‘to generate ideas and hypotheses for future research’ (Robson, 2002, p.59).

This piece of research is exploratory in that it seeks to develop some insights into ‘what is really going on’ within the group supervision of Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs). The research provides an opportunity to consider what is actually occurring within the group supervision sessions themselves by directly exploring the material produced within the sessions. This was in preference to using self-report measures such as questionnaires and interviews which attempt to gain insight and understand what is happening by asking participants what they *think* is happening within the sessions and, as such, are open to issues such as the honesty of participants (intentional and/or otherwise) and providing responses in a socially desirable manner and/or responses that are influenced by the expectations of others. The findings of this research are then considered in the light of the currently used frameworks for group supervision within Educational Psychology along with some thoughts about potential avenues for future research.

Due to the exploratory nature of this research it benefits from a broad research question which is as follows:

‘What is really going on in the group supervision of Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs)?

### **3.3 Ontological and epistemological considerations for thematic analysis**

This research is placed within a critical realist paradigm. Critical realism accepts that one’s knowledge of the world is understood through a variety of different perspectives whilst at the same time recognising that in order for these different perspectives to have meaning they must also relate to a world outside of that existence - a ‘real world’. This will now be further considered in the light of the ontological and epistemological assumptions relating to this research.

Ontology refers to how one understands reality and it is the philosophical study about the true existence of knowledge. There are a range of different ontological positions which can be polarised by taking a realist ontology at one end of the spectrum, which suggests that there is an independent reality that can be objectively verified, and a relativist ontology on the other, suggesting that there is no objective reality but rather an infinite number of realities which are constructed by different human perspectives. Schwandt (1997, p.133) suggested that ‘scientific realism is the view that theories refer to real features of the world. ‘Reality’ here refers to whatever it is in the universe (i.e., forces, structures, and so on) that causes the phenomena we perceive with our senses’. This research therefore assumes a realist ontology because it assumes that the data collected in this study can shine a light on the ‘reality’ (Schwandt, 1997, p.133) of group supervision. However, to fully appreciate the perspective taken within this research the epistemological position also needs further consideration.

Epistemology is the study of knowledge and is concerned with how knowledge is understood and to what extent can one can 'know'; it describes the approaches that can be used to understand the world. Again, there are a wide variety of epistemological positions that can be taken up and, to simplify matters greatly, sitting at opposite ends of the epistemological spectrum are positivist approaches – those that consider experimental investigations and observations as being the only sources of substantive knowledge, and social constructionist approaches which suggest 'a view that social properties are constructed through interactions between people, rather than having a separate existence' (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.24). However, between these two polarised epistemological positions are other perspectives which take up a more blended view, one of which is critical realism. As already highlighted, whilst a critical realist position accepts that there is an independent reality that exists outside of our standpoint (thereby adopting a realist ontology), it also accepts that reality is not directly reflected but is influenced by a range of cultural and social factors i.e. reality cannot be accessed without viewing it through one of an infinite number of socially constructed perspectives. However, this does not mean that critical realism subscribes to the idea of 'multiple realities' which are socially constructed by individuals but suggests 'that there are different valid *perspectives* on reality' (Maxwell, 2012, p.9).

Maxwell (2012, p.5) provides a helpful account of the critical realist view:

'Critical realists thus retain an ontological realism (there is a real world that exists independently of our perceptions, theories, and constructions) while accepting a form of epistemological constructivism and relativism (our understanding of this world is inevitably a construction from our own perspectives and standpoint).'



This research, therefore, takes a critical realist perspective in that it accepts that there is a reality to the group supervision sessions being observed but that this reality can only be understood through the interactions, views and perspectives of the participants involved in the supervision group. As this relies entirely on human interactions, consideration of these interactions, views and perspectives therefore allows for both conscious and unconscious processes to be thought about as part of this research. There is considerable debate regarding the concept of the 'unconscious' and it is beyond the scope of this work to explore it in any detail. However, within this research unconscious thought refers to ideas that may not be brought to awareness but will have an impact on a given situation.

'Unconscious ideas carry out *work*, they make things happen, they are motivating. If we want to understand ourselves and others, we cannot do so without reference to the unconscious (Frosh, 2002, p.13).

Moreover, unconscious processes are viewed as a dynamic activity which 'give rise to behaviours and experiences which seem to come from 'somewhere else' (Frosh, 2002, p.15).

This idea of 'not (consciously) knowing' remains compatible with the critical realist view taken in this research which recognises that 'all knowledge is partial, incomplete, and fallible' (Maxwell, 2012, p.5). Further consideration of unconscious processes within groups will be explored in the discussion.

### **3.4 The context to this research**

This exploratory piece of research took place in an Educational Psychology Service which is part of a large local authority based in the South of England.

Within the local authority, ELSA supervision groups are an established, cost effective, approach for delivering the supervision required for ELSAs to maintain their certificate to practise. The supervision sessions are a ‘purchased service’ from the Educational Psychology Service and are paid for by the schools in which the ELSAs work. ELSAs access supervision groups on a half-termly basis and regular attendance is expected. There is a maximum of eight ELSAs in each group and each session is two hours in length. Without this supervision, the ELSAs are not ‘certified to practise’ nor are they officially recognised as ELSAs within the local authority.

Three ELSA supervision sessions were observed which were part of the naturally occurring half-termly sessions for the groups. The supervision groups consisted of ELSAs working in schools within the local authority. The ELSAs within a group normally take it in turns to host a supervision session and therefore the sessions were conducted in primary schools in which one member of the group worked. The EPs facilitating the sessions were colleagues of varying experience all of whom had been involved in ELSA supervision for over a year. The groups were all organised so that the group was sitting in a circle either around a small or large table. The researcher joined these sessions as an observer and chose to sit away from the group because it was felt that once the session had started and the group members engaged in their shared task, then they would be less aware of the researcher’s immediate presence. A small digital audio recorder and microphone was placed in the centre of the

circle; this was felt to be the least obtrusive manner in which to capture an audio recording of the session. At the end of each session, the ELSAs and the EP were informally debriefed and a further acknowledgement was made as to the stress that having a session recorded often creates. This discussion offered an opportunity for participants to voice any concerns and the researcher was also available after the session if participants wanted to discuss any concerns privately. This time also allowed for another opportunity for any of the participants to withdraw their permission should they so wish.

### **3.5 Sampling**

It is recognised that the issue of sampling within qualitative research is complex and engenders much debate. Patton (2002, p.243) proposed that, ‘There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry’, suggesting that it depends on a number of factors including the purpose of the research, what you know and what can be done with available time and resources.

Purposive sampling aims to select ‘information-rich cases strategically and purposefully’ with the ‘specific type and number of cases selected depending on the study purpose and resources’ (Patton 2002, p.243). Within this approach, the researcher needs to identify an appropriate sample to fulfil the needs of the research. Robson and McCartan (2016, p.281) suggested that, ‘The principle of selection in purposive sampling is the researcher’s judgement as to typicality or interest.’ Within any sample, it is also important to consider the quality of the data (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.55) with the requirement that there should be ‘enough data to tell a rich story’ (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.56).

With these factors in mind, the sample used in this research was identified. The researcher was familiar with the occurrence of the supervision groups identified because it was carried out within the local authority in which they worked. The researcher was also familiar with the nature of the group supervision being offered and knew that the sessions would provide appropriately 'rich' material for analysis.

The broad, all-encompassing nature of the research questions and the fact that specific topic areas were not being targeted meant that nearly all the data collected was relevant to the research question; this provided a wealth of material to be analysed within the time and resources available.

This research used a purposive sample of three group supervision sessions; each session was attended by between 5 and 7 participants and was approximately two hours in duration. Although qualitative research approaches allow for the use of small sample sizes it is also incumbent on the researcher to be aware of the limitations of generalisability and issues surrounding validity or 'trustworthiness'. These will be further discussed in section 3.7.

### **3.6 The transcription**

The audio recordings of the group supervision sessions were orthographically transcribed by a professional transcription company. Orthographic transcription is a verbatim record of what was said and includes elements of spoken language such as repetitions and hesitations. An example of a transcription from one of the group supervision sessions can be seen in Appendix F.

Other forms of qualitative analysis approaches such as discourse analysis require a much more detailed transcript because the analytic focus is not simply on what is being said but also the manner in which it is being said; therefore, intonation and features of the language such as the length of a pauses and emphasis are important if a rigorous and meaningful analysis is to take place. For these such analytic methods there are complex transcription processes that capture the minutiae of spoken language, the most common of which is the 'Jefferson system' (for a full version of system developed by Gail Jefferson see Atkinson and Heritage, 1984). It is generally recognised that such complex transcriptions are not necessary when engaged in thematic analysis and a thorough verbatim transcript alongside the original recordings is felt to be more than appropriate (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.163; Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.471).

Within this research, the professionally transcribed audio recordings were meticulously checked for accuracy. This also allowed the researcher to become very familiar with the transcripts (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.471). In addition to this, throughout the coding process the audio recordings were listened to alongside the use of the transcripts; this helped ensure that the understanding of what was being said was interpreted accurately and therefore limited the possibility of incorrect interpretations of the transcript and therefore inaccurate coding.

### **3.7 The concept of trustworthiness within qualitative research**

The issues of validity (do findings actually reflect what they purport to do), generalisability (the ability to generalise findings to other similar situations) and reliability (the replicability of findings in another similar context) are concepts in research that were developed primarily

within a quantitative or positivist research paradigm and therefore their direct applicability to the qualitative research paradigm is questionable (Robson and McCartan, 2016, p.78; Yardley, 2008, P.236; Willig, 2013, p24). These traditional notions of validity, generalisability and reliability in psychological research are often challenged by qualitative researchers because they are difficult to address and less meaningful within research, such as this, which takes place in a naturalistic setting (Shenton, 2004, p.63). However, such considerations still need to be considered if qualitative research is to defend itself from the often levelled criticisms of lack of rigour and many qualitative researchers have, instead, turned to the concept of trustworthiness. In order to differentiate the concepts from their positivist colleagues a different set of terminology has also been adopted. Lincoln and Guba, 1981, (cited by Cohen and Crabtree, 2006) developed a set of constructs through which qualitative research can be established as being 'trustworthy', a summary of which are presented below.

Trustworthiness involves establishing:

- Credibility - confidence in the 'truth' of the findings
- Transferability – showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts
- Dependability – showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated
- Confirmability – a degree of neutrality or the extent to which the findings of a study are shaped by the responders and not researcher bias, motivation, or interest.

### **3.7.1 Credibility (or 'validity')**

Willig provides a helpful definition of 'validity' within qualitative research,

‘Validity can be defined as the extent to which our research describes, measures or explains what it aims to describe, measure or explain’

(Willig, 2013, p.24).

Within this research, ecological validity ‘which is concerned with the relationship between the ‘real world’ and the research’ is the most relevant (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.280). One argument that lends support to the ecological validity claims is that this research is taking place in a ‘real world’ context and therefore there is no need to extrapolate findings from an artificially contrived situation or process, for example, an interview or a questionnaire. This was one of the reasons for choosing to do this research – the collection of data ‘as it happens’ during a group supervision session in order to explore what was ‘really going on’ rather than asking a participant to report what they think might have happened.

Credibility is also gained through the researcher’s knowledge and familiarity of the research context (Anney, 2014, p.276 and Shenton, 2004, p.65). The credibility of this research is therefore supported by the fact that the researcher is familiar with, and has an in-depth knowledge of, the context for the research. This allowed the researcher to appreciate and understand some of the core issues of the work that is under scrutiny. The process of ‘reflexivity’ which seeks to ensure that the researcher considers their role within the research, and does also not unduly pollute the findings with their own inevitable biases, is also an important consideration here because it ensures that both the benefits of familiarity and the potential negative impacts are counterbalanced. Reflexivity is further explored as a concept in section 3.7.4.

It has also been suggested that the adoption of well-established research methods that provide specific procedures for data analysis support the credibility of a piece of research (Shenton, 2004, p. 64). This research fulfils this criteria with thematic analysis being an increasingly well-established methodological approach and one for which the procedure is now clearly provided - see section 3.8.2.

Credibility can also be supported by the effective use of peer/colleague debriefing (Anney, 2014, p.276 and Shenton, 2004, p.67). Throughout the process the researcher's supervision sessions have been used to gain different perspectives of the work which have provided a challenge to the researcher's thinking which allowed for a more robust data analysis along with revisions to conclusions.

### **3.7.2 Transferability (or 'generalisability')**

Whilst qualitative researchers hope that their work is to some degree generalisable, it is also recognised that with an often more intensive focus using smaller samples sizes this cannot be assumed in the same way as might be done by many quantitative researchers, for example, by ensuring they have a large, randomised samples taken from their target population.

Qualitative researchers therefore aspire to what can be called 'theoretical', 'vertical' or 'logical' rather than statistical generalizations of their findings.

(Johnson, 1997 as cited in Yardley, 2008, p.238)

In other words qualitative researchers recognise that it is unlikely that, due to issues such as variations in participant groups and/or difference in researcher 'biases', findings can be



closely replicated in other situations. However they still do argue that they are still likely to be useful in other similar samples and contexts. It is postulated that within this research the findings can be ‘theoretically’ generalised to other ELSA group supervision sessions given that the group membership across the ELSA supervision sessions are very similar and that the ELSA programme across the county in which this research was carried out is centrally organised and managed and therefore there is some consistency in approach. However, caution will still need to be applied given that, as well as the similarities, there will also be inevitable differences within the sessions themselves i.e. differences in participant characteristics, group dynamics, settings, time of year the session is being run etc. Therefore, any generalisations cannot be unequivocal in their assumptions.

Anney (2014, p.278) suggests two aspects that support transferability. The first is the provision of a clear, full description of the methodology and data analysis procedure with the provision of descriptive data thus enabling other researchers to make judgements about whether the findings might be ‘generalisable’ to other contexts. Secondly, the use of purposive sampling which leads to a specific sample of participants who are very well placed to provide information that can answer the research question and allows for elucidation of in-depth findings. It is contended that both of these criteria are addressed within this research.

### **3.7.3 Dependability (or ‘reliability’)**

For many qualitative researchers the notion of reliability is somewhat erroneous. Braun and Clarke (2013a, p.279) provide the following definition for reliability:

Broadly speaking, reliability refers to the possibility of generating the same results when the same measures are administered by different researchers to a different participant group.

For many qualitative researchers this is not possible and nor is it claimed to be – the very nature of their methodologies, often with a focus on individual meanings and experiences along with an explicit acknowledgement of the influence of the researcher, do not allow for an accurate replication of a set of findings. Within this research, this is also the case, as the methodology is to some extent subjective – coding is a subjective process – as Braun and Clarke (2013a, p.279) point out, ‘the types of themes or categories generated in the analysis depend on the standpoint and experience of the researcher.’

Anney (2014, p.278) highlights a number of strategies that support the dependability of a piece of research. He suggests that it can be demonstrated through the provision of a clear process for data analysis with accompanying examples of data to enable others to check the research process, as is the case in this research. He also suggests that within the data analysis process a coding/re-coding strategy can be adopted whereby the same section of data is coded twice by the researcher separated by a period of time and then cross-referenced. This strategy was informally adopted within this research. Finally, the use of peer review can also support dependability in a similar way as it supports credibility and creates the opportunity for enriched reflexive thinking. Within this research this was addressed to some extent through the supervision process.

### 3.7.4 Confirmability and Reflexivity

Confirmability is about the ability to demonstrate that the findings of a piece of research are clearly grounded in the data (Anney, 2014, p.279). This can be achieved through a clear description of the research process, as highlighted for some of the other aspects of trustworthiness, but also through the use of a reflexive journal.

Willig (2013, p.10) provides a helpful definition of reflexivity:

Reflexivity requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings throughout the research process, and an acknowledgement of the impossibility of remaining 'outside of' one's subject matter while conducting research.

Two types of reflexivity – functional and personal - will be considered in the context of this research and these are defined below:

Functional reflexivity involves giving critical attention to the way our research tools and process may have influenced the research. (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.37)

Personal reflexivity involves reflecting upon the ways in which our own values, experiences, interests, beliefs, political commitments, wider aims in life and social identities have shaped the research. It also involves thinking about how the research may have affected and possibly changed us, as people and as researchers. (Willig, 2013, p.10)

Within this research, the researcher kept notes of his thoughts and changing beliefs throughout the process of the analysis of the data as a way of maintaining his awareness of these issues in the foreground of his thinking and therefore at least limiting their capacity to consciously and/or unconsciously pollute the analytic process.

These issues are considered further in the discussion sections following 5.11.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

The original research proposal indicated that discourse analysis would be used to explore the content of the supervision sessions and to develop some insights into the nature of the discourses used within them. Following the data collection and the initial process of developing familiarity with the data it was felt that this would not be the most appropriate analytical method to use when asking such a broad research question. Through this initial process it became evident to the researcher that the data set would be more appropriately analysed using a different method – one that would capture the richness of the data and allow for all of the themes and patterns across the data set to be captured; thematic analysis was felt to fulfil these requirements. At the time of making this change of analytic approach it was felt that the impact on the previously made ethical considerations was limited and therefore a further ethical approval was not requested. The research remained exploratory in nature and although using a different qualitative approach the focus continued to be about developing greater insight into the nature of group supervision albeit the focus changing from one which explores the use of language to create discourses, to one which allows for identification of themes and patterns of meaning (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.175). The data set, and the manner in which it was being managed with regard to confidentiality, also remained the

same. With hindsight, it is acknowledged that the participants gave informed consent for a discourse analysis rather than a thematic analysis although the researcher felt that this change would lead to very minimal or no negative impact on the participants. The chosen approach - thematic analysis - will now be given further consideration.

Braun and Clarke (2006, p.78) suggest that whilst some qualitative analytic methods align themselves with particular (although still varied) theoretical and epistemological positions such as grounded theory and discourse analysis, others, such as thematic analysis, can be applied across a range of theoretical and epistemological positions. The flexibility and ‘theoretical freedom’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.78) provided by thematic analysis enables it to be used as a method to generate an understanding of complex data sets. In the past this has led to claims that approaches to thematic analysis have lacked rigour and with that in mind Braun and Clarke’s seminal paper in 2006 had a clear aim:

‘to strike a balance between demarcating thematic analysis clearly i.e. explaining what it is, and how you do it – and ensuring flexibility in relation to how it is used, so that it does not become limited and constrained, and lose one of its key advantages’

(Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.78)

Braun and Clarke (2006, p.78) continued to state the importance of ensuring that, as well as applying the method rigorously, researchers also need to make their epistemological positions explicit, as has been done here in section 3.3.

### 3.8.1 Thematic Analysis – the process

Thematic Analysis is ‘a method for identifying themes and patterns of meaning across a data set in relation to a research question’ (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.175). Prior to their seminal paper in 2006, Thematic Analysis (TA) was felt to be ‘a poorly demarcated and rarely acknowledged, yet widely used qualitative analytic method within and beyond psychology’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.77). Their paper sought to clarify the ‘process and practice’ of thematic analysis by producing a six phase model of analysis which is detailed below.

### 3.8.2 The six phases of thematic analysis

Six phases of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006)

This should not be viewed as a linear model, where one cannot proceed to the next phase without completing the prior phase (correctly); rather analysis is a recursive process.

1) *Familiarisation with the data*: is common to all forms of qualitative analysis - the researcher must immerse themselves in, and become intimately familiar with, their data; reading and re-reading the data (and listening to audio-recorded data at least once, if relevant) and noting any initial analytic observations.

2) *Coding*: this involves generating pithy labels for important features of the data of relevance to the (broad) research question guiding the analysis. Coding is not simply a method of data reduction, it is also an analytic process, so codes capture both a semantic and

conceptual reading of the data. The researcher codes every data item and ends this phase by collating all their codes and relevant data extracts.

3) *Searching for themes*: a theme is a coherent and meaningful pattern in the data relevant to the research question. If codes are the bricks and tiles in a brick and tile house, then themes are the walls and the roof panels. Searching for themes is a bit like coding your codes to identify similarity in the data. This 'searching' is an active process: themes are not hidden in the data waiting to be discovered by the intrepid researcher, rather the researcher constructs themes. The researcher ends this phase by collating all the coded data relevant to each theme.

4) *Reviewing themes*: involves checking that the themes 'work' in relation to both the coded extracts and the full data-set. The researcher should reflect on whether the themes tell a convincing and compelling story about the data, and begin to define the nature of each individual theme, and the relationship between the themes. It may be necessary to collapse two themes together or to split a them into two or more themes, or to discard the candidate themes altogether and begin again the process of theme development

5) *Defining and naming themes*: requires the researcher to conduct and write a detailed analysis for each theme (the researcher should ask 'what story does this theme tell?' and 'how does this theme fit into the overall story about the data?'), identifying the 'essence' of each theme and constructing a concise punchy and informative name for each theme.

6) *Writing up*: writing is an *integral* element of the analytic process in TA (and most qualitative research). Writing up involves weaving together the analytic narrative and (vivid) data extracts to tell the reader a coherent and persuasive story about the data, and

contextualising it in relation to existing literature.

(Braun and Clarke, 2013b, p.121)

‘This method, then, is a way of identifying what is common to the way a topic is talked or written about and of making sense of those commonalities’ (Braun and Clarke, 2012, p.57). This clearly supports the aim of this research and therefore Braun and Clarke’s six phases of analysis has been adopted and their procedure closely followed. Examples illustrating the coding process carried out in this research can be found in Appendices J and K.

### **3.8.3 Approaches to thematic analysis**

There are two broad approaches to conducting a thematic analysis - an inductive approach which aims to generate an analysis which is grounded in the data itself and is not informed by theoretical considerations or a deductive approach which uses a template to search for specific themes which have been generated from the literature in the area of interest (Willig, 2013, p.60). Some researchers have also used a combination of these two approaches. Within this research a primarily inductive approach to the analysis has been adopted and the researcher attempted to approach the data free from his own theoretical biases. However, one cannot ignore the impact of prior theoretical knowledge which will inevitably impact on the coding process and therefore it is important to recognise that, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (2012, p.58), the reality is that often a combination of the two approaches are used because it is important to recognise that coding is an active, rather than passive, process. Taylor and Ussher (2001, p.310) suggested that researchers are ‘actively involved in constructing the phenomenon under its gaze’ and however closely an analysis is grounded in



the data, 'their extraction, collation, interpretation and presentation...is clearly still tied intrinsically to the subjective positions of the researchers.' As has already been outlined in section 3.7.4 this further supports the need to consider issues of reflexivity – how the research undertaken might be influenced by one's own position. With regard to this research the issue of the researcher's reflexivity this will be considered in the sections following 5.11.

This research adopts an inductive approach because the coding and themes are grounded in the data and what has been 'mapped by the researcher during analysis closely matches the content of the data' (Braun and Clarke, 2012, p.57). This research aims to seek an understanding of what is *actually* happening within group supervision rather than looking for what the theory suggests *should* be occurring.

#### **3.8.4 The process of coding**

'Thematic analysis is a flexible method that allows the researcher to focus on the data in numerous different ways' (Braun and Clarke, 2012, p.58). Within thematic analysis, one can focus on coding (identifying features of the data of relevance to the research question) across the whole data set – often referred to as 'complete coding' or one can focus on one particular aspect of a phenomenon – often referred to as 'selective coding'. Within this research the focus was more general and explorative - to explore what was 'really going on' within ELSA group supervision sessions – it was not limited to a particular phenomenon and therefore the whole data set was coded for features relevant to the research question and the notion of 'complete coding' was adopted.

Codes are also generally divided into two types – semantic codes which are those that focus on the more obvious meanings within the data set and latent codes which focus on 'meaning

not explicitly evident in the data' (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.332). Although this research question led to a focus on identifying semantic codes it also needs to be recognised that some coding will also have latent elements to them. As Braun and Clarke (2013a, p.207) reflect:

This separation between semantic and latent codes is not pure: in practice codes can and do have both elements.

### **3.8.5 Identification of themes**

Willig (2013, p.58) notes that although the notion of 'themes' is key to much qualitative research there is little in the way of discussion of the term. She suggests that this may, in part, be due to the fact that the identification of themes in any data set starts off as relatively straightforward task i.e. identifying something of interest that answers the research question – but quickly becomes something far more complex as the inter-connections between themes and the overlaps between them create a complex web of ideas.

However, most definitions of 'a theme' make reference to the idea of a pattern within the data. Within this research the definition of a theme offered by Braun and Clarke (2006, p.82) will be used.

'[A] theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.'

It is important to note that the prevalence of a code within a data set does not necessarily mean that it should constitute a theme. The key factor for consideration should be ‘whether it captures something important in relation to the overall research question’ (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p.82).

The themes identified within this research have been described in the findings section with appropriate material from the data set used to support their identification.

### **3.8.6 A description of the six phases of thematic analysis used in this study.**

1. Familiarisation with the data: The three transcripts were meticulously checked for accuracy. This was repeated three times for each session and it enabled the researcher to become ‘intimately familiar’ with the whole data set (Braun and Clarke, 2013b, p.121).

2. Coding: The coding process started with a further reading of each session transcript alongside listening to the recording of the session and an initial coding was made. A complete coding approach was used (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.206) which sought to identify everything within the data set (all three sessions) that was relevant to the research question. The analysis was inductive in its approach because it was grounded in the data itself and semantic coding was primarily used, although as already discussed, some latent coding will also have occurred. The coded sections of transcript were highlighted and a corresponding initial label was created for each code so that it could be tracked back to the original transcript. This enabled the identification of the extracts used within the ‘Findings’ and ‘Discussion’ sections.

Appendix J shows a coded transcript - the sections of transcript highlighted in yellow relate to the contributions made by the Educational Psychologist and the sections of transcript highlighted in green relate to the contributions made by the ELSAs. A numerical reference was also created so that each initial code could be tracked back to the section of transcript from which it came. The initial numeral in each reference indicated the session from which the coded text came and the second numeral indicated the part/line from the transcript i.e. 1.4 would be a code from session 1 part/line 4.

Each session transcript was coded and, throughout the process, the codes evolved both within the coding process of a session transcript and across the process of coding all three session transcripts. The codes evolved as the researcher coded the next transcript which required a constant re-visiting of coding labels across the data set as a whole (all three session transcripts); sometimes the code descriptions broadened to reflect a more general feature whilst on other occasions additional codes were used to capture more nuanced meanings. Each time the transcripts needed to be re-coded using the revised codes. The key purpose was to be inclusive (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p. 210). This process was repeated numerous times, until the researcher felt that the codes captured the meaning within the data.

3. Searching for themes: The codes were then organised into themes which are 'central organising concepts' (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.224). Initial, or provisional themes, were created from the codes. The coding boards (shown in Appendix K) were used throughout this process. Some provisional themes had been identified by the researcher throughout the coding process and the codes were then collated around these and other provisional themes indicated by the coded material. This was an iterative process and the themes were refined and changed throughout the process. From these themes, sub-themes were also created. The

themes and sub-themes were represented visually throughout this process to provide another way that the researcher was able to explore the relationships between them. The themes and sub-themes changed, merged and were discarded. The visual representations evolved over time to reflect this process.

4. Revising themes: Once 'completed' the codes and collated data for each theme were reviewed to ensure that they were coherent and 'made sense'; adjustments were made, as appropriate. This involved final modifications to the themes/sub-themes and, on occasion, developing new themes/sub-themes. There were occasions when themes were further modified to allow themes/sub-themes to be subsumed under a different description. The final stage of this process was to consider the entire data set in relation to the identified themes and to consider their fit in relation to the research question. Final visual representations of the themes and sub-themes were created to be used in the 'Findings' section (Chapter 4).

5. A detailed analysis for each theme/sub-theme was then carried out; this included any final adjustments to the names of each theme/sub-theme. This is reported in the 'Findings' section with extracts from the data sets used to 'tell the reader a coherent and persuasive story about the data' (Braun and Clarke, 2013b p.121).

6. The analysis was then further developed in the 'Discussion' section so that it was 'contextualis[ed] in relation to the existing literature' (Braun and Clarke, 2013b p.121).

### **3.9 Ethical issues**

Guidelines from the British Psychological Society (2004) were used to consider the ethical issues within this research. A copy of the ethical approval obtained from the Trust Research Ethics Committee is included in Appendix G.

#### **3.9.1 Informed consent**

The permission for this research was initially sought and granted by the Area Principal Educational Psychologist and the Educational Psychologist responsible for the development of the ELSA project within the local authority.

A letter was sent to the participants of each group outlining the nature of the research requesting permission for the researcher to attend a session and make an audio recording of the supervision (see Appendix H).

It was agreed that all members of the group, including the EP, would need to give consent in order for the session to be recorded.

#### **3.9.2 Right to withdrawal**

If written consent from an individual member of the group was not given then they were not to be excluded from the supervision session to which they were entitled. In such a situation an alternative group was to be sought. However, this eventuality did not occur.

All members of the group were also informed of their right to withdraw their consent *after* the session had been recorded without giving a reason. If this were to happen then it was agreed that the recording would not be used and would be destroyed. Once again, this eventuality did not occur.

### **3.9.3 Confidentiality**

Participants were informed that all the information was to be kept in line with the Data Protection Act (1998); the information collected was to be confidential and participants' names and identities were not recorded in any way so that any of the material could be identified by a third party. All the materials were stored in locked cabinets and the recordings are to be destroyed after the research has been completed.

Participants were also made aware that, although it was the researcher's intention to carry out the transcription of the audio recording, the recording may be sent away for transcription. They were informed that if this decision was made at a later date then a professional transcription service would be used and careful judgement would be exercised to ensure that their confidentiality arrangements were robust.

Although participants were not to be identified by name, due to the nature of the research and the need to use direct quotations when writing up the work participants were informed that they may be identified to other members of the group and those familiar with their work. Therefore, whilst anonymity and confidentiality was to be respected, it could not be absolutely guaranteed. However, steps have been taken to ensure that their identity has not compromised, wherever possible. It was also agreed that if the researcher became aware of

any particularly sensitive material within a session, where there might be a heightened level of concern regarding confidentiality, then permission would be sought to use this material in the final write up directly from the group member concerned. Participants, nor the researcher, found this to be necessary.

#### **3.9.4 Duty of Care**

It was recognised that material of a sensitive nature might be discussed within a group supervision session which could be emotive for participants. It was also recognised that the researcher's presence and the fact that the session was being recorded might have amplified these feelings. With this in mind, participants were made aware that they could speak with, or make contact with the researcher, or their group supervision facilitator, to discuss any issues relating to the content of the recorded session at any point during, or at the end, of the session. This was to ensure that the researcher's presence, and/or any potential subsequent impact of the researcher's presence, was mitigated by this offer to ensure the participants emotional well-being and safety.

It was agreed with the participants of this research that the researcher would provide feedback regarding the outcomes of the research and that this would be provided to participants once the research had been completed and written up.

#### **3.10 Summary of chapter**

This chapter has outlined the analytic approach used within this research considering the ontological and epistemological position and giving a clear explanation of the methodology



used. The concept of trustworthiness within qualitative research was also explored. Finally, ethical issues have been considered.

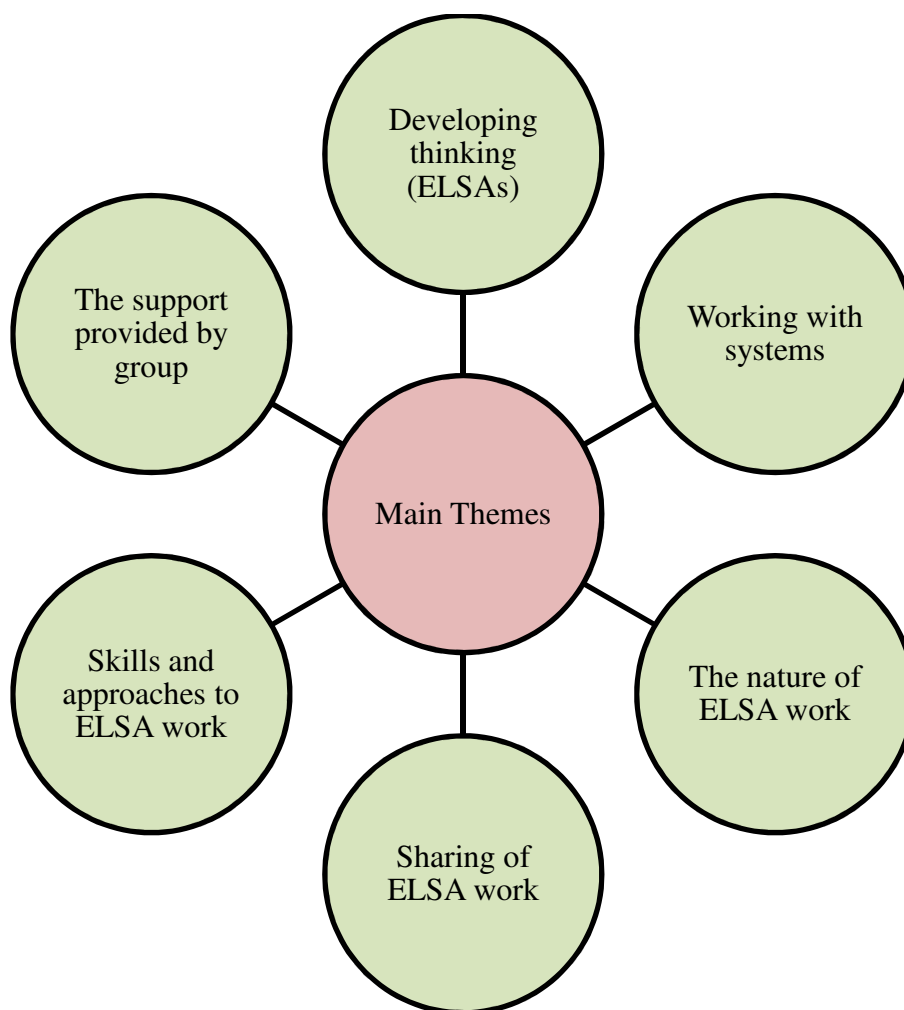
The research will now address the findings in the context of the proposed research question - what is really going on in the group supervision of Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs)?

## Chapter 4 – Findings

### 4.1 Introduction

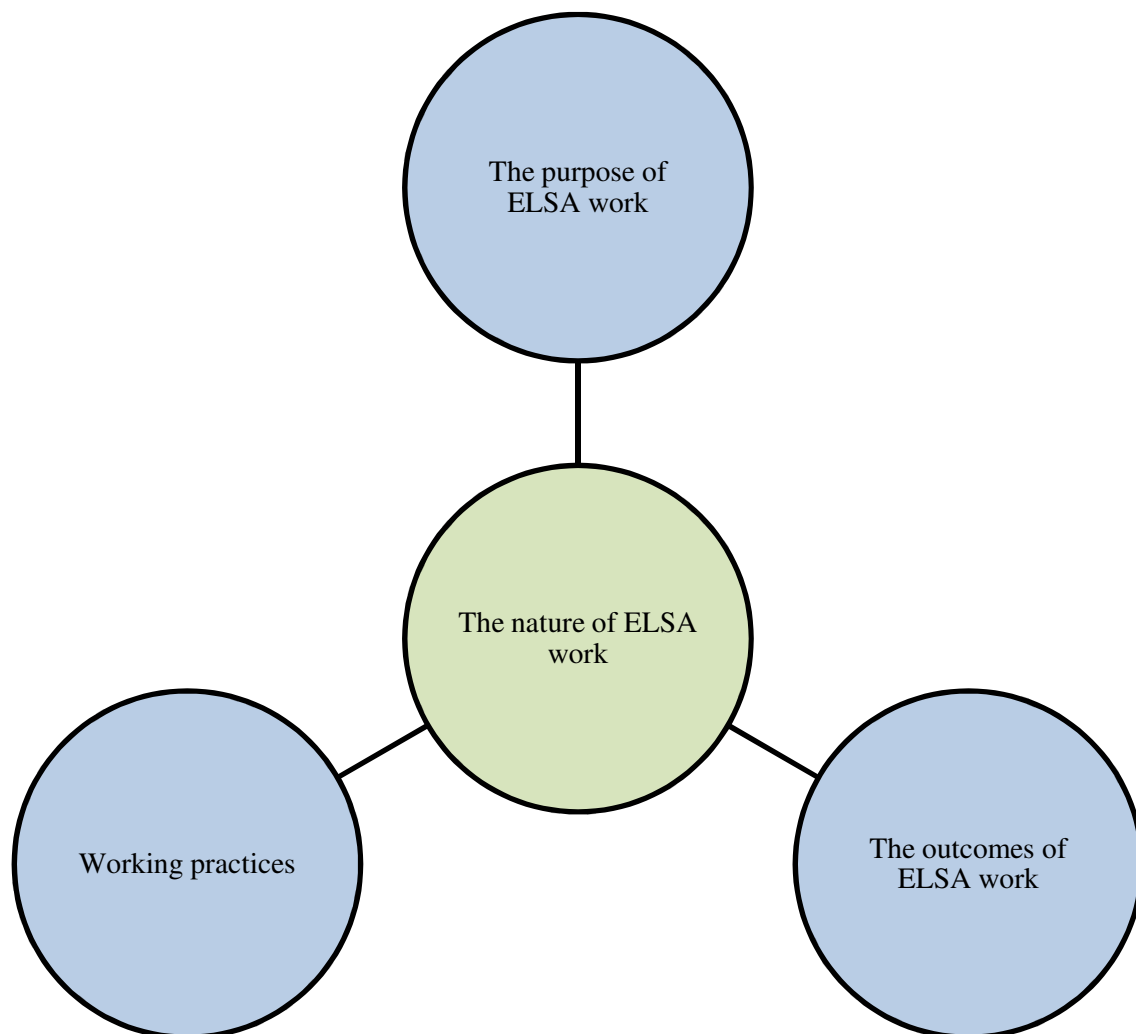
This chapter describes the themes identified within the data. Six main themes were developed from the ELSAs' contribution to the group supervision sessions and five main themes were developed from the EPs' contribution to the sessions. These will now be addressed in turn.

#### 4.1.1 The six main themes from the ELSA contributions to the group supervision sessions.



Sub-themes were created within each main theme and these are shown diagrammatically at the beginning of each section; no inferences should be drawn from the order in which they are presented. The sub-themes capture the content of what was being talked about within the sessions and these are outlined for each theme before presenting excerpts from the data which serve to illustrate the themes/sub-themes and provide a sense to what was ‘really going on’ within the group supervision sessions.

#### 4.2 Theme 1: The nature of ELSA work



#### 4.2.1 Sub-theme 1a: The purpose of ELSA work

ELSAs talked about a range of activities that they carried out to support children including transition work, friendship work, group work with children, development of social skills and therapeutic play. Within these discussions the ELSAs talked about the *purpose* of their involvement which revealed their thinking about the work that they do.

ELSAs spoke about giving children the opportunity to ‘offload’ and share their worries and concerns whilst also recognising the importance of developing new skills and ensuring that their work is child-centred.

Just letting them sort of offload and just finding out you know what it is and you know just – just a lot of it is offloading with whatever is going on and um giving them some skills, you know – like the book that I’ve got here – the child’s really quite cross about a lot of things and we’ve started with the anger book –

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..so it’s kind of coming from them rather than saying, “I think you need” – they, it’s coming from them which is – makes it a bit more powerful isn’t it.

ELSAs also raised the importance of not only teaching the skill but also supporting the child to put it into practice.

So we, so we, sort of, talked about how you can say, you can say something with the same meaning but use different words so you don't seem to be being so aggressive and this sort of thing. And it's just that helping her to, sort of, remember that and put all of that into practice.

ELSAs often discussed developing communication skills within families to support the development of positive relationships.

And all I did was use that bridge (laughs), I just bridged that gap, and once they got talking, mum and, sort of, and the girl, um, everything else was overcome. So it's been lovely.

The ELSAs also talked about being able to provide a different perspective to a situation; sometimes 'normalising' the feelings experienced by others.

So, you know, there was, so it was normalising everything really, that's a normal feeling you have, this is how he feels. You know, and just trying to bring all of that together. Um, and I think once we got talking that communication started happening at home and they weren't, kind of, dancing around each other about what was the right and wrong thing to say.

ELSAs also simply felt the need to support children's emotional well-being.

Sometimes the children just need a little bit, they're not getting a lot of support at home, so they just need a little bit of TLC.

Throughout the sessions ELSAs often referred to the need to identify the cause of the child's difficulty.

...I need to, sort of, get to the root of it really, for him.

...so there must have been a point whereby something has changed, but we're so new in the day I really haven't drilled into that yet...

Approaches and strategies used by the ELSAs to gain an understanding of the cause of their difficulty were also discussed.

... if he's used to free flow he'll probably start story-telling, it is a natural progression from that. And you'll probably find by just dropping in the odd scenario you'll get quite a lot out of that type of play with him.

#### **4.2.2 Sub-theme 1b: Working practices**

There was a thread running through a number of conversations about how ELSAs managed/received their work – often via another member of staff in the school with scant information about the case. This often led to ELSAs experiencing difficulties in planning and developing baseline assessments prior to their work starting.

This referral came with one set of expectations before the ELSA identified other needs which she felt needed 'long term support'.

Um, so he came with, “Oh, can you work with him on friendships, um, and, you know, being a good friend and what to look for in a good friend?” So we started on that and I became really aware that actually he’s got no real self-esteem or feeling of self-worth. So we’ve, kind of, switched to that really, um, and working with that. Um, I mean, really struggles to think about one good thing that’s happened to him that day, or one good thing that he’s done, or something. Really didn’t understand what proud was or feeling pleased with yourself, so I’ve, kind of, scrapped the playground stuff a little bit, um, and, and working on those things. Um, and I think he’ll be quite long term (laughs).

Whilst in other situations there was no clear agenda or plan to the work.

I don’t know a lot about him so really it’s going to be just seeing how he comes in. If he comes in tomorrow...

ELSAs often described a lack of authority with regard to decision making which perhaps reflects a lack of empowerment within their role and within the wider school systems.

Facilitator (EP): Are you carrying on with him?

Grp Member: I’m not sure. I think I need to find, see, um, because all these things are appearing that, that wasn’t the main reason why, why I was seeing him in the first place.

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I mean, he could probably do with ELSA but because he doesn't act out it in school it doesn't get flagged up. But he's probably got the same issues, but they're just tucked away somewhere else.

#### **4.2.3 Sub-theme 1c: The outcomes of ELSA work**

ELSAs often referred to the outcomes within their work and they were keen to celebrate their successes; discussions and the sharing of ideas led to planned changes within their practice.

Outcomes for children.

I've sent home, err, the visual timetables etc, that we use at school and the social stories, and mum has started to use them at home. And I think this has actually helped with him, you know, the way he is at home, you know, if something's coming up at school it's a case of, well, maybe going across to the church, um, on Thursday so that goes on his visual timetable and mum's started to use that at the weekends as well...  
...So we've come on leaps and bounds there which I was really pleased at.

ELSAs often mentioned the difficulty in recognising progress and that sometimes there was a time delay between the work being carried out and the recognition of positive outcomes.

And then there was something we were doing – it was a good few weeks ago now and the sessions that we'd done, we were talking about his defence mechanisms and about resilience and not having very much resilience and he totally got it! He's so – one-to-one he's really, really very intelligent and he's not in a place there where he's afraid



of getting things wrong. So I think it might – although he'd never admit to it, it's slightly a peer thing as – you know, so that's when he's scared of having a go and making mistakes, but um and I've said, "You know fooling around with the supply teacher and cracking jokes and things like that is – that's a defence mechanism and it's just a way to get you away from what you're meant to be doing", getting angry and all of this stuff. And then the – the supply teacher we had and she asked us to do something and I thought, "Oh right I'll try and have a go" and I found it so difficult (laughs) and I was kind of going a bit – and he came up and went, "Don't put barriers up Miss (name)" (laughs) and I was putting barriers up! (Laughter) So he actually you know turned it into a humorous thing which I thought was really funny.

Positive outcomes were also recognised by the EP and the ELSA confirmed that the progress had been noted by other staff in school.

Group Member: I worked with a Year 6 group of girls for friendship skills and it – and I didn't – I sort of had to for some of the – I used some of the stuff in the ELSA pack which worked and then that kind of sprung...into some other ideas and actually it was quite good fun some of the stuff we did. It was difficult in the middle of it, but then um... and they've pretty much been fine since then. I think -

Facilitator (EP): Fantastic.

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Yeah, yeah and their teacher said as well – he was a bit wary and he said, “I don’t know if it’s all going to kind of flare up again when – before SATs you know if they’re going to get a bit stressed and stuff” but they were pretty much okay so...

Outcomes were regularly recognised by others and ELSAs often recounted examples of positive (and on occasion, less positive) feedback about their work in general and more specifically progress/outcomes.

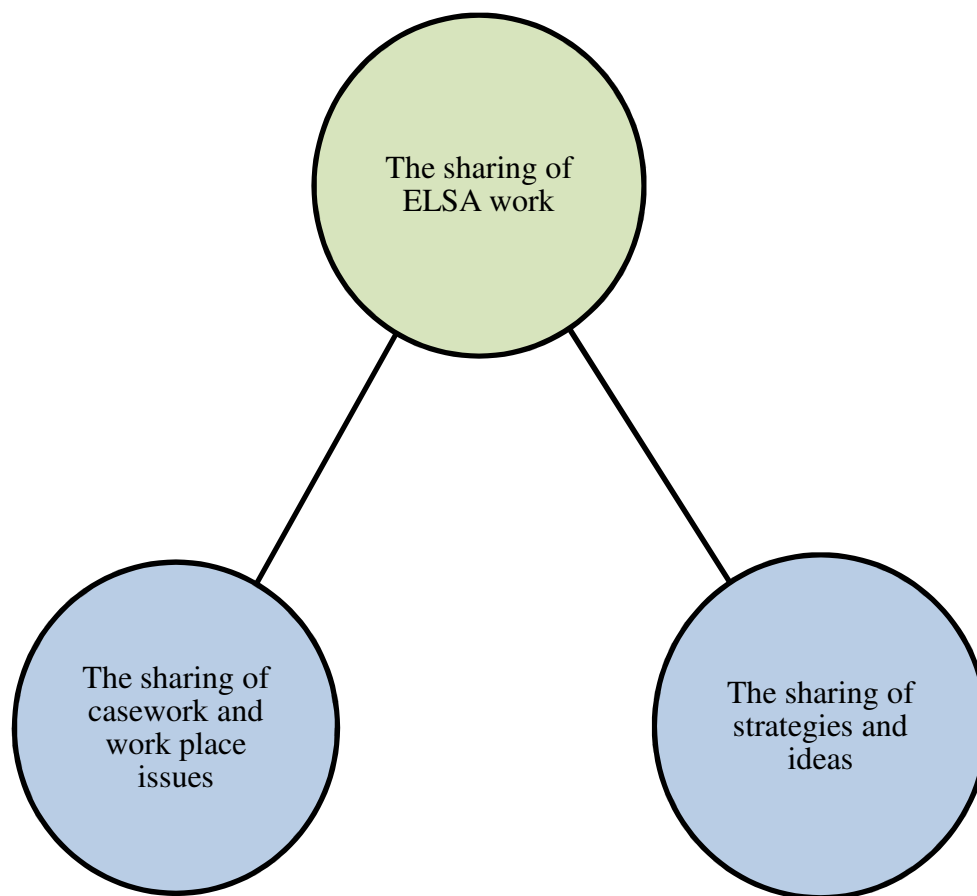
....So I fed that back and, um, she said because she wants to go back to the, err, Governors because she feels that the ELSA programme is going well and she wants to make it a permanent thing, which I never knew it was temporary, but there you go.

~~~~~

Group Member: Have you had any feedback from mum? Has mum...?

Group Member: Yes, thrilled to bits, um, err, the fact, um, what she was saying to me that grandfather was, um, obviously, err, quite concerned about his appearance because he does look very sick, very, very poorly, um, you know, when you’re poorly you don’t necessarily want children around.

### 4.3 Theme 2: The sharing of ELSA work



#### 4.3.1 Sub-theme 2a: The sharing of casework and workplace issues

ELSAs were keen to share and hear about resources used by their colleagues. When these were made as part of their work with children, it also appeared to serve as a way of validating their work or gaining feedback from the group.

So I thought that I might, so I've laminated it and everything for him, for him to take away and, um, to actually look at what a friendship means. And I just separated it all

up, so, um, we discussed together and then I went away and, sort of...so I'll pass that round if you're interested.

On other occasions, ELSAs described their use of published resources with children highlighting why they had found them useful.

So we've been playing quite a lot of, um, I've got some games, there's one called, err, socially speaking game, so we've been getting that out, um, and playing that. Um, it's quite good because it reinforces all the different elements that you go through. So, um, if you're out and about and at school and it gives them situations they have to say what they have to do, or also if they land on certain squares they have to say a sentence but express it in a certain emotion, both facially and in their voice. So that's been, and they think this game's great (laughs), so they don't seem to quite understand what, what, what, um, err, that it's in fact still doing the work.

#### **4.3.2 Sub-theme 2b: The sharing of strategies and ideas**

ELSAs enjoyed sharing successful strategies and ideas with their colleagues; it also appeared to be a mechanism to validate their work with colleagues.

One thing we've used in school which might be helpful is that, um, children who've had, sort of, anger issues have, um, like traffic light cards. So they're just laminated red, green and yellow, which they had on like a little stretchy thing that they tuck in their pocket, so they will go up to the adult and, sort of, show the colour. So if, for instance, it's yellow, for some of them that might mean, "I need to go to my quiet

corner,” or if it’s red (laughs), “I’m yelling(?) now, someone needs to do something.”  
But just as a, sort of, strategy, a bit like your spots but, yeah.

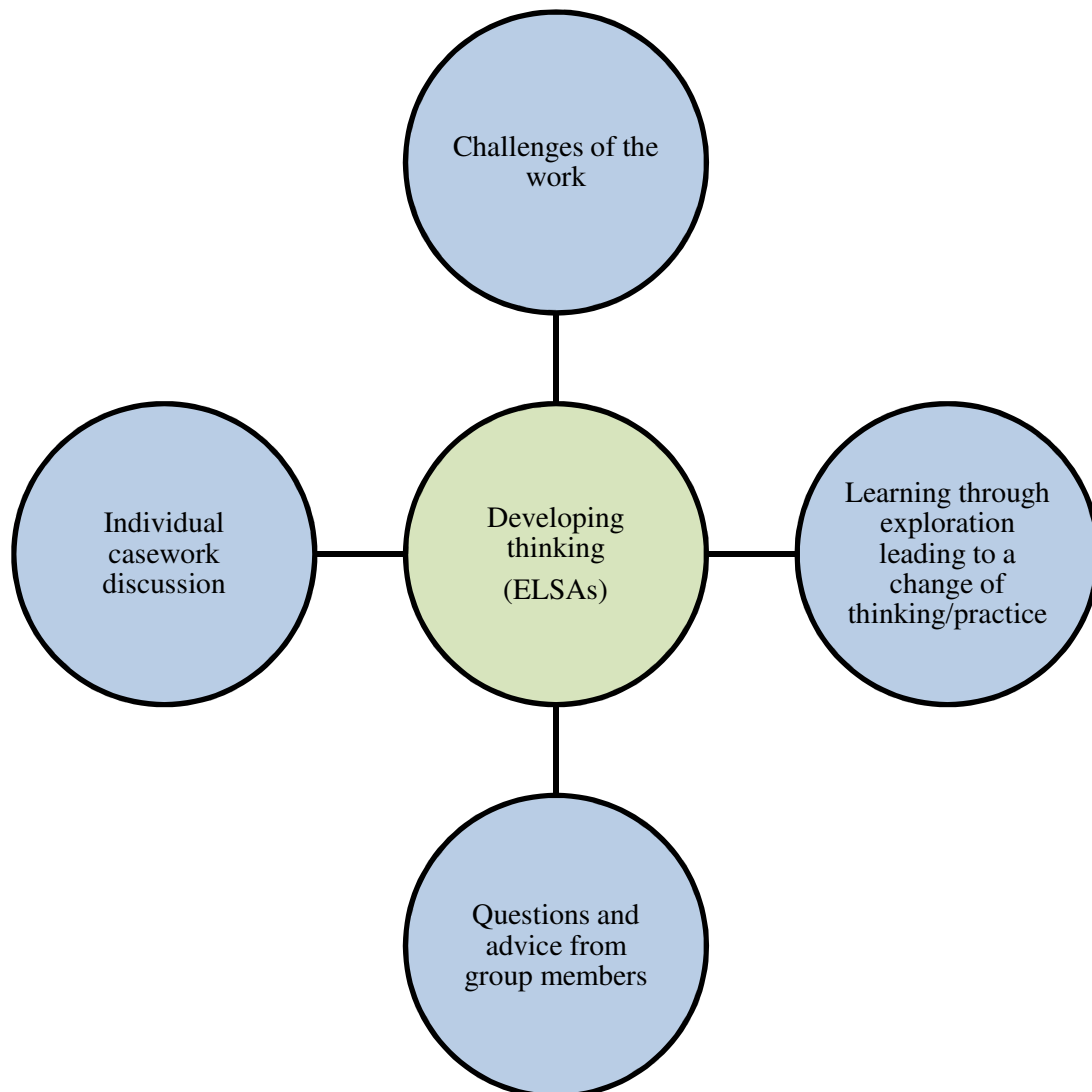
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... I think you have to let the children decide what they want to take and what they play and then they, kind of, do role play with it and everything. I mean, but it has made a difference, um, the one little boy who I said I see, you know, I’ve been seeing him, we’ve done social stories, um, and all sorts with him in the classroom. And he’s very, kind of, sullen and very, kind of, but when he saw the sand and he was playing with the sand, his face just lit up, you know, and there was actually some excitement in his voice and everything.

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...we did, a family tree, not in as, not in a mapping way, but we did a tree in his scrap book. Um, and, um, we put our family as our roots at the bottom and our friends around the top. From that I learnt, um, he, so he just drew the faces of all the people that he felt were close to him, um, and then he identified those with dots the people that he has a good relationship with and the people that he doesn’t or feels it difficult to have a relationship. Um, we had a red dot and a green dot, and, um, the only person that had a red dot on its own, and you would expect two and we normalise two, you know, because we do, you know, we have ups and downs, so that’s all good. But the only person that didn’t, err, that only had a red dot was his elder brother. So that’s come from him but in a non-verbal way.

#### 4.4 Theme 3: Developing thinking



A key purpose of supervision is to support, develop and challenge a supervisee's thinking about their work. The ELSAs' thinking was developed in several key ways.

#### 4.4.1 Sub-theme 3a: Questions and advice from group members

Much of the questioning from the ELSAs' colleagues tended to be aimed at clarification of information which, for the most part, appeared quite superficial. Nonetheless, it did appear to challenge their thinking and/or practice so that discussions took a different path and/or actions were noted.

Group Member: Has the teacher moved him away from the boys that he can't concentrate (over-speaking)?

Group Member: No, not yet. No. Because the teacher who, who, he wasn't here last week. He was off ill so I need to...

Whilst much of the questioning and challenge came from the EP or an individual ELSA colleague, some involved members of the group asking questions within the same exchange.

Facilitator (EP): I'm wondering a little bit about parental relationships because you mentioned earlier on that mum's quite feisty and comes in and gives the school what for?

Group Member 2: Mmm. Mmm. Yeah. Well, yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Just, yeah(?)?

Group Member 2: Yeah, she did, she did, um, recently.

Group Member 3: Or is it mum and dad, or just mum?

Group Member 2: Yes, dad came in as well. But, um, what can I say about her mum?

Her mum did actually say to me, I know she's not the - what did she call her? - something like the brightest button in the box, (child's name). So it's not that her mum's...

Facilitator (EP): So there's an issue there about parental views of, of, of the child, isn't there?

Group Member 2: Mmm.

On one occasion, an ELSA also reminded herself of the usefulness of asking open questions.

Group Member: Is he quite kind, caring? Is he, is he..? What, what sort of little...?

Group Member: Yes, he's... Okay, he can be, he can be a little mischievous at times.

Advice tended to be both general in nature i.e. about a particular approach or more specifically related to the area of discussion. When offered, the direct advice was often tentatively given.

When discussing how an ELSA might develop her understanding of a child's needs it was suggested that observing his play might be of value.



You could probably get some lovely observations off him, actually draw a lot just from that before you did, I don't know.

Another ELSA gave advice to a colleague based on their experiences of 'tics' in children.

If it's an on-going issue, from what I've seen of a different child, that, that behaviour rolls into something else, it doesn't stay on that particular behaviour. It, kind of –

Some advice was of a more general nature i.e. an ELSA's description of solution focused thinking.

It's, um, so they, they have somebody up who was, who did jive dancing. And actually, when you break that down, and that person can tell you what they had to do to achieve what they need to achieve, there are so many skills involved. And then you can pull on those skills and actually identify those in other things that they could do, but they don't realise. It was a really interesting process, um, I'll, I'll bring along what I've got.

#### **4.4.2 Sub-theme 3b: Learning through exploration leading to a change of thinking/practice**

The group supported reflective opportunities and challenged each other's thinking, enabling new learning which led to ELSAs considering changes to their practice.

The ELSAs presented many of their cases in a 'raw' state – sharing what appeared to be unprocessed thinking through which they appeared to be checking out their decisions and perhaps seeking a response from the group.

Well, like, she'll say, um, she'll say, she'll say they're bullying me because, as I said... And she also has a habit of, sort of like, going, like, looking at people like that. And then they complain about that and she says, well, I'm allowed to look how I want, type of thing. You know, it's very, um... And then I, sort of, thought, I realised why when I met her mum (laughing) because her mum's quite similar, is quite, sort of, you know, feisty and, um, aggressive really. I mean, not, I mean, I, you know, we get on quite well, but she's quite, sort of, "You must stand up for yourself and don't let them..." you know. And, and she's now been coming in and shouting the odds as well at the head, saying her daughter's being bullied. And it's all, sort of, really got a bit out of hand (laughing) in a way. Um, but then again I have seen this, this little girl, who, you know, I do quite like, she is quite pleasant, but I have seen her really upset, really crying so it, obviously is really, you know, she really feels it. It's, so it's that, sort of, it's that, sort of, dual thing of being quite like she's almost put on a big suit of armour and is, like, sort of, "You've got to be friends with me otherwise you're a bully and I'm telling of you," and then you see her when she is by herself and she's really heartbroken.

The following excerpt is the culmination of a conversation in which the ELSA was trying to understand a child's presentation; towards the end, with the help of her colleagues in the group, the pieces began to fall into place for her.

Facilitator (EP): So if I can get in that group I'm covering myself with that group.

Group Member 2: Yes. Yeah. Yeah.

Facilitator (EP): And I can, I will therefore be like them.

Group Member 2: Mmm. Yeah, I think that's it in a (over-speaking).

Group Member 5: Working with the little ones she gets, is it...?

Group Member 2: Yes (over-speaking).

Group Member 1: Because, because she's not coping very well in the classroom or, or,  
or...

Group Member 2: In the big playground.

Group Member 1: Is, is her way of getting back some of the control, isn't it, of, of,  
um...?

Group Member 2: Yeah. Yeah. And being the one that they all want to play with  
because she's the oldest one there, yeah.

The sharing of casework also allowed for individual learning to be shared with the group.

I think this is the quickest one I've, you know, that's ever, sort of, turned around, and it was something that was actually, underneath, really quite simple. And all I did was use that bridge (laughs), I just bridged that gap, and once they got talking, mum and, sort of, and the girl, um, everything else was overcome.

#### **4.4.3 Sub-theme 3c: Challenges of the work**

The supervision group also allowed ELSAs to share their own anxieties about their work in a safe environment and led to developing new ways of thinking.

It was apparent that ELSAs often lacked information about the child/family relationships, particularly when the case had been given to them by another member of staff within school. This inhibited ELSAs' thinking and decision making and made it difficult to identify appropriate ways forward.

Facilitator (EP): And you don't know whether the brother has said anything to the younger one about...?

Grp Member: Apparently not, um, err, I've got all my information from (name), our deputy head, so, um, err, no, apparently not. The, supposedly there are no family logistics that have been told to the younger ones, so I don't know.

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I don't know a lot about him so really it's going to be just seeing how he comes in. If he comes in tomorrow...

Whilst talking about her difficulty encouraging a teacher to understand a child's needs, the ELSA acknowledged the tensions of conflicting priorities – progress and emotional well-being – and being part of the wider school systems.

Facilitator: Do you feel she's understood?

Grp Member: I think she does, I think she does, I think she's reacting to pressure that's come from the head teacher, so, um. And yet I then spoke to my head teacher and I said, "Oh, I just want to, you know, um," I mentioned this child and said, you know, "I'm, I'm assuming you'd like me to carry on with him next year?" "Oh, yes, yes, yes, because I can..." So, it's a bit conflicting, um, err, I think I could, all I can do is carry on with what I'm doing.

ELSAs often talked about the difficulties of maintaining their role and being asked by others to be involved in the general behaviour management of children.

This ELSA talked about feeling 'blown all over the place'.

Group member: .....But sometimes I do feel, like I said, that I'm just, sort of, being blown by the wind and, sort of, it's where I end up and then you have to, sort of, um... So in other words I'm not being very... I'm being... I'm, sort of, reacting, I suppose, rather than...

Facilitator (EP): Who blows you in general, would you say?

Group Member: Er, the SENCO, the children sometimes, the teachers - they just come in and if it's one of the children I know, you know, they say can you come and can you have ten minutes later to try and sort out this, you know, friendship issue?

Which, you know, I mean, I do like doing it because you feel like you're being useful, but at the same time it impacts on things that I planned to do, sort of thing. So that's that.

ELSAs also became aware that the negotiation of work (how it is agreed and by whom) can give rise to ethical dilemmas.

Grp Member: It is, it is, we need to look, it's quite a complex situation. Um, so I've started, um, we've only had one session so far, um, and I was a bit iffing and ahing about whether I was comfortable with it because they live directly behind me.

(Laughter)

Grp Member: Oh yeah.

Grp Member: That's difficult, isn't it?

Grp Member: Um, it wasn't until after we started the process and, err, the deputy head had accepted and said, "Yes, yes, you know..." And I didn't know who lived behind me but they were told, err, they told the deputy head on the phone, "Oh yes, I think know, she lives behind us." So I'm going to go –

#### 4.4.4 Sub-theme 3d: Individual case work discussion

ELSAs were often supported/challenged to develop their thinking and identify next steps in their work with the child.

Facilitator (EP): Would you say he had friends do you think?

Group Member: Well yeah I did ask this question and yeah she's observed him in the classroom and when he – you know he doesn't always recognise they are trying to be friendly in that sort of sense, so...

Facilitator (EP): Okay so it's kind of perhaps around –

Group Member: Recognising it – yeah, what people are – coming across to him.

Facilitator (EP): Uh huh yeah recognising other people's intentions and thoughts and...

Group Member: Yes, yeah.

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Facilitator (EP): So where do you think the difficulty is at the moment?

Group Member: I think with him probably choices, but also for other staff to actually think before they react, rather than react and then find out, “Actually he hasn’t run off, actually he’s gone to a safe place where he knows, “Actually I can calm down here”” so...

Facilitator (EP): Okay so how can we get to a situation where they might be responding differently?

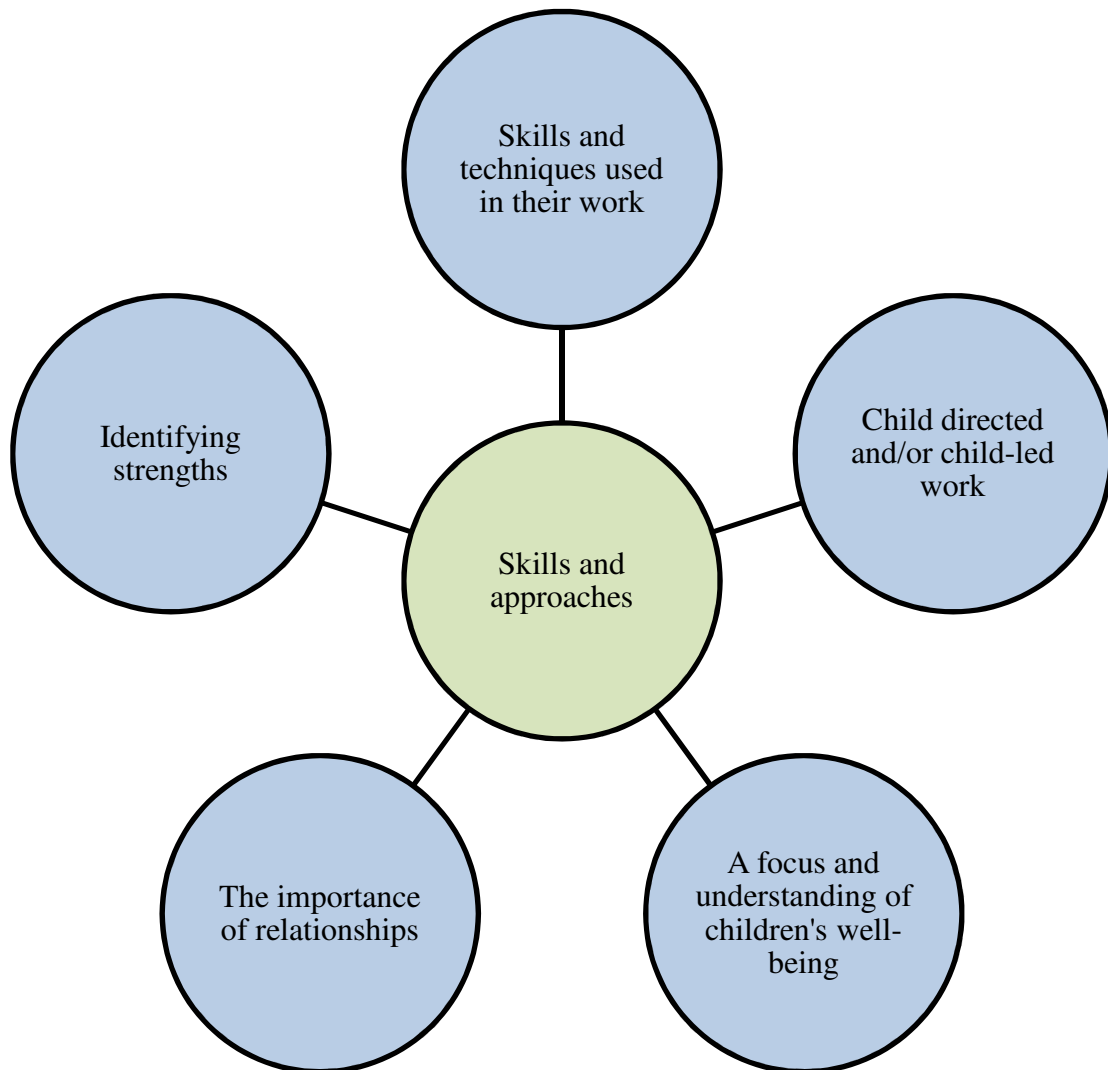
Group Member: I don’t know! (Laughs)

Such discussions also provided ELSAs opportunities to share gaps in their own knowledge and use the group to develop their knowledge, thinking and skills in a particular area.

I’m just about to take another one on for friendship skills, which I haven’t really done much with (laughs) in my time as an ELSA, so I’ll need some advice on that one (laughs) which is just about to start tomorrow.



#### 4.5 Theme 4: Skills and approaches



ELSAs talked about the skills and strategies that they used and highlighted key approaches that underlined some of their work.

#### **4.5.1 Sub-theme 4a: The importance of relationships**

ELSAs talked about the key importance of relationships within their work.

Group member: .....I really just want to see, get him in and talking really and (sighs) sort of build up the relationship as it were.

Facilitator (EP): So you're recognising that the first kind of couple of sessions will be just relationship building –

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Oh I think for me it's about relationships with those children I think about you know needing their one-to-one time first and really getting to know them as a person before actually doing actually any work. I think that's really important so I think that's – and I think feeling comfortable that that's – if that's all you're getting from it that actually you're going far rather than..

#### **4.5.2 Sub-theme 4b: Identifying strengths**

ELSAs were also keen to ensure that they adopted a strengths based approach.

Group Member: I'd probably just want to get to know them and just find out their likes and dislikes, things that they enjoy about school and –

Group Member: Yeah that's what I've got sort of in my head to do but –

Group Member: Their strengths as well – the strength cards are really good aren't they – just finding out about them and...

#### **4.5.3 Sub-theme 4c: Skills and techniques used in their work**

ELSAs also talked a lot about the approaches they took to their work and the varied skills they employed.

Facilitator (EP): So what sort of things have you done with the puppets?

Group Member: Well, just very, very simple. Just, like, okay, (name), you know, this is somebody, I don't know, this is, whatever she's called, Mary. You want to play with Mary. How could you ask Mary nicely if you...? And how are you going to, um, you know...? So then I might have the puppet saying, "Oh no, sorry (name), I'm a bit busy today. I've got to go off and do this." How are you going to react? You know, you saying to her something like, um, "Well, you're not a very good friend, are you?" You know, in that sort of... Because that's the tone she uses. You know, you could say, "Oh, okay," you know, "I'm a bit sad about that. Maybe we could have, er, you know, make a date for later on in the week?" You know, just, just trying to help her because, as I said, her language isn't very great either.

~~~~~

So we've been doing a lot on conversation work with him at the moment, um, and we've made a conversation tree just, um, with some sentences as to how to start conversations and how to hold a conversation. So we've just made, made the tree and we've put the sentences on to the, you know, the leafy part of the tree. Um, like, would you like to play, what's your favourite colour, just something like this to, sort of, keep the conversation going. And I'm thinking of recording a session so as he can actually hear his feedback as well, so as he can hear, you know, like how he is communicating.

#### **4.5.4 Sub-theme 4d: Child directed and/or child led work**

ELSAs often talked about the need for their work to be 'child directed' or 'child centred' which appeared to be coupled with the belief that this would be more effective.

We've started with the anger book - things like that, just whatever this child has – actually has come and said you know, "What would help?" So that's how we've kind of done it is like, "What would be useful?" And, "I'd want help with – I find this hard – " so it's kind of coming from them rather than saying, "I think you need – " they – it's coming from them which is – makes it a bit more powerful isn't it.

Whilst recounting an activity about family relationships an ELSA emphasised that her approach led to information being learned which was *from* the child.

So that's come from him but in a non-verbal way.

The belief in 'child-led' approaches also appeared to impact on the choices ELSAs made about their work i.e. not wanting to share known information with the child but waiting for the child to tell them.

So, um, but yeah, so, and he's, um, just delving a bit more now to get to the anger, because I know he's broken a telly at home, but that hasn't come out.

#### **4.5.5 Sub-theme 4e: A focus and understanding of children's well-being**

The ELSAs used their supervision sessions to develop their understanding of children's behaviour often looking for support from others to explain and understand it or to confirm their thinking.

Group Member: The behaviour probably is because they feel unsettled in that area possibly, because I know that we have some children that if they have a, um, stand-in teacher their behaviour does go wrong. But sometimes if you get a good stand-in teacher and they'll recognise that, so I think that sometimes is a problem.

Group Member: I don't know – they do it all the time, doesn't matter if they're a good supply, any supply – they will do it all the time.

Group Member: Because once you've got routine –

Group Member: Yeah.

Group Member: - they're used to that routine and they don't like the change, yeah.

Group Member: Change, yeah.

Group Member: Is it like an anxiety thing?

Group Member: Mm.

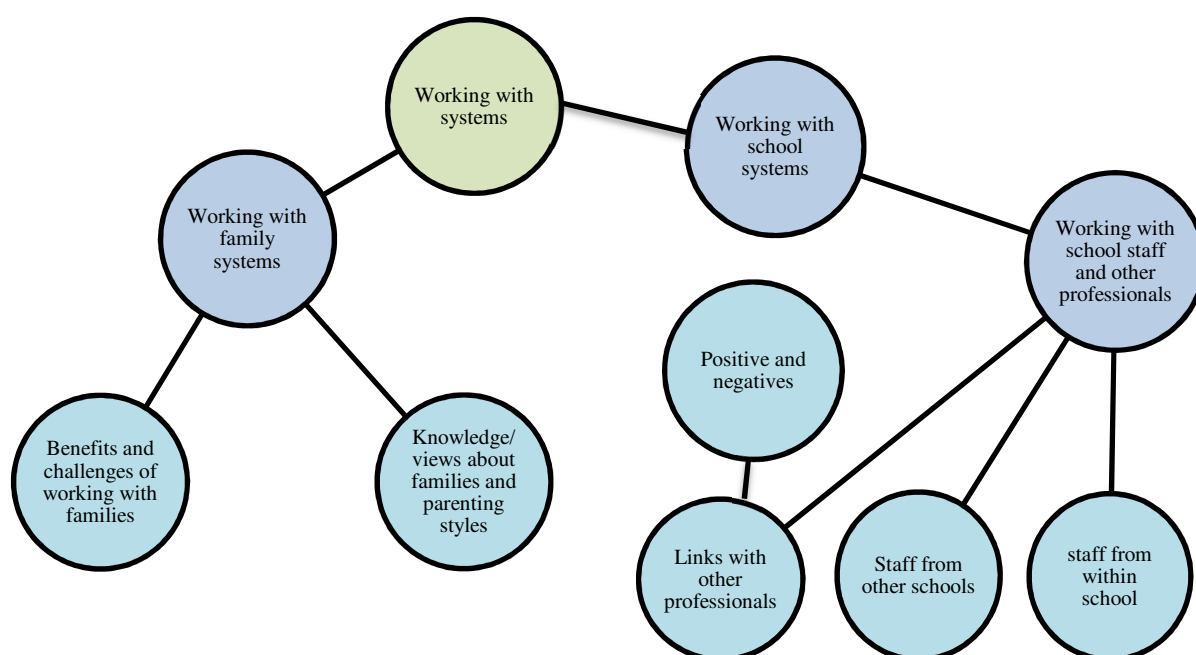
Requests for help in understanding children's behaviour also took a more reflective tone.

Yeah but we also have a change in behaviour, having worked with that class and done ELSA sessions with a few of them in that class and now being lunch time staff, the other thing that's been quite interesting is that – the change in the way – you know the way that they'll treat – not the way that they treat me so much but if you're in class and you tell someone that they need to behave or that they need to get that task finished or something then it's generally taken maybe that you tell them again and then you know they get on with it. Um but outside, if you tell them, "Could you please get down off that fence" or whatever, they'll just kind of laugh – they'll just turn round and sort of laugh at you. So there's this kind of whole disrespect really if you like and I have actually said – I've said to them, "I don't get why you act like this in the classroom and now you're outside and you're like that".

It was also evident that the ELSAs were caring and passionate about their work expressing concern for the child's well-being and, at times, appeared quite protective of the children.

So we're, we're just, just carry on, and I've been watching him in the playground because a few children have accused him of various things. But, you know what, unfortunately he's in that trap of, "Oh, he's the naughty one, so if I blame him he'll get the trouble," and not taking responsibility for their part in what's been going on. And, um, so, so that's been, um, interesting to watch and to be able to, and it's been quite useful to be able to step in and clarify situations.

#### 4.6 Theme 5: Working with systems



##### 4.6.1 Sub-theme 5a: Working with family systems

The importance of understanding the family dynamics in order to gain a clearer understanding of the child's needs was often recognised, particularly the difficulty of working with parents and gaining a clear picture about home based issues affecting the

children with whom they work. ELSAs also often talked about the impact of different parenting styles and raising issues to do with the parental choices.

And obviously when you're dealing with home issues, and I seem to be getting more and more of that at the moment, it's difficult to bridge that gap when you're not actually in the home as well. So, um, you know, that's quite nice that, um, you know, I do try and meet the parents, sort of, two or three weeks in, once we've, sort of, understood from the child's perspective, you've understood from the teacher's perspective and why they've come to you in the first place. And then you can, kind of, work with everybody together, I do find that helps. And, as I say, I think so many of the children that are coming, certainly through my door at the moment, have got issues at home...

ELSAs' understanding of the parenting approaches often appeared to be based on their opinion rather than a direct exploration of this area with the parents concerned.

Um, parents, um, are very supportive although they are both working parents and spend very little time with the children at home, they're, kind of, you know, between different childcares etc, etc, circumstances, you know.

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Facilitator (EP): Did you get any feel for the probable parenting style that's there in, in his house when you met with his mum and talked about him?



Group Member 4: Um, I think mum tries and, you know, lays down the law and dad just, kind of, brushes it off to one side, or doesn't want anything to do with it and says, mum, will you sort it out? Don't tell me, you know. It's not my problem, sort of thing. So...

Facilitator (EP): Some inconsistency between...?

Group Member 4: Mmm. Mmm.

#### **4.6.2 Sub-theme 5b: Working with school systems**

ELSAs explored the benefits, and their frustrations, of working within the limitations of the school systems.

Um, I mean, some things are, are really useful. Like, I was asked to go to a meeting with the, um, SEN governor, so it was really nice to meet her because they're trying to strengthen the roles between, um, the staff, you know, the, the support staff in school and the governors. That was really useful.

Some issues were around communication within the school system.

See we have a notice board in our staff room in this – and I think if something similar had happened to me, I would um just write – I would just write, “Dah, dah, dah is having difficulty with this so he may behave in this way; please can everyone – “ so it's constant – I mean I know people then become blind to those things don't they that

are up on the wall in there and you do forget about it, but just so at least then if they're saying, "Oh well I didn't know" you can say, "Well it's actually – it's here".

~~~~~

Grp Member: Can I just ask, did a job description go out to all the heads then?

Facilitator (EP): It went out as part of school communications which would have been to a head teacher.

Grp Member: Oh, okay.

Facilitator (EP): I have got a few copies, because I thought –

Grp Member: Because nothing's been mentioned, so it would be quite nice to see.

ELSAs also often shared their frustrations about their role being usurped by other responsibilities or duties.

And I'm looking forward to starting ELSA again, because we've been so short-staffed it hasn't really kick-started again since September, or since July when, um, we left, um, and we've got a new member of staff starting next week so ELSA's back in the timetable. So that's great. Yeah, looking forward to that.

The next excerpt highlights the inclusion within the ELSA's own school system – being included in the child's Annual Review but also the link with the secondary school around transition.

Um, I've got, err, we had his Annual, err, Review, um, since our last meeting and mum and dad were there and, you know, obviously head teacher and...from the new school. And um, they're on board and we've got three extra sessions for him to go down and visit, um, the school, one of which we've already done just last week, it was Thursday of last week, so it was really good.

#### **4.6.3 Sub-theme 5c Working with school staff and other professionals**

ELSAs talked about the benefits and difficulties they encounter when working with other staff which often seemed to reflect tensions between the different agendas, roles and responsibilities held by staff.

Having agreed a strategy for a child, the ELSA explored her frustration about colleagues not having a shared understanding of them; some empathy was shown by colleagues who perhaps have had similar experiences.

Facilitator (EP): Mm. Did you have the chance to say to them afterwards that he's – that that was sort of his strategy?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: And what reaction did you get to that from them?

Group Member: “Whatever”.

Facilitator: Mm.

Group Member: “Well I wasn’t supposed to know that”, “Actually yes you did”.

Facilitator: Okay...

Group Member: It’s tricky isn’t it, unless you can actually sort of – unless you want to do like a staff meeting, which I’m sure you don’t! (Laughs)

Group Member: I wouldn’t mind but it’s the senior lunchtime supervisor that took over from me and it’s actually class TA as well... so she is very –

Group Member: Everyone needs to be singing from the same sheet though don’t they, that’s the thing.

Group Member: Absolutely.

Group Member: So ultimately that’s obviously not happening.

Group Member: No, but with the more tricky ones she is more actually, “Let’s confront” and then, “Oh look, it’s happened – “

Group Member: Reflect after.

Group Member: Reflect after.

When working relationships were positive the outcomes for the child also seemed to benefit. Prior to the next excerpt, the ELSA described developing the child's skills to start conversations so that he could share his point of view with others. She continued to describe the transfer of these skills to the class setting with the support of the teachers.

Um, they're using them in class, um, and we're just starting off with something as simple as, "Excuse me," just so we can just say, "Hey, I'm here (laughs)." Um, and he did very well with that last week, there's a reward chart that's happening with that, um, the teachers –

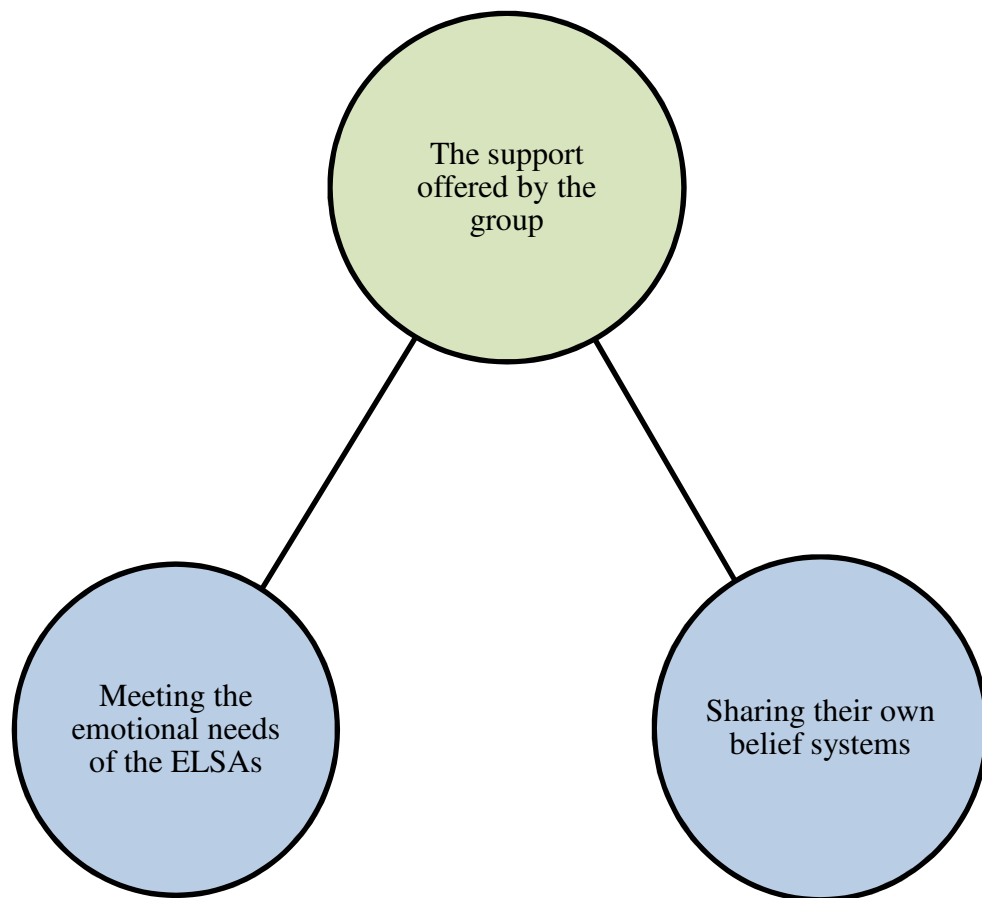
Within the context of their transition work with children, ELSAs often talked of successfully making links with teachers from other schools.

I managed to get someone from year, from the, err, senior school to come and talk to my guys and that went really, really well.

An ELSA also talked about working with a colleague from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

They've have a couple of meetings from CAMHS and (name of worker) has actually come in to school to have a chat with me as to how he is in school.

#### 4.7 Theme 6: The support offered by the group



##### 4.7.1 Sub-theme 6a: Meeting the emotional needs of the ELSAs

The ELSAs clearly benefitted from the group's support to develop their ideas and to respond to their requests for help and to provide reassurance.

Group Member: But um I don't know whether it's more – she needs more training or what, but try and say to the lad, "Look if that's happening, Okay you can't walk away

in that situation. She's talking to you, but you can still come in here" so it's trying to get the best of both really.

Facilitator: Uh huh.

Group Member: So I don't know whether to just say to the head teacher, "Right she definitely needs more training" (laughs) or –

Group Member: What about them both together? I was just thinking talk together so that they're kind of both talking to each other about what's going to work? I don't know, like he could kind of voice his opinions and say you know – and she could do the same.

Group Member: Mm, yeah I could try that actually.

~~~~~

Grp Member: What is the current line of thought on, sort of, like a tic or OCD type behaviour? Because I've read lots of different things, some of it saying that you should not draw attention to it and to ignore that behaviour, and others, that you should point it out when it occurs. So what is, I mean, I've always, kind of, you know, because otherwise I think if you address it too much then that anxiety then will rise. So to me that doesn't sit well with me.

Grp Member: Do you know, anybody?

ELSAs also benefitted from reassurance.

Facilitator (EP): And are you think that that's part, partly to do with it, that he's here, there one minute and then he's going somewhere else?

Grp Member: I think so, yeah.

Grp Member: Just trying to remember where he is...

Grp Member: Yeah, that's right, yeah.

Grp Member: And making sure he's got everything for each lesson.

Grp Member: And also, and what's happening, see, if he gets things wrong then the kids at school are starting to notice and then pass comment, you know.

Grp Member: It's just that age, isn't it?

Grp Member: Do you know what I mean? It's just niggly little things that could actually, when they all add up, they could just go boom, you know. But, but, yeah.

The sessions also provided opportunities for ELSAs to share their experiences and use their colleagues as 'a barometer' about their work. It appeared that the support and solidarity of the group was often reflected by 'what was not said' rather than 'what was said' and this will be further explored in the discussion.



Yeah, no good thanks, yeah – no it's been quite a difficult few weeks I think; we've had quite a few challenges, yeah I think we're okay. It's difficult – it's different because I'm not obviously doing so much, although I have been doing quite a bit more one-to-one because I've had to, but generally my role – I'm not doing it, because it's a small group anyway so we're doing a lot of the stuff in small groups. So...

Another ELSA talked about her difficulties working with a group of children.

Because they're not managing – still not managing – although they have done, they have done in the past or they would normally but for whatever reason... like there was a boy this morning who was absolutely fab last week and has been for weeks but we had a visitor in this morning and couldn't cope with the fact that there was a visitor there and he actually was able to tell us that by lunchtime and say he didn't like it and so that child then – we just could see it sort of escalated and he had to be kind of taken – and he just sort of said, "I just couldn't handle the visitor there" so then you kind of – so just kind of thinking on your feet there and not always necessarily planning it but I think this would be useful you know, see what it is or more like one-to-one kind of, "Where do we need to go with it?" He's not necessarily angry, it's just dealing with how he's feeling with himself

There were also a number of opportunities in which positive experiences were shared.

I feel positive, err, because, um, the year six sessions I've been running have been going really well and I managed to get someone from year, from the, err, senior school to come and talk to my guys and that went really, really well.

At times, the occasional use of humour was also evident to lighten the mood and to recognise the stress involved in their work.

Group Member: Mm. This one goes off in a strop and climbs a tree (laughs). Hides in a bush!

Facilitator (EP): Okay –

Group Member: I'd be quite tempted actually to just sit near the bush.

Group Member: I just let him stay there and watch him from the corner and then at 12.55pm just go up to him and say, "Come on it's time to go in now" and he'll come in. Because actually I work with him in the class as well.

Group Member: Get out of the tree!

Group Member: I can imagine you doing that one as well! (Laughter)

#### 4.7.2 Sub-theme 6b: Sharing their own belief systems

The group also appeared to offer the ELSAs a 'safe space' allowing them to show their vulnerabilities and share their own belief systems, assumptions and world views.

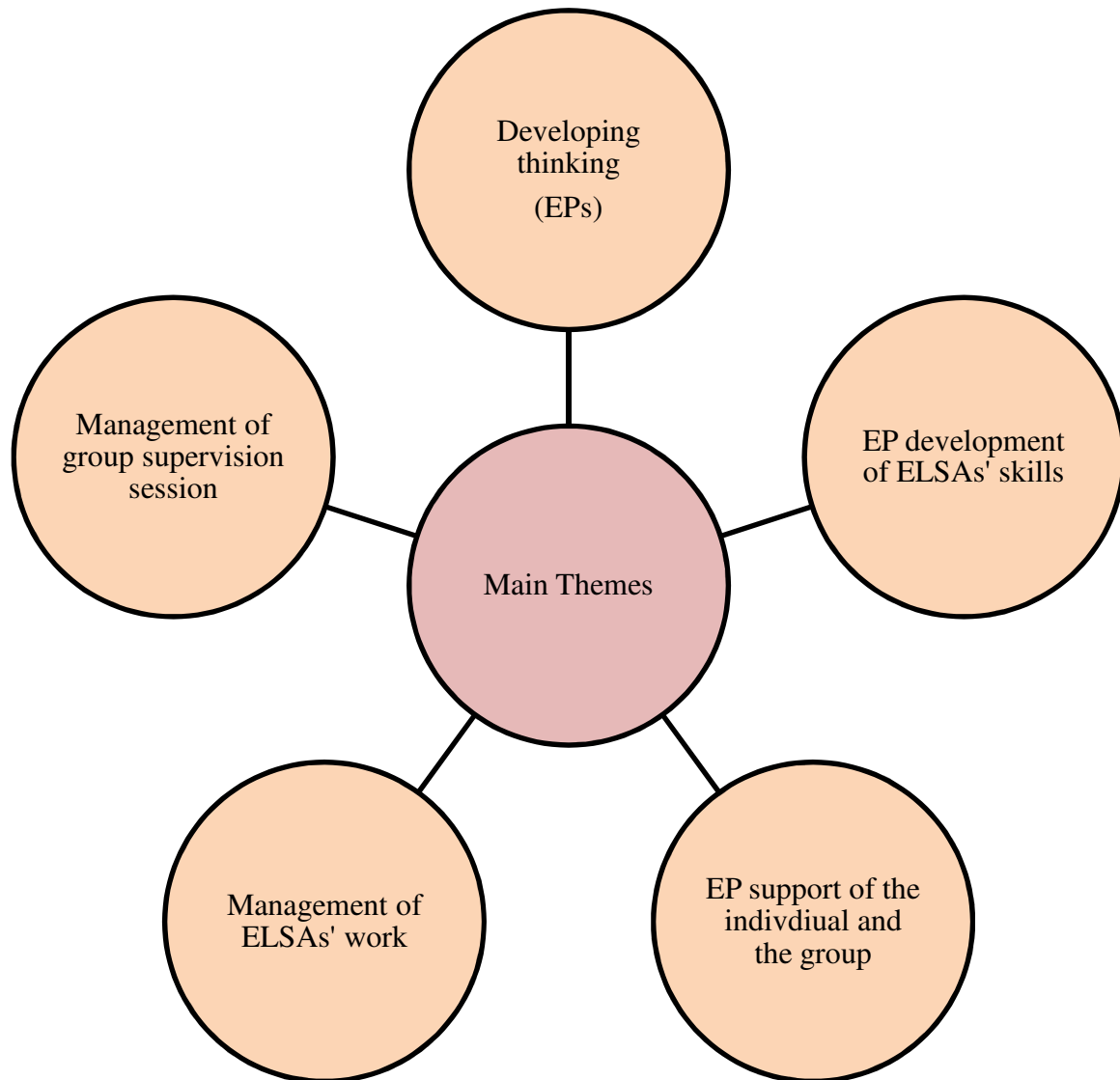
I'll start. I've picked this one here. I feel a little frazzled, (laughter) um, simply because since our last meeting we've had, um, the, the children had a, a residential trip away so I had to look after the children who weren't on the trip. Um, the second week we then looked after the second lot of children who weren't on the trip in class with the teacher, so that was fine.....

Stereotypical views were also challenged by the EP who employed some self-deprecating humour (the EP herself being Scottish) to make her point whilst ensuring the interaction remained positive.

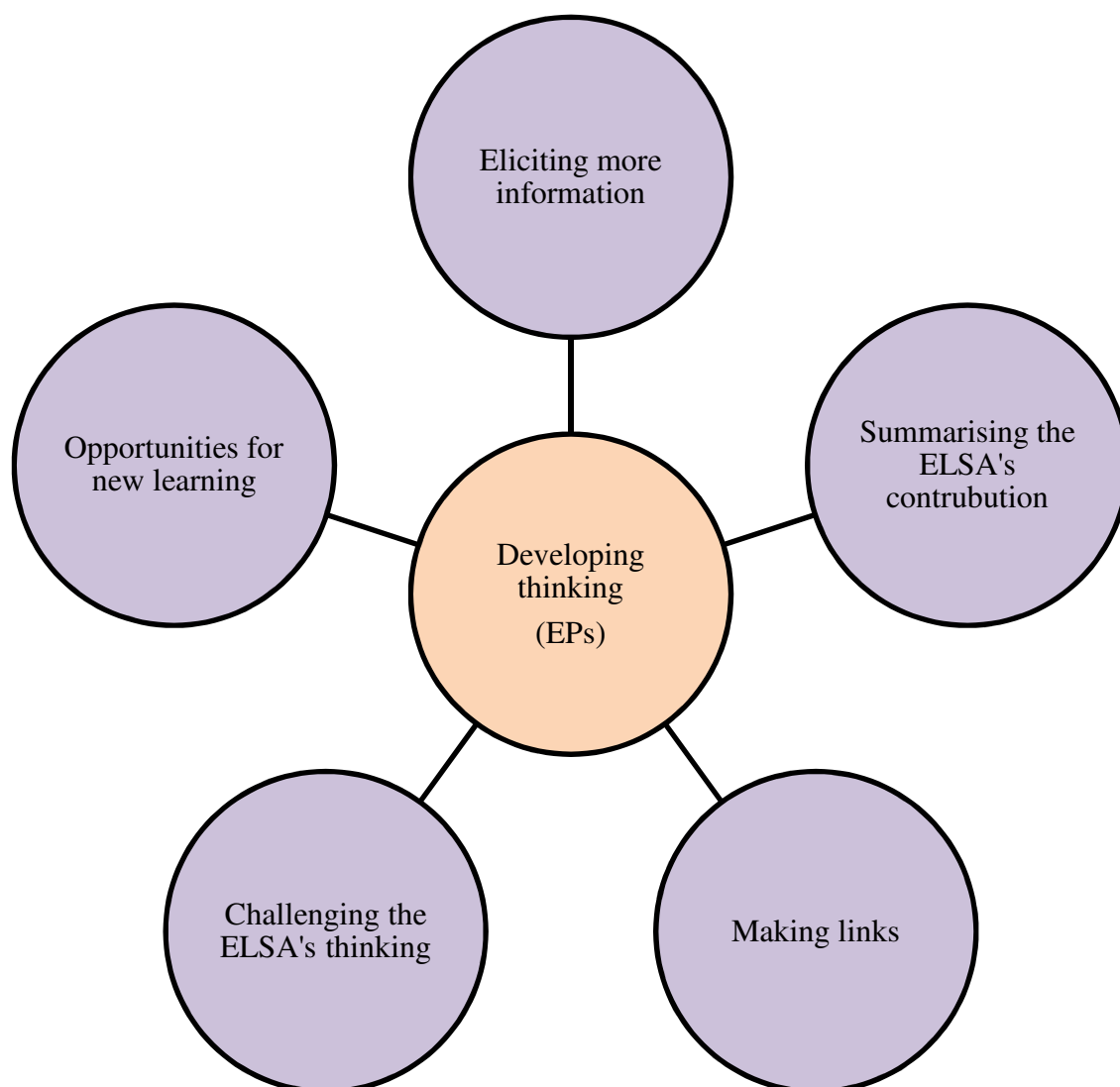
Group Member 2: Not with, um, not with social skills really. I don't, and I don't know if this makes a difference either, but her, her parents are South African and they're quite, sort of, I think they're quite strict and, um, at home, er, yeah. That's, that's the sort of impression I get.

Facilitator (EP): So they're, they're South African, they're, they're strict, but that's not really necessarily a link. It's, like, the Scottish parent could be, could be thought of being strict - some of them are. A lot of them are. (Laughter)

**4.8 The five main themes from the EP contributions to the group supervision sessions.**



## 4.9 Theme 1: Developing thinking



### 4.9.1 Sub-theme 1a: Eliciting more information

To facilitate the thinking of the group, the EPs asked many questions that were designed to elicit further information or clarify the information provided by the ELSAs. It was evident that further questioning often led to vague responses or gaps in the information/knowledge held by the ELSA.

Facilitator (EP): So that's something that we need to bear in mind. Mmm. Has anyone...? You mentioned her language skills?

Group Member 2: Mmm.

Facilitator (EP): Do you know what level her language skills are at?

Group Member 2: In terms of what, sort of?

Facilitator (EP): In terms of a speech and language therapist's assessment.

Group Member 2: Oh yeah, yes. Yeah. I mean, all, all through school she's had, she's, she's, she's somebody that, that, that could almost have a statement, but she's, it's been looked at in the past and she doesn't quite meet, you know, the criteria. I mean, her, her reading ability, she reads like a, I think the last time I tested her about a six year old, or a six, you know, just over a six year old type of thing.

Facilitator (EP): And her language scores, I mean, have you seen any reports from a speech and language therapist?

Group Member 2: No, I haven't, actually. I could look at that, yeah.

Facilitator (EP): But she has been seen throughout school?

Group Member 2: Yes. I'm, I'm sure she has, yeah, yeah, but probably, you know, three or four years ago, sort of thing...

The questioning also took a more curious style.

Facilitator (EP): Are you doing that mostly through talking – just kind of getting together and talking or activities...?

Group Member: Sometimes – it's hard – not talking, it's usually activities or sometimes just giving them a piece of paper.

On other occasions the questions appeared to probe for more information.

Facilitator (EP): So do they know why there's the discord between him and the brother?

Grp Member: No, the parents have absolutely no idea.

Facilitator (EP): Has it just happened or has it always been?

Grp Member: No, it's, err, over the last 18 months it's got worse, so there must have been a point whereby something has changed, but we're so new in the day I really haven't drilled into that yet. And I think I'll only find out a little bit more perhaps when I, you know, we have a meeting with the parents as well. Um, so very early

doors, but just judging from him, he's come through with what's, has been fed to me so, but in a, you know, in a different, completely different way. So, um –

Facilitator (EP): And you don't know whether the brother has said anything to the younger one about...?

#### **4.9.2 Sub-theme 1b: Summarising the ELSA's contribution**

The EPs often summarised ELSAs' contributions, drawing out key points and naming them for the group, often supporting them to identify what their work was actually achieving or what has been communicated by the members of the group.

Group Member: So um (laughs) where can I go from there? With that, what sort of – but then also it's going to be very early days as I said – to this first couple of sessions because he is quite a sensitive boy and I don't think he's going to be – he's taking it all in and – well he might be, I don't know him well enough yet to – I really just want to see, get him in and talking really and (sighs) sort of build up the relationship as it were.

Facilitator (EP): So you're recognising that the first kind of couple of sessions will be just relationship building

The EPs listened to the ELSAs' contributions and identified and named the strategy being used by the child but not yet clearly understood by the ELSA.



Facilitator: Yeah, so there's things around self-talk as well –

Group Member: Yes and that's the one he actually picked and I thought, "Does he know what this means?" as in why he's picked that and he said, "Yeah because I do often tell myself that – not to do that – in my head" and I'm just amazed how much – he's obviously had a lot from other places you know around the school with (name) and things like that, so things are going in but -

Facilitator: Yeah so it gave you a real insight into his own awareness and - ?

Group Member: Yeah, just – yes of his awareness and it was a really good game. I'll hang on to that one so I hope you don't want it back yet!

The EPs were also able to name and reflect on the group's emotional presentation following their contributions.

Facilitator (EP): A feeling of contented and happy and, and that feeling of moving on and may some new, better times are coming.

Grp Member: Yes.

#### **4.9.3 Sub-theme 1c: Making links**

The EPs often made links for the ELSAs helping them to develop an understanding of complex situations and their feelings about them.

Facilitator (EP): And I think you know, I think what you're kind of recognising is that there does need to be a consistency of response um and that that can be difficult depending on um the understanding of the staff can't it?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Do you know it's kind of – I think when you come from positions as ELSAs where you are very well informed around behaviour management and what might be behind behaviours and how best to kind of steer it in the right direction, it's – it's then having to think you know some staff may not have the similar awareness and you know, how can we support them to do that? And as an ELSA that's not your role (laughs) to skill up other members of staff. You can absolutely kind of reflect it back and suggest, “What would you like to do?” and then what would you like to do now as a result of today?

Group Member: I think I'll probably do the – what actually you suggested and probably get the adult –

Facilitator (EP): And child together? Yeah...

Group Member: That would be quite interesting.

~~~~~

Facilitator (EP): Okay, so we've got... Let's, let's, let's, let's try and think through what the, kind of, threads and what hypotheses are coming through. So we've got one around parental view being quite negative...to actually be heard to be saying that, that may, that maybe could be seen as being quite a negative view. And if, and if the parent has quite a negative of the, of the girl and her abilities and she tends to speak a lot around the child, um, I'm wondering about, er, the impact of that on her identity and her self-esteem. And if her big sister doesn't struggle quite so much with life, especially the social aspects of life, which are really important, um, I'm wondering about her self-esteem so, and her self-identity. So I have, I have, I have a little hypothesis there that could, that could be an area of difficulty.

The ELSAs were also encouraged to consider and explore links to the wider school systems so that their work can be supported.

Facilitator (EP): Is it something you have fed back to the SENCo or head teacher at the moment or - ?

Group Member: Um well they have another line manager, so um I will feed that back to (name) and then we sort of discuss it all together, but no it's like hitting your head against a brick wall sometimes.

#### **4.9.4 Sub-theme 1d: Challenging ELSA's thinking**

The challenges to ELSA's thinking tended to be mostly gentle in nature perhaps in keeping with a nurturing, positive group ethos; on occasion they were more demanding.

Facilitator (EP): I'm wondering a little bit about parental relationships because you mentioned earlier on that mum's quite feisty and comes in and gives the school what for?

Group Member 2: Mmm. Mmm. Yeah. Well, yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Just, yeah?

Group Member 2: Yeah, she did, she did, um, recently.

Group Member 3: Or is it mum and dad, or just mum?

Group Member 2: Yes, dad came in as well. But, um, what can I say about her mum? Her mum did actually say to me, I know she's not the - what did she call her? - something like the brightest button in the box, (child's name). So it's not that her mum's...

Facilitator (EP): So there's an issue there about parental views of, of, of the child, isn't there?

Group Member 2: Mmm.

The challenge offered by EPs often required the ELSAs to clarify information, whilst on other occasions the group was harnessed by the EP to support the ELSAs' thinking.

Facilitator (EP): Is there a family history of literacy, literacy difficulties or social communication difficulties?

Group Member 2: I think there is, yeah. I think, I think literacy difficulties, yeah, definitely. That's what mum, sort of, led, led me to believe, yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Dad's side? Mum's side? Do we know?

Group Member 2: Mum's side.

Facilitator (EP): Mum's side?

Group Member 2: I'm not sure about dad, but yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Which is another, could be another contributing factor to her stress?

Group Member 2: Yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Because she, she's seen this before. She might have seen it herself...

Group Member 2: Yeah. Well yes, like I said, she said she had a terrible time at school and wasn't helped so...

Facilitator (EP): So she's trying to make sure that history doesn't repeat itself?

Group Member 2: Mmm. I think so, yeah.

~~~~~

Facilitator (EP): So where do you think the difficulty is at the moment?

Group Member: I think with him probably choices, but also for other staff to actually think before they react, rather than react and then find out, “Actually he hasn’t run off, actually he’s gone to a safe place where he knows, “Actually I can calm down here””  
so...

Facilitator (EP): Okay so how can we get to a situation where they might be responding differently?

Group Member: I don’t know! (Laughs)

Facilitator (EP): Mm, what are people’s thoughts on that?

#### **4.9.5 Sub-theme 1e: Opportunities for new learning**

EPs offered suggestions to promote new learning, recognised when it had occurred and/or drew attention to it.

After having identified what might help the child feel better and build her confidence, the EP highlighted the need to support the parents, sharing her systemic thinking with the ELSA.

The ELSA appeared surprised (indicated by her laughter) but suggested an appropriate course of action.

Facilitator (EP): But you also have to do similar things to, for her parents, I think.

Group Member 2: Yeah. (Laughing)

Facilitator (EP): Because then they, if they feel more confident and more supportive then they'll make a better job of supporting her, I think.

Group Member 2: Okay. So maybe I should have a meeting with her mum too and say (overspeaking)?

Facilitator (EP): Yeah, I would think so.

Following a discussion about how an ELSA might manage another member of staff's lack of understanding and unhelpful intervention with a child the EP provided a more 'neutral' approach for the ELSA to consider in addressing it with her line manager.

Facilitator (EP): And I wonder whether simply feeding that back as well to the head teacher if that's the kind of line manager, um may be helpful in prompting something that you've noticed need to – do you know, it's that – it's going in at that level and saying, "This is what I've noticed, this is what I'm planning to do" and um... seeing what her ideas might be as well.

Group Member: Yeah, thank you very much. That's fine.

When 'checking-in' at the beginning of the session the EP used a box of items from which the ELSAs chose an item to represent how they might be feeling about their work – the EP explained the purpose behind the activity enabling them to use this activity in their own work in schools.

Facilitator (EP): Okay, so we use these to think about, about how you're feeling, just a way of illustrating what you're thinking, how you're feeling today. And also to begin to think about what you want to bring today and what you hope to get out of today. Okay? Who would like to start?

There were also opportunities for ELSAs to developing their understanding about the systemic nature of their work and on this occasion the EP highlighted the fact that their individual sessions only form part of the child's experience.

Facilitator (EP): Well it's similar I guess in a way to what (name) was saying for her – the child that you're working with as well isn't it, in the sense of... there is something around that you know when we're in a – in a situation where we can have time to reflect, because that's what your individual sessions provide isn't it?

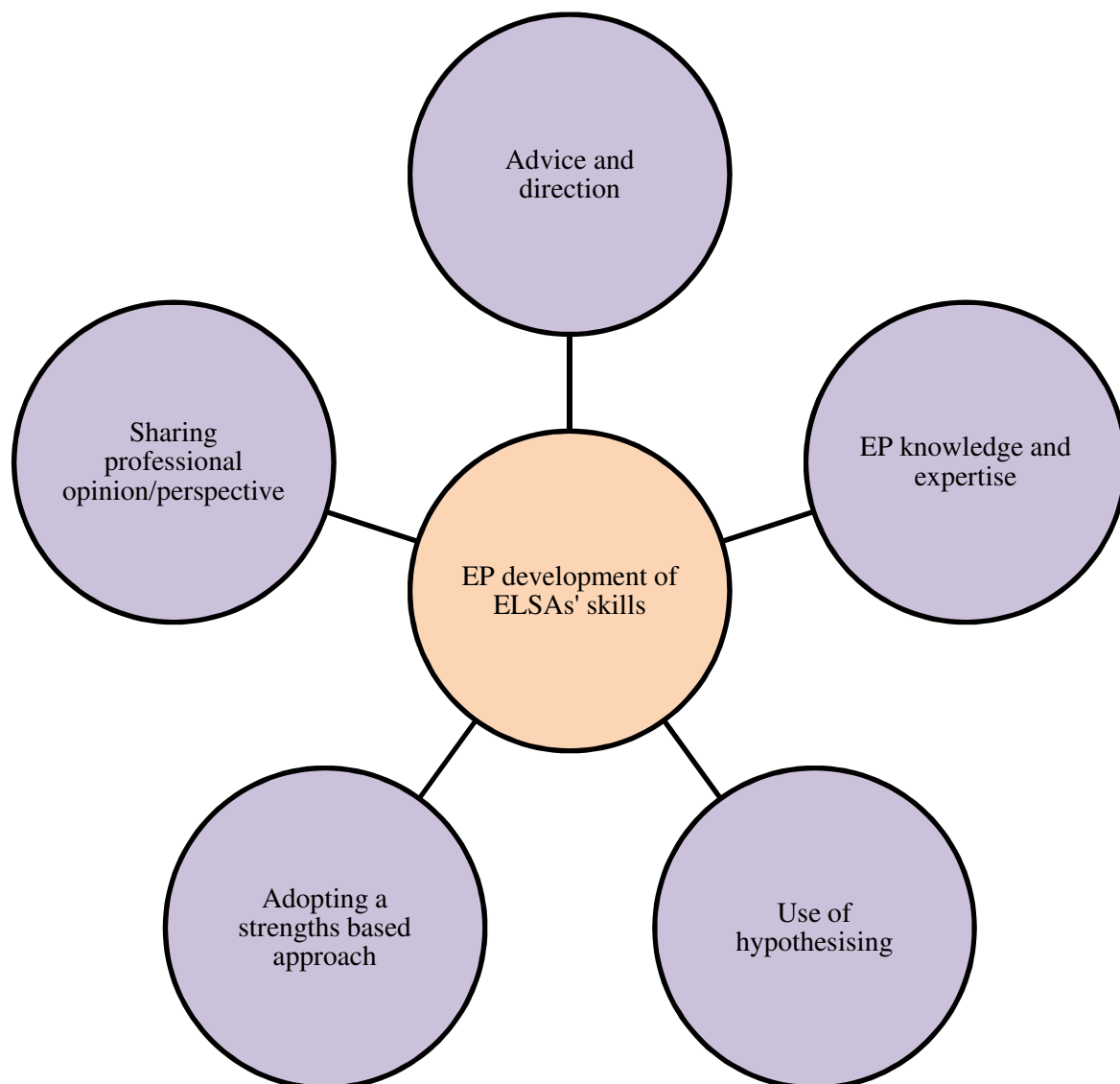
Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Then just as we as adults, we can reflect quite openly... then when we're in the situation there's a lot more complexities going on isn't there (laughs) that



impact on – yeah how you might respond. So I guess there's taking into account the fact that the work that you're doing is – particularly around those children where there's behavioural difficulties, it's part of a much bigger plan for a child that needs to take into account things like environmental change so you know the environmental and what sort of motivation they're getting to actually do these things back in class and to generalise those skills back. So it's kind of...

#### 4.10 Theme 2: EP development of ELSAs' skills



#### 4.10.1 Sub-theme 2a: Advice and direction

Within the session the EPs gave advice and direction about a range of issues often giving guidance about practise issues.

And it's about, it's about someone being able to take the time and to, to explore incidents that happen and use them really sensitively to, to deconstruct and then construct another way, but keeping, keeping an eye on her self-esteem and how she feels about what she's done as well so she doesn't feel too much shame. Um, so there's a really sensitive job for an ELSA really to, to explore things that happen and really listen to her point of view, help her see another point of view.

When discussing a particular approach the EP drew attention to the importance of why the approach might be helpful.

... which really does draw upon the importance of the connections between the thoughts at the time and how they might be feeling and I think – yeah, for me that's a big part of it is helping them to make that shift in a way in terms of um if a trigger happens, what thoughts are they going to have? Are they going to be kind of hot thoughts (laughs) or cold thoughts? Do you know what I mean by that? It's kind of – yeah. But there's different ways of seeing the situation and different ways of thinking about it.

~~~~~

Group Member 2: Well, she said that: she said to me, "I can't read." And she's worried about her SATS coming up and...

Facilitator (EP): Given that she's Year 6, um, you would wonder about moving into recognising that that is who she is and what is going on and, therefore, we need to move into coping strategies, especially for secondary school.

#### **4.10.2 Sub-theme 2b: EP knowledge and expertise**

The EPs' knowledge about child development and their interactionist perspective was often shared enabling ELSAs to broaden their thinking about the concerns brought to supervision.

And make sure he really is understanding the more abstract language around the school because if that, if that was a problem that could, that could be a contributing factor to the behaviour that mum's seeing. I think the contextualisation of the two, of the behaviour is, is very important that it is at home and not school so...

Whilst discussing the importance of relationships an EP draws on her expertise to draw parallels between working with children and her knowledge of therapeutic interventions.

Yeah and it is – it is a massive part isn't it – as they say with any, even adult, therapy, they say it is all about the relationship; that's what – the research says if you've got a relationship between you know client and therapist then that's part of the long journey really.

On other occasions the EP shared their knowledge and expertise about interventions.

Facilitator (EP): You've used Circle of Friends before, haven't you?

Group Member 2: Yes. Yes.

Facilitator (EP): Do you think that would be a useful approach to use with her?

Group Member 2: Yeah, I could.

Facilitator (EP): And you could maybe take, maybe use one or two from the, and mix the group up. One or two of the softer children you talked about, one or two of the more dominant children you talked about.

Group Member 2: Yeah, I could.

Facilitator (EP): Probably, not necessarily the lead here, um, to, to balance the group a little bit with her and not too many, many teachers. And some children who have a little bit of difficulty this way themselves who would be more understanding and empathetic.

#### **4.10.3 Sub-theme 2c: Use of hypothesising**

The EPs supported the ELSAs to develop hypotheses about the children with whom they were working.

When discussing the sudden appearance of an unusual 'tic-like' behaviour the ELSA was supported to gather some 'data' (observations) to explore her hypothesis.

Facilitator (EP): Can you make a note of those times when he does tend to do it and –

Grp Member: Yes, yes.

Facilitator (EP): And also those times he doesn't do it, as well, so you can build up...

Grp Member: But, but, err, yeah, because I, I've not, as I say, this is a very new behaviour and I've not seen this before, I've not –

Facilitator (EP): Do you think it's anxiety...?

Grp Member: I, I think it, I think it's a manifestation of what's going on, um, at, at home and, err, difficulties at home.

The EPs also shared their own hypotheses with the group about the concerns presented.

Facilitator (EP): That was a, sort of, worry of mine. Um, I wondered a little bit about displacement and girls, like, how he was there till four on his own and then this one baby then another baby.

~~~~~

Facilitator (EP): It is pointing towards the ‘parentification’, isn't it; of this little chap who's eight? And how long has been happening since, four years ago when he was four, just starting school?

#### **4.10.4 Sub-theme 2d: Adopting a strengths based approach**

The EPs all appeared to want to cultivate a positive ethos within their groups and this was reflected in their wish to highlight the positive aspects of the ELSAs work.

Right. Is there anybody who would like to share a really positive, um, that's happened in their ELSA work?

~~~~~

Yeah he'll need kind of clear expectations is what you're saying isn't it, in terms of knowing – so it sounds like you've done some good work around finding out which would be a good slot for him to come into –

~~~~~

Group Member: Which was quite a learning curve really and it made – just made life more harmonious.

Facilitator (EP): Fantastic! So you saw real changes with that?

Group Member: Yeah, yeah and their teacher said as well – he was a bit wary and he said, “I don’t know if it’s all going to kind of flare up again when – before SATs you know if they’re going to get a bit stressed and stuff” but they were pretty much okay so...

On occasion this extended to positive comments about the group’s functioning itself.

Grp Member: I think on the whole, from when we first started to now, listening to everybody I think we all seem a lot more positive.

Facilitator (EP): Oh yes, yes.

Grp Member: Yeah, at the beginning we were all like, hmm, but now I think we all seem –

Facilitator (EP): I think there’s a big change. And actually, you’ve had a, so when you speak, “So this is the concern, but I’ve done this about it.”

~~~~~

Facilitator (EP): That’s right, but you also share and help each other, so that’s really good. So just to say if there’s anything differently you’d like to do next year in the way we do our supervision, please let me know and we can shake things up a bit, if you don’t want to go round and you want to just do it a bit more –

#### 4.10.5 Sub-theme 2e: Sharing professional opinion/perspective

There were a number of occasions when the EPs shared their opinions sometimes through a surprised comment based on the ELSAs' actions whilst on other occasions it was based on their understanding of what has been discussed.

Facilitator (EP): Are you seeing his brother as well?

Grp Member: No.

Facilitator: No?

Grp Member: No, because he's always been perceived as being, oh, he's a bit more level-headed, but I'm, I'm, we'll have to see what happens, um, because I'm not so sure. Um, but it is, it is, and yes, I still don't know whether this new child is appearing or not.

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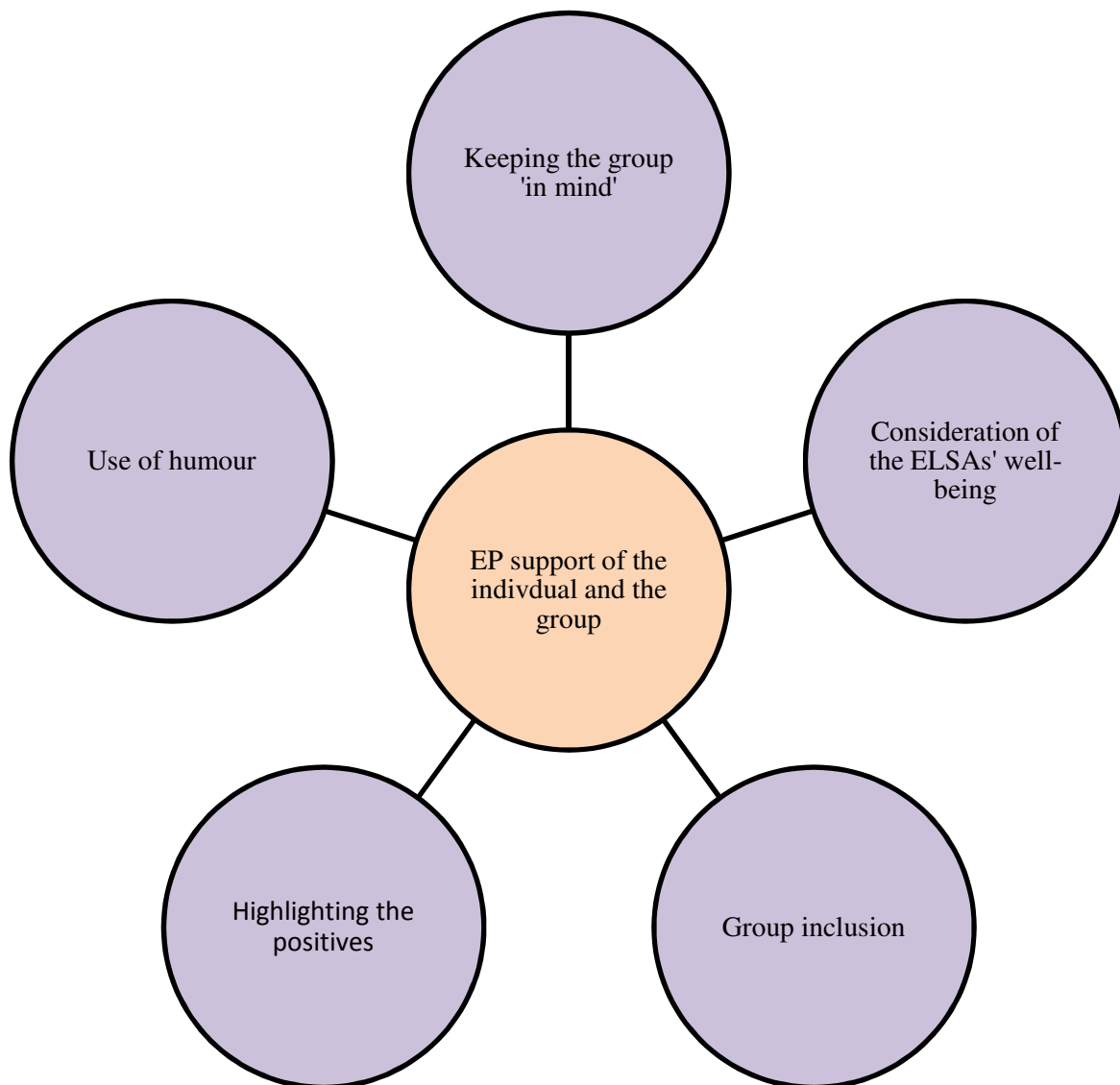
Um, and then you sense mum coming into fight or flight, don't you? And her, her default tends to be fight.

~~~~~



His developmental needs aren't being met then. And so you wonder how much nurture he gets in comparison to the two more vulnerable, more feminine individuals in his family. So there could be a, it could point to a need, a need for intense nurture's coming through quite strongly really. The girls, the, the not wanting to be with girls' element I didn't worry about too much.

#### 4.11 Theme 3: EP support of the individual and the group



#### 4.11.1 Sub-theme 3a: Keeping the group 'in mind'

The EPs demonstrated to the ELSAs that they thought about their needs and their practice both within the sessions and between the sessions thus providing 'containment' for their emotions (see section 5.6).

When an ELSA attempts to avoid an uncomfortable topic – anger management – the EP provides clear boundaries and expectations reminding her of the importance of the topic raised.

Group member: .....it's just obviously I'm going to have to get him comfortable and happy first because he doesn't really know me at all and then it's sort of where to go with him after that but yeah (sighs) so any friendship stuff would be helpful (laughs).

Facilitator (EP): Okay we can – I know you're doing your anger management today... that's important, we'll spend some time thinking about that.

Group Member: Yeah... obviously the anger management also I'll be all ears for that (laughs).....

Following an ELSA's recount of a successful piece of work, the EP makes a link to her previously described transition work; demonstrating care, attention and thoughtful listening and thereby offering 'containment'.

Group member: It was really just nice to see that he's smiling and happy about, you know –

Facilitator (EP): That goes back to your transition work.

Grp Member: Absolutely, have been doing an awful lot of transition work.

The ELSA group was also 'kept in mind' by the EP between sessions.

I've also got the reply from your last, some of you asked some questions last time and I did send it out, but I'm just checking that you got it.

#### **4.11.2 Sub-theme 3b: Consideration of the ELSAs' well-being**

The EPs were keen to ensure that the ELSAs felt supported and confident in their work following supervision which was often coupled with a wish to ensure the ELSAs' emotional well-being.

Facilitator (EP): Yes and you're recognising that there is that summer break so it's – it will be work towards a plan and then you can look at putting that plan in in September really. Yeah, okay... okay is that okay?

Group Member (EP): That's okay yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Yeah? Are you feeling you're okay in the next four weeks or do you want to explore any of that any further?

Group Member: (Sighs) I think until I have a first initial sort of – well maybe couple of weeks with him just to see where he is... just to get to know him really I think, I probably won't know.

~~~~~

... just reflecting on our last session, how quite big the, complex the kind of things we were talking about, because we were talking a lot about bereavement and suicide at that point. So it was just, kind of, checking with you that you were all okay within yourselves as well. Obviously we have these sessions, but if you need any extra support in between those because of these complex cases, both in terms of them being complex but also because of the emotional, they're quite emotionally draining on you as well, so obviously look out for yourselves. But if you need to talk to me in between sessions then please let me know.

#### **4.11.3 Sub-theme 3c: Group inclusion**

The EPs were often keen to widen the discussion to include the group; this was achieved through setting clear expectations within sessions and drawing on the group's knowledge by asking specific questions and requesting their thoughts and contributions.

So we'll go through what those are all about. And, err, and I thought we could have some positive stories from, um, at least two of you, it would be nice to hear. So if anyone's got anything they'd like to share which is positive, that would be great. And then do our normal catch up and see how things are going for each of you. Um, and then also to share any resources, I've got a few over here so please don't let me forget about them, and then any other business from anybody. Does that cover...?

~~~~~

Facilitator (EP): Okay so how can we get to a situation where they might be responding differently?

Group Member: I don't know! (Laughs)

Facilitator (EP): Mm, what are people's thoughts on that?

~~~~~

Anyone else, a hypothesis up the sleeve?

~~~~~

Does anyone else use sand?

#### 4.11.4 Sub-theme 3d: Highlighting the positives

The EPs all appeared to adopt a positive approach to their supervisory role – encouraging ELSAs to recognise the strengths in the children and families and identifying positive elements to their work.

Facilitator (EP): What would you say are his, the main, little strengths in his character?

Group Member 4: Um, I don't, I don't really know because he is such a quiet, little boy, you know. Um, I mean, the last time I had him as, in the class was when he was in reception so... And I haven't really dealt with him that much since till, until now doing ELSAs. And, and, um...

Facilitator (EP): The sense of humour you mentioned earlier?

~~~~~

We'll just end on a positive. Um yeah, something – something which – do you want to go round in a circle or is someone happy to –

The EPs also helped the ELSAs identify the positive aspects to their work when it was challenging.

... you know people have blips, children have blips and it's... it's not necessarily saying that what's happened in your session wasn't the right thing, do you know? It's kind of... yeah...

#### **4.11.5 Sub-theme 3e: Use of humour**

Humour was also used to maintain a positive ethos to the group supervision sessions.

Following a challenging discussion about a child protection case, humour was used to lighten the mood.

Facilitator (EP): So if you'd like to all choose one, first of all, and then we'll go round and see why you've chosen particular toys.

Grp Member: Can I choose one that someone else has chosen as well?

Facilitator (EP): Yes, you may, yes. You'll fight.

Grp Member: Yeah (laughs).

~~~~~

Facilitator (EP): .....The girls, the, the not wanting to be with girls' element I didn't worry about too much.

Group Member 4: No. I think it's a quite normal trait.

Facilitator (EP): It's quite easy to normalise that really.

Group Member 4: Yeah.

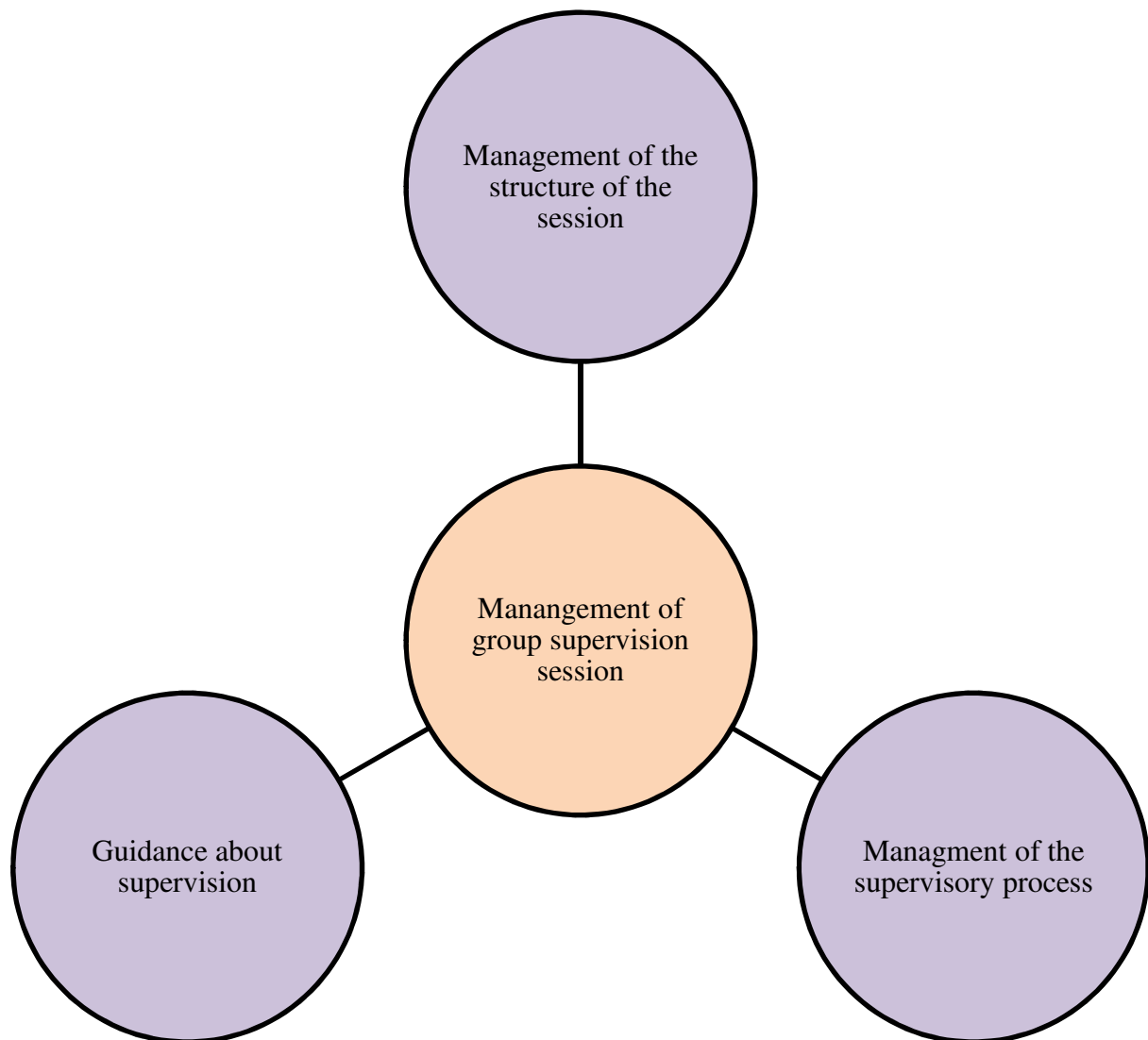
Facilitator (EP): Um, in that, yeah, I think it's the case for a lot of, a lot of

Group Member 4: Boys of that age, yeah.

Facilitator (EP): It'll change, no doubt. (Laughter)



#### 4.12 Theme 4: Management of the group supervision session



##### 4.12.1 Sub-theme 4a: Management of the structure of the session

The EPs structured the session, often setting the agenda to the session at the beginning and taking the lead for the various parts of the session.

Lovely, Okay so what we will do is um do it as we would normally, so it would be exactly the same session as we would normally do, so I'll go through um some business, we'll do some dates for the Autumn term and venues um and then we will do a check in and um have some time to problem solve perhaps one or two areas that come up within that and um then as we agreed, we're on to day three of our resource share now (laughs) so day three is anger management.....Okay that's the plan, is that all all right? Is that - ?

~~~~~

So... in the last bits of today um I brought some bits around anger management and day three in particular and then um we'll do kind of a bit of a round of celebrations as well as it's our last one of the year (laughs).

#### **4.12.2 Sub-theme 4b: Management of the supervisory process**

On occasion, the EPs provided the ELSAs with a choice of different supervisory processes through which they could consider their work.

Okay, shall we make a start then? Shall we do circle of friends, or gossip in the presence of? What do you feel like doing? Where one person speaks for six minutes and we all talk about it and come up with... I've got an idea. Why don't we do circle of friends for one and gossip in the presence for another?

~~~~~

...Okay. So as usual we've got what's happening now. We'll have a description of what's going on, then we'll, we'll tease out issues around relationships, adult and peer relationships. We'll look at organisational factors that are helping or hindering the situation. We'll try and come up with some, some hypotheses of what we think is happening. And we will have, um, hopefully, some strategies coming through that relate to that.

#### **4.12.3 Sub-theme 4c: Guidance about supervision**

The EPs took opportunities to educate and remind the ELSAs about the purpose of their shared task emphasising that the supervision is a two-way process and that they have a responsibility to bring material to discuss and take the time to think about what they need from the session. There were also opportunities to recognise their progress in using the supervision sessions.

Okay, so we use these to think about, about how you're feeling, just a way of illustrating what you're thinking, how you're feeling today. And also to begin to think about what you want to bring today and what you hope to get out of today. Okay?

Who would like to start?

~~~~~

Facilitator (EP): And remember, when we, when you, when you've told us the story we will then talk about it in your presence. (Laughter) You have to be quiet.

(Laughter) And then it'll come back to you.

Group Member 4: Okay.

Facilitator (EP): And you pull out the strands that you think are helpful to you. Okay?

Group Member 4: Okay. All right. Um.

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Grp Member: I think on the whole, from when we first started to now, listening to everybody I think we all seem a lot more positive.

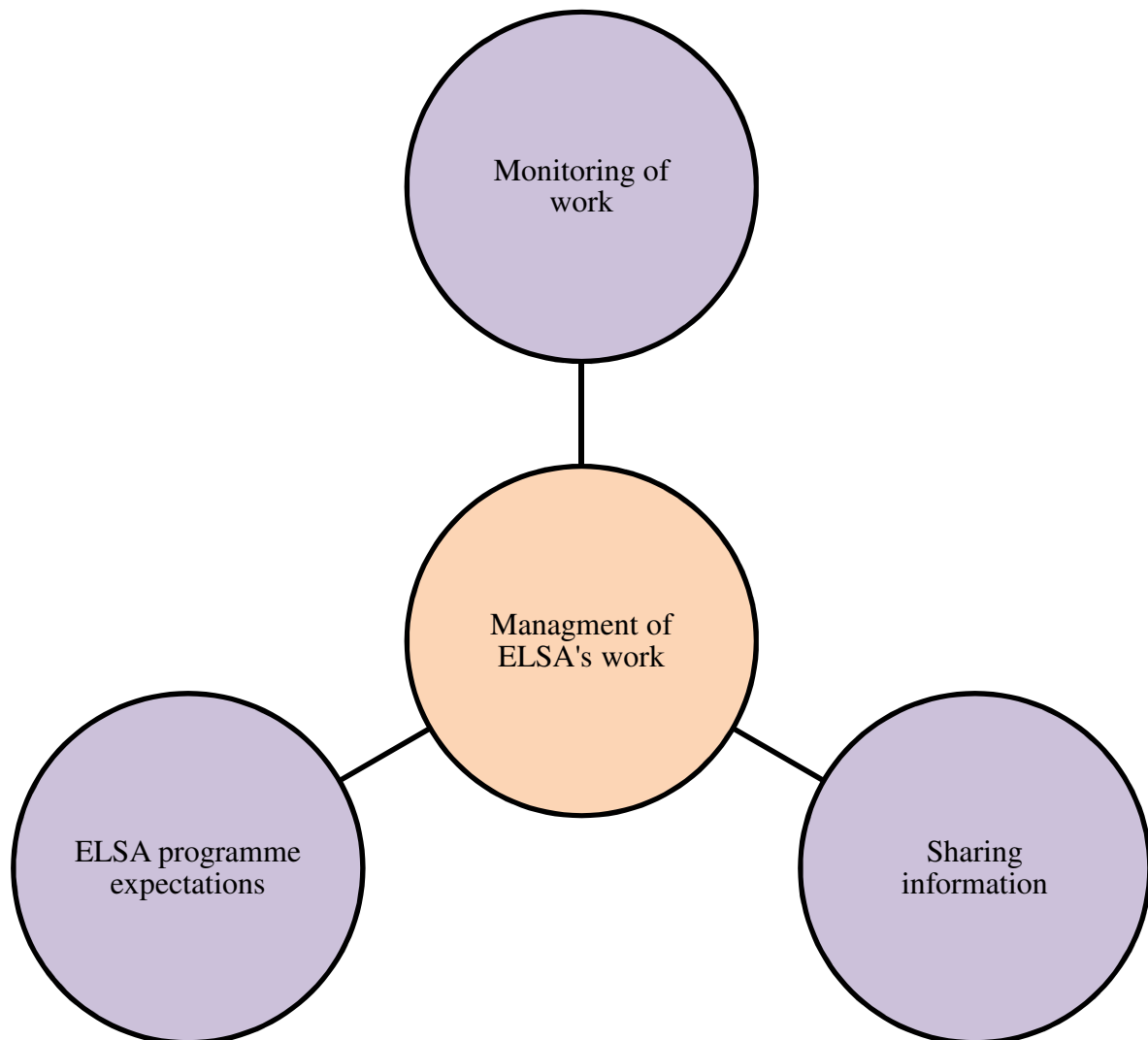
Facilitator (EP): Oh yes, yes.

Grp Member: Yeah, at the beginning we were all like, hmm, but now I think we all seem –

Facilitator: I think there's a big change. And actually, you've had a, so when you speak, "So this is the concern, but I've done this about it."

Facilitator (EP): That's right, but you also share and help each other, so that's really good. So just to say if there's anything differently you'd like to do next year in the way we do our supervision, please let me know and we can shake things up a bit, if you don't want to go round and you want to just do it a bit more –

### 4.13 Theme 5: Management of the ELSAs' work



#### 4.13.1 Sub-theme 5a: Monitoring of work

The monitoring of the ELSAs work occurred throughout the sessions and often took the form of questions clarifying decision taken or judgements made.

So is that where you're going to support?

~~~~~

Oh, okay. And how is he?

~~~~~

So that's the plan then?

~~~~~

Facilitator (EP): And presumably there was a child protection issue?

Grp Member: Hmm.

Facilitator (EP): So you've...

Grp Member: I mean, that's on-going, I think. Um -

Facilitator (EP): With what they said to you as well though?

Grp Member: But they, what they've said today, yeah, um, it -

Facilitator (EP): Not that you had to tell her but just to make you feel happy.

Grp Member: Yeah, yeah. I've passed it on to our head teacher -

Facilitator (EP): She's dealing with that, okay.

#### **4.13.2 Sub-theme 5b: Sharing information**

The EPs also shared information and resources that they felt might be helpful to the ELSAs.

So the other bit, um just in terms of business – “business” – is that there's a really helpful website that we've been told about.

~~~~~

...Um, what I did bring as well, I just photocopied the information we've got in our office about supporting children who have been bereaved by suicide.

#### **4.13.3 Sub-theme 5c: ELSA programme expectations**

Throughout the sessions, the ELSAs were reminded about their initial training, the boundaries to their role and the expectations of the interventions they carry out. This was used to shape their discussions and the work.

Okay... so in terms of the day three, mostly in – on the training, you'll remember it was around the sort of fireworks model, yeah? Does that ring a bell? Is that something that you use in - ? How did you use that?

~~~~~

So I think could you feed that to the SENCo that you know this is – this is the kind of time limits and what I hope to do before summer is... and then is he someone you think you could carry on with after the summer?

~~~~~

It sounds like you were sticking to the, sort of, time bonded nature of the, of the ELSA model?

These findings will now be considered within the context of this research in the discussion section.



## Chapter 5 – Discussion

### 5.1 Introduction

The aim of this research was to consider what was ‘really going on’ within the ELSA group supervision sessions with a desire to move away from survey/interview based approaches involving the use of questionnaires which inevitably rely upon participants being able to recognise and accurately report what is ‘going on’ within a group supervision session. Group processes necessarily involve a complex set of interpersonal interactions involving a number of participants and the complexity of this process is recognised in the previously highlighted writings on group supervision (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012; Proctor, 2008). Whilst many of these interactions take place at a conscious level it is also recognised that there is an unconscious, intersubjective dimension to these interactions. Intersubjectivity refers to the connections between two people at a basic psychological level and Brown (2011, p.3) suggests that ‘intersubjectivity is based upon, and is largely comprised of, processes that are a constant unconscious companion to what is occurring on a conscious level.’ There are many different ways of understanding what is meant by ‘the unconscious’ and it is beyond the scope of this work to explore them here. Nonetheless, a helpful, process-orientated definition is provided by Bargh and Morsella (2008, p.8) who suggest that ‘unconscious processes are defined in terms of their unintentional nature and the inherent lack of awareness is of the *influence and effect* of the triggering stimuli and *not* of the triggering stimuli (because nearly all naturally occurring stimuli are supraliminal)’ [emphasis added].

As was noted earlier in section 3.3, the acknowledgement of unconscious means that participants can never be *fully* cognisant of the processes that occur within a group

supervision session and therefore, all the participants of such an endeavour (including the supervisor/facilitator) can only ever partially know what is going on. Whilst it is recognised that other theoretical perspectives can be used to explore group processes, a psychodynamic perspective was used because the analysis of the data within this research was indicative of the presence of unconscious group processes as well as psychodynamic psychology being one of the researcher's own theoretical frames of reference. This led to the use of Bion's work on groups (1961) to shine a light on, and further understand the unconscious processes that occurred within these group supervision sessions. It also provided a further opportunity to explore the application of psychodynamic theory within the field of educational psychology which, to date, has been quite limited (Hulusi and Maggs, 2015; Pellegrini, 2010).

The thematic analysis in this research identified a number of themes/sub-themes within the data which covered a wide range of content which was multi-dimensional in nature. The research question was purposefully broad because the stance taken was one of curiosity (hence its exploratory nature) and whilst all the themes have been thought about, the limits of this work prevent all them to be considered in detail. The researcher's interpretation within the data analysis indicated two key areas that needed to be addressed – the process through which the developmental function of supervision takes place and the need to further understand the group dynamics, particularly the unconscious process that occur within them. A further aim of this research, in keeping with its exploratory nature, was to generate some more specific areas of research that could be addressed in the future.

This chapter therefore highlights the main themes identified within this research and considers them in light of the previous research, the functions of supervision and within the context of the models of group supervision outlined in the introduction. Further consideration

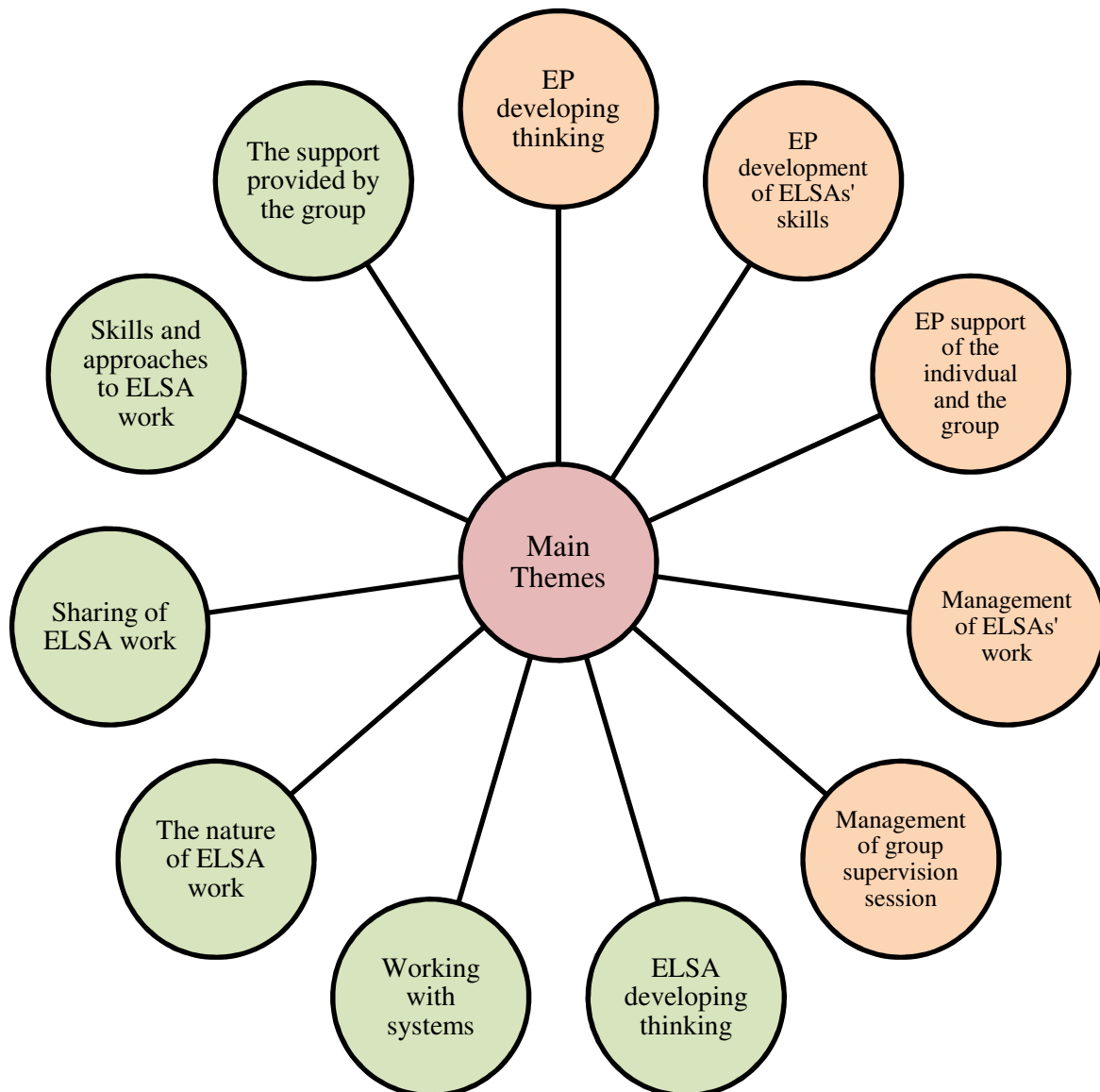
of the themes centring on the developmental function of supervision is made by considering the experiential learning process (Kolb, 1984) and how this might be helpful to further develop the ELSA supervision groups. The importance of understanding unconscious group processes is also considered in the light of Bion's work on groups (1961).

## **5.2 The combined ELSA and EP themes**

The diagram overleaf shows the combined main themes taken from the ELSA and EP themes. This provides an overall summary of the themes identified within the ELSA group supervision sessions.

**Figure 1.5** The combined main themes taken from the ELSA and EP themes.

The ELSA themes are shown in green and the EP themes are shown in orange.



### 5.3 The main themes and the functions of supervision

The main themes identified across both the ELSA and EP data sets have been considered within the framework of Hawkins and Smith's functions of supervision – developmental, resourcing and qualitative (Hawkins and Smith, 2006, p.151). Each theme has been identified as fulfilling one of the functions of supervision, shown in the table below. It should be noted that it is recognised that each theme does not necessarily exclusively serve a single function and that there is inevitable overlap between the themes within such a complex process. The function of each theme was determined by what was considered to be their *primary* function.

**Table 2** The functions of the combined ELSA (shown in green) and EP themes (shown in orange)

The functions of supervision	The combined ELSA and EP main theme
<p>Developmental</p> <p>The development of skills, understanding and the capacity of the supervisees through reflection on their work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● ELSA developing thinking</li> <li>● Skills and approaches to ELSA work</li> <li>● Sharing of ELSA work</li> <li>● Working with systems</li> <li>● EP developing thinking</li> <li>● EP development of ELSAs' skills</li> </ul>
<p>Resourcing</p> <p>Explores the way in which workers respond to the emotional impact of their work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The support provided by the group</li> <li>● EP support of the individual and the group</li> </ul>
<p>Qualitative</p> <p>Provide 'quality control' of the work being carried out; this may include ensuring that ethical standards are maintained</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The nature of ELSA work</li> <li>● Management of ELSAs' work</li> <li>● Management of group supervision session</li> </ul>

It is evident from the content of the themes that much of what was going on in the ELSA group supervision sessions focussed on the development of the ELSAs' skills and their understanding of casework. This was primarily achieved through a process of reflection on their work within their group supervision sessions. The themes also indicated that the ELSAs were supported to do this by the provision of emotional support as suggested by the 'resourcing' function. It is also recognised that the EPs have a managerial role both in terms of the work being carried out by ELSAs within school and in ensuring that the group supervision sessions run effectively and meet the needs of their members; this is reflected by the themes alongside the 'qualitative' function.

Overall, this pattern of support offered by the supervision groups dovetails with the key purposes of ELSA supervision (see section 1.4.3) which are to ensure that it 'provides opportunity for reflective practice, supportive challenge and personal support' (ELSA Network, 2016).

Table 2 suggests that a key function of the ELSA group supervision sessions is one of 'development' – of understanding, thinking and skills - and therefore it is important to consider the process by which this development takes place. One such way of understanding this is to consider the role of experiential learning within supervision.

#### **5.4 The role of experiential learning within supervision**

It is proposed that if the developmental function within the group supervision of ELSAs is at its core, and that this is achieved through a process of reflection about their work, then experiential learning can be considered to be central to the process.

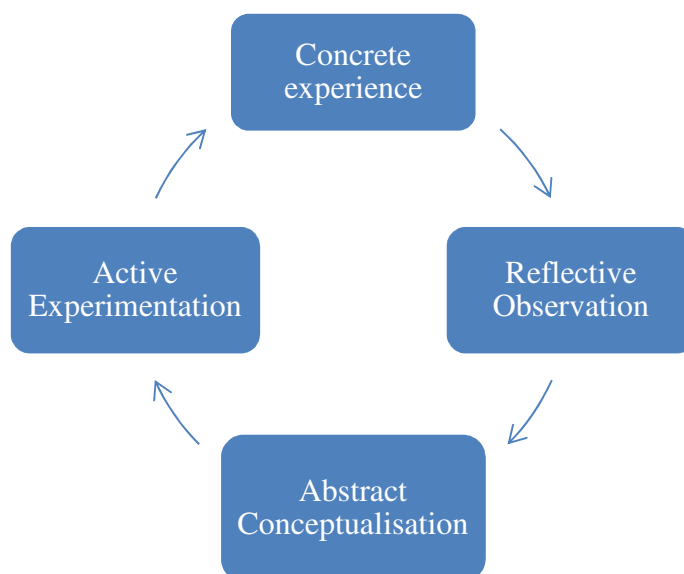
Carroll (2014, p.16) suggested the following with regard to supervision:

‘The process is clear: the experiential learning cycle becomes the journey through which reflection on past work leads to new learning that is integrated into future practice.’

#### 5.4.1 Kolb’s Experiential Learning Theory

Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning theory emphasises the importance of experience within the learning process. Such a theoretical perspective has clear links to the supervisory process and to this research, not only in terms of the experiences that ELSAs bring to supervision, but also the experience of the supervision group itself. Kolb suggested that ‘learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience’ (1984, p. 38).

**Figure 1.6** Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle (1984)



#### 5.4.2 Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (1984) and links to ELSA group supervision

Within Kolb's model, learning is an active process, one in which the individual is involved – they must have some 'concrete experience' on which to base their learning. Within the ELSA programme, it is expected that the ELSAs attending supervision have current active involvement in ELSA work which enables them to come to their supervision sessions with relevant 'concrete experience'.

This experience is then reviewed by the individual with the help of group members. In the context of this research this is achieved through the ELSA's supervision groups which allow for 'reflective observation'. This is at the heart of the group supervision process and, along with the questioning techniques used by the EPs, approaches such as the 'Circles of Adults' (Newton, 1995) and 'gossiping in the presence of' (Penn, 1982, p.274)<sup>4</sup>, is used to encourage the ELSAs to reflect on their thinking and choices within their work and to identify future directions. This process is evident in the themes that fall within the developmental function of supervision (Hawkins and Smith op.cit.). These can be seen in Table 2 above and are reported in the Chapter 4.

Kolb's process then provides opportunities for participants to make sense of these reflections – 'abstract conceptualisation' - linking them to the individuals' experiences and encouraging interpretations and an understanding of the experiences to develop. This process takes place within the ELSA supervision groups and helps to inform the outcomes to their discussions.

This stage can also provide opportunities for participants to draw on different theoretical

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<sup>4</sup> 'gossiping in the presence of' - an approach borrowed from family therapy in which members of a family are asked to comment on the relationship between others within the family unit whilst they are present and listening, but not joining in, with the conversation (Penn, 1982, p.274).



perspectives to understand their work. The themes identified in this research do not highlight the use of theoretical frameworks to support and develop their understanding and thinking. This could be explained by the fact that the majority of ELSAs appear to have limited pedagogical and psychological knowledge due to the fact that they work (or previously worked) as learning support staff within schools and traditionally are not required to have any formal professional training or qualifications prior to their employment. However, all the ELSAs were introduced to some psychological theories within both their initial training and some have continued to develop their theoretical knowledge through accessing continuing professional development training courses. It is also possible that ELSAs may also have other knowledge and background experiences that allow them to bring further knowledge in these areas to the group. Therefore, with the ELSAs' limited access to pedagogical knowledge and psychological theory, it would be expected that this be primarily highlighted, teased out and provided by the EPs. However, this was not really in evidence within the themes identified within this research, although very occasional references to a theoretical perspective were made by group members these tended to be oblique references which were not explicitly named and elaborated upon. The following two examples from the data set illustrate this point.

#### Example 1:

The EP draws together a number of different 'threads' that have been discussed and suggests a potential hypothesis for the group to consider about the impact of these 'threads' on the child's self-esteem. On this occasion the EP missed an opportunity to support the ELSAs understanding by explicitly relating this hypothesis to a psychological theory of self-esteem,

for example, that of Borba (1989) – a model that the ELSAs were introduced to in their initial training.

Facilitator (EP): Okay, so we've got... Let's, let's, let's, let's try and think through what the, kind of, threads and what hypotheses are coming through. So we've got one around parental view being quite negative, to actually be heard to be saying that, that may, that maybe could be seen as being quite a negative view. And if, and if the parent has quite a negative of the, of the girl and her abilities and she tends to speak a lot around the child, um, I'm wondering about, er, the impact of that on her identity and her self-esteem. And if her big sister doesn't struggle quite so much with life, especially the social aspects of life, which are really important, um, I'm wondering about her self-esteem so, and her self-identity. So I have, I have, I have a little hypothesis there that could, that could be an area of difficulty.

#### Example 2:

This example was provided by an ELSA who referred to 'defence mechanisms' and 'resilience' within her work. These concepts were not identified or further explored by the EP or the group members to support and develop her, and the group's understanding of the work.

Group member: And then there was something we were doing – it was a good few weeks ago now and the sessions that we'd done, we were talking about his defence mechanisms and about resilience and not having very much resilience and he totally got it!

Further research will be needed given that this research was exploratory in nature and used a small sample of ELSA group supervision sessions because it may be the case that the use of pedagogy and psychological theory is more widespread within other ELSA group supervision sessions.

The last stage of Kolb's cycle involves 'active experimentation' and is concerned with the individual putting their learning into practice and considering how this can be achieved. This area was addressed in the ELSA group supervision sessions - the 'Outcomes of ELSA work' was one of the sub-themes within the main ELSA theme of 'The nature of ELSA work' (see Section 4.2.3 for further details). The EPs supported the ELSAs to identify the next steps and to feel confident that they had planned a way forward in their work.

Whilst it is evident from the identified themes that experiential learning was taking place within the ELSA group supervision sessions it did not follow a specific, structured process which explicitly acknowledged the process. This may be a helpful development for the ELSAs within their sessions and provide the EPs with a shared structure to achieve the espoused goals of ELSA supervision and one such approach will be considered next.

#### **5.4.3 Operationalising Kolb's experiential learning cycle – the potential use of ORID**

Marsick and Maltbia (2009, p.160) operationalised Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984) by developing a framework that focusses on the different stages of the experiential learning process. ORID (Objective, Reflective, Interpretative and Decisive Data) provides 'a sequence of questioning and sometimes of listening in order to classify questions or comments that may not be adequately grounded in objective data.' (Marsick and Maltbia, 2009, p.164). This

supports the experiential learning process and Carroll (2014, p.125) further augmented the ORID framework by adding an ‘integrative’ stage to the process which focusses on what has been *learned* by the participant.

**Table 3**

The ORID model of experiential learning (Marsick and Maltbia, 2009)

ELC*	Process	Focus	Method
Action	Objective	What happened? What is happening?	Observe facts, events. Notice, give attention.
Reflection	Reflective	What am I feeling? What is my reaction?	Monitor and articulate reactions.
Reflection	Interpretative	What does it mean?	Utilise critical thinking.
Learning	Integrative	What have I learned?	Assimilate into new learning.
Application	Decisive	What do I do?	Implement decisions.

\* Experiential Learning Conversation

(Taken from Carroll, 2014, p.125)

A process such as that outlined in the ORID model may support ELSAs develop their thinking and learning within group supervision. The identification of the themes within this research highlights a high degree of congruence with many of the elements contained within the ORID framework and it is proposed that it is also within the overall ethos and guiding principles of the group supervision offered to ELSAs. Use of the ORID framework would enable ELSAs to be more explicitly aware of the process of supervision and help them to structure their thinking. This may be particularly valuable because most ELSAs do not have formal clinical or therapeutic training and are therefore unlikely to be familiar with the concept of professional supervision.

This type of experiential learning would appear to be central to the processes within the group supervision for ELSAs. Hawkins and Shohet’s seven-eyed model of supervision (2012,

p.87), outlined in chapter 2 (section 2.3.2), allows for the incorporation of an experiential learning model such as ORID. The seven-eyed model of supervision model proposed two interlocking systems in the supervisory process – the client-supervisee matrix and the supervisee-supervisor matrix. The former has a focus on material brought to supervision by the supervisee i.e. the ‘experience’ of their work whilst the latter focusses on the supervisee/supervisor relationship including the ‘here and now’<sup>5</sup> experiences of the supervisory process. The use of a framework focusing on experiential learning more easily fulfils the requirements within the client-supervisee matrix and therefore would require the facilitator of a supervision group to guide and challenge group members to consider the ‘here and now’ experiences of the supervisory process through reflection on group processes. Bion’s work on groups (1961) provides a theoretical perspective through which this can be achieved and he suggested that an understanding and interpretation of group processes is fundamental if a group is to function well and achieve its goals. This would require both a developed understanding of such processes and a greater focus on the supervisee-supervisor matrix within a group context.

### **5.5 The importance of unconscious group processes and the work of Bion (1961)**

The quality and development of the supervisory relationship has always been of significant interest to researchers (Carroll, 2014, p.42) and consideration of the relationships and interactions within groups carrying out supervision is similarly important and arguably more complex given the number of people involved in the process and the complexity of group interactions. The themes identified within this research suggested that the ELSAs were

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<sup>5</sup> The concept of the ‘here and now’ is drawn from the Gestalt school of thought and refers to a focus on understanding a person’s current situation as they experience it at that moment – in the present, or the ‘here and now’.

primarily supported to understand the emotional impact of their work through these group processes. However, it appeared that the support being offered by the EPs was not really taking account of one important aspect of group dynamics, that of the unconscious processes that occur within groups. The need to understand and work with a group's dynamics as part of the supervisory process is well documented (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.189; Page and Wosket, 2001, p.171; Scaife, 2009, p.158) and this will be considered next, from a psychodynamic perspective, by considering Bion's work on groups (1961).

### **5.5.1 Bion's conceptualisation of the functioning of groups (1961)**

Bion suggested that groups operate at two levels (Miller, 1998, p.41). At one level, a group comes together for a conscious and specific purpose or 'primary task' - to access ELSA group supervision sessions to explore their work – and they operate on the basis of rationality and involve a significant psychological investment on the part of the group members. He described this as being the 'work group' giving it the label of 'W'. The ELSA supervision group's primary (conscious) task is clearly evident through the identification of the themes within this research and their distribution between the functions of supervision identified by Hawkins and Smith (op.cit.). The previous sections exploring experiential learning suggests ways in which this primary task could be developed to further enrich the group members' understanding and practice.

At the other level – an unconscious one – Bion suggested that groups work with a complex web of individual emotional states that underpin the group members' actions and he conceptualised this as the group's mentality.

I shall postulate group mentality as the pool to which the impulses and desires implicit in these contributions are gratified (Bion, 1961, p.50)

The fact that this occurs at an unconscious level means that the individuals within the group and/or the group itself are likely to be unaware of the processes that are occurring. The responsibility for recognising, understanding and interpreting such phenomena therefore falls to the facilitator of the group. Within this research, the identified themes, or rather the lack of themes identifying and exploring unconscious processes and the paucity of challenge towards individual and group expressions of them, suggest that these unconscious processes were left predominantly untouched by the group members and the EPs. It is the functioning of the ELSA supervision groups at this second, unconscious, level that will be further explored in the next section.

### **5.5.2 The ELSA group functioning**

In his early reflections about groups, Bion (1961, p.39) noted the following.

Judged by ordinary standards of social intercourse, the performance of the group is almost devoid of intellectual content.

Furthermore, if we note how assumptions pass unchallenged as statements of fact, and are accepted as such, it seems clear that critical judgement is almost entirely absent.

The following excerpts from the data set collected in this research appear to exemplify Bion's reflections. Although much of the discussion appeared to be focussed on the primary task i.e.

developing an understanding of the child's needs and identifying ways forward with regard to ELSA intervention, a more critical stance might suggest that large sections of the discussions could be described as being rather mundane and, on occasion, almost inane with many assumptions remaining unchallenged.

Group Member: Yeah but we also have a change in behaviour, having worked with that class and done ELSA sessions with a few of them in that class and now being lunch time staff, the other thing that's been quite interesting is that – the change in the way – you know the way that they'll treat – not the way that they treat me so much but if you're in class and you tell someone that they need to behave or that they need to get that task finished or something then it's generally taken maybe that you tell them again and then you know they get on with it. Um but outside, if you tell them, "Could you please get down off that fence" or whatever, they'll just kind of laugh – they'll just turn round and sort of laugh at you. So there's this kind of whole disrespect really if you like and I have actually said – I've said to them, "I don't get why you act like this in the classroom and now you're outside and you're like that".

Group Member: Mm.

Group Member: And that comes from boys – that's boys isn't it?

Group Member: Mm.

Facilitator (EP): And what do you think that could be about?



Group Member: Testing boundaries possibly?

Group Member: Possibly... I think there's an element of sort of... like a sexism type of thing as well going on because they will – I mean they have a male teacher don't they and they will – they will do as they're told and then outside when it's lunchtime staff. I mean they've even said things – they've said to (name) haven't they – they've said, "You don't work here properly", you know things like that.

Facilitator (EP): Okay, so you're not noticing a difference to you, you're noticing a difference - ?

Group Member: Well to her they just kind of skip off don't they and have a laugh and often go and do it again and they can even know that you're watching them and they're sort of, "What?"

Group Member: "What have I done now?" (Laughter).

Group Member: It's attitude isn't it?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay yeah, so there's a shift in terms of how they might respond to requests in class than in lunchtime?

Group Member: Yeah but then maybe that is boundaries again because you've just gone, "Whoa! Here's a really big boundary! Here's a really loose boundary, it goes all the way round to the fence (laughs) go!"

Group Member: Well we have a child in Year 2 that can't cope as soon as he goes out at lunchtimes.

Facilitator (EP): Okay and it can be you know a real – it's another unstructured time isn't it –

Group Member: Yeah it's too long for him as well.

Facilitator: - yes unsettling and it's again how – how you develop their skills in that situation to manage that change and to put those expectations in and the boundaries around that.

Group Member: Mm. This one goes off in a strop and climbs a tree (laughs). Hides in a bush!

Facilitator: Okay –

Group Member: I'd be quite tempted actually to just sit near the bush.

Group Member: I just let him stay there and watch him from the corner and then at 12.55pm just go up to him and say, “Come on it’s time to go in now” and he’ll come in. Because actually I work with him in the class as well.

Group Member: Get out of the tree!

Group Member: I can imagine you doing that one as well! (Laughter)

Facilitator: Okay, we’re out of time! Oh my goodness (laughs) – that hour has disappeared and um so um (name) you want – you have the child that you wanted to explore and then (name) looking at friendship skills –

As if confirming that the conversation was moving away from being helpful it was abruptly stopped by the EP on the basis that the time had run out. There were a number of missed opportunities to address unconscious psychological processes such as exploring the ELSA’s understanding and feelings about the relationships she has with children in the school including a recognition of her denial that she was perhaps speaking of herself – ‘not the way that they treat me so much...’. The thorny issue of gender stereotyping was largely ignored and left unchallenged along with an apparent latent anger about the children’s ‘disrespectful’ behaviour’. The group then rallied round to support the beliefs and position of the presenting ELSA – ‘It’s attitude isn’t it?’; ‘Yeah’ – before a group member made comments about ‘loose boundaries’ which was perhaps reflective of the ELSA group’s functioning itself and is arguably unconsciously (and fleetingly) acknowledged by the EP – ‘yes unsettling..’ before it was quickly brought back to the more rational ‘primary task’ with attempts to address the child’s needs by talking about developing skills, which were largely ignored by the group.

The parallels in the next comment about the child being in a 'strop' and hiding in a bush suggested a possible frustration being unconsciously expressed by the ELSA at her needs not being addressed and the EP 'hiding' from her responsibilities which provoked other group members to suggest alternative courses of action perhaps alluding to what they might have hoped the EP would do - to 'sit' with the uncomfortable feelings, or to ask about them, or demand that they are spoken about. At that point the EP appeared to become overwhelmed and unsure of what action to take having had the control of the conversation taken away from her by the group members and she quickly reclaimed the mantle by drawing the conversation to an abrupt close.

The following excerpt gained no comment from any of the group members despite being unusual in content. There was no challenge at all to the assumption/belief that hair colour could explain a child's emotional and behavioural presentation. It is perhaps an example of 'pairing' within a group which will be discussed in the next section.

Grp Member: We met her, (name) and I trapped her yesterday. She came into, she came into, err, because we had a performance, didn't we, of Glee. And, um, there was a little girl that came in a little bit, well, she's not so little, is she?

Grp Member: Oh no, she's not.

Grp Member: She's quite a strong little thing. And she came in –

Grp Member: Oh yeah, about as tall as me, yeah.

Grp Member: Yeah, yeah. So anyway, (name) and I were, sort of, sat together and, um, (name) came in, I don't know her first name, but she was there when my daughter was there. And, um, another teacher or LSA came in and, um, a bit later on with this girl and sat her down. And I went, "I know who that," I mean, I've never seen her before –

Grp Member: No, but you can tell straight away, can't you?

Grp Member: Hair colour is a giveaway.

Grp Member: Yeah, you can just tell straight away.

Grp Member: Dead giveaway. And, err, so I said to (name), I went, "Ah, clocked her (laughs)." So yeah, I need to talk to you anyway about.

Bion (1961, p.39) inferred from his experiences of groups that,

'Whatever it may appear on the surface, that situation is charged with emotions which exert a powerful, and frequently unobserved, influence on the individual. As a result, his emotions are stirred to the detriment of his judgement.'

As illustrated through these excerpts, the challenge of understanding what is occurring within a group at an unconscious level is crucial in enabling the group to work towards their stated aim. The first step is for group members, particularly the EP, to have an understanding of the influential, unconscious psychological influences within groups that impact on the ability of

the group to fulfil the 'primary task'. Bion (1961) described this as a group's basic assumption mentality.

### **5.5.3 Bion's (1961) basic assumptions**

Bion (1961) identified three basic assumptions that unconsciously hold groups together.

#### Basic assumption dependency (baD)

In dependency the group behaves as if it expects to be fed and nurtured by an omnipotent and omniscient leader (Miller, 1998, p.41)

At the forefront of this group's need is the requirement for its members to have their needs fulfilled. Therefore, 'The leader is expected to look after, protect and sustain the members of the group, to make them feel good, and not to face them with the demands of the group's real purpose' (Stokes, 1994, p.21). The overreliance on the leader stifles and inhibits the potential of the group, and the individuals within it, to develop.

#### Basic assumption fight-flight (baF)

This group is preoccupied by the potential of an external danger or threat, the response to which will be either fight or flight. The group tends to focus on preparing their response to such a threat and in so doing avoids the primary work task of the group.

### Basic assumption pairing (baP)

BaP is based on the collective and unconscious belief that, whatever the actual problems and needs of the group, a future event will solve them. (Stokes, 1994, p.21)

Two members of the group – a pairing – become the focus and work towards this future event. There is little consideration for the current situation but a continual focus for what might be possible.

The group is focused entirely on the future, but as a defence against the difficulties of the present (Stokes, 1994, p.21)

The group's interests can become heavily invested in the pairing.

Bion argued that one of these three basic assumptions is always present within a group whilst also recognising that a group's functioning can change between the basic assumptions as conditions change. Although the unconscious needs of a group (and the individuals within it) more often than not, hinder the work of the group, he also recognised that, at times, the basic assumption of the group can support the primary task and therefore be helpful to the group's goals. Whatever the position, the facilitator of the group needs to recognise the basic assumption that is operating within a group in order to be able to make interpretations which need to be provided for the group so that it is helpful in supporting them to fulfil their needs.

#### 5.5.4 The prevailing basic assumption within the ELSA supervision groups

It is proposed that baD (basic assumption dependency) was often evident within the groups that generated the data set for this research. This will be illustrated through the following excerpts from the data set. It should be recognised that whilst it is proposed that baD is the prevailing basic assumption within these groups there is, as with many concepts, a continuum to the degree in which the assumption manifests itself.

In the following excerpt, the facilitator starts the session by explicitly drawing in a member of the group whilst at the same time excluding the researcher from the circle giving a clear message to the group about her power and authority and ability to keep the group safe from the ‘intruder’ – much as a parent keeps their children safe. Bion (1961, p.74) suggested that within baD there can be a feeling that the facilitator of the group ‘is some kind of parent’ which can engender both feelings of relief and resentment. The parental role continues as the facilitator (EP) gathers all the members of the group together and clearly sets out the agenda for the session reminding the group that the session is ‘exactly’ as they would ‘normally do’ (in much the same way as a parent might provide clear expectations for a child with little room for divergence or debate), giving a number of directions and a clear indication that timings within the agenda will be managed by her.

Facilitator (EP): Phones (laughs). (ELSA name) come and join again – we’re going to exclude (name of researcher) from our circle! (Laughs)

Facilitator (EP): Gather in. It feels funny doesn’t it? Okay right so welcome everyone. This is our group today – slightly smaller than normal but um it’s quite good in terms



of timing as well because um we haven't got as long. Is everyone okay until 3pm today?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Lovely, okay so what we will do is um do it as we would normally, so it would be exactly the same session as we would normally do, so I'll go through um some business, we'll do some dates for the Autumn term and venues um and then we will do a check in and um have some time to problem solve perhaps one or two areas that come up within that and um then as we agreed, we're on to day three of our resource share now (laughs) so day three is anger management. So I've just brought along some bits and I've seen that (name) has got a little thing and I notice that (name) has (problems?) in her so – oh fantastic brilliant. So we'll – I'll make sure that I leave some time for that and um I thought it would be nice to end with some celebrations as well, so just a round of something that you're pleased with that's happened this year. Okay that's the plan, is that all all right? Is that - ?

The dependency is also reflected by the group members; having run out of ideas a group member states clearly that she is looking to the EP to further equip her with more strategies so that she can address a child's anger management (indicated by italics).

Group Member: Yeah I am working through this stuff in the file and looking after her but I'm kind of running out of ideas a bit now (laughs) I have to say! *So I will be interested to see what you say later on.* But yeah so – friendship – probably need

some more guidance with that and the anger management – any extras (laughs) you may have... apart from that fine (laughs).

Although the baD within the group is not explicitly addressed at any point during the session the following excerpt is indicative of its presence. During a conversation about a boy's behaviour the group strayed into talking about the impact of strangers on groups and the unsettling feelings that accompany such a presence – perhaps an unconscious reference to the little acknowledged 'stranger' (the researcher) present in their own group supervision session. The facilitator recognised the 'power of emotions' and the possibility of 'conflicts' within the children being discussed but did not take the discussion further to explore what this might have meant for the individuals within the group and/or the group itself. Instead the discussion turned to thinking about how children could be supported to prepare for unfamiliar teachers and thus returned to the 'primary task' perhaps as a defence against such difficult thoughts. It may have been helpful at this point for the EP to have drawn the parallels between what was happening in the scenario being described by the ELSA and what was happening within the supervision session itself (the 'here and now' experiences mentioned in section 5.4.3). This would potentially help the group determine whose anxieties were being explored – those of the child or those of the presenting ELSA/group members.

Facilitator (EP): So do you think that he thought that the visitor was kind of out to get him or pick on him or something - ?

Group Member: Nothing even to do with him, it was just a visitor that had come from one of the children's schools, it wasn't any – you know an official person or anything, it was just...

Group Member: So it doesn't even need to be – have to be that personal, just that it's -

Group Member: No, just that it's somebody – it was a different face.

Group Member: So potentially it could be moving the furniture around to some degree?

Group Member: Yeah, absolutely, yeah, yeah because it's about the routine and – yeah, yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Unsettled and yeah it's those emotions like –

Group Member: That was classic this morning because like the last sort of four weeks he's been really settled and absolutely fine but just...

Facilitator (EP): And if you think about the power of emotions on how you might behave then you know like you were saying in your individual sessions, you don't necessarily have all those kind of conflicts to manage, so within the individual sessions, children are probably, generally on the whole, quite you know...

Group Member: Go with the flow, do their thing, yeah.

Group Member: And she left about 11.30am and it was absolutely fine – he was absolutely fine again as soon as she'd left. I don't know, that's how I just – he just didn't cope with that, so I don't know if that would be anything for particular children but...

Group Member: No it could be but then we do have a group – well Year 5 are quite an interesting class and we do have a – there are a few of them in there who just are like ...really pushed -

Facilitator (EP): So then you're noticing that the rest of the class may be different too?

Group Member: Yeah, will pick up to it, yeah.

Facilitator (EP): And that could also be I guess further unsettling – I think –

Group Member: I think that's quite common, I mean particularly with our children, the general thing that comes up is that they might be okay for their own teachers but maybe not...

Group Member: And if you take them out of their structured lessons, something changes; that's when they go – they can't cope. They do that in Year 2 as well. Just one or two of them...

Facilitator (EP): And then it's how you support a child I guess in those changes isn't it? Are there things that the schools do around helping to prepare for supply teachers when that happens or - ?

A further excerpt highlights the group's dependency. After many exchanges about a specific area of work, the dependency on the facilitator (EP) is further reinforced by her offer to accept emails or phone calls outside of the context to the session. Although following the

established ELSA supervision agreement (see section 1.4.3), at a 'work group' level the offer is clearly intended to be supportive, but at an unconscious level such behaviours reinforce the dependency and could easily introduce divisions within the group because conversations and relationships have the possibility to develop outside of the group session leaving the potential for destructive feelings to be introduced to the group.

Facilitator (EP): Yeah Okay it's because it's a new area –

Group Member: It's a new area for me yes, this – because you know and again it's only him, it's not like there's a group of similar sort of other ones to sort of you know bounce things off of when you've got more than one, but with him...

Facilitator (EP): Well after a couple of sessions, feel free to email or phone me as well if you want to then have a chat about how you might go about the next couple –

Group Member: Okay, yeah there might be only one session after that mightn't there?  
(Laughs).

Whilst there is nothing intrinsically erroneous in offering the possibility to contact the EP outside of the session the impact on the group should be explicitly acknowledged and thought about. In this way the likelihood of difficulties within the group occurring are reduced and/or addressed.

The excerpts used above illustrate the need for the unconscious group processes occurring within the ELSA supervision group sessions to be acknowledged, thought about and understood. Bion's work highlights the potential benefits of doing so and he argues that this

is necessary if the group is to be successful in its primary task. When talking about his work with therapeutic groups he suggested the following:

The therapeutic group should have its attention constantly drawn to the fear of the basic assumption group, and be shown that the object of the fear depends a great deal on the state of mind that is uppermost in the groups (Bion, 1961, p.99)

Further research may be beneficial to explore the impact of bringing this element of group management within supervision into practice within the ELSA supervision groups.

### **5.6 Managing the emotional needs within the group to support learning**

Themes were identified within this research that supported the emotional well-being of the group members - 'EP support of the individual and the group' and 'The support provided by the group'. These were recognised as providing the 'resourcing' function of supervision (Hawkins and Smith, 2006, p.151) although it should be recognised that other themes, i.e. those ascribed to the developmental function, will also provide emotional support to the ELSAs due to their potential to empower them in their work. This highlights the complexity of supervision and recognises that each theme is not exclusive to a function but is likely to serve elements of two, or indeed, all three supervisory functions.

It was evident in the data within this research that some of the ELSAs presented their work using a 'story-like format' and that these narratives appeared to provide group members with a cathartic experience – an opportunity to 'off- load' - which was perhaps recognised by the EPs who rarely interrupted or stopped such narratives occurring. These two aspects of

supporting ELSAs' emotional well-being are indicative of the 'containing' function of the group. The theory of containment was proposed by Bion (1961) and furthered in his later work (1963 and 1985). Bion suggested that the concept of containment is a fundamental aspect of the mother/infant relationship which is central to an infant's ability to process unwanted, anxiety provoking states. This is achieved by the mother being able to receive and process such unwanted feelings for the infant thus enabling them to regain their emotional security; a process which, when consistently repeated over time, provides an emotionally secure environment for the infant to process their negative feelings and to develop psychically and intellectually. However, in order for this to be achieved, Bion (1963, p.31) argued that the infant's mother must also be experiencing a sense of emotional security; this is likely to be gained from family support networks or something similar. In their research on WDGs for teachers, Hulusi and Maggs (2015, p.35) suggested that, 'This concept seems immediately transferable to many human relationships and to teaching and learning in particular'. ELSA group supervision is fundamentally about the pattern of human relationships and how they support (or hinder) the group in achieving its primary task of learning. Therefore it is likely that the themes identified within the 'resourcing' function of supervision are key to providing emotional containment for the ELSAs' unwanted and anxiety provoking feelings. Whilst these feelings can be (and are) expressed at a conscious level within the ELSA group supervision sessions, they are also expressed through complex, unconscious individual and group processes. It is therefore important to consider these unconscious processes within groups – if ignored, it is likely to inhibit the ELSAs' learning and impact on their subsequent practice.

Story-telling is also recognised as a familiar way in which people communicate and make sense of their experiences (Carroll, 2014, p.170) and when occurring within supervision such

narratives might also suggest that ELSAs do not have a particularly well developed understanding about the purposes of their supervision. See Appendix I for an example of a story-like narrative presented by an ELSA within a supervision group. Such ‘story-telling’ often contains a variety of different types of information – experiences, beliefs, assumptions, theoretical knowledge, unconscious thoughts to name a few – and it can then be a challenge to unpick the content and meaning behind the ELSA’s contribution so that effective learning can occur and emotional support can be provided. It is also arguably more difficult for the ELSAs to appreciate and understand the process that has led to their learning. This lends further support to the proposal that a more structured framework might be beneficial for the group members to utilise within their supervision so that learning and the understanding of the emotional impact of their work can be fully considered.

### **5.7 What might need to develop to ensure more effective group supervision of ELSAs?**

It is evident that the ELSAs arrived at their group supervision sessions with ‘prepared’ recounts and stories about their work. At the request of the EP, they were then invited to individually share their work with the group. As has already been noted, the EP tended to be the driving force behind the supervisory process with occasional contributions from and/or invitations to other group members to contribute. This, along with other case presentation, can be considered the primary task of the work group within ELSA group supervision. This predominantly (although not exclusively) places many of the ELSAs’ supervisory experiences within ‘quadrant B’ of Hawkins and Shohet’s group supervision styles and foci – ‘the group is led by the supervisor and focuses on the content of the cases brought for discussion’ (2012, p.180) and does not pay sufficient attention to the other quadrants, particularly A and D (see section 2.4.2, p.21). Hawkins and Shohet (2012, p.181) indicated



that good supervision ‘will cycle through all four quadrants’. Furthermore, Bion (1961, p.80) suggested that when attempts to offer such individual supervision within a group context occur then it can often be the case that the supervisor is working *against* the group whilst the supervisee is working *with* it. Bion continued to suggest that if the supervisor is aware of this process then she/he will recognise that the discussion needs to be about what the group member has ‘*not* come to discuss’ with consideration for their ‘characteristics as a group member, the characteristics of group membership, basic assumptions and the rest of it.’ (Bion, 1961, p.80). It would appear that what is ‘not being talked about’ within the ELSA group supervision groups are the unconscious processes and, as both Bion and Hawkins and Shohet indicate, for the groups to develop and more effectively achieve their primary task, group processes (unconscious and otherwise) need to be given more attention.

### **5.8 Implications for the practice of Educational Psychologists**

Much of what has been highlighted within this research addresses many of the elements within Inskipp and Proctor’s Group Supervision Alliance Model as described in section 2.5. The elements that may need to be further developed centre around those elements that consider the management of the group - elements 2, 5 and 8 (see section 2.5, p.27/28).

It is proposed that the following areas of development should be considered in order for group processes to become a greater focus within the ELSA supervision groups:

- The type of group supervision being offered to ELSAs should be clarified as to whether it is authoritative, participative, co-operative or peer supervision (see section 2.4.1). Once identified then further clarification about the role of all group members

including that of the EP should be established. The role and functions of the EP, as facilitator of the group, also needs to be clearly understood. This will need to be a continuing topic of discussion within the context of the group supervision sessions with time to reflect on the group's functioning (see element 5 of the Group Supervision Alliance Model – section 2.5, p. 27).

- The EPs are likely to require/benefit from additional training to develop their understanding of group processes particularly those from a psychodynamic perspective. It has been suggested that EPs and psychodynamic psychology are 'uneasy bedfellows' (Hulusi and Maggs, 2015, p.38) and that consideration of psychodynamic psychology can be seen as at odds to the more scientific, 'evidence-based' narrative that is dominant within EP practice (Pellegrini, 2010, p.258). Nonetheless, in order for the EPs to consider the unconscious processes operating within groups many are likely to need further training within psychodynamic psychology because without this, they are unlikely to make sense of the 'apparently irrational' experiences that occur within groups (Hulusi and Maggs, 2015, p.38).
- Alongside this developed knowledge and understanding of unconscious processes the EPs will also need to access supervision themselves (from a psychodynamically orientated supervisor) that will provide them with the opportunities to consider these issues within the supervision groups. In order to be more effective supervisors within the ELSA groups the EPs will need to develop their understanding of 'the presence of irrational and unconscious processes that interfere with attempts to manage oneself, the group, tasks and roles in a conscious and rational way' (Obholzer and Roberts, 1994, p.46).

- If a more psychodynamic approach to group supervision were to be developed then the ELSAs will also need to develop their understanding of group supervision. This might be achieved through some additional input about the functions of supervision during their initial training as well as ongoing reflections during the group supervision sessions themselves. This would also support the development of element 8 from the Group Supervision Alliance Model – ‘The group as a supervisor’ (see section 2.5, p.28). It is also likely that many of the ELSAs will have had limited, or no, experience of supervision within their professional roles and they may find the interpretative comments made by psychodynamically informed supervisors unfamiliar and (at least initially) difficult to understand and/or accept. Therefore, in addition to the initial training to develop their understanding about the role of unconscious processes, the ELSAs will need to give consent for such comments to be made within the context of supervision and be able to accept such interpretations from the group facilitator.

### **5.9 Avenues for further research**

This research is exploratory and therefore by its very nature seeks to develop a better understanding of the question posed within the research rather than to offer conclusive evidence to a specific question. The question within this research was deliberately broad and adopted a curious stance about the nature of ELSA group supervision. There are a multitude of possible areas for future research but the following are highlighted because they have arisen as a consequence of this discussion.

- To explore the ELSAs’ understanding of the supervisory processes and to consider how consistent their understanding is with the identified themes in this research.

- To explore the beliefs held by the supervisors about the style of group supervision they are offering to ELSAs and compare this with the actual group supervision being experienced – are the two congruent?
- To explore the explicit use of pedagogy and psychology theory within ELSA group supervision sessions and to consider how this facilitates learning, informs and develops ELSA practice.
- To explore how the use of an experiential framework, such as the ORID framework (Marsick and Maltbia, 2009, p.164) modified by Carroll (2014, p.125), might support the supervisory process within ELSA group supervision.
- To explore the impact of recognising and making psychodynamically orientated interpretative comments about the unconscious group processes within ELSA group supervision.
- To explore how the group works together managing its basic assumptions and its primary task within the supervisory process and to consider the relative contributions of the group members and their interactions with the EPs.

### **5.10 Dissemination of findings**

The outcomes of this research are of immediate value to those taking part in ELSA group supervision. The research outcomes will be shared with the following parties, in the following manner:

- Outcomes and discussion of this research will be shared with the Educational Psychology Service as part of one of their service development days; this will take the form of a PowerPoint presentation along with some opportunity for discussion.
- Outcomes will also be discussed and presented to the EP with the responsibility for co-ordinating the ELSA programme across the county.
- Outcomes will be shared and discussed with the ELSAs that took part in this research; this will be done as part of one of their ELSA group supervision sessions.

### **5.11 Issues of reflexivity and consideration of the limitations of this research**

This was a small scale piece of research which set out to explore the content of group supervision sessions for ELSAs. The sample size was therefore necessarily small considering the broad exploratory nature of the research question and the time constraints within which to complete a thorough thematic analysis. As indicated by Sandelowski (1995, p.183),

A good principle to follow is: An adequate sample size in qualitative research is one that permits - by virtue of not being too large - the deep, case-oriented analysis that is a hallmark of all qualitative inquiry, and that results in - by virtue of not being too small - a new and richly textured understanding of experience.

Having identified a number of themes through this thorough, but broad analysis, future research could develop more specific questions which would in turn require a larger sample size. It is also recognised that the sample used in this research was limited to a specific

geographical area and drawn from one EP service. Exploring the nature of group supervision across a wider geographical area and from different EP services may be beneficial because styles of supervision may differ and the psychological theoretical perspectives that the EPs draw upon may be more diverse. Both of these factors are likely to influence the nature of group supervision.

As with all qualitative research it is recognised that the data and the analysis in this research is subjective – the sessions themselves and the analysis reflect the identity and experiences of the people involved (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.21). It is important to distinguish the concept of subjectivity from the concept of bias within quantitative approaches which seek so called ‘true’ knowledge through an attempt to eliminate bias of any sort within their research. Qualitative researchers reject this concept of bias preferring to think of carrying out research involving a ‘contextualised analysis’ which embraces these issues rather than trying to limit/eliminate them (Braun and Clarke, 2013a, p.21). However, that is not to say that these issues are ignored or minimalised within qualitative research but rather they should be considered through the process of reflexivity which was introduced in section 3.7.4. The two types of reflexivity outlined in that section – functional and personal - will now be considered in the context of this research.

### **5.11.1 Functional Reflexivity**

This research set out to avoid the use of questionnaires or focus groups to elicit the views of supervisees and/or supervisors about their supervisory experiences and focus on the analysis of naturalistic data collected at the point of occurrence. However, it became evidently clear through observing participants’ behaviours and noting their comments during the process of

collecting the data that the presence of the researcher and the fact that an audio recording was being made had a significant impact on the participants. It was clear that these factors caused some stress which may have influenced how participants behaved during their supervision session. This issue would need to be more carefully considered in future with the possibility of considering a different course of action – the researcher not being present during the sessions or for the researcher to attend several sessions so that participants became more comfortable in his presence. Similarly, consideration could be made to make the recording process less obtrusive, for example, by positioning the equipment less obtrusively within the room or by recording several sessions so that participants accepted it as ‘the norm’ rather than it being an exceptional experience.

### **5.11.2 Personal Reflexivity**

The rationale for completing this research was the researcher’s own interest in group supervision. There is also a commitment to delivering group supervision by the EP service in which this research was carried out. These factors will have, both consciously and unconsciously, shaped the research process (Fox, Martin and Green, 2007, p.157). For example, the researcher approached this research with a broadly positive view of ELSA group supervision and its delivery within the workplace therefore, despite being conscious of this fact; it needs to be acknowledged that the analysis will have been unavoidably influenced by this perspective.

The researcher was also aware of gender, ethnicity and occupation issues within this research which will have provided specific lenses through which the work was viewed. The researcher is a white, male psychologist – factors that influence how the work was carried out. It is

particularly noteworthy that the groups studied were entirely female and therefore the different perspectives of gender are inevitably likely to have played a role in the analytic process.

However, it is not only the personal values and differences that influence research outcomes; 'reflexivity also invites us to think about how our own reactions to the research context and the data actually make possible certain insights and understandings' (Willig, 2013, p.25). The researcher recognises that this aspect has also influenced this research. During the analysis the researcher was aware of a strong response to the content to the sessions; whilst recognising the identified functions of supervision within the content, the researcher also experienced an absence of psychological challenge about the group dynamics within the sessions. This was perhaps borne from the researcher's own psychodynamic training as an EP which in turn influenced the decision to focus on understanding this aspect of the work from a psychodynamic perspective in the discussion section. Undoubtedly this experience shaped the knowledge produced by this research but arguably adds to the richness and diversity of the research base on group supervision as a whole.

These issues were explored through the researcher's supervision which also provided an opportunity to gain a different perspective on the analysis. Within the analysis the researcher also took the time to re-visit sections of analysis at a later time to provide an opportunity to 'self-check' the coding process. In future research it may be helpful to consider using others, for example, EP colleagues and/or participant of group supervision sessions, to gain further insight into the researcher's perspectives within the analytic coding process. It is also hoped that the inclusion of transcripts (Appendices F and L) and the coding decisions made



(Appendix J) will allow readers of this research to consider the coding decisions made within the analysis in this research.

## **5.12 Conclusion**

Over the last two decades the political attention and action regarding the mental health and well-being of children has ebbed and flowed and the agenda remains somewhat incongruent with the pressure for schools to increase their levels of academic attainment for all. Despite this, it has been recognised that schools have an important role to play in maintaining and supporting children and young people's emotional and mental well-being (NHS England, 2015) and the importance of staff training has been recognised (Ofsted, 2005).

The aim of this research was to begin to explore the main support mechanism available to one such group of staff, ELSAs, as they endeavour to continue their professional development through their group supervision sessions. The research aimed to be curious about 'what was really going on' in the sessions themselves and to date, there has been no research that has focused directly on the content of group supervision sessions for ELSAs. This research compliments the work of Osborne and Burton (2014) who elicited the views of ELSAs about their supervision through the use of questionnaires and reported that ELSAs felt that their supervisory experience fulfilled the three main functions of supervision as suggested by Hawkins and Shohet, 2007 (as cited by Osborne and Burton, 2014, p.152).

This research corroborates this view in that ELSAs used their group supervision sessions in the following three main ways to address their professional and emotional needs and it was

evident that these also dovetailed with the recognised functions of supervision as outlined in Chapter 2 (Hawkins and Smith, 2006, p.151).

- To meet their learning needs (developmental) – ELSAs used their sessions to develop their understanding of casework and in so doing challenged their thinking and developed their knowledge, skills and approaches to their work.
- To explore the emotional impact of their work (resourcing) – ELSAs appeared to benefit from the support offered by both the EP and the group; this reassurance also appeared to provide them with confidence and new ways forward with their work.
- Quality control (qualitative) – ELSAs were supported to consider outcomes and management issues within their schools, expectations of the ELSA programme and their approach to the work including safeguarding issues, safe working practices and accountability.

It was also clear that these functions were not discrete – they overlapped in their purpose or function i.e. it is likely that ELSAs were also emotionally supported by identifying appropriate ways forward with a piece of work through increased confidence and clarity of thinking; thereby fulfilling both resourcing and developmental functions. This highlights the complexity of the supervisory process. This complexity is amplified through the process of *group* supervision and this research has highlighted the need for greater consideration to be made to the group response and dynamics within the supervisory process for ELSAs (rings 2 and 3 of the concentric rings of the group supervision process, Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.182 - see Figure 1.3).

Hawkins and Shohet (2012, p.87) also identified two interlocking matrices and two supervision styles within their seven-eyed supervisor model - thinking about the material directly from the client and thinking about how the system is reflected in the 'here and now' experience of the supervision process (section 2.3.2). This research has recognised that experiential learning (Kolb, 1984, p.20; Carroll, 2014, p.16) can be particularly helpful in understanding the developmental function of supervision and suggests that an approach such as ORID (Marsick and Maltbia, 2009) might be a helpful framework to use within future group supervision sessions. This might also elucidate the process of learning within supervision for ELSAs thereby de-mystifying the supervisory process for those that have limited experiences of supervision and remind EP facilitators to explore the use of pedagogy and psychological theory within the interpretative and integrative parts of the ORID process (see Table 3).

This research has also highlighted the need for further consideration of 'the here and now' – the need for supervisors to take account of group dynamics (Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.189; Page and Wosket, 2001, p.171; Scaife, 2009, p.158) with a particular focus on thinking about unconscious group processes. It is suggested that using and applying a psychodynamic understanding of groups (Bion 1961) might further support the supervisory process and enable further insight into the ELSAs' work, although it is also recognised that this may also highlight a training need for the EPs involved in this task (Hulusi and Maggs, 2015, p.38). Further research exploring 'what is not being talked about' (Bion, 1961, p.80) might be beneficial.

This research illustrates the complexity of capturing all the elements of the group supervision process and, in attempting to map the complexity of group supervision, Proctor (2008, p xiv)

wondered 'whether it would be better left inexplicit'. This research suggests the opposite; supervisory practices, and ELSA work, are likely to benefit from a clearer understanding of what is really going on in group supervision sessions and this research has begun that complex process.

Word count: 42731

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## Appendix A

### Examples of ELSA activity

The following examples of work carried out by ELSAs are taken from an evaluation of the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) programme (Burton, Traill and Norgate, 2009, p.15) and have been included here to highlight the type of work carried out by ELSAs. It can clearly be seen in these examples that ELSAs are supporting emotionally vulnerable children and young people; this work also comes at an emotional cost to the ELSA hence the provision of supervision which allow ELSAs the opportunity to makes sense of their own emotional experience within their work, whilst also providing an opportunity to seek new ideas and reassurance about their work.

An ELSA worked with a Year 2 child whose parents had separated. The child had found this difficult to comprehend. He regularly spent time with both parents after school and during weekends. The child was angry and unsure about what his parents expected of him. The ELSA and pupil played therapeutic games and made a personal diary. In this way the boy was able to communicate his feelings of loss, anger and confusion. After several weeks he shared his diary with his parents. They were surprised by his emotional awareness. The child now regularly completes a feelings diary, opening up communication between himself and his parents.

An ELSA worked with a boy in Year 4 who had both friendship and anger issues. He decided for himself he would like to work on his anger management as he thought his temper was one of the main reasons other children did not like him. The ELSA used

ideas from 'A Volcano in my Tummy' (Whitehouse & Pudney, 1996) and solution-focused brief therapy. The boy was committed to the work and ideas discussed. His manner (body language, self-confidence and smile) changed and was noticed by staff. His parents were pleased with his progress but, more importantly, he feels different about himself. He manages friendships and his anger much better and is able to put calming strategies into practice.

A secondary ELSA worked for over a year with an upper school pupil who was not attending regularly. She met with her every two weeks in order to discuss her lack of self-esteem and other problems she was facing. The girl would also seek her out at other times when she was not coping. Over a period of time her attendance increased dramatically. On her last day at school she thanked the ELSA for her support and asked to keep in touch by e-mail. She achieved excellent GCSE results.

## **Appendix B**

### **The four major stages of supervisee development within the developmental models of supervision.**

#### Level I : self-centred

This stage is characterised by the supervisee's inexperience and insecurity in being able to fulfil their role. There is a danger that supervisees can become dependent on their supervisors. Supervisees can require a high level of support from their supervisor at this stage to ensure that they begin to develop the ability to see the wider context of their work and understand the whole therapeutic process of which they will have had limited experience. This support will prevent supervisees from being blinded by their enthusiasm and only focussing on the 'known' information.

#### Level II : client –centred

During this stage the supervisee begins to recognise the complexity of the therapeutic process and the interplay between their developing skill set and the presentation(s) of the client. Supervisees at this stage can oscillate between feelings of dependency and autonomy towards their supervisor.

#### Level III : process-centred

By this stage the supervisee has developed an increased professional awareness and is more able to synthesise the needs of the client and the therapeutic process. Supervisees are able to see the wider context and recognise how the ‘here and now’ (explanation –footnote?), the client’s history and other background factors all influence the work and need to be thought about.

Level IV : process-in-context-centred

This stage reflects a certain level of mastery by the supervisee. They are able to identify and articulate the complex links and connections learned in earlier stages of development and are now able to deepen and integrate their knowledge.

(adapted from Hawkins and Shohet, 2012, p.77)

## Appendix C

A table summarising the literature reviewed in Chapter 2

Author(s)/date	Description	Participants (Sample size)	Method/Methodology/Design	Findings
Atkinson and Woods (2007)	The study aimed to identify the facilitators and barriers to effective supervision for Trainee Educational Psychologists and sought to develop a model of effective fieldwork supervision focussing on the needs of trainee Educational Psychologists	8 focus groups typically with 12 participants in each  93 returned questionnaires	The themes identified from the focus groups were used to generate questionnaire statements Ranked order response to the questions were obtained	Responses indicated guidance, problem solving, support and effective communication as key features to effective supervision with the most significant barrier being difficulties with the supervisory relationship. The key features noted were the basis for the proposed model of effective fieldwork supervision.
Bartle and Travis (2015)	The study explored the use of group supervision with key worker staff within a specialist educational setting	Not specified	Focus group Thematic analysis	The main themes identified in this study were those around the process, the impact and the practicalities of group supervision. It is suggested that the supervision was valued and had a positive impact on participants' practice.
Bozic and Carter (2002)	The study sought to explore whether consultation groups were a useful form of EP work and whether they could	4 consultation groups with 7-9 staff in each group (mostly teachers but some teaching	Participant questionnaire Likert-style scale/analysis	Positive effects were reported – time to reflect, learning new approaches for teaching children and less

	be sustained without the presence of an external consultant	assistants)		isolation/self-blame when experiencing problems. The presence of an external consultant to some degree was reported to be helpful.
Carrington (2004)	This article provides a personal account exploring the aspects of supervision that provided opportunities for the professional development of the supervisor - the reciprocal learning process	n/a	Case study approach	A range of learning opportunities were identified by the supervisor; developing new ideas, a growth of understanding through a need to explain, the experience of being challenged and observed and the opportunity for reflection and receiving feedback. The author concluded by highlighting the enriching learning experience for the supervisor when providing supervision to others.
Farouk (2004)	The author used a systemic and psychodynamic approach to group consultation with teachers mainly working with pupils displaying emotional behavioural difficulties	A total of 7 groups with 4-6 teachers in each group (the majority of which were female)	A descriptive account of the process of group consultation provided by the author	The author proposed a model of group process consultation based on the reported positive outcomes of the group consultations
Hanko (2002)	This paper explored the use of psychodynamically informed insights within staff group consultations	n/a	Descriptive examples of her work with staff groups as a psychodynamically trained education consultant	The author concludes that the paper suggests psychodynamically informed insights can both deepen the understanding of the

				emotional and social factors that impact on learning, and develop the abilities of the staff to meet them, thereby enriching the learning environment
Hulsi and Maggs (2015)	An exploration of the use of Work Discussion Groups (WDGs) based on psychodynamic theory with teachers	n/a – the authors used clinical examples from their work to evidence their thinking	n/a	The authors concluded that psychodynamic thinking can be usefully applied to support teachers to provide professional supervision
Jackson (2002)	An illustration of how Work Discussion Groups (WDGs) can be used to challenge the thinking, attitudes and culture of a school.	16 participants across 2 groups (8 in each group)	A descriptive, illustrative account of the work carried out within the WDGs by the author.	The author concluded that the illustration suggested that WDGs offer participants the opportunity to develop their understanding of how emotions influence behaviour, learning and teaching. They also provide an opportunity for participants to reflect on the different aspects of their role within school.
Jackson (2008)	A paper describing the application and development of WDGs within schools.	95 evaluation forms	A largely descriptive account of the delivery of WDGs in a variety of schools – primary, secondary and colleges of further education. Some quantitative and qualitative data provided from the evaluation forms was reported.	The author reported that evaluation forms completed by participants of the WDGs suggested that they found them to be supportive, developmental and emotionally supportive. They were reported to reduce stress within staff and

				encourage reflective practice.
Lunt (1993)	A survey of Educational Psychologist Trainees, fieldwork supervisors and course tutors to establish the nature of their supervision	147 participant questionnaires returned	Questionnaire Ranked order response to questions was analysed	The article acknowledged participants to have a range of purposes and benefits to supervision although giving and receiving feedback was highlighted as important. The lack of clarity of the purposes of supervision was noted as a potential issue. It was also acknowledged that supervisors received adequate preparation. The availability of time to complete supervisory activities was also highlighted.
Nash (1999)	This article was an account of the development of the supervisory skills of a fieldwork supervisor and the use of solution focussed thinking within supervision.	Personal experience of supervising trainees over three academic years	n/a	The adoption of a solution focussed approach to the supervision enabled the supervisor to feel that she had developed a style of supervision that was clear and explicit and enabled her to reflect on her own development as a supervisor.
Nolan (1999)	This study explored how supervision was organised and valued within one focus Educational Psychology Service from which a questionnaire was developed	14 Educational Psychologists interviewed in the focus EP service 58 wider Educational Psychology Service	Interviews with 14 Educational Psychologists used to develop a questionnaire regarding how supervision was organised and valued in other Educational Psychology	The Educational Psychology Service responses to the questionnaire indicated that supervision of some form was taking place in most services; the most frequently



	to survey other Educational Psychology Services about the nature of their supervision.	questionnaires returned	Services Initial case study approach	described strengths were as sense of feeling valued, opportunities for informal supervision and flexible arrangements. Within the focus Educational Psychology Service the following strengths were identified; the supervision was valued, positive relationships between supervisor/supervisee; trust and confidentiality. A proposal for the future development of supervision was then outlined.
Osbourne and Burton (2014)	A study to explore the ELSAs views of their group supervision.	270 ELSAs	Questionnaire responses analysed	The group supervision provided to ELSAs was reported to be helpful most notably in providing advice, new ideas and general support. Relationships with supervisors and members of the supervision group were good. A beneficial impact on the personal/professional development of ELSAs and, for the children receiving ELSA support, was also reported.
Soni (2015)	Explored the use of group	Up to 10 attended the	Case study methodology Focus	The research highlighted that

	supervision with learning mentors/elicited their views on the outcomes of group supervision	supervision group; 6 attended the focus group; 5 completed the questionnaire	groups, questionnaires and written records	issues concerning the development of the supervisees' learning, understanding and abilities dominate within group supervision
Stringer, Stow, Hibbert, Powell and Louw (1992)	An article reporting on establishing consultation groups for school based staff through the development of a facilitator training programme.	42 teachers/staff from 29 different organisations attended the training	Questionnaires aimed at evaluating the training programme/consultation groups	A range of views were elicited from the questionnaires. Staff recognised the advantages of being part of the support group, most notably, an opportunity to discuss problems without interruption and a reduction in feelings of isolation. The most significant disadvantage noted was the amount of time required to access the group. Factors helping and hindering the group's establishment were also highlighted.
Rawlings and Cowell (2015)	The authors sought to develop a more detailed understanding of how Educational Psychologists experience group supervision	8 Educational Psychologists	Semi-structured interviews analysed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)	The following was highlighted: Group supervision provided an opportunity for Educational Psychologists to develop their own supervisory skills; it provided opportunities to think psychologically as a group; issues relating to the

				develop of the supervision group and the role of the supervisor in managing his process need to considered; the need for issues relating to confidentiality within group supervision to be considered
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## Appendix D

### Search terms and inclusion/exclusion criteria

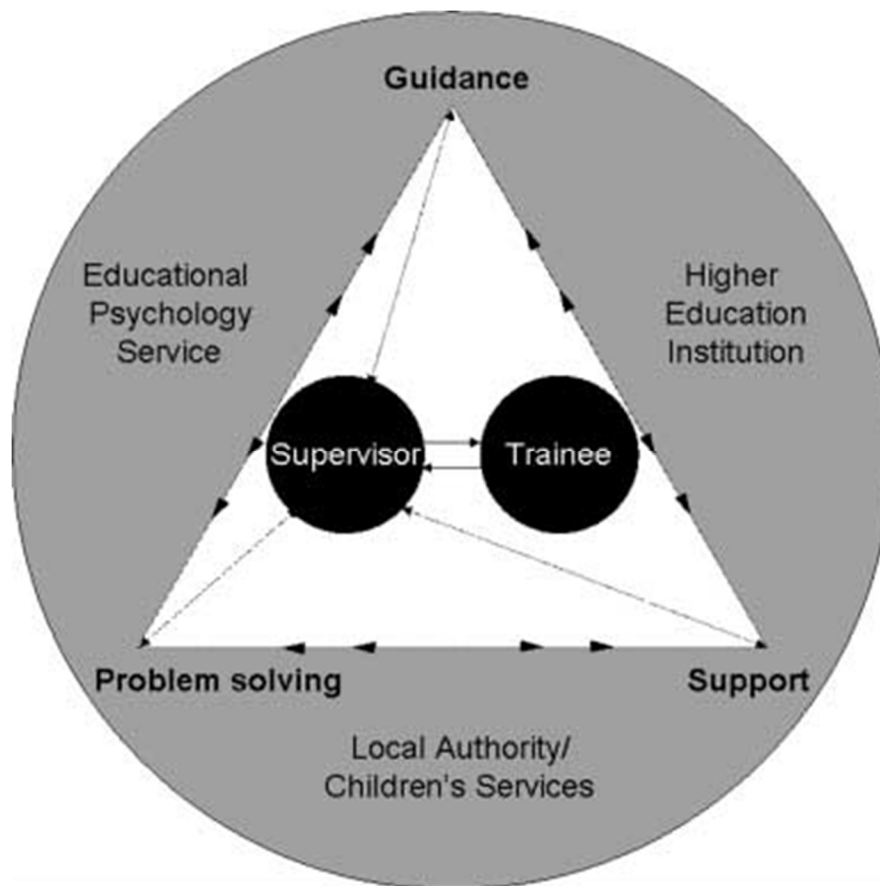
The inclusion criteria are shown in the table below which details the terms used when conducting the systematic search using PsychINFO in 2016.

The main search terms are identified and the limiters are listed below.

Main search terms used		
'group supervision' OR 'group consultation' OR 'collaborative problem solving' OR 'group support' OR 'group discussion' OR 'professional supervision'	AND	'school' OR 'education' OR 'teaching assistant' OR 'teacher'
Limiters		
UK* OR Britain* OR England* OR Wales* OR Scotland* OR Northern Ireland OR Ireland 1990 – 2015 Academic journals		

The Exclusion criteria were as follows:

- articles not published in a peer-reviewed journal i.e. book chapters
- articles not reporting of activities of a supervisory nature
- articles from different disciplines i.e. counselling, social care or health professions
- articles about supervision in a different setting outside of the education context
- articles involving studies outside of the UK
- articles outside the timeframe 1990 - 2015

**Appendix E****Diagram of the model for effective supervision (Atkinson and Woods, 2007, p.307)**

## Appendix F

### Transcription of Session 1

[0:00:00]

(Laughter)

Facilitator: Phones (laughs). [Name] come and join again – we're going to exclude [Name] from our circle! (Laughs)

(Overspeaking 0:00:20)

Facilitator: Gather in. It feels funny doesn't it? Okay right so welcome everyone. This is our group today – slightly smaller than normal but um it's quite good in terms of timing as well because um we haven't got as long. Is everyone Okay until 3pm today?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: Lovely, Okay so what we will do is um do it as we would normally, so it would be exactly the same session as we would normally do, so I'll go through um some business, we'll do some dates for the Autumn term and venues um and then we will do a check in and um have some time to problem solve perhaps one or two areas that come up within that and um then as we agreed, we're on to day three of our resource share now (laughs) so day three is anger management. So I've just brought along some bits and I've seen that [Name] has got a little thing and I notice that [Name] has (problems?) in her (inaudible 0:01:28) so – oh fantastic brilliant. So we'll – I'll make sure that I leave some time for that and um I thought it would be nice to end with some celebrations as well, so just a round of something that you're pleased with that's happened this year. Okay that's the plan, is that all all right? Is that - ?

Group Member: Uh huh.

Facilitator: It's just as normal really. Okay so um... dates for next time. Have people got diaries for the Autumn term? (Laughs)

Group Member: We'll keep with Mondays will we?

Facilitator: If that's Okay – is Monday still Okay with everyone here? Um yeah that's fine, lovely. So the first one I wondered about was 1<sup>st</sup> October which is a Monday, 1pm until 3pm? Everyone still Okay with that? Yeah?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay... so um resource share – I'll send an email out to remind everyone of these dates anyway, um but the resource share would be social skills and um autism and social stories and that sort of area. And then – so did everyone get that? Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: After half term... oh venue sorry for that one, is anyone able to offer any - ?

Group Member: I suppose we probably are (laughs).

Facilitator: (Laughs) (Inaudible 0:03:00) yeah? Thank you [Name]. Brilliant... after half term... 26<sup>th</sup> November which sounds a long way off! (Laughs)

Group Member: The what? The what?

Facilitator: 26<sup>th</sup> November.

Group Member: Is that a Monday is it?

Facilitator: Apparently so!

Group Member: Oh that means – my birthday is the day after, it's on a Tuesday!

Group Member: Oh we can probably make a date of it –

Group Member: It's a big birthday – yes so all come and bring me a nice present!

Group Member: Oh! (Laughter)

Facilitator: Note it down! (Laughter) [Name]'s birthday! Okay must do cake that day.

[0:03:48]

Group Member: Got to be a special cake – we'll get [Name] to make a special one.

Group Member: Yeah... 30 (laughter).

Facilitator: We could have it as 30 if you want it? (Laughter) Okay um so... venue for that one, anybody be able to –

Group Member: We could come here – come here again.

Facilitator: Shall we do it here? And then... we can embarrass you properly! (Laughter) Thank you, so that's the home for that one on 26<sup>th</sup>. And um the resource share would be around friendship skills, that's day five. If you still want to – are you happy to continue with that sort of format in terms of the resource share - ?

Group Member: Uh huh.

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: - do people find that a helpful thing to do?

Group Member: Yeah (laughs).

Facilitator: You're nodding?



Group Member: Yeah! (Laughs)

Facilitator: Okay good.

(Overspeaking and laughter 0:04:55)

Facilitator: So the other bit, um just in terms of business – “business” – is that there’s a really helpful website that we’ve been told about. Um so you know about the general ELSA one that Sheila’s put together?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: There is – there’s one that’s been put together by an ELSA in York um and she has made it accessible to everyone um it’s – do you want to take down the address? But I’ll email it round to you as well – it’s very easy – “www.elsa-“ - is that one of those lines, a hyphen? “-support” all lower case – “.co.uk”. And I just briefly went on and it’s just a really accessible, really kind of easy to navigate site um she – do you want a Post-it [Name]?

Group Member: Oh I suppose that would be easier! (Laughter)

(Overspeaking 0:06:00)

Facilitator: Just in case you wash your hands! (Laughs)

Group Member: “Elsa support” -

Facilitator: Yeah it’s a really – so what she does is um she’s got a number of different links – it covers all of the areas of day one to day six so um even she’s got things on loss and bereavement. She’s also got on there um templates which I thought would be quite helpful so um templates for kind of making games, so they’re sort of flash card templates where you can put information and it churns them all out for you – certificate templates and things like that so -

Group Member: Oh cool!

[0:06:44]

Facilitator: And all that she asks – she’s – there’s a little note on the home page which just says um if anyone wants to make an (update?) over time then she’d find that helpful, but otherwise it’s kind of open – so definitely go and check that one out because it was VERY useful and (whispering) that’s all I needed to say. So – so we’ll do our usual see how everyone is around, does anyone want to start us off today? I’m not going to look at anyone –

Group Member:(Laughs) Shall I start?

Facilitator: Yeah, go for it! How are you?

Group Member: Yeah, no good thanks, yeah – no it’s been quite a difficult few weeks I think; we’ve had quite a few challenges, yeah I think we’re Okay. It’s difficult – it’s different because I’m not obviously doing so much, although I have been doing quite a bit more one-to-one because I’ve had to, but generally my role – I’m not doing it, because it’s a small group anyway so we’re doing a lot of the stuff in small groups. So...

Facilitator: Uh huh.

Group Member: ... um but quite a lot of our children are needing extra one-to-one as well within that.

Facilitator: Okay you’ve been – you’ve been taking advantage of time where you can have individual sessions with – ?

Group Member: We’ve had to, just because of perhaps the dynamics of that group is not always working so we’ve had to kind of you know see how it’s gone and then – you know not necessarily always planned – quite often we just had to like, “This is a good time for a practical – we can do something else” because the practical is not going as well as what it should be but -

Facilitator: Is that for those pupils that aren’t managing the group situations?

Group Member: Because they're not managing – still not managing – although they have done, they have done in the past or they would normally but for whatever reason... like there was a boy this morning who was absolutely fab last week and has been for weeks but we had a visitor in this morning and couldn't cope with the fact that there was a visitor there and he actually was able to tell us that by lunchtime and say he didn't like it and so that child then – we just could see it sort of escalated and he had to be kind of taken – and he just sort of said, "I just couldn't handle the visitor there" so then you kind of – so just kind of thinking on your feet there and not always necessarily planning it but I think this would be useful you know, see what it is or more like one-to-one kind of, "Where do we need to go with it?" He's not necessarily angry, it's just dealing with how he's feeling with himself –

Facilitator: Yeah so you're doing this –

Group Member: - there's a lot more of that happening since I think the last time I was here. It was a lot – more group based but there's a real balance of a bit of both really.

Facilitator: Okay and so you were saying sort of in those individual sessions you're doing more kind of listening and –

Group Member: Just letting them sort of offload and just finding out you know what it is and you know just – just a lot of it is offloading with whatever is going on and um giving them some skills, you know – like the book that I've got here – the child's really quite cross about a lot of things and we've started with the anger book -

Facilitator: Uh huh.

Group Member: - things like that, just whatever this child has – actually has come and said you know, "What would help?" So that's how we've kind of done it is like, "What would be useful?" And, "I'd want help with – I find this hard – " so it's kind of coming from them rather than saying, "I think you need – " they – it's coming from them which is – makes it a bit more powerful isn't it. So...

[0:09:56]

Facilitator: Absolutely. Good, so how have you felt doing that sort of - ? Has it been a bit of a shift in terms of a - ?

Group Member: It has recently, yeah it has actually, but then it means they are allowed to do a lot more of that whereas before I think it – because it's always been group-based, you don't always get that one-to-one time, but I think you just really get to know them don't you – it's about the relationships as well isn't it? So yeah it's been really useful actually, you know good for that way, just to build relationships individually and kind of tune in to them.

Facilitator: Lovely, good, thank you.

Group Member: So yeah it's been great.

Facilitator: Are you doing that mostly through talking – just kind of getting together and talking or activities...?

Group Member: Sometimes – it's hard – not talking, it's usually activities or sometimes just giving them a piece of paper. It could be um – and then perhaps from that then think, "Right perhaps this would be useful for them" and then perhaps try and find something that relates to what he or she is worried about or got concerns about um but yeah generally – initially it's kind of like let's just get the Playdough out or let's just have a piece of paper and let's just you know -

Facilitator: And then see what comes from that.

Group Member:- and then see what comes from that and then find some activities that will link to that which has been helpful. So that's why – so it's not kind of like – I haven't planned it, it's kind of planned – self-planned really hasn't it (laughs) primarily from the child which I think sometimes works better isn't it? So yeah, quite useful that way so yeah it's been good.

Facilitator: Okay... lovely, shall we go round?

Group Member: Yeah may as well hadn't we?

Facilitator: How are you doing then?

Group Member: Not too bad. Um got my usual Year 3, he's still got his anger problem hence this that he made with the traffic light system, um literally he came up with like the bits

that come off on his own, he sort of, “Well can we stick something to it so it actually shows whether I’m actually feeling happy or getting more cross?” Um... so some of it’s worked, but he’s still stropping, especially when someone says, “No you can’t play football any more” and things like that and team games um... so I’m still working on that with him but he can be such hard work. But having said that, some of the adults can be as well! Because it’s a case of, “Oh [Name] has got – “ or has run off because he’s having a strop and when you get out there actually he hasn’t run off and he’s not stropping, it’s just gone to a quiet area and sat down.

Facilitator: Right so there’s interpretation from both adults and –

Group Member: Definitely, yeah.

Facilitator: - Okay, that might be influencing how people are responding to him and... Okay.

Group Member: Yeah, anything that happens out there, “Oh it must be him” so...

[0:12:54]

Facilitator: Mm, Okay. Is um [Name] wanting – might want to spend some time kind of problem solving in the group today?

Group Member: I think the only problem that I see with him is if he carries on the stropping in class, that he is going to get that reputation all the way through, so...

Facilitator: (Inaudible 0:13:18) Okay. And so [Name] is kind of... troubling you?

Group Member: He is.

Facilitator: The rest of the ELSA work?

Group Member: The rest of the ELSA work is fine.

Facilitator: Okay, you’re feeling Okay?

Group Member: Definitely.

Facilitator: Good, Okay, so shall we come back to - ?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: [Name]?

Group Member: Pretty much the same, still got a girl that's working with self-esteem to begin with but now I'm doing some anger management with her and another boy that I was doing self-esteem with and I'm just about to take another one on for friendship skills, which I haven't really done much with (laughs) in my time as an ELSA, so I'll need some advice on that one (laughs) which is just about to start tomorrow. So I'm going to have to start it, I've got the file, I've gone through the file and picked out some bits but – because we've only got a few weeks left, I think this getting to know him (laughs) it's going to be the end of term and we're not going to get sort of down to proper activities... So... any ideas where to start with him? (Laughs)

Facilitator: Okay so it's thinking about those initial sessions and then maybe where it goes - ?

Group Member: Yes because I think it's going to take a while – I'm sure I'll probably pick him up next year no doubt because this won't be long enough but um...it's just obviously I'm going to have to get him comfortable and happy first because he doesn't really know me at all and then it's sort of where to go with him after that but yeah (sighs) so any friendship stuff would be helpful (laughs).

Facilitator: Okay we can – I know you're doing your anger management today... that's important, we'll spend some time thinking about that.

Group Member: Yeah... obviously the anger management also I'll be all ears for that (laughs) because a girl that I'm working with has little fits and starts and you think she's absolutely fine and then suddenly something will happen... oh...so we're back (laughs) at square one again you know – anything we've done, has she taken it in at all?

Facilitator: So as in you're working with her in the individual sessions and things will be Okay outside of that and then - ?

Group Member: I think so and then suddenly I'll just get an email that she's done something and you think, "Oh Okay where did that come from?" it's... when I see her you wouldn't think she had any problems at all with anger management you know so –

Facilitator: Yeah and it's things that I would imagine – it sounds quite common in the sense of you can teach the skills within the individual sessions and then you know people have blips, children have blips and it's... it's not necessarily saying that what's happened in your session wasn't the right thing, do you know? It's kind of... yeah...

[0:16:27]

Group Member: Yeah I am working through this stuff in the file and looking after her but I'm kind of running out of ideas a bit now (laughs) I have to say! So I will be interested to see what you say later on. But yeah so – friendship – probably need some more guidance with that and the anger management – any extras (laughs) you may have... apart from that fine (laughs).

Facilitator: Okay.

Group Member: Nothing else, no.

Facilitator: All right then, thank you [Name]. And [Name]?

Group Member: I haven't really got anything to say!

Facilitator: That's fine. How are you?

Group Member: I'm fine thank you (laughter).

Facilitator: Okay are you doing ELSA work at the moment?

Group Member: Yeah, yes with the same children – just one with anger that goes off stropping and tantruming at the moment but we're getting there slowly. Yeah so it's quite quiet in my group.

Facilitator: Yeah, do you mean in the (nurture?) group or your...?

Group Member: In the ELSA group, I'm (done?) a group and we're making some puppets. They're quite happy in a group.

Facilitator: Lovely Okay, so you're finding it all Okay?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: And [Name]?

Group Member: I'm – mine – I'm sort of winding down now because I'll do – from this week I'll do transition stuff with the Year 6s that need it, but um... I've decided that this year the booklet – you can do the booklet to death really and go through a little bit each week and actually what they need – this group are quite – they're quite resilient but they just need – I think we just need to flick through and find key themes and just generally have like a group discussion about it and see – and then from that, they'll basically plan their own stuff that they need to do and then the odd ones that will maybe go for an earlier visit because their move up day. So I'm doing that and I've just finished working with two... pupils who were in my – actually in my class. So that's been quite interesting because then you see the times when (laughs) they've come to me and said, "Oh yes and I sometimes do this and I'm sometimes a bit like this and oh yeah I completely get why I shouldn't be like that" (laughs) and then they go back into class and do it!

Facilitator: Okay, Okay.

Group Member: But even to the point with – the boy that I've been working with, the other week we had – we've had quite a few supply teachers and we have a group of boys that do not react well to supply teachers, so you really need to kind of stay on top of that. And then there was something we were doing – it was a good few weeks ago now and the sessions that we'd done, we were talking about his defence mechanisms and about resilience and not having very much resilience and he totally got it! He's so – one-to-one he's really, really very intelligent and he's not in a place there where he's afraid of getting things wrong. So I think it might – although he'd never admit to it, it's slightly a peer thing as – you know, so that's when he's scared of having a go and making mistakes, but um and I've said, "You know fooling around with the supply teacher and cracking jokes and things like that is – that's a defence mechanism and it's just a way to get you away from what you're meant to be doing", getting angry and all of this stuff. And then the – the supply teacher we had and she asked us to do something and I thought, "Oh right I'll try and have a go" and I found it so difficult (laughs) and I was kind of going a



bit – and he came up and went, “Don’t put barriers up Miss (Jasper?)” (laughs) and I was putting barriers up! (Laughter) So he actually you know turned it into a humorous thing which I thought was really funny. Although still even today we’ve had – you know the barriers have been up, they’ve had a supply teacher in, the whole Maths lesson was you know... and we have been saying amongst ourselves or I’ve been saying to [Name] quite often it’s, “I wonder if they’re actually getting it or if they just come in and go, “Yeah I know and I do this and – “” And they – but they even give a bit more and take you by surprise and you think, “They really understand what we’re talking about here and how it can affect behaviour and everything” and then they just go back and – so we do start to wonder if they’re just saying it to us for the sake of it (laughs) –

Group Member: Saying what you want to hear?

Group Member: Yeah! (Laughter)

[0:21:15]

Facilitator: Well it’s similar I guess in a way to what [Name] was saying for her – the child that you’re working with as well isn’t it, in the sense of... there is something around that you know when we’re in a – in a situation where we can have time to reflect, because that’s what your individual sessions provide isn’t it?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: Then just as we as adults, we can reflect quite openly... then when we’re in the situation there’s a lot more complexities going on isn’t there (laughs) that impact on – yeah how you might respond. So I guess there’s taking into account the fact that the work that you’re doing is – particularly around those children where there’s behavioural difficulties, it’s part of a much bigger plan for a child that needs to take into account things like environmental change so you know the environmental and what sort of motivation they’re getting to actually do these things back in class and to generalise those skills back. So it’s kind of...

Group Member: But can I just say something there?

Facilitator: Yeah, go for it!

Group Member: What – thinking of this particular boy, he gets an awful lot of motivation for his ideas and especially you know he excels as an ideas person in literacy and does very, very well and he's certainly told by the teacher – and he did very well in the assessments – the last lot of assessments, unexpectedly well you know? And you could tell you know he walked tall, it gave him a real boost, but um... it's almost... even today with the Maths, he was able to do that Maths but he was still referred back to this – which looks sullen and lazy and having a really bad attitude and not having any respect for the teacher and things like that. So – and you just think, "How much more can you give?" do you know what I mean? Because he IS encouraged, supported and motivated and yet still – and he seems to understand about the barriers that he puts up and – I mean I don't know, because I guess if you do – if you work and you do the ELSA thing and you're doing this drip feed thing that hopefully eventually it's going to – these kids are going to understand – we're not there to see the benefits are we? (Laughter) Like maybe you could let me know by the time he gets to Year 9! And do you know what I mean? So I know long term that's what we're hoping for, but sometimes I'd (laughs) just like to see a little glimmer that it's all going to be all right!

Facilitator: Yeah, so you're recognising that there's – the work that you're involved in is those small steps of progress - ?

Group Member: Oh yeah, yeah completely.

[0:24:26]

Facilitator: That you'll be working on a small kind of target in a sense around a child's behaviour or motivation or that side of things and like you say, you may not see the ground (laughs) for example.

Group Member: But it's just that crossover between them being really kind of quite lucid about the whole... concept and – and offering ideas to you about their behaviour and where their behaviour falls down or where they are aware of where they've made the wrong choice and things like that. But then they still don't seem to actually make that work for themselves (laughs) on the whole –

Group Member: When they're in their different –

Group Member: - when they're in their general setting, yeah.

Facilitator: And what do people think that's about?

Group Member: The behaviour probably is because they feel unsettled in that area possibly, because I know that we have some children that if they have a um stand-in teacher their behaviour does go wrong. But sometimes if you get a good stand-in teacher and they'll recognise that, so I think that sometimes is a problem.

Group Member: I don't know – they do it all the time, doesn't matter if they're a good supply, any supply – they will do it all the time.

Group Member: Because once you've got routine –

Group Member: Yeah.

Group Member: - they're used to that routine and they don't like the change, yeah.

Group Member: Change, yeah.

Group Member: Is it like an anxiety thing?

Group Member: Mm.

Group Member: I was just thinking about this child that we had this morning that that was down to anxiety – couldn't cope with the fact that this visitor –

Group Member: With this visitor?

Group Member: - that had arrived. Although even though we sat and explained who she was, it wasn't enough. It was like, "Well I didn't know who she was or what she was here for", "Well we did explain –" but he just – in himself, his anxiety levels were quite high and just couldn't cope with it.

Facilitator: So do you think that he thought that the visitor was kind of out to get him or pick on him or something - ?

Group Member: Nothing even to do with him, it was just a visitor that had come from one of the children's schools, it wasn't any – you know an official person or anything, it was just...

Group Member: So it doesn't even need to be – have to be that personal, just that it's - ?

Group Member: No, just that it's somebody – it was a different face.

Group Member: So potentially it could be moving the furniture around to some degree?

Group Member: Yeah, absolutely, yeah, yeah because it's about the routine and – yeah, yeah.

[0:26:55]

Facilitator: Unsettled and yeah it's those emotions like –

Group Member: That was classic this morning because like the last sort of four weeks he's been really settled and absolutely fine but just...

Facilitator: And if you think about the power of emotions on how you might behave then you know like you were saying in your individual sessions, you don't necessarily have all those kind of conflicts to manage, so within the individual sessions, children are probably, generally on the whole, quite you know...

Group Member: Go with the flow, do their thing, yeah.

Group Member: And she left about 11.30am and it was absolutely fine – he was absolutely fine again as soon as she'd left. I don't know, that's how I just – he just didn't cope with that, so I don't know if that would be anything for particular children but...

Group Member: No it could be but then we do have a group – well Year 5 are quite an interesting class and we do have a – there are a few of them in there who just are like (inaudible 0:27:52) really pushed -

Facilitator: So then you're noticing that the rest of the class may be different too?

Group Member: Yeah, will pick up to it, yeah.

Facilitator: And that could also be I guess further unsettling – I think –

(Overspeaking 0:28:07)

Group Member: I think that's quite common, I mean particularly with our children, the general thing that comes up is that they might be Okay for their own teachers but maybe not...

Group Member: And if you take them out of their structured lessons, something changes; that's when they go – they can't cope. They do that in Year 2 as well. Just one or two of them...

Facilitator: And then it's how you support a child I guess in those changes isn't it? Are there things that the schools do around helping to prepare for supply teachers when that happens or - ?

Group Member: I know for some – for a lot of ours, they kind of try and tell them like the day before, to say like, "I won't be in tomorrow, it will be – " and tell them who it is, and so they kind of have less of that anxiety and so (inaudible 0:29:00) kind of just go through the timetable which has been quite good for some. But obviously –

Group Member: Sometimes you don't know what supply is coming in. They say someone's coming in so you tell them and then it's somebody totally different. But also of course for us it's Monday so even if he'd told them on Friday, they wouldn't remember.

Group Member: Yeah, yeah it's different. But it's still a surprised.

Group Member: Yeah we had for quite a few – probably about two months where the Year 4 teacher was off um and um basically the school actually made sure that they had the same supply teacher all the way through –

Group Member: To cover the whole term?

Group Member: - to cover, yeah. So once they got that in place, it was fine, because it was the same face.

Group Member: But you have to work through it and kind of work with them because I always think when they come to – you know they come to secondary it happens every day, so kind of almost preparing them each time it happens aren't you.

Group Member: Mm.

Group Member: And giving them that strategy and seeing how they'll cope...

Group Member: Yeah but we also have a change in behaviour, having worked with that class and done ELSA sessions with a few of them in that class and now being lunch time staff, the other thing that's been quite interesting is that – the change in the way – you know the way that they'll treat – not the way that they treat me so much but if you're in class and you tell someone that they need to behave or that they need to get that task finished or something then it's generally taken maybe that you tell them again and then you know they get on with it. Um but outside, if you tell them, "Could you please get down off that fence" or whatever, they'll just kind of laugh – they'll just turn round and sort of laugh at you. So there's this kind of whole disrespect really if you like and I have actually said – I've said to them, "I don't get why you act like this in the classroom and now you're outside and you're like that".

[0:31:00]

Group Member: Mm.

Group Member: And that comes from boys – that's boys isn't it?

Group Member: Mm.

Facilitator: And what do you think that could be about?

Group Member: Testing boundaries possibly?

Group Member: Possibly... I think there's an element of sort of... like a sexism type of thing as well going on because they will – I mean they have a male teacher don't they and they will – they will do as they're told and then outside when it's lunchtime staff. I mean they've even said things – they've said to Tina haven't they – they've said, "You don't work here properly", you know things like that.

Facilitator: Okay, so you're not noticing a difference to you, you're noticing a difference - ?

Group Member: Well to her they just kind of skip off don't they and have a laugh and often go and do it again and they can even know that you're watching them and they're sort of, "What?"

Group Member: "What have I done now?" (Laughter).

Group Member: It's attitude isn't it?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: Okay yeah, so there's a shift in terms of how they might respond to requests in class than in lunchtime?

Group Member: Yeah but then maybe that is boundaries again because you've just gone, "Whoa! Here's a really big boundary! Here's a really loose boundary, it goes all the way round to the fence (laughs) go!"

Group Member: Well we have a child in Year 2 that can't cope as soon as he goes out at lunchtimes.

Facilitator: Okay and it can be you know a real – it's another unstructured time isn't it –

Group Member: Yeah it's too long for him as well.

Facilitator: - yes unsettling and it's again how – how you develop their skills in that situation to manage that change and to put those expectations in and the boundaries around that.

Group Member: Mm. This one goes off in a strop and climbs a tree (laughs). Hides in a bush!

Facilitator: Okay –

Group Member: I'd be quite tempted actually to just sit near the bush.

Group Member: I just let him stay there and watch him from the corner and then at 12.55pm just go up to him and say, "Come on it's time to go in now" and he'll come in. Because actually I work with him in the class as well.

[0:33:30]

(Overspeaking and laughter 0:33:37)

Group Member: Get out of the tree!

Group Member: I can imagine you doing that one as well! (Laughter)

Facilitator: Okay, we're out of time! Oh my goodness (laughs) – that hour has disappeared and um so um [Name] you want – you have the child that you wanted to explore and then [Name] looking at friendship skills –

Group Member: Some more anger – some more strategies for calming down and things like that.

Facilitator: Okay.

Group Member: I've looked at the ones in there and I think I've done them all.

Facilitator: Okay, Okay.

Group Member: I need some more! (Laughs)



Facilitator: [Name] shall we take yours first and we should have time because um yeah resource share – so we'll have sort of 15 minutes and then 15 minutes...

Group Member: As I say, most of the time he's not too bad, once you say to him, "Actually you are coming in here", he will come in and then he'll have his, "Okay I'll have my little stroppy moment there" but it's just – you can see sometimes some of the other staff are like, "Well it was you" and you've lost him then straight away so you get the strop, so just basically... apart from going up to him and going, "Why the hell did you do that?"...

Group Member: Mm...don't know.

Facilitator: So it's about how the adults are responding to his – the strategies he's using almost?

Group Member: Yeah I think so yeah, because I mean a classic case the other day was um he was asked to leave the football pitch which he did in his little way and then I was called for because he was having this meltdown moment. Well actually he wasn't – he'd actually taken himself off and sat behind a bush.

Group Member: Mm.

Group Member: And because they couldn't find him they called out for the head teacher in the end, so there was this nice big incident that actually wasn't a big incident. So...

Facilitator: Right Okay and the strategy of... (laughter) musical accompaniment! So the strategy of kind of moving himself away is something that you've talked about in your sessions and - ?

Group Member: Yeah which he's responded to; in class he doesn't use it as much, but he's getting there slowly, hence the um traffic light system which he did.

Facilitator: Uh huh and how does that work?

Group Member: That basically works like if he's... if he's feeling happy he'll put it onto the green, if he's getting a little bit agitated or feeling a little bit cross with someone, he'll come up and he'll just stick it on there with the "I'm not sure" face as he calls it and then

his “cheesed-off face” as he calls it, “I’m really starting to get cheesed off now” goes on the red. So the teacher can have a look and think, “Okay if he’s on red, he can go to his place for five minutes or ten minutes and then come back once he’s calmed down”. And then he’s got the – obviously the plan on the back.

[0:37:17]

Facilitator: Lovely and he’s using that in class is he?

Group Member: He is um but I think it’s a little bit hit and miss sometimes where he’ll suddenly just go into a strop because he can’t do something so I’m going to be really working on that again.

Facilitator: Okay, so the staff are aware of...that?

Group Member: Yes.

Facilitator: So where do you think the difficulty is at the moment?

Group Member: I think with him probably choices, but also for other staff to actually think before they react, rather than react and then find out, “Actually he hasn’t run off, actually he’s gone to a safe place where he knows, “Actually I can calm down here”” so...

Facilitator: Okay so how can we get to a situation where they might be responding differently?

Group Member: I don’t know! (Laughs)

Facilitator: Mm, what are people’s thoughts on that?

Group Member: What for how the staff can react differently?

Facilitator: Mm. Did you have the chance to say to them afterwards that he’s – that that was sort of his strategy?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: And what reaction did you get to that from them?

Group Member: "Whatever".

Facilitator: Mm.

Group Member: "Well I wasn't supposed to know that", "Actually yes you did".

Facilitator: Okay...

Group Member: It's tricky isn't it, unless you can actually sort of – unless you want to do like a staff meeting, which I'm sure you don't! (Laughs)

Group Member: I wouldn't mind but it's the senior lunchtime supervisor that took over from me and it's actually class TA as well... so she is very –

Group Member: Everyone needs to be singing from the same sheet though don't they, that's the thing.

Group Member: Absolutely.

Group Member: So ultimately that's obviously not happening.

Group Member: No, but with the more tricky ones she is more actually, "Let's confront" and then, "Oh look, it's happened – "

Group Member: Reflect after.

Group Member: Reflect after.

[0:39:26]

Group Member: But um I don't know whether it's more – she needs more training or what, but try and say to the lad, "Look if that's happening, Okay you can't walk away in that situation. She's talking to you, but you can still come in here" so it's trying to get the best of both really.

Facilitator: Uh huh.

Group Member: So I don't know whether to just say to the head teacher, "Right she definitely needs more training" (laughs) or –

Group Member: What about them both together? I was just thinking talk together so that they're kind of both talking to each other about what's going to work? I don't know, like he could kind of voice his opinions and say you know – and she could do the same.

Group Member: Mm, yeah I could try that actually.

Group Member: Yes (laughs).

Facilitator: So that would enable her to hear from his point of view – because that might be quite powerful in a way mightn't it? In the sense of –

Group Member: Yeah I've done it with other children, so yeah.

Facilitator: - hearing what he would like to use as a strategy and...

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: And they could come to a plan together almost so they feel like they have produced it together.

Group Member: Yeah – no I'll try that! (Laughs)

Facilitator: Is it something you have fed back to the (Senco?) or head teacher at the moment or - ?

Group Member: Um well they have another line manager, so um I will feed that back to [Name] and then we sort of discuss it all together, but no it's like hitting your head against a brick wall sometimes.

Facilitator: In terms of - ?

Group Member: Of – adult wise.

Facilitator: Okay...

Group Member: But yeah, they're fully – I think they're fully aware of –

Group Member: (Laughs) Sorry what was that?

Group Member: See we have a notice board in our staff room in this – and I think if something similar had happened to me, I would um just write – I would just write, "Dah, dah, dah is having difficulty with this so he may behave in this way; please can everyone – " so it's constant – I mean I know people then become blind to those things don't they that are up on the wall in there and you do forget about it, but just so at least then if they're saying, "Oh well I didn't know" you can say, "Well it's actually – it's here".

Group Member: Yeah but as a senior lunchtime you sort of go, "Don't say that" or, "Don't do that because you will set them off", but yeah we've got um – the last couple of weeks actually they've started doing it, where they put up, "This is how so-and-so will react if you confront; please don't" so...

[0:42:24]

Facilitator: And I think you know, I think what you're kind of recognising is that there does need to be a consistency of response um and that that can be difficult depending on um the understanding of the staff can't it?

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: Do you know it's kind of – I think when you come from positions as ELSAs where you are very well informed around behaviour management and what might be behind behaviours and how best to kind of steer it in the right direction, it's – it's then having to think you know some staff may not have the similar awareness and you know, how can we support them to do that? And as an ELSA that's not your role (laughs) to skill up other members of staff. You can absolutely kind of reflect it back and suggest, "What would you like to do?" and then what would you like to do now as a result of today?

Group Member: I think I'll probably do the – what actually you suggested and probably get the adult –

Facilitator: And child together? Yeah...

Group Member: That would be quite interesting.

Group Member: It's a starting point isn't it?

Group Member: Yeah but that would be quite interesting.

Group Member: Because also maybe they need to build a relationship anyway don't they, if they've... you know – is she – does she just work lunchtimes?

Group Member: No, she's the class TA as well.

Group Member: Oh Okay – oh so they should have a degree of a relationship, maybe?

Group Member: Yeah.

Group Member: Maybe not a very positive one?

Group Member: No.

Facilitator: And I wonder whether simply feeding that back as well to the head teacher if that's the kind of line manager, um may be helpful in prompting something that you've noticed need to – do you know, it's that – it's going in at that level and saying, "This is what I've noticed, this is what I'm planning to do" and um... seeing what her ideas might be as well.

Group Member: Yeah, thank you very much. That's fine.

Facilitator: [Name]?

Group Member: (Laughs) Yes?

Facilitator: Um do you want to talk about – so it's friendship skills you were looking at - ?

Group Member: Yes so I don't know a lot about the boy at the moment so just once I've sort of got his sort of trust and everything and when he's comfortable coming to see me which could take all the time we have left in this half term...

Group Member: Ah...

Facilitator: Have you done any sessions at the moment or – did you say the first one's tomorrow?

Group Member: The first one's tomorrow. Well he's kind of a bit of – a bit hit and miss kind of kid so if he doesn't want to come he doesn't come, so he'd rather be in his lesson so he'll stay in his lesson but um officially I think I was supposed to see him for the first time last week but he never turned up and because he's... he's quite a sensitive boy (laughs) and it's been quite sort of – well if you like that lesson we'll try and sort out another one, so it's kind of gone on a bit... but now I've lost my Year 11 time, I have this sort of space and a bit more space and this Tuesday afternoon was one of the times when he would have been Okay to come out I think – I think because I know what lesson he's coming out of but... so um... I think tomorrow if I can sort of get you know him talking and sort of – which I think he'll be Okay as far as that's concerned but um all I know is that he – he sort of um comes across as being friendly but people might take it the other way and he's sort of like, "Oh no, do they feel like that?" you know and he sort of goes a little bit, oh you know horrified that they're thinking... I think there was a girl and – I mean they're only in Year 7 and she (laughs) – she sort of thought he was trying – coming on to her or something you know or just sort of trying to be a bit more than a friend and he was absolutely horrified by that so he also doesn't know how to

sort of... put out how he's – just being a friend or how to make a friendship. I don't know (laughs) – I don't know a lot about him so really it's going to be just seeing how he comes in. If he comes in tomorrow...

[0:46:50]

Facilitator: Would you say he had friends do you think?

Group Member: Well yeah I did ask this question and yeah she's observed him in the classroom and when he – you know he doesn't always recognise they are trying to be friendly in that sort of sense, so...

Facilitator: Okay so it's kind of perhaps around –

Group Member: Recognising it – yeah, what people are – coming across to him.

Facilitator: Uh huh yeah recognising other people's intentions and thoughts and...

Group Member: Yes, yeah.

Facilitator: Okay.

Group Member: So um (laughs) where can I go from there? With that, what sort of – but then also it's going to be very early days as I said – to this first couple of sessions because he is quite a sensitive boy and I don't think he's going to be – he's taking it all in and – well he might be, I don't know him well enough yet to – I really just want to see, get him in and talking really and (sighs) sort of build up the relationship as it were.

Facilitator: So you're recognising that the first kind of couple of sessions will be just relationship building –

Group Member: I think just getting to know him and just sort of making him – making him feel happy about coming because he's so like, "Oh I like that lesson, I don't want to come out of that lesson" where it's not (laughs) – we have quite a few of them who would be probably looking to find a way out of a lesson, he's sort of, "Oh no I like



that lesson". And I mean I just sat down with him for literally five minutes and had a look at his timetable and he said, "I like that lesson, no I don't want to come out of that one" (sighs) Okay! In a way you want to say, "No you're coming out of that one and that's it" that's the time I've got free, but because he's a bit of a sensitive soul, we aren't sort of treating him like that if you know what I mean? So um... don't want to upset his enthusiasm for going into class as well but – which he is... so... er yes, but starting off with making friendships and recognising how people you know might be trying to be friendly, which he may not see it as... It's a bit of a new one because I haven't really – I've done the other two areas but not so much that one.

Facilitator: Okay so you're wondering about whether there's something about helping him – recognising other people's emotions and intentions...?

Group Member: Yes...

[0:49:24]

Facilitator: Um so that could be – I guess what I'm picking up as well is that perhaps you're not sure at the moment in terms of where to focus?

Group Member: Yes so I think we're sort of very short of time and I want to have – I'd like to have some impact over the next four weeks but it may take you know just building up a sort of relationship with him and gaining his sort of confidence in thinking that he can sort of say how he feels or whatever but that may take that time that we've got left with the half term but...

Facilitator: And I guess what – did you say Year 9?

Group Member: No he's Year 7.

Facilitator: He's Year 7? Okay um... so he would – do you think he would be in a place to say where perhaps he would like to get to where...?

Group Member: As I say, I don't know him enough yet, but that was something I've kind of got to look out for tomorrow just to find out where he thinks he is now and where he'd like to be. So I suppose I'm on the right track, but again (laughs) because I don't know him -

Facilitator: Fantastic. Sounds – yeah, so you're looking at an activity around where he is, where he thinks he is - ?

Group Member: Yeah, where he is, where he thinks he is, but I don't want to bulldoze in yet really too heavily with the friendship thing because um there's a possibility he might be on that Asperger's sort of spectrum, but sort of looking into that as well so he just may not... full stop recognise anything like that, you know other people's feelings and emotions that are coming across to him. So until that's sort of a little bit more established I don't know – I don't really want to go full blown into that you know, "Well you know they are just trying to be friendly" (laughs)...

Facilitator: So at the moment you've been given the kind of broad area of friendships from (Senco?) is that - ?

Group Member: Well yeah that's the sort of line that I'm going for, so I've just been scanning through your – the folder and where to sort of go with that but...

Facilitator: It sounds like you've got –

Group Member: ...I need to sort of just get to know the boy first (laughs) and I think that's what worries me that the time is going to go before we break up and then we're back – then we'll be back and probably got to do it all over again (laughs).

Facilitator: Well could you see it as – from what you're saying, it sounds like a good kind of target between now and perhaps the end of term, would be for you to have a sort of clear path in terms of where perhaps he would like to get to –

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: I don't know, what are people's thoughts?

Group Member: Also, I don't know whether he actually realises he has a problem (laughs) with his friendships; it is sort of a feeling you know... (sighs) how it's come around I do not know but...

Group Member: I'd probably just want to get to know them and just find out their likes and dislikes, things that they enjoy about school and –

Group Member: Yeah that's what I've got sort of in my head to do but –

Group Member: Their strengths as well – the strength cards are really good aren't they – just finding out about them and...

Group Member: Yeah that's all the type of things I've got sort of sorted for when he does show his face! (Laughs) But the lessons –

Group Member: I probably wouldn't even be thinking about the friendship stuff I don't think until –

Group Member: No, this is it, I don't want to bulldoze in with it.

Group Member: If he's not very aware though of what he sort of needs to do or what he – if he's not very aware of what he wants to do and he's been given this place where because of the sort of person – character that he is, and there's lessons that he really likes and everything, do you think he might be sort of going, "I'm not that keen, if she shows up, I'm just going to say I really like this lesson" so maybe for next – depending what happens tomorrow, maybe give in tomorrow and then say, "Look next week we're meeting at this time because we're running out of time" and then – so that you can actually make a start and then he might see, "Oh actually it's not that bad" you know and it's all right and then to make it clear and say, "If you don't show up – this is my best slot for me because I work here too and I've got to juggle everything around and this is my best slot so we'll do it then and then we'll make a plan for now".

Group Member: Mm I don't think he's got this B Block phobia like (laughs) –

Group Member: Oh yeah, yeah! So if he's happy to come to B Block –

Group Member: He's happy to come, that's the first hurdle.

Group Member: Have you not heard about the B Block - ?

Group Member: He's not one of them, I mean the girl was in last year wasn't it and she really didn't like to come because of that big stigma around B Block but um yes I don't think he's going to be like that, it's just he just likes his lessons and he doesn't want to miss them I don't think, I mean genuinely that's what he's like so...

Group Member: And maybe he doesn't know what he's got to come for, maybe –

Group Member: Yes, yeah.

Group Member: This Asperger's thing –

Group Member: Well this is it, I'm not too sure yet you know whether it's that or not but um –

Facilitator: Yeah he'll need kind of clear expectations is what you're saying isn't it, in terms of knowing – so it sounds like you've done some good work around finding out which would be a good slot for him to come into –

Group Member: Yes, well I've got quite a few slots now – well not quite a few, but a few more than I had, but yeah it's... there are limits (laughs).

Facilitator: And so the agreement is that it's going to be tomorrow - ?

Group Member: Yes and I think he was fine by that but he didn't show up last week so – which I thought that was his first session, proper session. Maybe he'd forgotten, because they do that as well don't they. But if he does that this week then I will put my face round the door I think.

Facilitator: Will the staff in his lesson know?

Group Member: Yeah, yeah I'm sure that's been sorted already that he will be – yeah it's been Okay'd for him to – yeah.

[0:55:20]

Facilitator: Is it worth double checking with them just so if they spot him - ?

Group Member: Yeah I will just get... because I'm sure she has reminded him because she does see him. He does come into B Block – well he did for a while. He had his own little kind of board game club that he had sort of made up to sort of – I think that

was another thing to sort of – when he was waiting for his ELSA slot, to get some friends coming in but I don't think that really took off very well. But –

Group Member: Perhaps that's a way in, maybe you say to him, "Look let's go and play a game" or something?

Group Member: Yeah I mean I think – I don't think he's going to be one of these that just will sit there and sort of you know – I think he's quite a chatty sort of dare I say "friendly" but (laughs) obviously not in that sense – not recognising. No he's a sort of chatty friendly boy but he doesn't recognise other people's –

Group Member: Yes, yes.

Group Member: - how they're coming across to him. I don't know, I'll have to wait and see (laughs).

Facilitator: Yes, so it sounds like you're in the situation where you haven't quite met him and found out –

Group Member: No, no not a proper – it was just to have a look at his timetable and you know I wanted to say, "Do you know why you're coming?" but no, no there's time (laughs) – because at the moment it's still sort of just putting the feelers out and just sort of testing the water I suppose to see what he's – well as long as he's happy to come over, I think that's going to be my first thing, not because he doesn't want to come to B Block but just he doesn't want to come out of a lesson which he likes, "Oh I like that lesson" and that's literally how it's going, but you know he's not the first one to say (laughs), "I like that lesson, I don't want to come out of that lesson" so I might have to just be firm and yeah it won't be forever but we've only got like how many more weeks left? It probably won't be enough time to get into the friendship activities too much really but we'll see.

Facilitator: I think – so tomorrow you're going to be looking at general –

Group Member: Just and just you know what he likes and things you know getting to know him, his hobbies and things, just what I do normally in a first session because they don't know what they're coming into so... I'll just start talking to you (laughs) and I don't think I'll have a problem with him like that. I think he'll be chatty and -

Facilitator: Yes, it sounds like you think he'll be quite honest as well from what you're saying in terms of your –

Group Member: Oh yeah oh he will if he tells you he doesn't want to come out of that lesson because, "I like that lesson!" (laughs).

Facilitator: Yes exactly, he'll say it as it is.

Group Member: Yes he will, yes.

Facilitator: Okay um and so – and then as part of that, some activities that will help to explore how he actually sees himself and –

Group Member: Himself, yes.

Facilitator: - where he might want to get to so – because like you were saying, he may or may not think that he has friends. He may think that he would like situations to be different, it's kind of – it's that sort of thing isn't it. So it sounds like that activity around you know, "Who are you? And what do you see yourself as? Where would you like to be?"

Group Member: Yeah well that's what I've got to do for tomorrow but until he's in there (laughs) we'll just go with the flow...

Facilitator: Yes and at the moment your kind of hypothesis I guess in a way, your assumption is that –

Group Member: Yes, that this is how he is and -

Facilitator: Yeah, he finds it difficult to read the intentions of others; there could be work around there. Actually what we need to do is think, "Is that right?" to test that out really over the – in the next few sessions... yeah.

Group Member: Yes.

[0:59:04]

Facilitator: Does that sound - ?

Group Member: Yeah that's fine, yeah. I think I'm – well hopefully he'll come in tomorrow and we'll just have a chat really to begin with (laughs). Yeah, yeah so I'll – there's lots of friendship things that I've been looking at but I – you know until I know how much he understands of it or – we'll just see how it goes. As I say, the time limit is what worries me, it's that I'm probably just maybe starting in it and then we'll have this big gap and...

Facilitator: So I think could you feed that to the (Senco?) that you know this is – this is the kind of time limits and what I hope to do before summer is... and then is he someone you think you could carry on with after the summer?

Group Member: Well it depends whether he likes his lessons! (Laughter)

Facilitator: Okay in terms of your time management, do you think it's someone that –

Group Member: I should think so yes, yeah. Yeah I mean it might be difficult but we'll have to work round – yeah, well he will have to work round me probably more likely in September because it'll be a whole new ball game I suspect again won't it? But yes... yeah so one step at a time anyway with him (laughs).

Facilitator: Yes and you're recognising that there is that summer break so it's – it will be work towards a plan and then you can look at putting that plan in in September really. Yeah, Okay... Okay is that Okay?

Group Member: That's Okay yeah.

Facilitator: Yeah? Are you feeling you're Okay in the next four weeks or do you want to explore any of that any further?

Group Member: (Sighs) I think until I have a first initial sort of – well maybe couple of weeks with him just to see where he is... just to get to know him really I think, I probably won't know. But I've got lots of friendship stuff but I just – I just don't want to bulldoze in with it all yet because I might just scare him off even more (laughter), especially if

he likes his lessons even more than he likes coming here. So I'm just going to take it slowly I think but the fact is that I haven't got much time; that's my biggest worry is the time limit, but I know I can obviously pick it up in September but I would like to sort of have a bit of an impact in that area hopefully and a bit of a chance to -

Facilitator: Yes, it's kind of – it's wondering where to have the impact isn't it because - ?

Group Member: Yes and I mean there's all these things I'm looking at, "Oh that looks good, that looks good – that's too far in advance" like that you know? (Sighs) So I haven't even had a proper chat with him yet so... I think I'm just going to have to go with the flow and just take it like I do with all the other ones really (laughs) and sort it out as we go, yeah.

Facilitator: Yeah Okay it's because it's a new area –

Group Member: It's a new area for me yes, this – because you know and again it's only him, it's not like there's a group of similar sort of other ones to sort of you know bounce things off of when you've got more than one, but with him...

[1:02:22]

Facilitator: Well after a couple of sessions, feel free to email or phone me as well if you want to then have a chat about how you might go about the next couple –

Group Member: Okay, yeah there might be only one session after that mightn't there? (Laughs).

Facilitator: Yes but you could then think about what you might want to do in September around if you – you know if you...

Group Member: Yeah I think that's when it'll be happening more of it in September but he might have changed (inaudible 1:02:41) as well, he might – after summer holidays things do change a lot (laughs) and they come back different so...

Facilitator: And I think once you have a focus area then you think you'll probably be more confident in selecting which bits of resources will be more helpful around that area and obviously have a chat with the (Senco?) as well as you're going along.



Group Member: Yeah...

Facilitator: Okay are we all Okay? Do we need refreshments or anything or - ?

Group Member: No I'm fine.

Group Member: I'm going to go and get a drink of water. Does anyone else want one?

Group Member: No thanks.

Group Member: Fine thank you.

Group Member: Sure? Sure? (Laughter)

Facilitator: So... in the last bits of today um I brought some bits around anger management and day three in particular and then um we'll do kind of a bit of a round of celebrations as well as it's our last one of the year (laughs).

Group Member: Lovely!

Facilitator: Okay... so in terms of the day three, mostly in – on the training, you'll remember it was around the sort of fireworks model, yeah? Does that ring a bell? Is that something that you use in - ? How did you use that?

Group Member: I've actually – or the children have built like little models and things like that um and with some of them, they actually prefer writing some of the things that made them angry to put inside it.

Facilitator: Oh Okay...

Group Member: Um on other occasions they've actually drawn it on the board and then they choose whether it's a long fuse they've got or a short fuse, so depending on if it's a long fuse then the bigger explosion is longer whereas the short fuse is – you get instant reaction and come straight back down.

Facilitator: Right... Okay.

Group Member: So some of the children find that quite useful.

Facilitator: So in terms of their own awareness of how they might respond to the situations?

[1:05:07]

Group Member: Mm and what their triggers are and things like that as well. So instead of actually having them mapped, they'll have something else, um like someone um scribbling on their work or someone shouting at them. So just draw a little picture for them and say, "Right that's the one I want on there" -

Facilitator: Excellent.

Group Member: - or they get to draw it, depending on what they're wanting that day to do.

Facilitator: Yeah and there's lots around their kind of thoughts aren't they which is where the fuse kind of comes in, is that what you do as well? Is - are you - do you - ?

Group Member: Yeah we've done lots but they've all made their own like rockets and things and had the things coming out of the bottom you know, the things that make them (inaudible 1:06:00) yeah, the triggers and you know hopefully lengthening that fuse as time goes on.

Facilitator: Yes, yeah... (laughs). Okay and that's something that you haven't used at the moment?

Group Member: No.

Facilitator: So the bits that I've brought along, um you're probably aware of them um this book is basically what the ELSA um training is based on; it's just a really good guide in terms of the areas of anger really. Um... and so it goes through the firework model, it goes through the assault cycle as well, so if you remember um that's about how our body really responds in um a threat situation um... so yes, so that's just more of a general guidance around that but it does draw out, as does um the

volcano (inaudible 1:07:10) as well is that something -? Yeah... um... which really does draw upon the importance of the connections between the thoughts at the time and how they might be feeling and I think – yeah, for me that's a big part of it is helping them to make that shift in a way in terms of um if a trigger happens, what thoughts are they going to have? Are they going to be kind of hot thoughts (laughs) or cold thoughts? Do you know what I mean by that? It's kind of – yeah. But there's different ways of seeing the situation and different ways of thinking about it.

Group Member: Actually there was a good one um – is drawing up two people perhaps fighting over a book and actually what they're saying to each other but also what they're thinking -

Facilitator: Ah fantastic.

Group Member: - that's very interesting.

Facilitator: Excellent, so making those real connections between what's actually happening – what they're thinking at the time, which might be different.

Group Member: Yeah because you're going to be, "Actually I want this book", "No I want this book" and then one's probably thinking, "Actually you can have it" and the other one going, "No I really want that". But it's for the children to decide what's happening with that which is great.

Facilitator: So those sort of scenario based things and particularly when you draw it out like that, it can be really helpful. So you're all aware of this... mainly for younger ones actually.

Group Member: Yeah that looks like it -

Facilitator: There is one that's all about um kind of lessons um but I think as with all of these things, you can have lesson plans it's kind of you dip in and out as you feel is important for the child don't you? Um... yes and then there are books like this which I think again they're probably familiar with which is stories –

Group Member: Can I have a look at that now - ?

Facilitator: Yeah and I guess therapeutic stories come into this as well don't they when people have used that specifically around...

Group Member: Yeah I mean depending on obviously the child but yeah some of the stories can be quite good um I'm just thinking of the koala that wouldn't cooperate, that's a good one for some of the children.

Facilitator: Okay.

Group Member: It's the monkey – it's the penguin who lost its cool as well –

Group Member: That's it, yeah.

Group Member: - that's the one isn't it that's really good.

Group Member: Yeah Penelope (laughter) that's a good one actually.

Facilitator: Is that another story book?

Group Member: Another story book with a little – it's got a little penguin and...

Group Member: Um general stories that um she's doing a diving competition and things like that and someone says something to her and she loses her cool um so yeah that's quite interesting.

Facilitator: Okay.

Group Member: There's a nice little rhyme for them to learn as well isn't there? I can't remember it at this moment (laughs).

Group Member: I'm not saying it! (Laughs)

Group Member: I can't remember it but there was – and they loved the – it's – they make that rhyme don't they? (Laughter) You know it's when you start saying it and you're reading it out and the kids are like, "Shall we sing it together?" "No!" (Laughter)

Facilitator: What's the premise of the rhyme? Give me a little bit.

Group Member: If... no I can't remember it! (Laughs)

Group Member: If you – something about – I can't remember now. It's about what to do if you're feeling cross and then this is what I need to do, I don't lose my cool I can just – it's quite nice, it's quite powerful isn't it?

Facilitator: So gives them an alternative and a strategy. Okay... have people brought along anything?

Group Member: Well I brought – because I gave I think this to you didn't I? I gave you –

Group Member: Yes that was brilliant.

Group Member: (Inaudible 1:11:23) nice little work but it's a photocopy – I photocopied the whole book and then I just photocopy it as and when because it's like a workbook and it works -

Facilitator: Ah I see...

Group Member: - just quite nice, it's just something for them to work... um...

Facilitator: That looks like the same as, "What to do when I worry too much?"

Group Member: It's the same – yeah it's the same – yeah it's the same series.

Facilitator: Ah!

[1:11:38]

Group Member: And this has been really good – this has been quite powerful. I've been doing this now with a couple of children at the moment and they get to draw their car because it's about being in control of your car and about losing control. So you can kind of relate it to that which is – that's actually been really good and I think I gave that to somebody –

Group Member: Yeah it is really good. I liked that one.

Group Member: And then there's another little – that one, a little calming book.

Facilitator: Ah, thank you.

Group Member: It's about the candle and the strawberry.

Facilitator: Oh the candle and the strawberry! Yes another one of my groups were talking about that actually, that's deep breathing isn't it?

Group Member: Yeah, yeah.

Facilitator: Have people come across the candle and the strawberry?

Group Member: It's brilliant! (Laughter)

Facilitator: Do you want to explain [Name] or [Name]?

Group Member: You sniff the strawberry and blow the candle out.

Group Member: Three times.

Group Member: Oh that's quite interesting because most of the – most children who if you're on break – if I'm on break duty or lunch duty and they come over and they've got – it's

usually if they've been hurt or if they've been upset by someone, I just tell them to take deep breaths.

Group Member: Mm.

Facilitator: Yes, when I think of the strawberry I can take a deep breath in through my nose...

Group Member: But it's obviously younger children obviously that it's better for!

Group Member: You never know! (Laughter) There's one or two –

Group Member: They actually – they do it don't they and they sit there –

Group Member: Well they like strawberries.

Group Member: You can see them like...

Group Member: Mm.

Facilitator: Yes I think an ELSA in another group actually created models of it as well, so they have a strawberry and a candle and –

Group Member: (Laughs) It's brilliant, I like that. But yeah this is –

Group Member: It's a thick book.

Group Member: - it's quite a thick book.

[1:13:30]

Facilitator: It's like a workbook so you're actually working through it and there's activities –

Group Member: And there's activities for each – there's like several chapters and each chapter it tells you – it's about your fuse and what your triggers are and your calm thoughts and your cool thoughts and everything so um -

Facilitator: Oh Okay...

Group Member: I've got a copy of that.

Group Member: Oh did I give you that copy?

Group Member: Well I'm doing on with "Managing Moods" at the moment and we just like write it up on the board and then get them to think about it.

Facilitator: Mm... yes so again doing those real links between –

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: - the thoughts that they're having and then how some thoughts...

Group Member: (Laughs) It's like I'd read the book!

Facilitator: Okay brilliant, shall I pass that round?

Group Member: I've seen that, I've got -

Facilitator: [Name] have you seen that? Anything else people find helpful when they're doing this sort of work?

Group Member: Well I use Angry 'Arry who's having a lie down over there. He's –

Group Member: I was looking at that earlier.



Group Member: - but he's – I think I just got the idea from the book that I think this – um where you have your feeling – where you feel your feelings in your body and so it's just specifically for anger and then they do um... Post-its and they put Post-its on, so it's just really a communication tool really.

Facilitator: Mm yeah, so helping them to identify where in the body and - ?

Group Member: Yeah and then why and how it makes them feel and then perhaps what they do to kind of stop it or – and stuff, but it usually works quite well and then especially if they get lots of little kind of – kind of little bits of Post-its and they can actually write certain things on there as well. So it's just – and then you can um... depending on what comes out of that, you can focus more on various points for the like the – on another week and stuff like that. So it's quite good.

Facilitator: Thank you, anything else people use?

Group Member: Games... the anger games...

Group Member: Oh that one I do...

Facilitator: Can I ask what anger games?

Group Member: "Escape from Angry Island".

[1:16:00]

Facilitator: Oh yes.

Group Member: It's quite good actually, I used that a couple of times last week and um I was amazed at the response when they're coming back with really mature – to actually put it into words as well, what they were thinking, you know I was struggling with it, I was thinking, "Oh I'm not too sure how to put this" and out it came and I thought, "Yeah that's just what I was thinking but I couldn't say it" (laughs) so yeah I was really impressed with the game.

Facilitator: So they are sort of scenarios are they?

Group Member: Scenarios, yeah. I borrowed it from you – do you not know it? (Laughter)

Facilitator: I don't get a chance to play them!

Group Member: It is good.

Group Member: What sort of things do they have to do then?

Group Member: Well (sighs) – well you probably know it better than me because you played it more but there's (laughter) different like hot spots isn't there and self-talk and um different cards with all these different titles and you just pick up a card and you're going round the board getting back to your chosen pile of cards. I am playing it right aren't I?

Group Member: Your island, yeah.

Group Member: Yeah your island um... and you get like – it's good for their self-esteem because it's like, "Say three positive things about yourself" and you know a boy that I've been working with self-esteem – I started with him and then I had a gap and then I got him back again and normally he can't say a good thing about himself and you ask, you know what – that type of question and – but on the board, no problem at all, he just came straight out with it. I said, "Normally you can't say a good thing about yourself but when it's in black and white in front of you on that board to get round that board you just come out with it!" Positive things about himself which he can never, ever – "Oh you know – oh there's nothing good about me", that's all I get you know.

Facilitator: It's just different formats isn't it?

Group Member: Yeah, it's just the way it came out.

Facilitator: Yeah you try lots of different things don't you when you're working with pupils and just see what they might respond to and yeah –

Group Member: Yeah he actually wanted to play it today but I didn't – (laughs), "No we're doing something else today" but he – we had our session cut short anyway because he had to see Mike Walton so (laughter) -

Facilitator: Okay.

Group Member: "I don't want to go there!" "Yes, you do!" (Laughs) So... I managed to get him out the door eventually to go and see him but -

Facilitator: Yeah, so there's things around self-talk as well –

Group Member: Yes and that's the one he actually picked and I thought, "Does he know what this means?" as in why he's picked that and he said, "Yeah because I do often tell myself that – not to do that – in my head" and I'm just amazed how much – he's obviously had a lot from other places you know around the school with Mike Walton and things like that, so things are going in but -

Facilitator: Yeah so it gave you a real insight into his own awareness and - ?

Group Member: Yeah, just – yes of his awareness and it was a really good game. I'll hang on to that one so I hope you don't want it back yet!

[1:19:00]

Facilitator: No you're all right on that one! (Laughter)

Group Member: But [Name]'s going to use it as well so you know the two of us will use it for a bit until we get –

Group Member: The lad I used it with wanted it for his birthday. He kept pestering his mum, (inaudible 1:19:18) mum!

Facilitator: Ah! (Laughs) Brilliant! Good and so – yeah and so that was really useful to see that – for you to see that he's got a strategy that he works with and – yeah, because there are a lot of different strategies aren't there that you can kind of play around with, with different pupils. So some respond well to things like self talk; others –

Group Member: Just and also just the mood they are in when they come in. Last week he was on a real high and today he wasn't so you know – because I thought, "Oh we'll do a

bit more self-esteem” to see how far he’s come and what we’ve done and today just wasn’t – you know flagging it up at all (laughs) it was completely back – you know, lost it again and oh no, I think he was just a bit lethargic and just wasn’t in the happy sort of mood so it didn’t work today that – so we didn’t go with the game because I thought we’re not going to have very long with him going off anyway half way through his session, so we didn’t get started on that but -

Facilitator: So he was in a different frame of mind.

Group Member: He was and he just was – you know, was... not a good one today (sighs) to sort of get anything out of him but... so you have to be quite flexible and positive. We should have gone back to the Play Dough really! Go back to the Play Dough today –

Group Member: Have you tried the masked feelings with him?

Group Member: No, what’s that?

Group Member: That’s quite good. You get a mask and then you can put on it um you know like if you – if you look happy on the outside but actually you can be sad on the inside.

Group Member: Oh yeah I think you’ve mentioned that before haven’t you, yeah?

Group Member: And that works. That works really well because you will suddenly get them just writing down exactly how they’re feeling inside.

Group Member: Yeah... this one, he doesn’t really hide what he’s feeling (laughs) I think you can just see quite blatantly, “Yeah I can see what you’re like today” (laughs) but yeah... Yeah a good game.

Group Member: You might not see it for a while!

Group Member: It’s fine.

Facilitator: Okay – Okay anything else people wanted to flag up for anger management? Okay... so um we’ve got a few moments where um it would be really nice to end

the year just um thinking about something that you're really pleased with, something um related to ELSA for example (laughter). Or you could do general it's fine! We'll just end on a positive. Um yeah, something – something which – do you want to go round in a circle or is someone happy to –

Group Member: Well I'll start with my girl, only just that -

Facilitator: Yes.

[1:22:23]

Group Member: It's just that I've got her in a position where she can sort of just talk and just be um... come out with anything and she – she's not like she's trying to shock me or anything, she's just comfortable and we just talk about absolutely anything.

Facilitator: Brilliant.

Group Member: So – just that she's happy talking is good.

Facilitator: Good, so –

Group Member: About all aspects that – you know ones that – all sorts of things and I'm just happy that she's... comfortable enough in the room to talk.

Facilitator: Excellent.

Group Member: But that's probably nothing is it? That's probably nothing – that's how it should be I suppose (laughs) but yeah my experience was just to get, "Yeah fine" and all that so when you get one that is really just quite happy to speak -

Facilitator: Lovely good, I'm pleased, thank you. We're going this way...

Group Member: Which way? Okay... um well I've got quite a few successes really, quite a few children that know when to come in to me and say, "I need some time" um... I

think um... just when you go into a classroom and faces light up and you get, "Is it my turn yet?" so...I think just that kind of thing.

Facilitator: Yeah so you're seeing both changes in pupils that you work with and then some real positive feedback as well?

Group Member: Definitely, yeah.

Facilitator: Thank you.

Group Member: Oh I think for me it's about relationships with those children I think about you know needing their one-to-one time first and really getting to know them as a person before actually doing actually any work. I think that's really important so I think that's – and I think feeling comfortable that that's – if that's all you're getting from it that actually you're going far rather than -

Facilitator: Yes (laughs) –

Group Member: And knowing when I think it's appropriate.

Facilitator: Good yeah, so you feel like you're kind of confident in that –

Group Member: Confident in that – yeah absolutely.

Facilitator: Yeah and it is – it is a massive part isn't it – as they say with any, even adult therapy, they say it is all about the relationship; that's what – the research says if you've got a relationship between you know client and therapist then that's part of the long journey really.

Group Member: If you haven't got the trust, you haven't got anything.

Facilitator: Yeah absolutely. Lovely, thank you. [Name]?

Group Member: I worked with a Year 6 group of girls for friendship skills and it – and I didn't – I sort of had to for some of the – I used some of the stuff in the ELSA pack which worked and then that kind of sprung...into some other ideas and actually it was quite good fun some of the stuff we did. It was difficult in the middle of it, but then um... and they've pretty much been fine since then. I think -

Facilitator: Fantastic.

Group Member: - one of the um... we used Helen's buttons, that was good, and they all put each other together and they – what they kind of came to accept, there were kind of two core groups and then they sort of float between each other but what they came to accept is that you didn't actually have to be everybody's best friend all of the time and that was sort of Okay just to know that was all right to be like that. And the other key thing was um... just because you may be thinking something slightly unkind in your head, you didn't need to actually share that (laughter) as well!

Facilitator: Good!

Group Member: Which was quite a learning curve really and it made – just made life more harmonious.

Facilitator: Fantastic! So you saw real changes with that?

Group Member: Yeah, yeah and their teacher said as well – he was a bit wary and he said, "I don't know if it's all going to kind of flare up again when – before SATs you know if they're going to get a bit stressed and stuff" but they were pretty much Okay so...

Facilitator: Lovely, set up now for their transition.

Group Member: Hopefully yes (laughter).

Facilitator: Good, thank you [Name]. And [Name]?

Group Member: I've worked with a girl for quite a long time in ELSA and she's finally doing work now, writing, reading quite well and she's now moving on to Germany I think so -

Facilitator: Ah Okay, Okay...

Group Member: So we're working on her moving on to Germany now. But on the whole she's come a long way, considering what she was like.

Facilitator: Okay so she kind of became quite unsettled and you've seen - ?

Group Member: Unsettled it was – running round the school chasing her, trying to get her to do things but now she will sit down and do her work in the class.

Facilitator: Fantastic.

Group Member: But she still likes to come out and have a special time.

Facilitator: Yeah, yeah so you've provided that support for her and you're seeing the impact back in the class.

Group Member: Yeah.

Facilitator: Great, lovely, thank you. That was really lovely to hear all those (laughs). So what we will do is I will send out an email and um – just to prompt you about dates for next term and um what we'll be focusing on there and like [Name] said, if there's any queries about any of this stuff then either contact me or – is there a contact on the letter?

Male Speaker: There's a contact on the letter, yeah.

Facilitator: Yeah, yeah, um so yeah do just let us know if you want to have a chat about that and as always I'm around after if you want to catch me for anything at all. But otherwise, have a lovely summer!

Group Member: Yeah and you, thanks a lot! (Laughter)

Group Member: Can I borrow this?



[End of Transcript]

## Appendix G

The Tavistock and Portman   
NHS Foundation Trust

Quality Assurance & Enhancement  
Directorate of Education & Training  
Tavistock Centre  
120 Belsize Lane  
London  
NW3 5BA

Tel: 020 8938 2548  
Fax: 020 7447 3837  
[www.tavi-  
port.org](http://www.tavi-port.org)

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2012

Neal Ridley  


Dear Mr Ridley

**Re: Research Ethics Application**

***Title: Exploring the nature of discourse with group supervision sessions for Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs)***

I am pleased to inform you that the Trust Research Ethics Committee has approved your application.

If you have any further questions or require any clarification do not hesitate to contact me.

I am copying this communication to your supervisor.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you every success with your research.

Yours sincerely



Louis Taussig

Secretary to the Trust Research Ethics Committee

Cc Jeff Matthews (Supervisor)

## Appendix H

### The letter given to ELSAs inviting them to be part of the research.

Dear ELSA

My name is Neal Ridley and I am an Educational Psychologist from XXXX Educational Psychology Service working in the XXXX team.

I am planning to carry out some research exploring the nature of the group supervision that you receive as part of your ELSA work. The study will be exploring how language is used within the group supervision session itself. I intend to make an audio recording of three ELSA group supervision sessions using three different groups. The recordings will then be transcribed and analysed using a technique called discourse analysis. This analysis will explore how language is used to create meaning within the supervision sessions. It is hoped that the research will allow a better understanding to develop about how supervision sessions might be being used.

Please note the following information which I hope will allow you to agree to the recording of your session:

- permission for this research has been granted by the Area Principal Educational Psychologist and the psychologist responsible for the development of the ELSA project
- all members of the group will need to give consent in order for the session to be recorded

- members will have the right to withdraw their consent after the session has been recorded without giving a reason; the recording will then be destroyed
- although you will not be identified by name, due to the nature of the research and the need to use direct quotations when writing up the work you may be identified to other members of the group and those familiar with your work. Therefore, anonymity and confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. However, steps will be taken to ensure that your identity will not be compromised, wherever possible. If I am aware of particularly sensitive material within a session then permission to use this material in the final write up will be directly sought from the group member concerned
- please also be aware that, although it is currently my intention to carry out the transcription of the audio recording myself, transcripts may be sent away for transcription should this decision be made at a later date
- it is recognised that material of a sensitive nature can be discussed within a group supervision session which may be emotive for group members. It is also recognised that my presence and the fact that the session is recorded may amplify these feelings. If you would like to discuss any issues relating to the content of this session then please make contact with me or your supervisor at any point during or at the end of the session
- all information will be kept in line with the Data Protection Act (1998); the information collected will be confidential and your names and identity will not be recorded in any way so that they can be identified by a third party. All materials will be stored in locked cabinets and recordings will be destroyed after the research has been completed
- feedback regarding the outcomes of the research will be provided to you once it has been completed

I hope this letter provides you with enough information so that you feel able to give your permission for your supervision session to be recorded. If so, then please complete the section at the end of this letter and return it to me.

If you have any further questions then please feel free to ask me or contact me using the details provided below.

Thank you for your time in considering this matter,

Yours sincerely

Neal Ridley

Educational Psychologist

(Postal Address and email address supplied)

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.....(please print your name) gives permission for one ELSA group supervision session to be recorded for audio by Neal Ridley, Educational Psychologist, for use with his research into the nature of group supervision.

I have received verbal and written information about the planned research and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

Signed.....date.....

## Appendix I

### Excerpt illustrating a story-like narrative by an ELSA

Facilitator (EP): To start?

Grp Member: Yes, I'll start (laughs). Yeah, well, all sorts have happened. If you remember last time I, um, we'll start on a sad note, but, um, the last time I mentioned about this boy in year five whose mum had attempted to kill herself, and unfortunately she managed it, yeah. On the Friday before half term we got the phone call, it was an INSET day for us, thankfully, but she did it the day before. So, um, the funeral was last week, um, I didn't go, because I didn't work that closely, and I didn't know, really know her, so there was several members of staff went. Um, but the, the boys, they got special, each one of them's got special needs anyway because they were born to, because they were adopted, and they were, their, they were born to a mother who had been on drugs when she was, she was pregnant so it's affected them. Um, the youngest one who's in year five, he, um, the other ELSA has had more dealings with bereavement, everything, but one of the other LSAs had got a relationship with him anyway, so she's the one that's actually involved with him and she, sort of, defers back to the other ELSA for, um, sort of, guidance, you know. Um, I'm not, we're not quite sure whether he is really aware, and the really bizarre thing is, is that, um, their adoptive mum was an identical twin. So, of course, they're going to see the aunty who's identical, so it must be really weird.

Facilitator (EP): Yes, yes.

Grp Member: That must be really weird that mum's gone yet here's a replica in front of them, sort of thing. And she lives away but she's very good with them, um...

Grp Member: Their adopted mum's, not the real mum's?

Grp Member: No, the adopted mum is a –

Grp Member: Her sister is a twin.

Grp Member: Yeah, identical.

Grp Member: Oh, okay. Do they not usually have contact with her?

Grp Member: Um, yes they have, I think, in the past, I don't know where, I don't know the ins and outs of that. So that must be, but really weird, but I think it was the other sister that mum had had a row with, I think. There was, there was a big family row beforehand, a while before hand and, um, I think it might have been the other sister that, you know...

Grp Member: Because that knocked on to ours because she was a work colleague, she actually worked in, in –

Grp Member: Oh, that's right.

Grp Member: Yeah, so that, kind of, had a knock on effect into our school. Um, a lot of the parents and children knew about it, so we were waiting maybe on, me and the (inaudible

00:22:29) were, kind of, waiting for maybe any children that had some issues with it and wanted to talk. But we haven't had anybody.

Grp Member: No.

Grp Member: So there are other children as well, they're the older?

Grp Member: They've got, yes, two other boys who are older. One's, I think one's in year eight at (Secondary school name), and the other one's at (Special Secondary school name), I think, and he must be about year ten, I would think.

Grp Member: Okay. So who cares for them now?

Grp Member: Dad, Dad's now got –

Grp Member: Doctor dad.

Grp Member: Yeah, doctor dad, is, um, and also they're moving house as well so, um, they've had a, a house, sort of, refurbished and, you know, but, um, they've got lots and friends and family around.

Grp Member: They've had a lot of support (inaudible 00:23:18).

Grp Member: They have, yeah.



Grp Member: A lot, a lot of support.

Grp Member: Yeah, and then they're not moving far, they're just moving down the road, so it's, everything's going to be, sort of, normal, as in, sort of, schooling and stuff like that, and their friends and that. In fact, where they live now it'll be easy, where they're going to move to it'll be easier to get to friends, you know, because they don't have busy roads to cross and stuff. So –

Facilitator (EP): And you say he's being supported, the one in your school is being supported by –

Grp Member: Another ELSA, err, LSA, yeah.

Facilitator (EP): Through the other ELSA, so he's getting support in that way.

Grp Member: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And I think with the, I think with the family, um, somebody from outside, I think, but I'm not sure, I think they've got outside help as well. I would have thought so, I would have thought so, yeah, yeah, yeah. Or from the adopter, I think they were from the adopting side of it, I think there's help there as well. But, um –

Facilitator (EP): Oh, okay. And how is he?

Grp Member: I don't, I don't know. I think he, he, he's bearing up quite well, um, from what I can gather, um, but I don't really know on that one. So that was another one for year five. Um (sighs), then, um, year six, last Wednesday, because I do PPA which is, um, time out for

the teachers, but we do PE at our school. So, um, I've normally done, I used to do both Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday afternoon, then it went to just the Tuesday afternoon because we were doing nurture group on a Wednesday. And then we've stopped the nurture group for the year five and sixes, and we're doing, um, nurture now for three and four but that's on a Tuesday afternoon now. And I've now transferred to Wednesday. So I went out last Wednesday, and the Wednesday before, but last Wednesday I noticed it and, um, was it last Wednesday or the Wednesday before? Anyway, it was the first time I'd been out anyway with the year fives and sixes and, um, there was a boy in year six, and I had had dealings with him just on a, just on a, a one off, um, chat with him last November because his teachers were a bit worried with him, about him because his parents had just split up and he was, sort of, spending time with mum, spending time with dad, he was disorganised, he was all over the place. He's a bright boy but he was just all over the place. So I had a chat with him and everything and, um, he seemed to be okay, do you know what I mean, he was, he didn't have any, sort of, worries or anything like that, he didn't display anything like that. Anyway, when I was out the other Wednesday, um, and at the end of the session, um, I noticed that he had a twitch, shaking his head involuntary all the time. So I mentioned it to a couple of the other, um, sort of, LSAs that had been out there and they'd noticed it in the past. Then I spoke to the teachers, and it's a job share, so one of them had noticed it but the other one hadn't. So then obviously when she watched him, yes, she could see it. That was on the Wednesday, on the Friday, um, I was asked to take on him again, but she, and, um, but the teacher had wanted to speak to the mum but wasn't quite sure which way to go with it. And I said, "Well, I need permission to do, so if you could, you know, do it that way." And then the office had had a phone call on the Thursday, I'm off on a Thursday, but the office had had a phone call on Thursday from mum saying that, yes, they knew about, so this obviously had gone home, knew about the twitch and they were dealing with it. So in the space of, like, two

days, you know, it was all, sort of, coming out. Anyway, so I'm taking, I'm, sort of, he's year six so he's about to go to secondary school, um, he's a bright lad, he's a chatty lad, he's quite a comedian, you know, and, um, but at home I think he's displayed a bit of anger. But nothing, since I've been, sort of, I saw him on Friday and I saw him again yesterday morning because I need to, sort of, get to the root of it really, for him. So I just got, you know, got some, a big thing of sugar paper out and, sort of, wrote down the things that I thought, like the areas, home, school, friends and the future, really. And, sort of, went through these and he put likes and dislikes in.

Grp Member: Okay.

Grp Member: And then he actually said, "Can I put another one in?" I said, "Yeah," and he went, "Parents," (inaudible 00:27:53), you know. So, so it's helping him to actually, instead of having it all up in his head, actually discussing it. And when he was actually talking about it he didn't twitch once.

Grp Member: Oh, okay.

Grp Member: Yeah, so, probably, it'll probably pass, you know. But he's, he's at, they're having to move house and, um, but it's been going on since last August. And of course, um, he's feeling quite happy because they're, the buyers who were buying the house have pulled out, so, it, so he, you know, but –

Grp Member: So he doesn't want to move? (Overspeaking 00:28:24)

Grp Member: He's got the dream, he's got his dream room which is big enough to kick a football around, I went, "A football?" He said, "A soft one," I said, "Oh, right." God.

(Laughter)

Grp Member: So, um, but yeah, so, and he's, um, just delving a bit more now to get to the anger, because I know he's broken a telly at home, but that hasn't come out. And he's, he, he doesn't, he's not... He did have a go at somebody in the, in the playground, um, but generally he is not an angry boy, you know, he's a nice, he's a very pleasant lad, you know, and actually he's, he's doing very well despite... But he's just disorganised and it's, it's this sort of, like he's with mum and, mum on the Monday and Tuesday, with dad Wednesday, Thursday, and then could be with dad on Friday, Saturday, Sunday. But, you know, he's just, he forgets things and stuff like this for school, you know.

## Appendix J

### Coding used for transcript of Session 1

Data	Codes – How is group supervision used by ELSAs? <i>What is talked about by ELSAs in group supervision?</i> <i>What is happening in the group supervision of ELSAs?</i>	Codes – What functions do EPs take up (adopt) in supervision What are EPs doing in group supervision?
<p>[0:00:00]</p> <p>(Laughter)</p> <p>1. Facilitator: Phones (laughs). (ELSA name) come and join again – we're going to exclude (me) from our circle! (Laughs)</p> <p>(Overspeaking 0:00:20)</p> <p>2. Facilitator: Gather in. It feels funny doesn't it? Okay right so welcome everyone. This is our group today – slightly smaller than normal but um it's quite good in terms of timing as well because um we haven't got as long. Is everyone Okay until 3pm today?</p> <p>3. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>4. Facilitator: Lovely, Okay so what we will do is um do it as we would normally, so it would be exactly the same session as we would normally do, so I'll go through um some business, we'll do some dates for the Autumn term and venues um and then we will do a check in and um have some time to problem solve perhaps one or two areas that come up within that and um then as we agreed, we're on to day three of our resource share now (laughs) so day three is anger management. So I've just brought along some bits and I've seen that (name) has got a little thing and I notice that (name) has (problems?) in her (inaudible 0:01:28) so – oh fantastic brilliant. So</p>		<p><b>(Management of session - inclusion - EP ensuring ELSAs are included in group – 1.1)</b></p> <p><b>(Relationship building - humorous comment about excluding me – 1.1)</b></p> <p><b>(Management of session - warm welcome given to group – 1.2)</b></p> <p><b>(Group identify - inclusion - missing group members noted – 1.2)</b></p> <p><b>(Management of session - checking arrangements with the group members – 1.4)</b></p> <p><b>(EP giving structure to session – 1.4)</b> <b>(Supervision - EP ensuring that sessions run similarly on each occasion – 1.4)</b></p>

<p>we'll – I'll make sure that I leave some time for that and um I thought it would be nice to end with some celebrations as well, so just a round of something that you're pleased with that's happened this year. Okay that's the plan, is that all all right? Is that - ?</p> <p>5. Group Member: Uh huh.</p> <p>6. Facilitator: It's just as normal really. Okay so um... dates for next time. Have people got diaries for the Autumn term? (Laughs)</p> <p>7. Group Member: We'll keep with Mondays will we?</p> <p>8. Facilitator: If that's Okay – is Monday still Okay with everyone here? Um yeah that's fine, lovely. So the first one I wondered about was 1<sup>st</sup> October which is a Monday, 1pm until 3pm? Everyone still Okay with that? Yeah?</p> <p>9. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>10. Facilitator: Okay... so um resource share – I'll send an email out to remind everyone of these dates anyway, um but the resource share would be social skills and um autism and social stories and that sort of area. And then – so did everyone get that? Monday 1<sup>st</sup> October?</p> <p>11. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>12. Facilitator: After half term... oh venue sorry for that one, is anyone able to offer any - ?</p> <p>13. Group Member: I suppose we probably are (laughs).</p> <p>14. Facilitator: (Laughs) (Inaudible 0:03:00) yeah? Thank you (name). Brilliant... after half term... 26<sup>th</sup> November which sounds a long way off! (Laughs)</p> <p>15. Group Member: The what? The what?</p> <p>16. Facilitator: 26<sup>th</sup> November.</p>		<p><b>(Group identity - group agreement about sharing resources section – 1.4)</b></p> <p><b>(EP as group member – also brought resources to share – 1.4)</b></p> <p><b>(EP direction - session to also include 'celebrations' – what's gone well this year – 1.4)</b></p> <p><b>(Group identity - checking agenda with group – 1.8)</b></p> <p><b>(Management of supervision - administrative tasks as a group – 1.10)</b></p> <p><b>(Group identify - shared setting of venues – 1.12)</b></p> <p>Admin and arrangements transparent and arranged by the whole group</p>
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<p>17. Group Member: Is that a Monday is it?</p> <p>18. Facilitator: Apparently so!</p> <p>19. Group Member: Oh that means – my birthday is the day after, it's on a Tuesday!</p> <p>20. Group Member: Oh we can probably make a date of it –</p> <p>21. Group Member: It's a big birthday – yes so all come and bring me a nice present!</p> <p>22. Group Member: Oh! (Laughter)</p> <p>23. Facilitator: Note it down! (Laughter) (Name)'s birthday! Okay must do cake that day.</p> <p>[0:03:48]</p> <p>24. Group Member: Got to be a special cake – we'll get (name) to make a special one.</p> <p>25. Group Member: Yeah... 30 (laughter).</p> <p>26. Facilitator: We could have it as 30 if you want it? (Laughter) Okay um so... venue for that one, anybody be able to –</p> <p>27. Group Member: We could come here – come here again.</p> <p>28. Facilitator: Shall we do it here? And then... we can embarrass you properly! (Laughter) Thank you, so that's the home for that one on 26<sup>th</sup>. And um the resource share would be around friendship skills, that's day five. If you still want to – are you happy to continue with that sort of format in terms of the resource share - ?</p> <p>29. Group Member: Uh huh.</p> <p>30. Group Member: Yeah.</p>	<p><b>(Developing group ethos – 1.21)</b> friendly banter as a group whilst arranging dates</p> <p><b>(Caring for each other as colleagues – 1.21)</b></p>	<p><b>(Group identity - EP use of ELSA's names – personalises conversation – 1.23)</b></p> <p><b>(Personal event – group noting a member's birthday – 1.23)</b></p> <p><b>(Management of session – 1.28)</b> <b>(Group decision making - EP checking with group as to whether they still wish to maintain the same format to the sessions – 1.28)</b></p>
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<p>31. Facilitator: - do people find that a helpful thing to do?</p> <p>32. Group Member: Yeah (laughs).</p> <p>33. Facilitator: You're nodding?</p> <p>34. Group Member: Yeah! (Laughs)</p> <p>35. Facilitator: Okay good.</p> <p>(Overspeaking and laughter 0:04:55)</p> <p>36. Facilitator: So the other bit, um just in terms of business – “business” – is that there’s a really helpful website that we’ve been told about. Um so you know about the general ELSA one that (ELSA co-ordinator)’s put together?</p> <p>37. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>38. Facilitator: There is – there’s one that’s been put together by an ELSA in York um and she has made it accessible to everyone um it’s – do you want to take down the address? But I’ll email it round to you as well – it’s very easy – “www.elsa-“ - is that one of those lines, a hyphen? “-support” all lower case – “.co.uk”. And I just briefly went on and it’s just a really accessible, really kind of easy to navigate site um she – do you want a Post-it (name)?</p> <p>39. Group Member: Oh I suppose that would be easier! (Laughter)</p> <p>(Overspeaking 0:06:00)</p> <p>40. Facilitator: Just in case you wash your hands! (Laughs)</p> <p>41. Group Member: “Elsa support” -</p> <p>42. Facilitator: Yeah it’s a really – so what she does is um she’s got a number of different links – it covers all of the areas of day one to day six so um even she’s got things on loss and bereavement. She’s also got on there um templates which I thought would be quite</p>		<p><b>(Group identity - EP awareness of ‘power’– therefore asking specific question to group to ensure a verbal response received from group members about session format – 1.33)</b></p> <p><b>(Information sharing - EP sharing website information with ELSA group – 1.36)</b></p> <p><b>(Caring - EP offering group member some paper - looking after group members – 1.38)</b></p> <p><b>(Humour to develop group ethos – 1.40)</b></p>
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<p>helpful so um templates for kind of making games, so they're sort of flash card templates where you can put information and it churns them all out for you – certificate templates and things like that so -</p> <p>43. Group Member: <b>Oh cool!</b></p> <p>[0:06:44]</p> <p>44. Facilitator: And all that she asks – she's – there's a little note on the home page which just says um if anyone wants to make an (update?) over time then she'd find that helpful, but otherwise it's kind of open – so definitely go and check that one out because it was VERY useful and (whispering) that's all I needed to say. So – so we'll do our usual see how everyone is around, does anyone want to start us off today? I'm not going to look at anyone –</p> <p>45. Group Member: (Laughs) <b>Shall I start?</b></p> <p>46. Facilitator: Yeah, go for it! How are you?</p> <p>47. Group Member: <b>Yeah, no good thanks, yeah – no it's been quite a difficult few weeks I think; we've had quite a few challenges, yeah I think we're okay. It's difficult – it's different because I'm not obviously doing so much, although I have been doing quite a bit more one-to-one because I've had to, but generally my role – I'm not doing it, because it's a small group anyway so we're doing a lot of the stuff in small groups. So...</b></p> <p>48. Facilitator: Uh huh.</p> <p>49. Group Member: ... <b>um but quite a lot of our children are needing extra one-to-one as well within that.</b></p> <p>50. Facilitator: <b>Okay you've been – you've been taking advantage of time where you can have individual sessions with – ?</b></p> <p>51. Group Member: <b>We've had to, just because of perhaps the dynamics of that group is not always working so we've had to kind of you know see how it's gone and then – you know not necessarily</b></p>	<p><b>Appreciation of EP input – 1.43)</b> Interest from ELSA when more detail provided by EP</p> <p><b>(Group ownership - ELSA offering to start – 1.45)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA recap of work since last session – 4.47)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA sharing difficult time – 1.47)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA sharing tension between offering small group work and one-to-one sessions with children – 1.47)</b></p> <p><b>(Pressure of work - ELSA stating children need 'one-to-one' – 1.49)</b></p> <p><b>(Difficulties with work - ELSA sharing</b></p>	<p><b>(EP demonstrating professional interest in ELSA work - sharing information from website – 1.42)</b></p> <p><b>(EP recommendation for website – 1.44)</b></p> <p><b>(Management of session - EP referring to usual process to start session – 1.44)</b></p> <p><b>(Empathy - EP avoiding choosing ELSA to start – waiting for offer – 1.44)</b></p> <p><b>(EP question to gain clarity of situation for ELSA – 1.50)</b></p>
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<p>always planned – quite often we just had to like, “This is a good time for a practical – we can do something else” because the practical is not going as well as what it should be but -</p> <p>52. Facilitator: Is that for those pupils that aren't managing the group situations?</p> <p>53. Group Member: Because they're not managing – still not managing – although they have done, they have done in the past or they would normally but for whatever reason... like there was a boy this morning who was absolutely fab last week and has been for weeks but we had a visitor in this morning and couldn't cope with the fact that there was a visitor there and he actually was able to tell us that by lunchtime and say he didn't like it and so that child then – we just could see it sort of escalated and he had to be kind of taken – and he just sort of said, “I just couldn't handle the visitor there” so then you kind of – so just kind of thinking on your feet there and not always necessarily planning it but I think this would be useful you know, see what it is or more like one-to-one kind of, “Where do we need to go with it?” He's not necessarily angry, it's just dealing with how he's feeling with himself –</p> <p>54. Facilitator: Yeah so you're doing this –</p> <p>55. Group Member: - there's a lot more of that happening since I think the last time I was here. It was a lot – more group based but there's a real balance of a bit of both really.</p> <p>56. Facilitator: Okay and so you were saying sort of in those individual sessions you're doing more kind of listening and –</p> <p>57. Group Member: Just letting them sort of offload and just finding out you know what it is and you know just – just a lot of it is offloading with whatever is going on and um giving them some skills, you know – like the book that I've got here – the child's really quite cross about a lot of things and we've started with the anger book -</p> <p>58. Facilitator: Uh huh.</p>	<p>that the dynamics of the group being run proving challenging – 1.51)</p> <p>(Exploring own thinking - ELSA recognising group work not working – 1.53)</p> <p>(Exploring own thinking - acknowledging varied reasons as to why group work not functioning well – 1.53)</p> <p>(ELSA identifying reasons for child's behaviour – 1.53)</p> <p>(ELSA 'off-loading' – managing frustrations with work – 1.53)</p> <p>(ELSA role – giving children the opportunity to 'offload' - 1.57)</p> <p>(ELSA role – giving children the opportunity to develop new skills – 1.57)</p>	<p>(EP question for clarification – 1.52)</p> <p>(EP reflecting back – to gain clarity of ELSAs work/thinking – 1.56)</p>
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<p>59. Group Member: - things like that, just whatever this child has – actually has come and said you know, “What would help?” So that’s how we’ve kind of done it is like, “What would be useful?” And, “I’d want help with – I find this hard – “ so it’s kind of coming from them rather than saying, “I think you need – “ they – it’s coming from them which is – makes it a bit more powerful isn’t it. So...</p> <p>[0:09:56]</p> <p>60. Facilitator: Absolutely. Good, so how have you felt doing that sort of - ? Has it been a bit of a shift in terms of a - ?</p> <p>61. Group Member: It has recently, yeah it has actually, but then it means they are allowed to do a lot more of that whereas before I think it – because it’s always been group-based, you don’t always get that one-to-one time, but I think you just really get to know them don’t you – it’s about the relationships as well isn’t it? So yeah it’s been really useful actually, you know good for that way, just to build relationships individually and kind of tune in to them.</p> <p>62. Facilitator: Lovely, good, thank you.</p> <p>63. Group Member: So yeah it’s been great.</p> <p>64. Facilitator: Are you doing that mostly through talking – just kind of getting together and talking or activities...?</p> <p>65. Group Member: Sometimes – it’s hard – not talking, it’s usually activities or sometimes just giving them a piece of paper. It could be um – and then perhaps from that then think, “Right perhaps this would be useful for them” and then perhaps try and find something that relates to what he or she is worried about or got concerns about um but yeah generally – initially it’s kind of like let’s just get the Playdough out or let’s just have a piece of paper and let’s just you know -</p> <p>66. Facilitator: And then see what comes from that.</p> <p>67. Group Member:- and then see what comes from that and then find</p>	<p>(ELSA sharing work - identifying what would help the child manage anger – 1.59)</p> <p>(ELSA giving examples of the types of questions she uses with children to help them identify what they need – 1.59)</p> <p>(Child-led work - idea of ‘coming from them’ – 1.59)</p> <p>(Reflection on work - ELSA provided with opportunity to describe/reflect on difference between group work and one-to-one work – 1.61)</p> <p>(importance of relationships - ELSA identifying that her work is about relationships – 1.61)</p> <p>(Belief - one to one work allows ELSA to get to know children better – 1.61)</p> <p>(ELSA approach - using some stimulus with child along with conversation – 1.65)</p> <p>(Planning of activities - ELSA planning</p>	<p>(EP question to deepen thinking – identify changes – 1.60)</p> <p>(EP questioning aimed at exploring ELSAs approach to the work and techniques used – 1.64)</p>
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<p>some activities that will link to that which has been helpful. So that's why – so it's not kind of like – I haven't planned it, it's kind of planned – self-planned really hasn't it (laughs) primarily from the child which I think sometimes works better isn't it? So yeah, quite useful that way so yeah it's been good.</p> <p>68. Facilitator: Okay... lovely, shall we go round?</p> <p>69. Group Member: Yeah may as well hadn't we?</p> <p>70. Facilitator: How are you doing then?</p> <p>71. Group Member: Not too bad. Um got my usual Year 3, he's still got his anger problem hence this that he made with the traffic light system, um literally he came up with like the bits that come off on his own, he sort of, "Well can we stick something to it so it actually shows whether I'm actually feeling happy or getting more cross?" Um... so some of it's worked, but he's still stropping, especially when someone says, "No you can't play football any more" and things like that and team games um... so I'm still working on that with him but he can be such hard work. But having said that, some of the adults can be as well! Because it's a case of, "Oh [name] has got – " or has run off because he's having a strop and when you get out there actually he hasn't run off and he's not stropping, it's just gone to a quiet area and sat down.</p> <p>72. Facilitator: Right so there's interpretation from both adults and –</p> <p>73. Group Member: Definitely, yeah.</p> <p>74. Facilitator: - Okay, that might be influencing how people are responding to him and... Okay.</p> <p>75. Group Member: Yeah, anything that happens out there, "Oh it must be him" so...</p> <p>[0:12:54]</p> <p>76. Facilitator: Mm, Okay. Is um (child's name) wanting – might want to</p>	<p>activity based on initial conversations/play with child – 1.67)</p> <p>(Defining planning? - ELSA acknowledging work not specifically planned – 1.67)</p> <p>(Child-led work - ELSA suggesting better led from child determining the activity – 1.67)</p> <p>(Use of descriptor for child - child defined as having 'anger problem' – 1.71)</p> <p>(Developed resource - ELSA sharing resource made with child – 1.71)</p> <p>(ELSA sharing frustration - child's behaviour is challenging – 1.71)</p> <p>(Staff lack of understanding - ELSA commenting that the other adults in school lack understanding of child's needs – 1.71)</p> <p>(ELSA agreeing with EP reflection – 1.175)</p>	<p>(EP listening skills – reflecting and interpreting ELSAs words – 1.72)</p> <p>(EP interpreting ELSAs comment to provoke further thinking – 1.74)</p> <p>(EP directing ELSA – suggesting that</p>
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<p>spend some time kind of problem solving in the group today?</p> <p>77. Group Member: I think the only problem that I see with him is if he carries on the stopping in class, that he is going to get that reputation all the way through, so...</p> <p>78. Facilitator: (Inaudible 0:13:18) Okay. And so [Name] is kind of... troubling you?</p> <p>79. Group Member: He is.</p> <p>80. Facilitator: The rest of the ELSA work?</p> <p>81. Group Member: The rest of the ELSA work is fine.</p> <p>82. Facilitator: Okay, you're feeling Okay?</p> <p>83. Group Member: Definitely.</p> <p>84. Facilitator: Good, Okay, so shall we come back to - ?</p> <p>85. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>86. Facilitator: (name)?</p> <p>87. Group Member: Pretty much the same, still got a girl that's working with self-esteem to begin with but now I'm doing some anger management with her and another boy that I was doing self-esteem with and I'm just about to take another one on for friendship skills, which I haven't really done much with (laughs) in my time as an ELSA, so I'll need some advice on that one (laughs) which is just about to start tomorrow. So I'm going to have to start it, I've got the file, I've gone through the file and picked out some bits but – because we've only got a few weeks left, I think this getting to know him (laughs) it's going to be the end of term and we're not going to get sort of down to proper activities... So... any ideas where to start with him? (Laughs)</p> <p>88. Facilitator: Okay so it's thinking about those initial sessions and then</p>	<p>(School staff - not a shared understanding – 1.75/77) (ELSA frustration - being shown by a more offhand comment – 1.77)</p> <p>(ELSA troubled by child - accepting offer of support – 1.79)</p> <p>(Emotional support - ELSA feeling supported and understood by EP – 1.81/83)</p> <p>(ELSA listing work – anger management, self-esteem, friendship skills – 1.87)</p> <p>(ELSA request for advice - on developing friendship skills – 1.87)</p> <p>(ELSA dilemma – limited time to complete work – 1.87)</p> <p>(Gap in experience acknowledged – 1.87)</p> <p>(Help sought - asking group for</p>	<p>ELSA bring mentioned child to the problem solving section of the session – 1.76)</p> <p>(EP attuned to ELSA's emotional presentation – accepted EP's label for how she was feeling – 1.78)</p> <p>(EP monitoring/checking on ELSAs work – 1.80)</p> <p>(EP checking on emotional well-being of ELSA – 1.82)</p> <p>(Management of session - EP reassurance to return to discuss a child – 1.84)</p> <p>(ELSA planning -EP helping ELSA to</p>
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<p>maybe where it goes - ?</p> <p>89. Group Member: Yes because I think it's going to take a while – I'm sure I'll probably pick him up next year no doubt because this won't be long enough but um...it's just obviously I'm going to have to get him comfortable and happy first because he doesn't really know me at all and then it's sort of where to go with him after that but yeah (sighs) so any friendship stuff would be helpful (laughs).</p> <p>90. Facilitator: Okay we can – I know you're doing your anger management today... that's important, we'll spend some time thinking about that.</p> <p>91. Group Member: Yeah... obviously the anger management also I'll be all ears for that (laughs) because a girl that I'm working with has little fits and starts and you think she's absolutely fine and then suddenly something will happen... oh...so we're back (laughs) at square one again you know – anything we've done, has she taken it in at all?</p> <p>92. Facilitator: So as in you're working with her in the individual sessions and things will be okay outside of that and then - ?</p> <p>93. Group Member: I think so and then suddenly I'll just get an email that she's done something and you think, "Oh okay where did that come from?" it's... when I see her you wouldn't think she had any problems at all with anger management you know so –</p> <p>94. Facilitator: Yeah and it's things that I would imagine – it sounds quite common in the sense of you can teach the skills within the individual sessions and then you know people have blips, children have blips and it's... it's not necessarily saying that what's happened in your session wasn't the right thing, do you know? It's kind of... yeah...</p> <p>[0:16:27]</p> <p>95. Group Member: Yeah I am working through this stuff in the file and looking after her but I'm kind of running out of ideas a bit now (laughs) I have to say! So I will be interested to see what you say</p>	<p>suggested solutions to dilemma – 1.87)</p> <p>(Approach to work - ELSA feeling the need to build relationship <i>before</i> starting work – 1.89)</p> <p>(Supervision request - ELSA uncertain as to how to start friendship work – asking for ideas – 1.89)</p> <p>(Supervision request - ELSA sharing problem – work with a child around anger management – 1.91)</p> <p>(Description of child's behaviour - ELSA sharing pattern of behaviour from child not yet understood – 1.91)</p> <p>(Impact of school systems - ELSA being given responsibility for child's behaviour in school – 1.93)</p> <p>(Communication in school - ELSA being emailed by other staff to inform her of child's behaviour – 1.93)</p> <p>(Supervision – request for ideas from group – 1.95)</p>	<p>plan – 1.88) (EP summarising issue for ELSA – 1.88)</p> <p>(EP containment - EP reassurance and attaching importance to what's being brought for discussion – 1.90)</p> <p>(EP supporting ELSAs thinking - shaping ELSA's contribution into a clearer question – 1.92)</p> <p>(Training/sharing expertise -EP highlighting that children do not always use the skills that they may have learned – 1.94)</p> <p>(offering encouragement/support for ELSA - EP reassuring ELSA that her work remains potentially helpful even if child's behaviour remains challenging – 1.94)</p>
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<p>later on. But yeah so – friendship – probably need some more guidance with that and the anger management – any extras (laughs) you may have... apart from that fine (laughs).</p> <p>96. Facilitator: Okay.</p> <p>97. Group Member: Nothing else, no.</p> <p>98. Facilitator: All right then, thank you (name). And (name)?</p> <p>99. Group Member: I haven't really got anything to say!</p> <p>100. Facilitator: That's fine. How are you?</p> <p>101. Group Member: I'm fine thank you (laughter).</p> <p>102. Facilitator: Okay are you doing ELSA work at the moment?</p> <p>103. Group Member: Yeah, yes with the same children – just one with anger that goes off stropping and tantruming at the moment but we're getting there slowly. Yeah so it's quite quiet in my group.</p> <p>104. Facilitator: Yeah, do you mean in the (nurture?) group or your...?</p> <p>105. Group Member: In the ELSA group, I'm (done?) a group and we're making some puppets. They're quite happy in a group.</p> <p>106. Facilitator: Lovely, okay, so you're finding it all okay?</p> <p>107. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>108. Facilitator: And (name)?</p> <p>109. Group Member: I'm – mine – I'm sort of winding down now because I'll do – from this week I'll do transition stuff with the Year 6s that need it, but um... I've decided that this year the booklet – you can do the booklet to death really and go through a little bit each week and actually</p>	<p><b>(Professional development - ELSA relying on ideas from the ELSA file – 1.95)</b></p> <p><b>(Supervision – request for guidance on friendships – 1.95)</b> Drawing on group knowledge/experience - ELSA feeling less confident about how to plan work</p> <p><b>(Group work with children – 1.105)</b> ELSA delivering work in groups rather than individually</p> <p><b>(Adapting resources – 1.109)</b> ELSA adapting previous transition</p>	<p><b>(Valuing ELSA's contribution - EP politeness and appreciation – 1.98)</b></p> <p><b>(EP checking on ELSA's emotional well-being – 1.98)</b></p> <p><b>(EP monitoring ELSA's work – 1.102)</b></p> <p><b>(EP encouragement for ELSA to contribute – 1.104)</b></p> <p><b>(EP monitoring/checking that work falls under ELSA not nurture group – 1.104)</b></p>
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<p>what they need – this group are quite – they’re quite resilient but they just need – I think we just need to flick through and find key themes and just generally have like a group discussion about it and see – and then from that, they’ll basically plan their own stuff that they need to do and then the odd ones that will maybe go for an earlier visit because their move up day. So I’m doing that and I’ve just finished working with two... pupils who were in my – actually in my class. So that’s been quite interesting because then you see the times when (laughs) they’ve come to me and said, “Oh yes and I sometimes do this and I’m sometimes a bit like this and oh yeah I completely get why I shouldn’t be like that” (laughs) and then they go back into class and do it!</p> <p>110. Facilitator: Okay, Okay.</p> <p>111. Group Member: But even to the point with – the boy that I’ve been working with, the other week we had – we’ve had quite a few supply teachers and we have a group of boys that do not react well to supply teachers, so you really need to kind of stay on top of that. And then there was something we were doing – it was a good few weeks ago now and the sessions that we’d done, we were talking about his defence mechanisms and about resilience and not having very much resilience and he totally got it! He’s so – one-to-one he’s really, really very intelligent and he’s not in a place there where he’s afraid of getting things wrong. So I think it might – although he’d never admit to it, it’s slightly a peer thing as – you know, so that’s when he’s scared of having a go and making mistakes, but um and I’ve said, “You know fooling around with the supply teacher and cracking jokes and things like that is – that’s a defence mechanism and it’s just a way to get you away from what you’re meant to be doing”, getting angry and all of this stuff. And then the – the supply teacher we had and she asked us to do something and I thought, “Oh right I’ll try and have a go” and I found it so difficult (laughs)</p>	<p>work to the needs of the group</p> <p><b>(Professional practice - ELSA tailoring work to the needs of the children – 1.109)</b></p> <p><b>(Work with child-led focus – 1.109)</b> ELSA ensuring work is child-led</p> <p><b>(Professional practice - observation of children in class – benefit – 1.109)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA using psychological language – 1.111)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA topic area - resilience and recognising defence mechanisms – 1.111)</b></p> <p><b>(Successful outcome shared – 1.111)</b> ELSA reporting that child learned concept of defence mechanisms</p> <p><b>(ELSA’s learning – 1.111)</b></p>	
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<p>and I was kind of going a bit – and he came up and went, “Don’t put barriers up Miss (name)” (laughs) and I was putting barriers up! (Laughter) So he actually you know turned it into a humorous thing which I thought was really funny. Although still even today we’ve had – you know the barriers have been up, they’ve had a supply teacher in, the whole Maths lesson was you know... and we have been saying amongst ourselves or I’ve been saying to (name) quite often it’s, “I wonder if they’re actually getting it or if they just come in and go, “Yeah I know and I do this and – “” And they – but they even give a bit more and take you by surprise and you think, “They really understand what we’re talking about here and how it can affect behaviour and everything” and then they just go back and – so we do start to wonder if they’re just saying it to us for the sake of it (laughs) –</p> <p>112. Group Member: Saying what you want to hear?</p> <p>113. Group Member: Yeah! (Laughter)</p> <p>[0:21:15]</p> <p>114. Facilitator: Well it’s similar I guess in a way to what (name) was saying for her – the child that you’re working with as well isn’t it, in the sense of... there is something around that you know when we’re in a – in a situation where we can have time to reflect, because that’s what your individual sessions provide isn’t it?</p> <p>115. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>116. Facilitator: Then just as we as adults, we can reflect quite openly... then when we’re in the situation there’s a lot more complexities going on isn’t there (laughs) that impact on – yeah how you might respond. So I guess there’s taking into account the fact that the work that you’re doing is – particularly around those children where</p>	<p>ELSA showing surprise that the child learned the concept of defence mechanisms</p> <p><b>(ELSA’s sharing evidence for child’s learning/progress – 1.111)</b> Providing evidence in her recount as to how she knows child has learned concept – applied it to her</p> <p><b>(ELSAs supporting each other within school – 1.111)</b></p> <p><b>(Concern about impact of work – 1.111)</b> ELSAs wondering whether children manipulating them – understanding what is required of them but not doing it</p>	<p><b>(EP highlighting what ELSA’s sessions offer – reflection – 1.114)</b></p> <p><b>(Developing ELSA’s thinking - highlighting difference between skills learned and skills applied – 1.116)</b> <b>(EP sharing view - likening child’s behaviours to adult’s behaviours, including their own – 1.116)</b></p>
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<p>there's behavioural difficulties, it's part of a much bigger plan for a child that needs to take into account things like environmental change so you know the environmental and what sort of motivation they're getting to actually do these things back in class and to generalise those skills back. So it's kind of...</p> <p>117. Group Member: <b>But can I just say something there?</b></p> <p>118. Facilitator: <b>Yeah, go for it!</b></p> <p>119. Group Member: What – <b>thinking of this particular boy, he gets an awful lot of motivation for his ideas and especially you know he excels as an ideas person in literacy and does very, very well and he's certainly told by the teacher – and he did very well in the assessments</b> – the last lot of assessments, unexpectedly well you know? And you could tell you know he walked tall, it gave him a real boost, but um... it's almost... even today with the Maths, he was able to do that Maths but he was still referred back to this – which looks sullen and lazy and having a really bad attitude and not having any respect for the teacher and things like that. <b>So – and you just think, "How much more can you give?" do you know what I mean? Because he IS encouraged, supported and motivated and yet still – and he seems to understand about the barriers that he puts up and – I mean I don't know, because I guess if you do – if you work and you do the ELSA thing and you're doing this drip feed thing that hopefully eventually it's going to – these kids are going to understand – we're not there to see the benefits are we?</b> (Laughter) Like maybe you could let me know by the time he gets to Year 9! And do you know what I mean? So I know long term that's what we're hoping for, but <b>sometimes I'd (laughs) just like to see a little glimmer that it's all going to be all right!</b></p> <p>120. Facilitator: <b>Yeah, so you're recognising that there's – the work that you're involved in is those small steps of progress - ?</b></p>	<p><b>(Contribution to session - polite interruption/challenge to EP's contribution – 1.117)</b></p> <p><b>(Child's strengths – 1.119)</b> Identifying boy's strengths</p> <p><b>(Exploring frustration – interventions and encouragement in place but not immediate progress – 1.119)</b></p> <p><b>(Delayed success/outcome – 1.119)</b> ELSA acknowledging that work can take a long time and that they themselves might not see the outcomes</p> <p><b>(ELSA frustration – 1.119)</b></p>	<p><b>(EP sharing view - 'normalising' understanding of behaviour – 1.116)</b> <b>(Developing understanding of ELSA work - EP helping ELSAs to appreciate that their work is part of the support but there are other elements – environmental, motivation, generalisation – 1.116)</b></p> <p><b>(EP encouraging group dialogue - polite interruption/challenge welcomed – 1.118)</b></p>
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<p>121. Group Member: Oh yeah, yeah completely.</p> <p>[0:24:26]</p> <p>122. Facilitator: That you'll be working on a small kind of target in a sense around a child's behaviour or motivation or that side of things and like you say, you may not see the ground (laughs) for example.</p> <p>123. Group Member: But it's just that crossover between them being really kind of quite lucid about the whole... concept and – and offering ideas to you about their behaviour and where their behaviour falls down or where they are aware of where they've made the wrong choice and things like that. But then they still don't seem to actually make that work for themselves (laughs) on the whole –</p> <p>124. Group Member: When they're in their different –</p> <p>125. Group Member: - when they're in their general setting, yeah.</p> <p>126. Facilitator: And what do people think that's about?</p> <p>127. Group Member: The behaviour probably is because they feel unsettled in that area possibly, because I know that we have some children that if they have a um stand-in teacher their behaviour does go wrong. But sometimes if you get a good stand-in teacher and they'll recognise that, so I think that sometimes is a problem.</p> <p>128. Group Member: I don't know – they do it all the time, doesn't matter if they're a good supply, any supply – they will do it all the time.</p> <p>129. Group Member: Because once you've got routine –</p> <p>130. Group Member: Yeah.</p>	<p>that she does not always see the outcomes of her work</p> <p><b>(Exploring frustrations – 1.123)</b> ELSA struggling with child understanding in one to one situation but not using skills in context</p> <p><b>(Development of thinking – 1.123)</b></p> <p><b>(Exploring reasons for behaviour – 1.127)</b> alternative explanation for a child not putting skills into practice</p> <p><b>(Evidence/example for her thinking – 1.127)</b></p> <p><b>(Sharing ideas/hypotheses - environmental factors for behaviour - adult/child dynamic – 1.127)</b> ELSA suggesting that it can also sometimes be the adult's</p>	<p><b>(Talk about outcomes - EP helping ELSA to recognise small steps of progress – 1.120/122)</b></p> <p><b>(Inclusion of group - EP opening ELSA's question to the whole group – 1.126)</b></p> <p><b>(EP expecting dialogue from whole group – 1.126)</b></p> <p><b>(EP not putting herself in expert role – 1.126)</b></p>
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<p>131. Group Member: - they're used to that routine and they don't like the change, yeah.</p> <p>132. Group Member: Change, yeah.</p> <p>133. Group Member: <b>Is it like an anxiety thing?</b></p> <p>134. Group Member: Mm.</p> <p><b>135. Group Member: I was just thinking about this child that we had this morning that that was down to anxiety – couldn't cope with the fact that this visitor –</b></p> <p><b>136. Group Member: With this visitor?</b></p> <p><b>137. Group Member: - that had arrived. Although even though we sat and explained who she was, it wasn't enough. It was like, "Well I didn't know who she was or what she was here for", "Well we did explain –" but he just – in himself, his anxiety levels were quite high and just couldn't cope with it.</b></p> <p>138. Facilitator: <b>So do you think that he thought that the visitor was kind of out to get him or pick on him or something - ?</b></p> <p>139. Group Member: <b>Nothing even to do with him, it was just a visitor that had come from one of the children's schools, it wasn't any – you know an official person or anything, it was just...</b></p> <p><b>140. Group Member: So it doesn't even need to be – have to be that personal, just that it's - ?</b></p> <p><b>141. Group Member: No, just that it's somebody – it was a different face.</b></p> <p><b>142. Group Member: So potentially it could be moving the furniture around to some degree?</b></p>	<p>responsibility</p> <p><b>(Permission to disagree - ELSA resistant to colleagues' alternative explanation – 1.128)</b></p> <p><b>(Sharing ideas/hypotheses - alternative explanation for behaviour – anxiety – 1.133)</b></p> <p><b>(Group discussion – 1.135)</b> ELSAs discussion provoking thinking within the group</p> <p><b>(Developing thinking - ELSA reflecting on recent experience in relation to suggestion about anxiety – 1.137)</b></p> <p><b>('Evidence' shared for new thinking – 1.137)</b> ELSA recognising that their intervention was not enough to allay anxiety for child</p> <p><b>(Developing thinking/learning –</b></p>	<p><b>(EP questioning to probe and encourage discussion/thinking – 1.138)</b></p>
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<p>143. Group Member: Yeah, absolutely, yeah, yeah because it's about the routine and – yeah, yeah.</p> <p>[0:26:55]</p> <p>144. Facilitator: Unsettled and yeah it's those emotions like –</p> <p>145. Group Member: That was classic this morning because like the last sort of four weeks he's been really settled and absolutely fine but just...</p> <p>146. Facilitator: And if you think about the power of emotions on how you might behave then you know like you were saying in your individual sessions, you don't necessarily have all those kind of conflicts to manage, so within the individual sessions, children are probably, generally on the whole, quite you know...</p> <p>147. Group Member: Go with the flow, do their thing, yeah.</p> <p>148. Group Member: And she left about 11.30am and it was absolutely fine – he was absolutely fine again as soon as she'd left. I don't know, that's how I just – he just didn't cope with that, so I don't know if that would be anything for particular children but...</p> <p>149. Group Member: No it could be but then we do have a group – well Year 5 are quite an interesting class and we do have a – there are a few of them in there who just are like (inaudible 0:27:52) really pushed -</p> <p>150. Facilitator: So then you're noticing that the rest of the class may be different too?</p> <p>151. Group Member: Yeah, will pick up to it, yeah.</p> <p>152. Facilitator: And that could also be I guess further unsettling – I think –</p>	<p><b>1.142/143)</b>          ELSAs recognising through discussion that 'change' can be a source of anxiety</p> <p><b>(Making connections/developing thinking – 1.145)</b>          ELSA recognising that a change for a child led to different behaviour</p> <p><b>(Change in thinking - ELSA now thinking about the child's behaviour in comparison to his peers – 1.149)</b></p>	<p><b>(Learning point - EP view on impact of emotions on behaviour – 1.146)</b></p> <p><b>(EP questioning using ELSAs ideas to further their thinking – 1.150)</b></p> <p><b>(EP framing questions positively and highlighting ELSAs' skills – 1.150)</b></p> <p><b>(EP non-expert role trying to be more equal – offering her opinion – 'I think' – 1.152)</b></p>
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<p>(Overspeaking 0:28:07)</p> <p>153. Group Member: I think that's quite common, I mean particularly with our children, the general thing that comes up is that they might be okay for their own teachers but maybe not...</p> <p>154. Group Member: And if you take them out of their structured lessons, something changes; that's when they go – they can't cope. They do that in Year 2 as well. Just one or two of them...</p> <p>155. Facilitator: And then it's how you support a child I guess in those changes isn't it? Are there things that the schools do around helping to prepare for supply teachers when that happens or - ?</p> <p>156. Group Member: I know for some – for a lot of ours, they kind of try and tell them like the day before, to say like, "I won't be in tomorrow, it will be –" and tell them who it is, and so they kind of have less of that anxiety and so (inaudible 0:29:00) kind of just go through the timetable which has been quite good for some. But obviously –</p> <p>157. Group Member: Sometimes you don't know what supply is coming in. They say someone's coming in so you tell them and then it's somebody totally different. But also of course for us it's Monday so even if he'd told them on Friday, they wouldn't remember.</p> <p>158. Group Member: Yeah, yeah it's different. But it's still a surprised.</p> <p>159. Group Member: Yeah we had for quite a few – probably about two months where the Year 4 teacher was off um and um basically the school actually made sure that they had the same supply teacher all the way through –</p> <p>160. Group Member: To cover the whole term?</p>	<p><b>(Importance of relationships – 1.153)</b> ELSA identifying characteristics of their children - not liking change</p> <p><b>(ELSA sharing strategies - 1.156)</b> to help children cope with change</p> <p><b>(School system issues – 1.157)</b> ELSA sharing organisational issues/difficulties which are barrier to supporting children to manage change</p> <p><b>(Positive school system response – 1.157)</b></p>	<p><b>(Professional practice development - EP questioning what strategies ELSAs use to provide support for change – 1.155)</b></p>
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<p>161. Group Member: - to cover, yeah. So once they got that in place, it was fine, because it was the same face.</p> <p>162. Group Member: But you have to work through it and kind of work with them because I always think when they come to – you know they come to secondary it happens every day, so kind of almost preparing them each time it happens aren't you.</p> <p>163. Group Member: Mm.</p> <p>164. Group Member: And giving them that strategy and seeing how they'll cope...</p> <p>165. Group Member: Yeah but we also have a change in behaviour, having worked with that class and done ELSA sessions with a few of them in that class and now being lunch time staff, the other thing that's been quite interesting is that – the change in the way – you know the way that they'll treat – not the way that they treat me so much but if you're in class and you tell someone that they need to behave or that they need to get that task finished or something then it's generally taken maybe that you tell them again and then you know they get on with it. Um but outside, if you tell them, "Could you please get down off that fence" or whatever, they'll just kind of laugh – they'll just turn round and sort of laugh at you. So there's this kind of whole disrespect really if you like and I have actually said – I've said to them, "I don't get why you act like this in the classroom and now you're outside and you're like that".</p> <p>[0:31:00]</p> <p>166. Group Member: Mm.</p> <p>167. Group Member: And that comes from boys – that's boys isn't it?</p> <p>168. Group Member: Mm.</p>	<p><b>(Child focussed - thinking ahead – 1.162)</b> Preparing children for the future - ELSA thinking ahead to skills children will need in secondary school</p> <p><b>(ELSA role - providing strategies for children – 1.164)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA role - changing children's behaviour – 1.165)</b></p> <p><b>(Developing thinking/understanding - ELSA exploring children's behavioural responses - 1.165)</b> Surprise/confusion as to why children will behave differently in different contexts</p> <p><b>(Use of stereotype – 'boys' – 1.167)</b></p>	
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<p>169. Facilitator: <b>And what do you think that could be about?</b></p> <p>170. Group Member: Testing boundaries possibly?</p> <p>171. Group Member: Possibly... I think there's an element of sort of... like a sexism type of thing as well going on because they will – I mean they have a male teacher don't they and they will – they will do as they're told and then outside when it's lunchtime staff. I mean they've even said things – they've said to (name) haven't they – they've said, "You don't work here properly", you know things like that.</p> <p>172. Facilitator: <b>Okay, so you're not noticing a difference to you, you're noticing a difference - ?</b></p> <p>173. Group Member: Well to her they just kind of skip off don't they and have a laugh and often go and do it again and they can even know that you're watching them and they're sort of, "What?"</p> <p>174. Group Member: "What have I done now?" (Laughter).</p> <p>175. Group Member: <b>It's attitude isn't it?</b></p> <p>176. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>177. Facilitator: <b>Okay yeah, so there's a shift in terms of how they might respond to requests in class than in lunchtime?</b></p> <p>178. Group Member: Yeah but then maybe that is boundaries again because you've just gone, "Whoa! Here's a really big boundary! Here's a really loose boundary, it goes all the way round to the fence (laughs) go!"</p> <p>179. Group Member: Well we have a child in Year 2 that can't cope as soon as he goes out at lunchtimes.</p>	<p><b>(Exploring children's behaviour – 'sexism' – 1.171)</b> ELSA highlighting staff role differences and how children respond to different staff</p> <p><b>(Providing 'evidence' for her belief – 1.171)</b></p> <p><b>(Exploring children's behaviour – 'attitude' – 1.175)</b></p> <p><b>(Making links -developing thinking – 1.178)</b> ELSA making further links in her thinking during discussion</p>	<p><b>(EP questioning to challenge/further ELSAs thinking – 1.169)</b></p> <p><b>(EP reflective statement – to provoke further thinking – 1.172)</b></p> <p><b>(Learning point - EP modelling different ways of speaking about difficulties – 1.177)</b></p>
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<p>180. Facilitator: Okay and it can be you know a real – it's another unstructured time isn't it –</p> <p>181. Group Member: Yeah it's too long for him as well.</p> <p>182. Facilitator: - yes unsettling and it's again how – how you develop their skills in that situation to manage that change and to put those expectations in and the boundaries around that.</p> <p>183. Group Member: Mm. This one goes off in a strop and climbs a tree (laughs). Hides in a bush!</p> <p>184. Facilitator: Okay –</p> <p>185. Group Member: I'd be quite tempted actually to just sit near the bush.</p> <p>186. Group Member: I just let him stay there and watch him from the corner and then at 12.55pm just go up to him and say, "Come on it's time to go in now" and he'll come in. Because actually I work with him in the class as well.</p> <p>[0:33:30]</p> <p>(Overspeaking and laughter 0:33:37)</p> <p>187. Group Member: Get out of the tree!</p> <p>188. Group Member: I can imagine you doing that one as well! (Laughter)</p> <p>189. Facilitator: Okay, we're out of time! Oh my goodness (laughs) – that hour has disappeared and um so um (name) you want – you have the child that you wanted to explore and then (name) looking at friendship skills –</p> <p>190. Group Member: Some more anger – some more strategies for calming down and things like that.</p>	<p>(ELSA learning/misunderstanding – 1.185/186) ELSAs discussing management strategies not development of skills as requested by EP</p> <p>(Use of humour – as a defence? – 1.188)</p> <p>(Supervision request – for strategies –</p>	<p>(EP view - giving a summative statement about the content of the examples given by ELSA – 1.180)</p> <p>(Developing thinking/practice - EP asking direct question for ELSAs to answer – 1.182)</p> <p>(Management of session - EP managing session/timings – 1.189)</p> <p>(Management of session - EP reminding group of content of remaining time – 1.189)</p>
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<p>191. Facilitator: Okay.</p> <p>192. Group Member: I've looked at the ones in there and I think I've done them all.</p> <p>193. Facilitator: Okay, Okay.</p> <p>194. Group Member: I need some more! (Laughs)</p> <p>195. Facilitator: (name) shall we take yours first and we should have time because um yeah resource share – so we'll have sort of 15 minutes and then 15 minutes...</p> <p>196. Group Member: As I say, most of the time he's not too bad, once you say to him, "Actually you are coming in here", he will come in and then he'll have his, "Okay I'll have my little strop moment there" but it's just – you can see sometimes some of the other staff are like, "Well it was you" and you've lost him then straight away so you get the strop, so just basically... apart from going up to him and going, "Why the hell did you do that?"...</p> <p>197. Group Member: Mm...don't know.</p> <p>198. Facilitator: So it's about how the adults are responding to his – the strategies he's using almost?</p> <p>199. Group Member: Yeah I think so yeah, because I mean a classic case the other day was um he was asked to leave the football pitch which he did in his little way and then I was called for because he was having this meltdown moment. Well actually he wasn't – he'd actually taken himself off and sat behind a bush.</p> <p>200. Group Member: Mm.</p> <p>201. Group Member: And because they couldn't find him they called out for the head teacher in the end, so there was this nice</p>	<p><b>1.190)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA referring to training file – 1.192)</b> completed all the strategies in the file and wants more</p> <p><b>(Supervision - problem solving – difficulty outlined by ELSA – 1.196)</b></p> <p><b>(Use of ELSA - being 'called' to deal with behaviour issues – 1.199)</b></p>	<p><b>(Management of session – 1.195)</b></p> <p><b>(Learning point - EP view - statement summarising problem for ELSA – 1.198)</b></p>
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<p>big incident that actually wasn't a big incident. So...</p> <p>202. Facilitator: Right Okay and the strategy of... (laughter) musical accompaniment! So the strategy of kind of moving himself away is something that you've talked about in your sessions and - ?</p> <p>203. Group Member: Yeah which he's responded to; in class he doesn't use it as much, but he's getting there slowly, hence the um traffic light system which he did.</p> <p>204. Facilitator: Uh huh and how does that work?</p> <p>205. Group Member: That basically works like if he's... if he's feeling happy he'll put it onto the green, if he's getting a little bit agitated or feeling a little bit cross with someone, he'll come up and he'll just stick it on there with the "I'm not sure" face as he calls it and then his "cheesed-off face" as he calls it, "I'm really starting to get cheesed off now" goes on the red. So the teacher can have a look and think, "Okay if he's on red, he can go to his place for five minutes or ten minutes and then come back once he's calmed down". And then he's got the – obviously the plan on the back.</p> <p>[0:37:17]</p> <p>206. Facilitator: Lovely and he's using that in class is he?</p> <p>207. Group Member: He is um but I think it's a little bit hit and miss sometimes where he'll suddenly just go into a strop because he can't do something so I'm going to be really working on that again.</p> <p>208. Facilitator: Okay, so the staff are aware of...that?</p> <p>209. Group Member: Yes.</p> <p>210. Facilitator: So where do you think the difficulty is at the moment?</p>	<p><b>(School management issues – 1.201)</b> ELSA commenting on management of child in school</p> <p><b>(ELSA sharing progress/strategies with group – 1.203)</b></p> <p><b>(Outcomes – speed of progress issue – 1.203)</b> ELSA indicating 'slow progress' for child</p> <p><b>(Sharing success - ELSA strategy working – 1.205)</b></p> <p><b>(Child's plan working – 1.205)</b></p> <p><b>(Reflection on next steps - ELSA identifying area to work on following EP questioning – 1.207)</b></p>	<p><b>(Learning point - EP identifying and describing strategy taught by ELSA – 1.202)</b></p> <p><b>(EP encouragement re. successful strategy – 1.206)</b></p> <p><b>(EP supporting ELSA to think more carefully to identify precise difficulty – 1.206)</b></p> <p><b>(Links with other staff - EP questioning about communication within classroom with other staff –</b></p>
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<p>211. Group Member: I think with him probably choices, but also for other staff to actually think before they react, rather than react and then find out, "Actually he hasn't run off, actually he's gone to a safe place where he knows, "Actually I can calm down here"" so...</p> <p>212. Facilitator: Okay so how can we get to a situation where they might be responding differently?</p> <p>213. Group Member: I don't know! (Laughs)</p> <p>214. Facilitator: Mm, what are people's thoughts on that?</p> <p>215. Group Member: What for how the staff can react differently?</p> <p>216. Facilitator: Mm. Did you have the chance to say to them afterwards that he's – that that was sort of his strategy?</p> <p>217. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>218. Facilitator: And what reaction did you get to that from them?</p> <p>219. Group Member: "Whatever".</p> <p>220. Facilitator: Mm.</p> <p>221. Group Member: "Well I wasn't supposed to know that", "Actually yes you did".</p> <p>222. Facilitator: Okay...</p> <p>223. Group Member: It's tricky isn't it, unless you can actually sort of – unless you want to do like a staff meeting, which I'm sure you don't! (Laughs)</p> <p>224. Group Member: I wouldn't mind but it's the senior lunchtime supervisor that took over from me and it's actually class TA as well... so she is very –</p>	<p><b>(Reflection leading to decision – 1.211)</b>          ELSA identifying specific area of focus following EP questioning  <b>(School staff - unhelpful response from school colleagues – 1.211)</b></p> <p><b>(Issue for supervision – stuck - ELSA acknowledging difficulty – 1.213)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA frustration working with school colleagues – 1.219/221)</b></p> <p><b>(Problem solving - ELSAs suggesting ideas – 1.223)</b></p> <p><b>(School based issues regarding behaviour management being highlighted – 1.224)</b></p>	<p><b>1.208)</b></p> <p><b>(Developing thinking - EP asking specific questioning asking ELSA to identify difficulty – 1.210)</b></p> <p><b>(Professional practice development EP focusing on how ELSA can support staff to respond differently – 1.212)</b></p> <p><b>(Inclusion of group - EP widening question to whole group – 1.214)</b></p> <p><b>(EP not taking 'expert role' – 1.214)</b></p> <p><b>(Empathy - EP sharing in 'stuckness' – 1.220)</b></p>
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<p>225. Group Member: Everyone needs to be singing from the same sheet though don't they, that's the thing.</p> <p>226. Group Member: Absolutely.</p> <p>227. Group Member: So ultimately that's obviously not happening.</p> <p>228. Group Member: No, but with the more tricky ones she is more actually, "Let's confront" and then, "Oh look, it's happened –"</p> <p>229. Group Member: Reflect after.</p> <p>230. Group Member: Reflect after.</p> <p>[0:39:26]</p> <p>231. Group Member: But um I don't know whether it's more – she needs more training or what, but try and say to the lad, "Look if that's happening, Okay you can't walk away in that situation. She's talking to you, but you can still come in here" so it's trying to get the best of both really.</p> <p>232. Facilitator: Uh huh.</p> <p>233. Group Member: So I don't know whether to just say to the head teacher, "Right she definitely needs more training" (laughs) or –</p> <p>234. Group Member: What about them both together? I was just thinking talk together so that they're kind of both talking to each other about what's going to work? I don't know, like he could kind of voice his opinions and say you know – and she could do the same.</p> <p>235. Group Member: Mm, yeah I could try that actually.</p> <p>236. Group Member: Yes (laughs).</p>	<p><b>(School staff – ELSA complaining about professional behaviour – 1.228)</b> Recognising that other staff member's confrontation is not helpful</p> <p><b>(Reflection - ELSA recognising the power of 'reflection' – 1.229/230)</b></p> <p><b>(School staff - ELSA identifying staff training requirement for another member of staff in school – 1.231)</b></p> <p><b>(Dilemma for ELSA - managing child and staff needs – 1.231)</b></p> <p><b>(School systems – ELSA talking to HT – 1.233)</b></p> <p><b>(Exploring course of action – 1.233)</b></p> <p><b>(Group problem solving – 1.234)</b> Potential, collaborative way forward welcomed from another ELSA</p>	<p><b>(Group management - encouraging continuation of group discussion - EP making 'continuation' noises – 1.232)</b></p>
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<p>237. Facilitator: So that would enable her to hear from his point of view – because that might be quite powerful in a way mightn't it? In the sense of –</p> <p>238. Group Member: Yeah I've done it with other children, so yeah.</p> <p>239. Facilitator: - hearing what he would like to use as a strategy and...</p> <p>240. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>241. Facilitator: And they could come to a plan together almost so they feel like they have produced it together.</p> <p>242. Group Member: Yeah – no I'll try that! (Laughs)</p> <p>243. Facilitator: Is it something you have fed back to the SENCo or head teacher at the moment or - ?</p> <p>244. Group Member: Um well they have another line manager, so um I will feed that back to (name) and then we sort of discuss it all together, but no it's like hitting your head against a brick wall sometimes.</p> <p>245. Facilitator: In terms of - ?</p> <p>246. Group Member: Of – adult wise.</p> <p>247. Facilitator: Okay...</p> <p>248. Group Member: But yeah, they're fully – I think they're fully aware of –</p> <p>249. Group Member: (Laughs) Sorry what was that?</p> <p>250. Group Member: See we have a notice board in our staff room in this – and I think if something similar had happened to me, I would um just write – I would just write, "Dah, dah, dah is having difficulty with this so he may behave in</p>	<p>(Learning - ELSA enthusiasm for suggested approach by other ELSA – 1.235)</p> <p>(Learning -capacity to adopt suggested strategy – 1.238)</p> <p>(Next step identified - ELSA's problem 'solved' – 1.244)</p> <p>(Increased confidence - ELSA feeling more confident to talk with line managers about other school staff – 1.244)</p> <p>(Frustration - ELSA sharing frustration with colleagues at school – 1.244/246)</p> <p>(Clarification from ELSA – 1..249)</p>	<p>(Learning point - EP summarising and highlighting benefits of suggested approach – 1.237)</p> <p>(Professional practice development – planning with other child/colleagues – 1.237/239/241)</p> <p>(School systems - EP encouraging ELSA to use school systems to address approaches of other staff in school – 1.243)</p> <p>(EP question – clarification – 1.245)</p>
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<p>this way; please can everyone – “ so it’s constant – I mean I know people then become blind to those things don’t they that are up on the wall in there and you do forget about it, but just so at least then if they’re saying, “Oh well I didn’t know” you can say, “Well it’s actually – it’s here”.</p> <p>251. Group Member: Yeah but as a senior lunchtime you sort of go, “Don’t say that” or, “Don’t do that because you will set them off”, but yeah we’ve got um – the last couple of weeks actually they’ve started doing it, where they put up, “This is how so-and-so will react if you confront; please don’t” so...</p> <p>[0:42:24]</p> <p>252. Facilitator: And I think you know, I think what you’re kind of recognising is that there does need to be a consistency of response um and that that can be difficult depending on um the understanding of the staff can’t it?</p> <p>253. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>254. Facilitator: Do you know it’s kind of – I think when you come from positions as ELSAs where you are very well informed around behaviour management and what might be behind behaviours and how best to kind of steer it in the right direction, it’s – it’s then having to think you know some staff may not have the similar awareness and you know, how can we support them to do that? And as an ELSA that’s not your role (laughs) to skill up other members of staff. You can absolutely kind of reflect it back and suggest, “What would you like to do?” and then what would you like to do now as a result of today?</p> <p>255. Group Member: I think I’ll probably do the – what actually you suggested and probably get the adult –</p> <p>256. Facilitator: And child together? Yeah...</p>	<p><b>(School systems – 1.250)</b> ELSA describing/sharing school systems for sharing children’s difficulties in school</p> <p><b>(School staff issues – 1.251)</b> ELSA recounting inconsistent approaches being used by school staff</p> <p><b>(Change of practice - ELSA keen to take up suggestion offered by group – 1.255)</b></p>	<p><b>(Learning point - EP re-framing/summarising main points from discussion – 1.252)</b></p> <p><b>(learning point - EP modelling how to think about and describe issues – 1.252)</b></p> <p><b>(Support - EP highlighting skills that ELSAs have through their training – 1.254)</b></p> <p><b>(Staff differences/school systems - EP highlighting that not all staff have ELSAs’ skills and understanding of behaviour – 1.254)</b></p> <p><b>(Learning point – skill development - how ELSAs can encourage other staff’s understanding and gain their support – 1.254)</b></p>
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<p>257. Group Member: <b>That would be quite interesting.</b></p> <p>258. Group Member: It's a starting point isn't it?</p> <p>259. Group Member: <b>Yeah but that would be quite interesting.</b></p> <p>260. Group Member: Because also <b>maybe they need to build a relationship anyway don't they</b>, if they've... you know – is she – does she just work lunchtimes?</p> <p>261. Group Member: No, she's the class TA as well.</p> <p>262. Group Member: Oh Okay – oh so they should have a degree of a relationship, maybe?</p> <p>263. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>264. Group Member: <b>Maybe not a very positive one?</b></p> <p>265. Group Member: No.</p> <p>266. Facilitator: And <b>I wonder whether simply feeding that back as well to the head teacher if that's the kind of line manager, um may be helpful in prompting something that you've noticed need to – do you know, it's that – it's going in at that level and saying, "This is what I've noticed, this is what I'm planning to do" and um... seeing what her ideas might be as well.</b></p> <p>267. Group Member: <b>Yeah, thank you very much. That's fine.</b></p> <p>268. Facilitator: (name)?</p> <p>269. Group Member: (Laughs) Yes?</p> <p>270. Facilitator: <b>Um do you want to talk about – so it's friendship skills you were looking at - ?</b></p>	<p><b>(Reflection/thinking - ELSA valuing suggestion – 1.257)</b></p> <p><b>(Relationships - ELSA reflecting on the need for staff/child to build relationship – 1.260)</b></p> <p><b>(School staff issue - recognition that staff/child relationship not positive – 1.264)</b></p> <p><b>(Supervision - ELSA appreciation of time – 1.267)</b></p>	<p><b>(ELSA role - EP defining ELSA responsibilities – not responsible for school staff development – 1.254)</b></p> <p><b>(Empathy - EP showing empathy/understanding for ELSAs presenting problem – 1.254)</b></p> <p><b>(Learning point – skill development - EP suggesting <i>how</i> ELSA might approach line managers – 1.266)</b></p> <p><b>(Learning point – skill development - EP suggesting 'neutral' techniques for raising difficult issues – 1.266)</b></p> <p><b>(EP direction/management - prompting ELSA about specific topic area for discussion – 1.270)</b></p>
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<p>271. Group Member: Yes so I don't know a lot about the boy at the moment so just <b>once I've sort of got his sort of trust and everything and when he's comfortable coming to see me</b> which could take all the time we have left in this half term...</p> <p>272. Group Member: Ah...</p> <p>273. Facilitator: <b>Have you done any sessions at the moment or – did you say the first one's tomorrow?</b></p> <p>274. Group Member: The first one's tomorrow. Well he's kind of a bit of – a bit hit and miss kind of kid <b>so if he doesn't want to come he doesn't come, so he'd rather be in his lesson so he'll stay in his lesson but um officially I think I was supposed to see him for the first time last week but he never turned up</b> and because he's... he's quite a sensitive boy (laughs) and it's been quite sort of – well if you like that lesson we'll try and sort out another one, so it's kind of gone on a bit... but now <b>I've lost my Year 11 time, I have this sort of space and a bit more space and this Tuesday afternoon was one of the times when he would have been okay to come out I think</b> – I think because I know what lesson he's coming out of but... so um... I think tomorrow if I can sort of get you know him talking and sort of – which I think he'll be Okay as far as that's concerned but um all I know is that he – <b>he sort of um comes across as being friendly but people might take it the other way and he's sort of like, "Oh no, do they feel like that?" you know and he sort of goes a little bit, oh you know horrified that they're thinking... I think there was a girl and – I mean they're only in Year 7 and she (laughs) – she sort of thought he was trying – coming on to her or something you know or just sort of trying to be a bit more than a friend and he was absolutely horrified by that so he also doesn't know how to sort of... put out how he's – just being a friend or how to make a friendship. I don't know (laughs) – I don't know a lot about him so really it's going to be just seeing</b></p>	<p><b>(Importance of relationships – 1.271)</b> ELSA feeling the need to develop relationship with child before starting work</p> <p><b>(Problem identification – child able to choose whether to attend any given session – 1.274)</b></p> <p><b>(Commitment to work - ELSA being flexible to accommodate child's needs – 1.274)</b></p> <p><b>(Exploring child's needs – 1.274)</b> ELSA describing example of friendship difficulties/social communication</p> <p><b>(Lack of planning/knowledge – 1.274)</b></p>	<p><b>(EP questioning – factual clarification – 1.273)</b></p>
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<p><b>how he comes in.</b> If he comes in tomorrow...</p> <p>[0:46:50]</p> <p>275. Facilitator: <b>Would you say he had friends do you think?</b></p> <p>276. Group Member: Well yeah I did ask this question and yeah <b>she's observed him in the classroom</b> and when he – you know <b>he doesn't always recognise they are trying to be friendly in that sort of sense,</b> so...</p> <p>277. Facilitator: Okay so it's kind of perhaps around –</p> <p>278. Group Member: <b>Recognising it – yeah, what people are – coming across to him.</b></p> <p>279. Facilitator: <b>Uh huh yeah recognising other people's intentions and thoughts and...</b></p> <p>280. Group Member: Yes, yeah.</p> <p>281. Facilitator: Okay.</p> <p>282. Group Member: <b>So um (laughs) where can I go from there?</b> With that, what sort of – but then also it's going to be very early days as I said – to this first couple of sessions because he is quite a sensitive boy and I don't think he's going to be – he's taking it all in and – well he might be, I don't know him well enough yet to – <b>I really just want to see, get him in and talking really and (sighs) sort of build up the relationship as it were.</b></p> <p>283. Facilitator: <b>So you're recognising that the first kind of couple of sessions will be just relationship building –</b></p> <p>284. Group Member: <b>I think just getting to know him and just sort of making him – making him feel happy about coming</b> because he's so like, "Oh I like that lesson, I don't want to come out of that lesson" where it's not (laughs) – we</p>	<p>ELSA starting work 'without knowing a lot about him'</p> <p><b>(Referral process - ELSAs information 'second hand' from another staff members observations – 1.276)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA 'discovering'/understanding child's needs through discussion – 1.278)</b></p> <p>Child understood to be misreading social friendship cues</p> <p><b>Reflection - ELSA pausing to think in response to EP formulation – 1.282)</b></p> <p><b>(Importance of relationships – 1.282)</b></p> <p>ELSA feels need to develop relationship first</p> <p><b>(Child-led - ELSA wanting child to appreciate benefits of their work – 1.284)</b></p>	<p><b>(EP specific question to gain further information - ELSAs view about child's relationships – 1.275)</b></p> <p><b>(Learning point - EP helping ELSA to formulate her question/problem – 1.279)</b></p> <p><b>(Listening - EP reflecting back ELSAs perspective – 1.283)</b></p>
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<p>have quite a few of them who would be probably looking to find a way out of a lesson, he's sort of, "Oh no I like that lesson". And I mean I just sat down with him for literally five minutes and had a look at his timetable and he said, "I like that lesson, no I don't want to come out of that one" (sighs) Okay! In a way you want to say, "No you're coming out of that one and that's it" that's the time I've got free, but because he's a bit of a sensitive soul, we aren't sort of treating him like that if you know what I mean? So um... don't want to upset his enthusiasm for going into class as well but – which he is... so... er yes, but starting off with making friendships and recognising how people you know might be trying to be friendly, which he may not see it as... It's a bit of a new one because I haven't really – I've done the other two areas but not so much that one.</p> <p>285. Facilitator: Okay so you're wondering about whether there's something about helping him – recognising other people's emotions and intentions...?</p> <p>286. Group Member: Yes...</p> <p>[0:49:24]</p> <p>287. Facilitator: Um so that could be – I guess what I'm picking up as well is that perhaps you're not sure at the moment in terms of where to focus?</p> <p>288. Group Member: Yes so I think we're sort of very short of time and I want to have – I'd like to have some impact over the next four weeks but it may take you know just building up a sort of relationship with him and gaining his sort of confidence in thinking that he can sort of say how he feels or whatever but that may take that time that we've got left with the half term but...</p> <p>289. Facilitator: And I guess what – did you say Year 9?</p>	<p><b>(ELSA dilemma – needing to do work but child wanting to stay in lesson – 1.284)</b></p> <p><b>(Supervision - ELSA identifying clearer view of potential work)</b></p> <p><b>ELSA uncertainty – lack of experience – 1.284)</b></p> <p><b>(Developing thinking - EP shaping ELSAs thoughts about the nature of the work – 1.285)</b></p> <p><b>(Outcomes, lack of - EP articulating 'dilemma' for ELSA – 1.287)</b></p> <p><b>(Time restrictions – 1.288)</b></p> <p><b>(Outcomes - ELSA recognising need for impact/outcome – 1.288)</b></p> <p><b>(Relationships -need to gain child's confidence – 1.288)</b></p>	<p><b>(Developing thinking - EP shaping ELSAs thoughts about the nature of the work – 1.285)</b></p> <p><b>(Outcomes, lack of - EP articulating 'dilemma' for ELSA – 1.287)</b></p> <p><b>(EP direction – supporting ELSA to</b></p>
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<p>290. Group Member: No he's Year 7.</p> <p>291. Facilitator: He's Year 7? Okay um... so he would – do you think he would be in a place to say where perhaps he would like to get to where...?</p> <p>292. Group Member: As I say, I don't know him enough yet, but that was something I've kind of got to look out for tomorrow just to find out where he thinks he is now and where he'd like to be. So I suppose I'm on the right track, but again (laughs) because I don't know him -</p> <p>293. Facilitator: Fantastic. Sounds – yeah, so you're looking at an activity around where he is, where he thinks he is - ?</p> <p>294. Group Member: Yeah, where he is, where he thinks he is, but I don't want to bulldoze in yet really too heavily with the friendship thing because um there's a possibility he might be on that Asperger's sort of spectrum, but sort of looking into that as well so he just may not... full stop recognise anything like that, you know other people's feelings and emotions that are coming across to him. So until that's sort of a little bit more established I don't know – I don't really want to go full blown into that you know, "Well you know they are just trying to be friendly" (laughs)...</p> <p>295. Facilitator: So at the moment you've been given the kind of broad area of friendships from the SENCo is that - ?</p> <p>296. Group Member: Well yeah that's the sort of line that I'm going for, so I've just been scanning through your – the folder and where to sort of go with that but...</p> <p>297. Facilitator: It sounds like you've got –</p> <p>298. Group Member: ...I need to sort of just get to know the boy first (laughs) and I think that's what worries me that the time is going to go before we break up and then we're back –</p>	<p><b>(ELSA reassured by discussion – 1.292)</b> agreeing with her thinking</p> <p><b>(ELSA understanding of labels – Asperger's – 1.294)</b> introducing significant information part way through discussion</p> <p><b>(ELSA using folder to access resources – 1.296)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA concerned about time)</b></p>	<p><b>identify an outcome - EP suggesting asking the child for a target outcome – 1.291)</b></p> <p><b>(EP encouragement – 1.293)</b> <b>(Shaping target - EP formulating ELSAs plan into words – 1.293)</b></p> <p><b>(EP questioning – clarification of how work was received – 1.295)</b></p>
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<p>then we'll be back and probably got to do it all over again (laughs).</p> <p>299. Facilitator: Well could you see it as – from what you're saying, it sounds like a good kind of target between now and perhaps the end of term, would be for you to have a sort of clear path in terms of where perhaps he would like to get to –</p> <p>300. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>301. Facilitator: I don't know, what are people's thoughts?</p> <p>302. Group Member: Also, I don't know whether he actually realises he has a problem (laughs) with his friendships; it is sort of a feeling you know... (sighs) how it's come around I do not know but...</p> <p>303. Group Member: I'd probably just want to get to know them and just find out their likes and dislikes, things that they enjoy about school and –</p> <p>304. Group Member: Yeah that's what I've got sort of in my head to do but –</p> <p>305. Group Member: Their strengths as well – the strength cards are really good aren't they – just finding out about them and...</p> <p>306. Group Member: Yeah that's all the type of things I've got sort of sorted for when he does show his face! (Laughs) But the lessons –</p> <p>307. Group Member: I probably wouldn't even be thinking about the friendship stuff I don't think until –</p> <p>308. Group Member: No, this is it, I don't want to bulldoze in with it.</p> <p>309. Group Member: If he's not very aware though of what he sort of</p>	<p>constraints – 1.298)</p> <p>(ELSA reflection/thinking - questioning what the problem is? – 1.302) wondering whether child knows he has a problem with his friendships</p> <p>(Another ELSA making suggestion to group – 1.303) discover more about the children as a group</p> <p>(Reassurance from group - confirmation of thinking - 1.304) other ELSA contribution confirming ELSAs thoughts</p> <p>(Strengths based approach suggested by another ELSA – 1.305)</p> <p>(Suggestion of resource by ELSA – strength cards – 1.305)</p> <p>(Group support - receiving</p>	<p>(EP direction - legitimising identification of a target as an appropriate piece of work in itself – 1.299)</p> <p>(Inclusion - non-expert role - EP drawing group into discussion – 1.301)</p>
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<p>needs to do or what he – if he’s not very aware of what he wants to do and he’s been given this place where because of the sort of person – character that he is, and there’s lessons that he really likes and everything, do you think he might be sort of going, “I’m not that keen, if she shows up, I’m just going to say I really like this lesson” so maybe for next – depending what happens tomorrow, maybe give in tomorrow and then say, “Look next week we’re meeting at this time because we’re running out of time” and then – so that you can actually make a start and then he might see, “Oh actually it’s not that bad” you know and it’s all right and then to make it clear and say, “If you don’t show up – this is my best slot for me because I work here too and I’ve got to juggle everything around and this is my best slot so we’ll do it then and then we’ll make a plan for now”.</p> <p>310. Group Member: Mm I don’t think he’s got this B Block phobia like (laughs) –</p> <p>311. Group Member: Oh yeah, yeah! So if he’s happy to come to B Block –</p> <p>312. Group Member: He’s happy to come, that’s the first hurdle.</p> <p>313. Group Member: Have you not heard about the B Block - ?</p> <p>314. Group Member: He’s not one of them, I mean the girl was in last year wasn’t it and she really didn’t like to come because of that big stigma around B Block but um yes I don’t think he’s going to be like that, it’s just he just likes his lessons and he doesn’t want to miss them I don’t think, I mean genuinely that’s what he’s like so...</p> <p>315. Group Member: And maybe he doesn’t know what he’s got to come for, maybe –</p> <p>316. Group Member: Yes, yeah.</p>	<p><b>affirmation of ELSA’s thinking – 1.308)</b></p> <p><b>(Direct advice from another ELSA - 1.309)</b></p> <p>suggesting that the ELSA needs to be more boundaried about his attendance of sessions</p> <p><b>(ELSA suggestion - engagement with young person – 1.315)</b></p> <p>Importance of child knowing why he is receiving ELSA</p>	
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<p>317. Group Member: <b>This Asperger's thing</b> –</p> <p>318. Group Member: <b>Well this is it, I'm not too sure yet you know whether it's that or not but</b> um –</p> <p>319. Facilitator: <b>Yeah he'll need kind of clear expectations is what you're saying isn't it, in terms of knowing – so it sounds like you've done some good work around finding out which would be a good slot for him to come into –</b></p> <p>320. Group Member: Yes, well I've got quite a few slots now – well not quite a few, but a few more than I had, but yeah it's... there are limits (laughs).</p> <p>321. Facilitator: <b>And so the agreement is that it's going to be tomorrow - ?</b></p> <p>322. Group Member: Yes and I think he was fine by that but he didn't show up last week so – which I thought that was his first session, proper session. Maybe he'd forgotten, because they do that as well don't they. But if he does that this week then I will put my face round the door I think.</p> <p>323. Facilitator: Will the staff in his lesson know?</p> <p>324. Group Member: Yeah, yeah I'm sure that's been sorted already that he will be – yeah it's been okay'd for him to – yeah.</p> <p>[0:55:20]</p> <p>325. Facilitator: <b>Is it worth double checking with them just so if they spot him - ?</b></p> <p>326. Group Member: Yeah I will just get... because I'm sure she has reminded him because she does see him. He does come into B Block – well he did for a while. He had his own little kind of board game club that he had sort of made up to sort of – <b>think that was another thing to</b></p>	<p><b>(Benefit of group - other ELSAs following up different strands to the initial discussion – 1.315 - 318)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA – lack of factual information – 1.138)</b></p>	<p><b>(Encouragement - EP highlighting positive aspects of ELSA's work – 1.319)</b></p> <p><b>(Learning - EP attaching an explanation about why ELSAs actions might have been helpful – 1.319)</b></p> <p><b>(EP clarifying ELSA's action – 1.321)</b></p> <p><b>(EP advice – professional development - encouraging ELSA to be proactive – 1.325)</b></p>
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<p>sort of – when he was waiting for his ELSA slot, to get some friends coming in but I don't think that really took off very well. But –</p> <p>327. Group Member: Perhaps that's a way in, maybe you say to him, "Look let's go and play a game" or something?</p> <p>328. Group Member: Yeah I mean I think – I don't think he's going to be one of these that just will sit there and sort of you know – I think he's quite a chatty sort of dare I say "friendly" but (laughs) obviously not in that sense – not recognising. No he's a sort of chatty friendly boy but he doesn't recognise other people's –</p> <p>329. Group Member: Yes, yes.</p> <p>330. Group Member: - how they're coming across to him. I don't know, I'll have to wait and see (laughs).</p> <p>331. Facilitator: Yes, so it sounds like you're in the situation where you haven't quite met him and found out –</p> <p>332. Group Member: No, no not a proper – it was just to have a look at his timetable and you know I wanted to say, "Do you know why you're coming?" but no, no there's time (laughs) – because at the moment it's still sort of just putting the feelers out and just sort of testing the water I suppose to see what he's – well as long as he's happy to come over, I think that's going to be my first thing, not because he doesn't want to come to B Block but just he doesn't want to come out of a lesson which he likes, "Oh I like that lesson" and that's literally how it's going, but you know he's not the first one to say (laughs), "I like that lesson, I don't want to come out of that lesson" so I might have to just be firm and yeah it won't be forever but we've only got like how many more weeks left? It probably won't be enough time to get into the friendship activities too much really but we'll see.</p>	<p><b>(ELSA identifying barrier to work – 1.326)</b> Unsuccessful intervention occurring before request for ELSA intervention</p> <p><b>(ELSA colleagues giving advice – sharing tips – 1.327)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA exploring own thinking – 1.328)</b></p> <p><b>(Supervision outcome – action identified – 1.332)</b> Discussion has enabled ELSA to learn something about herself as a</p>	<p><b>(EP affirmation - EP reflecting ELSA is at an early stage of the work – 1.331)</b></p>
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<p>333. Facilitator: I think – so tomorrow you’re going to be looking at general –</p> <p>334. Group Member: Just and just you know what he likes and things you know getting to know him, his hobbies and things, just what I do normally in a first session because they don’t know what they’re coming into so... I’ll just start talking to you (laughs) and I don’t think I’ll have a problem with him like that. I think he’ll be chatty and -</p> <p>335. Facilitator: Yes, it sounds like you think he’ll be quite honest as well from what you’re saying in terms of your –</p> <p>336. Group Member: Oh yeah oh he will if he tells you he doesn’t want to come out of that lesson because, “I like that lesson!” (laughs).</p> <p>337. Facilitator: Yes exactly, he’ll say it as it is.</p> <p>338. Group Member: Yes he will, yes.</p> <p>339. Facilitator: Okay um and so – and then as part of that, some activities that will help to explore how he actually sees himself and –</p> <p>340. Group Member: Himself, yes.</p> <p>341. Facilitator: - where he might want to get to so – because like you were saying, he may or may not think that he has friends. He may think that he would like situations to be different, it’s kind of – it’s that sort of thing isn’t it. So it sounds like that activity around you know, “Who are you? And what do you see yourself as? Where would you like to be?”</p> <p>342. Group Member: Yeah well that’s what I’ve got to do for tomorrow but until he’s in there (laughs) we’ll just go with the flow...</p>	<p>practitioner – needs to be more firm with her expectations</p>	<p><b>(EP direction/reassurance - repeating messages to reassure ELSA – 1.333)</b></p> <p><b>(EP direction/guidance - EP providing some direction in response to ELSAs uncertainty – 1.339)</b></p> <p><b>(Professional practice direction - suggesting a question based activity – 1.341)</b></p>
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<p>343. Facilitator: Yes and at the moment your kind of hypothesis I guess in a way, your assumption is that –</p> <p>344. Group Member: Yes, that this is how he is and -</p> <p>345. Facilitator: Yeah, he finds it difficult to read the intentions of others; there could be work around there. Actually what we need to do is think, “Is that right?” to test that out really over the – in the next few sessions... yeah.</p> <p>346. Group Member: Yes.</p> <p>[0:59:04]</p> <p>347. Facilitator: Does that sound - ?</p> <p>348. Group Member: Yeah that’s fine, yeah. I think I’m – well hopefully he’ll come in tomorrow and we’ll just have a chat really to begin with (laughs). Yeah, yeah so I’ll – there’s lots of friendship things that I’ve been looking at but I – you know until I know how much he understands of it or – we’ll just see how it goes. As I say, the time limit is what worries me, it’s that I’m probably just maybe starting in it and then we’ll have this big gap and...</p> <p>349. Facilitator: So I think could you feed that to the SENCo that you know this is – this is the kind of time limits and what I hope to do before summer is... and then is he someone you think you could carry on with after the summer?</p> <p>350. Group Member: Well it depends whether he likes his lessons! (Laughter)</p> <p>351. Facilitator: Okay in terms of your time management, do you think it’s someone that –</p> <p>352. Group Member: I should think so yes, yeah. Yeah I mean it might be difficult but we’ll have to work round – yeah, well he will have to work round me probably more likely in</p>	<p>(Difficulties with practical</p>	<p><b>(Developing thinking - identification of ‘hypothesis’ – 1.343)</b></p> <p><b>(Identifying outcome - EP summarising hypothesis to end by giving a clear aim for ELSA – 1.345)</b></p> <p><b>(EP direction – ELSA to link with SENCo to share her plan of work – 1.349)</b></p> <p><b>(Professional practice development - EP encouraging ELSA to engage in good practice/continuation – 1.349)</b></p> <p><b>(EP direction/patience - demonstrating patience by giving consistent message to uncertain ELSA – 1.351)</b></p>
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<p>September because it'll be a whole new ball game I suspect again won't it? But yes... yeah so one step at a time anyway with him (laughs).</p> <p>353. Facilitator: Yes and you're recognising that there is that summer break so it's – it will be work towards a plan and then you can look at putting that plan in in September really. Yeah, okay... okay is that okay?</p> <p>354. Group Member: That's okay yeah.</p> <p>355. Facilitator: Yeah? Are you feeling you're okay in the next four weeks or do you want to explore any of that any further?</p> <p>356. Group Member: (Sighs) I think until I have a first initial sort of – well maybe couple of weeks with him just to see where he is... just to get to know him really I think, I probably won't know. But I've got lots of friendship stuff but I just – I just don't want to bulldoze in with it all yet because I might just scare him off even more (laughter), especially if he likes his lessons even more than he likes coming here. So I'm just going to take it slowly I think but the fact is that I haven't got much time; that's my biggest worry is the time limit, but I know I can obviously pick it up in September but I would like to sort of have a bit of an impact in that area hopefully and a bit of a chance to -</p> <p>357. Facilitator: Yes, it's kind of – it's wondering where to have the impact isn't it because - ?</p> <p>358. Group Member: Yes and I mean there's all these things I'm looking at, "Oh that looks good, that looks good – that's too far in advance" like that you know? (Sighs) So I haven't even had a proper chat with him yet so... I think I'm just going to have to go with the flow and just take it like I do with all the other ones really (laughs) and sort it out as we go, yeah.</p>	<p><b>arrangements – 1.352)</b> ELSA being non-committal to continues involvement</p> <p><b>(ELSA showing anxiety by repeating concerns/intended actions – 1.356)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA considering impact issues – 1.356)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA planning issues – 1.358)</b> ELSA trying unsuccessfully to plan without knowing the child's needs</p> <p><b>(Supervision – identification of outcome for ELSA not clear – 1.358)</b></p>	<p><b>(EP direction: giving more firm suggestion regarding plan of plan – 1.353)</b></p> <p><b>(Next steps - EP seeking confirmation from ELSA agreed plan – 1.355)</b></p> <p><b>(EP checking on ELSAs emotional well-being – 1.355)</b></p> <p><b>(EP wondering about impact/outcome – 1.357)</b></p>
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<p>359. Facilitator: Yeah Okay it's because it's a new area –</p> <p>360. Group Member: <b>It's a new area for me yes</b>, this – because you know and again it's only him, it's not like there's a group of similar sort of other ones to sort of you know bounce things off of when you've got more than one, but with him...</p> <p>[1:02:22]</p> <p>361. Facilitator: <b>Well after a couple of sessions, feel free to email or phone me as well if you want to then have a chat about how you might go about the next couple –</b></p> <p>362. Group Member: Okay, yeah there might be only one session after that mightn't there? (Laughs).</p> <p>363. Facilitator: <b>Yes but you could then think about what you might want to do in September around if you – you know if you...</b></p> <p>364. Group Member: <b>Yeah I think that's when it'll be happening more of it in September but he might have changed (inaudible 1:02:41) as well, he might – after summer holidays things do change a lot (laughs) and they come back different so...</b></p> <p>365. Facilitator: <b>And I think once you have a focus area then you think you'll probably be more confident in selecting which bits of resources will be more helpful around that area and obviously have a chat with the Senco as well as you're going along.</b></p> <p>366. Group Member: Yeah...</p> <p><b>367. Facilitator: Okay are we all okay? Do we need refreshments or anything or - ?</b></p> <p>368. Group Member: No I'm fine.</p>	<p><b>(ELSA sharing uncertainty - ELSA acknowledging new experience – 1.360)</b></p> <p><b>(Supervision - ELSA slowing changing thinking – 1.364)</b>          ELSA considering events/situation that have not yet happened</p>	<p><b>(Supervision - EP offering to continue supervision via email/phone after first couple of meetings with child – 1.361)</b></p> <p><b>(Structuring work - EP patiently leading ELSA through each step of planning the work – 1.363)</b></p>
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<p>369. Group Member: I'm going to go and get a drink of water. Does anyone else want one?</p> <p>370. Group Member: No thanks.</p> <p>371. Group Member: Fine thank you.</p> <p>372. Group Member: Sure? Sure? (Laughter)</p> <p>373. Facilitator: So... in the last bits of today um I brought some bits around anger management and day three in particular and then um we'll do kind of a bit of a round of celebrations as well as it's our last one of the year (laughs).</p> <p>374. Group Member: <b>Lovely!</b></p> <p>375. Facilitator: Okay... so in terms of the day three, mostly in – on the training, you'll remember it was around the sort of fireworks model, yeah? Does that ring a bell? Is that something that you use in - ? How did you use that?</p> <p>376. Group Member: <b>I've actually – or the children have built like little models and things like that um and with some of them, they actually prefer writing some of the things that made them angry to put inside it.</b></p> <p>377. Facilitator: Oh Okay...</p> <p>378. Group Member: <b>Um on other occasions they've actually drawn it on the board and then they choose whether it's a long fuse they've got or a short fuse, so depending on if it's a long fuse then the bigger explosion is longer whereas the short fuse is – you get instant reaction and come straight back down.</b></p> <p>379. Facilitator: Right... Okay.</p> <p>380. Group Member: <b>So some of the children find that quite useful.</b></p>	<p><b>(Sharing - ELSA keen to see EP's resources – 1.374)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA sharing experience – 1.376)</b> ELSA sharing some detail on use of a strategy from training</p> <p><b>(ELSA sharing feedback from children</b></p>	<p><b>(EP providing reassurance – 1.365)</b></p> <p><b>(School systems - EP signposting ELSA to support available within school i.e. SENCo – 1.365)</b></p> <p><b>(Management of session/well-being - EP looking after needs of the group; opportunity for drinks etc. – 1.367)</b></p> <p><b>(Management of session - EP reminding group of structure of session – 1.373)</b></p> <p><b>(Professional development - EP sharing resources – 1.373)</b></p> <p><b>(Training - EP reminding group of their training – 1.375)</b></p> <p><b>(Monitoring of practice - EP monitoring use of training materials</b></p>
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<p>381. Facilitator: So in terms of their own awareness of how they might respond to the situations?</p> <p>[1:05:07]</p> <p>382. Group Member: Mm and what their triggers are and things like that as well. So instead of actually having them mapped, they'll have something else, um like someone um scribbling on their work or someone shouting at them. So just draw a little picture for them and say, "Right that's the one I want on there" -</p> <p>383. Facilitator: Excellent.</p> <p>384. Group Member: - or they get to draw it, depending on what they're wanting that day to do.</p> <p>385. Facilitator: Yeah and there's lots around their kind of thoughts aren't there which is where the fuse kind of comes in, is that what you do as well? Is - are you - do you - ?</p> <p>386. Group Member: Yeah we've done lots but they've all made their own like rockets and things and had the things coming out of the bottom you know, the things that make them (inaudible 1:06:00) yeah, the triggers and you know hopefully lengthening that fuse as time goes on.</p> <p>387. Facilitator: Yes, yeah... (laughs). Okay and that's something that you haven't used at the moment?</p> <p>388. Group Member: No.</p> <p>389. Facilitator: So the bits that I've brought along, um you're probably aware of them um this book is basically what the ELSA um training is based on; it's just a really good guide in terms of the areas of anger really. Um... and so it goes through the firework model, it goes through the assault cycle as well, so if you remember um that's about how</p>	<p>- 1.380) commenting that children find strategy useful</p> <p><b>(Children developing new skills – identifying triggers for anger – 1.382)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA experience shared with group - 1.386)</b></p>	<p>- 1.375)</p> <p><b>(EP summarising the outcomes from the ELSAs description of her work – 1.381)</b></p> <p><b>(EP praise – 1.383)</b></p> <p><b>(Specific advice about an activity – 1.385)</b></p> <p><b>(Professional development for group – EP question about use of resource -1.385)</b></p>
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<p>our body really responds in um a threat situation um... so yes, so that's just more of a general guidance around that but it does draw out, as does um the volcano (inaudible 1:07:10) as well is that something -? Yeah... um... which really does draw upon the importance of the connections between the thoughts at the time and how they might be feeling and I think – yeah, for me that's a big part of it is helping them to make that shift in a way in terms of um if a trigger happens, what thoughts are they going to have? Are they going to be kind of hot thoughts (laughs) or cold thoughts? Do you know what I mean by that? It's kind of – yeah. But there's different ways of seeing the situation and different ways of thinking about it.</p> <p>390. Group Member: Actually there was a good one um – is drawing up two people perhaps fighting over a book and actually what they're saying to each other but also what they're thinking -</p> <p>391. Facilitator: Ah fantastic.</p> <p>392. Group Member: - that's very interesting.</p> <p>393. Facilitator: Excellent, so making those real connections between what's actually happening – what they're thinking at the time, which might be different.</p> <p>394. Group Member: Yeah because you're going to be, "Actually I want this book", "No I want this book" and then one's probably thinking, "Actually you can have it" and the other one going, "No I really want that". But it's for the children to decide what's happening with that which is great.</p> <p>395. Facilitator: So those sort of scenario based things and particularly when you draw it out like that, it can be really helpful. So you're all aware of this... mainly for younger ones actually.</p>	<p>(ELSA sharing activity – 1.390/394) responding to EPs questions by giving examples of how they've used/developed materials</p> <p>(ELSA learning from group – 1.392)</p>	<p>(Training reminder - EP recapping an activity from their training – 1.389)</p> <p>(Group inclusion - EP drawing group members into conversation – 1.389)</p> <p>(EP encouragement – 1.391)</p>
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<p>396. Group Member: Yeah that looks like it -</p> <p>397. Facilitator: There is one that's all about um kind of lessons um but I think as with all of these things, you can have lesson plans it's kind of you dip in and out as you feel is important for the child don't you? Um... yes and then there are books like this which I think again they're probably familiar with which is stories –</p> <p>398. Group Member: Can I have a look at that now - ?</p> <p>399. Facilitator: Yeah and I guess therapeutic stories come into this as well don't they when people have used that specifically around...</p> <p>400. Group Member: Yeah I mean depending on obviously the child but yeah some of the stories can be quite good um I'm just thinking of the koala that wouldn't cooperate, that's a good one for some of the children.</p> <p>401. Facilitator: Okay.</p> <p>402. Group Member: It's the monkey – it's the penguin who lost its cool as well –</p> <p>403. Group Member: That's it, yeah.</p> <p>404. Group Member: - that's the one isn't it that's really good.</p> <p>405. Group Member: Yeah Penelope (laughter) that's a good one actually.</p> <p>406. Facilitator: Is that another story book?</p> <p>407. Group Member: Another story book with a little – it's got a little penguin and...</p> <p>408. Group Member: Um general stories that um she's doing a diving</p>	<p>(Professional development - ELSAs responding to resources brought by EP – 1.398)</p> <p>(ELSAs sharing therapeutic story ideas – 1.400/402)</p>	<p>(EP praise – 1.393)</p> <p>(EP description of process within activity – linking action and feeling – 1.393)</p> <p>(EP advice - suggesting approach that ELSAs can use – 1.395)</p> <p>(Professional development - EP sharing resources – 1.397)</p> <p>(Group professional development - EP making links from one activity to another to further the work that an ELSA might be doing with a child – 1.399)</p>
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<p>competition and things like that and someone says something to her and she loses her cool um so yeah that's quite interesting.</p> <p>409. Facilitator: Okay.</p> <p>410. Group Member: There's a nice little rhyme for them to learn as well isn't there? I can't remember it at this moment (laughs).</p> <p>411. Group Member: I'm not saying it! (Laughs)</p> <p>412. Group Member: I can't remember it but there was – and they loved the – it's – they make that rhyme don't they? (Laughter) You know it's when you start saying it and you're reading it out and the kids are like, "Shall we sing it together?" "No!" (Laughter)</p> <p>413. Facilitator: What's the premise of the rhyme? Give me a little bit.</p> <p>414. Group Member: If... no I can't remember it! (Laughs)</p> <p>415. Group Member: If you – something about – I can't remember now. It's about what to do if you're feeling cross and then this is what I need to do, I don't lose my cool I can just – it's quite nice, it's quite powerful isn't it?</p> <p>416. Facilitator: So gives them an alternative and a strategy. Okay... have people brought along anything?</p> <p>417. Group Member: Well I brought – because I gave I think this to you didn't I? I gave you –</p> <p>418. Group Member: Yes that was brilliant.</p> <p>419. Group Member: (Inaudible 1:11:23) nice little work but it's a photocopy – I photocopied the whole book and then I just photocopy it as and when because it's like a workbook and it works -</p>	<p>(Group approval of shared resources – 1.148)</p>	
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<p>420. Facilitator: Ah I see...</p> <p>421. Group Member: - just quite nice, it's just something for them to work... um...</p> <p>422. Facilitator: That looks like the same as, "What to do when I worry too much?"</p> <p>423. Group Member: It's the same – yeah it's the same – yeah it's the same series.</p> <p>424. Facilitator: Ah!</p> <p>[1:11:38]</p> <p>425. Group Member: And this has been really good – this has been quite powerful. I've been doing this now with a couple of children at the moment and they get to draw their car because it's about being in control of your car and about losing control. So you can kind of relate it to that which is – that's actually been really good and I think I gave that to somebody –</p> <p>426. Group Member: Yeah it is really good. I liked that one.</p> <p>427. Group Member: And then there's another little – that one, a little calming book.</p> <p>428. Facilitator: Ah, thank you.</p> <p>429. Group Member: It's about the candle and the strawberry.</p> <p>430. Facilitator: Oh the candle and the strawberry! Yes another one of my groups were talking about that actually, that's deep breathing isn't it?</p> <p>431. Group Member: Yeah, yeah.</p> <p>432. Facilitator: Have people come across the candle and the</p>	<p>(ELSA's resource sharing – 1.419/422)</p>          <p>(ELSA's describing use of resource – 1.425)</p>          <p>(Approval of resource by group member – 1.426)</p>	<p>(Group inclusion - EP drawing in group members - 4.416)</p>
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<p>strawberry?</p> <p>433. Group Member: It's brilliant! (Laughter)</p> <p>434. Facilitator: Do you want to explain (name) or (name)?</p> <p>435. Group Member: You sniff the strawberry and blow the candle out.</p> <p>436. Group Member: Three times.</p> <p>437. Group Member: Oh that's quite interesting because most of the – most children who if you're on break – if I'm on break duty or lunch duty and they come over and they've got – it's usually if they've been hurt or if they've been upset by someone, I just tell them to take deep breaths.</p> <p>438. Group Member: Mm.</p> <p>439. Facilitator: Yes, when I think of the strawberry I can take a deep breath in through my nose...</p> <p>440. Group Member: But it's obviously younger children obviously that it's better for!</p> <p>441. Group Member: You never know! (Laughter) There's one or two –</p> <p>442. Group Member: They actually – they do it don't they and they sit there –</p> <p>443. Group Member: Well they like strawberries.</p> <p>444. Group Member: You can see them like...</p> <p>445. Group Member: Mm.</p> <p>446. Facilitator: Yes I think an ELSA in another group actually created models of it as well, so they have a strawberry and a candle and –</p>	<p>(Making links when resources are shared -1.437)</p> <p>ELSAs learning about new resources</p>	<p>(Reference to wider ELSA network – 1.430)</p> <p>(Group inclusion - EP drawing group members into conversation through direct question – 1.432)</p> <p>(Wider ELSA network – 1.446)</p> <p>EP reporting on creativity of ELSAs in other groups</p>
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<p>447. Group Member: (Laughs) It's brilliant, I like that. But yeah this is –</p> <p>448. Group Member: It's a thick book.</p> <p>449. Group Member: - it's quite a thick book.</p> <p>[1:13:30]</p> <p>450. Facilitator: It's like a workbook so you're actually working through it and there's activities –</p> <p>451. Group Member: And there's activities for each – there's like several chapters and each chapter it tells you – it's about your fuse and what your triggers are and your calm thoughts and your cool thoughts and everything so um -</p> <p>452. Facilitator: Oh Okay...</p> <p>453. Group Member: I've got a copy of that.</p> <p>454. Group Member: Oh did I give you that copy?</p> <p>455. Group Member: Well I'm doing on with "Managing Moods" at the moment and we just like write it up on the board and then get them to think about it.</p> <p>456. Facilitator: Mm... yes so again doing those real links between –</p> <p>457. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>458. Facilitator: - the thoughts that they're having and then how some thoughts...</p> <p>459. Group Member: (Laughs) It's like I'd read the book!</p> <p>460. Facilitator: Okay brilliant, shall I pass that round?</p> <p>461. Group Member: I've seen that, I've got -</p>	<p>(ELSA giving further information about resource – 1.451)</p>	<p>(Professional practice development - EP taking opportunity to highlight idea of making links in children's thinking – 1.456/458)</p> <p>(Group inclusion - EP passing book around whole group – 1.460)</p>
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<p>462. Facilitator: (name) have you seen that? Anything else people find helpful when they're doing this sort of work?</p> <p>463. Group Member: Well I use 'Angry 'Arry' who's having a lie down over there. He's –</p> <p>464. Group Member: I was looking at that earlier.</p> <p>465. Group Member: - but he's – I think I just got the idea from the book that I think this – um where you have your feeling – where you feel your feelings in your body and so it's just specifically for anger and then they do um... Post-its and they put Post-its on, so it's just really a communication tool really.</p> <p>466. Facilitator: Mm yeah, so helping them to identify where in the body and - ?</p> <p>467. Group Member: Yeah and then why and how it makes them feel and then perhaps what they do to kind of stop it or – and stuff, but it usually works quite well and then especially if they get lots of little kind of – kind of little bits of Post-its and they can actually write certain things on there as well. So it's just – and then you can um... depending on what comes out of that, you can focus more on various points for the like the – on another week and stuff like that. So it's quite good.</p> <p>468. Facilitator: Thank you, anything else people use?</p> <p>469. Group Member: Games... the anger games...</p> <p>470. Group Member: Oh that one I do...</p> <p>471. Facilitator: Can I ask what anger games?</p> <p>472. Group Member: "Escape from Angry Island".</p> <p>[1:16:00]</p>	<p><b>(Development of activity ideas – 1.467)</b> ELSA describing how she tries to make activities 'hands on'</p>	<p><b>(Inclusion - EP drawing named ELSAs into conversation – 1.462)</b></p> <p><b>(Group as a resource - EP continuing to prompt to exhaust ideas from group – 1.468)</b></p>
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<p>473. Facilitator: Oh yes.</p> <p>474. Group Member: It's quite good actually, I used that a couple of times last week and um I was amazed at the response when they're coming back with really mature – to actually put it into words as well, what they were thinking, you know I was struggling with it, I was thinking, "Oh I'm not too sure how to put this" and out it came and I thought, "Yeah that's just what I was thinking but I couldn't say it" (laughs) so yeah I was really impressed with the game.</p> <p>475. Facilitator: So they are sort of scenarios are they?</p> <p>476. Group Member: Scenarios, yeah. I borrowed it from you – do you not know it? (Laughter)</p> <p>477. Facilitator: I don't get a chance to play them!</p> <p>478. Group Member: It is good.</p> <p>479. Group Member: What sort of things do they have to do then?</p> <p>480. Group Member: Well (sighs) – well you probably know it better than me because you played it more but there's (laughter) different like hot spots isn't there and self-talk and um different cards with all these different titles and you just pick up a card and you're going round the board getting back to your chosen pile of cards. I am playing it right aren't I?</p> <p>481. Group Member: Your island, yeah.</p> <p>482. Group Member: Yeah your island um... and you get like – it's good for their self-esteem because it's like, "Say three positive things about yourself" and you know a boy that I've been working with self-esteem – I started with him and then I had a gap and then I got him back again and</p>	<p><b>(Benefit of using games – 1.474)</b> ELSA describing how a game drew some good description from children about how they feel</p> <p><b>(Professional development opportunity - resource/game enabled ELSA to get more from her children 1.474)</b></p> <p><b>(Reflection about use of resources –</b></p>	
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<p>normally he can't say a good thing about himself and you ask, you know what – that type of question and – but on the board, no problem at all, he just came straight out with it. I said, "Normally you can't say a good thing about yourself but when it's in black and white in front of you on that board to get round that board you just come out with it!" Positive things about himself which he can never, ever – "Oh you know – oh there's nothing good about me", that's all I get you know.</p> <p>483. Facilitator: It's just different formats isn't it?</p> <p>484. Group Member: Yeah, it's just the way it came out.</p> <p>485. Facilitator: Yeah you try lots of different things don't you when you're working with pupils and just see what they might respond to and yeah –</p> <p>486. Group Member: Yeah he actually wanted to play it today but I didn't – (laughs), "No we're doing something else today" but he – we had our session cut short anyway because he had to see (name) so (laughter) -</p> <p>487. Facilitator: Okay.</p> <p>488. Group Member: "I don't want to go there!" "Yes, you do!" (Laughs) So... I managed to get him out the door eventually to go and see him but -</p> <p>489. Facilitator: Yeah, so there's things around self-talk as well –</p> <p>490. Group Member: Yes and that's the one he actually picked and I thought, "Does he know what this means?" as in why he's picked that and he said, "Yeah because I do often tell myself that – not to do that – in my head" and I'm just amazed how much – he's obviously had a lot from other places you know around the school with (name) and things like that, so things are going in but -</p>	<p><b>4.482)</b> ELSA recognising benefits of games – children say things that they don't normally say</p> <p><b>(Humour - joking and laughter within group – 1.488)</b> developing sense of group cohesiveness</p> <p><b>(Outcomes - report of child demonstrating learning – 1.490)</b> ELSA recognising that the use of games provide an opportunity for</p>	<p><b>(Professional practice development - EP reflecting that experimentation with approaches is okay – different children respond in different ways – 1.485)</b></p> <p><b>(EP labelling approaches - EP highlighting development of skills in children – 1.489)</b></p>
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<p>491. Facilitator: Yeah so it gave you a real insight into his own awareness and - ?</p> <p>492. Group Member: Yeah, just – yes of his awareness and it was a really good game. I'll hang on to that one so I hope you don't want it back yet!</p> <p>[1:19:00]</p> <p>493. Facilitator: No you're all right on that one! (Laughter)</p> <p>494. Group Member: But (name)'s going to use it as well so you know the two of us will use it for a bit until we get –</p> <p>495. Group Member: The lad I used it with wanted it for his birthday. He kept pestering his mum, (inaudible 1:19:18) mum!</p> <p>496. Facilitator: Ah! (Laughs) Brilliant! Good and so – yeah and so that was really useful to see that – for you to see that he's got a strategy that he works with and – yeah, because there are a lot of different strategies aren't there that you can kind of play around with, with different pupils. So some respond well to things like self-talk; others –</p> <p>497. Group Member: Just and also just the mood they are in when they come in. Last week he was on a real high and today he wasn't so you know – because I thought, "Oh we'll do a bit more self-esteem" to see how far he's come and what we've done and today just wasn't – you know flagging it up at all (laughs) it was completely back – you know, lost it again and oh no, I think he was just a bit lethargic and just wasn't in the happy sort of mood so it didn't work today that – so we didn't go with the game because I thought we're not going to have very long with him going off anyway half way through his session, so we didn't get started on that but -</p> <p>498. Facilitator: So he was in a different frame of mind.</p>	<p>children to demonstrate their learning/what they already know</p> <p><b>(Outcomes - child enjoyment of session – 1.495)</b> ELSA reporting children's enjoyment of games</p> <p><b>(ELSA skill -flexibility of approach – 1.497/499)</b> ELSA sharing the need to be flexible and respond to child's mood</p>	<p><b>(EP summarising outcome for child – 1.491)</b></p> <p><b>(Need to identify success - EP highlighting the need for ELSAs to see that the children have strategies that work – 1.496)</b></p>
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<p>499. Group Member: He was and he just was – you know, was... not a good one today (sighs) to sort of get anything out of him but... <b>so you have to be quite flexible and positive.</b> We should have gone back to the Play Dough really! Go back to the Play Dough today –</p> <p>500. Group Member: <b>Have you tried the masked feelings with him?</b></p> <p>501. Group Member: No, what's that?</p> <p>502. Group Member: That's quite good. You get a mask and then you can put on it um you know like if you – if you look happy on the outside but actually you can be sad on the inside.</p> <p>503. Group Member: Oh yeah I think you've mentioned that before haven't you, yeah?</p> <p>504. Group Member: <b>And that works. That works really well because you will suddenly get them just writing down exactly how they're feeling inside.</b></p> <p>505. Group Member: Yeah... this one, he doesn't really hide what he's feeling (laughs) I think you can just see quite blatantly, "Yeah I can see what you're like today" (laughs) but yeah... Yeah a good game.</p> <p>506. Group Member: You might not see it for a while!</p> <p>507. Group Member: It's fine.</p> <p>508. Facilitator: <b>Okay – Okay anything else people wanted to flag up for anger management? Okay... so um we've got a few moments where um it would be really nice to end the year just um thinking about something that you're really pleased with, something um related to ELSA for example (laughter). Or you could do general it's fine! We'll just end on a positive. Um yeah, something – something which – do you want to go round in a circle or</b></p>	<p><b>(ELSA judgement – 1.499)</b> ELSA recognising that activities needs to be at child's emotional level</p> <p><b>(Activity suggestion – 1.500)</b> Another ELSA suggesting an activity</p> <p><b>(Successful activity shared – 1.504)</b></p>	<p><b>(EP succinctly summarising ELSAs contribution – 1.498)</b></p> <p><b>(EP managing session timings – 1.508)</b></p> <p><b>(EP highlighting positive aspects of</b></p>
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<p>is someone happy to –</p> <p>509. Group Member: Well I'll start with my girl, only just that -</p> <p>510. Facilitator: Yes.</p> <p>[1:22:23]</p> <p>511. Group Member: It's just that I've got her in a position where she can sort of just talk and just be um... come out with anything and she – she's not like she's trying to shock me or anything, she's just comfortable and we just talk about absolutely anything.</p> <p>512. Facilitator: Brilliant.</p> <p>513. Group Member: So – just that she's happy talking is good.</p> <p>514. Facilitator: Good, so –</p> <p>515. Group Member: About all aspects that – you know ones that – all sorts of things and I'm just happy that she's... comfortable enough in the room to talk.</p> <p>516. Facilitator: Excellent.</p> <p>517. Group Member: But that's probably nothing is it? That's probably nothing – that's how it should be I suppose (laughs) but yeah my experience was just to get, "Yeah fine" and all that so when you get one that is really just quite happy to speak -</p> <p>518. Facilitator: Lovely good, I'm pleased, thank you. We're going this way...</p> <p>519. Group Member: Which way? Okay... um well I've got quite a few successes really, quite a few children that know when to come in to me and say, "I need some time" um... I think um... just when you go into a classroom and faces light</p>	<p>(ELSA success - enabled a child to talk more freely about anything – 1.511)</p> <p>(ELSA exploring nature of success – 1.517)</p> <p>what's the normal expectation for children?</p> <p>(ELSA success – feeling needed – 1.519)</p>	<p>ELSA work – 1.508)</p> <p>(EP encouragement – 1.512)</p> <p>(EP encouragement – 1.518)</p>
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<p>up and you get, "Is it my turn yet?" so...I think just that kind of thing.</p> <p>520. Facilitator: Yeah so you're seeing both changes in pupils that you work with and then some real positive feedback as well?</p> <p>521. Group Member: Definitely, yeah.</p> <p>522. Facilitator: Thank you.</p> <p>523. Group Member: Oh I think for me it's about relationships with those children I think about you know needing their one-to-one time first and really getting to know them as a person before actually doing actually any work. I think that's really important so I think that's – and I think feeling comfortable that that's – if that's all you're getting from it that actually you're going far rather than –</p> <p>524. Facilitator: Yes (laughs) –</p> <p>525. Group Member: And knowing when I think it's appropriate.</p> <p>526. Facilitator: Good yeah, so you feel like you're kind of confident in that –</p> <p>527. Group Member: Confident in that – yeah absolutely.</p> <p>528. Facilitator: Yeah and it is – it is a massive part isn't it – as they say with any, even adult therapy, they say it is all about the relationship; that's what – the research says if you've got a relationship between you know client and therapist then that's part of the long journey really.</p> <p>529. Group Member: If you haven't got the trust, you haven't got anything.</p> <p>530. Facilitator: Yeah absolutely. Lovely, thank you. (Name)?</p> <p>531. Group Member: I worked with a Year 6 group of girls for friendship</p>	<p>children wanting to spend time with her</p> <p><b>(Importance of relationships - ELSA success – 1.523)</b> developing positive relationships</p> <p><b>(Trust as a key ingredient – 1.529)</b></p> <p><b>(ELSA success – developing materials</b></p>	<p><b>(ELSAs reporting Positive feedback from children- 1.520)</b></p> <p><b>(Encouragement - EP recognising confidence in an ELSA – 1.526)</b></p> <p><b>(Importance of relationships - EP affirming that the relationship is a key part of any therapeutic process – 1.528)</b></p> <p><b>(Research base - EP drawing on research to evidence her comment – 1.528)</b></p>
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<p>skills and it – and I didn't – I sort of had to for some of the – I used some of the stuff in the ELSA pack which worked and then that kind of sprung...into some other ideas and actually it was quite good fun some of the stuff we did. It was difficult in the middle of it, but then um... and they've pretty much been fine since then. I think -</p> <p>532. Facilitator: Fantastic.</p> <p>533. Group Member: - one of the um... we used (name)'s buttons, that was good, and they all put each other together and they – what they kind of came to accept, there were kind of two core groups and then they sort of float between each other but what they came to accept is that you didn't actually have to be everybody's best friend all of the time and that was sort of okay just to know that was all right to be like that. And the other key thing was um... just because you may be thinking something slightly unkind in your head, you didn't need to actually share that (laughter) as well!</p> <p>534. Facilitator: Good!</p> <p>535. Group Member: Which was quite a learning curve really and it made – just made life more harmonious.</p> <p>536. Facilitator: Fantastic! So you saw real changes with that?</p> <p>537. Group Member: Yeah, yeah and their teacher said as well – he was a bit wary and he said, "I don't know if it's all going to kind of flare up again when – before SATs you know if they're going to get a bit stressed and stuff" but they were pretty much okay so...</p> <p>538. Facilitator: Lovely, set up now for their transition.</p> <p>539. Group Member: Hopefully yes (laughter).</p>	<p>to use with a group – 1.531)</p> <p>(Training pack material use – 1.531)</p> <p>(ELSA success – overcoming some difficulties when working with a group – 1.531)</p> <p>(ELSA success – seeing the progress with the <i>group</i> of children – 1.533)</p> <p>(Outcomes - ELSA recognising the impact of their work – 1.535) positive outcomes that impact the wider environments</p> <p>(School systems - positive outcomes to ELSA work recognised by another teacher in school - 1.537)</p>	<p>(Positive outcomes - EP commenting on ELSA experiencing 'real change' – 1.536)</p>
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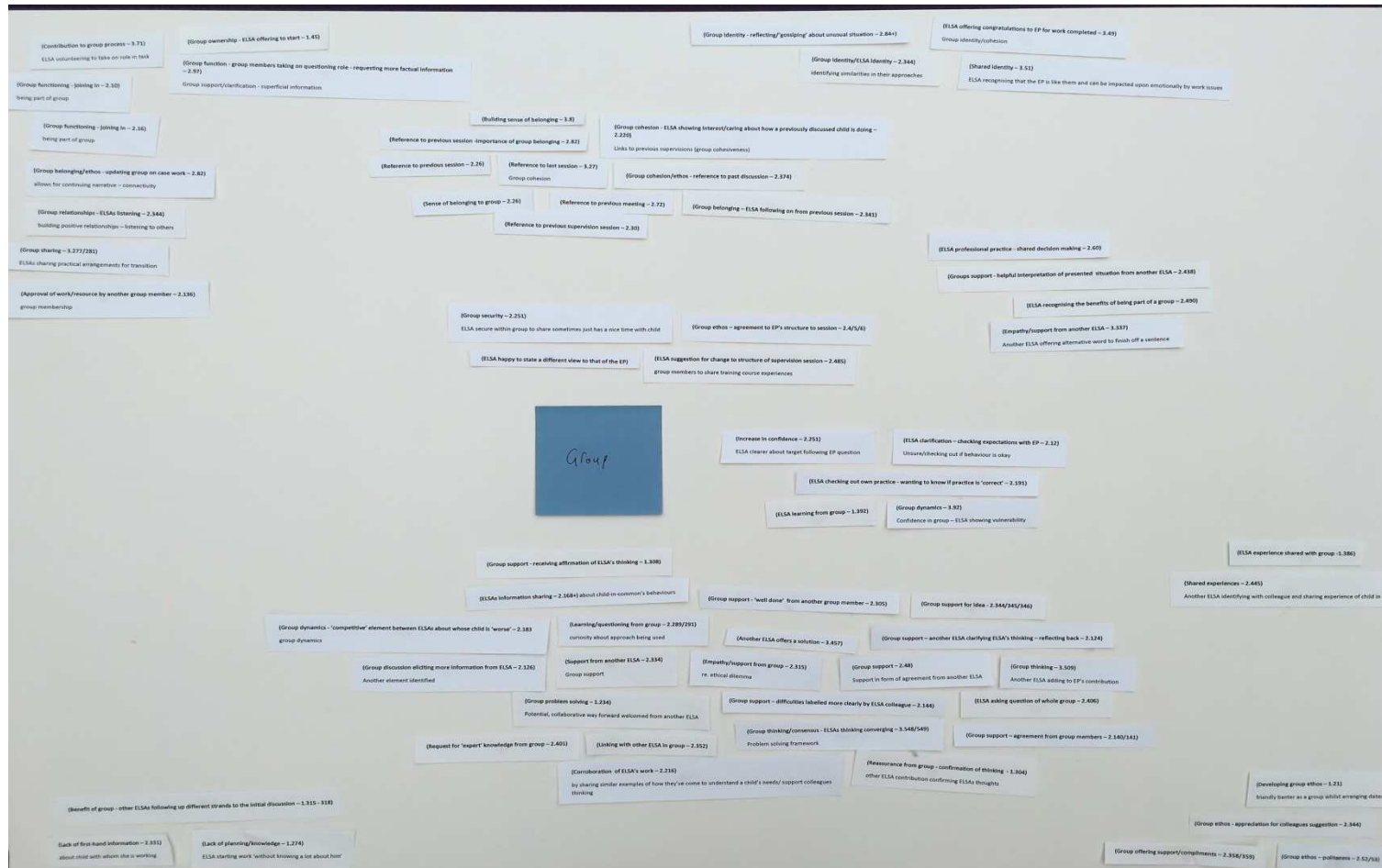
<p>540. Facilitator: Good, thank you (name). And Name?</p> <p>541. Group Member: I've worked with a girl for quite a long time in ELSA and she's finally doing work now, writing, reading quite well and she's now moving on to Germany I think so -</p> <p>542. Facilitator: Ah Okay, Okay...</p> <p>543. Group Member: So we're working on her moving on to Germany now. But on the whole she's come a long way, considering what she was like.</p> <p>544. Facilitator: Okay so she kind of became quite unsettled and you've seen - ?</p> <p>545. Group Member: Unsettled it was – running round the school chasing her, trying to get her to do things but now she will sit down and do her work in the class.</p> <p>546. Facilitator: Fantastic.</p> <p>547. Group Member: But she still likes to come out and have a special time.</p> <p>548. Facilitator: Yeah, yeah so you've provided that support for her and you're seeing the impact back in the class.</p> <p>549. Group Member: Yeah.</p> <p>550. Facilitator: Great, lovely, thank you. That was really lovely to hear all those (laughs). So what we will do is I will send out an email and um – just to prompt you about dates for next term and um what we'll be focusing on there and like (me) said, if there's any queries about any of this stuff then either contact me or – is there a contact on the letter?</p> <p>551. Male Speaker: There's a contact on the letter, yeah.</p>	<p><b>(ELSA success – impact of ELSA on positive academic work outcomes – 1.541/543)</b></p> <p><b>(Recognition of success through the child – 1.547)</b> continued support provided by ELSA/ feeling needed by child</p>	<p><b>(Impact on classroom behaviour - EP commenting on ELSA work and its impact on classroom behaviour – 1.548)</b></p> <p><b>(Management of session - EP ending session with reminder about an email indicating future dates and areas of focus – 1.550)</b></p>
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<p>552. Facilitator: Yeah, yeah, um so yeah do just let us know if you want to have a chat about that and as always I'm around after if you want to catch me for anything at all. But otherwise, have a lovely summer!</p> <p>553. Group Member: Yeah and you, thanks a lot! (Laughter)</p> <p>554. Group Member: Can I borrow this?</p> <p>[End of Transcript]</p>		<p><b>(Supervision availability - EP making herself available for any other queries – 1.552)</b></p>
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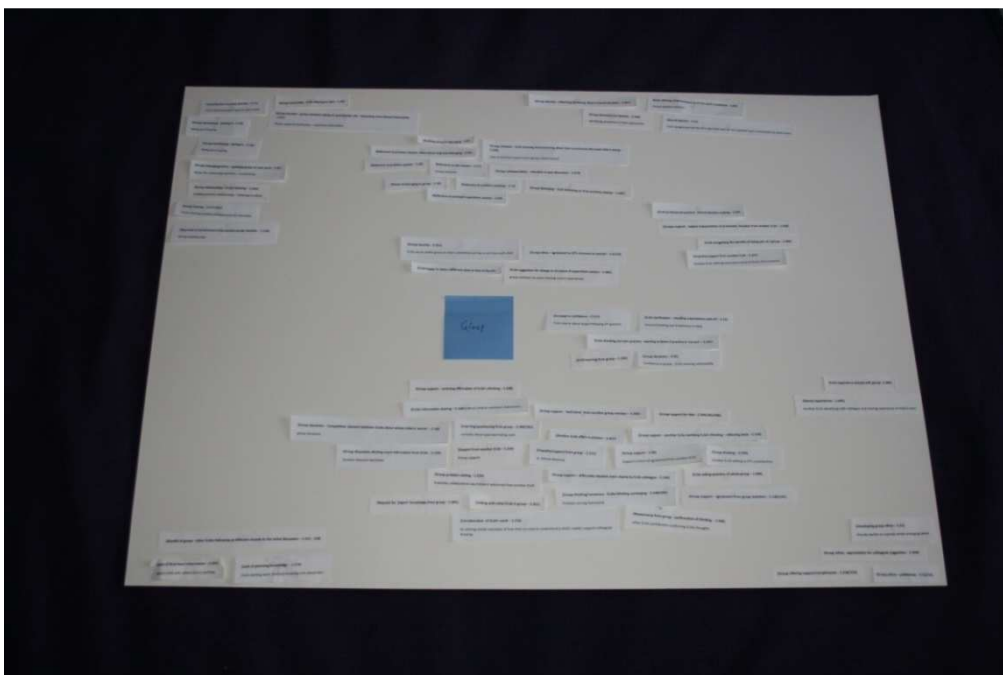
# Appendix K

## Photoboard showing the coding process for ELSAs' contributions

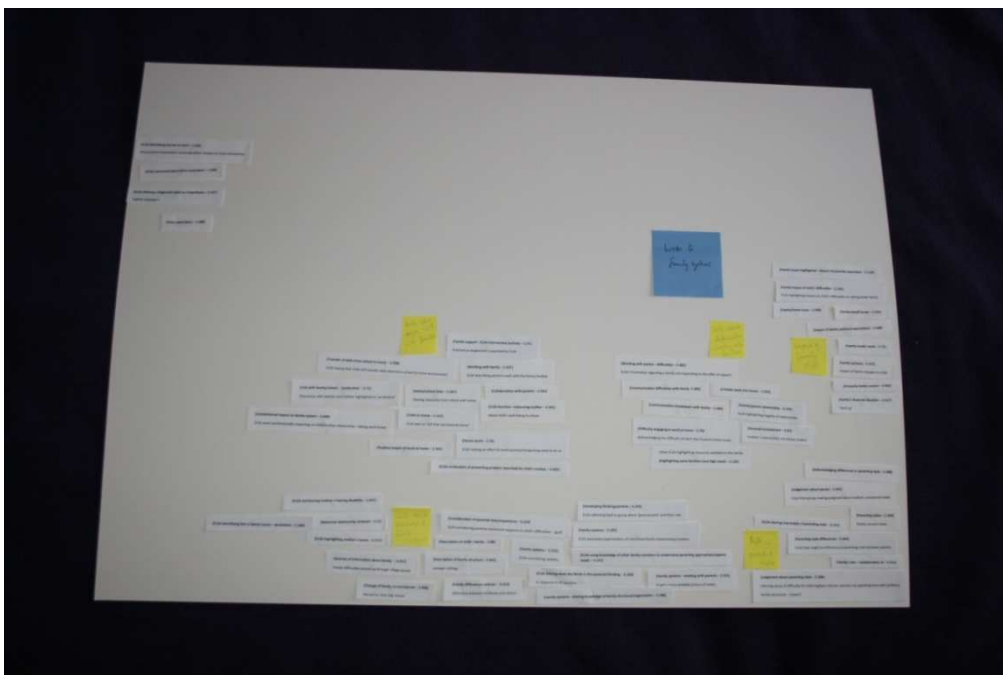
ELSA coding board 1- larger version to enable reading



ELSA coding board 1

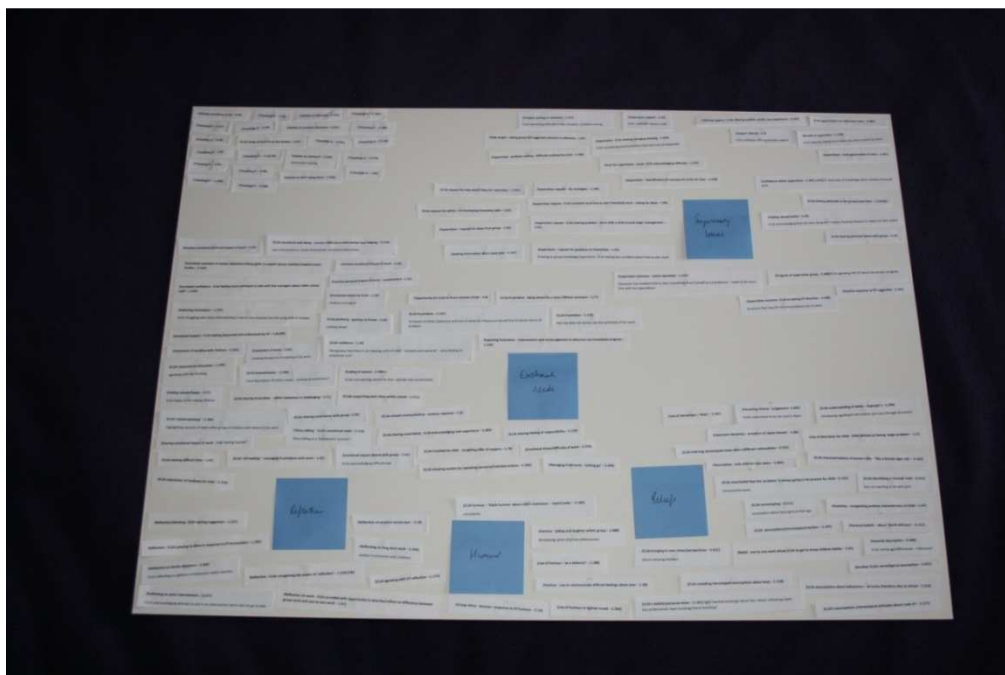


ELSA coding board 2

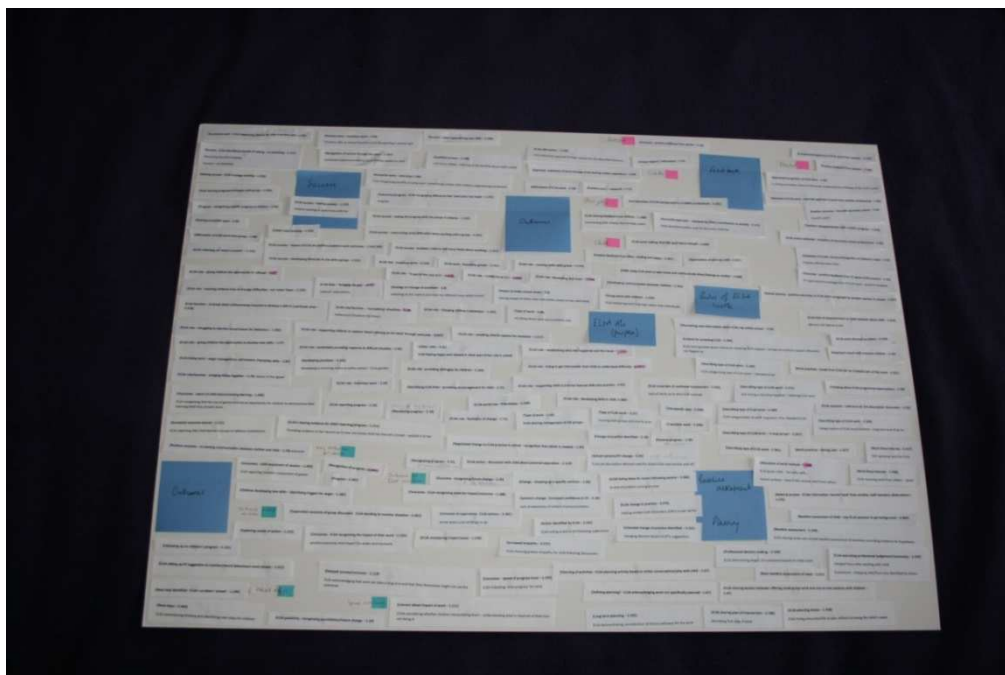




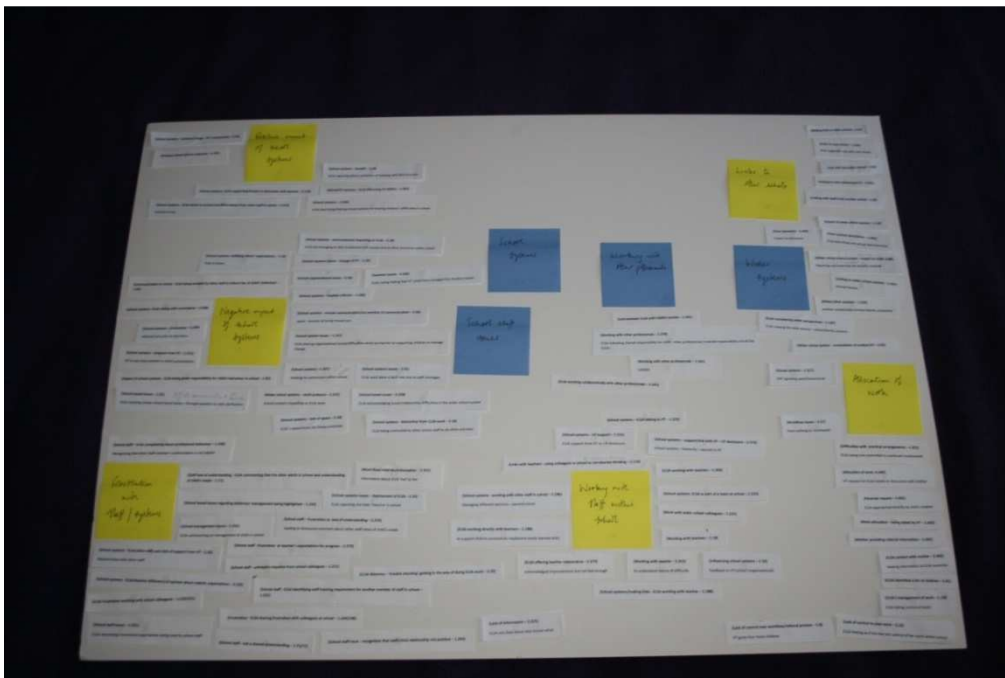
ELSA coding board 3



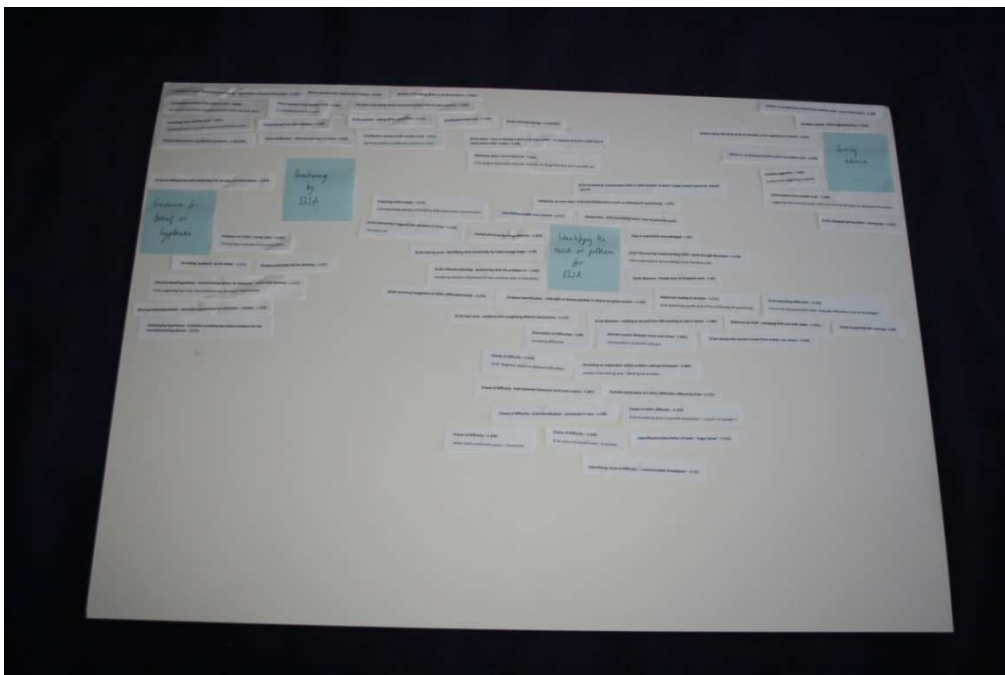
ELSA coding board 4



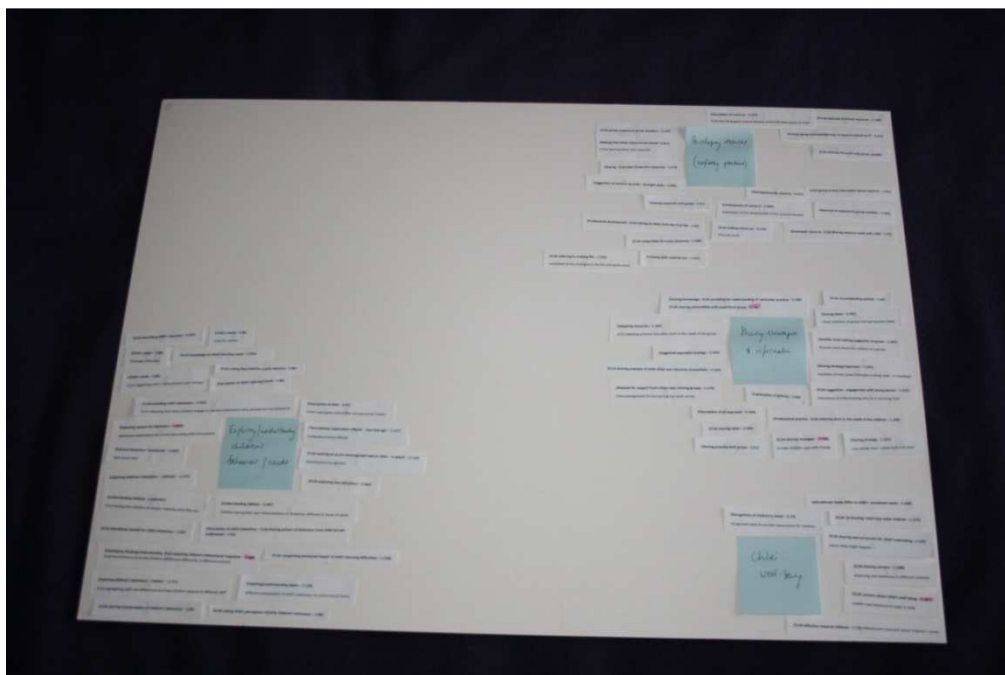
ELSA coding board 5



ELSA coding board 6



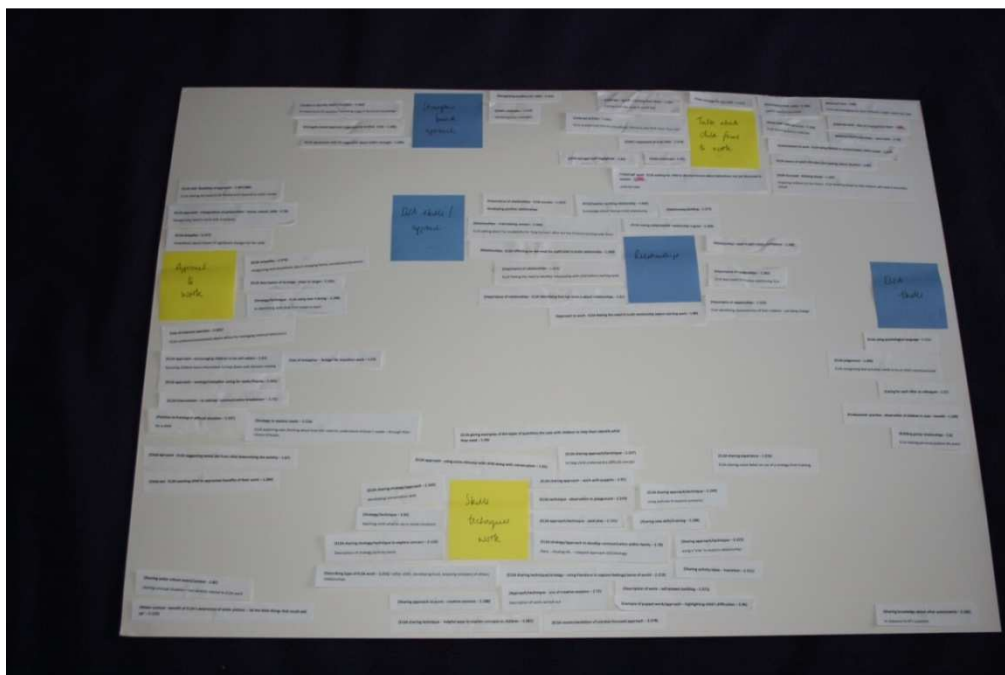
ELSA coding board 7



ELSA coding board 8

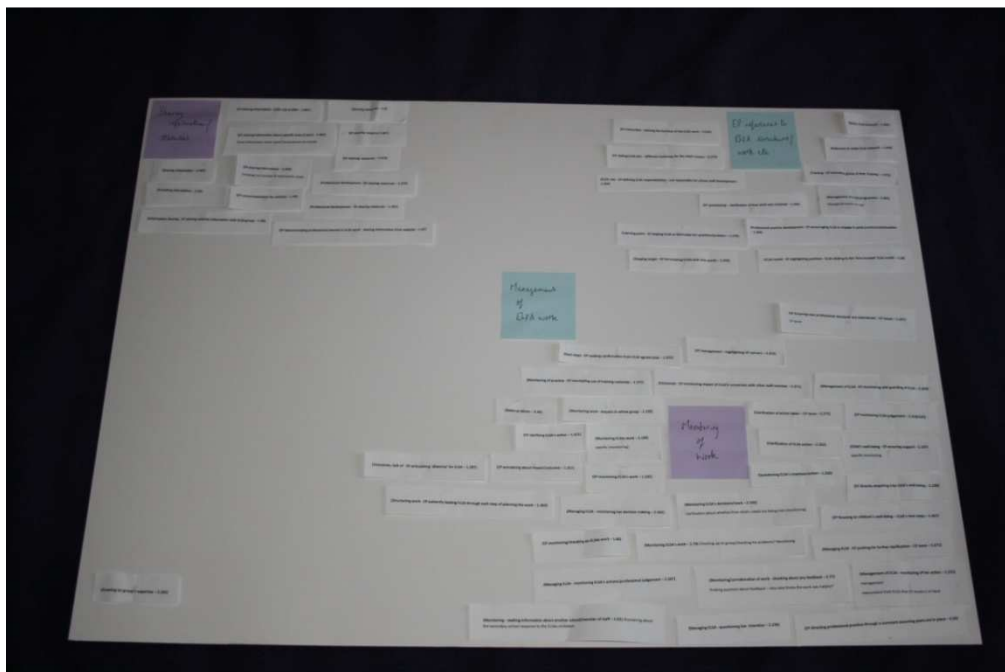


## ELSA coding board 9



## Photoboards showing the coding process for EPs' contributions

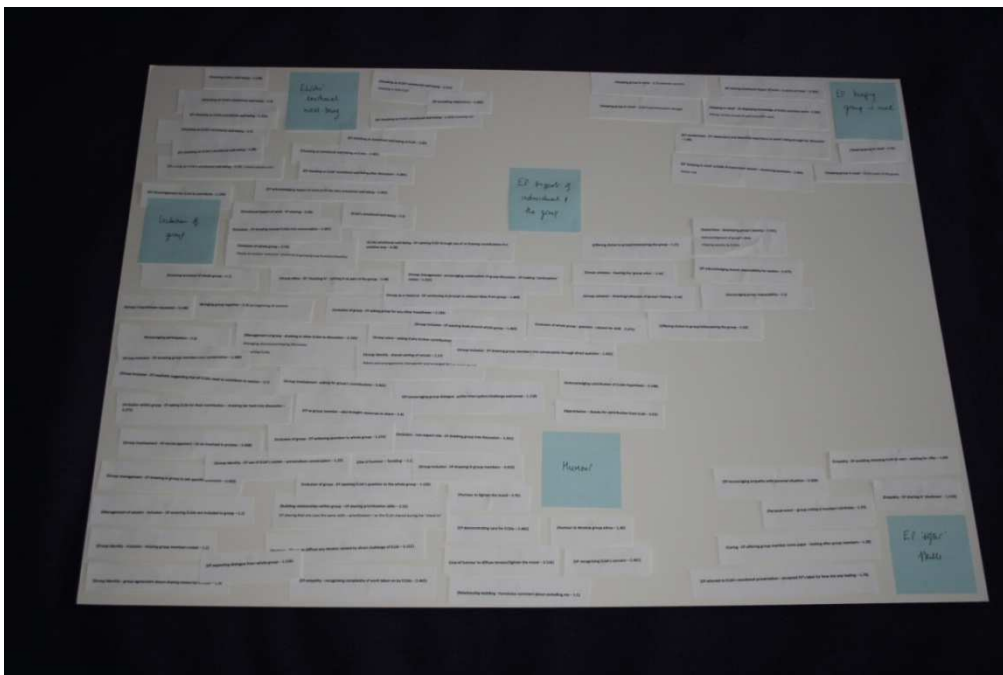
## EP coding board 1



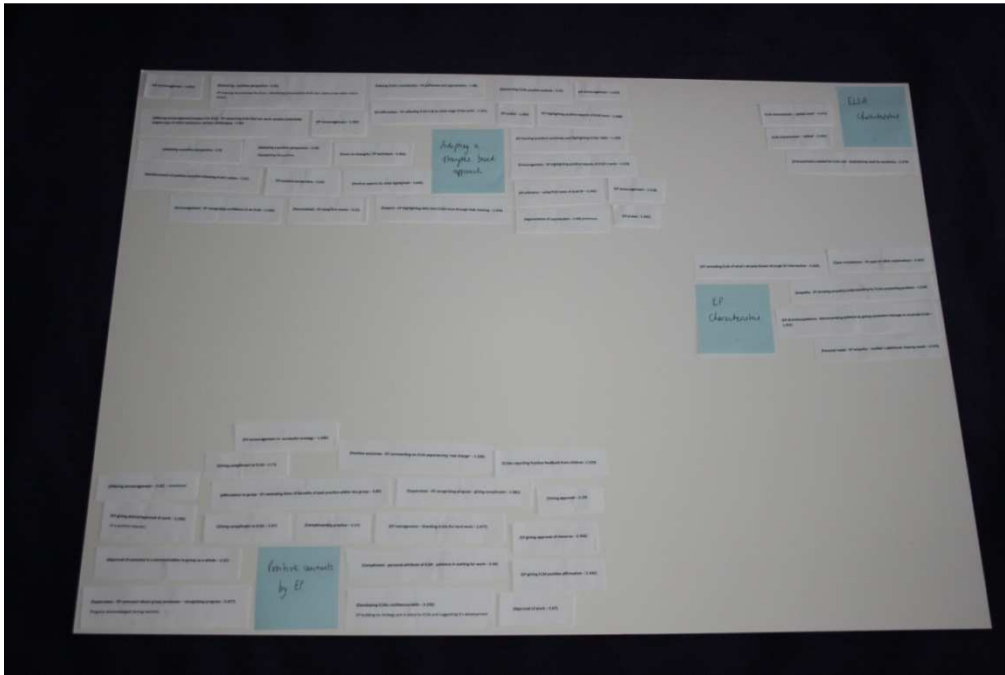
EP coding board 2



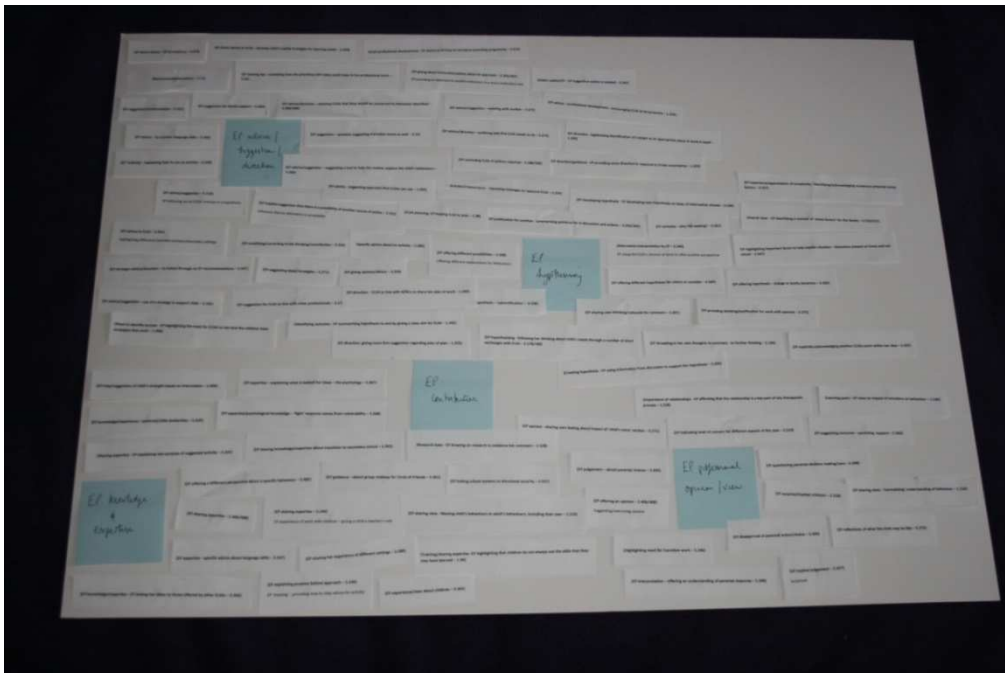
EP coding board 3



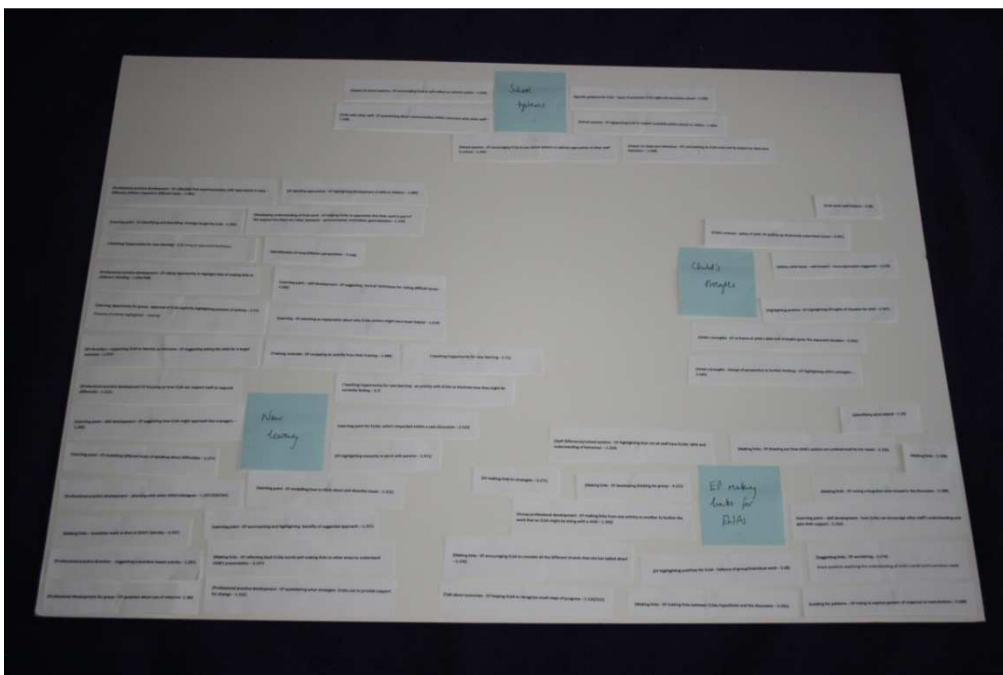
EP coding board 4



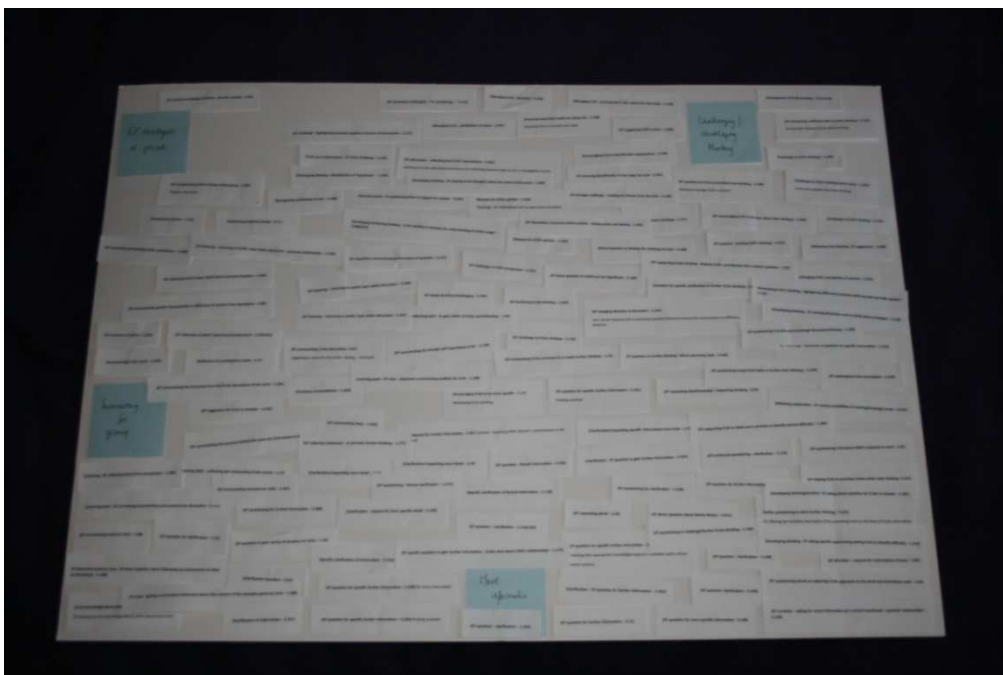
EP coding board 5



EP coding board 6



EP coding board 7



## **Appendix L**

### **USB drive**

The following information is contained in folders on the USB drive for reference if required:

- Coding grids – Sessions 2 and 3
- Photoboards – coding
- Transcripts – Sessions 2 and 3