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OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Directorate of **Learning Resources**

The Experience of Education
Of the Army Child

By

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VOLUME TWO

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The Children's Stories

The four focus children's stories are presented within the following sub-headings – family background, educational history, friendships, attitude to school and attitude to the army. After each child's story, the emerging themes are presented.

1 – DEL

Family Background

Del was born in November 1990, in a garrison town in the South East of England. When his mum, Mrs Hobson, was three months' pregnant with him, his parents separated and he had no further contact with his natural father. Del did not appear to be unduly upset by this and commented, "all I know is that he's in the Paras." (D1) [The Paras being short for the Parachute Regiment, one of the elite regiments of the British Army.] After the separation, Del and his mum moved in with her parents before finding a home of their own and, as a result, he became very close to his grandparents. The support from her parents allowed Mrs Hobson to find work in her home town and she had a series of jobs, including retail work for a large supermarket chain and catering work in the town's university halls of residence. Del's mum mentioned that the only difficulty he had when leaving the family home town to move to Upton "was leaving his gran and grampa, since they had brought him up when he was little, so he was so close to them." (P4) Clearly his grandparents had a strong influence on Del and his mum. Indeed, the first primary school that he attended was because his grandfather had gone there, even though, as Mrs Hobson was aware that "it was a really bad school." (P4) When Del's grandfather died, during the data collection period, Del was clearly very distressed but insisted on viewing his grandfather's body and attending his funeral.

When Del was seven years' old, Mrs Hobson met and married a soldier, posted at the garrison in her home town. Del was clearly extremely close to his step-father. After one interview, Del commented to me that "he's not really my dad, you know, but he is really." (Fn, 9/3) Indeed, in all of the interview material, Del called him "dad" and appeared to be completely at ease using that term. Lance Corporal Hobson of the infantry regiment the 1st Batallion of the Duke of Galland's Regiment (1 DGR) seemed to have an easy relationship with his step-son. Del

commented that "we talk about the army and he tells me his stories." (D4) When Del was asked if he missed his step-father when he was deployed, he answered yes with no hesitation. (D4) Lance Corporal and Mrs Hobson went on to have two further children – Richard, born in June 1996 and Matthew in October 1998. Richard attended the local primary school which Matthew was going on to join. Mrs Hobson commented that Del did not get on with his middle brother as Richard was always difficult when his dad was away and Del did not like the fact that he caused problems for his mum. At the time of writing, Mrs Hobson was also expecting her fourth child and was "desperate to have a little girl." (Fn, 15/6) Del may not have viewed himself as equal in status to Richard and Matthew, he commented that when his dad returned from a tour of duty, "Matthew and Richard jump all over him, so he doesn't normally speak much to me." (D4)

Over the course of the data collection, Mrs Hobson revealed that she was an alcoholic. She did not indicate when this started but offered many reasons for her dependency. Clearly her earlier experiences with her first partner were not positive, but she took a certain pride in stating that "I've brought up Del single-handedly." (P4) She found it very difficult to be separated from her parents and found the first few weeks of living in Upton a shock, "I just cried my eyes out." (P4) Her frustrations with her new life have continued, "now that we're here, though, neither him (Del) nor I like Upton." (P4) One of the difficulties must have been the amount of time that her husband is away from home. In the four years that they had lived in Upton, Lance Corporal Hobson had been away for two and a half years. Del commented that "he's only been home for one summer." (D3) Mrs Hobson stated that after her marriage in 1997, "I refused point blank to go and live on camp, so I didn't have my own quarter until we came to Upton." (P4) Her first real experience of army life, therefore, was when they came to live in Upton and this would have been made more difficult by the lack of support from her parents. Mrs Hobson did not have work in Upton but was hoping to help out in the classroom at the primary school that her youngest sons attended.

Mrs Hobson's alcoholism had a profound effect on Del. He commented that when his dad was away, "I feel like I have to be responsible, and I don't want to be there." (D3) During the course of the research, Del's attendance rate at school dropped. During one two week period, he was absent from school because his mum had slipped and broken her ribs and Del "had to have a week or two off

school to help my mum." (D4) During the academic year that the research was being conducted, Del's attendance rate was 83.77% and all of his absences were sanctioned by letters from his mum. Nonetheless, he clearly had a close but warm relationship with his mother, commenting that if he had a problem he would tell his mum "because she knows me so well, I try and deny it but she's got this, like, radar and she knows when something's not right." (D2) Their relationship was almost symbiotic, one could not exist without the other. Mrs Hobson was equal in her warmth towards her son, "my kids are everything to me." (P4)

Del's perception of himself was very interesting. When he was asked how someone would describe him, he commented "I don't know what to say, I can't describe myself, I don't know how anyone else sees me." (D4) He stated that he didn't see himself in his life. This could mean a variety of things – perhaps Del did not feel a part of his home and school life. When questioned further on this, he commented that his life was, to him, about what goes on at home and not at school. (D4)

Educational History

By the age of twelve, Del had attended four different schools. From the age of four until aged eight, he attended the local primary school in his grandparents' home town in South East England. In the middle of year four, he moved to his first primary school in Upton (Charterhouse Primary). Mrs Hobson commented that some of the wives in their home town gave her phone numbers and information about local schools. As she was so busy with her youngest children, she followed their advice and registered Del at Charterhouse. She and Del went to visit the school on the day that they registered him and filled out the application forms. Del then transferred to the second primary school in Upton (Zennor Primary) for years five and six. He moved primary school because the family were first of all quartered in a house on the Charterhouse Estate, within the catchment area for Charterhouse. Two weeks after moving in, they were informed by the army that their quarter was going to be demolished. Although their second home in Upton was in the catchment area for Zennor, the family had to wait several weeks before Del was given a place there. During this time, Del had to walk the forty minutes across Upton to get to Charterhouse. He refused to let his mum walk with him. Del's first visit to Zennor was on his first day of school, when he had finally been accepted. Mrs Hobson did not comment on Del's

transfer to Upton School, as if this was something that he was expected to do and that there was not an element of choice about this. Del transferred to Upton School for the start of year 7 and had attended the school for the full academic year before I met him at the start of year 8. At Upton School, Del had the choice of walking or taking the bus. He commented that walking was "easier, I can talk to my mates," whereas taking the bus was, "noisy, and some kids smoke. It's a waste of money – about £1.40." (D2)

It was not until Del was in his final years of primary schooling, at Zennor Primary, that he was diagnosed with dyslexia. Up until that point, Special Educational Needs' assessments had focused on Del's anxiety which was believed to stem from poor motor skills at an early age. In his pupil file, SEN assessments were available for Zennor Primary although his first primary school, Charterhouse had not evaluated or logged his difficulties. Del, then, was on the SEN Code of Practice at School Action Plus level. Within his first year at Upton School, Del did not have an annual review for his SEN.

There were no records available for Del's Key Stage One Scholastic Aptitude Test results. However, for his Key Stage Two SATs, Del obtained a level 3 in English, a level 4 in Maths and a level 5 in Science. He clearly expected to do very badly in his exams, saying, "I remember when I got my results I cried, then I peeled back the paper and saw that I had a level 5 and it was okay." (D1) On the basis of this, Del was put into the second set at Upton School at the start of year 7, but was moved down to set three at the start of year 8. Del's English teacher at Upton commented, "Del hasn't made such good progress although Del is naturally much brighter [than some of the other children]. He has a lot of time off school for personal reasons, and therefore it's very difficult to get the consistency with him to target his difficulties and follow up on them, because he'll be here for one lesson and then not for the other. He also has dyslexia and that isn't being supported in this school." (E5) When his step-father was deployed to Iraq, Del's behaviour took a down turn and several members of staff commented that he was more "distracted" (E6) but were not made aware by Mrs Hobson that the recent upheaval at home may have been the cause of this.

In their annual reports, staff commented on Del's literacy difficulties. Targets generally focused on using dictionaries or facilities in Learning Support and

making use of topic word lists and spell checkers. In PSHE, however, Del's "written work [was] detailed and well-presented," which indicated that the less informal nature of the lesson could have been of some benefit to him. In several subjects (art, French, Geography and Maths) staff had indicated that the quality of his homework had room for improvement. At the end of year 7, his attendance at lessons was still seen as very good, which indicated that his attendance rate had only started to slip over the course of year 8.

Friendships

Over the course of the year, there was an ebb and flow in Del's relationships with his peers. He was no longer in contact with any of his friends from his first primary school. Del commented that when he moved from Charterhouse to Zennor primary, "we had this football match between the two schools and everyone was calling me a traitor." (D1) This seemed quite an extreme example of loyalty and could explain why he took no friends with him through to his time at Zennor. When Del was asked who his best friend was at primary school, he was very clear about this and named a boy who had recently moved away. However, this boy was not mentioned again in any of our conversations and this underlined, perhaps, how easy it was for Del to move on and forget old friendships.

At Upton, Del's attitudes towards his friends was very changeable. He started off year 7 by being quite friendly towards Nick Carter, one of the other participants in the study, as they were in the same tutor group. By the end of the autumn term in year 8, however, Del's comment was,

> "Nick's a Westie [diminutive form of the Westmoreland regiment's name (assumed name)] and I don't get along with him. They're lazy. They did nothing when, well, my dad, he was in Kosovo for about four months, he was there for an extra month and he put the outposts out for them [the Westies]." (D1)

Del's attitude towards his male friends was mixed up in his feelings towards the army. Clearly, at home Del had heard his father miscalling the regiment that Nick's dad belonged to and Del had taken this on board and had used this in making judgements about people – including using the diminutive form for the name of their regiment! Towards the middle of year 8 (Fn, 4/2) Del had a major falling out with Nick and Steven. Nick and Steven had decided not to talk to Del

anymore because he had lied about how he had fallen from his bike and broken his arm and, as a result, he had got someone else into trouble. This was, again, another example of an extreme emotion – the boys obviously felt very strongly about the rights and the wrongs of the situation. Before this, Del had got a lift with Nick's mum up to football training on a Tuesday evening, as Mrs Hobson didn't drive. After the big falling out, Del couldn't attend football training any more. However, when questioned at the beginning of March, he had found a new hobby in the army cadets. Del commented that at "cadets, there's a minibus which comes to pick you up." (D3) Transport, therefore, was no longer an issue.

From this time, Del became very close to Jeff. When he was asked why they were friends he said that Jeff "does have a talent for getting into trouble." (D4) Jeff perhaps was seen as something of a thrill to Del – he found it exciting that they could break into a building site together and go somewhere that was out of bounds. It seemed that Jeff and Del had started to mature faster than Nick and Steven. During a lesson observation (Ob, 23/2) Del commented to me that all Nick and Steven wanted to talk about was "football, football, football," whilst he and Jeff, "like football, fun and girls and guys stuff." Del was asked how long he and Jeff had been best mates. His reply "since the summer holidays of year 6" (D4) indicated that he had already forgotten his friendships from the year before and from his time at primary school. His friendship with Jeff was important because it represented the here and now and the moment that Del was living in. Del was clearly comfortable with Jeff because "his dad lives in the army, but his mum lives in a civilian house," (D4) so they shared the bond of army life and experiences.

Attitude to School

On the surface, Del's attitude towards school and schooling was very proper. He attended school "to learn stuff, to get a good education, that's it." (D2) However, it became increasingly apparent during the study that what he said and what he did were, in reality, two very different things. Time after time, Del was observed playing an inactive, if not apathetic, role in lessons. He regularly sat himself, when there was no seating plan, in a seat as far away from the teacher as possible. Countless lessons took place when Del did not put up his hand an answer a question. At primary school, he stated that his favourite subjects were PE and English. Now, however, at Upton, he only liked PE, "because it's fun, it's

not boring." (D1) The list of subjects that he disliked was quite extensive – ICT, Technology, History, Maths and English. When he was probed why he disliked these subjects so much, his response was because "they're boring, you always work the same. Write, write, write." (D1) The fact that he had picked up on the issue of writing is indicative of the difficulties that Del had with his literacy skills, caused by his dyslexia and the lack of support he had in overcoming this. In one English lesson, when Del was required to read through an extended piece of text, he clearly struggled and gave up half way through. (Ob 10/6)

Del was very suspicious of teachers. He found it impossible to name a member of staff that he liked at any of the schools that he had attended. Furthermore, when asked if he would seek a teacher's advice over anything he replied, "no, because they always say that it's confidential and stuff and it never is. I don't trust them." (D1) As a result, he would always talk to a friend or a member of his family first. During a lesson observation, Del had commented to me that he no longer liked Steven because he was being bullied but had spoken to a teacher about it. Del's comment was "it's like, you never leave your flock, you stay with them." (Ob, 23/2) The words echoed the military ethos of staying with your platoon, through thick and thin, and, in doing so, presented the teaching staff as something of a natural enemy. This was evident in a lesson where Del had previously been absent. Instead of asking the teacher for assistance, Del turned to one of his friends and copied his work. (Ob, 17/11) However, when the school asked a local football coach to come in and take over some of the PE lessons, Del was clearly very comfortable with him and spent some time after lessons chatting with him about sport. (Ob, 22/1)

Over the course of the lesson observations, it became apparent that Del did not have any real sense of responsibility for his own learning. After periods of absence from school, Del would not approach his teachers and explain that he had been away, or ask for catch up work. (Ob, 17/11) In several lessons, when the teachers asked the whole class who had been away, Del did not respond. (Ob, 23/2) He did, however, display a need to be able to control his experience of school. In an IT lesson, after a period of absence, when he was clearly far behind the other pupils in his class in terms of work output, Del deliberately overloaded the programme he was working on, so that it would crash the PC. (Ob, 8/12) Perhaps if he could not achieve in a positive manner, he would be seen to be

achieving by his peers through his negative actions. Noticeably, when discussing school, Del did not use any personal pronouns (for example, by saying "my school"), so there was no sense that he felt he belonged to Upton or had felt a part of Zennor or Charterhouse. This attitude contradicted Del's intention to attend school "to get a good education."

During Science lessons, there were several examples of collaborative work. Del usually paired up with Jeff. However, in all cases, both of them found working together extremely difficult and this usually resulted in goading each other into some sort of violence. (Ob, 23/2) Contrasted to this were more 'formal' lessons, where the teachers stood at the front of the classroom and the pupils were expected to work individually through work sheets or text books. In these lessons, whilst Del did not play an active role (as outlined earlier), he worked steadily through his tasks and tried to complete them. (Ob, 11/2)

Attitude to the Army

Del displayed a strong commitment to the army and seemed to revel in the army experience. Throughout the interviews, Del used army terminology and displayed a clear understanding of the work that his step-father did. There was a sense that he felt that he was very much part of the army now, as a child of a serving soldier, living in a married quarter. Del's comment at his first interview was that Upton "is my first posting." (D1) There was no sense, therefore, of separation between him and his step-father's work. On several occasions, it became clear that he had taken on some of the rivalry his step-father felt towards other regiments – when describing Nick, Del commented, "when we went to the Westmoreland's open day and that, he [Nick] said that it was much better than our open day. And ours was a lot better." (D1) When talking about his father's regiment, Del made use of personal pronouns and intimated a sense of belonging.

Throughout the course of the interviews, there was the feeling that Del was being very positive about his life in the army. Del commented that,

> "I prefer army life. It's different. You don't have to pay to move, they pay you to do that. You never stay in one place, but you make friends." (D1)

Tellingly, however, it became clear how unhappy Del and Mrs Hobson had become in Upton. When Del was questioned about their next posting, he said,

"it'll be better than here." (D3) Clearly, the necessity of living in places which were not always very appealing had not put Del off the army experience. He was adamant that he would join the army when he left school, "I either want to be in my dad's regiment, or our army cadet regiment." (D3) His reasons for joining the army were particularly poignant. He saw it as an escape from his day to day problems, "I figure you don't know how grateful you are until you come that close to losing it, you know. You know you go through day to day and then you have something that makes you grateful." (D4) He felt that he could punctuate the routine of his daily life with the highs of active service, forgetting, perhaps, the lows that active service could bring.

The themes emerging from Del's story

The section is divided into three themes – family, school and friends. Beginning with the theme of family, we can see how close Del had become to his mother. This had started at a very early age as Del's mum had brought him up single-handedly. By looking at Bowlby's theories of attachment (1969) along with Ainsworth et al. (1978) and Main and Solomon's (1986) further patterns of attachment it is possible to understand why Del's relationship with his mother had developed in the way that it had. As they were alone together for much of Del's early childhood, they formed a close bond. However, as Del's mother related, she often turned to her parents for help as she found bringing up a child single-handedly very difficult. It is likely that Del might have been able to sense her feelings of inadequacy and, in doing so, felt panicked and fearful as a result. Main and Solomon identified the disorganised pattern of attachment which is resonant of Del's reactions, stating that children became unpredictable if they could sense fear and disorganisation within their primary carer. The intensity of his relationship with his mother can only have added to this sense of fearfulness – he had only one parent to rely on so would have invested all of his emotional energy in her. Schofield (2002) discusses how children with more secure patterns of attachment can do better at school and go on to form secure relationships with teachers and peers. It may well be that Del's inability to do this (see later discussion) stemmed from his early experiences with his mother. Both Jolly (1987) and Keller (2001) explain how dependent army parents can become of their children. For the parent who moves frequently, children represent the one consistent part of their life. It is understandable, therefore, that Del and his mum had come to depend on each other so much.

Del described himself as the "man about the house" and listed all the things he did to help his mum out when his step-father was away. He clearly felt very responsible and described how he felt he needed to be near the house in case anything went wrong. This sense of (over) responsibility amongst military children is common in military child welfare literature (McCubbin and Dahl, 1976; Wertsch, 1991) but can also be seen in literature that focuses on the experiences of the military family more generically. Both Chandler (1991) and Rosen and Durand (2000) commented that military families had two ways of coping when the serving parent was posted away from home. Either, they left the role of the parent 'open' for the parent to return to, or an older child would take on many of the parent's roles and responsibilities. In Del's case, given his long-established close relationship with his mother, Del chose to take on many of his step-father's jobs around the home.

It was clear that Mrs Hobson found it difficult to cope with army life – she recounted that she found the move to Upton very difficult and disclosed that she was an alcoholic. Spencer (1976) had assessed that the stability of an army family depended on the ability and motivation of the army mother to come to terms with the impact of turbulence. Added to this was the fact that Lance Corporal Hobson's absences were many and often. Both McCubbin and Dahl (1976) and Watanabe and Jensen (2000) concluded that soldier absences were better for a family if they took place over long periods of time. Whilst Lance Corporal Hobson was often away from home, up until his deployment to Basra his absences were short (a few weeks at a time), resulting in the family never quite having the chance to fully adjust to him being away. This situation was compounded by Mrs Hobson's sense of detachment from the army - she commented that she did not have many close friends within the army. Montalvo (1976) had assessed that 'mutual help' was a tradition of the army. By not involving herself in army life, Mrs Hobson was, effectively, distancing herself from the support she could get from other wives in a similar position.

The theme of problematic school admissions is evident within Del's story. In line with research conducted by Hutchinson (2004), the BBC (2001) and the AFJ (2001) Mrs Hobson had experienced some difficulty getting Del into his second primary school in Upton. As a result, he had to travel some distance on foot

across the town to his first primary school until a place became available for him. Like many army parents, Mrs Hobson had asked army contacts at the previous posting for information about schools in the Upton area. Keller (2001) had concluded that army families do not know about schools when they move to a new area so they are often forced to rely on the opinion of others and can, as a result, make unsuitable choices of school for their children. This lack of knowledge about local schooling was compounded for Del by his mother's lack of involvement in his schooling. Mrs Hobson had recounted how she was aware that he wasn't getting the support that he needed for his dyslexia but had waited until a parent-consultation meeting until she raised this with the school (some twelve months later). Vincent (1996) concluded that parents like Mrs Hobson, could be indicative of a particular type of parental involvement, and suggested that parents might be 'independent' of their child's education. Given the range of difficulties that Mrs Hobson experienced, it is not difficult to understand that she had other things going on in her life that made her unable to engage more fully in Del's education and preferred to maintain a distance from this. Crozier (2000) felt that working class parents (like Mrs Hobson) might fail to get involved in their children's education because they could not access the education system (rather than not wanting to access the system). This was based on the cultural and social experiences of the working class family that would deny them the self confidence with which to approach schools.

The theme of friendship was particularly distinct for Del. He experienced turbulence in his friendships over the time that he took part in the research and also described several 'fluid' friendships that he had had before. Spencer (1976) suggested that mobility made it impossible for army children to develop anything other than superficial acquaintances, which is certainly possible in the case of Del. However, the research conducted by Darnauer (1976), Jeffreys and Leitzel (2000) and Pollock and Van Reken (2001) suggests that wanting more superficial friendships is something of an active choice on the part of army children – they do not want to become any closer to their peers for fear of being hurt when they have to say goodbye. As Del knew that he was going to be leaving Upton by the end of year nine, this remained a distinct possibility for him.

Del maintained military friends only – all his 'close' male friends were from an army background. Out of all of the children involved in the research he was the

most enthusiastic about the army, generally, and wanted to join up when he left school. The army was very much a part of his identity. Darnauer (1976) and Black (1984) suggested that being a part of a service community was an all-consuming and central part of a military family's life and identity. Del, therefore, seemed to be unable to (or did not want to) separate his military home life from his friendships at school. Derrington and Kendall's suggestion (2004) that there is a cultural clash between traveller children and the stable community might also be transferred to Del's case – perhaps he was more suspicious of civilian children and, thus, kept the company of other military children.

Turning now to some of the themes concerning school and school-life which emerge from Del's story, we can see that Del had a history of high mobility within his educational experiences, having attended four schools. As a result, perhaps, his special educational needs were diagnosed late (towards the end of year five at his third school). Added to this was the fact that Del's school file was incomplete, failing to contain any information from his second school, as well as information from his Key Stage One tests. Although he was on School Action Plus level for his SEN, Del had not had this reviewed during his time (two years) at Upton School. Galton (2000) and Ofsted (2002a) both considered that the quick (and complete) transfer of information about a student was key to the good management of pupil mobility. This issue was further highlighted by Nicholls and Gardner (1999) who considered that the quick transfer of information would be important in ensuring that teaching and learning could continue in a new school. Perhaps as a result of this mobility and the failure to transfer information about previous experiences, Del did indeed have his SEN diagnosed later than should be the case.

Del's Key Stage Two SATs results indicated that he was achieving below the nationally expected average in English. Marchant (2002) had discovered that, when comparing the numeracy and literacy results of service and civilian children, there was a difference in scores, with service children achieving lower literacy scores than their civilian peers. Spencer (1976) had indicated that mobility might impact upon a child's social development and, therefore, in their overall educational development. His results were mirrored somewhat by Strand (2002) who suggested that mobility in the early years of a child's education might be connected to lower attainment levels. Certainly, for Del, his difficulties in the area

of language might well be connected to mobility in his primary years. It is likely that he would have followed several reading schemes at the three primary schools he attended and would have missed out on any early intervention strategies that the schools might have in place. Del, unfortunately, would have been likely to move on to a new school before any real assessment, diagnosis and intervention would have been carried out. Added to this possibility is Spencer's assertion (1976) that teachers who taught army children were able to tell when the father was away from home. These teachers witnessed the children becoming more aggressive or more withdrawn in class when this happened and, as a result, there was a negative impact on their education. After Del's mother had married Lance Corporal Hobson, when Del would have started to connect with his new step-father, the possibility that he was increasingly affected by his absences and, as a result, acted out in the classroom setting was very real.

Del's relationship with his teachers was very distant. Whilst he was never rude or openly hostile to them, he talked of not 'trusting' (D1) them and was never seen to ask for help from any of them. Keson (1991) describes army students detaching from relationships with people around them (both friends and teachers) as a means of 'numbing themselves' from the pain of having to say goodbye over and over again. Del already knew, at the start of year eight, that he would be moving on again by the end of year nine, so he may well have avoided any close working relationships with teaching staff as a means of preventing this. So, for Del, not getting close was not only about preventing pain but was also, probably, quite rational – why bother getting close to someone if you know you aren't going to be there for long anyway? A further possibility is hinted at by Keller (2001) who suggested that many teachers do not have any experience of a military lifestyle themselves so are unable to understand the unique aspects of the military lifestyle experienced by army children. As a result, a gulf emerges between teacher and student. As it was suggested in the theme about friendships (above) Del was perhaps more military minded than many of his peers. This would have made the distance between his teachers and him bigger than for other army children.

Taking Del's attitudes towards school then, we can summarise them as being detached. He was almost apathetic in the classroom. Viewing the classroom as a social world of its own, made up of the interaction between student and teacher and student and peers (Pollard with Filer, 1996), it is not surprising that Del stood

back from the social world around him. Above, the relationships between Del and his friends and Del and his teachers have both been described as distanced – viewing this distance as a result of mobility and in reaction to mobility are possible answers. However, Del also admitted that he was 'nervous' when he moved schools and worried about making friends. For him, this was the most difficult thing of all about moving schools. This falls very much in line with both Keller (2001) and Tyler (2002) who suggested that, in spite of everything, the social problems associated with moving schools were more important to military children than anything else. So while, on the surface, Del appeared to manage the experience of mobility, deep down he, too, found it a painful experience.

2 - NICK

Family Background

Nick was born in February 1991, in a garrison town in Northern Ireland. He lived in Northern Ireland until he was five years old, when the family were transferred back to a garrison in the North West of England. Nick's family stayed there until he was nine years old, when they were moved to Upton. Shortly after moving to Upton, Sergeant Carter was told that he was going to be posted away from his regiment for two years. Mrs Carter decided that she would remain in their quarter in Upton with her children, rather than move away, only to have to move back again. As a result, Sergeant Carter worked away from home during the week and only returned to the house at the weekends. Nick was a polite young man, he was always in full school uniform and always had clean and tidy PE kit.

Mrs Carter was a qualified nursery supervisor and worked between 9am and 1pm every day at a creche situated quite close to the family home in Upton. As a result, she seemed to have a clear commitment to learning and education. She attended parents' meetings at the school and also came to the school's Ofsted meeting along with Sergeant Carter. Nick's homework planner had been checked off every week with her signature and she often wrote notes in the planner to teachers to ask advice about supporting his homework. (Ob, 30/6) Her attitude to Upton School's difficulties was very pragmatic, "it's not the school at the end of the day, if a child wants to learn they are going to learn." (P3) She questioned Nick about his homework and always reminded him to read at home. In order to choose a school for her sons, she considered what the other parents were intending to do, "I go with the majority but I do that for Nick and Miles' sake

because there's nothing worse than being at a new school in a new place on your own." (P3) Mrs Carter's father had been in the army, so Mrs Carter was used to the lifestyle. She commented that she had been to nine schools because her father was in a Corps, which required the family to be posted individually, rather than being posted with whole regiments. As a result, Mrs Carter said that she was used to moving around, "I was making friends all the time." (P3) Her reactions were very positive, "I would have those days back again any day!" (P3) Mrs Carter was very involved in the regimental system. The day she was interviewed, she was waiting for a phone call from a neighbour who was about to give birth and Mrs Carter had offered to look after her children whilst she was in hospital.

Nick's dad had been working away from home for over two years. Nick commented that this had been hard at first but that "we're used to it now, we're not bothered now." (N3) At the weekends, Sergeant Carter would try to play an active part in the boys' lives. Nick related how his dad would often watch him play football when he was home. He would often do all of the cooking at the weekends. Although he was unable to attend his son's parents' meeting, Sergeant Carter had made comments on Nick's report, so that Mrs Carter could feed these back to Nick's form tutor. Sergeant Carter's absence caused several difficulties, not least that the family had only one car which he would use to commute to work. As a result, Nick's mum had to rely on neighbours and regimental friends for lifts around the local area. Nick was obviously very close to his dad, he described how, "my dad is always there for us." (N3)

Nick had a younger brother, Miles, who was one year younger than him. Physically, Miles was taller and broader in stature than Nick. Nick commented that he "couldn't stand" (N2) his younger brother. Mrs Carter told a somewhat different story, however, and mentioned that, "I've always found that, because they are so close together in their ages, Nick would settle when Miles got to his school." (P3) Within Miles' first few weeks at Upton, Mrs Carter had received a letter about his behaviour. The school's Inclusion Manager recognised Nick's name only because she had had dealings with Miles. Towards the end of year, Miles appeared to be improving as he received a good conduct certificate in the school's Key Stage 3 Celebration Assembly. (Fn, 26/5)

The Carters appeared to be a very close family unit. On the walls of the family home were many photographs of Nick with his parents and brother. Mrs Carter commented that when their dad was away, the boys' behaviour wasn't too changeable, because she was very strict with them about their behaviour, "I'm the boss! And their dad isn't – he lets them walk all over him." (P3) During the course of the interviews, Nick became worried when he realised that his mum's decision to paint one the walls in their house magnolia might indicate that they would be moving again. (In the army, all quarters have to be returned to their original state (including wall colour!) before they are handed back.) Nick was unable to stay overnight at friends' houses and used to phone up his Mum to come and pick him up. Miles, on the other hand, was described by his mum as "very, very independent." (P3) Nick demonstrated a real belief in his mum, when he was asked who he would turn to for support if something went wrong, he replied, "I would tell my mum and get her to sort it out for me." (N2) Nick and his mum had an obviously warm relationship, as he related how he had asked his mum to dye his hair blonde, but that it had resulted in a bright orange colour. When he was asked if his mum was annoyed about this, he commented that they had sat down and laughed for hours about it. (Ob, 13/10) In a PSHE lesson, Nick commented that he respected his mum and dad and, as a result, they respected him. He knew where he stood at home. (Ob, 11/2)

Nick appeared to have a fairly realistic idea of himself, saying that, "Nick is fun sometimes and annoying sometimes." (N4) He was able to see what his positive and negative attributes were, even at an early age. His mum underlined his positive outlook on life, when she described him as being "a happy chappie." (P3) He had a fantastic sense of humour and was readily able to laugh about himself. In one lesson, he was told by the teacher that he had got 30 in a test. Nick began to celebrate and punched his fist. A bit later, the teacher said that the test was, in fact, out of 60, so Nick turned around and said "yeah, half way" and began celebrating all over again. (Ob, 23/2)

Nick saw both sets of his grandparents fairly frequently. His dad's family lived in Manchester and they used to travel to stay with them every couple of months. (Although Nick had related in some detail an argument which had taken place there last time (N4)) Mrs Carter's parents now lived in the Midlands, following her

father's time in the army. Nick commented that his grandparents (Mrs Carter's parents) came down to stay with them at least once a term. (N4)

Educational History

Nick had attended five schools. He started his first year of schooling at a primary school in Northern Ireland. A few weeks after joining, when his family was transferred back to the mainland, Nick moved to an Infants' school in the North West of England in the garrison in which the family lived. He then moved on to a primary school in a neighbouring town for his junior years. At the end of year 5, Nick moved to Upton and went to Zennor Primary for year 6. When they arrived in Upton, Zennor was full up, so Nick and his brother had to wait a few weeks at home before they were admitted. Nick described the move to Zennor, "I was shocked because I didn't know anyone that was there." (N1) He transferred to Upton School at the beginning of year 7 and had been there for one academic year before I met him at the start of year 8.

When the family moved back from Northern Ireland, Mrs Carter commented that they had not been able to visit the new Infants' school that Nick would be attending. However, when they moved to Upton, Mrs Carter had applied to Zennor Primary before they moved because she had heard that the school was very short of places. She had asked for a prospectus and had sat down with both of the boys and had talked them through it. She had told them,

> "to do well and get on, don't fight and don't bully, just be yourself, not be a different person because you'll have friends there, so it doesn't matter." (P3)

The message about "being yourself" was relevant to the boys because the family anticipated being in the Upton area for some time. When Sergeant Carter was offered work away from Upton, Mrs Carter's decision to stay in Upton had been based on the difficulty she had had getting her sons into Zennor Primary, "it took me so long to get them in here ... I said I'm not coming because it took long enough." (P3) In spite of the obvious difficult situation this would put the family in, she rated her sons' education as more important than the family stability.

At the end of Key Stage 2, Nick had achieved a level 3 in his English and Maths SATs, and a level 4 in Science. His school records showed that he had never

been diagnosed with or assessed for Special Educational Needs. When he joined Upton School, he was put into set 2. His Science teacher summed up many of the teaching staff's comments about him, "he's keen and he's enthusiastic and he tries hard to understand. So I'm really impressed with him because, you know, there's no problems with his behaviour, there's no problems whatsoever." (E7) He was, therefore, well regarded. His English teacher, who was also his form tutor, had a more in-depth description of Nick,

> "he's got that relaxed approach to his work, he'll do anything you ask him to do but he doesn't have that sense of where he personally is going, he's very task orientated as opposed to seeing himself as somebody that's developing." (E5)

This relaxed attitude was seen in several lessons, when he completed work and did not engage with the extension activity. He described his most difficult subject as being history because he hadn't studied it in great detail at primary school in the North West, so found it difficult to understand now. His favourite subject was PE because he liked sport but also because, "I'm with all my friends because I'm not with all of them now in this teaching group." (N2)

Nick spoke with a slight accent which was different to the southern accent that the local children spoke with. In one lesson, when Nick had to read out loud, the other children laughed at the way that he pronounced his words. (Ob, 7/1) As his teachers' comments above indicate, Nick was, undoubtedly, a very successful student. At one of the termly Key Stage 3 assemblies, Nick collected two prizes. One was for his written work in English, whilst the other was for his involvement in the school's newsletter. (Fn, 11/2)

Friendships

Nick's best friend was Steven, whose father was also in the army. Steven lived on the Zennor estate, only a few minutes' walk from Nick's house. They had met at the start of year 7 at Upton School, when Steven had transferred back into the state sector, after a short time in a boarding school. Steven described his time at boarding school as "quite stressful because I didn't get to see any of my friends or my family for ages." (E14) The common bond between Steven and Nick was football, they both played for the same football team. This was a team formed outside school and was organised by sports' coaches in Upton itself. Nick's

comment about Steven was, "Steven and I like basically the same stuff, we like football, I like PE, he likes PE." (N4) When the issue of friendships were discussed with Steven, he commented that he found army friendships easier, "they understand you and I think that they know what it's like." (E14) Nick might not have been able to totally understand his friend. At the end of the data collection phase, Nick was perplexed as he could not understand why Steven wasn't attending normal lessons. (Fn, 13/5) Steven's dad had been deployed to Iraq. Steven's mum found this extremely difficult and left Upton to move in with her mum in Manchester. Steven stayed behind with a neighbour but found the separation from his parents extremely difficult. His behaviour at school deteriorated and he was often to be seen in the school's Inclusion Room. Nonetheless, his relationship with Steven was clearly closer than his friendship with anyone else. During a maths lesson, Nick and Steven carried out a ritual 'promise' (Ob, 13/11) that they wouldn't pass on information about each other, by clasping each other's little finger. This indicated an exclusivity about them.

Friendships, however, were extremely important to Nick. Throughout the interviews, it became apparent how much Nick valued his friends and how hard he found it to move away from them and adjust to new friendships. In his photos of school, Nick had few pictures of his classmates. He commented that although he got "on with the other people, but I don't really like them." (N4) This mirrored Steven's comment that he needed his army friends because they understood him better. At school, Nick had to mix with army and civilian children. Nick had a strong sense of competitiveness. In lessons, Nick made sure that he was awarded points correctly in in-class competitions. (Ob, 7/1) On the sports field, Nick could be seen trying to out-do Del when it came to estimating how many laps of the cross-country circuit they could do. (Ob, 22/1) Nick and Steven also became very angry with Del when they found out that he had lied about how he broke his arm and, in doing so, got another boy into trouble. (Fn, 4/2) He also had a heightened sense of justice which could be seen when Nick became angry with a teacher for wanting to keep the whole class in detention, rather than the individuals who had been misbehaving. (Ob, 7/1)

Attitude to School

Nick appeared to be successful at school. During the academic year that the research was being conducted, his attendance rate was 95.03%. Interestingly, his mum had mentioned (P3) that he was being bullied and that to avoid this, he often had time off school, but this was not reflected in his attendance rate. His teachers' comments about his academic ability, explored earlier, indicated that he was doing well in his studies. His teachers were warm in their praise of him, "he is a lovely child and, again, you know, very resilient, very flexible, he comes in gets on, very polite and pleasant, the type that comes in and gets on with it." (E3) Nick was not able to return the compliment, however. He could not name a favourite teacher, either at Upton School or at his previous schools. Furthermore, he was adamant that he didn't trust the teachers. If he had a problem,

> "I would definitely talk to my friends. Not a member of staff – don't trust 'em. Just tell my friends and my family." (N2)

When he had been absent from a previous lesson, due to being school receptionist, Nick was asked if he was going to ask for help, his reply was, "you must be joking!" (Ob, 11/2)

In their annual reports, staff were very complimentary of Nick. In all subjects (except for art), he was awarded a 'good' or 'very good' for the key indicators – application to class work, quality of homework, personal organisation, behaviour, attendance at lessons and punctuality to lessons. In art, the teacher had commented that Nick "must ensure that he puts as much effort into his homework as he does his class work." Comments generally focused on Nick's ability to listen to other pupils in his class, his enthusiasm and his effort. In geography, however, Nick had achieved 49% in a test which was "about average for the group and was above his minimum expected grade." This suggested that the level of expectation was not high.

Nick's ability to relate to his peers was highly thought of by the members of staff at the school. His PSHE teacher commented,

> "he's very sensitive and is very sensitive to other people's needs, really. He's very aware of other people and what they do, and he will often do things that you think, yeah, that's really nice to do. Sometimes he'll say just the right thing." (E6)

Perhaps as a result of this, during the data collection year, Nick was made a 'peer supporter'. (Fn, 24/3) These were pupils in year 8 who, in year 9, would be pointed out to the new year 7 pupils as older students they could turn to if they had a problem. In spite of his positive attitude, Nick was not involved in any after-school activities, and commented that they were, "all girls' things." (N2) The list of activities on offer was quite extensive, but Nick had not investigated them thoroughly.

There appeared to be little personal connection between Nick and his schooling. When asked why he went to school, his reply was very formal and, almost rehearsed, "so you can get educated and when we're older you can get a job." (N2) There was no indication of school being there in order to socialise with friends. More telling was Nick's lack of personalised vocabulary. When we discussed Upton's difficult Ofsted report, Nick commented, "if it's not going to improve, I'm going to pull out of the school and go to another school." (N2) When he was showing me the photographs had had taken, there was one photograph of the outside of Upton. Nick commented, "that's the school that I go to," (N4) which seemed a long-winded way of saying that that was his school. In both instances, his speech lacked personal pronouns and seemed almost aloof.

Attitude to the Army

Nick's attitude towards the army could, perhaps, be described as world-weary. He commented that he was "used to it now, we're not bothered now," (N3) about his dad's absences, suggested that, at first, he had been bothered by his dad being away from home. When his dad was deployed on his first extended tour of duty, to Kenya, Nick commented that, "it was quite sad because I didn't know if he was going to come back." (N3) The family had dealt with the absence by explaining to Nick and Miles that their dad was only going away for a few days. Nick appeared to crave stability – the best thing about their current quarter was the fact that, "I know most of the people living around and about, I've got my best friend." (N3)

Nick was asked if he would consider joining the army himself and he replied very vehemently, "it's not me, you know, I don't like going to war and killing people." (N4) He was unable to see the highs that service life could bring, but focused on

the lows – the movement, making and losing friends. When asked directly what one of the photographs he had taken said about him and his relationship to the army, Nick replied, "well I've got a dull face on." (N4) Unlike many of the children in Upton, Nick had chosen to attend football, rather than army cadets. He wanted no part in the military lifestyle. When he discussed his dad's job, he made it clear that it was his father's regiment, and did not use personal vocabulary, although he understood what his dad's role and responsibilities were. A negative aspect of army life had already been brought home to Nick. He was hoping to go away with his family to Disneyland during the half-term break in February. Unfortunately, his father's duty patterns were changed at the last minute and the family had to cancel their time away together. (Fn, 23/2)

The themes emerging from Nick's story

Beginning with the theme of family, we can see what a strong relationship Nick had with his mother. Nick commented that if there was anything wrong, he would get his mum to 'sort it out' for him. (N2) His relationship with his mother appeared to be settled and most resembled the 'secure' attachment patterns outlined by Ainsworth et al. (1978) whereby Nick was able to exist beyond his relationship with his mother and settled quickly into other social areas (for example, school). The one statement made by Nick's mum that might contradict this assertion slightly was when Mrs Carter commented that Nick found it difficult to spend the night away from home and had telephoned to be picked up from friends' houses rather than sleeping over. (P3) This might suggest that Nick was less secure in his relationship with his mother than at first seen. However, it might be that this was more indicative of Nick's relationship with the army, rather than his parents. It was at this time that Nick, in an interview, had revealed that he was now worried that the family would be moving on again – he had seen his mum painting their quarter. This suggested that he felt fearful about moving (and was insecure as a result) and had begun to feel unsettled. Adam, Sheldon Keller and West (2000) suggested that the loss of the family home (and Nick has lived in Upton longer than any other quarter) was also likely to lead to "disorientation and confusion" (p330) as children often related their attachment figures to the surroundings. As such, Nick's insecurity was not focused around his primary carer (his mother) but more around the situation within which his family lived.

Nick's father was posted permanently away from the family home (with the family maintaining a quarter in Upton so that the boys might experience some stability in their education). As a result, the sole parental focus, for Nick, was his mum. She openly admitted that she was the 'boss' (P3) around the house and that her husband was not very strict with the children. Mrs Carter was, evidently, extremely capable. She managed the family home, went out to work herself and clearly coped during the absences from her husband. As Sergeant Carter's absences were now long-term (McCubbin and Dahl (1976) and Watanabe and Jensen (2000), it is possible to see how the family had adapted to his absence by filling his place and managing well without him (Chandler (1991) and Rosen and Durand (2000)). Mrs Carter was indicative of Spencer's assertion (1976) that much depended on the ability and motivation of the army mother to come to terms with the impact of turbulence.

Mrs Carter was so able to cope, it seems, because her own background was military. Her father had been in the army, so moving around was all that she had known. Black (1984) had commented that the service community was an all-consuming part of the military family's life and identity. As Mrs Carter had been brought up within this community, she perhaps identified more strongly with the army than any of the other mothers. Out of all the mums in the study, Mrs Carter was the most involved in army life and had an active social life that revolved around the regiment. She also provided support to other wives and showed that she was clearly a part of the regimental support network. Montalvo's (1976) tradition of 'mutual help' was a reality for Mrs Carter. An interview towards the end of the study revealed that Nick was not happy with the army (he had commented that the army gave him a 'dull face', N4) although he chose not to pursue this comment any further. As the army was such a huge part of the family identity, he might have felt uncomfortable being openly disloyal to the family situation.

In line with research conducted by Hutchinson (2004), the BBC (2001) and the AFJ (2001) Mrs Carter had experienced difficulty getting Nick and his brother into their primary school at Upton, resulting in there being some delay (with the boys remaining at home) until places became available. Considering the choice of schools, we can see how Mrs Carter admitted that she had chosen to send Nick and his brother to Upton School because that was the choice that everyone within

the army seemed to be making. She was aware that there were difficulties at the school but always chose to send her boys where 'the majority' of neighbours' children went (P3) in a way that mirrored the research by Keller (2001). Mrs Carter was proactive in her support of school and in her responsibilities as a parent with a child at school. She had contacted Upton School about Nick's brother (P3) and had asked to meet with the Key Stage Co-ordinator as she was unhappy with Miles' behaviour. Unlike many other parents, she attended meetings at the school and appeared to understand how to challenge the school system. She had left school herself at the age of sixteen so, on the surface of it, appeared not to have the means of challenging the education system or the knowledge to do so (Crozier, 2000). However, unlike the other mothers in the study, on leaving school, Mrs Carter had embarked on a job within the early-years sector and recent training and development had resulted in her promotion to nursery supervisor. As a result, she had some professional standing within the education world and might have felt more confident about entering into the 'world' of the boys' schooling. She was also active within the home and supported Nick and his brother when they completed their homework.

We can see that Nick had experienced a history of high mobility within his educational experiences, having attended five schools. Added to this was the fact that Nick's school file was partially incomplete as it did not contain information from his two years at Upton School, although all of his primary schools had forwarded some information about this time there. Galton (2000) and Ofsted (2002a) both considered that the quick (and complete) transfer of information about a student was key to the good management of pupil mobility. This issue was also highlighted by Nicholls and Gardner (1999) who considered that the quick transfer of information would be important in ensuring that teaching and learning could continue in a new school. Although Nick had not been diagnosed with having any special educational needs, his Key Stage Two SATs results indicated that his literacy skills were one of the weaker areas of the curriculum, having obtained a level 3 in English (with a level 3 in Maths and a level 4 in Science). This is not entirely indicative of Marchant's assertion (2002) that there is a difference in literacy and numeracy scores, with service children achieving lower literacy scores than their civilian peers. However, it might suggest that Spencer's findings (1976) (that mobility might impact upon a child's social development and, therefore, in their overall educational development) were

correct. Certainly, for Nick, the issue when considering his educational history is more one of mobility rather than missing files.

Turning now to Nick's relationships with his teachers, we can see how he was unable to name a favourite teacher or even mention a teacher who he would trust. (N2) He did not seek help when he had been absent (Ob 11/2) and did not talk personally about school, describing any school as 'his' school, for example. Keson (1991) describes army students detaching from relationships with people around them (both friends and teachers) as a means of 'numbing themselves' from the pain of having to say goodbye over and over again. Although Nick was not likely to be moving from Upton any time in the near future (and was aware that the family had retained the quarter to avoid this) it is likely that, because of his incidence of high mobility in his early education history, he was more conditioned to maintain a distance between himself and his teachers. Previous experience had probably taught him that moving was painful. Keller (2001) suggested that many teachers do not have any experience of a military lifestyle themselves so are unable to understand the unique aspects of the military lifestyle experienced by army children. As a result, a gulf emerges between teacher and student. As Nick's whole family identity was more focused around the military than other families, this may well have made the gulf more apparent for Nick.

Nick had a very close friendship with one boy only, to the near exclusion of other potential friendships (N4). His friend, Steven, also came from a military background. Steven had admitted that he found civilian friendships difficult because civilians didn't really understand the army lifestyle (E14). Whilst Nick was not exactly enthusiastic about the army (see earlier comments) the army was still a part of his identity. Darnauer (1976) and Black (1984) suggested that being a part of a service community was an all-consuming and central part of a military family's life and identity. It is reasonable to suggest that Nick might choose to spend his time with someone who understood that part of his identity. Derrington and Kendall's suggestion (2004) that there might be a cultural clash between traveller children and the stable community might also be said of Nick – perhaps he was more suspicious of civilian children and, thus, kept the company of other military children? For Nick, losing and making friends was the most difficult thing of all about moving schools (he describes the experience as 'shocking' (N1)). This falls very much in line with both Keller (2001) and Tyler (2002) who

suggested that, in spite of everything, the social problems associated with moving schools were more important to military children than anything else.

3 - SHELLEY

Family Background

Shelley was born on 9th May 1991 in a large town in Lancashire, with a high percentage of the population coming from the ethnic minorities. When Shelley was six years old, her parents separated and she and her mum came back to the South of England, so that they could be near her mum's family. In the two years that they lived in her grandparents' home town, Shelley and her mum lived in two properties at either end of the town. As a result, when they moved to the second house, Shelley had to move school again. Mrs Gordon commented that "there was so much going on in my life at that time that schooling had to be put on the back burner." (P2) It was at that time that Shelley's mum met and married Sergeant Gordon of the 1st Duke of Galland's Regiment (1DGR). After the marriage, the Gordons moved to the Charterhouse Estate in Upton, as they realised that the prospect of low rent in an army quarter was too good an opportunity to miss. Shortly afterwards, they were re-housed to the quarter area of Pilton when the army began to knock down the quarters on the Charterhouse Estate. Sergeant Gordon had also been married previously and had two sons from his first marriage, David and Dillon. Dillon was one year older than Shelley and David was two years older. Sergeant and Mrs Gordon went on to have a daughter, Tilly, who at the time of conducting the research, was one and a half years' old. Shelley continued to see her natural father, who lived in the Midlands. When she came back from a visit, she had usually been bought an expensive present, such as clothing or jewellery. (Ob, 17/11)

Mrs Gordon commented that the boys had had a difficult experience up to that point. They had found their parents' divorce particularly traumatic and were not set ground rules when they were living with their mother. As a result, 14 months before the research began, both of the boys moved in with their father and step-mum. Both David and Dillon had emotional and behavioural difficulties, compounded, in David's case, by learning difficulties. For 12 months, Dillon had not been in school, as a suitable placement for helping him had not been found. After some intervention by the Service Childrens' Education Unit, a residential school place was made available and Dillon weekly boarded at the school. During

the course of the research, Dillon's behaviour, even at this special school, became more and more of a concern. He regularly lashed out at his step-mother and brother. As the data collection phase came to a close, his step-mother had thrown him out of the house and Dillon had been put into care.

Shelley's relationship with her step-father was fairly ambivalent. Mrs Gordon commented that, "she never really got to know him like she would have a father or a step father because he was so rarely here." (P2) During their marriage, Sergeant Gordon had been on tours of duty to Kosovo and Canada. Shelley admitted that she preferred life at home when her step-father was away, because she preferred to have her mum to herself. She enjoyed her step-father's return as he brought her loads of presents! However, during the course of the data-collection, when her step-father was posted to Iraq, Shelley admitted that she was quite worried about him and commented, very starkly, that, "I worry that he's going to get shot." (S4)

Bringing up a toddler by herself, Mrs Gordon was unable to work away from home. As a result, she had two jobs, one for Avon, processing neighbourhood orders, the other putting together cards and magazines for a home work company. Her family lived only 10 miles away, so Mrs Gordon often saw her mum and sisters and was able to rely on them for support. Shelley talked easily about her aunts and uncles. Mrs Gordon was not disdainful of the army, but was adamant that she was not a part of it, saying she was "not one of those women who wears her husband's rank on her sleeve." (P2)

Shelley had a close relationship with her mum. She talked about reading out loud to her when she was younger. She was able to list all of the household chores that she did to help out. Shelley, in particular, was allowed to help her mum with the Avon catalogue work that she did. During data collection (Fn, 25/11), Shelley had become very distressed when a teacher had discovered an alcoholic drink in her school bag. When questioned about this afterwards, she was asked whether she was worried that she would get into trouble at home. This wasn't what had upset her, rather, she was worried about upsetting her mum when she already had so much to think about.

Shelley displayed a mixed relationship to her step-brothers. Her attitude towards David was varied. In PSHE at the start of the year, she displayed some warmth towards him by making him a medal if he would stop "acting like a drama queen." (Ob, 13/11) When she said this she smiled as if she expected him to act out at home, but was tolerant towards him. On the other hand, David, it was discovered, had been trying to control her actions around the school. Shelley had been missing her lunch because she wanted to eat school dinners in the lunch hall with all the other children, but David had been blocking her way in. In order to resolve the situation, Shelley approached the school's Inclusion Manager, who had a good relationship with David. The Inclusion Manager intervened, "I had a word with David and he was prepared, you know, to do it, so I spoke to mum and said if I can persuade David to let his sister have school dinners, would you give her the money." (E8) Towards Dillon, Shelley was less tolerant and angrier. When Dillon was eventually put into foster care, Shelley was very dismissive towards him, "Dillon doesn't live with us anymore ... that's what he wanted and he made my mum's life hell anyway." (S4)

With the disruption at home, staff at Upton had commented that Shelley's life at home was akin to a "soap opera." (Fn, 12/12) Over the course of the data collection phase, Shelley had mentioned that when she was in the last years of her primary school education, she used to have problems with wetting the bed. When Shelley was asked how she saw herself, she commented that she was a "nice person," (S4) but trailed off and giggled nervously when prompted for further responses. This could indicate that her self-esteem was still an issue as she was unable to project on herself a positive self-image.

Educational History

Shelley began her schooling at a primary school, close to her home in a large town in Lancashire. She stayed there for three years. On her move to the South of England, she spent a year each at two schools in her grandparents' home town. Mrs Gordon commented that because their second home was at the other end of the town, "I had to change schools, I couldn't drive there every day." (P2) When the family were offered their first quarter in Upton, Sergeant and Mrs Gordon accepted this due to its low rent, so Shelley then moved on for her final year of primary schooling at Charterhouse Primary in Upton. She moved up to Upton School at the start of year 7 because "that's the closest school you get and

you get transport," (S2) and had been there until the point that I met her at the start of year 8. When she lived at Upton, Shelley commented that she had had to walk to Charterhouse School. As it was "such a way," (S1) she used to get up at 6.30am. When the family moved to Pilton, Shelley qualified for a bus pass. She didn't like to use the bus, however, and commented that, "when the bus stops there's always people coming down the stairs and pushing and stuff." (S2)

In order to prepare for moving house, Sergeant and Mrs Gordon had made enquiries amongst their army friends about the schooling in Upton. Although Sergeant Gordon received an information pack from the army, they had already made their decision about which schools the children would go to. They drove over to Upton twice before moving there – once at the weekend, when their friend, who was the caretaker at Charterhouse Primary, showed them around the buildings and grounds. On the second time, they organised an official visit and were shown around by the headteacher. They applied for the school places and were accepted before they moved into their quarter.

When she moved to Charterhouse Primary, Shelley was diagnosed as having literacy and numeracy difficulties. As such, she was registered on the school's Code of Practice for SEN at a Stage 2 (now called School Action). However, by February 2002, she was deemed to have made sufficient progress and came off the Code of Practice. At the end of Key Stage 2, Shelley achieved level 3 in all of her SATs exams. At the start of year 7, Shelley was put into set 3 at Upton, on the basis of her literacy difficulties. At the start of year 8, she was put into set 4, which was made up of a small number of children who required extra support. Her English teacher commented, "she was very low in self esteem and confidence, and in that group she shone so maybe it's done her some good there." (E5) By the middle of year 8, she was deemed to have progressed sufficiently, her form tutor described that, "she's superb, she really has come on I think," (E6) and, as a result, she was put back into set 3 at Easter in year 8. During the academic year that the research was being conducted, Shelley's attendance rate was 91.1%

When Shelley was describing the schools that she had attended she was unable to use more personalised forms of vocabulary. For example, she never said "my school," but mentioned "the school." (S2) There was no sense of ownership or

belonging. Shelley stated that she did not want to take part in the after-school activities because she didn't want to be seen as a "geek," (S2) but to do so might have demonstrated a commitment to the school.

Shelley's annual school reports indicated that staff were concerned about her confidence in her abilities. In English and in French, her self-esteem issues had hindered her ability to progress in the subjects. In Geography, the teacher had commented that Shelley "should make much better progress now that she is away from the influence of a pupil who has left," indicating that personality and personal relationships had some bearing on Shelley's ability to progress in a subject area. In Physical Education, the teacher was concerned that on many occasions, Shelley had not brought in her PE kit so was unable to take part in the lesson. It is difficult to assess whether Shelley did this accidentally or on purpose, in order to avoid taking part in the subject. Shelley's key indicator grades were either good or very good, apart from in Geography, where her application to class work had room for improvement, and English and PE, where the teachers thought that her personal organisation had room for improvement.

Friendships

In comparison to many of the other girls in her year group, Shelley was physically mature. She wore make up, false nails and jewellery and had tried smoking on the school premises. She was rarely observed in full school uniform – instead of wearing the regulation school jumper, Shelley wore one of her own jumpers, in a shade of blue which was brighter than the school jumpers. Within her teaching group, there were a lot of less mature girls and, as a result, Shelley seemed to gravitate towards Suzy, another physically mature and outward going girl. Shelley commented about the other girls, "I'm not being rude or anything, but I don't look like any of them." (Ob, 17/11) She seemed to be very aware of her maturity and felt different to the others. Shelley met Suzy at Charterhouse Primary, although Suzy did not live locally, coming to Upton by bus from the next town. During the year a warmth in their relationship could be seen. One day, Shelley had been chastised by a teacher and arrived at her art lesson very upset. Suzy collected together Shelley's art equipment and cajoled her into action by slapping her on the backside and said "come on bitch." (Ob, 25/11) As a result, Shelley dissolved into giggles and was able to move on with the lesson. Suzy was often a visitor at Shelley's house and regularly stayed over.

Shelley and Suzy worked together in lessons to the exclusion of the other pupils. Shelley's comment (above) justified to her the need to be apart from the others. In countless lessons, Shelley did not interact with her classmates. On one occasion (Fn, 11/2), however, she pushed herself to the centre of the action, when there was a minor bundle outside Technology. Shelley was pushed into one of the (smaller) boys into the group. As soon as this had happened, she rushed over to him to apologise and check that he was not hurt, and then turned back to berate the pupils that had started the bundle. To her, she was more mature and was, therefore, in a position of responsibility towards the other pupils. This sense of justice was also apparent in other lessons, when she asked pupils to be quiet and listen when a nervous pupil was trying to speak out. This had not passed un-noticed by the staff of the school. The Inclusion Manager commented that she only saw Shelley when, "she's supporting another student who's having problems. She's got a lot of mates, I think." (E8)

Shelley and Suzy spent time outside school socialising with older girls from year 10. These were girls who lived in the same quarter area as Suzy. During the data collection year, Shelley and Suzy had a very damaging argument due to their friendship with the older girls. Shelley was accused of calling one of the older girls names and Suzy sided with them. Shelley seemed to be sad about this but was almost resigned to the situation, "she's, well, she's not been ignoring me, but she's keeping her distance." (S4) In the last few weeks of data collection, when Shelley was transferred to set 3, Suzy remained in set 4 and, as a result, their relationship suffered even more. During those weeks, it was rare to see the two of them around school together at all. In lessons, Shelley appeared to be distanced from her new classmates and often chose to sit alone.

Attitude to School

Shelley appeared to be quite withdrawn and reserved in lessons. She rarely put up her hand and answered questions. As intimated above, her relationship with her classmates was very difficult. She felt more mature than all of them and this could well have been her reason for failing to get involved. Indeed, when at the start of year 8, Shelley's tutor group arrangements changed, moving to tutor groups made up of pupils throughout Key Stage 3, Shelley was delighted. This opened up her ability to socialise, "it was boring just being with your own year group. I know the people I'm with." (S2) Shelley's music teacher had discussed

this with her and it became apparent that Shelley was also very concerned about appearing to know all the answers in front of her peers. (Fn, 8/12) She confirmed this in interview, when she commented that she wouldn't attend any after school clubs because she "didn't want to be a geek." (S2)

Shelley's self-esteem became a key issue in trying to understand her likes and dislikes in school. When asked what her favourite subject was, she replied, "art because I've always been told that I'm good at art and I like it." (S2) Whilst her other favourite included PE, suggesting that she liked all things practical, it became clear that she needed the encouragement and reassurance. Mrs Gordon was adamant that Shelley needed, "support with school work. And whether she gets on with the teachers. That's a big thing for her." (P2) Shelley confirmed the need to have a good working relationship with teachers, when she said that she didn't like History "because the reason is I don't like the teacher, she really picks on me." (S2) Whilst Shelley accepted that some of this could be because she found writing difficult, personal relationships were obviously very important and yet she could not remember the name of her favourite teacher.

Shelley confirmed that she went to school "to learn, to get my education, get a good job and go to university." (S2) Her reasons were purely practical and did not reflect a desire to enjoy the social world of schooling. If she had a problem at school, she said that she would probably tell a teacher, but if that problem was to do with home then she would "just keep it to myself and maybe talk to my parents or my mum." (S2) To her, her home and school life were quite separate.

Attitude to the Army

It was very difficult to gauge Shelley's attitude to the army because she rarely mentioned it in her interviews. She admitted that she did have some friends whose fathers were in the army, but she had found this out quite by accident when they had got the same bus home and got off at the same bus stop. When her step-father had asked who her new friends were at Upton, he realised that their fathers were in his regiment. When Shelley was asked if she had attended one of her father's regimental open days, she couldn't really remember, but then thought that perhaps they hadn't gone after all because her mum might have been ill. She was aware of her step-father's job within his regiment, having commented

that, "he works with tanks, he's got four of them." (S3) Her level of knowledge and interest went no further than that.

One of the positive things that army life had brought for Shelley was the large quarter that they now lived in. Shelley commented that, "we've got a big garden, it's bigger than all the others next door to us because they've got like a two-bedroomed house and we've got a four bedroomed." (S3) In a Maths lesson (Ob, 22/1), Shelley was overheard talking with Briony, a girl with a quarter in Upton itself. Shelley was boasting that her quarter had six bedrooms and was a four star quarter. The information on the number of bedrooms was obviously incorrect, and, although it is true that quarters are categorised, they are not given star ratings! Shelley clearly gained some sort of kudos from the good standard of their home.

The themes emerging from Shelley's story

Like Del, Shelly was extremely close to her mother. This had started at a very early age as she had been brought up by her mum single-handedly after her parents had separated. It is possible to understand why Shelley's relationship with her mother had developed in the way that it had. As they were alone together for much of Shelley's early childhood, they had formed a close bond. When Mrs Gordon had met and married Sergeant Gordon, Mrs Gordon had commented that Shelley had never really had the chance to bond with him as he was away from home so often (P2) as a result he was not really like a 'father or a step-father to her'. Although she maintained contact with her real father, he lived over two hours away so she saw him infrequently. Her main attachment figure, therefore, was Mrs Gordon alone. All of Shelley's emotional activity, therefore, was invested in her mother. Shelley talked of wanting to protect her mother and hide bad news from her (Fn 25/11) displaying some of the signs of the 'avoidant attachment' patterns of Bowlby (1969). This had evolved not out of Mrs Gordon ignoring Shelley (although Mrs Gordon did admit that she had had 'so much going on in [her] life' when she had separated from her first husband (P2) which might have contributed to Shelley's sense of unease) but rather out of Shelley's over-investment in her relationship with her mother.

Sergeant Gordon's absences were many and regular. As mentioned above, Mrs Gordon already felt that this had had an impact on Shelley's ability to form a

relationship with him. Both McCubbin and Dahl (1976) and Watanabe and Jensen (2000) asserted that it was easier for a family to adapt to absence if it was long-term and it is possible to see how Shelley (and particularly her step-brothers) found it difficult to adapt to Sergeant Gordon's tours of duty. For Shelley's step-brothers, their father's absences were particularly difficult to bear and both Shelley and Mrs Gordon recounted the ways in which the boys had reacted aggressively and negatively to their father being away. (S4, P2) Mrs Gordon, however, continued to cope extremely well whilst her husband was away. She mentioned that she did not rely on army contacts for support (Fn 18/9) as she had her family close by. Spencer asserted (1976) that much depended on the ability and motivation of the army mother to come to terms with the impact of turbulence. Mrs Gordon, therefore, had come to terms with the army life through the support of her family. She remained fairly stable throughout her husband's absences as a result. However, her ability to cope must be called into question if she was ever to be posted away from her support network in the Upton area. Without them, she might not be able to remain so stable in the absence of Sergeant Gordon.

For the Gordons, the choice of school for Shelley was based upon what was practical for them. Moving Shelley from the nearby town to Charterhouse School in Upton (and then on to Upton School) meant that travel arrangements were easy. (S2) Shelley could have remained at her primary school in the nearby town, resulting in less disruption to her education but this would have involved organising a fifteen minute car trip each way to get her to school and back. Lacey (1970) theorised that practical decisions, rather than those based on 'deferred gratification' were common in working class families. For the Gordons, the short-term difficulties of organising transport for Shelley were outweighed by other decisions involving other family members and the family's preference for the "immediate gratification" (Lacey, 1970: 189) of easy travel arrangements. It might be said that Sergeant and Mrs Gordon's previous poor experiences of education might have made them de-value and fail to engage with education (Crozier (2000)). However, Mrs Gordon did make use of some of her local, civilian contacts in order to arrange for Shelley to tour Charterhouse Primary before she went there for the first time. This would, undoubtedly, have helped Shelley to settle in. Unlike other army families (Keller (2001)) Mrs Gordon could rely on local contacts and this made the passage into their new life at Upton easier.

Shelley experienced a high level of mobility in the early years of her education, having attended a total of five schools including Upton School. As a result, perhaps, her special educational needs were diagnosed late (when she moved into year six at her fourth school). Added to this was the fact that Shelley's school files were incomplete, failing to contain any information from her first three schools, as well as information from her Key Stage One tests. On arriving at Charterhouse Primary, Shelley was considered to have special educational needs in the areas of literacy and numeracy. As a result she was put onto the SEN register at the equivalent of school action plus level, receiving some intensive intervention work. After a few months she was deemed to have made satisfactory progress and was removed from the SEN register. Galton (2000) and Ofsted (2002a) both considered that the quick (and complete) transfer of information about a student were keys to the good management of pupil mobility. This issue was further highlighted by Nicholls and Gardner (1999) who considered that the quick transfer of information would be important in ensuring that teaching and learning could continue in a new school. Perhaps as a result of early mobility and the failure to transfer information about previous experiences, Shelley did indeed have her SEN diagnosed later than should be the case.

Shelley's Key Stage Two SATs results indicated that she was achieving below the nationally expected average in English. Marchant (2002) had discovered that, when comparing the numeracy and literacy results of service and civilian children, there was a difference in scores, with service children achieving lower literacy scores than their civilian peers. Spencer (1976) had indicated that mobility might impact upon a child's social development and, therefore, in their overall educational development. His results were mirrored somewhat by Strand (2002) who suggested that mobility in the early years of a child's education might be connected to lower attainment levels. Certainly, for Shelley, her difficulties in the area of language might well be connected to mobility in her primary years – on her transfer to Upton School, she was placed in set three on account of her literacy difficulties. It is likely that she would have followed several reading schemes at the four primary schools she attended and would have missed out on any early intervention strategies that the schools might have in place. It is likely that Shelley would have been likely to move on to a new school before any real assessment, diagnosis and intervention would have been carried out. The difference came at Charterhouse Primary, where a large mobile, army population made up the

majority of the school's intake. It is likely that the school's induction policies (tailored to meet the needs of the mobile population) would have ensured that Shelley's needs were assessed early on.

Shelley's mother claimed that Shelley needed to have good relationships with her teachers in order to make progress at school (P2). Shelley confirmed this when talking about the reason she disliked History was because she didn't like the teacher. (S2) In lessons, however, she was observed to be withdrawn. She said that she might talk to a teacher if she had a problem but would not talk to a teacher about a problem at home. Shelley was unable to mention the name of a favourite teacher at any of the schools that she attended and did not describe the schools using personal pronouns, indicating that she felt no sense of belonging at any of them. (S2) All this might indicate that, whilst personal relationships were important to Shelley, she had not experienced this in her education history. A possible reason might be Shelley's educational mobility, which had prevented her from spending any significant amount of time one school, thus preventing Shelley from becoming friendly with teachers. The impact on her ability to make good progress, given that both she and her mum stated that personal relationships were an important part of this for her, is a real possibility. Keson (1991) describes army students detaching from relationships with people around them (both friends and teachers) as a means of 'numbing themselves' from the pain of having to say goodbye over and over again. It may be that Shelley, in spite of needing good relationships to make progress, sought to protect herself and, so, failed to make good working relationships with teachers at all.

Shelley experienced turbulence in her friendships over the time that she took part in the research. Shelley was withdrawn from most of her classmates apart from one girlfriend, Suzy. Unfortunately, they fell out with her towards the end of the data collection year and Shelley then failed to make any close friendships with anyone else. (S4) Spencer (1976) suggested that mobility made it impossible for army children to develop anything other than superficial acquaintances, which is certainly possible in the case of Shelley. However, the research conducted by Darnauer (1976), Jeffreys and Leitzel (2000) and Pollock and Van Reken (2001) suggests that wanting more superficial friendships is something of an active choice on the part of army children – they do not want to become any closer to their peers for fear of being hurt when they have to say goodbye. Towards the end of the data collection year, Shelley found out that her family would, indeed, be

moving away within twelve months. It is possible, therefore, that Shelley chose not to make new friends following her argument with Suzy because she knew she would be moving on again soon and didn't want to invest the emotional time and energy in a relationship which might not go very far.

Suzy, Shelley's best friend, did not come from an army background. Indeed, it was often difficult to ascertain to what extent the army had any impact on Shelley's life as she seemed to be so detached from it. Like the army girl interviewed as part of the pupil interview group (E14) Shelley, it seemed, did not actively seek army contacts and, perhaps, preferred the friendship of civilian girls. Darnauer (1976) considered girls to be more at risk of having friendships affected by mobility, whilst Anderson et al. (2000) also considered that girls were more vulnerable at transition time. It might be that Shelley's preference for one strong friendship with a civilian girl was a way of trying to avoid the impact of mobility. Suzy, as a civilian, would be more likely to remain in Upton than an army girl, whilst investing in one friendship alone would help Shelley to avoid having to make friends over and over again with several people. Shelley, therefore, goes against the work of Darnauer (1976) and Black (1984) who suggested that being a part of a service community was an all-consuming and central part of a military family's life and identity. Whilst Shelley's experiences were undoubtedly affected by her service 'experiences' she did not identify with the army. This might partly be due to the fact that she had been unable to form a close bond with her step-father and also by her mother's dislocation from the support of the service community. A move away from Upton, to a posting away from her extended family, might result in a stronger army identity being formed.

4 - KATIE

Family Background

Katie was born in July 1991 in a garrison town in the West of Germany. She had a twin sister, Sarah, who was born a few minutes after her. Mrs Turner was born and brought up in Germany, to German parents, and had met her husband, Corporal Turner, when he was posted out to her home town in Germany in the early 1980s. Apart from her sister, Katie had two brothers – Bruno, who was six years older than her and Max, who was a year younger. Up until the age of ten, Katie continued to live in Germany, only returning to the UK once a year to visit her father's family in the North of England. At home the family spoke English and

Katie had commented that she could only speak a few words in German. As a result, she was unable to communicate with her maternal grandparents.

Corporal Turner served in the Queen's Own Dragoons, a heavy-armoured cavalry regiment. Up until Katie was six, he served with his regiment at their headquarters in the West of Germany. When Katie was six, the family moved away from regimental duty to another garrison town in Germany because Mrs Turner had had some difficulty with the other regimental wives whilst their husbands were away on a tour of duty in Canada. Katie and her sister seemed to be unaffected by his absence, continuing to go to school as normal. Max, however, found his dad's absence very difficult and refused to leave the house to go to kindergarten. Mrs Turner commented that the wives had been hostile towards her and had "backstabbed through the kids as well and they had to suffer." (P1) Mrs Turner said that when they moved to their second posting she was "a little bit more careful with [her] friends." (P1)

When Katie was ten, Corporal Turner's regiment were posted back to the UK, to Upton and they requested that Corporal Turner join them back at regimental duty. As a result, the family moved to the UK and lived here for the first time. Katie described how this felt to her, "I kept on being sick because the air was so different." (K1) (This summed up Katie's feelings of alienation and difference on her return to the UK.) Her mum commented that visiting family and actually living here were two very different things. The family were given a quarter in Pilton, which angered Mrs Turner as no-one from their regiment was quartered in the same area. In fact, Katie was unaware that the whole regiment had been posted back to the Upton area and thought that her family had been transferred back to the UK on their own. As Pilton was quite isolated and Mrs Turner was unable to drive, Mrs Turner did not attend events in school, apart from Katie's parents' consultation meeting. (Fn, 26/11)

Mrs Turner was quite hard in her attitude towards Katie. She said that, "Katie is a little bit sensitive and I have told her she needs to toughen up." (P1) At parents' review day, Katie had chosen some poetry to show to her mum. Mrs Turner was somewhat dismissive of this and did not give any positive feedback but, rather, commented on the state of Katie's spelling. On the other hand, she was clearly concerned for her child's welfare as she wouldn't let Katie walk home from school because there was no footpath and streetlamps. (Fn, 26/2) Mrs Turner's time and

attention was spent supporting Max, who had been excluded from school due to his behavioural and emotional difficulties. Mrs Turner had commented that,

> "we've been concentrating so much on Max at the moment that we can't really focus on Katie as well. It's a shame, but that's the way it is." (P1)

Katie seemed to be unconcerned about this, perhaps because this was always the way that things had been, so she did not know what sort of support to expect from her mum. Her comment "my brother goes to boarding school and he has to stay there until his anger is under control, we need to be near him" (K4) was unemotional.

Katie's relationship to her brothers was very low-key. Her older brother, Bruno, attended the local further education college and, although he lived at home, often stayed away. Katie was obviously quite fond of him. She described him as her "big brother" (K3), rather than using his name, and spoke with some pride that he was the one that helped her with her homework. Her younger brother's experiences had obviously caused some turbulence to family life. His mum described that "something is not right in his head," (P1) and this was evident in the way that he used to lash out at family members and teachers. Katie, however, found Max's attendance at a boarding school for behavioural difficulties as something which exciting. Mrs Turner commented that "Katie wants to go to boarding school because she thinks that everything is like a teddy bear there." (P1)

Katie's relationship with her sister was very complex. They were extremely hostile towards each other and were very competitive. In spite of being twins, Katie insisted on calling Sarah her "little sister." (K3) She stated that she had to share a bedroom with her sister and was adamant about this being something which, "I do not like" (K3) [her emphasis]. With no prompting, Katie told me in one English lesson that she hated her sister! (Ob 17/11) At the beginning of the winter term, a conversation with the school's teaching assistants revealed that they were extremely concerned about the nature of Katie and Sarah's relationship, commenting that it wasn't natural that they should loathe each other like they did. (Fn, 23/1) Mrs Turner's comment that "Sarah is the only one that I don't have to worry about," (P1) could explain some of Katie's animosity towards her sister. She was jealous of the approval that her sister had earned. Interestingly, the

competition obviously worked both ways. On the day that Mrs Turner was interviewed, Sarah returned home from school and informed her mum that she was being bullied. (Fn, 9/3) This was a mystery to the school and they wondered whether Sarah resented the attention that Katie was getting through being involved in the research.

The family had been troubled by racist targeting when they had first moved to Pilton. Sarah's form tutor commented (E6) that he had had a long conversation with Mrs Turner about an incident at home when some of the children living at Pilton had called Mrs Turner a "nazi bitch" (Fn, 18/9) and had then started to throw stones at the house. Mrs Turner had involved the Ministry of Defence Police and the incident seemed to have calmed down. The incident had then spilled over into school, however, and Sarah's form tutor had had to deal with name-calling. When Katie was required to talk about her heritage in a lesson, she declined to mention that she had spent most of her life living in Germany (Ob, 7/1).

Educational History

Katie first went to school in her mother's home town in the West of Germany. The school was run by the Service Childrens' Education (SCE) organisation, a subsidiary of the Ministry of Defence, providing overseas education for the children of service personnel. The school was run according to National Curriculum guidelines and catered for pupils between the ages of five and eleven. Katie stayed there for two years. Her mother was very complimentary about the school, "they had nice uniforms, they had nice classes and when you were in school it felt like school." (P1) She commented that it had quickly picked up on Katie's special educational needs and had supported her with these. When her family moved to another garrison town in Germany, she transferred to another SCE primary school. There were two primary schools in this garrison area, but the second school was already full up. For parents wanting their children to be educated in the British system, this meant that there was no choice but to go to the first school. Mrs Turner was extremely angry about Katie's second school experience, "here's what I think, X School really fucked it up for my kids." (P1) The school was built on an open plan design and this meant that Katie would be watched by other pupils when she was getting extra support for her difficulties, "her confidence got knocked down." (P1) Mrs Turner was not happy either with

the level of specialist support available at Katie's second school. She claimed that she was told by an Educational Psychologist that "the education system over there, we only morally abide by the rules but if you want to take us to court you can't, because it's in Germany." (P1) The school were poor at keeping in touch with parents, so Mrs Turner did not feel that she knew what the situation was until it was too late. As a result, when Katie moved to the UK, Mrs Turner claimed that she was at the "bottom." (P1)

Katie moved to Charterhouse Primary in January of year 6. Mrs Turner had discussed school provision in Upton with friends in Germany but commented that it was difficult to make a decision based on this because "you don't know whether that's changed. It's difficult when you're far away." (P1) Corporal Turner was given a list of schools by the army and he made the final decision as to which school the twins would go to. Mrs Turner said that moving schools mid-year must have been "awkward" for Katie. (P1) This was the first time that they would have had to find a school and register their children in the UK, as their first move in Germany would have been organised by the army and the SCE. When the family arrived in Upton, they arranged a tour of Charterhouse and the girls started there soon after. Mrs Turner commented that they were excited about going to school in Upton because they had to go on a double-decker bus to school. Katie's comment was more poignant, "it was really hard for me leaving all my friends behind." (K1)

Katie's special educational needs (Fn, 8/12) were assessed at her first school in Germany but it was not until she went to her second school that she was statemented. Her Statement was triggered by the school's concern about Katie's speech and language difficulties, although the Statement itself reflected her literacy and numeracy problems and her self-esteem issues. Perhaps because she attended Charterhouse for only a short time, these needs were not commented on. At the end of year 6, Katie achieved a level 2 in English, a level 3 in Maths and a level 3 in Science, in her Key Stage 2 SATs. When she was asked what her scores were, she could not remember. Katie transferred to Upton School at the start of year 7. She was put into set 4, whilst her sister was placed in set 2. Mrs Turner was aware of the difficulties that Upton School had been having but did not want to move her daughters again. During the academic year that the research was being conducted, Katie's attendance rate was nearly 100%.

In their annual reports, five out of thirteen staff commented about Katie's lack of confidence in her own ability. In Physical Education, the teacher had mentioned that Katie was "beginning to understand the importance of team work and the contribution made by others in the group," suggesting that an ability to interact with her peers was not a strong point. It was also interesting to note that her Maths teacher had commented that she "took a little time to settle in and this held back her progress." However, in all subject areas, Katie achieved a 'good' or 'very good' in the key indicators of application to class work, quality of homework, personal organisation, behaviour, attendance at lessons and punctuality to lessons.

Friendships

By Katie's own admission, she had had difficulties establishing and maintaining friendships with people her own age. In her final interview, many of her responses focused on her issues with people at school. Katie's initial special needs assessments had pin-pointed these self-esteem issues. At Upton, they had tried to deal with these by putting her into a small teaching group in year 8, where they hoped to be able to nurture her. They had also put Katie into the school's 'Gardening Club', whereby certain pupils were removed from lessons once a week to work closely with some of the teaching assistants, planting and tending their own flowers. The teaching assistants had said that they hoped Katie would grow in confidence from this. Sarah, her sister, was also put into the club, and the school hoped that Katie and Sarah might learn to get on with each other more. (Fn, 23/1)

Katie's best friend was a local girl called Alison. Alison's mum was a single parent, so Alison was often required to look after her younger siblings at home. This assertive role was reflected in her relationship with Katie, where Alison took on a more dominant role towards Katie, and Katie seemed happy to be passive and controlled. In one geography lesson, Alison knew one of the answers to a question, but hid it from Katie. (Ob 22/1) She laughed at Katie when she became frustrated about not knowing what to do. What followed was something of a bizarre role play between the two of them, with Katie following the orders of Alison. Sometimes, however, there was evidence of the relationship becoming more respectful and mutual, with Alison helping Katie when she couldn't answer a question. It became clear that they had met on a school trip at the end of year 7

and had fallen out because Alison had been calling Katie names (Ob 8/12). Katie commented that now, however, Alison was her "best friend in the whole world." (K4) She was hoping that they would be able to stay locally when her dad came out of the army, so that she could live near Alison. Perhaps the realisation that they might stay locally had started to have a positive effect on Katie. The school's Inclusion Manager commented that, "that's social skills, she's not been long enough anywhere to actually have time to learn and use all the skills." (E8) Now that she had been at the school for two years and looked set to stay there, those social skills were being allowed to develop. She took a photograph of a new pupil and commented that he "came to the school quite recently and joined my group and we became friends." (K4) This could be seen as an example of Katie making new friends rather than sustaining older friendships.

Attitude to School

Katie was a hard-worker at school and always tried to do her best. Her teachers were very complimentary in their comments about her, "in terms of ability, I would say that she does struggle, but she's very willing to work, very willing to take on board what she has to do and she has a go at everything, really." (E6) This was a common theme – she found work hard but always tried to have a go. There was a general consensus that spending time in the smaller bottom set had been of benefit to her, "she's also found her feet now." (E5)

At primary school, Katie's favourite subject had been German. She stated that this was the case because "we got to do puzzles and numbers and all sorts." (K1) Having a German mother, Katie must have revelled in being able to excel in a subject, in which she could easily get support from home. Katie was easily able to assess her own difficulties. She stated that she didn't like Science because "you only have a certain amount of time to finish things and I just don't finish." (K2) She seemed to realise that she found it difficult to work under pressure and found it difficult to copy down text (Ob 13/11). In one lesson, she was observed throwing down her pen and shouting out "I can't" (Ob 22/1) when she was put under pressure to complete a task. With low literacy skills, she was not able to complete word-based exercises with ease. The fact that English was now her favourite subject was a testament to the nurturing teaching style of her English teacher. In English lessons, Katie was constantly encouraged and was taught sound literacy skills to help build up her ability. She liked the fact that in English,

"we get to do poetry and we listen to Mozart when we're working. It's just a bit different." (K2) Encouragement and support were the key to working with Katie. She stated that a teacher had to be "friendly" (K2) in order to be good.

Katie stated that she would not go to speak to a teacher if she had problems at home, but had already spoken to teachers on several occasions about bullying and other issues at school. She was unable to use personal pronouns to talk about Upton or her previous schools – for example, "mum and dad visited the primary school," (K1) and "my mum doesn't like the school anyway." (K2) When asked who her favourite teacher was, her reply "my favourite teacher was [pause] I don't know," (K1) indicated that she disassociated herself with her previous experiences. Her response to the question "why do you go to school?" ("to get an education, to make new friends and, that's all," (K2)) demonstrated that, to a greater or lesser degree, she was able to make friends but she was not able to claim ownership of the schools that she went to. She was able to interact with teachers but this seemed to be on a more social footing, rather than for her educational benefit. Katie commented that she and Alison often stayed behind after lessons to help to clear up ("it's good to give them a hand" (K4)) rather than to do extra work or seek clarification for problems with work. She began to attend singing club because it was run by her new form tutor and she felt that she should attend, not because she really liked singing.

It could be said that Katie did not place much value on education or schooling. She asserted that she did her homework at school "because I've got better things to do at home." (K4) Katie mentioned that her elder brother was the only one who had access to a desk to do his work so perhaps things might have been too busy at home to sustain quiet study in the evenings Alternatively, Katie might be suggesting that, for her, home was more important than school. In either instance, school life and schooling were not the priority.

Attitude to the Army

Katie was able to name her dad's regiment, which she did using its initials, rather than using the long version of its name. This showed some familiarity with the army, but she did not know what job he did. She was not friends with anybody from her father's regiment. Although they lived at Pilton, where they were the only family from the QOD, Upton, where the main body of the regiment was stationed,

was only 2 miles away, but they did not mix with anybody from there. As a result, Katie did not interact with other children from her father's regiment. In Pilton, the neighbouring families came from a variety of regiments, most of whom would not have had to have been posted to Germany, so they would not have understood Katie's experiences either. Perhaps as a result of their previous experiences in Germany, Mrs Turner would have been unwilling to get to know other regimental wives. However, since then there would have been new people joining up but she was not willing to get to know these or make use of the German wives club which met every week in Upton. The family was very isolated.

Katie's attitude towards the army seemed to be pragmatic, she understood the 'system' that her father worked in. When discussing her house, Katie commented that, "the curtains are army curtains," (K3) and was not embarrassed, indicating, perhaps, that she felt it was normal and was to be expected that the army should provide furnishings. She was very matter of fact about what would happen after they left Upton, "it just depends whether they give him [her father] any extra time and whether we have to move or not." (K3) Her tone when she said this was emotionless and demonstrated an expectation that somebody else would be making the decisions that would affect her life so much. Mrs Turner mirrored this comment when she was talking about the family's return to the UK, "we're just a number in this big organisation, all these years I was just a number but for once, I wanted to be treated like an individual." (P1) She was used to being sent where her husband's superiors wanted to send them, but wished that the family's difficulties with Max could have been taken into account when they moved. The family's attitude was of down-trodden acceptance. When the school had its' Ofsted parents' evening, Corporal and Mrs Turner did not attend – Corporal Turner had a Mess meeting that night and would not say to his superiors that he needed to attend his children's school event. They gave the army precedence in their life.

The themes emerging from Katie's story

Katie had a difficult relationship with her mother and her family. At school, teaching assistants had spoken about their concern that Katie and her twin sister, Sarah, were very hostile towards each other (Fn, 23/1). Her older brother, Bruno, did not play a strong part in her life and her younger brother, Max, was away from home at boarding school. Mrs Turner, Katie's mum, admitted that, as a family,

they had not had much time for Katie as the family's focus had been on Max, trying to get him into school. (P1) Mrs Turner had also admitted that she didn't have to worry about Sarah in the same way that she did the rest of her children which suggested that she might favour Sarah above the others. Mrs Turner's attitude towards Katie seemed to be dismissive, suggesting that Katie should just "toughen up" when it came to problems at school. (P1) As a result of this family situation, Katie often expressed her anger at home, by flying into a rage and running up to her room. (P1) At school, her teaching assistants wondered whether Katie was enjoying the focus on her that her involvement in this research had created and whether this had resulted in her sister acting up. (Fn 9/3) This pattern of family relationships has many similarities with the ambivalent attachment pattern outlined by Ainsworth et al. (1978). This suggested that caregivers who were inconsistent in their care resulted in children acting out in order to gain the attention of their carer. In a family where the focus had openly been on the youngest son and his difficulties, it may have appeared to Katie that the only way she could attract her mother's attention was to act out at home and experience difficulties at school.

Mrs Turner was extremely angry towards the army and intimated that the army was responsible for many of the problems that the family had. She talked about the educational difficulties of her youngest son and how these had not been acted on by the army education system in Germany. She also mentioned the special needs of Katie and how these had not been properly assessed in Germany. She was also dismissive of the regimental system and was angry that she felt she had been ostracised from the regiment because of a falling out with some of the other wives. (P1) Spencer (1976) had assessed that the stability of an army family depended on the ability and motivation of the army mother to come to terms with the impact of turbulence. It appears that Mrs Turner was not coping with the army system – at interview, she was tearful (Fn 18/9) and had related how she thought the whole army welfare system "stinks". (P1) Now that the family were living in Pilton, they were not in the same quarter area as the other wives in the regiment. As a result, Mrs Turner would have been unable to 'access' the support of the other army wives as outlined by Montalvo (1976). However, not being able to tap into the 'mutual help' was as much due to living in Pilton (a decision made by somebody in the Housing Executive) as Mrs Turner wishing to distance herself from the support she could get from other wives in a similar position.

The choice of school for Katie was based upon what was practical for them. Sending Katie and her sister to Charterhouse School was an easy decision – it was the 'local school' and had transport to and from school provided. (P1) Lacey (1970) theorised that practical decisions, rather than those based on 'deferred gratification' were common in working class families. Mrs Turner echoed Keller's comments (2001) that, as she was an army wife, she couldn't rely on local contacts to get information about schooling in the area. She was very pragmatic as she accepted that information gained from people in Germany might well be several years out of date. (P1) Mrs Turner was rarely involved in Katie's educational experiences. Across the year, Mrs Turner only came into school when absolutely necessary – on parents' review day. She did not attend school functions. Crozier (2000) suggested that previous poor experiences of education might be the key to understanding why parents cannot engage with their children's schooling. Although Mrs Turner had attended school up to the age of eighteen (which was longer than any of the other parents) this was because this was the compulsory school-leaving age in Germany at that time and was not representative of her enjoyment of schooling.

Katie had experienced a high level of mobility in the early years of her education, having attended a total of four schools including Upton School. Perversely, her worst experience of schooling, according to her mother, was at her second school in Germany, where she had stayed the longest amount of time. Pollock and Van Reken (2001) suggested that previous experiences of mobility might lead to a rootlessness and restlessness which Katie may well have felt at this school, resulting in her poor experiences there. Her special educational needs were diagnosed late (shortly before she left Germany and transferred back to England). Katie's school files were incomplete, failing to contain any information from two of her primary schools as well as information from her Key Stage One tests. Although Katie had a statement of special educational need, there was no evidence of this having been assessed at Charterhouse Primary nor Upton School, which would have been a statutory requirement. Galton (2000) and Ofsted (2002a) both considered that the quick (and complete) transfer of information about a student were keys to the good management of pupil mobility. This issue was further highlighted by Nicholls and Gardner (1999) who considered that the quick transfer of information would be important in ensuring that teaching and learning could continue in a new school. Perhaps as a result of early mobility

and the failure to transfer information about previous experiences, Katie did indeed have her SEN diagnosed later than should be the case.

Katie's Key Stage Two SATs results indicated that she was achieving well below the nationally expected average in English, Maths and Science. Marchant (2002) had discovered that, when comparing the numeracy and literacy results of service and civilian children, there was a difference in scores, with service children achieving lower literacy scores than their civilian peers. Spencer (1976) had indicated that mobility might impact upon a child's social development and, therefore, in their overall educational development. His results were mirrored somewhat by Strand (2002) who suggested that mobility in the early years of a child's education might be connected to lower attainment levels. Katie's difficulties in the area of language and numeracy (as outlined on her statement) might well be connected to mobility in her primary years – on her transfer to Upton School, she was placed in set three on account of her literacy difficulties. It is likely that she would have followed several reading schemes at the three primary schools she attended and would have missed out on any early intervention strategies that the schools might have in place. It is also likely that Katie would have moved to a new school before any real assessment, diagnosis and intervention would have been carried out. A further aspect of Katie's statement, concerning her self-esteem issues, whilst pertinent to Katie's experiences within her family, are also relevant to Black (1984), Darnauer (1976) and Anderson et al. (2000). Black considered that girls experienced greater neuroses from the service lifestyle than boys, whilst both Darnauer and Anderson et al. suggested that more girls than boys were affected by the impact of mobility and transition on their friendships. All these could lead to an lower sense of self-esteem.

Turning, then, to Katie's friendships at school, these were seen to be very difficult. Katie had one particular friend, Alison, with whom she had developed a seemingly imbalanced power relationship. Katie appeared to prefer being dominated by Alison. A member of staff had suggested that this was because Katie had never spent long enough in one place to develop the correct social skills to be able to challenge this. (E8) It is also possible that Katie's experiences at home with her family had made her seek out this more dominant friendship with Alison as a means of compensating for the ambivalent attachment she had formed with her mother. (Ainsworth et al. 1978) Katie had appeared to favour forming friendships

with new students rather than trying to develop existing friendships (K4). Spencer (1976) suggested that mobility made it impossible for army children to develop anything other than superficial acquaintances, which is certainly possible in the case of Katie. However, the research conducted by Darnauer (1976), Jeffreys and Leitzel (2000) and Pollock and Van Reken (2001) suggests that wanting more superficial friendships is something of an active choice on the part of army children – they do not want to become any closer to their peers for fear of being hurt when they have to say goodbye.

Katie considered that a teacher had to be "friendly" in order to be good at their job. (K2) Certainly, the ability to interact with teachers on a more social footing was important to Katie. She spoke about staying behind after class in order to help teachers clear up, rather than using the opportunity to seek help with her own work problems. (K4) As such, the connection between teachers, schools and learning seemed to be lacking in Katie. Whilst she appeared to view schools as a place to "get an education," (K2) this appeared to be hollow words without meaning. Furthermore, Katie appeared to be unable to identify with any of the schools or teachers that she had known. She did not describe any of her schools as "my" school, nor was she able to identify any favourite teachers. Essentially, then, whilst Katie appeared to value relationships with teachers, really she was detached from the process of learning. Keson (1991) described how army students detached themselves from relationships with people around them (both friends and teachers) as a means of 'numbing themselves' from the pain of having to say goodbye over and over again. Katie's focus on her relationships with her teachers, rather than her own learning, is also indicative of Keller (2001) and Tyler (2002) who suggested that, in spite of everything, the social problems associated with moving schools were more important to military children than anything else. It is also possible that Katie had developed this need to help teachers as a coping strategy, so she could deflect the attention away from her difficulties in the classroom and, yet, still be seen to be a 'good student'.

Table showing matrix of four focus children and initial analysis

	DEL	NICK	SHELLEY	KATIE
Date of birth	10.11.90 (Aged 13)	16.2.91 (Aged 12/13)	9.5.91 (Aged 12)	8.7.91 (Aged 12)
Home	3 - Canterbury; Charterhouse Estate, Upton; Zennor Estate, Upton	3 - Northern Ireland; Market Drayton; Zennor Estate, Upton	5 - Lancashire; Andover; Andover; Charterhouse Estate, Upton; Pilton	3 - Munster; Hohne; Pilton
FAMILY Family relationships	Mum – used to work when they lived in Canterbury. Now has 2 young sons and is pregnant again. Would like to help out as a TA at primary school. Alcoholic. Can't drive. Del feels responsible for his mum. Step-dad – Lance Corporal, 1DGR Half brothers – Richard 8, Matthew 5 Pets - cats	Mum – currently works as a nursery supervisor, confident. Nick doesn't stay away from home overnight Dad – Sergeant, Westmorelands, posted away Brother – Miles 11 Family have one car so dad uses it when he goes away during the week Pets – used to have a dog and hamster, mum "doesn't want to go through it again."	Mum – currently works from home, Avon and making cards. Can drive. Step-dad – Sgt, 1DGR Step-brothers - David, 2 years above at Upton. She alternates fear (won't go into the dinner hall as he is there) and warmth (makes a medal for him) towards David. Dillon (1 year older) attends a residential school for behavioural difficulties. At Easter, Dillon is taken into care after he tries to assault Tilly. Angry about him and his affect on her mum. Half-sister (Tilly) Pets – cats	Mum – does not work, chain smokes, nervous. Can't drive. Dad – QOD, Corporal Brothers – elder brother (Bruno, 18) at local FE college, middle brother (Max, 11) at residential school for emotional and behavioural difficulties. Sister – Twin, Sarah, with whom Katie is extremely competitive. Pets – none, dad doesn't like them.
Extended family	Mum's parents are in Canterbury. Extremely close to them. Dad's parents not mentioned. Real	Grandparents (both sets) live in Manchester. They go up to see them quite often, but Nick's mum's mum and dad	Mum's family are in Andover.	Mum's family in Germany, although one of her sisters is in London. Mum's family come over to visit.

	father no longer seen. Grandparents don't come down and stay, partly due to grampa's illness.	come down and stay at least once a term.		Dad's family are in Manchester – they go and visit them.
Parents' attitudes to school	Mum attends parents' day but does not attend concerts or Ofsted information meetings. Mum is quite negative towards the school. However, does not go in to complain about Del's SEN support. Dad not involved.	Mum a strong supporter of education. Mum is a nursery supervisor. Mum and Dad attend Ofsted meeting, Mum attends Nick's parents' day. Mum's answers shows she understand the world of education (I would write to the governors.) Mum tells Nick to be himself at this school because he'll be here for a long time.	Mum not prepared to travel to send S to same school in Andover, nor will she consider 'low rent' before school stability (Upton) Mum seems tired of involvement in the school due to over involvement because of step-sons. Nonetheless she appears to value education as she was prepared to stay in Upton to see the boys through school. Dad not involved.	Mum seems generally supportive of the school but is not involved in any aspect of school life – she attends parents' day but nothing else, even though the girls are involved in concerts. Dad not involved.
Parents' experiences of schooling		Mum was an army child. Left school at 16 with fairly good results. Much of schooling in Germany.	Mum stayed until she was 16, did her exams but couldn't wait to leave to have a job and earn her own money. Left with minimum qualifications.	Mrs Turner left school at 18, found it okay, not very enthusiastic about it. Corporal Turner joined the army at 17 as he said that he wasn't very good at school.
Parents' choice of school	Mum was given information by some of the	"I go with the majority. It's convenient and if	Friends' kids went there, ease of access - because it's close	Ease of access - because it's close. Mum

	wives in Canterbury, nearest school, she was very busy at the time. She has no car – these schools are the nearest.	he needs me I'm there."	and does not involve too much travel.	can't drive.
School visit and application	Same day as registration (Charterhouse), not at all (Zennor). Had to wait to get a place at Zennor as full up.	Visited when they had moved. Applied well in advance as Zennor was full up – had to wait to get places.	Yes, visited formally and informally.	Husband found out about schooling, Mum says they only had 2 choices, the other one in Andover was too far away. Word of mouth – told them that Andover was not good. Parents visited school before the twins started – kids did not go.
Parents' attitudes to boarding school	"I don't believe in boarding schools. Not ever. You don't have kids to send them away."	"They could go to boarding school, fine the education is a lot better, supposedly, but we don't know what they're doing in the evenings when they're finished at 6 o'clock. You don't know whether they're smoking, whatever, do you? At least here they're coming home to me every night and I know."		Had thought about boarding school if Mrs Turner had a job and couldn't be there during the day to support her children. Bruno attended boarding school in Germany as no local SCE provision. Mrs Turner said that if they were to send them to boarding school she would probably have to

				work anyway as BSA doesn't cover everything.
Parents' attitudes to the army	Generally positive – the army has given them a house and some stability. Family are prepared to move with Dad. Mum does not seem to get involved in regimental days/wives' groups. Mum has made the quarter her own – painted walls, own curtains etc. Mum says that she hates Upton.	Mum was an army child herself. The family are generally positive towards the army. Mum sees the army in a good light. Mum has made the quarter her own, painted the walls and put up her own curtains. Mum mixes with the other wives and often goes out with them.	Detached from the army. Mum maintains local links with friends and family. Stated initially that she would rather stay locally than move. Had made her quarter her own – painted the rooms and had put up her own curtains. Stated that she "wasn't one of those women who wear their husbands' rank on their sleeves."	Extremely negative towards the army and its impact on their family life. Claims lack of support from regimental welfare structure. Can't wait to leave. Quarter remains how it was when they moved in – army curtains. Mum has little to do with anyone.
SELF School history	4) Kingsmede, Canterbury (Yr 1-4) Charterhouse, Upton (Yr 4) Zennor, Upton (Yr 5-6) Upton School, Upton (Yr 7-8) Set 3	5) Tyrella Primary, Northern Ireland (Jan to March yr 1) Buntingsdale Infants, Staffs (Yr 1-2) Market Drayton Primary, Staffs (Yr 3-5) Zennor, Upton (Yr 6) Upton, Upton (Yr 7-8) Set 2	5) Wolverden, Lancs (Yr 1-3) Sumerston, Andover (Yr 4) Balksbury, Andover (Yr 5) Charterhouse, Upton (Yr 6) Upton, Upton (Yr 7-8) Set 4 to set 3	4) Oxford School, Munster (Yr 1-2) Slim School, Hohne (Yr 3-6) Charterhouse, Upton (Yr 6) Upton, Upton (Yr 7-8) Set 4
SATs	KS2 – English 3, Maths 4, Science 5	KS2 – English 3, Maths 3, Science 4	KS2 – English 3, Maths 3, Science 3	KS2 – English 2, Maths 3, Science 3
Attendance figures	83.77% (all authorised by	95.03%	91.1%	98.17%

	mum)			
SEN	School Action Plus for his dyslexia. Initial concerns in Canterbury mention anxiety due to poor motor skills.	None.	Used to be on Code of Practice stage 2 for literacy and numeracy skills, came off in February 2002.	Statement for literacy, numeracy and self esteem issues. Statement issued April 2001 in Germany.
Perception of Self	Cannot describe himself. Low self-esteem? Low perception of himself?	Nick is fun sometimes and annoying sometimes	Others comment that she has a low self esteem. She describes herself as a nice person, but then giggles nervously.	She describes herself as nice, friendly, helpful and kind. Others say that she has a really low self-esteem
School attitudes	Ambivalent. Avoids participation in lessons. Deterioration in work.	Positive, involved in most lessons. Friendly and polite to staff.	Ambivalent. Avoids participation in lessons but makes progress.	Positive
Why do you go to school?	Well, to learn stuff, to get an education, that's it. Well, I suppose we have a bit of fun, muck about and stuff	So you can get educated and when we're older you can get a job.	To learn, to get my education, get a good job and go to university	To get an education, to make new friends and, that's all
Attitude to moving schools	I was quite nervous because I didn't know anyone	Nervous because you don't know no-one and it's scary because there are older people	A bit nervous because half the people I didn't know	It was really hard for me leaving all my friends behind. But I knew some people at the school over here. Mentions being "sick" because of the British air!
Subject likes and dislikes	At primary school used to like PE	Dislikes history as didn't do it up until	Likes art because she is good at it. Dislikes	At Primary school liked

	and English. Now he just likes PE. Dislikes ICT, Technology, History, Maths and English – too much writing.	year 6 – finds it hard.	history because she doesn't get on with the teacher and she finds that there is too much writing.	German, hated English. Now likes English and hates Science because of the teachers.
Attitudes to teachers	Suspicious, would not confide in them. Avoids contact with them. Will not ask for help, will not say when he has been absent.	Wouldn't tell them any problems, would tell friends or get his mum to sort it out for him. Says that he "don't trust 'em" about staff.	Has to like the teachers to be able to work well in their subjects. Would talk to staff about problems at school but not at home. Rates warmth of character over discipline.	Doesn't like teachers to be too strict.
Favourite teacher	I don't have one	I don't have one	I can't remember her name	My favourite teacher was (pause) I don't know
Friends	Jeff. Towards the end of the data collection, Del is very friendly with Jeff. However, when asked his best friend, he mentions someone from primary school then never talks about him again. Friendships are very fluid. Serious bust up with Steven and Nick.	Steven. Shares a passion for football with Steven, they both play for the local team. Friendship seems to be quite fixed. Live near each other. Nick seems genuinely concerned when	Suzy. A difficult relationship. Suzy is as physically mature as Shelley, but she hangs around with older girls, who have often been rude and aggressive to Shelley in the past. After Easter, Suzy sides with her older friends and Shelley seems to have no significant girl friends. Shelley accepts that she is more mature than her classmates, adopts a detached but semi-maternal approach towards them.	Alison. Something of a host relationship, they feed off each other. Ali bosses Katie around and Katie seems to enjoy being told what to do.
Army or civilian	Army. Del is aware if a child	Nick states that his friendships are	Civilian. Friendships revolve around size of	Civilian. Katie doesn't mix with

friendships	comes from an army background or not. Jeff is okay as his dad is in the army, even if he lives with his civilian mum.	mainly army – certainly his best friend lives on the same army patch. He says that he likes Steven best and just gets on with other people.	house/possessions, rather than army loyalties.	anyone at Pilton, partly because of her mum's annoyance with being quartered there. Also due to the racial tensions that they have had.
Attitude to army	Extremely positive – wants to join the army when he leaves school, has already joined the cadets. Forced positivity?	Average – seems positive enough but states categorically that he would not join the army himself, doesn't like "going to war and killing people."	Ambivalent – likes the kudos that having a large quarter gives her. Cannot recall if she has attended a regimental open day. Does not know with any detail what her father does.	Ambivalent. Seems to have picked up on the hatred of her mother.
Dad's absences	Del becomes the man of the house and feels a lot of responsibility.	Dad is away so much that they don't recognise him so much within the household. Mum is the disciplinarian. Nick says that he's not bothered anymore. When dad was away on an extended tour of duty, Nick says it was "quite sad because I didn't know if he was going to come back."	Shelley goes shy with her step-dad when he gets back and has to get to know him again, likes the close contact with her mum. The boys play up even more and pay no attention to their step-mum's control.	Twins became more insular and played together more. Big effect on boys – Michael was at the age when he needed his dad's influence. He didn't want to go to school – all women teachers.

Outline of nodes and trees from NVIVO programme

NODE LISTING

Nodes in Set: All Tree Nodes
Created: 20/08/2004 - 17:51:32
Modified: 20/08/2004 - 17:51:32
Number of Nodes: 95

1 (1) /attitudes
2 (1 1) /attitudes/ARMY
3 (1 1 1) /attitudes/ARMY/kids attitude to the army
4 (1 1 1 1) /attitudes/ARMY/kids attitude to the army/anxiety
5 (1 1 1 2) /attitudes/ARMY/kids attitude to the army/impotence
6 (1 1 1 3) /attitudes/ARMY/kids attitude to the army/rivalry
7 (1 1 1 4) /attitudes/ARMY/kids attitude to the army/pride
8 (1 1 1 5) /attitudes/ARMY/kids attitude to the army/normality
9 (1 1 2) /attitudes/ARMY/parents attitude to the army
10 (1 1 2 1) /attitudes/ARMY/parents attitude to the army/for
11 (1 1 2 2) /attitudes/ARMY/parents attitude to the army/against
12 (1 1 3) /attitudes/ARMY/others attitude to the army
13 (1 2) /attitudes/SCHOOL
14 (1 2 1) /attitudes/SCHOOL/army attitude to school
15 (1 2 5) /attitudes/SCHOOL/parents attitude to school
16 (1 2 5 1) /attitudes/SCHOOL/parents attitude to school/parents attitude to absences
17 (1 2 6) /attitudes/SCHOOL/kids attitude to school
18 (1 2 6 1) /attitudes/SCHOOL/kids attitude to school/subjects
19 (1 2 6 1 1) /attitudes/SCHOOL/kids attitude to school/subjects/independence
20 (1 2 6 2) /attitudes/SCHOOL/kids attitude to school/absence
21 (1 2 6 3) /attitudes/SCHOOL/kids attitude to school/teachers
22 (1 2 6 4) /attitudes/SCHOOL/kids attitude to school/dislocation
23 (1 2 6 5) /attitudes/SCHOOL/kids attitude to school/justice
24 (1 2 6 6) /attitudes/SCHOOL/kids attitude to school/behaviour and identity
25 (1 3) /attitudes/CHILDREN
26 (1 3 1) /attitudes/CHILDREN/of other kids
27 (1 3 1 1) /attitudes/CHILDREN/of other kids/army
28 (1 3 1 3) /attitudes/CHILDREN/of other kids/loyalty
29 (1 3 2) /attitudes/CHILDREN/army attitude to children
30 (1 3 3) /attitudes/CHILDREN/school attitude to children
31 (1 3 4) /attitudes/CHILDREN/parents attitude to children
32 (1 4) /attitudes/PARENTS
33 (1 4 1) /attitudes/PARENTS/school attitude to parents
34 (1 4 2) /attitudes/PARENTS/childrens attitude to parents
35 (1 4 4) /attitudes/PARENTS/army attitude to parents
67 (3) /family
68 (3 1) /family/mum
69 (3 1 1) /family/mum/coping
70 (3 1 2) /family/mum/not coping
71 (3 2) /family/house
72 (3 3) /family/pets
73 (3 4) /family/money

74 (3 5) /family/siblings
75 (3 6) /family/dad
76 (4) /external issues
77 (4 1) /external issues/clash
78 (4 2) /external issues/admissions
79 (4 3) /external issues/curriculum
80 (4 7) /external issues/officers
81 (4 7 14) /external issues/officers/boarding
82 (4 8) /external issues/misconceptions
83 (4 8 5) /external issues/misconceptions/choice
84 (4 8 13) /external issues/misconceptions/support
85 (4 9) /external issues/mobility
86 (4 9 1) /external issues/mobility/curriculum
87 (4 9 6) /external issues/mobility/ability
88 (4 9 10) /external issues/mobility/isolation
89 (4 9 11) /external issues/mobility/funding
90 (4 16) /external issues/communication
91 (4 16 2) /external issues/communication/admissions
92 (4 16 3) /external issues/communication/files
93 (4 16 4) /external issues/communication/SEN
94 (4 16 12) /external issues/communication/class sizes
95 (4 16 15) /external issues/communication/absence

Table Outlining Time Frame of Data Collection

Date	Activity	Rationale
2003		
April 30th	Letter to Headteacher, Upton School	Outline PhD research and request permission to conduct research at Upton School.
May 15	Meeting with Headteacher and Senior Teachers at Upton School; Informal presentation at school assembly	Discuss research, teachers' concerns, data collection strategies. Decide on data collection timetable with staff. Present research to rising year 8 in order to gain participants.
18 September	Fieldnotes - Meeting with three sets of parents in order to explain work in detail and answer any questions.	Answer ethical concerns, describe first thoughts about families and their homes.
25 September	Fieldnotes – Discussion with Deputy Headteacher, meeting with one parent, meeting with four focus pupils.	Answer ethical concerns, describe first thoughts about families and their homes. Outline research to focus children, explain data collection timetable to them.
30 September	Observations – period 1, French, Shelley and Katie; period 3, Geography, Nick; period 4, Science, Shelley and Katie. Fieldnotes around school.	Broad range of observations from full scope of curriculum areas.
13 October (One week gap due to Ethics Review pending)	Observations – period 1, ICT, Nick; period 2, French, Del; period 3, Art, Del and Nick; period 4, Music, Katie. Fieldnotes around school.	Broad range of observations. Gathering documents.
13 November (Three week gap due to half-term and research methods training)	Observations – period 1, Maths, Shelley and Katie; period 2, PE, Nick; period 3, Maths, Nick; period 4, English, Nick; period 4, PSHE, Shelley and Katie. Fieldnotes around school.	Broad range of observations.
17 November	Observations – period 1, ICT, Del; period 2, French, Del; period 3, English, Shelley and Katie; period 4, Food Technology, Del and Nick. Fieldnotes around school. Organise student interviews.	Focus on Del for observations due to absences during previous visits.
19 November	iInterview with Deputy	Focus of interview – to

	Controller, SSAFA, London. Handwritten notes taken.	present a general picture of the situation in which the research was to be conducted and gain understanding of broader national context of issues. Compare with experiences of Navy and RAF children.
20 November	Observations – period 2, Science, Nick; period 3, ICT, Shelley and Katie; period 4, Technology, Shelley and Katie.	Del absent period 1 so re-assess schedule. Focus on range of lessons for remaining 3 focus students.
25 November	Observations – period 3, Art, Shelley and Katie. Fieldnotes – evening, information from Parents' Ofsted meeting Interviews – Shelley and Nick, Interview 1	Chose to go in today in order to observe the parents' post-Ofsted meeting and find out what are the concerns of all the parents with children at the school. Focus for interview 1 – life history of each participant, previous schools.
26 November	Interviews – Katie, interview 1	Interview focus see above.
3 December	Interviews – Del, interview 1; Service Families Co-ordinator, neighbouring garrison	Interview focus see above. Begin to compare the issues happening in Upton with other garrison towns.
8 December	Observations – period 1, History, Del and Nick; period 2, Maths, Del; period 4, Music, Shelley; period 5, Technology, Del and Nick. Fieldnotes around school.	Focus on Del for observations due to previous absences. Review of pupil files – understand their past experiences, SEN issues.
12 December	Observations – period 3, History, Shelley. Interviews – School Finance Manager Fieldnotes around school.	Have not observed Shelley in Humanities yet. a broader understanding of the impact of turbulence on a school's budget could be gained Find out about mobility and school finances. Find out about files and school transfers.
2004		
7 January (Two week gap due to Christmas holidays)	Observations – period 1, PSHE, Katie; period 4, Music, Nick; period 5, Geography, Del and Nick. Fieldnotes around school. Organise student interviews.	Broad range of observations in all curriculum areas.
22 January	Observations – period 1, Maths, Shelley and Katie; period 2, PE, Del and Nick; period 5, Geography, Shelley	Broad range of observations in all curriculum areas. Focus of interview 2 – participants' life at their

	and Katie. Interviews – Katie and Nick, Interview 2 Fieldnotes around school	present school past experiences of education
23 January	Observations – period 1, French, Nick; period 3, History, Shelley and Katie. Interviews – Del and Shelley, interview 2; interview with Senior teacher Fieldnotes around school.	Focus of interview 2 see above. Focus of interview with senior teacher – school policies to manage transfers, difficulties of army students. Discussion with TAs in order to understand more about Katie's family circumstances.
30 January	Observations – period 2, PE, Shelley and Katie; period 3, Geography, Shelley and Katie. Organise parent interviews.	Observe Shelley and Katie as recent observations have looked at the boys.
4 February	Observations – period 1, English, Nick; period 2, Science, Nick. Fieldnotes around school. Visit to Upton Garrison – Interview with Welfare Officer (handwritten notes taken); Parent Group Interview.	Del absent so focus on lessons he would have been in. Focus of discussion with WO – understanding to what extent army are involved locally with education. Focus of group interview with 4 army parents with children at schools in Upton – gain understanding of parental concerns regarding their children's education in order to be able to contextualise the interviews of the four focus parents.
11 February	Observations – period 1, Maths, Del; period 2, English, Shelley and Katie; period 3, KS3 Assembly; period 4, PSHE, Del and Nick; period 5, Food Technology, Shelley and Katie. Interview – interview with Senior Education Officer, CEAS. Fieldnotes around school.	Focus on Del for observations due to previous absences. Focus of interview – gain understanding of issues concerning army children nationally
23 February (One week gap due to half-term)	Observations – period 2, Maths, Nick; period 3, English, Del and Nick; period 4, Technology, Del and Nick; period 5, Science, Del.	Focus on Del for observations due to previous absences.

	Fieldnotes around school.	
26 February	Interviews with Mrs Turner, Mrs Carter and Mrs Gordon. Fieldnotes written after interviews.	Interview focus – to gain an understanding of the difficulties the focus children might have encountered and the parents' reaction to this. Mrs Hobson not in so re-arrange.
3 March	Observations – period 1, French, Shelley and Katie; period 2, Art, Del and Nick. Interview – interview with Mrs Hobson. Fieldnotes written after interview. Organise student interviews.	Broad range of observations. Interview focus – to gain an understanding of the difficulties the focus children might have encountered and the parents' reaction to this.
9 March	Observations – period 3, French, Nick; period 4, English, Shelley and Katie. Interviews – student interview 3	Interview 3 focus - the participants' home and family life. Wider topics explored included their friends and social life, the preparation that went into transferring to a new school, their likes and dislikes about schools in general and each school attended, specifically.
24 March (One week gap due to personal circumstances)	Observations – period 1, English, Nick; period 2, ICT, Shelley and Katie; period 4, Music, Nick. Fieldnotes – period 3, peer supporter training session, Katie and Nick; period 5, observe video conference, Shelley and Katie; evening, information from Friends of Upton meeting.	Del is absent. Observations period 3 and 5 in order to view the children in informal non-teaching environment.
2 April	Observations – period 1, Science, Del; period 2, PE, Shelley and Katie; period 3, History, Del and Nick; period 4, Music, Del and Nick. Fieldnotes around school.	Focus on Del for observations due to previous absences.
22 April (Two week gap due to Easter holidays)	Observations – period 2, Art, Nick and Shelley; period 3, Science, Shelley and Katie; period 4, English, Nick and Shelley	New timetables – study these during period 1. Broad range of observations for rest of day. Del is absent.
28 April	Observations – period 1, French, Katie; period 2, Music, Nick. Interviews – interview with School Counsellor	Observe Katie in new grouping (by herself, without Shelley) Focus of interview to understand the broader

		difficulties of army children.
6 May	Interviews – interview with Headteacher Fieldnotes around school. Organise student interview 4.	Focus of interview – to understand the issues of army children's education from policy and management level, compare to experiences at another army school in order to contextualise Upton's experiences.
13 May	Observations – period 2, Science, Nick; period 3, French, Del. Interviews – interview with KS3 co-ordinator Fieldnotes around school	Del absent previously so observe him during period 3. Focus of interview – gain further knowledge of four focus children, gain understanding of difficulties of educating army children from teacher perspective.
21 May	Interview – interview with Inclusion Manager Fieldnotes around school	Focus of interview - gain further knowledge of four focus children, gain understanding of home/school relationships
26 May	Interview – interview with KS4 co-ordinator; interview with Head of English. Organise pupil group interview Fieldnotes around school	Focus of interview, KS4 co-ordinator - gain further knowledge of four focus children, gain understanding of difficulties of educating army children from teacher perspective, understand particular difficulties for KS4 transfer Focus of interview, Head of English – gain further knowledge of four focus children, gain understanding of difficulties of educating army children from teacher perspective, understand particular issue of mobility and literacy.
10 June (One week gap due to half-term)	Observations – period 3, Maths, Del; period 4, English, Del, Nick and Shelley. Interview with KS3 Form Tutor. Fieldnotes around school. Organise student interview 4.	Focus on Del for observations due to previous absences. Shelley absent period 2. Focus of interview - gain further knowledge of four focus children, gain understanding of home/school relationships Pupils were given a disposable camera and were asked to document a 'day in

		their life at school'
15 June	Interviews – student interview 4 (photo=elicitation interview) – Katie and Nick; interview with Head of Science Fieldnotes – visit to Mrs Hobson	Interview focus – pupils were asked to explain what was in their 24 photographs and why they had decided to take that particular picture.
16 June	Fieldnotes – all day at the Army Families Federation Conference	Put findings from Upton in context of national difficulties
22 June	Interviews – student interview 4 (photo-elicitation interview) Shelley Fieldnotes around school	Interview focus – see above. Del absent so re-arrange date
25 June	Interviews – discussion with Head of SCE (Germany). Hand-written notes taken. Fieldnotes	Focus of discussion – follow up on AFF conference, find out about funding for SCE schools in order to understand Katie's experiences
28 June	Fieldnotes – KS3 Review Day, observation of four student/parent/teacher sessions.	Observe children with their parents, get feedback about progress at school.
6 July (Final visit before summer break)	Interviews – student interview 4 (photo-elicitation interview) Del; group interview with army and civilian students.	Interview focus - see above. Pupil group interview focus to consider the relationship between 7 army and 'non-army' children.
12 August	Fieldnotes – telephone conversation with Mrs Turner	Find out some more about feelings about her own schooling as she did not mention this in her interview.
23 August	Interviews – discussion with Head of SFTF, MOD in which handwritten notes were taken; interview with Education Adviser, AFF.	Focus of discussion and interview - put findings from Upton in context of national difficulties
1 September	Interviews – interview with LA Inclusion Manager	Interview focus – to gain an understanding of LA difficulties due to mobile population and what the LA are doing to address this.
17 September	Interviews – telephone discussion with Chair of National Association of State Schools for Service Children. Handwritten notes taken	Focus of discussion - put findings from Upton in context of national difficulties, compare to another school.
24 September	Interview – telephone discussion with LA Finance Manager. Handwritten notes taken.	Discussion focus – to gain an understanding of LA difficulties due to mobile population and what the LA are doing to address this.

2005		
21 January	Letter to Headteacher, Alchester School	Outline PhD research and request permission to conduct research at Alchester School
3 February	Meeting with Senior Teacher at Alchester School	Discuss research, teachers' concerns, data collection strategies. Decide on data collection timetable with staff
4 April	Observations – period 2, History, C; period 4, Maths, C. Interviews – interview with Student Services Manager; interview with Deputy Headteacher. Fieldnotes around school; informal discussion with C; tour of local area; tour of school.	Broad range of observations. Interview focus, SSM – it was suggested that SSM should be interviewed as she has most contact with army parents and students. Find out about issues and what the school does to address these. Interview focus, Dep Head - to understand the issues of army children's education from policy and management level, compare to experiences at another army school in order to contextualise Upton's experiences. Focus of discussion with C – to gain an understanding of his experiences and feelings about school. Tour of area in order to gain understanding of home situation of children in Alchester.
5 April	Observations – period 2, Music, H; period 3, Maths, H. Interview with Head of Year 8. Fieldnotes around school; assembly period 1; informal discussion with H	Broad range of observations. Focus of interview – to understand difficulties of teaching a mobile group and transfer arrangements in order to contextualise Upton's experiences. Focus of discussion with H - to gain an understanding of her experiences and feelings about school.
6 April	Observations – period 2, German, H; period 4, ICT, C; period 5, English, C. Fieldnotes around school; informal discussion with H's form tutor, visit to SEN department; visit to garrison;	Broad range of observations. Discussion with form tutor – to gain further understanding of H's experiences. Visit to SEN department to find out about SEN figures for army and civilian children and

	informal discussion with Connexions adviser.	issues of mobility and SEN. Visit to garrison to find out to what extent army are involved in education of children in Alchester. Discussion with Connexions adviser to find out about KS4 issues.
7 April	Observations – period 2, Geography, C; period 3, Science, C; period 4, French, C. Fieldnotes – informal discussion with parents of C and H (telephone); informal discussion with C's form tutor.	Broad range of observations. Discussion with parents in order to understand home experiences of H and C. Discussion with form tutor – to gain further understanding of C's experiences at school.

All observations and field notes were recorded using hand-written notes. All interviews were tape recorded unless otherwise stated. Interviews were of varying lengths – for the case-study children, the interviews lasted approximately 20 minutes, whilst interviews with adults lasted between 30 and 40 minutes. The group interview with the army and civilian children lasted approximately 30 minutes, whilst the group interview with army parents lasted 45 minutes.

Key to Collected Data

Ob – Observation note, carried out in Upton School throughout the academic year 2003-04, dated (eg 25/9 = 25th September)

Fn – Field notes, written throughout the academic year 2003-04, dated (eg 25/9 = 25th September). Field notes written at Alchester School can be differentiated through their use of the 2005 date.

K1 – Katie, Interview 1, 26th November 2003, Location – Headteacher's office

K2 – Katie, Interview 2, 22nd January 2004, Location – Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator's office

K3 – Katie, Interview 3, 9th March 2004, Location – Classroom 103

K4 – Katie, Interview 4, 15th June 2004, Location – Headteacher's office

S1 – Shelley, Interview 1, 25th November 2003, Location – Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator's office

S2 – Shelley, Interview 2, 22nd January 2004, Location – Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator's office

S3 – Shelley, Interview 3, 9th March 2004, Location – Classroom 103

S4 – Shelley, Interview 4, 22nd June 2004, Location – Headteacher's office

N1 – Nick, Interview 1, 25th November 2003, Location – Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator's office

N2 – Nick, Interview 2, 22nd January 2004, Location – Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator's office

N3 – Nick, Interview 3, 9th March 2004, Location – Classroom 103

N4 – Nick, Interview 4, 15th June 2004, Location – Headteacher's office

D1 – Del, Interview 1, 3rd December 2003, Location – Headteacher's office

D2 – Del, Interview 2, 22nd January 2004, Location – Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator's office

D3 – Del, Interview 3, 9th March 2004, Location – Classroom 103

D4 – Del, Interview 4, 6th July 2004, Location – Classroom 108

P1 – Interview with Mrs Turner (Katie's Mum), 26th February 2004, Location – family home, Pilton

P2 – Interview with Mrs Gordon (Shelley's Mum), 26th February 2004, Location – family home, Pilton

P3 – Interview with Mrs Carter (Nick's Mum), 26th February 2004, Location – family home, Upton

P4 – Interview with Mrs Hobson (Del's Mum), 3rd March 2004, Location – family home, Upton

P5 – Group interview with army parents, 4th February 2004, Location – Unit Welfare Office, Upton

E1 – Interview with RE, Senior teacher and Science teacher, 23rd January 2004, Location – Senior teacher's office

E2 – Interview with RB, Headteacher, 6th May 2004, Location – Headteacher's office

E3 – Interview with JB, Key Stage 3 Co-ordinator and Technology teacher, 13th May 2004, Location – Key Stage 3 Co-ordinator's office

E4 – Interview with GR, Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator and Maths teacher, 26th May 2004, Location – Key Stage 4 Co-ordinator's office

E5 – Interview with DH, Head of English and Key Stage 3 form tutor, 26th May 2004, Location – English office

E6 – Interview with TR, Key Stage 3 form tutor and French teacher, 10th June 2004, Location – Classroom 039

E7 – Interview with SC, Science teacher, 15th June 2004, Location – Headteacher's office

E8 – Interview with TB, Inclusion Manager, 21st May 2004, Location – Headteacher's office

E9 – Interview with JS, School Finance Manager, 12th December 2003, Location – Finance office

E10 – Interview with SH, School Counsellor, 28th April 2004, Location – Counsellor's room

E11 – Interview with CR, LA Inclusion Manager, 1st September 2004, Location – SEN department

E12 – Telephone discussion with RP, LA Finance Manager, 24th September 2004

E13 – Telephone discussion with IP, Chairman of National Association of State Schools for Service Children, 17th September 2004

E14 – Group interview with army and civilian pupils, 6th July 2004, Location – SEN department

O1 – Discussion with PB, Deputy Controller Soldiers, Sailors and Air Force Association (SSAFA), 19th November 2003, Location – SSAFA office, London

O2 – Interview with TA, Service Families Support Co-ordinator, 3rd December 2003, Location – Headteacher's office

O3 – Discussion with MC, Unit Welfare Officer, 4th February 2004, Location – Unit Welfare Office, Upton

O4 – Interview with OD, Senior Education Officer, Service Children's Education UK, 11th February 2004, Location – SCE office, Upavon

O5 – Telephone discussion with DW, Head of Service Children's Education Germany, 25th June 2004

O6 – Interview with SH, Education Officer, Army Families Federation, 23rd August 2004, Location – family home, London

O7 – Discussion with JS, Head of Service Families' Task Force, 23rd August 2004, Location – Ministry of Defence, London

A1 – Interview with SA, Student Services Manager, Alchester School, 4th April 2005, Location – Student Service Office

A2 – Interview with PR, Deputy Headteacher, Alchester School, 4th April 2005, Location – Deputy Headteacher's Office

A3 – Interview with DB, Head of Year 8, Alchester School, 5th April 2005, Location – Head of Year 8 Office

NB – the term 'interview' indicates that the conversation was recorded and a transcript produced. Use of the term 'discussion' indicates that the conversation was not recorded and the notes taken reflect my recollection of the conversation after the event. Participants were given the option not to have their discussions recorded. Interviews taking place at Upton School indicate a room name/number for location. Interviews commencing with the code 'A' indicate that these interviews formed part of the second data collection phase, at Alchester School.

Table of observations for each focus child

	N	D	SJ	K
Maths	13.11.03 23.2.04	8.12.03 11.02.04 10.6.04	13.11.03 22.1.04	13.11.03 22.1.04
English	13.11.03 5.2.04 23.2.04 24.3.04 22.4.04 10.06.04	23.02.04 10.06.04	17.11.03 11.02.04 9.3.04 22.4.04 10.06.04	17.11.03 11.02.04 9.3.04
Science	20.11.03 5.2.04 13.5.04	23.02.04 2.4.04	30.9.03 22.4.04	30.9.03 22.4.04
ICT	13.10.03	17.11.03	20.11.03 24.3.04	20.11.03 24.3.04
French	23.1.04 9.3.04	13.10.03 17.11.03 13.5.04	30.9.03 3.3.04	30.9.03 3.3.04 28.4.04
Art	13.10.03 3.3.04 22.4.04	13.10.03 3.3.04	25.11.03 22.4.04	25.11.03
Music	7.1.04 24.3.04 2.4.04 28.4.04	2.4.04	8.12.03	13.10.03
PSHE	11.02.04	11.02.04	13.11.03	13.11.03 7.1.04
Technology	8.12.03 23.2.04	8.12.03 23.2.04	20.11.03	20.11.03
Geography	30.9.03 7.1.04	7.1.04	22.1.04 30.1.04	22.1.04 30.1.04
History	8.12.03 2.4.04	8.12.03 2.4.04	12.12.03 23.1.04	23.1.04
PE	13.11.03 22.1.04	22.1.04	30.1.04 2.4.04	30.1.04 2.4.04
Food Technology	17.11.03	17.11.03	11.02.04	11.02.04
TOTAL	31 lessons	22 lessons	25 lessons	23 lessons

Observation Notes

Observations are presented in chronological order. Information given at the start of each observation lists the date and time during the school day of the observation, the children it involved, the teacher's initials, the subject and the classroom number. When cited in the main body of the thesis, observations appear according to their date. For example, an observation recorded on 30th September would appear in the thesis as Ob 30/9. Observations recorded at Alchester School are differentiated through their use of the year 2005.

Tuesday 30th September – Shelley and Katie

Period 1 French, RO, Room 39

Introduction 13 present 6 boys and 7 girls, 1 LSA present. This is group 4 out of 4. There are 11 students on the CoP and there should be 16 pupils in total in the class. Katie's name is not of the list of pupils with difficulties, Shelley is listed as having literacy difficulties. There is a seating plan. Ro has seated students with ADHD with stable students. Katie is towards the back at the side and Shelley is at the front. There is a horseshoe seating arrangement. The LSA tends to be with this group. Although she is assigned to one boy who has 15 hours per week on his statement for ADHD, she works with the whole group. Ro is not a French specialist and also teachers art and RE. Did a French Art degree.

Start clear objectives on the board. Students jot down ideas on rough paper. No internal register. There is a class set of books (Metro 2 Vert) so not one to take home with them. Exceptionally quiet and focused as they think back to past lessons. There are examples of work on the walls. New furniture in the room, although damp on the ceilings.

Ro is very softly spoken with them, does not raise his voice. Pleasant manner. I later find out that he is a 2nd year teacher. He knows them all by name. Lesson emphasises grammar and structure of a sentence. At 9.10, 2 girls arrive late saying that they have missed the bus. At 9.15 there is another knock on the door and another pupil waits outside for several minutes before coming in to say that she, too, was late as she was doing a job for another member of staff.

9.25 Ro hands back books and gets pupils to record their credits in their planners. He then asked pupils to use the Metro book to help them write down phrases and unjumble them and rewrite in the correct order. In the plenary session, students are encouraged to speak out their answers. Ro goes through what they have done and explains why they have not covered one of their objectives. Ro asks about homework. 4 pupils have not done theirs, various excuses. Adam has no reason for not doing his homework. He is very sullen about this.

Generally, I feel that Katie has her hand up more than Shelley and is more involved. Ro had a really pleasant manner with the group, he didn't have to shout at them once and they all seemed to know what they were doing. The lesson had a clear purpose.

Tuesday 30th September - Nick

Period 3 Geography, HI, room 7

This is a mixed ability teaching group. LSA in class, traditional seating arrangement. Del is absent. Normally, there are 29 pupils in the class, 15 of them girls. Nick is seated in the 3rd row between 2 girls. Del normally sits at the back. There is a seating plan. On lesson info. sheet Del is listed as dyslexic and is advised to use pastel coloured paper for his work. On the walls, there are pieces of work relating to the various groups field sketches, treasure maps, buzz words.

The group are finishing off project work to do with Snail Beach in Wales. Pupils work individually, fetch own resources and have a copy of a lesson information sheet which lets them know what they should achieve. HI talks about what they need to achieve and relates this to NC levels by the end of year 9. In their books, there is a form giving information about levels of assessment from year 7 and a clear outline of assessment for year 8. They do not have their own copy of a textbook. Nick does not like geography as it's "boring." He says he can't be bothered to finish off the work at home. Looking at his planner he fills in every day and gets it signed off by mum. He says he gets a detention if he does not get it signed. Mum has used the planner to write to the cookery teacher about where to get ingredients. No personal notes or personalisation of the planner. Nick is

arguing with Rebecca throughout, across the classroom. I ask him why he says it is because Rebecca was picking on Steven, a mate of his. Nick and his neighbour start tapping on the table. In spite of the noise, it does seem as if they are on task. Nick is fairly quiet and not as unfocused as other pupils and yet he does get picked up an awful lot about his behaviour.

Noticeable that a lot of the girls in the room have light blue shirts, jumpers tied around their waists and big hoop ear rings. Is this a sort of internal uniform? I was struck by the amount of interchange (negative) between HI and Nick. I start to wonder if there is a relationship between the number of years teaching experience of the staff and their perception of army children?

<u>Tuesday 30th September – Shelley and Katie</u>
<u>Period 4 Science, CL, Room SO8</u>

16 present 6 boys and 10 girls. 1 LSA present. Class are group 4 of 4. The room is organised in a traditional science formation, with islands of tables. Clearly a mixed science lab as there are biology and chemistry posters on the walls. Keyword posters for write-ups. There is a seating plan, Shelley sits by herself at the back and Katie sits in a group at the front.

Pupils come in and stand behind their tables. CI unhappy with the noise, so she sends them all back out and they start again. She asks the LSA why they were like that and the LSA says that they are all hungry. CI takes the register whilst the pupils are doing an introductory task. Pupils are handed out class copies of Spotlight Science. Pupils are asked to summarise paragraphs.

By midpoint of the lesson, Katie and Shelley have not put up their hands and have not answered any questions. Extension activities on desks for pupils who finish their task. All the pupils gather at the front for a demonstration of the experiment. Shelley stands to the side of this group and does not talk to anyone. Katie talking to 2 of her neighbours. Lots of focus on the lesson and little sense of the pupils being off task. In the plenary session, pupils feedback to the teacher what their results are. Shelley remains silent throughout. CI finishes off whole lesson by reminding the pupils what their aims were and what they have covered. Shelley changes into her trainers to go out for lunch.

I spoke to CI afterwards about Shelley because it struck me how little she was involved. CI agreed that Shelley did not interact with anyone. She said that if you sat Shelley next to anyone, there would always be a disagreement, so it was easier to sit her by herself. I am struck by how focused the group are and how clear the tasks were. CI was softly spoken, very direct to the pupils and was an excellent classroom manager. Another young teacher.

Monday 13th October - Nick

Period 1, ICT, FR, ICT1

This is a fairly large group, with 17 girls and 5 boys. Nick is sitting to the side of the room with one boy as his neighbour. They are obviously very friendly with each other. There is one boy (who is dressed very streetwise) who sits with a group of girls only at the other side of the classroom and remains with them throughout. They look like they are in the 'in' crowd.

The lesson begins with an internal register. The teacher circulates the room, signing off hw in pupils' planners. (The tutors should give out daily planning sheets if pupils have lost their planners.) The teacher discusses the focus of the lesson with pupils and guides them through their homework in order to revise for the assessment they have today. Nick talking to his neighbour throughout this, although he did complete his hw. Generally the room, however, is quiet subdued, almost. No individual text books, so the majority of hw is done on worksheets. Nick leans back on his chair as the teacher guides them through their assessment.

General move from class work to individual work on computers. Assessment is to find out information on ferry times on the Isle of Wight ferries. I wonder whether Nick even knows where the IoW is? Do any of them? Nick remains sitting next to his friend. I ask him if he has a computer at home, he says that he has a laptop. Nick works very quickly through the assessment, but has imported the wrong timetable and has not realised this. Works too quickly? Nick guides his neighbour through the work seems confident and knows exactly what he is doing. Confident and happy in this lesson.

Monday 13th October - Del

Period 2, French, PR, room 5

Pr is absent, so the cover in the school is arranged into two halves of the lesson. Pupils are required to stand behind their chairs, until the teacher allows them to sit. I have not noticed this in other lessons, so I wonder if this happens throughout the school? There is French and German vocabulary on the wall, but German is only offered as an option in year 10 and 11. There are 7 boys and 14 girls in the class.

Del is sitting at the front of the room with 2 (male) friends. Both of them live near him in Upton and 1 of them attended the same primary school as him (he's on report). I asked Del why he was away when I came in before and he said that he had to go to hospital. Del is not actively getting on with his work (but then, neither is anyone else!) He is talking to his 2 friends about films that they have seen. There seems to be little active talking between the groups/tables the friendship groups seem quite insular.

I notice that Del looks over every now and again to see if I am looking at him. There is still a sense of the students having to explain to their friends who I am. Del says to me "you know all the teachers" and I worry that he thinks I am on 'their' side and not his. I explain that I have to ask their permission to do the study as much as I have to ask for his permission.

Monday 13th October – Del and Nick

Period 3, Art, EL, A2

This is a large group of 11 boys and 17 girls (the first time that I have seen more girls than boys!) Nick is sitting right at the back in the left hand corner, sitting next to a girl. Del is sitting on the left, half way down the room, next to a boy. (The same boy who sat next to Nick in ICT.) Del arrives late to the lesson and says he didn't hear the bell! There is a seating plan. Tables organised fairly traditionally for an art room the teacher work station is at the front and the pupil tables are organised in lines in front of that.

The lesson focuses on a group of artists. The pupils must replicate their work. The teacher is young, female never shouts, is always very calm and methodical with them. Emphasises the skills the pupils need to focus and learn, need to listen to her. Asks questions similar hands go up to get involved.

Nick and the boy in front of him are giggling and laughing with each other, they are throwing things around. Del not involved. Nick crawls under 2 sets of tables to get to Del! Nick turns to talk to me and says that at the weekend his mum dyed his hair blonde, but it turned out orange. Del continues to be focused, painting and only talking intermittently to his neighbour. Nick does not seem to be making any progress at all (takes a long time to do one small task!) Teacher constantly circulating, bending down to speak to the children and making eye contact.

The 1hour session seems to be quite rushed the pupils have only been on task for a short amount of time when they have to pack away. Volunteers are asked for to tidy up. Nick has been asked to 'do a job' but he spends a lot of time tidying up his own work, not collecting other peoples'. He is reminded several times about this. Del packs his own things away and puts his bag over his shoulder, over 5 mins before the end of the lesson. Del continues to remain in his place. Nick involved in the lesson, Del seems to be passing through it.

Nick and Del are not, I think, seen to be disruptive. There is a desk right in front of the teachers' where a boy is sitting. He is spoken to a lot and is, eventually, asked to leave the lesson. He is dealt with very quickly and quietly no fuss or disruption for other pupils.

<u>Monday 13th October - Katie</u>

<u>Period 4 Music, FE, room 34</u>

Shelley is absent. Katie is sitting in the front row, near the teacher. There are only 9 present in total 5 girls and 4 boys. Start with a vocal warm up, pick a current pop song and sing along to it. Refer back to previous lesson of South American rhythms. Katie is sitting between a boy and a girl, ignores the boy and talks quietly with the girl. There is no LSA in the lesson (and this is the group that usually has one.)

Lewis, the boy that I noticed in French, is not working. He does not have a pen in his hand and he and his friend are flicking paper. Eventually they settle down to work. Either they finish extremely quickly, or they are allowed to finish on what they have done because they are given the chance to go to the back and play on the keyboards for a while. Lewis then goes to the front and acts like the class DJ.

The pupils work in folders, from worksheets. They do not have their own books. Katie seems to conform to expectations her hand goes up to ask a question, she checks her work against the teacher expectation of her. She does not draw attention to herself, like Lewis!

Katie and her neighbour come over to say hello when they have finished. Katie says that this is the girl who called her names last year and her mum would be really angry with her if she knew that they were still talking. (Is this where the racist comments started?) Katie says that they fell out during the year 7 residential trip, when they argued over beds! The girl lives in Upton and they can't see each other after school. The girls seems anxious to point out that this is because she has responsibilities at home, looking after younger cousins, as she has a single mother!

<u>Thursday 13th November – Shelley and Katie</u>

<u>Period 1, Maths, RV, room 103</u>

RV talks to some pupils outside, silence whilst he does that. Pupils come in and set up. RV says nothing and waits for pupils to stand up to start the lesson. K sitting in the middle at the back by herself, Shelley sitting next to another girl (Emma) at the back by the window. Shelley approaches me to say hello as she comes in. Katie asks if I still like orange smarties!

15 pupils in total (6 boys and 9 girls). RV uses information on making oil to explain what a fraction is. At 9.15 the pupils start to write having completed 15 mins of discussion. Shelley volunteers to answer one of the questions. I go and sit with Katie to help we use our fingers to divide up. Shelley and Emma talk a fair bit during the exercise. Emma looks out of the window and RV warns her that she will move if she continues. Katie says to RV that she would have got the answer if she had been given more time. She seems uncomfortable about

approaching the teacher. Shelley does not lead any of the unfocused behaviour but she is quick to follow it. Shelley kicks the chair of the boy in front of her and copies the work of Emma. RV then mentions there will be a new seating plan for the next lesson because of the behaviour of Shelley and Emma.

Shelley has fake nails on her which she taps on the desk throughout the lesson. At the end of the lesson, in discussion with RV and TA, they say that Shelley has always been a year older than the other pupils. Katie and Alison have obviously fallen out as they are sitting separately and she is talking to someone else. RV describes Shelley as a bit of a slapper!

Thursday 13th November - Nick

Period 2, PE, WA, Sports Hall

Pupils mix with other year groups in the changing area. Year 8 are doing basketball in the Sports Hall. Del is away as he managed to dislocate his thumb at football practice the night before. Nick has his full kit (in contrast to the other pupils) and is looking really smart.

Nick's friend from ICT (Steven) comes over and greets me. Nick is very attentive during the introduction and warm up session. He answers questions about basketball and techniques. For the warm up, the pupils run around the sports hall, Nick is quick to catch them up and soon takes over. Pupils then carry on doing individual stretches.

Nick works straight away with Steven and one other boy they work quietly together and ignore all the other groups. The pupils continue to talk so the teacher stops the lesson completely.

I go over and join in the practise with Nick and Steven.

There is a new pupil and the teacher asks another pupil to explain what is going on. When it comes to finding a partner, the new pupil is obviously anxious as he 'follows' a friend around with his eyes and calls him over to work with him.

The teacher speaks to me later about what a good group they are.

Thursday 13th November – Nick

Period 3, Maths, HO, Room 108

Nick and Steven come and sit at the table nearest to me. Other pupils are talking and unfocused, so Nick gets out his football magazine and starts to read it. Tables are arranged in a work station formation. Nick and Steven are at the back and in the centre. Tasks on the board to work through.

Emily (blonde hair) is doing a massive amount of calling out and answering back. She is threatened with being sent out. Steven and Nick are playing Jinx games when HO mentions their name, they are jinxed until it is mentioned again. Is this a sign of boredom or just a way of getting the teacher's attention? Steven is moved because he is talking to Nick. He and Nick continue with their jinx game across the room. Nick is leaning back on his chair and not looking at the front. Apart from at the beginning of the lesson, there is little evidence of work.

Nick writes a letter to Emma (his girlfriend?) and gets Steven to deliver it for him. A sense of ritual about the promise that Steven must make not to read it. (They have to clasp fingers.) Nick leans over and asks me whether I heard him swear or not sense that he is trying to test me. Steven and Nick start singing Happy Birthday (very loudly!) to one of the girls and are asked to leave by HO spoken to outside. Nick says to me that he doesn't normally get sent out, just when he's with Steven. Steven takes Nick's ruler. Some of the girls continue to sing Happy Birthday but they are not sent out.

Steven and Nick are working really slowly and have still not finished the 2nd question. Eventually they settle down to work is this because there are already people who have finished and they feel the need to compete with them? (Nick and Steven have been completing the wrong questions but they have not sought the teacher's clarification of this.)

Nick continues to write notes even though there is an extension task on the board. My previous assumption that more challenging work would make him get involved is wrong. JB comes in and the room goes quiet and is focused. Steven is called over to talk to her. Steven confirms to me on the way back that he lives near Nick and went to Zennor Primary with him.

Thursday 13th November – Nick

Period 4, (first half), English, HG, 040

As I come into the room, I ask HG for permission to observe and she asks me for clarification of my work. I say I am watching Nick. She says that Nick is an interesting case as at the moment he has periods of inactivity, followed by periods of extreme difficulty. At the moment he is not working as he should be. We both agree that Nick is not as focused as he was before half term. Later I compare Nick's handwriting from pre-half term, now it seems to be scruffier and there is less care and attention paid.

The class come in in a very noisy way. HG asks where they have come from and then reminds them they are in English and not in a farmyard.

Thursday 13th November – Shelley and Katie

Period 4, (2nd half), PSHE, RO, rm 039

As a group, the class are working on a family fun kit, designing posters on how to spend time as a family. Katie is sitting with another girl, Shelley is by herself. Alison is sitting with a boy behind Shelley. Katie is looking slightly red, as if she had been crying.

I go over to see what posters they are producing. Katie is making tokens for family members. For her sister if she pays back they money she has borrowed from her. For her parents, she has designed a token for it they stop smoking. I ask her if she doesn't like smoking, she says she hates it! Shelley has drawn one token for her brother to stop him acting like a drama queen! I ask her about this and she says that one of her brothers will cut his finger and act up about it. I ask about her brother at boarding school and he is at home, having been excluded for smoking in the toilets and setting off the fire alarm.

This lesson is one in a series encouraging families to get along more positively. RO invites me back for when the students will present their information and explain why they have chosen these targets and tokens.

Katie and Alison are talking, but there is none of the warmth that was evident before half term.

Monday 17th November - Del
Period 1, ICT, GS, Resources Room

18 pupils present. Set seating plan. Del is at the back of the room on the right hand side. The lesson begins with a discussion about previous work. Del was absent for this but does not indicate to the teacher that he was.

Pupils move to the computers for the practical part of the lesson (designing own websites). Del admits to me that he doesn't know what he's doing, so he will copy from his neighbour. This is in spite of the fact that 2 other pupils have approached the teacher because they were away.

Del has a rough copy of what he is trying to do, but there are a LOT of mistakes on it and he is having difficulties inputting work into the computer. He does not have a computer at home. Del's relationship with his neighbour is open and friendly.

Sarah, Katie's sister, is also in the room and she says that they have a computer at home which she and her brothers and sisters fight over using. There is a whole group of children near Sarah who are not working and focusing on someone else's computer, but she continues to work on her own and ignores the distraction. At the end, she is so absorbed (introverted?) in her own work that she ignores the instruction of the teacher.

The teacher often mentions TV personalities to the children as points of reference, but the children don't know what he is talking about!

In the Resources Room, there is a Careers library section with a file on the army but it is not given any more prominence than other careers.

Monday 17th November - Del

Period 2, French, PR, Room 5

The pupils are tested to check up on their progress. Pupils wait outside and come in and stand behind their chairs until the teacher is ready for them to start. Teacher explains the levels obtainable from the tests and what levels the pupils have already obtained. Teacher sits pupils on alternate tables. Some encouragement in that pupils are told that they have all done very well so far. Pupils work in silence and put up their hands if there is a query.

Monday 17th November – Shelley and Katie

Period 3, English, HG, Room 40

This is a really small group with only 8 pupils. HG organises them into a horseshoe shape for the start of the lesson. They begin by discussing the words that they will need for their vampire stories. Pupils are encouraged to look up the words in the dictionary. There is a focus on the skills needed to find the correct word. Technical language is encouraged for discussing grammar. There is a very encouraging atmosphere as one pupil helps another. It is quiet and industrious.

Neither Shelley or Katie volunteer an answer. They are asked questions, however. Katie is sitting near to Alison again. I ask Alison what they argued about last week and she says that it was nothing important.

Shelley sits by herself. Within this class it is very obvious that she is different from the others in appearance and size. She says to me that she has had a great weekend as her Dad came down (from Oxford) and bought her loads of things, including a pair of black stiletto boots, which she describes as being "very fashionable" at the moment in school. Again, I get the feeling that she wants to be accepted into the mainstream group. When there is practical work (using the word stealthily) Shelley looks disdainful. She does not follow low level instructions (for example to close her book) and her appearance is one of boredom.

Katie has been called by her full name in all of the classes that I have observed, whilst Shelley is normally called by a shortened name.

Katie says that she hates her sister. She says that her favourite subject is Art.

I return to Shelley and say that her best mate isn't in here she says that her best mate is Suzy. I say to her that she obviously doesn't like anyone in here and she says "no, I'm not being rude or anything, but I don't look like any of them." I agree with her.

Monday 17th November – Del and Nick

Period 4, Food Technology, BL, FO1

Nick arrives late. Nick and Del are sitting next to each other. Steven is also sitting at the same table. Del has no ingredients (he was away on the day that the work was set) so Nick offers to have him work with him.

We discuss cooking Nick does not cook at home, but Del cooked for his Mum's birthday this year when his Dad was away. His Dad is now back from Batus, but will be going to Iraq in April for 6 months. Del and Nick play football for a local club. Nick's dad goes to watch when he is home for the w/end. Del's mum has gone once, so Del tends to go by himself. Nick, Del and Steven go together and share lifts. Nick's dad is away during the week.

Del calls me his stalker but says that this is because of his sense of humour.

I discuss the health and safety requirements with BL because of the knives/ovens in the room. She says that she has never had a problem at that school because the children seem to know how to use equipment appropriately. I agree and say that perhaps this is something instilled in them at home, where they are taught to respect weapons etc.

An army patrol walks past the window (they have just leased some of the school land) but no-one notices or comments on this.

If pupils have no ingredients, they work next door.

Thursday 20th November - Nick

Period 2, Science, CL, SO8

Nick sitting next to a girl at the back for the initial presentation. For the demonstration of the lungs, Nick puts himself at the front of the group. Nick is absolutely focused throughout rapt! During a question and answer session, Nick answers questions and remains focused. For video, Nick takes himself to the front of the group again. Again, focused and really interested. Seating plan is based on which pupil combinations work well together. Steven goes to stand with Nick when they are watching the video. Nick leans forward to watch the video a bit closer and Steven leans on to him. It strikes me that they have a very close friendship, to the exclusion of the other people in the group. Emily is something of a problem in this lesson, too very attention seeking, always wanting to put her hand up.

Thursday 20th November – Shelley and Katie

Period 3, ICT, GS, Resources Room

In this lesson, there are normally 2 teachers, one of whom is not ICT trained. As a result, there is often a gap between the 2 teachers (evident in the first few minutes when the class' homework is with the other teacher.) Pupil arrives from another teacher when pupils walk around school they must carry a card from the member of staff who has 'released' them.

Katie is sitting at the front of the class, by herself. Shelley is sitting in the 2nd row and has a boy and a girl of either side of her. Shelley, as usual, is not wearing a school jumper, but has a long, light blue cardigan on a sign of her individuality or a failure to conform? A lot of enthusiastic calling out but Katie and Shelley remain silent. When the teacher demonstrates the lesson at the front, Katie continues to focus, whilst Shelley talks to her friends and remains unfocused. Set seating plan for practical work.

When they go to their computers, it's obvious that Shelley doesn't know what to do (as she wasn't listening) so she asks her neighbour for advice, rather than asking the teacher. Then settles down to work.

Katie says that she's "rubbish" at ICT but her work shows that she's really good. Alison goes over to Katie and they start discussing something. Katie and Shelley starting to make progress in the lesson.

Thursday 20th November – Shelley and Katie
Period 4, Tech, SN, Tech 1

Tiny group, working on a practical project. Shelley pairs of with Suzy (her best friend) and start to get quite silly together. Katie is concerned because the boy who has recently stolen her bus pass is in the room this clearly affects her because every time I approach her, she mentions it. I speak to Suzy about her being friends with Shelley Suzy lives in A. (ie out of catchment) she has been friends with Shelley for 2 years. Physically, she is as mature as Shelley.

The pupils use fairly technical (and dangerous) equipment by themselves and are un-supervised. There is a lot of trust on the part of the teacher and he admits that this is necessary. There is an air of industriousness and focus very little silly behaviour at this point.

What is obvious is that there are no starts everyone works individually and there is no attention seeking or anyone trying to monopolise the teacher's attention. I wonder whether there is any link between the individual work they are doing and the pleasure they seem to be getting from it. Class led work does not make them feel like they are adults.

Students are called over for a teacher led discussion and Shelley and Suzy are the last ones to get to the front. The teacher is concerned that the pupils accept poor quality work and aren't prepared to spend time finishing off properly. One of the pupils is completing a task wrongly, so another pupil steps in to help.

Suzy and Shelley move a lot more slowly than the other pupils. Shelley blows sawdust over Suzy (revenge for when Suzy did this earlier) and she is called up to the teacher and is chastised there in the classroom. She continues to fiddle with the metal she has in her hand and makes no eye contact throughout.

Shelley spends a lot of her lesson time standing up on her (new!) high heels and tapping.

The teacher worries that the small size of the group means that there is little competition, so the work is "dumbed down" and the level is babyfied.

Tuesday 25th November – Shelley and Katie
Art, Period 2, EL, A2

Katie on time comes straight up to me and shows me her homework. Shelley comes in late in tears, asked why she was late, she ignores this. Asked again by teacher, then says that another member of staff wanted to talk to her (no further details.) I wait until the teacher has given her instructions, then I go outside to talk to Shelley. RO has found a bottle of alcohol in her bag. Shelley said her brother put it there. Initially, I am concerned that she will get into trouble about this, but she says that RO knows it's not her. Her major concern is that RO will phone home and that her Mum will get upset. She also worries that her Mum will blame her for the incident. Shelley calms down when Suzy arrives (late) and comes in. Shelley's art work is excellent, really good quality and far better than the other pupils in the room. I ask her if she likes art and she agrees. She says that she won an art competition and is really proud of this. Suzy then fetches their art materials and slaps Shelley on the backside, saying "come on bitch."

Katie sits with Alison and they work fairly well together some silly annoying of each other. Again I notice that Katie is called by her full name and Shelley by her shortened name. I go and talk to Alison and Katie Alison, as always, is talking about her babysitting. I ask Katie if she has to babysit for her brother. She says that her older brother (18) doesn't need babysitting and the younger brother is away at boarding school (a recurrent theme, it seems, with these families!) Shelley has finished working, so she starts to help Suzy. Katie and Alison are both finished, so they tidy up and start to talk to each other. They bring up their work to show me.

Monday 8th December – Del and Nick

Period 1, History, CK, room 110

Classroom tidy and in good order. Excellent displays on the walls.

Del sitting in small table at the centre of the horseshoe. Nick sitting at the back of the horseshoe. Silence as pupils copy aims from the board. Discussion about hw what were the good and bad points about the essays? Nick has said that he finds history difficult as he didn't do it at early primary age. Students have to plot changes on a graph across the Tudor period. Nick working quietly with girl next to him. Del working by himself. Del does not answer any questions. Nick answers one questions (NB Nick has messy hair and his shoes are not done up!) No calling out, all pupils put their hands up.

Nick head down and getting on with work individually. Del making eye contact with neighbours and talking quietly. CK circulating throughout. Extremely well ordered classroom. Steven not following instructions, rebuke from teacher but this is the 2nd time this lesson he has been in trouble. CK circulates asking pupils to explain points on their own scales justification. She is hard on them expects high standards so gets them! Returns to Del for the 2nd time just to explain what to do.

When CK leaves the room to go to the office next door, Del starts talking, whilst Nick continues working by himself. Nick turns around and asks me to spell a word for him. The lads on Del's table seem to have no equipment between them ask CK for basic equipment several times.

Monday 8th December - Del

Period 2, Maths, SM, Room 104

No set places so Del sits with a group of boys at the far corner of the classroom. Review work from previous lesson. Sm asks class to chip in with ideas. Del keeps quiet and does not take part. Scott (new boy) is sitting with Del Del says outside the lesson that Scott went to an all girls' school before he came here. Scott answers several questions (ie trying to conform) but also talks to the boys (ie trying to be a member of the new group). Del and Scott talking to the

exclusion of the other boys. The boys' group talks after the 10 second countdown but they are not warned about their talking. So far, Del has not actually done any work. Lots of talking from their group. In this room, the class is seated according to gender so no girls are sitting with boys. One boy (Matthew) from Del's group clearly enjoys the subject so works away and approaches the teacher to check an answer.

Boys discussing TV and working slowly. Someone has passed a note to Scott discussion about its contents. One of the group gets moved but I am so surprised that Del is not warned or told off about his behaviour. There is no feeling that the teacher is against the pupils, however. Del looks over to see if I am watching him and then ducks down when we make eye contact. Del asked to take his work up to the teacher. The boys, it seems, think they have finished working and discuss what they did at the weekend. Teacher goes over to their corner and tells them he wants the work finished by the end of the lesson. This is enough to refocus Del for a short while. A lot of giggling from the boys. The teacher warns one of the boys to behave or he'll move.

Monday 8th December - Shelley

Period 4 Music, Mrs Lloyd, Room 34

Shelley arrives to the lesson late. She says that she has just been sick. Class divides into 2 for composition and music practice. Shelley and her group go and work in the practise room. They close the door and discuss what has happened to Shelley. I go in. Shelley says that no one believed her that she had her tongue pierced. People crowded into the girls' toilets and she locked herself into a toilet to get away from them. She took the piercing out and either swallowed it or put it down the toilet.

Shelley is working with Alison and Fern, who normally work with Katie (absent as school monitor). Suzy is away as she has been excluded last week she brought a new, expensive coat into school and a year 9 boy wrote rude words on it in marker pen. Suzy kicked him and she was excluded. Shelley looking slightly lost, not animated, follows instructions of Alison. The girls close the door again and there is a lot of banging around not practising!

Monday 8th December – Del and Nick

Period 5, Technology, GS, Resources Room

Technology up in the ICT Resources Room. Nick is sitting in the front of the room, on the left Del is on the row behind him. GS outlines the lesson and plots what has been covered this term. 2 girls sent out for talking after a warning seems a bit harsh as they have made less of a commotion than some of the boys at the back!

Del was absent from previous lesson so he has no hw. GS has to quickly teach the lesson to him so that he can carry on with his design. Nick goes to sit with Steven automatically for the computer session. They get on with their work whilst talking quietly. Del sits the other side of Steven. Del turns to me and says that he thinks that I am a spy and I'm obviously writing a report on him. Del has to start from scratch and is clearly under some pressure to get to the same point as everyone else by the end of the lesson. Nick has already finished so it is difficult to work out how he is going to make any progress. Nick bins his original design and works on a second one. Meanwhile, Del is asking Steven how to perform some of the functions on the programme. Del deliberately messes up is work (does what he shouldn't be doing) and shows off to Steven and Nick for this in a sense, he wants to be in control in a situation where he is so behind the others.

Steven has to stop work again to complete some of Del's work for him. Steven finished but spends time downloading (illegally) from the internet and sending smileygrams to people. Nick has completed 2 designs Del is still working on one. At the end, Del rushes his work in order to finish.

Friday December 12th - Shelley

History, Period 3, CK, room 110

Katie is absent as she is doing gardening club. This is an activity outside the classroom and today they are away from school selling plants. There are 7 present (4 girls and 3 boys). Suzy is back in school but not in lessons as she is in the inclusion room. All of the pupils are seated separately. The TA sits with Shelley.

Shelley is fairly quiet and subdued. She tells me that tomorrow she is going to her (step) brother's school where he is a boarder, for his school play. It sounds like his school is just the other side of A.. Obviously he is coming to the end of term and will soon be back at home. CK is making jokes with the class about some of the things that Puritans can't do no reaction from Shelley, whereas all the other pupils laugh loads. Shelley focused on teacher throughout. Other pupils talking across the room to the TA and CK, but Shelley remains silent and doesn't talk to any other pupils either. Alison is also fairly silent because Katie is away? Shelley does not answer any questions. Kirsty is talking about her home life and Shelley cuttingly puts her down "too much information, Kirsty" but asks her to repeat the information on who is going out with who anyway!

Plenary session Shelley plays with hair and does not put herself forward to answer any questions without being asked.

<u>Wednesday January 7th - Katie</u>

<u>Period 1, PSHE, RO, rm 39</u>

Lovely build up at the beginning RO says how much progress the group have made with their group work and social skills. Suzy arrives late comes in very quietly, makes her apologies, takes off her coat and sits down. The lesson objective is to understand how life in Britain is similar to life in other countries.

Shelley is absent, Suzy sits next to Katie 8 pupils present in total Katie and Suzy barely speak to each other all lesson. Discussion about developing countries Katie is very quiet and does not contribute to this very open discussion. She folds her arms across her chest. Katie eventually puts her hand up to answer a question, but doesn't get asked.

Up to this point, no discussion about pupils' own home experiences Katie has definitely lived in another country! When the focus of the discussion goes to talking about the pupils' own houses, Katie does not say anything.

I ask RO for a finished copy of Katie's work which she will complete next lesson. I wonder what she will say about her home life in it?

Wednesday 7th January - Nick

Period 4, Music, rm 34, KS

Difficult start. KS is new to the school and some of the boys refuse to be quiet. Del is late, (in fact he is absent for the whole lesson at a counselling session), Nick sits quietly at the front. Nick is not a part of the boisterous group, who are already excluding the boy who joined last term he sits at the back and all the boys turn and look at him when he answers the register.

KS introduces herself to the class and sets out very clear expectations to the group they are all nearly silent and listening. KS moves Stevie to the front of the room and Nick starts to get drawn into Stevie's unfocused behaviour. KS demonstrates on the piano a major and a minor key the class pay full attention.

Steven interrupts the discussion to say that he has finished. Steven wants to get on with the feedback session he and Nick all have their hands up to answer questions. During 2nd discussion session, Nick messes around with Stevie. Steven is still really interested. KS mentions again that they are to stay in at lunchtime Nick says out loud "that's not fair" and genuinely seems aggrieved.

End of lesson, copy the teacher's singing. The lesson ends in a really upbeat way the whole class joins in.

Wednesday 7th January – Del and Nick

Period 5, Geography, rm 7, Hi

Del and Nick sitting next to each other. Del comments, as usual, that if I sit next to him then I will cramp his style. Hi decides to change the seating order. Del and Nick are removed by they remain very chatty with everyone around them. Nick wants to ask a question hand up straight away. He has obviously heard before about Antarctica. Del came into the classroom saying that he was in detention after school today it becomes clear during the lesson that this is because he has not done his hw (and has not tried to complete even something to hand in instead!) Discussion amongst Del and Nick about chicken pox and who has it. Nick has done all his work and is asked by Hi to read his work out. When he speaks out loud he has a different accent slightly cockney? and the other pupils

laugh at him. Even Hi joins in. Nick is then praised for the content of his work. Nick and Del settle down and start working Nick talks to his neighbours about the answers, whereas Del works on but chats to his neighbours about unrelated issues. Steven turns around and gets Nick to help him. Nick has a very easy relationship with the class TA leans over and asks her something. Is obviously not afraid about doing this. Class answer questions about the worksheet Del puts up his hand to answer a question. Nick seems to be quite competitive "do I get a half point for that?"

TV on to watch a video Nick moves himself around without asking if that is okay. Del does not move to join Nick (and Steven) who have gone to the back. Silence and focus when they are watching the TV. Instead of returning to his place, Nick goes to the side of the room so he can be next to Steven. Nick asks how to spell things again, quiet happy to ask for help. Del is very self contained. Hi obviously notices that Steven and Nick haven't returned to their places, but does not follow up on it. Steven has a shoe print on his backside was kicked over at lunchtime by an older boy. Nick switches off for the discussion of his homework at the end so he turns to ask me about it. Nick is very quick to pack away Steven takes his time. Del remains for his detention.

<u>Thursday 22nd January – Shelley and Katie</u>
<u>Period 1, Maths, RV, room 103</u>

13 present. The group gathers at the front of the room for an informal discussion about the previous lesson. Shelley approaches me before this she has new ear-rings, says that they are real huge diamonds! Variation on a theme of uniform she is wearing a long sleeve shirt under her polo shirt. Katie smiles as I walk in she and Shelley sit near the back of the front group, they do not join in the discussion, but they do seem to be well focused. RV leaves the room to fetch something from his office, Shelley is seated next to Bonnie. Much discussion about whether they will sit next to each other as Bonnie does not want to sit near Katie.

Hand out work from last time on which this lesson is based. Jenny arrives at 9.25 reason for being late not sought or given. Getting a pupil out to the front and explain what has just been taught to the rest of the class. Katie and Alison are

chatting quietly during the going over of the work. Shelley is doodling on her paper. Shelley turns and asks me what I got for Christmas I feel obliged to answer something girlie, so I say perfume! Bonnie then turns to talk about all the clothes she got for Christmas.

RV asks me what I am writing I deflect and say I liked the start of the lesson. Pupils then draw a second graph and work out own gradient. (A breakdown of the lesson would show that two thirds of the time is spent in discussion with a third being on writing up.) I ask Bonnie where she lives says Upton I then overhear a conversation about their quarters and which is better. Shelley is boasting that hers has 6 bedrooms and is a 4 star! Bonnie then realises that she has no PE kit and will have to phone her mum to bring it in Shelley asks if her Bonnie's mum can drive. Complete revelation to me that perhaps the majority of the army wives don't have a licence.

Plenary all at the front, again, to discuss what they have covered.

<u>Thursday 22nd January – Del and Nick</u>

<u>Period 2, PE, Sports Hall, WA</u>

10am meeting in entrance to sports hall as students need to go out to the field to do cross country. WA solely in charge as 2 support staff are on temporary contracts. Del is not running (he has hurt his knee playing football and has been to see the doctor who advises rest.) Pupils are given the option at the start of doing more laps (more laps = more points) Steven hesitates to do this and I sense that he feels he needs to do more in order to appear good in front of everyone. Del is quite chatty as we stand at the field. I ask him if Nick said he would do three laps, how many would he (Del) do? Del says 4! I chat to the new coach. Nick drops out due to an injury we walk back to the sports hall together and Nick says that he's always pulling things. Del quite comfortable with the new coach and continues to chat with him.

Thursday 22nd January – Shelley and Katie

Period 5, Geography, Mr Hill, room 7

11 present. Tables arranged differently as this is a smaller group pupils arranged around one big table. Shelley and Katie sit at the far end from Hi. They start off with a wordsearch pupils quite happily calling out and asking Hi how to spell various words are their literacy skills low? Hi prompts them, reminding them about what they have covered in the lesson before. Alison remembers well. One of the boys is very vocal questions the work, questions why I am there, eventhough he has seen me before. He sits with his leg pressed up against the table. Alison hides her answers from everyone knowledge is her power! Hi trying to move everyone along. Katie has not finished and is clearly under some pressure to keep up she says 'I can't' and throws her pencil down. The first time I have seen her angry before! Frustrated with herself or with others? Alison laughs at her and Katie says 'I don't like geography at all' but , when given some help by Alison, she continues happily. There's a sense of show need to be seen to be doing the right thing in front of the others. Alison and Katie seem to have some sort of arrangement where they are in 'charge' of each other weaker characters need this direction? Discussion about continents Hi 'what continent are we in?' A pupil says 'are we all British?' Katie answers that she is half german. Lewis then gestures for her to go away and the noisy boy (Justin) says 'a bit like Hitler'. Katie is not visibly upset but she goes quiet and does not retaliate. Katie, Shelley and Alison then spend time not listening and fighting over the sheet. Justin then gesturing out of the window at the boy in the next classroom. Justin is rumbled but is backed up by Lewis who allows him to copy his work. Katie stands up to make herself heard or to make herself noticed? Discussion related to worksheet continues Shelley yawns and says 'I'm so bored' too easy for her? Shelley and Katie don't chip in or take part, however. Change of activity for the last 10 minutes. None of them have actually finished the task that they were concentrating on. The final task, again, is a short task no follow on. Katie approaches me as she becomes frustrated again with not recognising a word.

Friday 23rd January - Nick

Period 1, French, RO, room 39

Really clear lesson objectives on the board, then an overview of the last lesson. Ro asks anyone if they can remember items from last lesson (ie an open question) but it is only when he directs this question to individuals that he gets an answer. Steven is leaning back on his chair and is not really listening he is asked a direct question and he is struggling Nick leans over and mouths him the answer. Ro makes them stand up if they are 1 question right and stand on the chair if they answer 2 questions right. Nice response and level of interest from the boys competition! Ro racks up the interest 'if you can get this one you're doing really brilliantly as it's really hard' All the boys now want to be standing on the tables. (Nick finishes standing up!)

9.25 handing out the books and exercise books. Nick's hand goes up to help out. Steven puts up his hand and questions the way that questions are structured in French says it doesn't work that way in English. Ro answers directly and sensitively. Now focus on book and answering question on another family tree. Natasha is asked a question and, again, is struggling so Nick leans back and whispers her the answer. Very quiet and focused approach from everyone as they do the written section of their work. Ro walks around quietly checking on their work as they do it speaks quietly to pupils so it is an individual comment and not something to be heard by everyone praise or criticism.

Nick has finished fairly quickly. He puts his hand up to have his work looked at, almost as if he wants instant reward for his work. Looks disappointed when a general praise remark is handed out. Nick puts his hand up for help and I am desperate to jump in there. Resist! Nick dejected/rejected that his question was not answered, so for the feedback section he does not put up his hand to answer any questions. Nick asks a question, requiring Ro to put a translation on the board. Ro looks to me for the answer I no, eventhough his answer is wrong as a) I don't want to draw attention to myself and b) I'm not going to draw attention to his mistake.

Friday 23rd January – Shelley and Katie

Period 3, History, CK, Room 110

Class enter and collect their own resources. Shelley and Katie are sitting around the horseshoe Shelley is by the door near a boy and Katie is by the window next to Alison. Katie putting up her hand to answer questions, Shelley not getting involved. Looking at photos of poverty and discussing them. Then look at examples of written records.

Katie hasn't understood her instructions is looking at her resources and looks puzzled. She is talking to herself to affirm what she has to do. Eventually both Katie and Shelley settle down for Katie it seems like she is overwhelmed by the work in front of her, whilst she does not ask for help or seek reassurance from the teacher. Katie is handed a pair of scissors to trim off her paper she complains that she can't use them as she is left handed. CK says that she is left handed and she can use scissors. Attention seeking needing some kind of affirmation? Katie turns to Alison for back up is she doing the right work? CK sits with Shelley guiding her through the work - Shelley does not talk actively to her but accepts the guidance she is given. Alison and Katie are having a really NICE conversation about their work give and take. They are trying to work out a set of dates together. CK leaves the room Katie and Alison continue working. Shelley starts talking to her neighbour says she has no pen because her little sister takes it. I give her one of mine. Pupils have to tidy up so they can play a game at the end. Katie and Shelley play with Alison. Katie put on the spot for an answer does not like this, suddenly loses her confidence and her enthusiasm for the game.

Friday 30th January – Shelley and Katie

Period 2, PE, WA, Gym

Shelley and Katie arrive on time and have their full kit unlike all of the other pupils who are late. Wa has the group (6 pupils in total 3 boys and 3 girls) gathered around and they discuss general health issues (Fern has a new nose stud and they talk about how to look after it.) Discussion about safety. Suzy is not doing PE so she writes up instructions on the board. Shelley does not take part actively in the warm up keeps returning to Suzy who is sitting at the side of the gym. But

Shelley is laughing and is joining in better than I have ever seen her before. Both Shelley and Katie have proper trainers on.

Alison is not doing PE but goes over to 'help' in the stretching but is very bossy towards Katie dominant almost. Discussion about balances students try to out do each other by balancing on four points. Suzy calls over to Shelley and suggests ideas for balances. Suzy and Shelley are working slightly apart from the others. They are all then given the instruction to sit in twos very quickly, Shelley shrinks back and says "I'm not working with Danny" and keeps on repeating this. Eventually she works with Katie.

The coach takes a pair Alison works with Shelley and Katie and Suzy goes over to two of the boys. Wa goes around the room telling pupils how to improve balances and commenting on the coach's grading. Wa is extremely positive with the pupils but is also firm Shelley is ticked off for not doing up her laces but she continues to respond positively to Wa afterwards, no sense of her switching off.

Back to group work again Wa picks up SJ to demonstrate a handstand balance but she repeats "I can't do it" all the time. The way that she says it is less affronted and trying to work against the teacher, and more genuine and fearful, even. The other pupils are talking and Shelley tells them to be quiet. Wa is direct to them and doesn't baby them. One of the boys doesn't want to do the handstand Wa asks why and doesn't accept no by provides genuine reasons to the boy why doing a handstand might be difficult.

Again, a group discussion to sum up the good and bad points. Wa asks the group what work they would like to do next lesson.

<u>Friday 30th January – Shelley and Katie</u>

<u>Period 3, Geography, Hi, room 7</u>

The group are gathered around the table doing some preparation work pupils freely calling out and asking questions naturally. Shelley more involved than in previous lesson is this because Suzy is here and she feels supported and backed up? Pupils are given a worksheet and need to refer to a book to answer the questions.

Discussion as a group before answers are filled in. Shelley volunteers an answer for the section on the foodchain. Suzy quite involved and chips in her knowledge about whales. Katie, up to this point, has not taken part she appears to be working by herself and does not interact even with other pupils. Lovely to see Suzy seeking advice and being very happy to take guidance. Katie is so insular in here she doesn't seem to be aware of anything going on around her suddenly she makes a start and realises that the lesson is going on. She appears confused and needs to catch up with what is going on. Suzy and Shelley talking quietly Katie starts to talk to Kirsty and Alison. Kirsty is obviously thinking back to her music lesson as she is singing a song from that others join in.

The boys are laughing at each other's drawings Suzy chips in "stop taking the piss out of each other." Katie appears to have been worried earlier because she does not have her homework to hand in (lost? Not done?) She tries to complete her homework in the lesson why is she so worried about messing up?

Lots of quips going back and forth Lewis asks if he can phone a friend when he is asked a question Hi responds "no you haven't got any." Shelley is not happy when Danny buts in and answers the question she obviously knows. Shelley shouts angrily at him "shut up Danny" a sense of justice, needs to be listened to?

Shelley and Suzy start talking not interested in the discussions going on at this point. Hi raps on the table to get their attention. They start talking about ships Katie says the word and Alison points at her "you said a naughty word, detention," thinks she said shit. Another example of dominance. Katie is asked to read out loud from the sheet Alison keeps on chipping in with difficult words. She is really annoying like a mother hen! Katie never asserts her dominance over Alison. Suzy asks for the boys to stop talking as she can't concentrate - a positive role model for Shelley.

Lewis shouts out "we were beating up the army with snowballs yesterday" (the army leasing the school buildings?) Negative attitude towards the army from locals them and us?

Pack away. Suzy and Shelley move off to the door together.

Wednesday 4th February - Nick

English, period 1, HG, room 040

Del is absent again! There are 21 present in total. Class are having a mini revision session using small white boards. HG asks questions and the pupils write their answers on the board. This provides 2 learning opportunities 1 is to revise the topic and 2 is to look at the grammar involved in writing words on the boards. Nick is asked a question and knows part of the answer. Exceptionally quiet and focused in the room pupils are putting up their hands to answer questions. Pupil focused learning HG sees that the class are unsure about the grammar, so she stops the lesson and they work on that. Flexibility.

Pupils seem to be enjoying themselves there is competition between them, but they can work with people when they need support. HG picks up pupils' boards to demonstrate the right answer a lot of praise to individuals. Pupils act as helpers handing out books, collecting in whiteboards. HG asks if someone will hand out the books and Nick responds to this straight away without being asked to. Literacy workbook pretty technical stuff, pupils working in twos to discuss key words. Nick unlike many of the other boys is quite happy to work with the girl he's sitting next to. HG puts information on the board, then asks the class 'does that look okay?' sense of collaborative learning, that the teacher is working with the pupils, rather than the pupils working for the teacher. For hw, pupils must find and bring in an example of an explanation text (will they all have access to books. Etc. at home?) Then discussion about what they are going to do next lesson.

To finish with, a discussion about prepositions pupils have to put themselves on/under the table etc. Nice way of getting the kids moving after a static lesson. Pupils are encouraged to think up examples themselves.

Wednesday 4th February – Nick

Science, period 2, CI, room SO8

Register at the beginning of the lesson. Question and answer session at the beginning, focusing on homework. Nick does not put his hand up or try and answer any questions. Steven is absent today he is school monitor. Nick stands

to one side when the group come to the front for a demonstration. Again, he doesn't put his hand up or take part for this. He does seem to focus, however.

Return to carry out experiment Nick is working with 2 girls and another boy (Sean?) and is quite happy to let them set up the experiment. Eventually, Sean comes over and Nick starts talking to him it's not that he is unhappy working with the girls, but he seems more comfortable/responsive with Sean. Sean and Nick actually carry out the experiment (ie hold the metal into the flame) and the girls take a back seat. Quite a lot of discussion as a group about the reactions. Nick and Sean decide to conduct the experiment again, rather than write up the experiment observations.

I leave half way through.

<u>Wednesday 11th February - Del</u>
<u>Maths, period 1, SM, room 104</u>

Del is here!!! Del is sitting in the back corner with a group of boys. SM carries out translations around the room. Del does not put his hand up or call out for this is this because he does not want to get involved, or as a result of not being at school recently? There are 4 boys and 1 girls in his group in terms of output, this group are the most dominant, they call out but Del is not the controller of this group, he follows everyone else and is teased by them about his work. Del is not interacting with many of the boys in the group but keeps up a continuous flow of patter with Jeff who I've seen him with in other lessons. Del is looking at his neighbour's work again showing lack of knowledge and not wanting to ask the teacher. (I overhear a conversation between Del and Matthew (the dominant boy in the group) Matthew comments "she's always watching you".) Del keeps looking over to see if I am watching him.

SM asks me to help one pupil. I discuss with the girls about piercings symbolic importance to them. Difference to the male perspective. Del continues with his work, even when Matthew and Jeff are standing up and walking around. I discuss Maths with Kimberly she attended booster classes at primary (as she had been to 4 primaries) and she did not like being singled out and removed from the main lessons.

Wednesday 11th February – Shelley and Katie

Period 2, English, HG, room 040

The group are in a cluster formation. They group themselves around a nest of tables. Shelley is sitting next to Suzy and Katie is next to Alison. Suzy has a big bag with her and it emerges that she is going to stay over at Shelley's tonight. Dictionary work looking up words Suzy leans over and helps Justin. Discuss place names and Katie chooses 'Germany' Shelley is having some difficulty finding the work 'explain' and HG advises her to use her knowledge of another similar word. Shelley is still stuck and the others have been advised not to help. Katie is asked to read a note in a dictionary quite able and fluid reader. Shelley asked about verbs - she replies immediately. One of the boys sniffs Suzy calls out "who made that disgusting sound?" Whilst Kirsty reads out the text, Katie does not follow it. Discussion about key words Shelley picks out one keyword and gives quite an extended reason for choosing it to the others. This lesson mirrors the lesson with Nick's class last week, but here there is differentiation in terms of resources and input. Whilst HG is out of the room, Alison leans towards me and says "why do you want to watch us? We're the boring group." To which I reply, no you're lovely. The feedback session at the end Shelley and Katie both volunteer answers quite happily. Pair work Alison and Katie discuss the work, but Shelley and Suzy talk about other things. Shelley and Suzy play arguing at the end about who's going to tidy up. They write in their homework.

Wednesday 11th February – Del and Nick

PSHE, period 4, room 40, RO

The lesson starts late but the pupils settle down very quickly, following the KS3 assembly. RO echoes the praise given in the assembly and then focuses the group in by talking about last PSHE lesson. They are discussing the hierarchy of human needs Nick and Steven put their hands up and answer questions, again Del's absence may have prevented his joining in. Discussion of mums and dads Nick says that he respects his mum and dad and, as a result, they respect him. Nick has his hand up a lot to join in. RO asks "is there anyone who was away last lesson do you know what to do?" Del says that he does not need extra help, some of the other absentees say that they do. Again, does Del not want to appear worse than the others? Does he not trust RO? Nick was also absent last

lesson as he was the student receptionist I ask if he's going to ask for help, "you must be joking" I am told! I come back to my seat via Del he has decided he's going to have a playboy mansion on his planet, "yep, it's going to be all sex, drugs and rock and roll" he says. Apart from that, a fairly quiet and focused approach to the work. I go over and see Del's work Steven chips in some fairly explicit ideas for the playboy house! RO says "we aren't going to have any of that." I sit next to Nick for a bit and have a look at his work. I notice that friends and family appear very highly for him in his belonging and respect sections. He says that he is not going to Disneyland any more as his dad's leave patter has changed and he has been given leave early. In spite of Steven's previous negative comment about Del, they are sitting together now working well. Del leans over and tells me that he thinks RO was trying to chat me up. Says he's going to tell my husband and will arrange to bump RO off for me! Del says there are 3 ways of doing that a sniper, beat him up and a car bomb! I ask Steven about them being friends again. Steven says "oh it all came out and we're mates again now." They are very chatty with each other is Nick happy about this?

<u>Wednesday 11th February – Shelley and Katie</u>

<u>Period 5. Food Technology, BL, FO1</u>

Begin with a theory lesson there are 10 pupils present. Pupils in 2s predictably Suzy and Shelley are together and Katie and Alison sit together. Lewis and Justin sit at the far side of the room. Discussion about senses and food Suzy is the dominant partner in Shelley and Suzy. Katie and Alison sit discussing Katie's lockable diary Katie seems to be very proud of this and points it out to me! Justin continues to create tension keeps leaning over and tries to involve Suzy. Shelley does not seem to want to get involved and looks away. BL has to give very basic instructions fold arms, be quiet, face the front, just to get the focus. We move next door to the practical room, so that pupils can perform a taste test. Shelley and Suzy are split up Shelley retreats into herself again and doesn't talk to anyone in her group. We return to the theory room and I says as an aside to the TA that Justin is a bit of a nightmare. She says that this is good behaviour for him! (Today Suzy is wearing jeans and is having a good show of her g-string at the top of her trousers!) Katie turns to me and says that she is going to attend the singing club tonight with the new singing teacher I'm not sure if Katie likes singing (she hasn't mentioned it before0 but she clearly likes the new teacher. Shelley

reads out loud fairly fluent. Then a quick going over rating and hedonic scales. BL asks pupils what their preferences are for the crisps they have eaten Shelley looking excited and enjoys giving her opinion on this. HW is to organise ingredients for next lesson's practical (making vegetable lasagne can you get all the ingredients for this locally if you have no car?)

Monday 23rd February - Nick

Maths, period 2, HO, room 108

Nick speaks to me outside he and Steven have both had birthdays over half term and both received football kits. Steven wasn't there to celebrate with Nick as he went home to Manchester. Nick and Steven are sitting next to each other at the back of the room Nick gets his test marks back. He gets 30 and punches his fist in the air at me in celebration. When he finds out that it's 30 out of 60, he does it again and shouts "half way!" The 2 of us dissolve in laughter! The levels are given out for this test Nick is at a level 4.

The lesson starts with the pupils adding up their own scores. Lesson aims are put on the board. Steven and Nick continue to talk really quietly throughout this time. Steven turns his head to Nick, but Nick continues to face forward. Nick is asked to be quiet, but he's also asked to hand out the books. Saint and Sinner! Nick then hands out the paper. Pupils calling out "thanks Nick" as he hands out the paper. Steven told that he'll get sent out if he continues to make noise. Steven is sent out but, in fact, it's the girls on the far side of the room that are making all the noise they are giggling massively. Steven remains outside and Nick starts to talk and interact with the boy on the other side of him. Steven returns. Nick's avoidance tactics involve walking around the classroom to pick up individual pieces of equipment before returning to his seat. He is not challenged about this because it's almost as if he is allowed to wander around, expected to, even. Nick calls over to me to help him and is challenged by HO. HO comes over to help Nick. Nick and Steven settle down and are working. It's almost as if, deep down, they do want to work and don't want to be unfocused all the time. The 3 boys talk quietly but they are working.

Nick finishes the work but does not put his hand up to inform the teacher. He looks down and waits until HO happens to come over in his direction. Is this

because he doesn't want to appear clever in front of the others, or because he doesn't want to interact with the teacher? Work stops and conversation begins in earnest Nick and Steven have completed the minimum and they won't do anymore. Nick leans back on his chair. They perk up when the class is set a time target.

Plenary session verbal feedback on work. Steven and Nick don't take part but continue to talk quietly together. HO outlines the work for the next session. Nick and Steven are not listening. Nick hands all the work in for his small group.

Monday 23rd February – Del and Nick
English, period 3, HG, room 040

Pupils file in very quietly and go straight to their places. Nick is sitting in the 2nd row , sitting next to a girl. Del is sitting at the back by himself. Del was obviously absent from the last lesson he gets his book from the teacher. At the start of the lesson, the pupils chip in with what they remember from the precious lesson. Nick has his hand up and looks really involved. Steven arrives late he has been at reception as somebody has broken his lunchbox. Del listens to the revision and responds when he is asked something about this. (NB he didn't say to the teacher that he had been absent.) This is done in some detail as the previous lesson was before half term. HG asks Del is he was here for a particular piece of work he says no HG says she will need to go through it with him. When HG goes over to Del it turns out that he Was in at least for the part of the lesson as there is evidence of it in his book. 2 pupils read out their work HG asks about connective words and Nick willingly volunteers the answer. Gets a merit. Pupils self correct their work as they go along. Nick is really well focused on pupils reading their work out, whilst Del seems to be staring into space! Pupils now move to their books and put the information they have just talked about into their books. HG writing on the board Del asks if he should start where he left off. Del moves to the front to sit next to Shaun so that he can do partner work. Shaun and Del don't appear to work together they seem to ignore each other. They don't seem to discuss anything, but Shaun allows Del to lean over and copy his work. Nick is turning around and helping the student behind him (who doesn't appear to want any help as he puts a finger up at Nick!) Really nice to see one of the pupils is prepared to disagree with HG. Nick works very quickly and finishes the work

before the others. Nicks seems to enter into a personal dialogue with HG happy to exchange ideas with her. Del puffs his cheeks out and looks a bit overwrought when he is pushed on with his work he leans over to talk to Shaun (to check he's doing the right work/to get an answer?) and is reminded that he only has a few minutes to do the work. One of the other boys leans over the Nick for some help. Absolute silence as the pupils finish their work. Nick is working on very quickly and is obviously confident and secure in his own ability. Del seems less so HG asks 3 boys to read out their work 2 boys refuse and Nick says yes. Praised. Pack away. No hw.

<u>Monday 23rd February – Del and Nick</u>
<u>Technology, Resources Room, GS, period 4</u>

Move to the theory side of the room first. Reminder about what the work was before half term. Del is sitting at the back in the middle of 2 other boys. Nick is sitting on the other side at the back next to Steven. Stevie announces that he wasn't here last lesson Del whispers under his breath that he wasn't there either. GS moves a girl to sit on the back row with Nick, Steven and I he instructs me to "keep an eye on her so she doesn't talk." (I leave the room for 5 mins.) Back in Nick and Steven are working together on the computers. They aren't really sure what they are doing so they check on each other's work. Steven and Nick continue to help each other through. Del continues to sit over in the theory section of the room he is planning the work as he was absent. He wasn't there before half term and has to catch up now. I go and sit with Del and have an interesting conversation about friends and friendship. Del, Nick and Steven have all fallen out and Del is quite frustrated at their lack of loyalty. "Some friends they are" he says. Del can't believe that Steven, who is having trouble at school, goes to speak to teachers, "it's like, you never leave your flock, you stay with them." He admits that he doesn't like the same things as Nick and Steven anymore all they like is football but Del and (Jeff another Upton boy) like "football, fun and girls and guys stuff." Discussion about TV Del and Jeff have been watching SAS Are you Tough Enough? They think it was excellent. Del also talks about the Dunkirk programme. Del seems more comfortable towards me and wants to talk but he is very antagonistic towards Nick and Steven. Jeff lives near Del in Upton and they often go down to the Matthews Estate together to "have some fun."

I walk back over to the computers, Nick and Steven have not made much progress and they feel frustrated because of it. All return to their seats in theory side for the plenary session. Neither Nick nor Del get involved in this. The class are kept in for 5 mins because some of the pupils were talking. Nick and Del look very upset by this.

Monday 23rd February - Del

Period 5, Science, ES, room SO4

The lesson begins outside the room as the pupils line up ready to go in. Instructions given about expectations etc. Del sits with Jeff on the work bench at the front 2 other boys sitting with them. ES explains how he is out of breath and holds up apparatus Jeff calls out "are you going to make a bomb?" Jeff seems to be quite interested in the warm up activity but Del is allowing himself to be distracted by what is going on to one side of him. Eventually, Del settles down and is in deep conversation with Jeff. The boy next to Del is very unsettling keeps hitting him, pulls the stool out from under him, verbally goading him. Pupils have to tell ES how to breathe they enjoy "controlling" his breath and there is an equality in the relationship. Jake and partner are moved. There is a discussion about the content of inhaled and exhaled air Del is not involved in this. Del and the company of boys move to the front of the room to observe an experiment. Del is watching very closely observing well. (NB Jeff is wearing a cannabis wristband.) They copy statements from the board and Del starts talking to the boy in front of him instead. Then talks to Jeff. Again, the group move to the side for another demonstration of the experiment that they are going to do. Del observes closely again. Whilst the 3 other boys set up the experiment, Del takes the candle to one side and starts to light the flame he cups his hand around the flame "this is really hot, come and see this." Del carries out his own unrelated experiment measures the temperature of the flame of the candle, whilst the others work seperately. This continues. In the plenary session, Del is not focused as he has added a splint to a candle and is watching the large flame burn. Del does not offer any explanations etc. Instead of moving to pack away straight away, Del and company carry on adding more wood to the candle flame.

Wednesday 3rd March – Shelley and Katie

Period 1, French, RO, Room 39

Room change due to a leaky roof! 18 present this seems to be more than usual, RO confirms that all of the students are present, which makes a big change! Katie is sitting next to Alison over one side of the room. Shelley is sitting next to another girl (I don't know her) by the door. Real confidence boosting pupils are planning a presentation (an advert) to be filmed RO says this is because he knows that they can do this. Katie and Shelley are quiet, but focused, during the first section they don't put up their hands. Class put together a mini sketch advertising a product Shelley remembers the word for hairspray (very relevant for her!) and offers this quite freely. Pupils work in pairs Alison and Katie have been making eye contact throughout and turn automatically to each other. Shelley does not seem to work naturally with the girl next to her it turns out she is called Catherine and she is new. Shelley turns to the girl behind her (Emma) and talks to her. Lovely to see the pupils involved in pair and small group work. Katie asks me to check her work. Shelley has brought her own hairspray in from home, rather than using the class one! Both Shelley and Katie present their sketches Katie is more confident when speaking, although gets her adjectives mixed up. (Is this because of her German speaking?)

Wednesday 3rd March – Del and Nick

Art, period 2, A2, EL

EL lines all the students up outside and brings them in and tells each one where to sit. Nick is sitting next to Chris and Del is asked to sit at the far side of the room by the window Stevie sits with him and the 2 of them lean into each other and start talking. Steven sits at the back. Del is very anxious as he comes in that EL realises that he has done his homework and has already put it on her desk. Jeff (Del's usual friend) is being quite aggressive turns to make eye contact with the others and dominates his space compare this to Nick who looks downwards and only takes up a little space. Del is also sitting sideways on to the class.) Pupils present one point about Op Art they put their hands up to show that they want to say something. Nick says something fairly quickly and Del remains quiet (was he absent when they studied this?) Del is half sitting on the table and can only estimate the date of an artist.

Del is told to go next door with 3 others in order to finish off his previous work so he will be at the same level as everyone else. He and one other boy create a print he works quite independently at it and is very focused. Don't appear to want any teacher help. He has paint on his hands and I comment on this. He responds "I'm not like other people." Outside, some soldiers are having their breaktime one of the girls shouts out "look, it's some squaddies." Nick carries on working and ignores this he talks quietly to Jeff and Chris, but keeps on with his work. Free movement of students around the classroom pupils collect their own equipment. Steven is very subdued and does not join in the conversation going on around him he has had a very radical army haircut! The girl next to Steven is criticising him Nick turns around and listens intently! Del returns to the room with some smudged prints EL returns him next door to do them again but gets Stevie to remain in the classroom saying "Del, I think that you can manage by yourself now, don't you?" Nick puts his head on the table when the class receive instructions tired? Bored? (NB the class have to sit down and put all their items down when they receive instructions.) Nick does this very quickly and offers to hand out the homework books. Students are then given certificates for excellent or improved homework. Nick is somewhat flabbergasted he got a D and he says that he took over 45 mins to do this! Del returns from next door. Discussion about how homework was marked. Return to learning objectives and pupils say whether they have met them or not. Certificates handed out pupils should clap the others, but there is a mixed response to this.

<u>Tuesday 9th March - Nick</u>
<u>Period 3, French, RO, room 39</u>

Nick is sitting half way up the class next to a girl. Discussion about French breakfast items. Steven is sitting across the aisle. Pupils put hands up and say if they recognise any words the pupils relate these words back to words they already know in French or other languages (not German). Nicks is asked directly if he recognises a particular word he is forced to speak out. Nick is leaning back on his chair not actively involved. The books are handed out RO comments on how he assessed the previous homework and has made comments on a new target for each pupil. He sets out the work in French and one pupil puts her hand up to interpret. Nick puts his hand up to try too. Books are then handed out by a pupil Steven has left his book at home and is really grumpy about this. Gets

paper from RO and is offended when RO mixes up his name as RO points out, "not half as offended as I get when people forget their books!" Nick, on the other side of the room, ignores this interchange completely. Nick draws my attention to his picture seeks approval put my thumb up for him to say well done! RO collects in everyone's pictures and tests them on words. RO refocuses the group and reminds Steven about his own focus. Nick does not put his hand up during the Q and A session and waits to be asked. He then giggles madly when his picture is shown. Then a game of vrai/faux pupils again speaking and responding individually to individual words. Nick slouching in his chair and writing on his hand. At the end, RO checks that everyone has learnt some of the words with a short written vocab test pupils have to write down three or more words in the back of their books. Some of the macho group girls are not wanting to co-operate when asked they don't try and say things like "I can't do that" or "I don't know that one" there is something of a competition from the boys at the end, trying to get more words right than other people. Nick seems to get some sort of personal kudos by saying that he only got 3 right! Screws his face up at RO RO tries to make light of it "better to know 3 really well" etc.

Tuesday 9th March – Shelley and Katie

Period 4, English, HG, Room 040

Class re-organise the classroom into horseshoe pattern. Shelley hands out the literacy books. Danny is fussing about handing out white boards, Shelley calls over "oh stop whinging." Shelley is set up, and ready to work nearly straight away. She is purposeful. Shelley is sitting with the boys Suzy is absent today. Katie is next to Alison, over on the other side of HG HG sits with the pupils. She suggest words and pupils write them down this forms the basis of spelling practice and a discussion about ascending and descending letters. HG mentions that she didn't take the class from the start of the year. Katie is left handed Shelley is right handed. Shelley gets the questions right first time. Suzy is absent today but I saw her earlier getting medical attention at reception, said that she had a bladder infection.

Then turn to literacy books, to continue the lesson. Discussion about lesson objectives HG refers back to the objectives of other teachers. Shelley chips in and answers for one of the pupils she is almost exasperated with his lack of

knowledge. She seems to have problems following the reading. (Shelley's difficulties seem to be reading, not writing based.) But there are no booster classes available and no extra support for reading. Shelley reads better out loud by herself, HG stops the reading every few lines just to check that everyone is at the same place. The written work that follows is based on this text a comprehension exercise. Shelley works totally independently, but Katie and Alison work more together, they are still fairly quiet. Mark, one of the boys, who is a particularly poor reader, takes up a lot of HG's time. Katie comes around to work with Justin and Shelley has to work with Mark (to go through and check answers). Katie guides Justin but Mark is quite dominant with Shelley. Shelley keeps turning around to check the clock. Verbal feedback of answers.

<u>Wednesday 24th March – Nick</u>
<u>Period 1, English, HG, Room 040</u>

Del is absent. Nick hands out the books doesn't have anyone to work with, so goes back to work with Scott. Have to read out own explanation texts and Nick has chosen to talk about warming up before football. Then class feedback what makes a good explanation text. Steven seems to be extremely low, not really talking to other students or taking part. HG refers back to punctuation work previously studied. She gets the students to stand up if they have used certain punctuation marks Steven isn't listening, he looks very surprised when people are standing up around him, so stands up anyway. HG relates punctuation and explanation texts back to National Curriculum levels. Steven complains about the overnight homework as he says he has football training. Lots of praise about the attitude of the class, and how they need to focus on year 11 and their own effort at GCSE.

Video example of someone giving a speech. HG stops the video every so often to ask questions and check understanding. Pupils speak to their neighbours to try and work out how many paragraphs there are Nick and Steven both turn to their respective neighbours and are very focused. Stop and see if there are any words that people don't understand Steven asks about this. Nick looks up a word for the class in the dictionary and reads out the definition.

Wednesday 24th March – Shelley and Katie

Period 2, ICT, IT1, BA

The teacher is BA I haven't observed her before. When I ask for her permission to observe at the start of the lesson, she says that she only takes the class once a week and follows on from the input of another teacher. Girls are all complaining loudly about the smell in the room due to some work which has been going on in the technology room next door. Shelley is sitting in the corner near Bonnie and complains that she is feeling terrible. Katie isn't in the room at all she and Alison have been asked to do some work for Mrs Stratford. 1 TA and Mrs Frankum are also present. Shelley seems fairly subdued she sits in a corner and works through very slowly. The class are working through another teacher's worksheet this lesson. Some confusion about where Alison and Katie have gone. BA then remembers. I chat to FM about the class and we agree that the difficulties are caused by the deployment of IT specialists to other subject areas. BA is a leisure and tourism specialist, and FM has been seconded to geography so that HL can be freed up to teach some PE as they are one teacher short there. BA says she can cope with the class work at the moment, but later on she will need some advice on the programmes she has to teach.

10.25 Alison and Katie return they have been going around the school taking down posters about the talent show as it has been cancelled.

Wednesday 24th March - Nick

Period 4, Music, St, room 034

Del is absent. Discussion about the aims and objectives pupils remind pupils about keywords. They are put together to form objectives for lesson. Class have to complete their melody and counter melody today must work in twos. This is a form of keyboard practise for all of them.

Nick is sitting at the front of the room and is not doing anything he says that the keyboards that are left are rubbish and he won't use them. Other are noisy but they are working on their composition. Nick is working with Steven (Jeff is hanging around them he is working in the inclusion room at the moment and has come into the classroom for his work) and they have moved to St's own piano at the front of the room. N and S are working extremely well together but when I go

over to them it becomes apparent that they are, in fact, working on their own composition, not practising the class one! They are talking overly loudly as they appear to want to attract everyone's attention at the moment, they are at the front of the room whilst everyone else (including the teacher) is at the back. When I return to Nick and Steven, they are still unfocused, but, unlike all the other groups, they work very well together no squabbling. Nick comes over and asks what the time is St says that they are going to stop anyway and do some singing, so Nick returns to his seat shouting "tra la la". Nick and Steven are asked to clean the board make a real song and a dance of it! End of the lesson sing song, everyone excited about which song they are going to sing evidence of a routing in this classroom that they are all used to. Nick and Steven clap along to the song as St sings it for the first time, then everyone joins in. No embarrassment about singing out loud.

Friday 2nd April - Del

Period 1, Science, ES, Room SO4 (Group 3 out of 4)

Pupils line up outside and ES ushers them in and they sit down and settle very quickly. Del is sitting down on a bench with 3 other boys' Jeff is on one side of him. There is a discussion at the start of the lesson about renewable energy the class are really focused and answer the questions very quickly and readily. Jeff is working on the project by himself as he didn't want to work with Alex (on the other side of him.) Del works with the boy to the right of him. There are examples that other students have completed on the wall and the students refer to these very easily they don't need to ask for help from the teacher. (Joule Island = design an island where you can live on renewable energy sources.) Wander around - Suzy is in this group. Sarah T is working at the front I try and enter into a conversation with her but she is very negative and is NOT in a good mood. Del is talking to all the boys on his bench and I don't get the feeling that it is work oriented. I ask about Suzy she has always been in this group, but ES says that she is a poor attender. Suzy's group grind to a halt and go over to the display on the wall for inspiration. They get an idea from this and go over to ES to check it. I go and sit next to Del and ask him to talk me through his design he is very lethargic and complains of a headache. I ask him what he's doing for Easter and he shrugs and says nothing, that he'll just be hanging around (Result of dad going away and worry for Mum?) ES walks from group to group discussing their work with them.

This seems to refocus groups for a short period of time. Del and his partner are now poking each other with a pencil and are not trying to finish their project. The issue of collaborative learning is interesting here many groups are clearly finding it difficult to collaborate with each other. Either because one is more dominant or both don't want to contribute.

9.50am ES "right boys ad girls, stop and eyes to me." Unfinished posters will be finished during the 1st lesson back after Easter. ES says that one pupil is already undertaking the next task.

Friday 2nd April – Shelley and Katie
Period 2, PE, WA, Sports Hall

Pupils sit on the floor and go through their cross country marks with Wa the teacher reads out their attainment scores and the pupils have to decide on their own effort grades. Shelley gets an E and awards herself a 3 for effort. Katie gets the same. Shelley is very honest that she didn't try on their last attempt at cross country. Katie is not doing PE today as she has no kit she says she has grown out of it and her mum will only buy her a new kit after Easter. Katie says that her previous kit broke during a lesson, when her shorts split. (Wa confirms that the reason for no kit is genuine and that Mrs T had phoned to say that she was having money problems.)

Today the pupils are practising the high jump the group get out all the equipment. They work very well together even those with no kit still help to get everything out. The whole group assembles in front of the high jump and discuss technique and safety issues. They also discuss the history of some of the jumps. Wa puts some of the pupils in charge of the warm up and gets non-doers to check the others are doing stretches correctly. Shelley is in charge of the stretches the others must copy her. Katie and Alison set up the high jump Alison is fussing over the height and fit of the bar, so she instructs Katie to organise it for her. Katie meekly follows orders. During the stretches, Katie enjoys putting people right and adjusting their stretches. Suzy is not following instructions and is told to complete a circuit Shelley makes no eye contact with her during this. Shelley seems to enjoy her PE and wants to please. When Suzy returns to sit down and join it, Shelley leans over and acts placatingly towards her. Suzy flips over during

a jump and Shelley giggles at her. Alison and Katie have to readjust the mat after each jump. Wa changes the mood to more positive by having a joke with Suzy about which leg she should take off on. Feedback as a group about individual sections of the jump. Shelley and Suzy stand in line together Suzy leans on Shelley. The pupils encourage each other during the run up willing each other to succeed. Feedback at the end Wa picks out the best bits of technique from each pupil.

Friday 2nd April – Del and Nick

Period 3, History, CK, room 110

Steven sits with Corey at the front. Del is with Jeff in the central front table. Nick sits at the back by himself. Discussion about the rights of black people in the USA in the 50s. Series of photos of life in the USA on the OHP. CK has produced her own topic workbooks she says that she finds the textbooks available too formulaic so she writes workbooks split into topics. She says this is also good for taking into account the fact that the students move away, so they can take their work with them. Nick goes to work with the girls at the table beside him. They discuss how they would protest about an issue at school in order to understand how the black protestors worked. Some extra sheets are given out to support students and focus them during the video. During feedback time, Del puts up his hand to answer a question and seems to be very focused. Nick is staring into space. Steven chips in an answer. Steven didn't understand something on the video, so asks CK for clarification. Sense of purpose about the lesson a terrific pace. Pupils are bombarded with questions and little/no opportunity for them to chill out! Extra worksheets handed out for those who finish. Del and his table discuss the issues with the table. Steven's table are debating some of the statements Nick who is now by himself has no one to work with. His head is down and it looks like he is finding it challenging. The extension sheet has definitions on it (re literacy). Feedback tactics of civil rights movement asked to use as much technical vocab. As possible. Nick shows he hasn't understood the lesson as he offers responses of the whites not the blacks. Del offers a response someone else has already given.

Friday 2nd April – Del and Nick

Period 4, Music, St, room 034

Class assembles outside and receives instructions come in too noisily, so are sent out again. Del comes in and peers over my shoulder sees the comment about being sent out and comments "we weren't sent out, we were asked, get your facts right." Class stand behind their chairs for the register. Nick is sitting at the front by himself. Del sits on row 2 with Steven, some pupils are picked for instrument practice next door, leaving Del and Nick in the main room. St goes to hand out the books Del says he doesn't have one and has never been given one. The main room workers have theory based work sheets Del gets out a football and starts hitting it. He comes over to me see note in Field Diary. I leave the room.

Thursday 22nd April – Nick and Shelley

Period 2, Art, EL, A2

Del is absent today Jeff says that he doesn't know why he is away. Nick asks me what Del said to me in Music before Easter. New groupings Steven comes in and goes to sit straight away with Nick. Shelley sits at the front she doesn't seem to know the group and is uncertain. The group is now made up of 22 pupils. Discussion about pictures of flowers in small groups. Nick leans back to work with Jeff and Shaun. He is not as focused as last term smirking with the other boys in the group, not seeming to want to please like before, not wanting to achieve in front of the others? When the group gathers at the front, Nick stands towards the back and starts to lean on the table behind him. During presentation of pupil work stage, Nick is quiet and focused but he leans back on his chair. The boys chatter but, at the start, it is about what work they are going to do. Shelley is extremely quiet and follows all instructions. Nicks focuses down on his work Jeff and Steven argue over who likes Nick the most. I approach Shelley and say to her that she is very quiet and focused. I ask if it's because she doesn't really know anybody and she says no, it's because she enjoys her work and just wants to get on with it. Shaun is asked to leave the room for a few minutes. Shelley focuses solely on her work and doesn't talk to the girl next to her. The one time I do see her talking is to offer her neighbour advice about the colour she is using. Nick is

very quick to start to pack away. The class are kept behind at breaktime due to their bad behaviour in music the day before.

Thursday 22nd April – Shelley and Katie
Period 3, Science, CL, SO8

In Science, groups have remained the same as before Easter. Shelley is seated at the front on a table by herself. Katie sits with Alison and Kirsty. The class are divided up according to which planet they are studying. Shelley seems very solitary. I speak to her she has chosen to work by herself and study planet Earth ("as everyone else is doing Mars and stuff.") Katie is doing Venus. Katie has finished doing her research and is now working by herself to produce her presentation. Shelley works totally independently. The contrast between Shelley and Katie and the others (who are all working in small groups) is striking. I don't think it's because they can't do group work, but they are obviously comfortable working by themselves. Katie has used things from the internet but has applied and interpreted them. Shelley shows a tendency to cut and paste items from the internet only. There is a fair bit of chatter between students who have finished on the computers and Shelley and Katie don't get drawn into this. Independent, self study work suits their personalities? School pupil gardeners are outside Katie comments that the pupils are chosen as they may have 100% attendance. It is seen as a reward this is how Katie sees it, or has been told to see it. One pupil, Matthew, does nothing. Another possibility is that Katie and Shelley are motivated to work at school so they don't have to work at home?

Thursday 22nd April – Nick and Shelley
Period 4, English, ROC, rm 3

Del is absent. Shelley comes in very quickly and quietly and sits by herself near the front. Nick and Steven are next to each other and directly in front of her. 10 minutes silent reading to start the lesson Shelley is reading her own book and is focused. Steven and Nick whisper to each other. There is a group of girls at the back who dominate the group. Shelley is not a part of them. Steven comments that the library at school doesn't allow pupils to take books out. (Yikes, "I was very dismayed at the way you came into the classroom and I think that Miss (points at me) was also very dismayed." I try and smile non commitedly.) Mr

ROC uses opening the window as an example of an information text Steven does not want to co-operate and points out that they don't have the same windows at home. Nick is one of the 2 who has brought in an example of an information text. Due to the change of teachers, several of the pupils in the group have their books in the other teaching room. Shaun, who was sent out at the beginning, is invited back in again. Pupils answer questions from the Literacy textbook very bog standard stuff. Dull pace! Shelley turns around and starts talking to Jeff and Shaun. HG has a girl sent to her and she brings her back in. A Chinese pupil walks past the window and Shaun comments "ching chong." Shelley continues with her work, Steven and Nick chat quietly to each other but it is low level compared to some of the others in the group. Individual tasks but same for everyone open ended, no time limit.

Wednesday 28th April - Katie

French, period 1, RO, room 39

Shelley is absent Katie says that she has been off for a while. RO uses white boards in the same way as I have seen in literacy lessons. Katie is really quick to respond to the answers and write them down. Lewis spells 'cake' (as in the cake shop) wrong and RO guides him in the sounds in order that he can spell it correctly. Very little need to instruct everyone how to use the boards the group are clearly on task and purposeful. Move from a French to English spelling test to spotting the odd one out. RO now chooses individuals to translate words for him. Focus now moves smoothly to grammar based work (masculine and feminine words) Katie becomes unsure at this point and often rubs out what she has written before she decides on an answer. RO asks what is the currency of France Katie is unsure how to spell this, although she does know the answer. Now move to working in books Ro presents the next bit of work in French and gets the class to translate what he has said. Katie can only work out some of them but does put her hand up for these. Katie starts to copy the words from her text book but copies a few letters incorrectly. RO goes over and corrects her over her shoulder. Class are absolutely SILENT as they copy down their own words. I just realise that I never see them doing any listening work (do they have a cassette which goes with the course book?) RO says that the group are set through Maths so he doesn't think of them being a bottom set, but more like mixed ability. RO knocks over the pencils on his way back to his desk Katie turns around, nearly in tears

about this (complete over-reaction) and recounts to me everything that RO has done this lesson. (Eventhough I am sitting behind her and can see everything for myself!) At the end, the pupils put up their hands to present a new word they have learnt Katie's hand is up for a while before being chosen. In the end, she repeats what the previous pupil has just said is she listening?

Wednesday 28th April - Nick

Music, period 2, SF, room 34

SF goes out to the door to meet the class she has changed the room plan around so gets the class to come in in groups she wants them to work in. Class really moan about this. Del is absent again. Shelley is also absent. Steven and Nick are split up Steven is put on the 1st table and Nick on the 2nd. SF says that Del not being here is a relief to her has he been playing up so badly with her? SF recounts Blues music the class asks them about the instruments. She asks them to draw a stave in their book Jeff is very abrupt about not knowing what this is tone of voice suggest he thinks this isn't his fault. Shaun is also quite vocal (Nick is sitting next to Shaun) quite a feeling of boys being very anti teacher. Silence during copying. Nick finishes and starts throwing pencils across the table. Some of the girls (NB none of the boys) bring up their books to check what they have done need approval. Nick walks up to the front to sharpen his pencil and starts an Egyptian walk in front of the OHP. The Head of Department then walks in. SF presents a blues tune to the class on her piano at the front. Nick is sitting playing with his pencil and does not look like he wants to join in the Q and A session. Conversation between Nick and Shaun about working together but SF puts Nick and Steven on her own piano (trust?) at the front. Discussion between the 2 of them who is going to do the treble and the bass lines. Steven, as usual, changes the tone on the piano and begins to play the funeral march. Nick is sent off to find headphones. Nick and Steven are quick to point out to me that they have a football final tonight, an away match in A.. Nick and Steven actually don their headphones and start to look as if they are working on their piece. There is some screaming coming from next door and a lot of banging around as the pupils have to be unsupervised due to the lack of working keyboards in this room. As soon as SF leaves the room to supervise next door, Nick and Steven start to play their own tune. Steven asks met to tell a girl to get lost. I say no so he says that I'm tight. They start dancing to the tune that they have created. Nick and one of the

girls (the one who is going to move to Banbury) start trying to hit each other. Nick and Steven are now swaying in time to their pre recorded music.

Thursday 13th May - Nick

Science, Period 2, CL, SO8

Steven is absent Nick is sitting right at the front with Emily. The room has been re-arranged so that the pupils are no longer sitting in work stations, but are sharing 2 to a bench. Pupils copy diagram of a plant cell into their books. A lot of Q and A session CL checking that pupils have understood the concept. However, Nick, although he appears to have understood (he clenches his fist in victory when his written answer was correct) he does not put his hand up to answer any factual based questions. He answers a guess/imagination type question. Nick agrees to work with the girl he is sitting with (and one other boy, Chris) but as the class get up to move they stay still and are last to pick up their equipment. When they have carried out their experiment, they move back to the front to copy up their method etc. 2 girls to the side of the class, whilst waiting for their experiment to work, are discussing army cadets. One has just joined and talks to some extend about her uniform. Jack starts to text someone and Nick shouts out "someone's on the phone". CL moves to Nick's group and is in deep discussion with them about what they think is going to happen. Nick and Chris leave Emily to carry out the experiment. They say that's what girls do. She replies that, no, that's what men should do. In fact, their experiment fails - Chris keeps trying and Emily and Nick give up and start flicking each other with their goggles. They leave their equipment behind.

Thursday 13th May - Del

French, period 3, PR, room 5

Del sees me as I walk down the corridor and rushes to get into the classroom so that the can sit as far away from me as possible. He sits with Jeff in the far corner on a table with 2 others. The class use white boards from literacy students are asked to pick out words from a dialogue. Del does not hold up his board to show he has answered the question. As the teacher announces the correct answer there is bickering from the children when they have a go at the person who has given them the wrong answer! Throughout the Q and A session, Del's table fail to

hold up their boards. Whilst the other groups do take part and ask PR questions, Del's table exclude themselves. Del and Jeff get moved further to the front as they have not engaged in the work then they were at the back I make no eye contact. Class go through the dialogue and translate it. PR gives them the option of using this dialogue instead of making up their own. When they try to translate, only Sarah T puts up her hand to answer a question. PR stops the lesson and reminds the class about needing to listen a fire engine goes past the window and they all look at this. The 2 remaining boys at the back make wild guesses about what individual lines might mean. Del does not get involved and keeps quiet. Jeff starts to engage in the translation puts his hand up to make guesses. The class now splits up to work in their groups to prepare their dialogue. I speak to Danny and Suzy. One of the groups of girls make a big thing about leaving the room and doing their rehearsal outside. Danny works alone. Del and Jeff return to their original group and continue to complete little work. Del comes over to me (ostensibly for some paper) and says HI. I start up a conversation with him and I feel that as I have kept my distance and not approached him, he feels better about this. Some of the girls are sitting on Del's table and chatting with him.

Thursday 10th June – Del

Maths, period 3, SM, room 103

Students standing up to start Del is no longer sitting with the group over in the far corner. He is now sitting alone with one of the boys I have seen from Science. The class begins with an 8 minute warm up activity. Students carry out mental arithmetic. There's a real sense of purpose about the lesson. Del is working purposefully with his partner all of their talk is about their work, whereas the girls next to me are having a go at each other about looking out of the window. SM uses a time line that he says the pupils would have used at primary school he tries to make a link with their previous learning. They then use the time line to carry out time subtractions. SM blows his whistle to attract everyone's attention. Train timetables Del puts his hand up to answer a question. I wonder how aware the pupils are of the places on the timetable. One pupil comes over to me to have a bit of a help Del pulls his chair up and works with me too. When I've explained the timetable to the pupil again he goes and sits back next to Del and carries on working. He and Del work very well together and are getting on with their work.

The girls talk about their birthdays. It's clear that there have been recent changes of place because one of the girls appeals to be moved back again.

Thursday 10th June – Del, Nick and Shelley
English, period 4, Ro, room 38

New teaching group Del is sitting with Jeff at the front of the room. Nick is at the back with Emily. Shelley is sitting by the wall with one of the girls. Shelley is very subdued following the incident during period 2 and does not seem to be focusing on her work. Instead she is using a pen to doodle on the sheet. Del reads the sheet from the 2nd task, rather than focusing on what they should be doing on the 1st task. This is an example of directed classwork rather than individual tasks, and the class seem to be very antagonistic towards the teacher. There is a lot of calling out and calling over each other. RO stops the lesson and reminds the class about their lunchbreak getting shorter because of their behaviour prefers to keep them all in rather than the individuals concerned. RO reads the story to the group. Nick offers to read but is turned down. Steven is sitting with Shaun Steven is very subdued, almost disgruntled. Del is not following when RO reads the text are there just too many words for him to follow. Nick gets on with the job in hand, as does Shelley, but Del seems to be finding it difficult to follow. Steven has scribbled all over his sheet and is not doing any work. Shelley seems to be focusing, but Del looks like he hasn't done any work at all. Does he feel that the others will answer for him during the feedback session? Predictably, during the feedback session, Del, Shelley and Nick say nothing.

Monday 4th April, 2005
Period 2 History, DB

Key words on walls. C sits next to a girl in the front of the room, H sits 2nd to back. C is v chatty asking the teacher, friendly manner. Spelling test of key words to start. A lot of playful whining at the words that they can't spell. Text books are class copies only. Seating plan. C gets 8/10 and leaps up when he tells his score to class. H not putting up hand to get involved. C hand up and recalls the whole of the previous lesson. H is not taking part. She doesn't have her book this lesson so uses a spare sheet of paper. Pupils volunteer to read some of text book C volunteers. Pupils ask questions about text they don't

understand. Teacher asks question "why did no one go to school?" to which C answers "because no one wanted to be a teacher" under his breath. Pupils work through the questions from the text book. Extension task on the board. Throw ball around for plenary H "I don't know anything" (self conscious?)

Monday 4th April, 2005
Maths period 4

C sits near the door, seating plan, C sitting v quietly, unlike other students. Students have own calculators. Slight antipathy towards the teacher. C does not put up hand or get involved. Some calling out from children. C asked to do an answer. Key words on the wall. C quietly thinking about new work being presented. Students supposed to be copying the work from the board. Teacher (Malay?) is mimicked in her accent by some of the children (1 of these is from an army background). Have a maths book which they can take home with them. C not a part of the general melee but apart from it. Students should have completed exercise from book many haven't. C has done work. Some students offer to demonstrate the answer on the OHP C wants to (hand up but not asked). Teacher asks for help C leaps up. One pupil says "miss you've only got one minute left", C corrects with "it's one minute twenty actually." Girls all have long hair, tied back.

Tuesday 5th April 2005
Music, period 2, room 45

H comes in quietly with one girlfriend and sits on the 2nd row. Practice of transitions today (playing 2 notes at a time) pupils can choose to practice on keyboard or on guitar. H chooses a guitar and goes out to one of the practice rooms with 4 others (1 other girl and 3 boys) when I go in she and the other girl are practising quietly. I ask why they have chosen the guitar and she says it's to get out of the main room! I sense she is somewhat mistrustful of me. I explain who I am and she says that she doesn't know. I ask if she remembers my letter and her mother's reply slip but she doesn't (parents haven't discussed with her or reply automatically?) NB for maths she is in room 40 so I will have to remove my comments from maths of the previous day. Comment on her pencil case written by a friend "Hannah G is addicted to money and food." Group of girls on

keyboards are the dominant group and H and her friend are subservient? H and friend come in with guitar to play with the rest of the group teacher wanted them in and some of them refused. H wants to please? She wears a beat the bullying wristband. Return to tables in centre of room copy new melody from board. Many other girls chatting, asking teacher questions H doesn't. Teacher mentions that he is the only music teacher so fitting in all of the curriculum time is hard. H finished copying and has turned to talk to the boys beside her and behind her. Pupils move back to keyboards H is unsure of something and asks the girl next to her for advice. Works quietly by herself after that.

Tuesday 5th April 2005
Maths, period 3, room 40

Miss W. (senior teacher) begins the lesson by talking about the group being a top set and that they will be doing a higher paper for GCSE. Then passes over to the trainee teacher. H copies from the board very quietly. She is sitting next to a boy at the front of the 2nd line. There is a seating plan. There is a starter activity, a main activity and a plenary game (a bit like the national numeracy strategy from primary school?) Sense of continuity between schools therefore? A quiet group little discussion between pupils or between pupils and teacher. One boy continues to put his hand up and answer questions, H doesn't put her hand up at all. Class size of 28 students. This is the top set. No contact between H and any other pupils some of the others are trying to turn around and make eye contact with others. Between demonstration and exercises, H turns around to ask Chloe if she can have some of her water. Chloe passes it over. Speak to Miss W. she is concerned at the level of expectation of army children. She uses the example of H's older brother who "only wanted to be a soldier" and didn't need to aim for high level qualifications. 3 years ago only 1 of the leavers went on to higher education, about 50 out of the 80 or so leavers went on to the 6th form college. She feels that the college is too relaxed for many of their students who need structure and relationships with staff to get results. H is very quick to pack away and leave.

Wednesday 6th April 2005

German, period 2

H is sitting at the front by the door next to Billy a v noisy member of the group! The German teacher has booked one of the IT rooms this lesson so we move to room in order to go onto the LA's German website (run by TLA) school subscribes for a year at a time. Series of language related games. H has chosen to sit at the front with Chloe she works through games very quickly but doesn't seem to care for what she's doing, says things like "I don't know what I'm doing" or "I don't understand this". Works almost exclusively with Chloe. 1 other girl on row. Not really talking to any other pupils. I get one of the boys to show me what intranet access they have. All have their own email addresses, emerging curriculum areas. Speak to one of the IT teachers. School applying for ICT status as this is seen as a way of having a positive impact on all subject areas and all levels of pupils. ABS is the only school in Alchester without a specialism it is hoped that IT specialism will give staff and students a boost in self esteem. The school had approached the army for some funding for IT status. Army had pledged some money (which they would give from the sale of some land for private housing) but the teacher was not too optimistic that the money would come through. Potentially the extra housing will mean higher numbers for the school.

Wednesday 6th April 2005

Period 4, ICT

C comes in and sits on the front row. He is looking at the Arsenal FC website the Arsenal shop. The students are allowed to do games for the first few minutes of the lesson. This is a small year 8 group of only 18 students, so there are some year 11 students at the back. C is unsure what to do he doesn't ask the teacher. The teacher, fortunately, happens to re-explain what they have to do to the whole class. C starts to get on with work, checks with his neighbour (Kiera) on how to do something. C and I talk he will be playing for the school football team tonight. His parents have given him an early birthday present (his birthday is in May) an Arsenal goalie shirt to wear. His dad prefers rugby but he has started to follow football so that he can enjoy it with C. C adores Arsenal because his cousin liked them ie no geographical affiliation. Lee is sitting behind us and keeps chipping in

comments. C and I talk more about football. He likes FC Barca and has visited the Nou Camp. C has a computer at home but he doesn't use it for hw prefers gaming. He doesn't really use email. Students have to email a copy of what they've done in the lesson to the teacher. Students are allowed free time at the end.

Wednesday 6th April 2005

Period 5, English

C is sitting at the desk at the front by the teacher, next to a girl. H is sitting by herself to the side and at the back. Teacher reminds the class that in such a big group they need to 'fit in' and obey the group rules. A lot of key vocabulary on the walls. Discussion of a film called Iron Giant a film focusing on the imagery of warfare and soldiers. The class are very receptive listening very attentively. Seating plan for initial section of lesson, but pupils can sit where they want and work in pairs for second section of lesson. H is involved in a girlie gossip session her and her mates are trying to piece together something that happened earlier. C sits very quietly. All this goes on whilst the teacher is setting up the video for the video viewing. During lunchtime, C has obviously changed into his sports kit, he's put it on underneath his school uniform. Clearly more interested in the fact that he'll be leaving soon to play footie keeps turning around, distracted. H is very focused. Chloe seems to be quite a central character in this group a lot of attention is drawn to her. C leaves to go to football. Pupils now choose a partner for creating storyboard. H automatically turns to the girl in front of her. Focus on structure of language rather than literature or creative writing. Ie the different forms of text here, narrative writing. H and neighbour are not exactly working together chatting but completing their own work. Chloe has moved to work with a girl at the middle of the room. But H and neighbour shout over to her to borrow eraser etc. On the wall there is a poster created by H and her friends about Jacqueline Wilson. H has finished 5 mins early so she walks over to Chloe's place to see what she's doing. She stands and has a chat with her. H says to the teacher that she thinks that a new school rule should be that they are allowed to listen to music in lessons. Doesn't feel antagonistic more like friendly banter. All students move to front to watch the last few minutes of the video H sits with her 2 friends, keeps whispering, not terribly focused. Interesting portrayal of the army as following orders unquestioningly and very stupid!

Thursday 7th April 2005

Period 2, Geography

H is student guide today. Assessment today. C sits at the back with Lee. C calls out some answers for Q and A session at the start. He is reminded to put his hand up to answer questions obviously intelligent and confident about answering in front of others. Assessment this lesson C has to answer q's into his exercise book. Teacher mentions that they are probably having assessments in all subjects at the moment so apologises that they have another one. (A school policy MFL teacher says it's a fluke!) Class size of 21 in all. Again, keywords are clearly displayed on the wall. I ask the teacher where H is she says that she has to remember who H is. C doesn't understand 2 words of his assessment so he puts up his hand to ask. C's planner mum has signed everything, credits and merits go back a way. Teacher praises the class for always listening to her. C's handwriting is poor. Talking about whether they speak English in Japan one girl calls out "if they had an army camp in Japan they would speak English there". Lee puts his hand up to say that he's finished teacher goes over to see his work and make suggestions as to how he can improve things. C has always finished so he and Lee are given an extension activity. Teacher is surprised that the group have finished so quickly. She writes some key words onto the board and they have to work the odd one out. C shouts out and answer and gets told off. C and Lee are still talking to each other. Lee gets a verbal warning for his behaviour. Gets another one for shouting out a silly comment everyone else ignores Lee but C giggles because of L's behaviour. C continues to be distracted by Lee. C wants to answer a question now as everyone is finding the final question difficult he strains to put his hand up (likes the competition and being the best?) Play hangman Lee is really angry that he hasn't been asked for final answer competitive. Lee runs the game and is very showmanlike.

Thursday 7th April 2005

Period 3, Science

Teacher knows straight away that H isn't in the lesson. C sits at the end of the 2nd line next to Chloe. There's a boy/girl order so obviously a seating plan. Internal register. Class of 22. Lee has forgotten his book, Lee calls out the answers. C had put his hand up for all the questions. Use of ICT teacher has

prepared pictures he projects onto the Smartboard. Girl sitting next to C (who he has ignored throughout) is sent out for talking out of turn to the teacher on several occasions. Billy (at front) asks a question about weathering. Teacher is unsure of what the pupil is asking so Lee shouts over his interpretation of the question. C reads out loud to class. Class read through explanation texts in text book together and discuss. Then have to complete questions from text book. Teacher comes over to discuss my research and mentions another issue when army children have moved away and come back again they think they know everyone and can be quite cocky but still need to settle in. He was aware of the unique aspect of the school as he had read the Ofsted report before he came for interview. He says that he has found teaching here hard, and is moving to a new school in September. Students have finished their work a LOT of chatting. C is working quietly eventhough the girls on either side of him are talking. Lee burps and is sent out. Wordsearches if they finish C continues to work quietly when the girl next to him is spoken to by the teacher for her behaviour he totally ignores them and looks away justice? A lot of students are out of their seats and have moved C is static. Literacy strategy on the wall see, learn, look, repeat etc.

Thursday 7th April 2005

Period 4 (half lesson) French

C sits next to a girl seating plan? Connor and 2 others arrive late C makes no eye contact. C's copying skills are poor (reading generally) explanation of the listening test by the teacher C puts his head onto the table whilst he waits. Connor, Lee etc noisy group / C is part of the eager to please?

Interview Transcripts

Information about interviews is presented at the start of each transcript. This information lists the date, time and location of the interview as well as the name of the participant. Interviews are cited in the main body of the thesis according to the code mentioned in the Key to Data Collected.

K1 – Katie, Interview 1, Wednesday 26th November, period 3, Headteacher's office

G Right, Katie, can you give me your full name, please?

K Katie Turner

G And what's your birthday?

K July 8th, 1991.

G Where have you lived before coming to Upton?

K Before here, I lived in Germany.

G Whereabouts in Germany, what was the name of the town?

K I think it was *Bittgen*.

G Right, so were you born in Germany?

K Yeah.

G When did you come to Upton?

K I was 11.

G So it was for the start of Upton?

K Yes.

G Do you remember which schools you went to in Germany?

K Yes, I went to O School, then I went to S School. That's all.

G And did you go to Primary School in Upton?

K Yes, I went to Charterhouse. It wasn't for a whole year, though, about half a year.

G So in Germany you must have lived in an army house?

K Yes.

G So your friends in Germany, were they all army friends or did you have any civilian friends?

K Half army and half civilian. They were mostly army, but I still have one friend out there.

G Do you think because your mum is German it made it easier to make friends over there?

K Yes.

G What about here at Upton?

K They are mainly civilian. When I go out and play I go away from the house and don't hang around Pilton.

G Have you got any other mates living elsewhere?

K No.

G What about when you were at Primary school, what was your favourite subject?

K It was German because we got to do puzzles and numbers and all sorts.

G What about your favourite teacher?

K My favourite teacher was (pause) I don't know.

G What was your most difficult subject at Primary school?

K It was English because they put me in a difficult group, it was too hard.

G Did they work out that you were in a difficult group?

K They found out and they tried to put me in a different group but they couldn't. The classes were only for 21 people and they were all full.

G Did you have any problems outside school?

K No I just used to play out in the park and that's all I do when I get home.

G Do you remember what your SATs results were?

K No.

G When you moved from Germany to come over here did you prepare for it?

K Yeah, I kept on being sick because the air was so different. German air and English air, I had to get used to it. It was really hard for me leaving all my friends behind. But I knew some people at the school over here.

G So was it the whole regiment that came back?

K No, just me and my dad and my mum.

G So how did you go about preparing to move house?

K We had to stay in a hotel for a couple of days so we could clean it out. I helped my mum wash the walls, which was all disgusting, all yellow because my mum and dad smoke.

G What about mum and dad, did they talk to you about what life was going to be like over here?

K No, I didn't even know what it was going to be like, but my mum doesn't like it here. It was difficult for her as she was leaving home.

G What about moving schools? How did you prepare for moving schools?
K I was all right with it. My mum and dad visited the primary school. On my first day my sister started crying. That's all.
G Are there any things that you would do differently?
K No.

K2 - Katie, Interview 2, Thursday 22nd January, period 4, RO's Office

G Okay, let's kick off by asking about Christmas holidays. Were they okay?
K Yeah.
G So when did you come to Upton then?
K I came here in September on year 7.
G And what tutor group were you in then?
K I was in Mr H's.
G And this year?
K Miss H the new music teacher.
G So you've had about 3 tutors this year, haven't you?
K I've had Mr F, Mrs L and now Miss H, but she says she's going to be here for 5 years.
G What set are you in?
K I'm in set 4.
G What's your favourite subject?
K Um, English.
G Why's that?
K Because we get to do poetry and we listen to Mozart when we're working. It's just a bit different.
G And what's your worst subject?
K Science, because I don't like the teacher. Because if you don't have your books or you've forgotten your pen you get a DT and you only have a certain amount of time to finish things and I just don't finish.
G Do you get a bit stressed with that pressure?
K Yes.
G What do you think generally about the teachers here?
K They're all right, some of them I hate and some of them I don't.
G Okay, well let's ask it in a different way then. What qualities would your ideal teacher have?

K Friendly, helpful and they wouldn't give DTs very often.

G When you were back at primary school what was everyone saying about Upton?

K That they flushed your head down the toilet. That was it really.

G Has what you think about it changed now?

K No. Somebody did get their head flushed down the loo here.

G Who was that?

K I don't know, I think it was a year 7.

G What do you think about it here generally?

K It's all right compared to previous schools.

G How did you prepare to come here?

K I got my bus pass that was with my parents. I had to wear my old school clothes because my new ones hadn't come through yet. That's all.

G Did you come up for a visit?

K Yes, with my school.

G And how do you get to and from school?

K Bus. It's overcrowded, so I try to get on a really early bus so it's not overcrowded.

G Are there lots of people on the bus that you know?

K Yes. We've got our own bus stop.

G Can you tell me what kind of out of school activities there are here?

K Netball club, but that's for year 7s now, not year 8s.

G And do you go to any of the clubs?

K No.

G But you went last year? Why not this year?

K Because there's nothing for year 8s.

G What did you think of the things they said about the school in the Ofsted report?

K I think it was fair because you look everywhere and it's really messy and stuff.

G Did you feel upset when you heard that they had said these things about your school?

K No, because my mum doesn't like the school anyway.

G You have peer supporters here what are they like?

K Peer support talk to you when you've got problems, like you've fallen out with your friends. Or you've got problems at home.

G Have you ever been to them before?

K Yes, when I was being bullied in year 7.

G Did you find it helpful?

K No, not really.

G So would you ask a teacher for help?

K Yes.

G Has that happened before?

K I spoke to Mr R, my form teacher. He was helpful because he told them to stop.

G If there was something going on at home would you talk to a teacher?

K No, I would talk to my friends.

G Why do you think you go to school?

K. To get an education, to make new friends and, that's all.

K3 - Katie Interview 3, Tuesday March 9th, period 1, RO's Classroom

G Can you tell me the names and ages of your brothers and sisters?

K. My little brother Michael is 11, my little sister Sarah, who's my twin, is 12, and my big brother Ben is 18 or 19.

G Can you tell me what regiment your dad's in?

K. QOD

G And do you know what sort of job he does?

K. No.

G Has he ever been posted away from home before?

K. Not any more but when we were living in Germany he went to Canada.

G Do you remember how long it was for?

K. No, but it was for a long time.

G What did you feel like?

K. I can't remember.

G Does your mum work?

K. Not any more but she used to be a florist. She doesn't work anymore because of my little brother Michael, he's got behaviour problems and she can't find any work around here which is near to home.

G Who helps with your homework?

K. My big brother and my mum. My Mum helps me with Maths and History and my brother helps me with everything else. He's pretty good at stuff.

G Do you read at home?

K. Yes, I don't read to anybody anymore. When I was at junior school I used to read to my mum.

G Do you help out at home?

K. Yes. I clean the kitchen surfaces for her, I clean the living room table and when the dishwasher doesn't have enough salt in it, I wash the dishes for my mum.

G How often do you do all this?

K. Once a week.

G Describe your bedroom to me.

K. It's messy, I have to share it with my sister, which I do not like. I've got a bunkbed and I always have to go on the top, not the bottom, which I've always had to do.

G What colour are the walls and the curtains?

K. Yellow, and the curtains have got flowers on it in yellow.

G So the walls, are they the same colour as when you moved in?

K. Yes. The curtains are army curtains and they, like, let the light come in.

G Are you friends with anybody in your dad's regiment?

K. No, there's no QOD living near to where we live.

G Have you ever been to a QOD family day?

K. We were supposed to go to one, but my dad got sick so we didn't go.

G Was that in Upton?

K. Yes.

G And have you ever been to any regimental days in Germany?

K. No.

G Any ideas where you are going to go next, after Upton?

K. I don't know because my dad is probably going to leave the army. It just depends whether they give him any extra time and whether we have to move or not.

G When will that be?

K. Probably in a year or so. We were originally going to stay here for 3 years and then move, that's what we normally do, so we've nearly there.

G What do you want to do when you leave school?

K. I want to go to college and then on to University. I'd like to do health care. I would like to care for people or become a nursery teacher.

G Thinking back to the places that you've lived in, what was your favourite house and why?

K. A proper house. In M, because we had a proper army house because in H we used to have a flat and I don't like flats. Because I got lost the first day there,

because our house was down and I went down into the cellars to see where the door was. In M, we didn't have to share bunk beds and our rooms were much bigger.

G Have you got any pets?

K. No, we've never had any pets.

G Why is that?

K. My dad doesn't like them.

K4 - Katie, Interview 4, Tuesday 15th June, period 1, Headteacher's office

G Okay, for a warm up, if somebody was going to describe you what would they say?

K. Katie is nice, friendly, helpful, kind.

G Okay, here's your photos, then. This is photo number 2, what's going on here?

K. I don't know what that is.

G Oh I know, that's the bathroom.

K. Oh I know, that's our bathroom at home and I took that because I wanted to show how many people have to use the bathroom and you don't have a lot of time.

G So how many of you have to use the bathroom in the morning?

K. 6. My dad gets in there first and he always takes a long time.

G So do you sometimes find that you're late for school?

K. No, because we always get up at 7.

G Okay, this is picture number 6. What's going on here?

K. That's my bedroom and that's my sister. These are our bunkbeds and that's my sister hiding under the blankets. I share a room with her.

G This is picture number 7.

K. This is our living room where we watch TV.

G In the background there's some plants and some candles and things.

K. Yeah, my mum loves her plants. We've got them all over the place.

G This is picture number 8.

K. These are my next door neighbours, at the weekend I went to their party and they've always been really kind ever since we moved here.

G What are they called?

K. Becky, Laura and Eve. Eve is coming up to one, Laura is three and Becky is thirty. Becky is the mum.

G So where were they standing when you took the photo?

K. They are standing at the back of our house, on the footpath because you don't come in from the front garden at ours, you come in from the back. And there's the back of our garden.

G Oh that's right, your front garden leads onto the pathway which goes past the front of the house. Okay, this is picture number 10.

K. I didn't know that I did that.

G Okay, well, tell me where it is.

K. It's in the playground, outside the hall where everybody is lining up waiting to go in. We're going in to assembly. We have to line up before we go in with our teachers. Sometimes it's for the whole of Key Stage 3, and sometimes it's just year 8 and year 9. Sometimes it's just for year 7.

G Right, this is picture number 11.

K. That's my favourite lesson, ICT. We were doing work so I thought that I would take a photo. That's one of my friends, Chris.

G How do you know Chris?

K. From lessons because he came to the school quite recently and joined my group and we became friends.

G This is shot number 12.

K. That was in the Resource Centre. I think that I was sitting in there at lunchtime doing my homework. I work here because I've got better things to do at home.

G When you do work at home is there somewhere where you can do the work?

K. We've only got a computer desk and that's usually taken up by my brother.

G So when your brother's there, where do you do your homework then?

K. Sometimes the dining room table, sometimes the floor.

G Okay, this is picture number 13.

K. This is Hannah and last year she used to bully me a lot, but we've decided now to call it a day and give up.

G What did she used to bully you about?

K. She used to call me names about me.

G What about you?

K. She used to make comments about the way that I looked, about my hair.

G Do you know Hannah outside school?

K. No, she doesn't live near me.

G Okay, this is picture number 14.

K. Oh, no, I really didn't take that picture. It's Sarah.

G It's okay, we don't have to use it if you don't want to.

K. She took the camera off me and took a photo. I didn't know that she had put a finger up.

G So who is this person then?

K. Sarah Cooper.

G It doesn't sound like you like her very much.

K. No. She says nasty things about me, about my hair.

G Do you have to see her in school?

K. No, not really, she's not in my group anymore.

G Okay, then, let's move on to picture 15.

K. Yes, that's Shelley. I took a picture of her because she lives quite near to me and she's been a good friend this year. She used to be in the same teaching group as me and she's stuck up for me when people have bullied me. She's said to people to leave me alone.

G Okay, number 17.

K. Oh that one went wrong.

G What was it supposed to be?

K. It was supposed to be the corridor, it's a part of school which is really busy and there's always people coming and going. We've got a corridor rule where you are supposed to walk one side if you're going somewhere and people should walk on the other side if they are coming back, but it's always busy.

G This is number 18.

K. That's my friends in the playground at breaktime just having a laugh. It's Corey and I think it's Chris again.

G What kind of things do you do at breaktime?

K. We just hang around and talk about things, we don't do much.

G This is number 19.

K. That's my best friend Alison and it's in the art block. I really like art as well as ICT.

G Why do you like Alison?

K. Because we like the same things and she really is my best friend in the whole world.

G Where does she live?

K. Over towards M. We might be moving towards there when my dad gets out because of my brother.

G Why's that?

K. Well my brother goes to boarding school and he has to stay there until his anger is under control. We need to be near him.

G It will be nice to be near Alison though.

K. Yes, I mean she comes over to my house during the holidays and at half term.

G This is number 20.

K. That's my artwork. I was putting it together for a display and I got a D plus.

G Were you happy about that?

K. Oh yes, it was the first time I got that.

G There's lots of paper and things in the picture.

K. Yes, that was my Op Art work, so there was a lot of paper used to make it.

G This is number 21.

K. I can't really see it. Oh yes, it's Alison staying behind to help clear up for Miss E.

G Do you often give the teachers a hand?

K. Yes. It's good to give them a hand, so we often stay behind at breaktimes to clear up.

G Okay here's number 22 and 23.

K. That's Alison holding up my art work when it's been displayed.

G I tell you what I did notice in your pictures, there's no photos of your mum and dad or your aunties and uncles.

K. No well my granny didn't come over when I had the camera, she came over another time. But my mum doesn't like having her photo taken and neither does my dad. I did try and take a photo of them there's one of my mum on the sofa next to my sister.

G Do you get quite a chance to see your aunts and uncles?

K. Yes my aunt is coming over from Germany in a few weeks to stay.

G What about your dad's mum and dad?

K. Well they live in Manchester so it's quite easy for us to go up there.

S1 - Shelley interview 1, Tuesday 25th November, period 4, RO's office

G Okay, can you give me your full name?

S Shelley Gordon

G And what's your date of birth, Shelley, what's your birthday?

S Oh, the ninth of May, 1991.

G Is it the ninth of May, really, because I'm on the tenth! I tell you what I've noticed, everyone calls you Shelley at school and no-one seems to call youby your full name, why is that?

S I don't know.

G Where have you lived before you came here?

S Upton, before then A. A year before that I was in Lancashire.

G Um, do you remember what schools you went to before here?

S Um, Charterhouse, B, W, that's in Lancashire, and that's all I remember. W I went to up to about year 2.

G And then, what's the other one?

S B, that's in A. That was year 3 and 4, I think and then I moved up to Charterhouse in year 5 and 6.

G So the school in Lancashire, was it an army school, was that before your mum met your dad?

S No it was when my mum was living with my dad. It was mostly Muslims and coloured people.

G So the school in A, did you live on an army base there?

S No, I was probably the only kid that had an army step-dad.

G In Upton were you living in a quarter there?

S Yeah, then we got moved to Pilton.

G So in all these schools, the A one and the Lancashire one, you had mainly non-army friends and then when you moved to Charterhouse in Upton it was mainly army friends?

S Yeah.

G What would you describe your friends here at Upton as being?

S They are really nice. They are army and non-army. Suzy hasn't got an army dad. She's got a really nice house.

G When you moved from Lancashire down here to A, did you know anybody because of your army connection?

S No.

G What about when you moved to Charterhouse?

S Oh yeah. It wasn't a big shock.

G Think back to primary school, then and all the primary schools you've been to, what was your favourite subject?

S PE because we got to do really fun stuff like trampoline and they had this really big climbing frame, I mean, it was really big.

G What about your most difficult subject?

S I think that it was English and Geography. They were my worse ones because I wasn't really very good at English and Geography.

G Did you find anything else hard at primary school?

S I don't know why but I always used to wet myself.

G Up until what age?

S Um, ten. I wet the bed a couple of times but that was because I didn't have a wee before I went to bed.

G Did you go to the doctor's about it?

S Yes because I had to wee in this bottle thing. And they said, oh, it would stop by the time you were a teenager. At primary school, this teacher, I danced about in front of her saying I really needed the toilet, and I said "miss, I'm wetting myself," and she said "wait there, I'm talking." And I said, "miss, I'm wetting myself," and she said "go to the toilet then." So I said, "well I've finished now." And she goes, "oh I am sorry." Then a couple of weeks later she got sacked.

Pause.

G Um, what was your favourite teacher in primary school?

S Oh, god, um, I can't remember her name.

G Why was she such a good teacher, do you remember that?

S Because she was really nice to me when I was at school. She was really strict, but she never shouted at me because I was really good for her. She used to let me out of lessons and let me play on the computers.

G Um, what time did you used to get up in Lancashire, do you remember what time it was?

S Well, we had to be there for nine, so I used to get up about half eight because it was a two minute walk.

G What about here and when you went to school in A?

S In Upton, I had to wake up at half six.

G Why's that?

S Because I had to walk. It was such a way. In Charterhouse, I had to walk to Charterhouse but that wasn't so far, that was only about five minutes.

G So when you lived in Upton and you went to Upton from Upton you had to walk, but in Pilton you can get a bus?

S Yes. I've got a bus pass.

G Do you remember what results you got for your Key Stage One and Two SATs?

S No.

G What did you feel before you moved school?

S A bit nervous because half the people I didn't know.

G What was worse, moving house or moving school?

S Moving house because it took ages to paint it and put all the stuff away and that. It was right near Christmas, so, in fact, it was two days before Christmas.

G Did your mum help you to prepare for going? Did she talk to you about going to new schools?

S Yes, she said don't mess around, do well and do your best. Just keep your cool and walk away if you're in trouble. It will be a good school and you'll be alright. That's about it.

S2 - Shelley, Interview 2, Thursday 22nd January, period 3, RO's Office

G So let's start off by talking about the Christmas holidays. How did they go?

S Fine, got loads of stuff.

G Did you have your brother back home?

S Well, he's come back and he got excluded from his school for about a week because he was effing and blinding.

G Oh dear. Well, let's think about Upton then. When did you first come to Upton?

S In year 7.

G What group were you put into in year 7?

S Set 4.

G And who's your tutor?

S In year 7 Mrs RB and now I've got Mrs F?

G So you had a change of tutor then?

S Yeah, they said they were going to have mixed tutors, like year 9s and stuff with year 7s and it would be better.

G And is it?

S Yeah, it was boring just being with your own year group. I know the people I'm with.

G What's your favourite subject here?

S Art because I've always been told that I'm good at art and I like it. The other classes are just really boring. French is alright but I like the activity in art, the practical stuff.

G So you prefer practical things?

S Yeah I don't like the writing.

G Okay, what about your worst subject and why?

S History because the reason is I don't like the teacher, she really picks on me and, well, because I'm not very good at it.

G Is that, again, because there's a lot of writing involved?

S No, it's just that I'm not very good at history. I suppose it is connected to the writing but the other stuff is really hard.

G What do you think generally about the teachers here?

S Some of them are really, really nice but some of them, like, right you off, like Miss C and Mr R, I'm not that keen on him.

G Can you sum up for me what your ideal teacher would be?

S For me it would be Miss E. She's really nice.

G What did you think about Upton before you came here?

S I thought that I was going to, well, instead of being at the top of the class, I was going to be at the bottom again. And people thought that it wasn't a very good school and that you'd get lots of people picking on you and you'd get bog flushed and stuff. But my parents sat me down and said that I had to come here because I can't get the transport to J School.

G That's where?

S A.

G Did you get any messages about the school from the teachers at primary school?

S They just said that you've got to work hard and do your best and ignore people who try and pick on you and stuff. That's about it.

G Have any of those ideas changed now?

S Because we've got a new headmistress and everything, the school has changed because, like, if you knocked on a window it used to smash. That happened to this girl. But now there's all new stuff and everything there's new

windows and new sets of books for the library, everything's painted. I think this new headmistress is going to make it a better school.

G Did you prepare to come to Upton?

S My mum and dad said that I was going to come here because that's the closest school you get and you get transport, because I've got a bus pass. And they said that if anything happened I should tell a teacher.

G And did you come up and visit?

S Yeah, I visited before year 7 started. I think the whole class went and we visited the school and it was alright then but, like, some people got bog flushed.

G You mentioned your bus pass. What time does it leave?

S Um, half past eight. Normally it's like five or ten minutes late.

G And then it leaves from the front of the school at what time?

S Well it takes about five minutes for everyone to get off the bus because the bus goes around through Upton and back down to the barracks. So I'm the last person to get on.

G What's it like on the bus?

S It's the school bus so it's always busy. Sometimes there are older and adult people on the bus.

G Have you got a proper bus stop?

S Yeah, there's a bus stop but it's not very big because when the bus stops there's always people coming down the stairs and pushing and stuff. There's like 20 of them that all come down at once.

G What out of school activities are there here?

S Well there's after school clubs like basketball, football and netball and there's the homework club and in the resource centre there's a club where you can just go on the computers.

G And do you take part in any of them?

S No (laughs).

G Why not?

S Don't want to be a geek.

G So if you go to after school clubs you're a geek?

S Well if it's homework club and stuff.

G What do you feel about the way they talked about the school in the Ofsted report?

S Well, it was fair, really, because they're just here to learn, really, and they want us to go on to college and university. I am going to go to university.
G That's good. Did you get annoyed with them at all?
S Not really. It's just the school.
G Are there prefects at Upton?
S Not really. We have peer supporters. So you go tell them if, say, you got beaten up. My auntie was one of them. Right before I started year 8, Caroline, she was here and she was one of them. But she's got a home of her own now and she's got a job.
G Would you go to one of them if you had a problem?
S No, I would go and tell my mates or someone.
G What times in the past have you gone and told a teacher something?
S Well, I went out to the hut out the front to have a private chat with Sarah and she got a cigarette out and started smoking it. And I said that she shouldn't do that on school property. Anyway, Miss C saw me and I got into trouble for it. And I talked to Miss H about that. And I talked to Mr R about that beer thing, when my brother put the beer in my bag.
G So you do talk to staff if you've got a problem?
S Yeah.
G What about if you had a problem at home?
S No I would just keep it to myself and maybe talk to my parents or my mum.
G Why do you go to school do you think?
S To learn, to get my education, get a good job and go to university.

S3 - Shelley Interview 3, Tuesday March 9th, period 1, RE's Classroom

G Tell me a bit about your brothers and sisters.
S Dillon is 13 and he's in year 9 at St Edward's School, David is 14 and he's also at this school and Tilly is one and a half I think and she doesn't go to school yet. Dillon and David are my step brothers and Tilly is my half sister.
G What regiment is your step dad in and what job does he do?
S 1 DGR he works with tanks, he's got 4 of them.
G Has he ever been away from home before?
S Yeah, he's been to Kosovo, Canada and in April he's going to Iraq for 6 months, he went for 6 months to Kosovo, too.

G How do you feel about him going away soon?

S Good. I just like it when it's less people at home and having him shouting, go up and have a shower, or whatever. I like it when it's just me and mum. David, when he gets in from school, just goes up to his room anyway.

G So what's it like when he comes back?

S Well, you get presents and stuff, it's quite nice actually.

G How does David feel when his dad is away?

S Oh, he likes it because when he's naughty his dad really shouts at him, goes right up into his face and tells him one. But when David hasn't done nothing, he's all right, he's really friendly with him.

G Has mum got a job?

S Yes, she's got 2. She works for Avon and she works for Gemma Cards, you know, she puts pins and stuff in cards. She works from home. She's got this catalogue at the moment, where you spend over 15 pound and you get a free mobile phone.

G When you lived in A, she used to work away from home, didn't she?

S Yes, she used to work in SuperSnaps, the camera shop.

G Who gives you a hand with your homework?

S I don't really have problems with my homework, if it's history or maths, I might go and ask Simon (step dad) because he knows a lot about those. I don't really ask mum. Well, I do sometimes because Simon says 'oh you should do it yourself, it's your homework.'

G Do you read out loud at home?

S Yes, I stopped when I was in year 5, I used to read to my mum and we used to read books, but I don't do that anymore.

G Do you help out at home?

S Yes, every night we take turns to clean up the kitchen, we do a bit more on a Sunday, like clean the bathroom, or I've got to do Avon for mum, take the bins out. It's fair, though, because we get pocket money out of it. We get £2.50 but if we do quite a lot we get £5.

G Can you describe your bedroom to me?

S It's purple and it's got groovy pictures in it, on the ceiling it's got these sort of pom poms, which have got lights in.

G What colour are the curtains?

S I haven't got curtains, I've got one of those pull down things. My mum and Simon painted it.

G Have you got friends in Simon's regiment then?

S Yeah, I have because I've got Lauren, Vicky, yeah, I've got loads of people. I met them when I was waiting at the bus-stop going to school, started talking to them and then later I found out that Simon knew their dads and that they were in the same regiment as us.

G Are there a lot of people in the 1 DGR in Pilton, then?

S There's quite a few over in Upton, because not many army people live in Loxley because that's all like private houses, I think.

G Have you ever been to one of those family days?

S Yeah, I don't think we went because mum was ill. But the regiment do have them, I think.

G Would you like to go to one?

S I don't really care, to be honest.

G Any ideas where Simon's going to get posted next?

S We were going to be in Cyprus but we've got to stay here for David because he's just about to do his GCSEs and Mum wants me to stay here as well, she doesn't like us moving schools in secondary school. So we're staying here and Simon says that we might move to Upton but that would be in a couple of years, like two or something. We would probably stay in the same house, though.

G So what do you want to do when you leave school?

S I want to be a popstar. My mum says that I've got a good singing voice. When I go into year 10 and do that work experience I want to go and work in a shop, like New Look, or Exsports or something like that. David's doing that now. I do want to go to University, if I graduate from my GCSEs. If I don't go to university, I might go to college. I would like to study art, because I'm very good at art.

G What's your favourite house been?

S I think it's this house because it's a lot bigger. The area around it is not very nice people but the road that we live on is quite nice. We've got a big garden, it's bigger than all the others next door to us. Because they've got like a 2 bedroomed house and we've got a 4 bedroomed. There's just grass in the garden, with a few plants as well, with these daffodils growing underneath.

G Have you got any pets?

S Yes, we've got two cats, Scrappy and Scooby, they're both girls. Mum bought them for all of us. I like Scrappy best because he's just fluffy and comes up to me, not like the other one who scratches you every time you walk past.

S4 - Shelley Interview 4, Tuesday 22nd June, period 1, Headteacher's Office

G Okay, let's start off with a little warm up. If you were being described by your best friend, how would they describe you?

S Shelley is a nice person, um, (giggles), (silence), nice.

G Okay, let's look at photo 00.

S That's a picture of what goes on every Tuesday, it's the computer room. We have a lesson in there every Tuesday. Someone must have nicked the camera! I think it was David.

G This is picture 0.

S That's my best friend Suzy, so I said to her can I take a photo of you and she said no because she doesn't like having her photo taken, so I managed to take a shot of her when she wasn't looking?

G How long have you known her for?

S Since year 6.

G So you've been friends since then? Does she live near you?

S No she lives on the outskirts of A.

G Do you see a lot of her outside school?

S Not recently, since that incident with that girl, she's, well, she's not been ignoring me, but she's keeping her distance.

G Why's that?

S Because she heard that I had called that girl fat, which I hadn't, so she listened to that.

G What are you going to do about that?

S I'm not going to do anything because I don't want to start anything again. And I'm not like that, really.

G So if you're not hanging around with Suzy at the minute, who is your friend?

S Um, Sarah Cooper and some others. They come around to mine sometimes, and I go up to see them.

G This is picture number 1.

S I don't think I took a picture of that!

G What is it a picture of?

S A wordsearch, I think. Probably from some work that we were doing in geography.

G Do you get a lot of worksheets?

S Only when the teacher is away and they leave work and say get on with it.

G Do you have books in most subjects, then?

S Yes, books, I think.

G Okay, right, this is picture number 2.

S Oh that's the music room. We have music twice a week and this is a picture of the board and some of the information posters. We've got a new teacher at the moment, Mrs S, but I thought that Mr F was better.

G Okay, picture number 3.

S That was our tutor. But now it's not because it's a new tutor and we're in IT. We used to go there twice a day. We have the register taken and he makes sure that we've got pen and paper and stuff.

G If you had a problem would you go to your tutor?

S Not really.

G So why have you changed room?

S We're now in the computer room because we've got a new teacher, Mr F and I don't like him. He came here about a month ago. He's really strict and you're not even allowed to talk in tutor.

G Number 4.

S (laughs) That's when I dropped the camera!

G Number 5.

S That's my art work. We had to like, design some polystyrene, then cut it up and do some prints from it. You roll paint on it and put it on a piece of paper. Mine came out like that.

G Why do you like art so much?

S Because I'm good at it.

G That's a good enough reason! In art, now, you're in a different teaching group.

S It's all right actually. I mean there's some people that I know and it's much better from that smaller group that I used to be in.

G You didn't like that?

S No I did not!

G Why did they put you in set 4?

S Well I was supposed to be in set 3 but when I came back I was in set 4.

G Let's look at picture 6.

S That's my work again, I was drawing lines to lead your eye away from the paper. It's one of my pieces of work.

G This is number 7.

S Oh, I know, that's when Suzy took my camera and said that she was going to take a picture of the corridor and I said to her that it would be too dark, but she said no it would be okay.

G Where is it then?

S That's downstairs where you come out of our tutor.

G Number 9.

S I decided to take a picture of my bedroom. There's my fairy lights, and I've got some other pictures on the walls, that's my TV in the corner.

G So you've got your own room?

S Yeah. Well, Dillon doesn't live with us anymore because he's gone to live back with his mum. That's what he wanted and he made my mum's life hell anyway.

G How did Simon feel about that then?

S I think he was a bit unhappy but he said if he was going to carry on like that then he deserved it. And he just carried on mucking around.

G David is still at home?

S Yeah, he's still there, still having a go at me. Well, not last night, but a couple of nights ago. He was riled because he had phoned up his mum and asked his mum to stay the night but she said no, so he took it out on mum and started shouting loads of stuff and calling mum names and stuff.

G Do you hear from Simon?

S Yeah, Simon phones once a week. It doesn't sound very nice out there. I mean, when I spoke to him he said he wasn't enjoying it and he said that he could only have one shower a week. Can you imagine that when it's so hot? He says it's really horrible and it's too hot.

G How long has he got?

S Five months, I think.

G Do you worry about him?

S Yes. I worry that he's going to get shot. One of his friends got shot in the neck and then he got hit in the face with a basketball. My mum's worried.

G Shall we move on to number 10?

S It looks like more work. PSHE I think.

G What sort of things do you do in PSHE then?

S Um, at the moment about health and care. About how the government sorts out the NHS and the problems of the smokers and things.

G Do you get the chance to talk about things like Iraq in school, in PSHE?

S Yeah, sometimes teachers ask.

G Number 11.

S That's Sarah, coming out of the girls' loos. Sometimes you go to the girls' loos to hide out. When I had my tongue stud, they were jumping over the cubicles.

G Okay, number 12.

S On this one I tried to take a picture of what was on the screen, but it's not come out. It was supposed to be a graph thing which had taken me months just to do the background.

G Okay number 13.

S I don't know.

G I don't know what that is either, I really can't work that one out! Let's look at number 14.

S Oh that's my geography work. We were learning about where the rivers come from.

G Do you like it?

S No. Well, it's all right, but, it's a bit boring.

G Okay, number 15.

S Oh that's the changing room. And I took that because we do that every Wednesday and Friday. We have it twice a week but in one week we've only got it once.

G Do you quite like PE?

S If we do stuff in the gym, yes. Mr Way makes me laugh when I have gum in he always asks me what flavour it is!

G Let's look at number 16.

S (Laughs) Oh no! I must have dropped the camera, that's me getting changed! Look at my hair, it's all in the way.

G You don't have a set uniform for PE do you?

S No, we just have to have navy blue trousers or shorts and a polo top. But they haven't done a PE kit yet, they said that they are going to do that stuff next year.

G Would it be a good idea having a kit?

S Yes because you wouldn't have to phone up if you had forgotten it. It would be here all the time.

G Right, number 18 and 19 are the same.

S It must just be me in IT again.

G Number 20.

S That's where we eat, me and Suzy, well, we used to eat together but we don't anymore. At that, there's a picture of Suzy in there somewhere.

G So you don't eat there anymore?

S No because of Lauren, that girl. Suzy still eats there, but I just go out on the field. I bring in a packed lunch.

G What are school dinners like?

S They are all right actually. But the chilli con carne is disgusting and it looks like sick!

G What's going on in the poster?

S It's when they went to Pencelli. The picture is of Suzy doing some walking or something.

G Did you not go?

S No I didn't go. Because David went and it cost something like two hundred quid, so Mum said I couldn't really afford to go.

G When did it take place?

S I think it was in September.

G Look at number 21.

S It's my bag.

G Tell me about your bag, you've had problems with it, haven't you?

S Yeah, well, I was over at one of my friends and her little sister had one of Lauren's mates over. And Lauren's mate said to me what do you think of Lauren and I said she's okay and then she told Lauren that I was calling her fat, so she came up to me on the bus and tried to beat me up. She took my bag and snapped my bus pass in half and stuck it together with nail varnish and she wrote all over my bag. But, well, I've got a new bag now.

G Last year, David had put something in your bag hadn't he.

S The night before he had a little argument with me and he was saying oh you're fat and stuff. And the next morning he was like in a big huff with me and he put that in there.

G What did he put in there?

S A can of beer. He wanted to get me in trouble.

G Okay picture number 22.

S Oh, that's the art room. That's, like, my group, I told them all that I was going to take a picture and they turned around to look! We were all sitting around the table talking about our work and Miss E was showing us stuff.

G You gather around a lot in art don't you?

S Yes.

G Last one, then, number 23.

S Oh that's my art work, that's my best picture in art. The idea was we did a lady and we had to make it look, well, it had to bounce across the eye and we had to make it look 3D. It was quite hard. Actually, I think you've missed a photo.

G Oh, so I have, I'll call that number 24.

S Well, they were all, like, asking me to take a picture of them, and I said that I don't think that I'm allowed and then I just took it. That's like, well, that one is best mates with David, they're friends. That was in the science block, it was just before an experiment.

G So David is mates with someone in your year group?

S They aren't best friends anymore, I don't know why. It's Adam and Darren and Stevie.

G I know Stevie, you used to be with him for English, didn't you.

S Yes.

N1 - Nick interview 1, Tuesday 25th November, period 3, RE's office

G Okay, Nick, what's your full name?

N Nick Carter

G And what's your date of birth?

N The sixteenth of the second, 1991.

G Alright, other than living in Upton now and going to school here in Upton, where have you lived before here?

N Um, T, that's near Shropshire and, we lived there because I went to pre-school there and the same school.

G You were in Shropshire quite a long time, weren't you?

N Yeah.

G What was the names of your previous schools, then?

N M was one and I don't know what my pre-school was.

G When did you come here, do you remember?

N I started here in year 7.

G So you didn't go to the primary then?

N Yeah, I went to Zennor but then I came here. I was only there for about a year and then I come up here.

G So you did year 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 in M and then you did your year 6 at Zennor and then you started here in year 7?

N Yeah.

G When I talked to your mum it sounded like you were going to be here for quite a bit, really, weren't you?

N Yeah, until year 11.

G And are you happy about that?

N No.

G Oh dear.

G So when you lived up near Shropshire, did you live in a quarter there, did you live in an army house?

N Yeah.

G Was it like Upton, 'cos Upton has got army houses and it has civilian houses as well, was it like that?

N Yeah.

G And at the school there, did you have a lot of army friends or did you have mainly civilian friends?

N Army friends, because it was an army, I mean there was some civilians around but, um, it was mainly army.

G So, um, including your time at Upton, really, all your mates are army mates?

N Yeah, they still are. But some of my friends are non army, but ...

G Well, Steven, for example, he's your best mate and he's army.

N Yeah.

G When you went to Zennor, obviously you moved from Upton to here, did you already know some people there because they were with you at M or was it a whole load of new people?

N No, they were new people because some of them were in my Regiment but they lived away from us and some were closer. My mum's friend has come around near us so we don't have to travel but most are away.

G When you were in year 1 through to 6 what kind of problems did you have at school? I'm thinking about subject stuff, which subjects did you find hard at Primary School?

N History.

G Why?

N Because I didn't know hardly anything and at M we didn't do history, until we was years 5 and 6.

G And what about, say, the wider things at school? Tell me about what it was like not really knowing anybody.

N When I moved to Zennor, I was shocked because I didn't know anyone that was there. And then just everyone started to be my friend and now they've come to the same school as me so that's good.

G Um, what was the best thing about Primary School?

N My friends (said with NO hesitation!) because they were there with me and they stayed with me when I moved up here.

G Obviously people like Steven and Del.

N No, I weren't with Steven then, I got to meet up with him here.

G Um, what time did you used to get up for school at M?

N Around 7 o'clock.

G Is that the same as here?

N Yeah but we had to catch the bus at half past seven.

G Oh, right, so you had to travel for M, then.

N Yeah, it was only about twenty minutes to school but the bus had to go all the way around to Shropshire. It had to go to up to Telford then come and pick us up and then go all the way back to M.

G So was the army camp you lived on quite far away from anywhere then?

N Yeah, Telford was about an hour away and that was the town centre.

G So the army camp was quite far away and the school which belonged to the army camp was ...

N ... was about twenty minutes, yeah.

G Right, so all the army kids from that camp had to travel into that school. Um, I don't suppose you remember your SATS results, do you?

N No, I know my Key Stage 3 one, though, I've got a level 4.

G Excellent. Um, do you remember doing SATS, then?

N No, I don't. We didn't do 'em.

G When you were moving from M to Upton did you have any way of preparing for the move? Did your mum talk to you about it?

N Yeah, my mum told us we were going to move house on a certain date and we would have to start packing, so we would have a couple of days off school. To help pack. Two days before we started to move we had two days off so I helped my mum to pack and my dad. That's what happened. And I talked to her and she said we were going to be here until quite a long time so she told us to do well and get on, don't fight and don't bully, just be yourself, not be a different person because you'll have friends there, so it doesn't matter.

G You were worried when your dad moved job that you were going to move somewhere else weren't you.

N Yeah, B, we were going to move up to B because of Dad. Me and my brother said no, we don't want to move because we've got friends down here and we don't want to go and make a whole new group of friends. Because in another year or so he was going to change jobs anyway. But he got longer there because they didn't have no-one to take over from him. We would have just moved up there and had all our friends up there, and then all our friends would have been down here.

G Did you go and look around your primary when you came here?

N I made one friend because he came back to my house and helped me to unpack. That was good. But he left just before year 7. He was in the same Regiment as us, but we didn't know them. Well, we knew them, but not much.

G And what does it feel like, that week before you move?

N Well it's nervous because you don't know if you're going to pack enough to get on the lorry, or just take stuff by car.

G What about moving schools? What does it feel like before you start?

N Nervous because you don't know no-one and it's scary because there are older people.

N2 - Nick, Interview 2, Thursday 22nd January, period 3, RE's Office

G Okay, tell me about your Christmas holidays first of all. How were they?

N They were all right. Well I got a £100, some computer games, clothes and stuff.

G Was dad at home?

N Yeah. He come home but then he was on guard duty.

G Right, so Upton. When did you come here?

N At the start of year 7.

G What tutor group are you in?

N I'm in 8 H. I'm in set 2.

G And were you with Miss H last year?

N Yeah.

G What's it like now?

N It's all right, but me and my brother are in the same group and I can't stand him.

G What's your favourite subject?

N PE because I like sport and I'm with all my friends because I'm not with all of them now in this teaching group.

G So these are people that you know from outside school?

N Yes.

G What about your worst subject?

N History because I get confused about what I've done.

G Teachers what do you think of them generally?

N They're all right. They're a bit strict.

G What's your favourite teacher here?

N I don't have one.

G Okay well tell me what your ideal teacher would be like.

N Well, sporty, they don't just do the same things, always on time and always here.

G What did you think about Upton before you came here?

N Big. There was lots of bog washing and you'd get beaten up and everything like that.

G And was that what everyone was saying back at primary school?

N Yeah.

G What did the teachers say to you about here?

N Don't worry about the school, it's just another start. You'll start at the bottom up here you're the top at primary school but then you're at the bottom here.

G Have your opinions of Upton changed now?

N Yeah. It's not a good school but it's an all right school.

G Did you prepare to come here?

N No. I came up for a visit. My teacher said look, nothing's going to go wrong, nothing. My mum and dad said, because you've had a bad report, my mum goes, look if they're not going to do anything for a couple of years then we'll move you.

G How do you get to and from school?

N I used to get the bus but now my dad's come back from Burton because he used to have the car during the week, so my mum picks me up.

G So during the week then, when your dad was away, he used to have the car?

N Yep but my mum has a friend just down the road and she would give us a lift if we needed one.

G What was the school bus like last year?

N It was all right but now the year 7s just ruin it, they take control of the bus.

G Tell me about out of school activities here.

N Well, there was a football club but me, Steven and Del, we all go off to our own football club together, the Upton Colts. I think that's it.

G When's that on?

N Wednesday nights.

G So you don't stay after school for anything?

N No, it's all girls things, they can't get enough boys to take part. There was about 6 people going and that ain't enough to have a team.

G Did you think that the Ofsted report was fair?

N I think that it was fair. I mean, it's a good school but they're not pushing us as well as I thought they would.

G What do you feel about them doing down your school like that?

N Don't know. I looked at it with my mum and we thought, well, if it's not going to improve, I'm going to pull out of the school and go to another school.

G Do you ever go and see the peer supporters what do they do?

N Well you talk to them if you've got a problem. I wouldn't go and see them if I had a problem.

G If you had a problem would you ask a teacher for help?

N No I would tell my friends. And I would tell my mum and get her to sort it out for me.

G What about if you've got a problem at home?

N No, I would definitely talk to my friends. Not a member of staff don't trust 'em. Just tell my friends and my family.

G Tell me why you think you have to go to school?

N So you can get educated and when we're older you can get a job.

N3 - Nick Interview 3, Tuesday March 9th, period 2, RE's Classroom

G Tell me a bit about your brother.

N Miles, he likes motorbikes, he's got one he was riding this weekend. He's here at Upton in year 7.

G Tell me about your dad, what regiment is he in?

N Westies, he's in mortars, he's a Sargeant.

G Has your dad been away from home before?

N Yes. He went to Kenya for 6 months about 4 or 5 years ago.

G What did it feel like before he went away?

N It was quite sad because I didn't know if he was going to come back, there's all these animals over there.

G What was it like whilst he was away?

N It was quite hard because my dad is always there for us, I think that was the 2nd time he had gone away for a long time. My mum said that he was just going to come back in a couple of days.

G What was it like when he came home?

N I was so happy! He had sent us a couple of letters but that was all.

G Was it hard having him back at home?

N Yes, but now he's been away for 3 years recruiting, only coming back at weekends, so we're used to it now. We're not bothered now.

G Does your mum have a job?

N Yes, she works in a pre-school.

G Who helps you with your homework?

N Mum because my dad's not there until quite late.

G Who did you used to read out loud to?

N Both because I used to read before I went to bed, so I used to read to my dad, but now I just read to my mum.

G Do you help out at home?

N Nope. Well, I wash up sometimes.

G Tell me a bit about your bedroom, what's it like?

N A mess! It's got loads of games in. We might be turning my room into, like, a video arcade for me and my brother. At the moment we don't share. I've got blue walls and lots of football posters and I've got these little football things that you stick on, they're like gold and silver. The curtains and stuff are blue and I've got a blind which is blue, too.

G Have you got any mates in your dad's regiment?

N Yeah, I've got some on the street and some down the road, so I knew them before I came to Upton.

G Do the Westies have family days and open days?

N Not much, but I have been to some before, I went to Paulton's Park with the regiment and that's it, I think.

G Any ideas where you'll be heading off to next after Upton?

N I'm not going to leave Upton, my dad's only got about 3 years left, so when I do my GCSEs he might go somewhere else, so mum can stay here.

G Do you know what you want to do when you leave school?

N Be a football player or, if I can't do that, be a street racer, where you do up a car and race it around. I want to go to university, want to go to college, I'd like to do PE and English and things.

G What's been your favourite quarter?

N Most probably the one here because I know most of the people living around and about, I've got my best friend. I've got used to it now, but before we were only living in the houses for about 3 years and I didn't have many friends. But now, I've got loads of friends because I've lived here for a long time. My best friend is Steven.

G Have you got any pets?

N No, not any more, but we used to have a dog and a hamster. My mum doesn't want to go through it again but my dad would like a dog again. Me and my brother keep on asking for one.

N4 - Nick, Interview 4, Tuesday 15th June, period 1, Headteacher's office

G Just to start off with, if you were, say, Steven, what would he say about you? How would someone who knows you fairly well describe you?

N Nick is fun sometimes, annoying sometimes, and that's it.

G Okay, we'll leave that. Let's look at your photos, tell me what's going on in each of them and why you decided to take a photo of it. Let's start with photo zero.

N Oh this is where I was just trying to finish off the film, so I took some photos of a couple of people, Emily and Chris.

G How do you know them?

N Because they are in my year group and the same set as me.

G Okay, here's number 1.

N Oh no, this one really was taken by mistake!

G So what's it a picture of?

N (laughs) Me!

G We get a good look up your nose there! Here's number 2.

N That's the trophy that we won, and we won that by beating the best team in the league.

G And why's that so important to you?

N Because that's my life and I would like to be a footballer as well.

G So what's number 3?

N That's the little trophy. That one was for winning and the little one for us to keep so we don't have to give it back next year.

G Here's picture number 4.

N That's my team.

G Who would I recognise?

N You would recognise Steven and that's it.

G So where does everyone else come from?

N All over. Only Adam and David live near me.

G So how did you find out about the football team?

N Matthew told Steven and Steven told it to me and Del, so we went for a try out.

G Del doesn't go anymore?

N I think that's because of Cadets.

G This is number 5.

N My mum took that. She was there the day we had the photos taken for the trophy.

G Here's number 6. Where is the picture being taken?

N Here at Upton. We practise here but the team isn't a school team.

G Here's number 7.

N I had been trying to take a picture of the school. But this car got in the way.

G I notice that you've taken a couple of pictures of the outside of school, but none of the classrooms.

N Because I only like football and I only wanted to take one of the sports hall.

G Here's number 8.

N That's the school that I go to.

G Here's number 10.

N Ah, that's my living room at home, that (points at things in the picture) is a picture of my dog, we don't have him anymore.

G You've got lots of photos on the walls.

N Yeah. There's one of me and Miles, me and mum and me, my mum, my dad and Miles. And on the other wall there's a big picture of me and my brother.

G Number 11.

N That's my room. It's all football.

G There's lots of videos there, too, have you got your own video player in your room?

N Yeah, but it's not working at the moment. I've been giving some of them away at the moment to my friends.

G You've got blue walls.

N Yeah, we painted them about a year after we moved in. But my mum wants to paint them back to magnolia now.

G Why's that?

N I think we're moving, to be honest. If we are, I don't know.

G Number 12.

N This is the St George's cross, there's Michael Owen, it's some more football stuff.

G This is number 13 and I think that I know about this picture.

N Oh my mum took that. I'm holding Harvey, my mum is auntie to the daughter and Harvey is getting christened soon.

G So Harvey lives near you? (N nods.) When I went to interview your mum, she was waiting for him to be born.

N We had to look after Laura, the little one, she had to come and stay with us.

G You look quite comfy with Harvey there, Nick?!

N Yeah but he was big though. He was really long.

G This is number 14.

N That's me again, but this is about me and my family and the army.

G What does this picture say about you and the army then?

N Well I've got a dull face on.

G There's a lot of fridge magnets here, where are they from?

N Wherever we've been. We got one from Canada a couple of weeks ago, with the flag on it.

G Okay, let's look at number 15.

N Oh that's my house. It's really boring.

G Is your house different to the others?

N No, on the outside it isn't. These six here (points to the side of the photo) they don't have a doorstep like we do.

G Do you know the people who live near you?

N Yeah, Pat lives one side and on the other side the people have just moved out but my mum's friend is going to move into there. They live around the corner. My mum keeps getting ticks on her feet because we've got long grass and we don't like it, I had one in my eye.

G Let's look at number 16. How is this one different to the other one?

N It's got more things in than the front because this is the back garden. That's my dad's shed, there's a story attached to that. My dad got it from a DIY place but it took him about 4 hours to put it together but there was this piece missing.

G When you move house will you take it with you?

N Yes. We've got the fence there because they (points at neighbours' house) have got cats and one of the them got attacked by a fox and it was lying dead in the woods, but the fence is to protect the flowers.

G This is number 17.

N Oh that's my living room again.

G This is number 18.

N That's my brother and my kitchen, my mum spends all her time in there. And my dad. My dad cooks on Sundays and my mum does the rest of the week, because my dad has gone off to work and is away.

G This is number 19.

N Oh that's my brother again, that was a sneaky one because he didn't want to have his photo taken.

G This is number 20.

N That's my mum just about to go out because it was one of her friends' birthdays. So I said Mum I'll come and take your picture. She's all dressed up.

G Does she go out with the girls a lot?

N No she usually goes out with my dad and when that happens I babysit my brother.

G What's that (points to something in the photo)?

N That's my fishtank, but we lost a fish the other day because the pump sucked one of them up there.

G This is number 21.

N That's my dad, he's just come back from work.

G What's he wearing?

N His army uniform. I don't ever want to join the army.

G Why not?

N Because it's not me, you know, I don't like going to war and killing people.

G What does your dad think about that?

N I don't know really.

G But he's quite happy in the army, isn't he?

N Dunno. I overheard something and dad was called in by someone, I think it was an officer, and a couple of weeks later he did it again to a man that my dad was friends with. So people make it difficult for him.

G Do you think that your mum likes the army life?

N Oh, I dunno.

G This is number 22.

N That's me and Steven, he's my best friend. We're having our photo taken in the corridor, out there. Steven and I like basically the same stuff, we like football, I like PE, he likes PE.

G Did you know him before you came to Upton?

N No. He came here at the same time as me, though. He lives just down the road from me.

G Do you come to school together?

N No my mum takes me and he gets the bus or sometimes walks.

G Okay, look at number 23.

N That's just Steven on his own.

G You haven't got many pictures of other friends.

N Well, that's because Steven is my best friend. I get on with the other people, but I don't really like them.

G I noticed that you haven't got any pictures of your grandparents.

N My nan lives in Manchester with my auntie. Last time I went up there there was a row with my uncle and my nan woke us all up at 2 o'clock in the morning and told us to leave. My mum's mum and dad, I get on with them really well. They come down about once a term but I don't see them an awful lot.

D1 - Del Interview 1, Wednesday 3rd December, period 4, Headteacher's Office

G What's your full name and your birthday?

D Del Hobson. I was born on the 10th November, 1990.

G Was your dad back in time for your birthday?

D No.

G Where have you lived before coming to Upton?

D Um, this is my first posting. Before this we lived in C. That's where my mum and dad got married. I used to go to K Primary School.

G Can you remember what schools you've been to before you came to Upton?

D Um, C Primary School, Charterhouse Primary School and Zennor.

G Do you remember what years you were in?

D I was in C from the beginning to a few months in to year 4. I was in Charterhouse from January 6th in year 4 to June 25th. Then I was in Zennor in year 5 and 6. Then I came here at the beginning of year 7.

G Why did you go to Charterhouse and Zennor?

D That was because my house was right next to Zennor and it used to take me about half hour to walk across the estate to Charterhouse.

G So did you not know where you were going to live before you came down here, then?

D No, we knew we were going to live on Matthews Estate and when I got there there was, like, 12 people living on one estate. We had one next door neighbour and the nearest one was a couple of doors away.

G Were they emptying the estate then?

D Yeah, they were emptying the estate and moving everyone. I was only there for a few weeks and they moved us to Zennor. I went to Charterhouse Primary for the rest of the year because it took my mum a couple of months to get me a place.

G Was that because they were selling off the quarters?

D They weren't selling them off. You know the Matthews estate, the new one, well they were knocking all of these houses down.

G So when you were at Primary school, did you have a lot of army friends?

D David Popper, he was probably my best friend he moved away not long ago. You know, I didn't realise they were army until a few weeks before we moved.

G What about at Charterhouse and Zennor?

D Um, they were mainly army, but I had a few civvie friends.

G Well, tell me about your army friends then.

D Well, Nick's a Westie and I don't get along with him. They're lazy. They did nothing when .. well my dad, he was in Kosovo for about four months, he was there for an extra month. He put the OP, the outposts, out for them.

G What regiment is your dad in Del?

D He's the first batallion, infantry, DGR. I know everything about him. He's B Company.

G So you say that you don't get on with Nick?

D Well, I get on with him but it's, like, but when we went to the Westie's open day and that, he said it was much better than our open day. And ours was a lot better.

G So tell me about your non army friends?

D Some of them are, like, I can't stand that you move from place to place. And they go, oh you move around a lot, don't you. It's sort of like, army alien. No, I like it, you travel all over the world. We're going to Northern Ireland then Cyprus. Then I'll be a squaddie.

G I remember when I first met you, you said that you wanted to join the army. What was your favourite subject at primary school?

D In Charterhouse it was English. At Zennor it was PE, English.

G Why were these subjects so good?

D Well, the primary school, it was the best school in Wiltshire. They make it fun. It's not boring. The teachers were nice.

G What about your worse subject?

D In Charterhouse my worst subject was probably PE. I mean, I like PE, but I didn't like it there.

G Did you have any problems beyond school?

D Well, on the Matthews estate I didn't have any friends. They lived quite far off so I used to stay in. I had all my friends over at Zennor. I was a good goal keeper so I used to play a lot.

G So the football, that started at primary?

D Yeah, I played goal keeper.

G Tell me about your timetable.

D Well, I used to leave at 8 for Charterhouse and get there for 8.40. I had to get up at the same time for Zennor because it starts 15 minutes earlier.

G How do you get to school here at Upton?

D Bus, and if I haven't got the money I walk or dad gives me a lift.

G Do you remember what your SATS results were?

D Well I can't remember 1 (key stage 1) but for 2 I got a 3 for Maths, a 4 in English and the highest one I got was a level 5 in Science.

G Were the results what you expected?

D No, I remember when I got my results I cried. Then I peeled the paper back and saw that I had a level 5 and it was okay. Everyone else got 3s and 4s. I remember there was this one kid who got 5s and 4s.

G That's fantastic. When you moved from C to Upton how did you prepare for the move?

D Well I remember we made a list of all the good things, like a cheaper house and stuff like then. Then all the bad things, like family, it was a bit isolated. I really wanted to go because I spent my whole time seeing everyone else moving. I liked it there but I prefer army life. It's different. You don't have to pay to move, they pay you to do that. You never stay in one place, but you make friends. It's funny, you can have a friend that you knew, say, three years ago and you meet up with them again. Then you move away again, you move away.

G How did you feel the day before you went to your new school?

D I was quite nervous because I didn't know anyone. I didn't live too far from the school when I was at my old school. I remember when we first pulled up, it was like are these our houses, they can't be. They were all horrible. But it didn't take long, it was okay. Within the first day all the bedrooms were done. I remember eating fish and chips and watching a Champions League match on the telly.

G Did your mum say anything to you before you went to your new school?

D I remember I moved there on the Thursday, went to look at it (the school) on the Friday morning and it seemed quite nice. I had to go home. And then on the Friday at 3 o'clock, I watched them all come out, from my room. It seemed quite a friendly school. It was hard, though, because it's a mixture of military and civvies. I think I got on there made a few enemies.

G Was it easier going to Zennor?

D Yeah, but then we had this football match between the two schools and everyone was calling me traitor. But I showed them up because we won 6-1. Then in the next game, in the final, they beat us.

G Do you still see your real dad?

D No. My real dad, all I know is that he's in the Paras.

D2 - Del, Interview 2, Thursday 22nd January, period 4, RE's Office

G Let's start off first of all by asking about Christmas.

D It was okay my main present didn't come through.

G Oh yeah?

D My auntie had promised me an X box and she didn't bring it down.

G Where's your auntie from? The one from Kent?

D No, up in Oxford.

G Okay, let's think about Upton. When did you come here?

D In September in year 7.

G Okay, what tutor group did you go into?

D Well in year 7 I was with Miss H and I was with Nick, and a whole lot of other people. I found all the boys better in Miss H's group than now. I think it's better now because there's always people you can bond with. You know, like, year 7s with year 8s.

G What set are you in?

D Set 3. I was in set 2 but I went down because I found it too difficult in year 7.

G What's your favourite subject here?

D PE because it's fun. It's not boring.

G Is it because of all the practical stuff?

D Yeah.

G And worst subject?

D ICT, Technology, History, Maths, um, English.

G Quite a list then!

D They're boring. You always work the same. Write, write, write, write.

G I would have thought that you liked technology.

D No I prefer PE.

G What are the teachers like here?

D They're okay.

G What about the best teacher here?

D (Pause) I don't have one.

G Maybe a better way of asking it is to say to you what makes up your ideal teacher?

D They've got to be strict and don't let there be any mucking about.

G When you were at primary school what did you say about Upton?

D They were saying that it was going to be okay and that it was the best school and that kind of thing.

G And what do you think now? Are these things true?

D No. I mean I know that it could be a lot worse.

G And how did you prepare to come up here?

D Well I didn't worry about it. I mean, like, the night before we all came here for the first day nobody slept, but I was, like, never mind.

G What about your primary school teachers, did they talk to you about it?

D Not really.

G Mum and dad?

D No, well, they said, like, it was going to be a lot more harder and everything. And that your work was going to be harder.

G How do you get to and from school?

D Bus, but I've been walking a lot lately.

G Why have you decided to walk?

D It's easier, I can talk to my mates. It doesn't take long.

G What about the school bus? What's that like?

D It's horrible. It's noisy, and some kids smoke. It's a waste of money about £1.40.

G So you don't get a bus pass then?

D No, we're not out of that three mile radius.

G Is there a bus stop near your house?

D Yes but I go further up the estate so that I can get a seat. I don't like to stand up because it's, like, 35 minutes.

G Is that how long it takes?

D Yeah, it has to go from Zennor to Matthews then Pilton then here.

G Out of school activities what is there?

D Well there's computer club.

G So you don't attend any other after school stuff?

D Well there's football but it's not to do with school.

G Why don't you take part in any other activities?

D Well it's all sewing and cooking and things.

G What did you think about the Ofsted report?

D I thought it was a lot worse.

G What, the school is a lot worse than it came out as?

D Yeah. Because the facilities we have here compared to other schools, well, they're a lot better.

G What did you feel like when you heard that your school had got that report?

D I wasn't upset because I knew it was going to happen. I knew it was going to be bad.

G Tell me about the peer supporters here.

D Got any problems you go to them.

G If you had any problems at school would you go and see one?

D No, I would tell my mum or someone.

G Would you tell a teacher?

D No, because they always say that it's confidential and stuff and it never is. I don't trust them.

G If you had a problem at home who would you tell?

D My mum because she knows me so well. I try and deny it but she's got this, like, radar and she knows when something's not right.

G (laughs) It comes with years of practise, Del.

D I think that I've got one too.

G What, a radar?

D Yes, because I'll say are you okay and she says yes, but I know she's not. But I'll find out, I have my ways.

G Why do you go to school?

D Well, to learn stuff, to get an education, that's it. Well, I suppose we have a bit of fun, muck about and stuff.

D3 - Del Interview 3, Tuesday March 9th, period 2, RE's Classroom

G Can you tell me about your brothers?

D Richard is 6 years old, he was born in 1996, on the 20th June. Matthew is 4 and he was born in 1998, I think, on 10th October.

G What regiment is your step dad in?

D 1st Batallion of the DGR. They're infantry. He's a lance corporal but he's got to go on one course, do that, go on another course then, when he gets back, next April, I think, he'll get promoted. To Corporal. He does radios in the Warriors.

G Has he been away from home before?

D Loads of times, in the 5 years we've been here in Upton he's been to Kosovo, Kosovo, Canada and now Iraq. He's only been home for one summer.

G What's it like when he's away?

D Terrible. (At this points mouths 'home problems' to me).

G Your mum has spoken to me, so you can talk if you want. If you would rather not, that's no problems.

D I'll talk about it a bit. Before he goes, I'm really scared. When I'm outside, when I'm out, I don't have as much fun and I tend to go in a lot earlier. I mean, I have fun, but not as much as before.

G What's it like when he gets back?

D Well, we get the house all smart and he doesn't normally get in until about 8 o'clock in the evening, so by that time we're all tired. So then it's back to normal again. He's tired and is normally jetlagged and Matthew and Richard jump all over him, so he doesn't normally speak much to me.

G What's your main worry when he's away?

D Mum and her problems. I feel like I have to be responsible and, I don't want to be there.

G Let's move on to something different shall we? Does your mum have a job?

D No, not at the moment, but she's going to work in Zennor primary school and help out with the reading.

G Did she work in C?

D Yes, sometimes, she worked in Asda a few times. And she worked up at the university doing some catering work.

G When you have problems with homework who do you go to at home?

D Mum, she's a lot better than dad.

G Do you read out loud at home?

D Yeah, sometimes, to mum.

G Do you help out at home?

D Yeah, I've got some jobs but not many. I take down the dirty cups and plates in the morning, I'm supposed to do it every day but I don't.

G Can you describe your bedroom to me?

D Okay it's got, have you been in my house?

G I've been downstairs.

D Well upstairs you've got on the right, my bathroom and then that way (points left) you've got my room. It's my own room. You go in there and it's got my desk and a playstation, a stereo/DVD player. On one wall I've got one big poster of Linkin' Park, I've got a calender of Linkin Park and I've got another poster of

Linkin Park. There's a cupboard with a load of army stuff in it. Then you've got my bed. The walls are white.

G The same as when you moved in?

D Yes.

G What about the curtains?

D Grey, I think, my own ones.

G Have you got any pets?

D Yeah, I've got some fish. I've got my cat, Spike, he quite likes me, when I'm up in bed he always comes up and sits on my stomach.

G Have you got friends in dad's regiment?

D Yeah, but most of them are in the REME and Westies and stuff that's in the area we live in.

G So how did you meet the friends of your dad?

D Months before we came here (Upton?) we started to be friends, we got talking and started to know each other really well.

G Did you know them before you came to Upton then?

D No, we got talking.

G Do the DGR ever have family days?

D We get loads but, to be honest, they're when dad's away, so we don't go.

G Have you ever been to one?

D Yeah, but I didn't like it because it was boring.

G Do you know where you're going next?

D Northern Ireland. We'll be there for a year or two. I'm sort of looking forward to it, it sounds good. It'll be better than here.

G When you leave school what do you want to do?

D Join the army.

G Do you want to go to university?

D I might go to army college for a year and learn the radio, the kit and everything.

G What's been the favourite house that you've lived in?

D I quite liked the Matthew's Estate one because, like, in C, there were these posh houses that we used to walk past with walls in front of the kitchen, and I always wanted something like that. And we had one like that at Matthews.

G So when you join the army which regiment do you want to be in?

D I either want to be in my dad's regiment or our army cadet regiment, the Royal B and H regiment, because they're infantry.

G So you don't want to join a cavalry regiment?

D No.

G Tell me a bit about army cadets.

D It's fun. I had a bit of a funny time this week. We have Sgt Jackson and Corporal Wassle and I remember, we've got the Upton Platoon, the B Platoon, and there's LH and M. I remember Jackson because I thought she was a warrant officer, but she said to me that she's not a sergeant in this but that I had her rank in the real army right.

G Why did you decide to join the cadets?

D it's fun. I can't go to football anymore because I can't get a lift there, so cadets there's a minibus which comes to pick you up and it's meant to be really good.

D4 - Del Interview 4, Tuesday 6th July, period 2, HO's classroom

G Let's start with a warm up question. How would someone who knows you well describe you? Start off with the words, Del is.

D I don't know what to say, I can't describe myself, I don't know how anyone else sees me.

G Okay, let's look at picture 1.

D This is in the kitchen, because there's my mum and that's either dad or a workman. Must be a workman because he's got his notes out.

G Do you get breakdowns fairly often then?

D Yeah. The roof caved in a couple of months back because the boiler was leaking.

G Did they take ages to come and sort it out?

D No, they were there in about 10 minutes.

G This is picture number 2.

D There's my brothers Richard and Matthew but they look really silly in that because they've got all that hair! They're both bald now, like one of those army cuts. It's in the front room, they must be watching TV.

G Number 3 we think must be somebody's finger!

D Number 4 is Richard and Matthew again watching the TV with the cat on them.

G I didn't know you had a cat.

D Yeah, the cat's coming over and is probably purring. That's Spike. We did have 3 cats but we gave one away because mum's pregnant. The other ones are Scooby and Arthur, but now it's just Spike and Arthur.

G So it's a bit much having 3 cats when you're pregnant.

D Yes, it's all the muck and everything and she's sick all the time.

G Let's look at number 5.

D Richard and Matthew again. It's annoying because these are my pictures and my mum probably took this one. Richard and Matthew are a pain at times.

G Is it difficult having an age difference between you?

D Yes. They mess around so much sometimes that they make you so angry that you just want to hit them. I ask them to do stuff and they can just ignore me.

G Do you wish that you had brothers and sisters your own age?

D No, not really.

G Well number 6 is an almost identical shot so we won't bother talking about that one. Number 7, I like this one, I think it's lovely.

D Yeah, but look at their hair, though! It's horrible. We're all sitting down here posing for the camera, but I didn't want to be in any of the shots.

G Why's that?

D Because I didn't. It's my life and how I see it and I don't see myself in it.

G That's a weird thing to say, isn't it?

D No, it's not, it's quite normal. You know, this is my life and I don't see myself, you know, him standing there and me standing there.

G Are these army curtains in the back of the picture?

D No they're my mums, she's got a couple of sets of everything and she changes it all around once in a while.

G Look at number 10.

D It's the front room again with the TV in the corner.

G Your mum has done quite a bit to the house hasn't she?

D Yeah, she's painted and stuff.

G Let's talk about number 12.

D That's my dad the night he went off to Iraq and he was supposed to go on the Thursday, but he came in on the Tuesday night and his flights had changed, so it was all a bit of a rush because he had to leave an hour later. He looks different here because he's got his desert combats on.

G Does he wear his uniform every day then?

D Yeah, he does, but I've got some of it, like I've got his boots.

G Of course, you're in the cadets now, aren't you? So he came back from Iraq and was at home for the weekend and then he was away again on a course?

D Yeah, he's on a course at W.

G So he goes up to W and comes back at weekends?

D Yes, normally, but he didn't come back this weekend because he was on guard. And I don't think that he could afford do.

G I know your mum was worried about the money. Would you like to do the same job in the army as your dad?

D I don't know, I'm not sure really. I think I would like to join a rifle platoon like him.

G You might end up being posted down here yourself.

D Well we're going to Germany for 6 years, but I would have to earn the money to get over here, although the army might pay for that.

G What does your mum feel about you wanting to join the army?

D It doesn't bother her.

G Where's your dad been?

D Canada twice, Kosovo twice, Iraq, Northern Ireland, well that was probably his best posting. He got stabbed in the arm, petrol bombed and he stopped a robbery.

G What is it about the army that interests you?

D Well I figure you don't know how grateful you are until you come that close to losing it, you know. You know you go through day to day and then you have something that makes you grateful. Like school, that's just boring.

G Is that why you don't like it?

D Yes, it's just why be here when you could be sitting out in a field, doing exercises and stuff. At cadets, it's only exercises but it still feels exciting.

G Okay then, let's look at picture number 13.

D That's Jeff. He's my best friend. It's taken at his house.

G Does Jeff come from an army family?

D His dad's in the army, but his mum lives in a civilian house. I don't think his mum and dad are together but he still gets to see him a lot.

G What's happening in the photo?

D We were about to go to school.

G How long have you been best mates?

D Since the summer holidays of year 6.

G So what is it about him that you like?

D I'm not sure if I can tell you that (laughs) well, he does have a talent for getting into trouble.

G Does he live quite close to you?

D Not close, but about a 3 or 4 minute walk.

G Okay then, number 14.

D I'd just come in from school, I'm knackered because I had just walked home from school. I went through to sit on the sofa with my brother. You can tell that my dad is home because his stuff is on the table. Yeah, that must have been a couple of weeks ago because of the mirror.

G What do you mean?

D The mirror's not there anymore.

G So how long does it take you to walk home then?

D About 30, 40 minutes.

G This is picture number 15.

D Oh my dad's stuff was hanging around at home, so Richard tried on his webbing to see what it was like.

G Was your dad okay about that?

D Yeah, yeah, he put it on him. And he's saluting all wrong.

G I notice that his hat is desert but his webbing is combat.

D Yeah, I've seen on the telly over there that the American security personnel have black webbing and black combat jackets and they stand out a mile.

G Do you think that your younger brothers might join the army as well?

D No, all they do is talk about football.

G Right, this is number 17.

D Richard and Matthew in the bath what was my mum thinking of? If you see them now they're, like, bald. They look so much better.

G Here's number 18.

D That's the front room but mum's changed it all around again. Yep, she's changed it all around again and it's nothing like that now.

G Number 19.

D That's when my mum broke her ribs and I had to have a week or two off school to help my mum.

G Was your dad away then?

D Yes, he came home for weekends.

G How did she break her ribs?

D She slipped in the bath.

G So you put her to bed and were looking after her.

D I had to bring her her breakfast, lunch, dinner, get the house tidied and get the boys to school.

G Number 20 is the same, so let's look at number 21.

D That's Richard and the cat again. I think I was trying to do my homework.

G Number 22.

D Oh that's Matthew messing about and in the next one as well.

G Number 24.

D That's dad coming home. He and mum had an argument that night, I remember it, mum spilled the gravy and you can see it all over the side by the cooker. My dad was leaning out of the kitchen door having a cigarette to calm his nerves afterwards.

G Your dad isn't allowed to smoke in the house, then?

D No, neither of them do because of passive smoking.

G Do you talk quite a lot to your dad?

D Yes, sometimes. We talk about the army and he tells me about his stories. Whenever we watch a film with a war story in it, he sits there and goes that would never have happened!

G Do you miss him when he's gone?

D Yes, but I talk to my mum.

G I tell you what I have noticed, Del, is that you haven't got any pictures of school.

D It's not really me, is school.

G So when I asked you to take photos of a day in your life, a day in your life isn't really school.

D No, it isn't. It's more about what goes on at home.

P1 - Interview with Mrs Turner, Katie's Mum, Thursday 26th February, 10am, Her Home

G I wonder if we could start by you telling me which schools Katie has been to?
Mrs T Oh, God, the first school was the Oxford School in M, Germany and she went there when she was four and a half. That was for the first two years. And then we went to H, the S School and that was the worst school. M was a great school but S was open plan. They had four classrooms off one big room and I was annoyed. Even in the army, you live in one of their flats, you have to go to this school. I mean, there was another school not far away for her and for Michael (her brother). Well my experience of the school was that I went to the parents' day and they said that there was no problems and everything was fine. 2 months down the road you get a report and nothing was fine. The report said what they told me on the phone. And I wonder how we went from there to there in only 3 months. And if she was going down, why didn't we get a letter or something in between. So my guess is the school is totally rubbish for an army school. Not every army school is rubbish but this school in particular. And I was not the only one who had complaints. And the problem is when you live in H you can't do anything. And then we move back here and she went to Charterhouse and the amazing thing was the kids went from the bottom up. Even though they were further back in their school education, they were much happier there. Then after that she went to Upton. So she's attended 4 schools. At the beginning she liked Upton, but now she wants to go to boarding school like her brother. But her brother is not really in a boarding school, it's a school for his behaviour problem and he needs some assessment. It's Aspergers or ADHD or whatever. But we have a problem because Katie wants to go to boarding school because she thinks that everything is like a teddy bear there, but it's not like a teddy bear. Wherever you go, you take your problems with you. After the Ofsted report, my older son told me, because they had discussed it at college, that this school is not a good school but, I don't know, it's the only school, otherwise you have to put them on the bus to A.. And I think that's ridiculous. I mean the bus up there, it's only 5 minutes drive, but they have to go on that because there's no pavement up there, and it's really dangerous to go where cars drive as well. But to go to A., it's much longer and I don't think that Katie can cope with that. So I leave her where she is and we'll see what's going to happen to the report.
G What kind of difficulties did you feel that she had?

Mrs T She's dyslexic and for that reason she's getting more help. And I think that's right. I mean, when you are dyslexic and you have difficulties reading and writing, you have difficulties in every other area. We'll just wait and see what happens to her. You see, we've had to fight for Michael, really, and I have had to argue for therapy and then schooling, but you don't do this in England, it's all education, education and if they're not in education you can't do anything. And I would argue, look at that problem first and then put him in education and see if he can go further or not. But we've been fighting for two years and he doesn't even have an assessment, so you see we've been concentrating so much on Michael at the moment that we can't really focus on Katie as well. It's a shame, but that's the way it is. I have to kick my 19 year old up the backside so he gets to college, because he's at the moment in his own little world! Then Sarah is the only one that I don't have to worry about, apart from she's like a boy and gets into ruffles with people. But I think that school should sort it out. Katie is too sensitive almost, she can't ignore something, she just cries or really gets upset and she needs to be toughened up.

G Which school was Katie's dyslexia diagnosed at?

Mrs T M. The first school. When they discovered she had dyslexia she had progress reports and an assessment from the school's psychiatrist and he did everything. The funny thing is that he did it in Germany, wrote the report for her. But when Michael came up for it, he (the doctor) refused point blank because we were in Germany. He said that, the education system over there, we only morally abide by the rules but if you want to take us to court you can't. Because it's in Germany. But I mean, that's ridiculous. But to get Katie through in Germany was possible. I mean, she should have had more help at S School. I wasn't very happy about that but I couldn't do anything. But then, somebody should have said to me, listen, this is disgusting, this school is no good for her. With this open plan class, there was never anywhere for her to go and have peace and quiet and concentrate. I am bitter about it, very bitter. If I could close S School down now, I would do!

G So out of the four schools that Katie has been to, this one didn't really match her needs?

Mrs T Yes and it did the most damage! And it was an army school and there was nothing that we could do. Not really. There was M School also but they were full but if I had had a case probably they would have taken them. But the problem was you couldn't get any information from either side in Germany. If I had made a

fuss, I wonder if I could have got her in there. If I had made it public? You see, we were not the only parents who were unhappy with S School. They changed the head teacher, they changed a few things around but, in principle, it didn't change. And really what they needed was a third primary school there some children flourish with that open plan, but most of them can't, not in an army camp where there's half a psychiatrist for every child anyway. Here's what I think and S School really fucked it up for my kids, for Katie and her sister. As soon as they went to Charterhouse, they went up again.

G So what was it about Charterhouse and the school in M that helped them, do you think?

Mrs T In M, when you had a problem, you go in and you talk to them. They had clear classes, and a door that shut. If a child does something stupid, they aren't talked to in front of everybody. So this child isn't bullied on the compound as well, it doesn't come into school. I don't know, you see they had a long bus drive at S when they were young, because the school was on the other side of the town, about 45 minutes depending on the traffic. But at M they had nice uniforms, they had nice classes and when you were in school it felt like school. It felt good, when I was in S School it didn't feel very well, it was more like a kindergarten, you know for the little ones. Harry, my husband, had the same feeling. You go in one room and they all look at you. When Katie had her problems with reading and writing, somebody from the other side would turn to her and have a look at her, so her confidence got knocked down. So it's a vicious circle. Before that, she was in one classroom, so she can go in there and they close the door on the classroom. Her confidence was not so knocked down. In the playground, she was always crying at S School ... In Charterhouse it was the same, I think that they had a lot of support for her because she needs a lot of support, they have their own classrooms and you can go into other classes for help but not everybody sees you. And I guess they have bullying there as well, most schools have it, but they tried to handle it here as well. The point is, Katie is a little bit sensitive and I have told her she needs to toughen up. I say to her it doesn't matter what people say, because words can't hurt you, don't tell them that you're hurt, just ignore it because then after 10 minutes they're bored of it. It's different if they get vicious, then I think you should complain, but with name calling you do it to your sister here. So get on with it and get a little bit more tough now. With Katie if you say anything to her, she storms upstairs and says things like "oh it's so unfair and nobody loves me", mind you, it's probably the hormones coming in! I know the

feeling because I felt like that when I was younger. She takes an hour to calm down. But with Sarah, she blows up and that's it. And I think, well if she does this in school it's no wonder she gets picked on.

G Can you tell me a bit about the army and the support that they gave you?

Mrs T The whole welfare system stinks to high heaven. The only support I had was when we were in H and the support I got was from the Families Officer from the X regiment and that wasn't even Harry's regiment. They tried to get us to stay there so that Katie could go to G School which was a very very good school and Michael could go into a therapy with the doctor. But our regiment, the QOD, didn't want to have it and they moved us back. They put us in these houses, no-one else from the QOD lives here. When we were in M with the QOD I saw a health visitor. One health visitor! When I had Michael, that was the only time. When Harry was away, I had 6 months at home with three young children under 5, and I had no support system, I just got on with it. There was no one. Even now, here, with all the difficulties, there is no-one coming around here. And I'm not going there because I know, I know I'm not a battered wife, so I wouldn't get any support. And I think it stinks to high heaven. And in H, we had a meeting where we could talk, but here, nothing. I don't see the Families Officer, really, getting involved in what we have with Michael now, we need pressure to the civvies to get on with it. I said to Harry that somebody has to do something. We as parents can't do anything, we have to rely on you. But here, the QOD, never any help.

G Have you ever heard of the Service Children's education unit?

Mrs T Yes, I think we had someone from them in the meetings with Michael in H. But, to be honest, when we came over, we had all the paperwork for Michael so we didn't have to start all over again, we hoped that they would make enquiries before hand, because we said, here's the paperwork, but nothing. We got to this area and it's "we can't do nothing, bye bye." And I haven't seen the Families Offficer in a meeting.

G So there was no liaison between Germany and the UK before you came here?

Mrs T No. And even when we moved here, I thought oh, at least we can start where we left off. How wrong I was. We had someone from the education team here who tried his best, a social worker, everything, but we have to start again because England doesn't accept that. They have to find out by themselves in other words. I mean, Michael was on the register, for being in danger, and every two months we had a meeting, there are all these people sitting around, even the welfare officer, but all he does is sit there, writing stuff, never says a word. And I

was so upset, I went out a few times. So I said to him, don't waste my time. And my husband said to me, you can't say that to him, because he's in the army, you see. But I'm not in the army. On the one hand now you're in England, so many things have changed, you can take them to court, you don't need the army. But then, he's got 2 years left now and he's still not saying anything. It's the system. After all these years, I kept my mouth shut and I got on with it.

G You talked earlier about the lack of support when your husband was away. Did you notice a change in your children when their dad was away?

Mrs T Michael, he was very fixated to his dad. Katie and Sarah, they used to play together more, there was always someone in the house, they weren't alone. Eventhough they had their own friends, they were still together. But Michael, he was the baby and he wanted a bit more love from his daddy. He needed to play fight with his daddy. Then I started to have this reverse psychology with him, if I say, like, touch the oven, he wouldn't. If I say, don't touch it, he would do it! In the end, I didn't want to get annoyed, so I used to say, fine, do it. And I knew he wouldn't do it. Because he was quite a handful when he started to walk and stuff. Harry missed all of that anyway.

G Do you think that they were different at school as well?

Mrs T I don't know, Michael wasn't at school when we were in M. But Katie and Sarah were quite happy to get out of the house and mix with other children. But Michael didn't want to go to kindergarten. But what I felt was wrong was that they should see if they can get men working in these jobs, so at least he can be with a man somewhere down the line. Every woman was, in his eyes, like mummy. And he wanted daddy. That was really where we had the first difficulties with him. But Katie and Sarah, no.

G You've obviously had several difficulties with your children's education up to now. Who is the first person that you usually approach about this?

Mrs T At first I rely on the school if I get a report. But if you get a report and everything's fine, you believe that. The written word, you believe that. You go to a parents day and they say that everything's fine, so you go home and think fine. But then you get this report and you say to yourself something is not right. All these problems I had at S School, I think that Michael did not have the right teachers. And we had this patronising attitude from them, really, like, Mr and Mrs T, you are the parents and you are the losers. And they said to me a new punishment system. Oh don't punish him if he doesn't do anything stupid, just ignore it, give him a little sweetie before school, no matter how he behaves, so

long as he behaves at school that's fine by us. And I thought, you must be silly. From that point on, I thought, right, that's enough.

G How do you find out about school provision in the new posting area?

Mrs T Harry said that there were 2 schools here and that the girls would go there. I didn't know anything about the schools. The army they give you a list with all their phone numbers and so on and then you have to contact them yourself. When we moved in, he was here for half an hour the Families Officer and he talked to Harry because I was crying because I couldn't believe that we were here. I thought that we were in the middle of nowhere. No information, nothing. Well, I get information from the social worker. It's more word of mouth. I mean, there's the QOD newsletter, but I don't see that.

G So when you moved to Pilton, you moved in and then looked for the school?

Mrs T Yes, more or less. I mean we knew that there were two schools there. I mean for Michael we said that, something is not right in Michael's head and if it is not sorted out, no matter which school he goes to, he will get excluded. The more he will be excluded, the more mixed up he gets in his head and the more difficult he will be. So after Michael saw the doctor, we got him into N School but it was not the right school either. But I get my information from the social workers, but not from the QOD really.

G You mentioned when you were in H that there were 2 schools there and that one was already full up. Have you ever had any other problems with admissions?

Mrs T No. I've never had a problem getting them into school.

G How do you prepare your kids for moving school?

Mrs T Well, when we moved from M to H, they were quite happy to move. Well, something happened there, nothing to do with the kids, something to do with the adults in the QOD, because I knew too much and there was a lot of back stabbing. And they backstabbed through the kids as well and they had to suffer. It was embarrassing and I think that some people, really, should be court marshalled for it. And they were happy because they were going to be away from all that. And I was happy to move, too. I thought the best way was to get out. I thought we should have gone to SSAFA and confronted these people straight away. But I said, okay, Harry, I'll keep my mouth shut and we won't do anything.

G Do you mind telling me what it was or would you prefer not to talk about it?

Mrs T There were several women who had affairs and they were so called best friends of mine. And they asked me to cover for them. Until of course one of the husbands came to me and he asked me right out and I had to lie. I said no, I lied

to him, and then I said right, after this, I want nothing to do with you because I can't do this anymore. And then the back mouthing starts. And then they accuse Sarah of stealing a necklace off another child. And I was furious because Sarah never went into this house this child was neglected. And when I asked this child I said, look, we had you here, we fed you, we gave you somewhere to stay when your parents weren't in and this is what you do! And he says, yes, my mummy said that. So I knew then from where it came. So I went over there and the woman said yes, so what. And my other best friend was stood there grinning. So Harry went over to speak to one of the husbands, and he said ' oh I'm keeping out of it.' So I said, well, our way of dealing with it is you had better make sure that you get a posting. Or I might let a few little secrets go up. Then it's not only the Families Office that will go up.

G So you moved to H and that was quite good?

Mrs T Yes, it was good, away from those children. Then in H I was a little bit more careful with my friends. I had a job and I had some friends from my job and some friends from the regiment, not our regiment but a different one, so I was quite happy. So if I had a fall out with one, there was always the other.

G It must have been a big move to come back here, though?

Mrs T I didn't want to come back. Because in H, okay, we had our difficulties because of Michael, but we had this one hope to get him therapy. And we were so close to getting him into that. And I was happy because I knew that S School was not a good school, but Katie and Sarah were in their last year and if we had stayed we would have gone to G School and that was an excellent school. So they would have made it up there. So I was not worried about Katie and Sarah. But Harry tried to stay but every time they would say, oh it's Manual Records, oh no it's the regiment, oh no it's manual records. And it's always someone else's decision. What we needed was someone to stand up and be counted for. But there was all these different excuses. But because we're just a number in this big organisation, all these years I was just a number but for once, I wanted to be treated like an individual.

G Was it the first time that you had lived in the UK?

Mrs T Yes, it was the first time.

G So not only did you have the whole business of moving house again, but you also had the preparations of moving here.

Mrs T We used to come every year once for a few weeks but up North and that's a different thing, 2 weeks with grandad, grandma, aunties and uncles. That's

different circumstances. Then you could go home, here you have to stay. At the moment I'm not worried about Michael, because at the moment he's at the C Centre and he's getting therapy. But we waited 2 years for that. And in those 2 years, Sarah and Katie were on the sideline. But I don't see anything for his future here.

G When you moved back, did you go and visit the schools?

Mrs T Yes, we went there with the kids, we had a look around and at the Charterhouse School they gave us the grand tour. It was not a problem. I was happy with that school. On the other hand, we only had two choices, Charterhouse they go on the bus, and it's only 20 minutes bus drive, or A is further away. And I had heard that the other schools were not so good, you get it by word of mouth. Somebody in H, when I told them, said oh I know that, don't send them to that school. The difficulty is that you don't know whether that's changed. It's difficult when you're far away. I mean everyone said that S School was perfect but when they were there it was awful! All you can do is put them in there and see how you go on, speak to the other parents, that's when you really find out. You really can't find out much before. When you come here, you may find out that the school has totally changed.

G When your husband is out of the army will you stay in the UK?

Mrs T I want to go back. The problem for him, he has got depression and he doesn't know what to do, really. And the job prospects for him in Germany aren't very good either. You see, I have to make the compromises all the time, so I guess we'll stay here. If I was silly enough to marry him, I just have to get on with it. Fine but on the other hand, this is a chance to go back, why not? The other thing I would say is that we need to stay down here, we can't go up North because Michael is in the C at the moment and we need to be near him. Because when he comes home we have to pick him up. From here, it's just an hour's drive. So we have to stay somewhere round here in 2 years, that's fine by me because it's close to London where my sister is living. Although she might move back to Germany as she's had enough. But it's still close enough for me to get on a ferry from Dover, over to Europe. Up North I think I would feel isolated. The other thing is that we can't get a house, not on his wages, we can't get a mortgage, we'll have to wait until the DHE chuck us out of here and hope that the council give us a house. But the army welfare, and I take them on their word this time, she said that they would help us. If we stay here, then the girls can stay at that school and I don't want them starting another school again. When we moved

from Germany it was in the middle of the year and that was not right. If we had moved later it would have been at the beginning of a new school year, but no, we had to come in January. If you move in September and go to a new school that's fine, but I think in January it's awkward. If you go in January you get that "oh" and everyone stares at you.

G Did the kids find it difficult when they moved to England?

Mrs T It was more excitement. The first thing was definitely excitement because they had to get on a double decker bus to go to school at Charterhouse and that was the first time that they had ever seen a double decker. And my kids are different, they aren't "oh I don't want to try something new." They are more open and Katie is more nosey and wants to find something out. And then after a few times the novelty wears off. But for Sarah and Katie it was difficult to leave their friends behind even Katie made good friends and she was very annoyed at leaving them behind. In H they started to make girl friends, and the boys were away, really good friendships.

P2 - Interview with Mrs Gordon, Shelley's Mum, Thursday 26th February, 11.30am, Her Home

G Where has Shelley been to before Upton?

Mrs G Before Upton, her junior school in Upton was, oh I've got to remember the name now, Charterhouse? She went there for her last year. Then before that she was at another school in A for a year and I can't remember the name of it, then before that she went to S School in A for a year, then before that we lived in Lancashire so she went to a school in Lancashire. So she's been to quite a few different schools.

G Is that because you were posted?

Mrs G No, when I lived in Lancashire I was married to somebody else and then, obviously, the marriage was over so I moved nearer to my family and Shelley came with me. My family lived at one end of A and I stopped there for a while, until I got myself sorted out with my own place. Then, of course, when I got myself sorted with a place it was at the other end of A and I had to change schools. I couldn't drive there every day. Then I married Simon and we got an army quarter which I couldn't turn down because it was a lot cheaper rent, so we moved into the army quarter in Upton and had to change schools again. And then, of course, they demolished half of Upton and moved us here but then

Shelley moved to secondary school anyway so she went to the one up the road, at Upton.

G Have you ever had any difficulties at any of the previous schools?

Mrs G I don't think she's having any difficulties now but in her junior school years she was very behind. But that could be a lot to do with moving all the time, leaving her father behind, me meeting someone new. And then of course, she was living with someone who was not her dad, and he was here one minute and gone the next because of his job, so, when I met Simon, she never really got to know him like she would have a father or a step father because he was so rarely here. I think she found it hard work because she would be all shy again when he got back and she would have to get to know him all over again. But since she's been at secondary school I don't think she's had any problems.

G Out of the schools that she's been to, how helpful have they been at matching what they provide to Shelley's needs?

Mrs G Her first school in A, I couldn't really tell you because there was so much going on in my life and her life there wasn't room for anything else. I know it sounds awful but schooling sort of got put on the back burner for a little while until we got ourselves sorted out with somewhere to live. So I can't comment on that one. The second school that she went to when we started getting settled into our own place and all that, I don't think they did very well in fact, I think that they gave up on her. When we went to parents' evening they were so concerned that she was so far behind, they actually told me at parents' evening that she was just never going to be an academic person. And I thought, well, you've failed then as a school, by saying that, because you've given up on her already. You weren't trying to help. So in a way I was glad that we were changing schools. She went to Charterhouse and she did really well there.

G What kind of things make a good school for her, then?

Mrs G I don't know really. Support, support with school work. And whether she gets on with the teachers. That's a big thing for her. Apart from that I couldn't say.

G When you moved from A to here, did you get any help from the army?

Mrs G I didn't ask for it. I kind of knew what there was for schools here anyway, so I didn't need to ask. I suppose it would have been there.

G If you do have problems, who do you go to?

Mrs G I would approach the school first. Well I would talk to Shelley about it before anything, then I would approach the school.

G How do you find out about the new schools before you move?
Mrs G If I remember rightly, Simon got an information pack, but before he had got it, I had already been enquiring about that school. It helped, as well, because two of our friends were already in the army and lived in Upton, so they sort of helped. They said that was a really good school etc.
G When you move, do you move then approach the school, or the other way around?
Mrs G The application to the school was all done before the day we moved in. Because I think that we moved in during the summer holidays and I knew that straight after the holidays she would be in there.
G How do you prepare Shelley for transferring schools? What will you say to her when you leave Upton?
Mrs G Well, I won't be moving. I am going to stay put. I've told Simon. You see he's got 2 other children and they live with us. And one of them's got learning and behavioural difficulties and one of them has gone to a special boarding school. And if we were to move out of the county, I have got to go through all the rigmarole I had with him, and he was at home for a year with me, which was really, really hard, because he didn't want to be here, he wanted to be with his mum. Unfortunately for reasons that couldn't be helped he couldn't be. So I had the hassle of putting up with a disruptive child at home every day for a whole year. So I've said that there's no way on God's earth that I will move again. He will have to get himself out of the army. I'm sorry but you have to put your children first. I mean obviously I don't want him to through away all that he's done he's only got four years left until he gets his pension, but I'm not going to do that again.
G So worst case scenario is that you'll stay and he'll be posted off?
Mrs G No, worst case scenario is that he'll have to get out because I won't stay here and look after his children that have problems, that need him here. So that's the worst case scenario. But I don't think that that will happen anyway because I've been in touch with the army welfare to get him to stay here. I know that the battalion are moving next year to Northern Ireland and I've said no way because there's no special schooling over there. And he's going AME, he's just going to stay here attached to another regiment. By that time we've only got two, three years left anyway, so that's what he's trying to do.
G So did you talk to Shelley about moving school?
Mrs G Yes, I talked to her, yes. She probably won't remember any of it! It worked out quite well, really, because I didn't have to take her out half way through a

school year. She was in her first year in Junior school and we moved in the summer holidays, she had all the summer holidays to make friends, which was good because all the friends she made, every single one of them, was going to Charterhouse. She already knew two boys who went there, from our friends, so she was quite looking forward to it because she knew Martin and Daryl. So I don't think she was scared about it, no. Whether she said different to you, I don't know.

G Did you go and visit the schools?

Mrs G Yes. We went and did all that, yes. We went and visited Charterhouse and met the headmaster. We got shown around the school and stuff. We had also taken a drive up there on a Saturday and had a look around with her, so she was quite looking forward to it. It helped as well because that other couple that I was talking about that I know, he was caretaker there so he gave us a good look around when the school wasn't even open!

G You might be aware of it with your step sons, but when dad is away, are they different?

Mrs G Definitely, not with Shelley, but definitely with the two boys. Basically, when he's here, I have a certain amount of control over them. We try to be strict but we try to be fair. If we tell them no, we tell them why no. It's not you will do this and that's it, it's no, you will do this because. When dad's away I have no control over them whatsoever. If they want to climb on the roof and jump off, or run out the house, then they do. And all I can do is drag them in sometimes by the back of the neck and that's basically what it's like. It's tough. They've both been diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder which I don't actually believe in, I think it's just a word for children that are out of control. They were on loads of medication, like ritulin, and things like that which they don't take any more because I don't believe in controlling children with drugs.

G What was your own experience of school?

Mrs G I loved it and I hated it! I was glad to leave, I had no intention of going to college or anything. I just wanted to go out there and earn money! I did the normal things like bunk off! But I still sat my exams - I could have done better, I do know that I could have done better, but the way I looked at it was that I learnt things that I thought I would need when I left, which was Maths and English and stuff everything else.

G Your stepsons' difficulties, do you think that might have been caused by the military lifestyle?

Mrs G No because they have only been living with us for 14 months, so they've only known this house and the school that they're at now. No I think it was more to do with their mum and dad splitting up and their lifestyle they had with their mum. It's a lot to do with that.

G Have you ever heard about the Service Children's Education unit?

Mrs G I've heard about that much stuff because of the boys, I can't remember to be honest with you. No, hold on, I think they have. I think Simon spoke to a lady on the phone, from Upton, when we were trying to find schooling for Dillon. And somebody else came knocking on our door, a gentleman did, introduced himself and said, "I don't normally do this but we feel that you've not been treated fairly by the education authority here, and this is the phone number and you can ring this lady who can help you and advise you." Which we did speak to her, yes.

G And did you find that this did move things forward?

Mrs G Well she wrote several letters to the education authority saying it was absolutely appalling and disgusting that this child had been out of school for over 12 months. Now, of course, he goes to St Edwards' school in R. What I don't understand is that, this is a special school for kids who are naughty and yet they send him home when he's naughty! They should keep him there and explain the reasons why and the reasons not, you know? With three other children at home, I can't give my 100% attention to him and that's what he's crying out for.

P3 - Interview with Mrs Carter, Nick's Mum, Thursday 26th February, 1.00pm, Her Home

G Can you talk me through where Nick has been to school?

Mrs C Right, he started school in Northern Ireland, he probably wouldn't remember that because we was only there for a couple of months. Then we went to M, and he went to B Infants, then M Junior School, then here and he went to Zennor Primary, then Upton.

G So he's been to a total of 5 schools, although the first one was for quite a short time?

Mrs C It was a full time school in Northern Ireland but he started in the January as we left in the March. He was only there for a couple of weeks.

G What difficulties has he had at school?

Mrs C Settling in, a lot. He's had to avoid bullies, as well, which didn't help. And they have sort of followed him around, all the time, so going to different schools ...

But I've always found that, because they are so close together in their ages, Nick would settle when Miles got to his school. It's like at Upton he didn't settle in his first year and then Miles started and now Nick has settled. So whether it's having that family contact? He doesn't like to go anywhere new on his own. He likes to be with somebody that he knows.

G So have you found that he's met up with friends from before?

Mrs C There's always been people that he's known in school. I mean, he gets on easily with people, it's not that he finds it hard, but it's just the fact that he's a bit insecure.

G How helpful were the schools in helping him to settle down?

Mrs C Not very helpful at all, actually! The bullying side they were good at and I think Nick just had to get on with it! Upton, they weren't very good. He used to get upset and say things like I've got a sore head so he could stay at home and have the day off, but then we found out it was because he was getting bullied. But really he just has to get on with it, but he's very personal and internalises it, so it's very hard for a teacher to notice it, really. I mean after I have suggested it to them, they've kept an eye on him that way, but I have to take control.

G Which of his schools were you happiest with?

Mrs C The Infant school, B in M, they were used to army children, it was on an army camp and it was only army children that went there. So they knew. And half of them were from army backgrounds anyway, the teachers themselves. And they understood more about the children's lives than a civilian school does.

G So what do you think the factors are which make a school include army children?

Mrs C Well I don't think that they should stereotype army children. I don't think an army child is treated as well as a civilian child, especially up there (ie Upton.) Because they don't seem to have a bond and it's always the army children who are in trouble. They are always the ones that are the main cause, but they don't take a look at the other cases, do you know what I mean? Everyone's an individual, but they are treated the same.

G Have you had any support from the army when you moved?

Mrs C Well, they've suggested where the schools are and they send prospectuses out. I get a prospectus from them. But otherwise we have to do it all ourselves. Before we moved here, they actually went to the schools themselves and said, look this is how many children we've got that are coming down. Whether they come to your school or not is, you know.

G Do you speak to people about the new area you're going to?

Mrs C Yes, I tend to speak to them rather than going and checking it all out. Me, I go with the majority but I do that for Nick and Miles' sake because there's nothing worse than being at a new school in a new place on your own. So I tend to go with the majority. And that's why he's there. I don't regret it because it's convenient and if he needs me I'm there. If he went into A, it's not so easy to get there. But he's settled there and he enjoys it, so. His grades have dropped a lot, though, I've noticed that, over the two years. And his English is terrible. But I don't know whether they think that's okay or no.

G Have you ever asked for advice from the SCE?

Mrs C No.

G Are you aware of what they do?

Mrs C No!

G So if you have problems with Nick's education, who do you go and see?

Mrs C The headmaster, or I would go to the governors and put a letter or proposal into them.

G Would you talk about it with your neighbours?

Mrs C It depends what the problem was, really. If it was the way that homework and things like that were done then I would talk to someone else, from Nick's class or year. But no, not if I had a problem with the school.

G When do you apply for a new school?

Mrs C Coming here, I had to apply before we came because there was the minimum number of places left in the classes. I had to wait three or four weeks when we were here before they could give me a place because of the age of the boys and the years were full. And they don't really set aside places for army children and I think because we are an army garrison, and most of the children are around here anyway, then they should realise that there are going to be families moving in and moving out. And they should keep them places instead of stacking up the classes to 30 kids, the maximum, you can't get in there, can you?

G Do you talk to the boys about it before you move?

Mrs C We do talk about it. They know they have got to go to a new school and I just say, I give them a prospectus and we'll read through it and we'll talk about the school and I'll talk about it with them when we get there. Because usually we come down for a day, it depends where we're going, but we'd pop down and have a look around the schools. It's just talking to them, and they're used to it now

anyway. But hopefully they won't have to do it again because I'm hoping to stay here.

G So you always visit the school first?

Mrs C Yes, if we can. Obviously we couldn't from Ireland, but yes we like to let them have a look round, get the school uniforms and things like that.

G Have you noticed a change in the boys' behaviour when their dad is away?

Mrs C No because I'm the boss! And their dad isn't he lets them walk all over him! Because he's not been there much in the last couple of years, he's left it all up to me and he thinks, because he's back, he doesn't want to take over my role. But no, my boys are exactly the same. Sometimes they are better behaved for their dad than they are me. They know which buttons to press with me, which they don't know with their dad.

G Obviously the last few years, you husband has been away.

Mrs C Yes, I chose that because, well, an element of that was because of the kids' school. It took me so long to get them in here. Six months after we got here they said, oh we're posting you away and I said I'm not coming because it took long enough and I knew we would be back here after the two years. And I said it took me long enough to get them in there. I'm not taking them out just yet. So we talked about it and we decided we would stay here, me and my boys.

G Were the DHE okay about you retaining the quarter?

Mrs C Yes, to start with. We had to write letters and everything else about the retention of the quarter. I only got to stay here because my regiment was actually staying here on a posting for five years. So they knew I would come back. Steve was only posted out, but he's still a member of the Westies, so that's the reason I got to stay. I don't think I would get to stay now because they're a bit tight for houses here.

G Well no wonder, they've sold them all off down the road!

Mrs C Well that's what we said they're a hundred houses short and there's a load of new families coming in.

G What kind of experience did you have of schooling?

Mrs C My schooling was really good but then I went to school in Germany for 9 years. The schools over there are really good. It was when I came back here I had two years left. I did my options over there but they didn't have them over here. So I just sort of got thrown in. I mean I got 2 O levels and 9 GCSEs, so it's not that bad! And I didn't try because I wasn't a good student. I mean French, I hated French, because I had to do that here and I hadn't done it before. But no, it

was good. I enjoyed it. I mean we moved around every two years, I wasn't as lucky as the boys because I had about 9 schools. But I loved it. I don't think I would have understood if I was a civilian because it is hard, you're making friends and losing them. My dad wasn't in a regiment, he was in the corps, so we were posted on our own, one family, so I was making friends all the time. Whereas, for Nick, it's good because he gets to move around with the battalion. Yeah, I enjoyed it, I would have those days back again any day!

G What comparison can you make between the forces' schools in Germany and the schools we have here?

Mrs C I think they understand more because over in Germany they know that you're in the forces of some kind. They expect what they expect. It took me ages to settle in but once I was in I was fine. They've always got their own pack and I think that's what they have here. I would go back tomorrow. My friend's going over in October, so I said can I not come? I'll come for a holiday for 2 years!

G What are your feelings about Upton?

Mrs C I'm unsure at the minute, because I've had trouble with Miles the last few weeks. They don't seem to have a teacher in charge. I've rung up three times and I've got no reply. Now they say in their letter that Miles' got behaviour problems, why have I only just heard about it? A behaviour problem, to me, you should be on top of it. There's nothing. I was worried about it at that last meeting (parents' ofsted) because I didn't realise it was that bad. People were telling me, but I was saying, no the boys are doing really well there. They're happy, so I'm happy. I didn't know until we got the letter home saying that they had failed. But I mean, hopefully that's a good thing because they've got to get up to the mark, they are concentrated on more and they'll get more money. Hopefully we'll see the difference. I mean it's not a bad school, the kids are happy there. As long as they're happy, I'm happy. It's not the school at the end of the day, if a child wants to learn they are going to learn.

G Do you think that your own work in education helps with that?

Mrs C Yes. Because I came from a pre-school that was the best, it had everything. And I came here and I'm supervisor of a little creche, it's smaller than this room. And it's not what you do, it's how you do it with them and what they learn. It doesn't matter what resources you've got, if you've got good teaching, it's fine.

G Are there any changes you would make to the boys' education up to now?

Mrs C Yes, I would teach him his colours when he was little! (laughter) I would do more reading with him because he's a nightmare at the minute. As soon as he started Upton, they say read twenty minutes a day and I say, have you done your reading? I used to read with him all the time at junior school but now I think he's got to be a bit more independent. So he says yes I've done it. Can you tell me what the story's about Nick? Oh, blah, blah, blah. And I say, but Nick, you read that about 6 months' ago! But I don't know. No, I don't think there is anything, there's nothing I could have done. Unless I sent them to boarding school but I didn't have kids to send them to boarding school. I think about it and, at least I know what Nick and Mitchell are up to. They could go to boarding school, fine the education is a lot better, supposedly, but we don't know what they're doing in the evenings when they're finished at 6 o'clock. You don't know whether they're smoking, whatever, do you? At least here they're coming home to me every night and I know. And Nick couldn't cope without his mum! You know he doesn't even stay over at his friends! He's attached to my umbilical cord still! He stayed over at a friends' house last weekend for the first time, because people have asked him to stay and he's like, yeah, yeah, I'm staying. Ten o'clock I get a phone call, Mum come and pick me up! He's terrible but Miles is very, very independent.

G What are the positive aspects of the lifestyle he's led?

Mrs C He's got to get around places and see places, see different schools. I don't know, he's a happy chappy!

P4 - Interview with Mrs Hobson, Del's Mum, Wednesday 3rd March, 11.30am at her home

G Can you tell me which schools Del has been to?

Mrs H Well at the moment he's up at Upton, before that he was at Zennor, then before that he was up at Katie School in C. He was at K. from 4 up to about 8 years old. Then he moved to Zennor for his last year and a bit of primary school, then he went up to Upton. It was only at Zennor that they diagnosed his difficulties.

G I hope you don't mind answering this, but when did you marry your husband?

Mrs H 1997.

G Were you living in a quarter then?

Mrs H No, Del and I lived in a council house up in C and that's where I met my husband. I had split up with Del's dad when I was only 3 months' pregnant with

him, so I've brought up Del single handedly. I didn't go into a quarter after that, I refused point blank to go and live on camp, so I didn't have my own quarter until we came to Upton. So this is my first posting.

G How happy have you been with his schools?

Mrs H Well here, at Zennor, he came right up the scale, up at Upton he's gone back into himself. And I didn't know until quite recently that the SENCO up there has left, so Del isn't getting the teaching that he should be. He should have been taken out of technology once a week to have extra classes with her.

G Did he have any problems leaving his school in C?

Mrs H No, the only problem he had was leaving his gran and grampa, since they had brought him up when he was little, so he was so close to them. I mean, I really miss them too. When we got to Zennor, I finally found out what his problems were. Eventhough he had had these problems all the way through, the school in C just put it down to lack of confidence. But up here, they called me in and said that it was dyslexia. I'm worried now he seems to be going backwards. I mean, the other night, he had some homework that he didn't understand and he took over an hour just to go through some words. So I sat upstairs with him and we tried to do it together. It must be hard for him because there are a lot of things that Del can't do that his younger brother, Richard, can do.

G What were the good things about Zennor, then, that worked for Del?

Mrs H Well, I think it was their communication. They were always having meetings, some of them I didn't understand, but I was always invited to them. They've even asked me now to go in and help a girl who is also dyslexic, worse than Del, I think, but they know that I learnt how to help Del. I don't know when that's going to start but I'll be going in soon. I want to give back to them because they were so helpful with him.

G Did you have any help from the army?

Mrs H No, I had to find the schools myself. So the first thing I did was to sort the schools out, so I phoned them myself. I mean you have to bear in mind that I had Del, a two year old and a baby and I had to do all of this myself. My husband was away on extended exercise and the army expected me to move up from C by myself. So in the end, he came off exercise, moved into the block here for a few weeks, then came back to C for me. They wanted us to go before Christmas, like everyone else, but I said no, I wanted to spend that last Christmas with my mum and dad. So I waited until after Christmas and then we came up here. So whilst everyone else came up in November/December, we came up on January 6th.

G How did you find out about the schools?

Mrs H Two of the women I knew from K. School gave me the names of the school. They said here's the schools, here's the phone numbers so that's what I did. I'm sure I could have asked the army, but I'm not the sort of person who will go asking, I would rather do it myself. He actually started at Charterhouse School you see, we moved to the Matthews Estate and then two weeks after moving in, they sent us a letter to say that we were going to have to move quarter because they were knocking the estate down. Before we moved in, they said that we would be able to be there for at least 18 months. So you can imagine us arriving to a place with a load of boarded up homes, I just cried my eyes out. So then we moved over to this side and Del, being Mr Independent, as he was, wouldn't let me walk him over to Charterhouse every day, it was about a 40 minute walk, so he used to leave at quarter to 8 to walk to school and get home at quarter to 4 and I would be in that porch worrying. As soon as we moved here I tried to get him in to Zennor, and it got a bit, not nasty, but I was getting a bit irate, and I wrote a letter just saying I wanted him in there and a couple of weeks later he got his place. I was just so worried about him walking all that way.

G So how long was he at Charterhouse for?

Mrs H We moved here at the beginning of January, we moved quarter in the February and he got in there in the March, so it was only a couple of months.

G If you have problems with Del's education, who do you speak to?

Mrs H Nobody, I don't know who to speak to. I might speak to what I call close friends here, but not many. Del isn't ashamed of his difficulties but he doesn't like other people pointing them out to him. When I first got here, I didn't realise just how bad it was, but up at Zennor, when he left, they had a little ceremony and Del was presented with a medal for his achievement and it was only then that I realised. He was a bit embarrassed about it, but I was just so proud of him.

G When you moved here, how did you go about preparing Del for moving from Canterbury to here?

Mrs H Well, when he was at K, that was a really bad school and the only reason that I sent him there was because, well, his grandad used to go there at the end of the day. But I think it's shut down now. It was only Del that I had to sort out, so I made the phone calls and did it all over the phone. We did talk about him leaving and he was fine about it. He was looking forward to it, a new life, a new start. Now that we're here, though, neither him nor I like Upton, he doesn't like the school, and we can't wait to leave.

G Did you visit the schools before Del went there?

Mrs H Charterhouse I visited on the day that you go to fill the forms out. Zennor I didn't I've got all this coming up with him (points to youngest child) because he goes up there in September, and they've given me loads of stuff about it. Richard's there now and they'll just get on with it.

G Did you get any information about the schools?

Mrs H Yes, they sent me quite a good booklet. And Zennor gave me all their bumph as well. I got this booklet here for him (points to youngest child) and I got the same sort of thing for Del but in a big folder.

G Has your husband been away a lot?

Mrs H In the last 4 years, he's been away for 2 and a half of that.

G Do the kids behave differently when he's away?

Mrs H Del, for instance. When dad's away he's the man of the house. I mean, my kids are everything to me and I run around after them, even Del, and I get told off for that. He's got one or two jobs to do normally, like bring the cups down in the morning, but as soon as his dad's away, he gets on at the others to help out and be good, too! He really helps out. He doesn't like his dad being away, he feels responsible, partly because of what we've been through. He's the man of the house calls out as he goes off to school, have a good day, mum and be good. He worries.

G Do you think that he is different at school as well?

Mrs H Um, yes, I think so. I mean, poor kid, he's been through a lot and he's got a lot on his plate. His dad came home with a load of stuff last night about the Gulf and I just told him to put it in the cupboard because I just didn't want to see it. I'm not ready yet.

G Have you thought about using the boarding school allowance?

Mrs H I don't believe in boarding schools, never ever. You don't have kids to send them away. Even Richard, we threaten him with it!

G So next year it's Northern Ireland?

Mrs H Yes, it's a whole unit move. This is my first posting, so the whole marching out thing is going to be all brand new for me. Del is really excited about it, he knows that we're moving away and has said oh I'm going to make new friends and that. I've heard that there's good schools in Northern Ireland so, finger's crossed, we'll get him into a nice school and hopefully he'll come out of himself again.

P5 - Focus Group with Serving Army Personnel, Wednesday 4th February, Unit Welfare Office

In attendance, Sgt O, WO2 Kv, Cpl G, Capt P. (For further details, see information in field notes.)

G Out of all of you, do any of you have children who attend boarding schools?
WO2 Mine started yesterday actually.
G What was behind that decision?
WO2 Because he was going backwards. He went to B, B 1st School, he then moved to B Middle. We liked the idea of the Middle School because, when he turned up at the school, there weren't guys up there who were miles bigger than him. And it was quite a nice little family school. He was doing very well there. Then we came back here and he went to Upton, which was the biggest mistake we ever made. He was getting no homework, and what homework he did get, we never saw a mark for. There was things like, he would come home and not understand homework, he would come to me. And I would say, well surely you've got some reference, you know, you've got your book with the schoolwork in. But he had no reference materials, they weren't allowed to bring home books etc. So I said, well, look, if you don't understand it how are you supposed to find out what to do, I'll have to ring up my brother in law whose a maths guru to find out how to do some of the things that I've forgotten how to do. And the other major issue I had with Upton is that they don't do any organised sport. There's no rugby team, football team, or whatever. And he was bored, he was definitely bored. I, luckily, managed to pick up another six years in the army, which now made it worth my while, because then I only had two years left, so I didn't want to put him into a private school and then pull him out when I came out, so when I got the nod that I was getting another six years here, it worked out that I could put him through. Then literally, within about four weeks, I took him out of that school, I'd gone down, did all the interviews and he started yesterday at BS School, down in T.
G The Boarding School's Allowance that you are drawing down, does that cover all your expenses?
WO2 No, no. Well, you see, initially, the school is split into two. They've got a junior section and a senior school. The junior section I will have to pay £400 a term. You've got to pay, the BSA will not cover everything, you've got to put a contribution to it. So whilst he's at junior school I have to pay about £420 a term.

And then when he moves to senior school at year 9, I'll then pay just under a £1000 a term. If he was at B Middle, I wouldn't have had to do it. But I can't go back to B Middle. We're very constricted where we can send our children. Upton is not the only option, I admit, but the other option isn't that much better. And I didn't want to move him from school to school to find a good one. I needed to find a good school and get him in it. And Upton when we first got here, I was aware of the bad press about it, but it was the only option we had. So we sent him there and he wasn't enjoying it. We thought he was going backwards. We read the Ofsted report as well, which made for interesting reading, and we made a decision then. I mean, my wife did not want to send him to boarding school. You know, she's not from the boarding school ilk. I was, so it didn't bother me. So we'll just have to find out how he gets on, but at least now we know that his education will be dealt with properly.

G When you said it was the only option what do you mean?

WO2 It is because of transport problems, also there's catchment areas now, you can't just send them to any school you want to. There are good schools around, but either your wife would have to drive them there or you pay an arm and a leg in childminding. And you don't want them to leave home and half past seven in the morning to get on a bus to get to school in S by quarter to nine at the age of 11. So that would have been an issue, or my wife would have had to drive him in, but my wife wants to work herself, so we would have had to find childminding etc.etc. And the other issue is you can't always get them into these schools because of the catchment system. And if I hadn't have been offered these extra years, he would have had to have stuck it out in Upton until 13. Now everyone says that things are going to get that much better, I can't believe things will, unless they knock the school down, rebuild it and call it something different. And change all the staff. I mean, it's really got to that stage and if I hadn't have got this extra time, I don't know what I would have done. The other option would have been to go down to the D area, buy a house but to literally go through the buying of a house in double quick time, just to move into an area where we know there's a good school would have been too expensive. Now that would have been the only other option, where do we go?

G (turning to Captain) Have you thought about these things yourself?

Capt No, not really. You see, I've got dramas with my youngest daughter that were compounded by Upton. She's only got a bit of year 10 and 11 left, so I don't

know whether we could find a boarding school with this sort of time left. And it might have an effect on her GCSEs, so we've not gone down that line.

G You say you've got dramas, can you tell me what you mean?

Capt Yes, she's a pain in the arse, is our Laura. She was alright until she came to Upton, then, well, she was also really sporty and she ran for the County and did high jump and whatever. And again, the sporting facilities at Upton are awful. I mean, even to the point where she had a high jump lesson and there's no bar. Because that way, if somebody knocks it off they don't fall down. So she couldn't deal with that. She's also extremely bright. She's been the brightest kid in her year in every single subject. But because Upton couldn't give her the work to do, she found other ways to get rid of her pent up aggression. She's had real run ins at Upton. But I don't think you can just talk about Upton, if you want to focus on the issues of army kids. But I think that the problem with Upton is that, because it's primarily military, they rely on parents in the military system to try and solve some of their problems. My wife has a lot of civilian friends, her friends' kids will get away with far more at Upton than the military kids will. They just get sent straight off to their parents and it's yeah, they'll come around. They lose that with you. So Mrs Smith who lives and works near A, says that I haven't got time to come and pick up my kid from school, it's your problem so you deal with it. They almost seem to think that military discipline is endorsed by us as well. And I think that the military are treated differently because they think that we have got some sort of in-built discipline. I've got no control over my daughter whatsoever! And also, Upton, well the Ofsted report shows. I mean, Laura was excluded and everything they told us she was excluded for was highlighted in the Ofsted report. Now we went back to them and said, look, you were wrong to exclude her, and put her down an even worse road. And they say, no we must look forward, we can't look back. And I said, look you excluded her for all these reasons and this is all your fault, no it's Laura's fault. But that choice thing. I mean, if I wasn't in the services I wouldn't be in Upton and that's the choice of it.

G So the issue is, that you have no choice?

Sgt Yes. That's one of the key issues one is, if you move around quite a lot you don't have much choice which school you go to. And another is, the child's ability. If you've got a bright child, it normally takes the school a while to cop onto that. Because if you go in there and say, look my child is really bright, they say, oh look at him, blowing his own trumpet. Or, on the other hand, like my child has, he has just been diagnosed with dyslexia and, when he went to school in H, he actually

got put back a year because of the way the system worked. And all three issues, I've had problems with throughout my career.

WO2 The problem is, I've got a 7 year old and, depending on how long I stay here and when I get posted, I now know that, what in 3 years time, I'm going to have to go back down the line of, oh my god, I'm going to have to find a school. I'm more than happy with Zennor Primary School. The school, at that level and at that age, they do more than enough as a school. The issue I've got is with Upton. And like Captain P said, this is not a military school, we're not in Germany here, we have no voice. We do have choices here, but the problem with the choices is it puts more of a strain and a stress on you. You've got to maybe go 20 miles there and back. I mean, there's a school in A, I can't remember the name, that is another option we've got. But then you look at some of the other parents, some of the guys I know here, and they have the same dramas with JH school. So they are going to have to move them further away for exactly the same problems.

G So did you feel in Germany, where you had no choice, it was essentially get on with it?

Sgt Yeah, but the thing about the military schools is that they are all run on the same curriculum, so I can go from one school to the next and, hopefully, all the schools are run on the same curriculum. But over here, you go from one school to the other and it's, like, totally different curriculum.

WO2 We had that between D and Southshire, totally different curriculum. Yeah, I mean, some of the schools in Germany are totally abysmal but you really have got no choice. So that's why we have these things - I mean, the boarding school is there, so we moved him, but that is why the boarding school allowance is there. I mean, that's our choice and I'm prepared to pay the money for it. But a lot of people can't afford to do it because it's not cheap. I mean, the army are very, very good with their subsidies. And also, boarding school's not for everybody. Some kids might not want to go to boarding school I'm bloody lucky, mine did, mainly because I told him to! (they all laugh.) And the other issue you've got is that the day you leave the army, they cut off your BSA. So, like, I've got a friend of mine, whose left the army, he knew that his daughter had two more terms left after he left the army, and he would not get subsidies for those two terms. So then he had to put away 10 grand because he had to pay the full fees, rather than £400.

G So what are the military schools doing that is right?

Capt. I think their perception of the military is different. I mean, I've done lots of civvie orientated courses and the perception there is, if you want them to do it, you tell them to go and do it. If they won't do it, you shout at them. Well obviously that's just total and utter crap. And I think the military schools have all got the same perception of the military because the teachers live in the officer's mess, so they understand the military. Civilian schools don't necessarily understand the military and even Upton, where 70 or 80% of the kids are from military backgrounds, they truly have no understanding of the military. They still have this perception. I mean, I was at a meeting last Friday with my daughter and the head of year, whatever his name is, he just turned around to me and says well can't you deal with it from the military network? And he thought that would get him out of it. Basically they can't and they don't know how to deal with it. But their perception is we can deal with anything, you know, put them in jail for a couple of weeks, that'll sort it out. And I still think that they take less from the military kids because they think well, their parents, being military, you know, bed checks in the morning, inspections every Saturday, that sort of thing. That'll solve it. I don't think that they are prepared to change their attitude to that. My kids only ever went through one Junior School in Germany, it was O School in M. Also, our perceptions changed as well. When they were at O School, you know that it's not the best school in the world, and they'll tell you, don't worry that problem it's not important at the moment, you can sort it out later. Whereas actually it is. But our perception is this is what we've got, this is what we're stuck with, this is not the important year, but it is important. All of those experiences, they count. I mean, also with M as well, we were getting to the stage where my daughter was going to have to leave O School and go to G, weekly boarding, and she just said, no, I'm not doing that. It scared her to death, the fact that she was going to go to school on a Monday and not come home again until the weekend. No choice, no option. Because there was no middle or secondary school in M. Whereas at G it was weekly boarding. We had no boarding school allowance, so you've still got all those outlays. And we had no choice.

G You're very quiet Cpl G!

Cpl Yeah, well I've only got one in school at the moment, he's changed school once. Realistically, me and my wife we've found the teachers to be very good but the actual school itself it leaves a lot to be desired. So I've considered buying a house and going back up to Manchester, and sending them all back up there and putting them into the school that I went to because I know that it's a good school.

My sister is the headmistress of the infant school there, so it had better be good! But the problem is, with me being in for a few more years, we'd be apart from each other. And there's enough going away on exercise, on tours. And when I go away, it does affect them, and it does affect their schooling. When I go away, his schoolwork and his attitude totally changes. However, with moving every 18 months to 2 years, I don't want that to affect him as well. So the options are buying that house, or sending them to boarding school. And nothing against boarding school, but my wife wouldn't want to send them there, I know that. But I want them to have a good education and with the life that we have, I don't see how they would be able to. As I said, my kid's very clever, but when we moved, it took him, it took them nearly four months to pick up on it. And, like Sgt O said, we didn't go in. He's advanced for his reading and he's advanced for his maths. So once they pick it up, they're okay, but there's that delay, so he's gets bored. And when he gets bored, he plays up. But if that's what happens every time they move, then what's going to happen?

G So the worry is the delay in catching up?

Sgt Or, what I've found is that, they've gone to a school where they do a totally different curriculum and they're lost. Because the fact that they didn't do it, when this other school did.

Capt. Well, if they come in part of the way through they need to think about it. Like, up at Upton, when I first took Laura in, they did this in-test, if you like. So they sit the kids down and give them this test. Now Laura went in, I took her in and said, well how long is it going to be, and they said well it will take about two hours, pop back then. 40 minutes later they're on the phone and she's finished. And I said, oh is that a good finish or a bad finish? They said no, she's finished. Extremely high marks. And they took absolutely none of that into account. So they knew, from that day that she could do it, could do it quite easily, but it didn't affect the workload they gave her.

WO2 I found that, we had one of those teacher parent meetings. And there was this form with all the information on about Matthew, my boy, there were subjects down the left hand side and subjects down the right. And the same remark, cut and pasted 12 different times, for 12 different subjects, was 'has settled in well.' And I looked at it and I said, well have you got anything to say about Matthew here, yeah, they said, he's settled well. I said I can read that, what else can I do? He's not getting enough homework, you know, 10 minutes, every two days, homework is not enough. They said, well, we're giving him more than that. But

ten minutes is not enough, it needs to be every night for half an hour. And the impression I got was well, if we give him that sort of homework, we've got to mark it and we haven't got the time to do it. And I'm like, this is education we're talking about. And Matthew was bored, bored solid. And I went up there, on the same night, and one of the issues we had is that they don't do any sports up there, and I thought, oh, it's because they've got no facilities, and I walk around the back of the school because I'm lost, and there was this green grass for miles. You could have put 20 rugby pitches on it. And I said, well who does this belong to, oh Upton! And they had two concrete slabs for goalposts and that was it out the back. And the kids go out there. And it's boredom. I mean, Matthew complained about it. Now to have an eleven year old child say that he's bored at school, in my day if you were bored you tried to get away with it. For an eleven year old child to come in and say he's bored and for us not to be able to entertain him. You know, in the winter, when they come home from school and it's dark, how can I play football with him? We've got that facility with the floodlighting, so if you can't do it up at school, then let's take them there. He was worried that he was getting fat! He was worried that he wasn't doing enough sport.

Capt I think the problem that we've got here is Upton and it's not a service school. And there are no service schools, really, in the UK. I think another thing about the service schools in Germany is that, not only are the teachers militarily aware, but the military are aware that they have got in-roads into that school. So I think if you had an incident where you had a school that was providing no sports facilities, I think the military would turn around and say sort out your sports facilities. And the school would respond because otherwise the teachers would be out of a job. I mean, I know that M sits on the board of governors at Upton, because I S did, and the Families Officer before him, but I'm not convinced they listen to a word that they say. I mean, it was offered to me that post and they really don't want me on their board of governors. I don't think they take into account the service situation. But, I mean, even at B, and I thought it was a good school, and I didn't have any problems there, there were stories there of a kid who was having problems at school and the headmaster would say, well, when are you posted? As if, well, if we can hold on to him for 6 months, he'll be gone anyway. Whereas with a civvie kid, they are going to have to deal with the issue. They aren't going anywhere, so I think that's the problem. They know that's where their money comes from, if we built a service school on one of the estates, then Upton would close down because they would only have about ten kids left. And I don't seem to think that

they appreciate that. And other things, I mean, I've never heard of any of the schools around here who bring their kids to have a look at the tanks. But at B they did it all the time! I mean, we were always having school visits. I mean, I used to go into B First School and take a load of radios and get the kids to plug them all up and report back to me. We've got no contact with them at all.

WO2 I know I keep going on about Upton, but there is nothing for the kids to do and what really gets my back up is that four miles down the road, they have got everything. Up at Upton, they don't have a running track, well neither did B Middle, so they used to go to P to do athletics, they would all get in the minibus, drive to P and do athletics. Here, they've got four miles, they've got a brand new facility, floodlit, they don't even have to pay for it. We've got a complete community here that's got everything they need and they don't use it. Anything they could want to use. And there's no team sports, and I can't understand why.

G Okay, I'll play devil's advocate here, is it a case of you not reaching out to them, or them not reaching out to you?

Sgt Well we don't know, and I can't talk for Upton, but it's an issue right across the board. In Germany the schools have access to all the army facilities on the base. As soon as you come back to the UK, we don't have half of that. And again it goes back to that lottery of which schools are where you get posted to. And some are a lot better at it than others, or you pay for it yourself.

Capt I know exactly what you're saying, maybe the army might turn around and say, no you can't use it. I would be surprised, but then, what the army does sometimes doesn't surprise me! But maybe even a letter, out to us, saying, look, we realise we don't do this, don't do this, and don't do this. However, we have approached the army and they have said no, we cannot use their facilities, something like that.

WO2 I don't think it's as simple as that because they don't encourage team sports at Upton. So someone's got to lose and they don't like that. Like, my boy, when he was out playing football one break time, and Matthew's team were winning 2-0. And one of the teachers came out and said what's going on, he played football on the opposite team and it was the old, get out of my way, I'm going to score, and he was not willing to allow them to leave until it was 2-2.

Capt And it's exactly the same with the high jump thing. They put a bar up there and someone knocks it down .. And Laura just went, no! She likes to win. The question I ask, is that everyone likes to win, most kids do.

WO2 My boy was a D runner and every year we would go to B School and did all the D Athletics, we would go down to A in P and my boy couldn't wait for it! And he's come here and they are, well, they're cut from the waist and there's nothing. And how can you explain that to an 11 year old? The question he asks is why can't I do sport, and I can't answer that one. And the only time I can do sport with him is on a Friday and Saturday and I will put myself out for him, but Monday to Friday, nothing. And consequently, I have to move him to a private school.

G Cpl G, you said that you felt your son misbehaves when you're away.

Cpl Yeah, well, when I was in Iraq last year, I went away and it really did affect the children. My children started , well, it affected his work and he didn't want to go to school. Normally, like now, well he loves going to school. But when I go away his attitude changes at school, he becomes aggressive. He's very big for his age and when he becomes aggressive, that causes problems. And, also, his attitude towards the teachers changed, but as soon as I come back he's okay. And every time I go away he reverts back to it. Whether it's because he has problems obeying his mother, although I'm not the disciplinarian in the family.

Sgt Funnily enough, I went to a parent and teacher evening and my boy's teacher could tell me exactly when I've gone away on exercise, when my son's been to me for a weekend. Because there's a difference in the way that he approaches his work.

Capt In O School in M, when we went to the Gulf the first time around, they did a little project because they knew that 90% of the kids in that school, their dads were off in Iraq.

G The common thing here is that it's the boys. What about your daughters?

Sgt No, it's not them, it's the boys.

Capt All those kids that were in O School, in 91, well, the teachers thought that this is going to be a bit of a drama. Well, when I came back , my eldest daughter could tell me what tanks the Iraqis had and they did it as a school project. Here, they come into school and they are seen as a pain in the arse.

Captain C But isn't that the same with single parent families anyway? Boys will try to be more dominant.

Capt Yeah, but they don't seem to appreciate the military side of it. The problem is, though, is that there are too many Upton issues.

G How do you know what school to put your child into? How do you go about finding out?

WO2 Well you say, oh you were in that place, what was it like? I mean, when I came here, M's predecessor, his kids were up at Upton, so I asked him what it was like.

Sgt If you've got a good Families Officer, or a good families office, you ask them. You can ring them and get some information from them. There's a lot of word of mouth.

WO2 Word of mouth is great if you're regimental, but if you've never served with a regiment before.

Capt Yeah, it's okay if you're a Tiffie and you've maintained contact with someone, but what if you don't?

Sgt Yeah, a lot of it depends on the initial welcome pack you get from the families office, like there's this school, this school and this school.

WO2 They wouldn't put in print under no circumstances let you kid go to this school!

Cpl I don't know how much I benefit from that because we (points at the Sgt) are not in regiments, we move individually every 18 months or so. So we come into units where the people already know what the schools are like.

G Do you make the decision about schooling before you move?

Sgt A bit of both.

WO2 Well, I mean, I moved here in the middle of termtime, so you either keep your kid out of school until you find somewhere, but you've got to get them in, or you get fined. So if you're lucky enough to move during a holiday, you can maybe ask people by knocking around, and make your decision then. But you've got to give the school plenty of warning that you want to enrol your child in that school. I mean, I, well it felt like the easy option, but at the time I felt like I had no option, Upton was the only option I really had in the local area, to send my kid to the local school. Sent him there and 4 months down the road, I've taken him out.

Capt Can you find out about a school before you get there, can you read their Ofsted report?

G Yes you can, you can download them from the website.

Capt We need to know things like that. No, seriously, if I had read the previous Ofsted report, I wouldn't have driven past Upton and even thought about it. If you went to another school, I'm sure the Ofsted report would give you some leverage.

WO2 Well I took the Ofsted report down with me to my boy's interview. I said read that, to the headmaster, and he said when do you want your son to start! The BSA is excellent and if that is the one thing that comes out of this, it's that.

The BSA for the army is excellent and it should never go. It gives us the opportunity. I mean, I could not afford, well none of us could afford to put our kids into those schools.

G We've talked about finding out about schools, but if you have an issue regarding your child's education, who do you all talk to?

All together The school (said with some incredulity to me!)

Sgt What you will find is that some of the army wives go in their with all guns blazing, and they go up there. But me, the person after the school is normally the families officer.

G What about seeking information about the BSA?

WO2 Me, well I made the decision, based on my experiences. No, I didn't talk to M about the issues I have with Upton, I mean, what's he going to do about it? I mean, I spoke to I S about Upton, but that's because I knew his kids were there. It makes me laugh half the time, because I'm in the army, he (pointing at M) isn't going to sort my civilian issues out. My kids being in a civilian school is my problem. I mean, if I have an issue with the school, I can't understand why people think the welfare office or padre is going to sort it out for them. Because if I wasn't in the military, I would have to do this myself anyway. Because I'm sorting it out on a civilian basis, not a military basis.

Sgt Yeah, but I think, well we're here because of our jobs, and this is the only school I can send my kids to in the area, and we can talk about it.

Capt Well it may be the issue that we've dealt with service schools where they have taken notice of us, and we assume that they will here, and they won't. I mean, I remember writing to the board of governors at B Middle about something and they said, well, it's up the headmaster. Whereas, with a service school, I think you would have more in-roads from a military perspective. Because we expect that what we do will be taken account of.

WO2 We were in Upton in 1990 and Upton didn't have a great reputation then, it's just one of those things. Luckily I've got the option of putting him through with the BSA.

G Go on, give me something positive to end off with. What are the positive aspects of having the kind of lifestyle that you do?

WO2 My kid walked into a public school yesterday and got on with it just like that (clicks fingers.) Because he has no problems mixing with people. He walked into a new school yesterday, phoned us up last night, I said how are you going on, he says fine, no problems. Their social skills are very good.

(They all agree at this point)

Capt Also, I think they're not afraid to say when something's wrong or something isn't how it should be. They will turn around and say, no, that's not right. Being brought up, being dragged all over the place, having to say I haven't done this before.

WO2 Conversely, I will say that Matthew, when we had to pull him out of B Middle, it's the first time I've seen him in bits. He didn't want to leave, he had made some really good friends and Miss Davis down there, his teacher, she still writes to Matthew now. He said why are you taking me out of this school, I love it here.

Capt Yeah, but that happens at a certain age, too.

Capt C I mean you must accept that there are children who find it quite difficult to adapt to boarding school.

Capt I think that my problem child would have gone to a boarding school, we just didn't want to do that. The other one, not a chance in hell. We got posted just at the right time for her, god knows what we would have done if we had to send her to G.

Capt C I think another frustration from the service point of view, is that when they attend the local authority schools, they aren't always guaranteed a place to get in. I mean, for us, the local school, my wife did some supply at and one day they were throwing chairs out of the window, literally throwing them. So we thought, we don't want our daughter to go there. So we had to appeal and we didn't know up until two weeks before if she had got in or not.

WO2 The other problem with putting them into private school is that it doesn't pay all the time. If you are living in a quarter, then you are okay, and you can then move into your own home, but if you're already living in your own home, you can't apply for BSA. I mean, the CO has to sign a bit of paper saying that yes, this man might get posted and that is like the authority to allow me to put my kids into private school. So what they're saying is that you can't put them in as a day boarder.

G Will you send both your kids to boarding school?

WO2 My girl won't go to boarding school and she's 7 now. I mean, I went to boarding school when I was 8 and I would never do that. It crippled me. Matt's 11 now and he's a little bit more savvy but we don't think Corinne is the type. And, to be honest, if I do send her to boarding school in three years time, I would

have to find the money myself after I leave the army. It's not financially viable for me to do it anyway.

Capt I think you know your own children and it doesn't suit them all anyway.

Sgt Yeah, I think you decide if it would suit that child. And the other thing is a family thing, it depends what kind of family background you come from. My wife is dead against it.

Capt That's right, it's an individual decision. I mean we know that for my last two years, we'll buy a house, my wife and kids will live in it, and I'll be working wherever. It's not ideal, but that's what we want to do. I wouldn't consider it, though, just for the sake of doing it.

WO2 Yeah, I know, before here my wife wouldn't have considered boarding school for our son in a million years. But you speak to her just before Christmas and she very quickly changed her tune. She understands that it's the best thing for him.

G You've mentioned earlier the cost involved to you, can you tell me about that?

WO2 Well, I hate to say it, but here I am, a WO2, earning reasonable pay. Here's Cpl G, he's also got kids. We're in exactly the same position, but not everyone can do it. I couldn't have done it up until a couple of years ago when I had gone through the promotions and stuff. I mean I've just forked out £500 on school uniform, then there's a £500 signing on fee.

E1 - Interview with RE, Senior Teacher and Teacher with responsibilities for interim admission, Acting SENCO, Friday 23rd January, period 2, his office

G What would you describe the school's policy towards army children before Ofsted?

R The school has procedures rather than policies. There's a very clear procedure for any child, whether of army origin or civilian transfer coming into the school, to be dealt with by the admin. Staff, to be welcomed, processed formally and allocated a tutor group and then the Key Stage Manager would be told. And we used to say that that child would be then monitored, but that meant, under the old regime, that you would keep half an eye on them to make sure that friendships were established, and this 'eye on' was the policy. And, admittedly, it worked for most of the children, and it did well, because for some of the children who weren't settling, they were picked up. But it would be true to say that we had no clear policy towards guidance and any good practice was as a result of good people,

looking at the children and saying we had better act to support them. So, admittedly, the children are welcomed into our school but we have not tied down the policy or the process. So we kept an eye but that wasn't good enough.

G Did you feel, then, that the Ofsted report was fair?

R I think the Ofsted report recognised, well, it was fair. There's a very clear area where, because of the type of our school, we have children coming in at all times and because of that we should have a positive response to that.

G So you have put together a very comprehensive action plan?

R We have indeed. We have looked at all aspects of our pastoral plan. I mean, you've seen the document. There are thirteen very clear areas. We've included belonging to Upton, we've included support and consistent practice. So what we have to do as far as interim children are concerned, is to make sure that we have a clear process and that that clear process is followed. And I am confident that this action plan has come up with the goods. I can't dot the I's and cross the t's for the minute, but I have the idea. I read that Ofsted report, the March 2002 one, and it was quite interesting reading that. Where schools have good practice, they have clear policies. And they don't necessarily say what those policies were but they .. I think as long as we are able to say for the next Ofsted we have a clear admin procedure, to get the child in, we have a policy and a, b, c, d, e, f happens. Now whatever a to f is, as long as it is related and structured and supportive of the child, I think we'll be able to nod agreeably to the HMI and say, yes, the policies are in place. The next stage in implementing that development is they're going to, well, all right, we've got our action plan, and that doesn't mean that things are going to happen. Already I've looked at the Spring activities and we've picked out those actual pieces with which we've got to get a move on. And I'm not so sure that, yes, mid-term entries is number 11 (looking at action plan) so already, within the next two weeks, we'll be beginning to consider elements like protocols for admitting mid-term entries, the policies, and it includes a student handbook. So that is something that we will have responded to by the end of this term.

G So when you consider policies for that, will you consider them yourself or will you be consulting other people?

R We start off with the Key Stage Managers, as they are sort of hands on, day to day. And then, I think logically, part of the evolving process will be a discussion with parents and a little with the children. Because one of the things that was made clear by Ofsted is that in the previous life there was little referral to parents and the children. So as a school we chose to ignore.. well, let's put it this way,

when we put together the bullying policy, I didn't just write the policy, I wrote an outline and I also at the same time wrote to parents, in fact, I wrote to 200 parents, and I think I got about 26% response, which is quite good. And their advice to me on that issue was move away from the no blame approach, if these bullies are caught they should be punished. Not hang them, then shoot them but that was the message. So, you know, you can sit here and have nice ideas, but often what the parents want is clearly different. So I imagine, yes, we'll ask the parents and I will be interested to see how they respond. So we'll ask parents who have just moved in and we'll ask children who have moved in mid-term as well. And I'll ask you as well laughs.

G You are obviously acting SENCO at the moment, and I asked about the Ed Psych service for the school and the comment that came back was that the provision was scarce. What kind of difficulties do you have with receiving information on students coming in from other schools?

R When children transfer there is supposed to be this Key Stage Transfer document which, actually, is not the best document in the world as it gives a very bare bone picture of Key Stage 3 and what have you. What is not always immediate is the documentation for children with special needs. So it is true that it sometimes happens. On Monday, I am talking with a group of parents who have just come in from Germany he's a year 8 child, with a Statement and we have to talk on Monday to have a look at what the Statement involves and whether we can provide for that. So that child is clearly coming here with parents who are organised and all sorted. We have had in years gone by children turning up on your doorstep, turning up at school with their parents not even coming with them on their first day, you know. It has happened. So, it is variable. Sometimes they come with the documents, sometimes without the documents. And sometimes they come with porkie pies there's nothing wrong with my child, he's perfect. And then you find out that the perfect child is a bit different and then we have to do quite a bit of backtracking.

G Do you find that there's a period of catch up, between receiving the documentation and assessing it? I wonder if there was a different way between assessing over here and whether you always agreed with what was written?

R It would be difficult to assess that, based on my experience of one person arriving next Monday. I haven't actually sat down and assessed the information that's coming. I can answer that question, perhaps, on Tuesday!

G I know that you had a multi agency team meeting at the beginning of term and that there was no representative from the army there, obviously they were invited.
R Yes, they were invited and when I sent the minutes of the last meeting, I wrote an extra paragraph for the people who hadn't attended expressing my disappointment that they weren't there. Now hopefully that will encourage some of them to attend. If not, I think that I am going to pick up the phone this time and talk to the man, Colonel T, and I'll do the direct approach. But let's just go back half a step, when we talked about psychological support and Statement transfers, if that young person comes in next Monday and there are areas of which I am uncertain, and would therefore need to seek advice, I know that I am already up against a source of frustration because one of the major problems that we have is professional support and the timescale issue. And this relates not just to children coming mid-term but also to all children and this is the timescale for response from professional bodies and this is a constant source of frustration. And the best analogy I came up with was going to the doctors with a pain in your leg, so the doctor says come back in 3 months and we'll have a look at it. So you go back in 3 months and he says, oooh, you've got a pain in the leg, you need to go and see someone. And this is the way that the support services work. Meanwhile, young Fred, Mary whatever, attends school day after day, either not being correctly supported or getting the professional advice that is needed. It makes me cross, it really does. Another doctor said to me recently, this child needs to be referred for some psychological counselling and I agree, I'll put him on the list. But he won't be a priority, he'll be about 15 on that list and they'll get to him in about 3 years time. Literally, 3 years time. Ah, he says, he'll have left school by then. It happens all the time. It makes me very angry. The support is insufficient.
G So there is no extra support made for the fact that you receive children every 18 months to 2 years?
R There is nothing extra that we are given by the Local Education Authority. Miserable, isn't it? The response that we are going to be making, of course, is to develop the off-site centre, where the issues of access to professional bodies, the issues of timescale I would hope would be addressed. I went to the A Family Centre yesterday and talked to Phil C, down there, who's the centre manager about the way that their centre works. And they work with 0 to 8 year olds. After 8 there is nothing available for young people. So we've developed this idea of an off-site centre and we would want to work with children 8 plus as probably a way of getting funding, there's no use arguing that we want to work with children in this

area if we include just mid-term entrants. And mid-term entrants with specific learning problems, particularly in years 10 and 11. If we had a centre, like at Ashdown, which would be accessible by people moving into the area, who would be able to find support and guidance, literally related to this school, or others, with a frequency of attendance by professional bodies at A, once a fortnight, or once a week, it would be ideal. We could get them to address difficulties at a timescale that is best for the youngsters. And this would apply to children coming in mid-term with a Statement which required a bit more professional input. That young man, say he's put in in February, the Ed Psych will almost certainly not come back in until next April. If that young man turns out to need significant support or guidance, I can't access it probably until next April. And then that would mean that he would have to leapfrog people currently on the list. That's scandalous, scandalous.

G Going back to your idea of inviting a member of the army onto your multi agency group, what do you hope to get from that?

R I would definitely say that the army has a responsibility, which goes a little bit further than moving, say, the family from A to B. They move in and the husband reports for duty. I would like to think that there was a little bit more to it than that. Having got a little bit close to the Service life now, with my son being in the marines, there is this overall 'we are here to help you,' we'll support the families when the boys are away and all that business, we'll tell you where the best schools are, but there it seems to stop. And, well, okay, both military families and civilian families have responsibilities to be able to access information but military families have certain characteristics, in my eyes. When dad's away there sometimes are problems with young children, whether there is a statistical link between the number of family breakdowns and the armed forces, I haven't got the statistics to say that, but I believe there exists a correlation. When we have to support families in difficulty, we have no other support, other than we have for everybody else. There is no specific support for either family therapy or family counselling. We don't do that. And I think that sometimes we ought to. I think we have enough families who would benefit from work with a qualified counsellor. And we can't make that provision, so it would be a useful thing to try and get the army to accept in principle that once the family are in and the front door is closed and dad has reported for duty, that they could do a little bit more to support these families who need that support. And I would want them to recognise that if they've got access to the family and they've got SSAFA and all these support

services, bring them into action and, somehow, get their policies and processes written. I don't know who would do it, maybe the Families Officer could direct the support into the area that's needed without, I suspect and again I'm not sure on this one, whether the father would feel that, having to call in the support services, is that my career ended?

G Yes, I know what you mean.

R I can manage my military role, I should be able to manage my family role.

G You obviously teach a lot of army children in your role as a teacher, have you noticed anything in this role?

R There is nothing that Del does, says, or the way that he acts that makes him present himself as somebody who has come from a military background, in that sense. He's a normal character, presenting within the normal range of ability for a 12/13 year old. But in year 10 and 11, we have to, well, for example, take Andrew, he arrived mid way, a quarter of the way through year 10, and we had done a whole topic that he hadn't touched. Now that means Andrew had to turn up for clinic, or I had to give him and book and say read that and then come and talk to me. Now I think that Andrew managed it because he turned out to clinic. But I think that most year 10s are interested in turning out to clinic, normally they don't become interested until year 11. We have to do clinic because we haven't got the space within the school day to sit down and talk about individual issues. And that often happens to children who transfer, inappropriately I might say, during year 10 and year 11. And they do sometimes lose out. But then there's some who have done exactly the same courses that we have and the same modules and they just fit in fine, seamlessly really. And now in Key Stage 3 where there's 3 years of work, and there's umpteen different key stage 3 science courses, they can come in with lots of variation. So we've tended to go for a programme of spirals, recognising that the young people coming in may or may not have done topics, but that the spiral curriculum allows you to revisit and add bits to the knowledge. Now that, I think, goes well with the sort of catchment area that we have. It makes sense. But it doesn't help with the key stage 4 programme, where the programme is linear. Especially the modular bits, where people like Andrew would come in, well he won't do the modular exam, but the standard end of year 11 exam.

G So there is room in the way that you organise exams to try and tailor the exam to the individual?

R Yes. It would be very wrong of me to ignore people like Andrew and say tough luck, Andrew, get on with it. And it wouldn't be very professional of me either. So, let's go back to young Del, Del doesn't present as working outside the parameters, but one thing which is, I suppose, a qualitative observation, interim transfer doesn't always have an effect on their education. I have a theory which I have never tested out, that it is the stage in which they have moved at primary school that is a significant factor, so these are children who have moved in, say, years 4 and 5 who have never followed through a reading scheme and went from one reading programme to another. And basically, these children are highly at risk of not developing the basic literacy skills. There are children who move quite regularly but seem to move almost at the right moment and are perfectly bright, sharp and well-rounded individuals. And very often I find that it's the civilian children who can't cope with the concept of transfer.

G What do you mean by that?

R Well, I've spent a long time around children, especially those in years 7 and 8, and there they are, they have their close friends (draws a circle in the air) and there's the people they like talking to (draws a wider circle) and there's the people that you know their names of. And they've come to school in September and this is the way that it is. And then in comes somebody else, and they start being friends with someone in that group. And sometimes the ripples of that will, oh my goodness me. It causes all sorts of problems and mainly it's the civilian children who can't cope with the fact that, look, Sir, he's taken my best friend away. And so I say, no, it's just made your friendship group a bit more interesting. And trying to explain that. It's part of our PSHE programme in year 7, there's a topic on friends. That is an issue for us, for some of our civilian children. People coming in are better, not always but seem to be, at just moving in and forming new friends. And it's the established friendships that suffer.

G What kind of relationship does the school have with its parents?

R As a whole I think that one of the observations by Ofsted was that we don't have sufficient relationships with our parents. We have good relationships with the parents of children who cause us difficulties. But we don't refer to the parents sufficiently about policies. I mean, we're addressing that in our action plan where we've got a process to develop, in Autumn this year, monthly pamphlets as guidance to parents for supporting their children. And I think quite clearly within that guidance we're talking about children coming in in September, but we'll have to relate it also to children coming in in mid-term. I hope that by the end of the

year we can discuss what policies we have agreed about our mid-term entries because at the moment it's embryonic.

G Thank you very much indeed.

R My pleasure.

E2 - Interview with RB, Headteacher, Thursday 6th May, 9am, Head's Office

G Could we start by you telling me how long you have been a headteacher for?

R 6 years. With 2 years as acting head before that.

G What is your perception of the difficulties that army children have?

R Many and varied. I will have to talk principally about Ablington, because that is the school I have the most experience of, and put it in the context of most of the children come from the families of soldiers, not officers, we have one sargeant, one warrant officer, and the majority are infantry or whatever. Obviously they come in or out of the school, they usually stay for two years max, sometimes there are whole troop movements, sometimes there's just one or two. Some children, they come from families that are extended because a pattern is that soldiers will marry and divorce and remarry, and we have lots of kids who have brothers and sisters (in inverted commas) who come from previous marriages. (Pause) So you get young people coming in and moving, probably every two years, at Ablington, there's some from Ireland, from Cyprus, there's some from Germany, they know that their stay will be short, most of them, in excess of 50% I would say, come from families which are extended because either parent has remarried. They come in, if they have got special educational needs, without going through the statementing process, they come in with no continuity of education, and they come in right the way through the school. So some will come in in year 7, 8, 9, 10 and we've even had some in year 11. Usually, although not always, there will have been some previous contact, so one of my deputies will have been to their school to talk to them if there is a large troop movement, so they will have some idea of what they're going to. And they will meet one, at least two, members of staff. And they will arrive, usually, having received a briefing from their garrison commander about the area and what they're going to.

G What sort of difficulties are they presenting with in the classroom?

R Basically, our students have come from smaller schools or army schools in Germany and therefore for all of them there is going to be a period of serious readjustment. Because none of the schools that feed into Ablington are similar at

all. It's more difficult for children in Key Stage 4 because they come for their exams and sometimes we can't always match them with those that they can do. Some of them come with anxieties about their father, and it's usually dad and not mum, going off to Kosovo, or Iraq or, and if they come from Ireland, they come with a complete understanding of what that means. Some of them settle in very quickly, we're their bolt hole, their haven, and I can't put a percentage on that. They settle very quickly and things start to go a bit later, and some of them just don't settle at all. Some of them have particular needs, I mean we get records as quickly as we can from the previous school, if additional support is required we put that in place. Some students need to have an email link with their father if he's away on tour and we try to set those things up. Some students might be very introverted and we put them on a programme. Some students just don't want to know and we have to watch that and be sensitive to them. And the difficulty that this school experiences and Ablington experiences is that the army deals with things in the army and it's almost like, in some areas, there's a closed shop. And if you contact the Families Officer, that may have a negative effect on parental opportunities, therefore some kids don't share their problems at all, they don't say what's going on. You have to be very sensitive when you work with them. Here and at Ablington we have quite rigorous monitoring systems, so we monitor from the point of view of their emotional development, their academic development, we have a whole school approach to behaviour management, so none of them are lost in the system. What we're bad at, and I think we are bad at it, is getting the level of work right, it takes too long to get them settled in. And there are no easy answers to that.

G The Ofsted report highlighted that this school wasn't doing all it could to support the mobility of the children, why do you think the Inspection team made that comment?

R It is a very bland statement and I'm not sure to what extend they actually investigated that issue. I don't argue that the statement in itself was surprising, but it's a very complex issue. Yes, literacy and numeracy levels are an issue in the school, yes, programmes to integrate students into the life of the school are an issue, but links with the garrison and links with the army staff are difficult. That is disrupted by the very nature of the mobility of the army. We get to know the families officer and then he moves on every two years as well. So, what we are looking at here is the literacy and numeracy support, the whole school approach to discipline and behaviour management, the link between families where father is

away in Kosovo or whatever and using ICT, the understanding of differentiation in planning lessons, the battle for money and this is an issue. Where finances are concerned, there are small numbers in the school and we're addressing that, but, having done all that at Ablington, the links with the army are still perceived to be poor. That is something that not only this school but others are finding difficult to establish because there has to be a statement from key people in the army that education is important. There has to be a statement from the army that, actually, you don't just go through school and then join the army, there are other avenues of opportunity, there has to be an understanding amongst students about different kinds of life and that relationship with the army which can develop that needs to be developed.

G Are you finding, then, that the army are not playing a supportive role?

R I am finding that. I mean what do you do, you're a major in the army, you've got responsibilities for a large part of activities, soldiers and you're suddenly told that, part of your job, is to be on the governing body of a school. You don't want to be on the governing body of the school, you've got no interest on being on the governing body of the school, but you have to be on it. So you attend the first meeting, and that's it. What do you do if you're a families officer and you're told to establish links, well the army is here and we deal with our own issues, and really there isn't a problem. What do you do? How do you combat those sort of assumptions that children get from the context of being an army child? Another feature here is inter-garrison competition, we often have fights between children from different garrisons and we're surrounded here. And the emotional side, you know, having your dad go off to Kosovo, within a school which is one small part of the issue, you know we need the army to work with us on that. I find the army has other agendas understandably.

G What sort of support do you get here from the LEA?

R In terms of army children? I think the LEA are gradually coming to the idea of student support. Obviously we've got YPSS, we have YOFF, we have educational psychologists, we have home visitors. But I think they find the same. I'm not sure until very recently, not since the arrival of BW, really, I'm not sure before that time the LEA actually took on board what it means to be a services' school. Certainly here, I am working incredibly hard with the LEA to establish positive links with the garrison commander. So in terms of providing support for young people and the problems that they present, as a general issue, they are trying to rationalise and support us, but they are limited by cash the same as

everyone else is. There has been a greater recognition of turbulence, and there is now a greater desire to establish a dialogue with the army. I don't think that secondary schools are as far along the line as primary schools are. For a number of different reasons, you know, the nature of the secondary school is that kids go to different subjects and have a more diverse experience than they would have at primary school.

G So would it be fair to say that the LEA don't identify army children as a particular group?

R Yes, that is fair to say. The other thing is that this school, Ablington and a local primary school have all been on special measures. We've been hammered by comparator groups. It's an issue that's been rattling on for years and nobody but nobody has taken it seriously. And what that means in real terms is the number of free school meals you know is an identifying factor and this determines the make up of the intake of the school. Army families don't receive free school meals because the soldiers have a regular income but the conditions in which they sometimes live, the way in which they live on a day to day basis, means that those children need to be acknowledged. So only recently have the LEA come up with the ratio of 2 to 1, so 2 services family equates to 1 free school meal. That means that the work being done in schools is seen in context, that to me looks at it properly and it's taken an awful long time. So now, more at local level, but increasingly at national level, service children are seen to actually have a raw deal and that the schools that manage them need more support than they are actually having. You can't just hammer, hammer, hammer and say you're not doing enough, we know that, we're doing as well as we can, but we need additional resources and if additional resources come into the school and support comes into the school, then those groups of children will see that support, then great. So I think there is a greater recognition, obviously, there is an issue, though, as three schools here are on special measures. I wonder why?

G How specifically, then, are you going to address the issues within the report?

R Let me say that if the DfES were to pour money into this area, if they were to designate it as something akin to an education action zone and give it the same attention that they give to inner city areas and have a new school, decent building, decent facilities, good infrastructure, then these kids would be getting the facilities that they deserve in their local school. You walk around here and it's absolutely appalling. And okay somebody can come back to me and say, you know, it's nowhere near as bad as the inner cities and I know that but they've still had

thousands and thousands of pounds poured into them and I know that because I worked in the inner cities for year. But when I start scrapping around for a thousand pounds here and a thousand pounds there to paint classrooms and it's been like that for six years plus in this area then I say that, money has to be put into it. It needs to be focused and we need to ensure that these kids have the best facilities available to them. The next thing is that we now have a whole school approach to behaviour management, we now have clarity so that everyone takes responsibility for managing behaviour and we have the same response to the behaviour. So now as the behaviour escalates, there is an appropriate response. It's a whole school approach and we're being supported by the LEA on that and we set that up at Ablington and it worked. It's come out very well with good and very good and all the rest of it. The second thing is that we are establishing a special needs team so that we can effectively deal with the issues that are surfacing. There is now a focus on teaching and learning, making sure that we set credible targets in lessons, making sure that lessons are resourced and all that. We are working to try and have an off-site facility which services both schools where you have an immediate response, whatever it is, family support, ed psychs, a one day programme or even a whole week. This will develop a programme for young people to meet their needs. At Ablington we have established a family learning project so that we can help parents to work alongside the young people, we have set up links with major feeder schools in Cyprus and Ireland. We have a 7 C group whereby pupils who come into the school whose literacy levels are below level 2, they will be taken out for support for as long as it takes to be re-integrated into the school. We have an induction process which allows for a 6 week introduction into the school with close parental contact, we have regular multi-agency meetings so that we can discuss individual students but thus far the army has not attended. However, I hope with the new garrison commander that will develop. And I hope that we can get them involved in our careers profile, so that we can develop the post 16 process. We have good vocational education where we have links with the college. There's still a lot to do.

G But you are optimistic.

R I am optimistic because there are a lot of committed people in this area. They all want to do better for the young people who come here. I would like somebody, somewhere to take notice of the fact that it might look like it's all green fields around here and, oh, they can't possibly understand what it's like in the city, but I

know, I've taught in the inner city but I know that this school and Ablington have just as many problems, if not more in some circumstances and we are seriously under-resourced. And I'm not pointing the finger at the LEA, Southshire in general is badly resourced, and, therefore, there's a fairly limited pot to claim off, but you know you've got to see that you've acknowledge the 2 to 1 ratio, we know what the difficulties are, put some money there. But I am fed up with dealing with people from the DfES who come along with clipboards and say such and such, we don't like this school, let's knock it down, and then say, well, we might have a new school in 10 years' time. What we need to do is this school and its primary feeders, Ablington and its primary feeders, need to put together a bid for an education action zone, that, in its own right, would have brought in excess of 2 million pounds. That, then, would have stopped two secondary schools being in special measures and a primary school being in special measures.

G The 2 to 1 ratio, has that come from the LEA itself?

R Yes.

G And has that been recognised by the powers 'above' them?

R The Ofsted inspection that Ablington has just had, the school has worked its socks off to address all the issues that were highlighted in the previous report. It is a different school now to the one it was then. But, although there has been an increase in results to something like 35, 36%, something like that, I hope it will go up to the lower 40s, that is still seen as not good enough. So when the Ofsted inspectors came in, I got quite empassioned about this. I said, look, if you do not accept the 2 to 1 ratio that's promoted by this LEA, for the services factor, then what you will see, despite this increase, and within the context of the changing demands of Ofsted, this is still a good school, with good behaviour, good teaching but it's not in the low 40s. So he went away and did some research and contacted the HMI and came back and said I'm willing to stick my neck out here and I'm going to accept the 2 to 1 and let's see what difference that makes. So he accepted the 2 to 1, acknowledged the problems of turbulence, went around the school, the inspection took place, and he said this is a rapidly improving school good, good, very good. One unsatisfactory which we knew about and which we were addressing and everything else good or better. Now if he stuck his neck out and I thank him for that, that report is now in the public domain and it sets a precedence. So if there's a precedence here, this school is comparable. That's not denying what we've done but it is comparable. It's got to go to HMI and they have got to see that this area is different. Okay it's not the inner city, but these

children have been through 'this is the worst school in Southshire', everybody out there knows we're rubbish and it takes an awful lot of time and energy to redress this. So there you have a comparable school, with similar army families and it has been treated in a sensible way by Ofsted.

E3 - Interview with JB, Key Stage 3 Co-ordinator, Thursday 13th May, Her office, period 1

G Could we start by getting you to outline what your role and responsibilities are as Key Stage 3 manager?

J As key stage 3 manager, I look after students in years 7, 8 and 9, I talk to their tutors ### and I have overall responsibility for their behaviour, and, to a certain degree, their academic progress, although that is more provided by the curriculum leaders. I'm also responsible for bringing year 6 into year 7, so I will co-ordinate induction day, initial parents meetings, I will organise children into tutor groups and make sure their transfer documents come into school. I don't put them onto the system, mind you, Ali is responsible for organising all that.

G Does that mean that you also have responsibility for students who come in new to years 7, 8 and 9?

J Um, it's not something I do, but it's probably something I should do more. When new pupils come in, generally it's someone from the office who will take them around, show them the school, talk to them about school uniform, timetables and all that. But Ali tends to do all that because, although I am the key stage co-ordinator, I do also have quite a heavy timetable commitment. But it's something I think we could improve on we don't do it as well as we could or should. And maybe it's something that the children should do the children are, you know, very honest, they would tell new people how it was, warts and all. We do organise children with a buddy in the lower school, we will link them with a fellow pupil and we're quite selective about that and that does work well but, in a way, I think we could do a lot more of that.

G What, then, do you perceive the difficulties of army children to be?

J I think I don't normally find behaviour to be an issue, they are very flexible and I wonder whether that is because they move around and they are quite resilient in some way. But, I have to say, I don't have any problems with them, to be honest. You know they seem to arrive, they fit in straight away. I think the real problems are in academic issues, when, possibly, they've done a different topic, or covered

a different area of work and they haven't done things that we have in the UK. But, um, I would say that what they gain in travelling and culturally probably compensates. Now in key stage four there are major issues, regarding exam boards and coursework and that is a nightmare. Because they come to us either having started something different to what we do, or they haven't started it at all, and they haven't got their coursework, or they've lost it or their previous school hasn't sent it on.

G Do you work with other support agencies as part of your role?

J We work with Young People's Support Services, we work with Cancer? I do now have a link with army personnel and I've yet to meet them because they haven't attended any of our multi agency meetings. We work with behaviour support and some other colleagues from county.

G So up to this point there has not been a link with the army?

J No we have not had that we've got the multi agency group with all the people in it that I've mentioned but up to now the army welfare service have not chosen to attend meetings. We really need to have them on board, we need to work with them.

G So what would you hope to achieve with them?

J I would like to have a one to one meeting with them to find out what their role is and then work out what her role is in our school and work out how we can work together.

G Can you comment specifically on the progress of the four children in the study?

J Nick's lovely, I mean he is a lovely child and, again, you know, very resilient, very flexible, he comes in gets on, very polite and pleasant, the type that comes in and gets on with it. Del is quieter, but, again, he just fits in and I wonder if it is because of his background, upping sticks and moving on, they don't panic at the thought of change. And they can cope with change so well. The girls are no trouble, they are lower ability, they adapt to change slightly less, but I don't think that's because of the army life, I think it's just because they need a little bit more support. They are both keen to learn, keen to take on board any support that is offered.

G I know from looking at their files that all four of them came to you at the beginning of year 7, so you were involved in the induction process then, did you feel that you would have liked any further information on them?

J I don't think so because when they come to us they are given lots of tests anyway, so although we have their transfer documents, some of the information

that arrives is often questioned, I have to say, so we tend to do our own testing and place them where we think it's appropriate. Bearing in mind that this is a small school with an intake of, say, 70 or 80, we only have to divide them into three, or a maximum of four groups. The girls, of course, they were put into a selective group at the beginning of year 8, and I have to say that I think it's done them an awful lot of good. They've really come on. The groups have now been amalgamated into the rest of the year group because it had meant that the other groups were much bigger, but those children were given a really good boost at the beginning of this year and it's shown the girls that, actually, they are quite able.

G When you know that somebody is leaving, what is the process involved?

J First of all, Ali would ask me to get the documents, so I would come down here and collect everything that we've got on the child, I would check with Learning Support if they are involved with them, the school receptionist takes around a leavers document to all the teachers and that has all their levels on. And the child that's leaving is expected to collect all their books.

G And in practice, does that work quite smoothly?

J It does now, because we've refined the system, so that it works. Otherwise, what used to happen was the child would say I'm leaving, the child would go off, we wouldn't necessarily know where they were going. They would leave all their documents, and it would be weeks sometimes months before we'd be asked for them, then we would have to post so there was the time factor and also the cost. So now we get it all ready, give it to the child and they take responsibility for it.

G And what sort of link do you have with the parents?

J Normal links, as we would with any child. The army parents often come to visit before they bring their children here and that doesn't matter if they are transferring in, or leaving or whatever, they can come to visit. We wouldn't normally link with parents just because they are army children. We wouldn't make an exception.

E4 - Interview with GR, Key Stage 4 Manager, Wednesday 26th May, His Office, Period 1

G First of all, can you tell me what your role is as Key Stage 4 manager and what responsibilities do you have?

Gr My basic role, as I see it, is to support the children in their learning, and that support is in class support, talking with parents, talking with teachers, negotiating things, smoothing things over and so on. So the basic role is supporting learning.

To me that's the bottom line, if I'm not supporting their learning and improving their chances of getting good exam results, I'm not doing my job.

G When you have children transferring into Key Stage 4, how do you go about the induction process?

Gr We interview the parents and the child as soon as they arrive, we go through their options, so we sort out what subjects they've been doing in their previous school, what they can do in this school and we produce a timetable. We hopefully match this to what they want. We then give them a day or two at home to give us a chance to inform the staff, say that so and so is arriving, whatever, this also gives us a chance to contact the previous school, find out a little bit about them, although I personally don't want to know anything about them, because you can't get a fresh start if you say 'oh I was talking to your headteacher last week and she said' or whatever. So all I want to do is check through their results, that's all I'm interested in. And then we pair them up with a buddy, give them a timetable, introduce them to their form tutor, and then I make a point of every day for the next 3, 4, 5 days seeing them, saying is everything all right? The obvious example of this is Gemma who's in her second week here now and I've spoken to her every day to see she's all right and now we'll start to let her off the leash a bit. They adapt very quickly, they get used to the school and she, she's a bright girl, she'll be fine.

G Would you say that the majority of kids that come in in KS4 come here because they are from an army background?

Gr Yes, I suppose it's something like 80/20 or 90/10, something like that. We do get civilians and we get kids from A, who live in the village but went to A, and for that David B is an obvious case. We do get civilian moves, but not very many because it's expensive around here, so really from North to South is impossible. So yes most of them are services children.

G What do you perceive to be the difficulties that service children have?

Gr Service children are very good at fitting in. They seem to have this ability to adapt to whatever group they're in and behave like the group is. So if the group's naughty, they'll be naughty, if the group is very good they will be very good. They are almost like chameleons, they change their colours to suit the environment. So from what I can see, a service child who is very bright moves into set 1 and will fit into set 1 very quickly. A child fitting into set 2 with some naughty children will act in the way he or she thinks the group wants him to act. The biggest problem in Key Stage 4 is course continuity and, other than every school teaching the same

things at the same time, there is no answer to this. The other issue, of course, is course work, if it's late year 10 or even the start of year 11, they can be severely disadvantaged if they haven't done the coursework. Or they move into a subject, for example Health and Social Care, which is almost all continuous assessment. And they haven't done that. You almost write them off. You know you put them in a class but they can't do well because there's no time for them to do the coursework that they've missed, or the module of work that they've missed. You can give them the book and say, look it's that module, read up on it, so there is a need for, well, extra staff, really, if we had an extra member of staff, there job would be to liaise with previous schools, set up for the kids a scheme of work and help them specifically, but we don't have that, we cobble it through. It's not so much an issue in English, Maths and Science, it's the option subjects and quite often they are unsuccessful. Which is a shame, really.

G So at the moment, support is on an individual basis and teachers provide what support they can at the time?

Gr Yes.

G What process do you go through when a child in KS4 says that they are leaving?

Gr Well I always try and dissuade them, I try and get in touch with the parents and say is there no alternative? Because in some cases there is, there are alternatives, we've written letters of support to stop them being moved. But basically, we generate a Key Stage 4 leaving form and that is filled in by every member of staff and that goes with the child along with, I say to them get every single piece of work you've ever done in this school and take it with you, so all the coursework. It's better to go with the child, rather than keep it here and wait for the next school to ask for it. You know that could be 3, 4 weeks later, well the kid needs that work so he can say that's what I've done in my previous school. And that hopefully will ease the passage, as it were, between one school and the next. But it's a bit haphazard, the better children, the more motivated children, will take their work with them, the less motivated children quite often say, I left it at school. And you get a phone call saying you've got his coursework, no we haven't, we've got no work he was told to take it all with him. So they use the system. But I truly believe it's the only system that will work. At Key Stage 4 it's the child that should take the work with them. They've got to take some responsibility for their own work.

G What support do you draw down from other agencies?

Gr Very, very little. The Young People's Support Service do not support Key Stage 4, they only support KS3. And that's it really. What we don't use is the Army because it is such a nebulous organisation, it's very difficult to find anyone who could actually help you. So we don't use the army, we use our in house support and expertise, basically.

G So the army aren't proactive in offering support?

Gr No, the army are not interested in children.

G Finally, I wonder if you could comment whether children from an army background may well join the army themselves?

Gr I don't agree with the generalisation that you have made. At the moment, we've got 2 year 11 boys applying for the army, 1 is service and 1 isn't. Quite often, they are turned off the army, quite often a family moving all the time will often resent the move. And the only thing that they can put a handle on is that the army made them move. So they actually are very negative towards the army. A lot of it depends on their father, on how he has coped with service life. And how the mother has coped when he is away. So I would never say to you, oh they're in the army, so they'll join the army. And I always, no disrespect to the army because I think that it's good for some children, I always say, have you thought about a year at college, some wider experiences and so on, rather than going in at 17 as a squaddie, so there isn't a generalisation you can make.

G So your year 11 leavers, what percentage go on to employment and what percentage go on to FE?

Gr Let's quote this year, there are 72 in the year group, 42 have applied for college, 2 have applied for the army and the rest will look at modern apprenticeships, jobs, although very few will get jobs. So you're looking at about 60% on to further education. They don't all make it, there's quite a high dropout rate, but our job is to show them the possibilities, that there are various things that they can do, the options. We often say go for a modern apprenticeship, go for college as well and then decide.

G Do you have any information about the number of children that make it on to higher ed?

Gr We get every year a printout from C, we don't get one from S, about the A level results of our students. The only way we then know whose gone on to higher education is through word of mouth, informal contact, there is no way of knowing at the moment. However, the children that are going now have got UPNs, so theoretically you could track that UPN and find out where they are, but we don't

have the wherewithall to do that. But I think somebody could. It's not a huge number going on to higher education, you're looking at about half a dozen to a dozen a year who go on.

E5 - Interview with DH, Head of English, Wednesday 26th May, English Office, Period 4

G Can we kick off by getting you to explain what your perceptions are of the difficulties of army children? Firstly, talking more generally, then more specifically about literacy issues and in your role as an English teacher here.

D Generally, I guess it's the moving in and out of school, although I'm not aware until they leave or come into the school, that they are army or whatever other reason for moving around. Well what kind of implications does that have? It has friendship implications, and whether kids settle into class easily. My experience of Upton is that kids that come and go do settle in easily, the ones who don't tend to come from other schools due to behavioural problems. At Key Stage 3 there's not really a problem with accessing the curriculum, because of the National Literacy Strategy they have done more or less what we're doing and because we're working towards SATs, that's a national exam. The only problems in English are where they've come from another school where they've studied another Shakespeare text and that has all kinds of implications at Key Stage 4 then, because you're not supposed to do the same Shakespeare text at key Stage 3 and 4, so that's a specific problem with English. And the other problem is at Key Stage 4, which is that because of the different exam boards. I'll give you an example, we've got a lad whose in year 11 and because we have quite a poor entry process he has managed to get into the wrong English group, he's got no coursework from his school in Germany, he's probably a C candidate and he's probably going to fail.

G Are there any difficulties with regards to learning skills?

D I certainly haven't noticed any patterns of learning skills, maybe I haven't been at the school for long enough. I think that people have generally come in and settled down quite quickly within my classes. And again, I couldn't pinpoint army. The only reason I know children come from an army background is either because I've met the parents or because the kids speak a lot about their dads, but other than that I wouldn't know.

G What do you do when you are told a child is transferring in?

D Theoretically, this is based on new procedures, if the child arrives without a key stage 2 or 3 result, they will have to sit a test now, but the English department have that set up, but as a whole school we don't have an entry policy. Apparently it used to be that when a child came to Upton, before they were even allowed into a classroom they had to have done certain tests and then they went back home and the school would assess them before they came back and were invited in to join the school. As it happens, at the moment, often they turn up on the day and expect to start. And the process of being put into groups is pretty hit and miss from what I can see. I'm not clear as to who makes the decision, I think Graham probably makes the decision based on stuff, if it's Key Stage 4 he'll make the decision as to where they should go. And this is one of the reasons why that year 11 boy, we've failed him because I wasn't formally approached as a head of department. At Key Stage 3, you tend to get put into mixed ability and that's not too much of a problem but again to get hold of Key Stage 2 scores is nigh on impossible. And that's what really wrecks it because we have to then start again by setting where the children are. They do get tested for a reading age but that only happens at the beginning of the year, so if they come in in February they won't get tested until the following September.

G So do you feel that the previous system was failing those that came in at an unusual time?

D Yes, it totally is, isn't it, because, well, I've now said that anyone that comes in to this school I have to know their results before they go anywhere, because what's happening is they will either be finding the group that they went to was because their friends were in that group, and I've actually caught some year 10s saying oh we're going to Mr R's class but only because I chanced upon them. It seems to me that certain heads of department, such as Science, Maths and English, really do need to be informed when there is someone coming in and then we can make a decision as to which group they go to. I mean it's still very difficult, with that lad in year 11, even having the results, it's still very difficult to place him, without any coursework or any remarks from the previous school. I mean I looked at an English book he had and put him into the 2nd set but by which time, you know, it was a bit too late. Also I followed that up with a phonecall to the parents, just to say what they could do at home to make up for any coursework or whatever, but they've never come back to me. You know I was prepared to spend as much time as was necessary to either give him work to do at home, or to arrange to have him stay in with me to do work, but I needed the

support from home. But no response at all. The father said he couldn't come in that week, so I said give me a call as soon as you have some time available and I will go through it with you, but nothing at all.

G Can you comment on the progress and ability of the 4 children that I've been following this year?

D I mean they all have low literacy skills, although that's not necessarily a surprise because lots of children have low literacy skills. Nick has made very general progress, I mean he's keen, he's in school a lot and he seems to have very supportive parents and I think considering his natural ability in English he's making good progress. Del hasn't made such good progress although Del is naturally much brighter. He has a lot of time off school for personal reasons, and therefore it's very difficult to get the consistency with him to target his difficulties and follow up on them, because he'll be here for one lesson and then not for the other. He also has dyslexia and that isn't being supported in this school. I think he's on the list but in terms of getting one to one support that's not happening for him. Shelley is fairly able, for some reason she was identified as being in the lower group and as you know at the beginning of this year, she was in a group called 8E who were a group of 10 children of low ability, low literacy levels and she, clearly, I don't know whether she was there for confidence or what but she could clearly cope in there. So for her being back in mainstream is good, I mean I think that it was good because it did help to establish her confidence, she was very low in self esteem and confidence, and in that group she shone so maybe it's done her some good there, now she's capable of working independently and she can handle her work quite well. I think Katie, also, I think she's benefited from a spell in 8E, she's also found her feet now and I didn't teach her the previous year, but she works well with Amy and she's confident to have a go. And I would say she's a good level 4 going upwards, so that's good. And I think if she continues like that next year she's got a chance of getting a level 5 which is where we would hope she would be. Shelley should be able to get a level 5 by the end of next year, I'm not sure about Del because he suffers on the written paper and Nick is more hit and miss as well. I think really because he's got that relaxed approach to his work, he'll do anything you ask him to do but he doesn't have that sense of where he personally is going, he's very task orientated as opposed to seeing himself as somebody that's developing. He can't look at his work and say oh look well I'm now doing this but later I'll move on to that, but he can if you ask him to, he can respond well to do this and that. He doesn't see the bigger picture.

G Is there a process in the school whereby at the end of the academic year one teacher will hand over to another?

D There is now a process. The process that is currently being put into place is a report card, a record card, that will see them through the whole of Key Stage 3 and 4, it will have an assessment of reading, writing, speaking and listening, gathered over the year, it will have their Key Stage 2 results, and then hopefully we're looking at putting preferred learning styles and things like that. So these, at the end of this year, will go on to the new class. So we've now got much more of an awareness of what they are like and where they're coming from. Also now we've got something like a department, in other words, 2 of us that are working here permanently, we can discuss individual children and their needs. So that's not anywhere near being watertight at the moment, but it is moving in the right direction.

G So do you have a chance to meet as a department to discuss this?

D We meet every Tuesday. But because the school is on special measures most of the meetings at the moment have been to do with the curriculum, or what we are actually doing and until, well, basically, as you know I have non-specialists delivering English so we tend to have to focus on what needs to be delivered, so I haven't had as much time to look at individual pupils. We're almost through one year now and we're following a literacy package, so once we are familiar with that we'll be able to move on a lot more to individual pupils. I mean at the beginning of the year when we had to decide which child was going into which class, I spent a lot of time talking about mixed ability groups so that the ability was evenly distributed, so there is some discussion as to which children would perform well. The problem though is that you can get a number of levels in each group. So that's developing it's not perfect but it's developing.

G How far are other curriculum areas on board with literacy across the curriculum?

D You see I'm not the literacy co-ordinator in the school, Clare is. But Clare has done lots of delivery of reading skills, spelling skills. We haven't done anything so far on writing which is something I would like to bring in. But my focus at the moment has to be sorting out the English department and also I'm not the literacy leader. The advice was from the LEA that the person leading the literacy strategy shouldn't be from the English team as often other teachers view it as English off loading their work. I would say Humanities are probably on board, beyond that I'm not sure. Clare and I work quite closely together developing strategies.

G You were going to comment earlier about the size of the school?
D Because the school is so small I think it's a good thing. I mean I know virtually all the kids around the place. I teach years 8 and 9, I don't teach year 7 so I don't know them too well, but I've got a pretty good general knowledge of children in this school, whereas if it was a bigger school I would have no idea. I think that has an advantage to it, that we do know them personally. It's a lot easier to track them, as pupils, with their progress, we know roughly where they are and what they're like. It depends on each class each year, I mean you are very dependent on those records, whereas here you can just pop across the corridor and say what's so and so like, and I guess that's an advantage here.

E6 - Interview with TR, Key Stage 3 form tutor, Thursday 10th June, period 2, his classroom (room 39)

G Can we start by your outlining what your roles and responsibilities are at the school?
T I lead PSHE in Key Stage 3 this year and I teach French to year 7 and year 8 I've got a year 7 bottom set and a year 8 2nd set and 4th set. I do one lesson of art and I share the group with C E, so that's one group that we share, and that's it I think. I've got to co-ordinate the programme for PSHE and RE as well. I've been given this year the RE to do, this was before the Ofsted and that's because we don't have any RE. I'm working with one of the county advisors for that, preparing all the schemes of work with some help from Ablington for that. And I co-ordinate the RE with the tutors really, we have meetings so that they know what they're doing. I'm also a key stage 3 tutor, I have 24 in my tutor group. It's my second year at the school.
G What is your perception of the difficulties that army children have at school?
T Well I think it's got to be the moving around, not settling properly in one place, or thinking maybe that they, you know. I think that they're very good at making friends because I think they've had a lot of practise at that, they keep going through and doing that in different places and I think they've got to try and fit in really well. But I haven't really noticed any specific major difficulties, only that, really, that it can be hard to make friends, but most of them seem to fit in really well.
G So in terms of being a form tutor, there's no difference?

T I wouldn't say there was, no. I wouldn't say that I could point out, if I didn't know who they were, I wouldn't point out, right you're army, you're army.

G I wonder if you could comment on the progress of the four children that I've been working with this year?

T Katie, as you know, is a twin and she's very different to Sarah. I mean, I've talked to the family and have had long telephone conversations with them. I would say that Katie has less everyday social problems than perhaps Sarah does. Katie is very quiet, she sits there and she takes it all in, really. In terms of ability, I would say that she does struggle, but she's very willing to work, very willing to take on board what she has to do and she has a go at everything, really. She won't put up a barrier or anything else. I think that Sarah is very different to her, she is the opposite really and is quite stubborn sometimes. Katie is very easygoing.

G Did you get involved in any of the issues with bullying and name calling last year?

T I made various telephone calls and I heard from the mother about the various issues. Now I had a very long phone call with her once, because there was a problem with either Katie or Sarah, but there was problems at home with racism and comments about them going back to Germany. Her mum was very, well, I think she had had it so much, she said, well, you won't be able to do anything. It was more with Sarah, because Sarah is in my tutor group this year and I've had more dealings with her because of that. But there was some racist comments and I think there was some paint sprayed on the walls at some point. I had various conversations with her. I think she was resigned to the fact that nothing could be done and that the school wasn't doing anything. But then we couldn't do anything, but she was blaming the government and saying that this wouldn't have happened if they were in Germany. It would have been sorted out, really. My reaction to that was, well, if she wouldn't tell me who it was, and Sarah was very reluctant to say, I said, well I can't do anything if I don't know what the problem is.

G Did it spill over to school then?

T It did spill over to school because there was an incident with another boy in my tutor group who made a racist comment once. And he realised that he had done wrong, he did apologise to her and that was when I got involved really, when that happened. I haven't heard that it's still carrying on. But that's not to say that it's not because I don't think she's the sort of person who would tell me, really.

G What about Shelley?

T Yeah, I think very positively about her, at one point, I think, well, she didn't like me at all at the beginning, she was quite sullen and you know. But recently and, I would say, most of this year, she's very bright and positive. Ability wise she's very, very artistic, and she's keen to learn, she's superb. She really has come on I think.

G What about Nick and Del?

T Now Del recently I've found him a bit distracted really. He made a really good start and I know he has problems with his dyslexia, but I've just found him a bit distracted and that's not surprising given his background, but he's tended to be more distracted recently I think. Nick, hard working, works well, polite, very helpful, he's very sensitive and is very sensitive to other people's needs, really. He's very aware of other people and what they do, and he will often do things that you think, yeah, that's really nice to do. Sometimes he'll say just the right thing. That's super and should be encouraged.

G Given the various roles that you have, do you find you can encourage the children to talk about their backgrounds, are there opportunities to do this?

T Within the school probably not, yet and I've felt very much this year that I haven't been very clear about what my role has been until very recently. I mean I am now leading PSHE but that was never made very clear when I started. It's not an excuse but I don't think this is something that we do enough. But in my lessons, probably not as much as I could do, I do try to talk about their interests and to talk about things to do with the army. I mean they will often bring something in and will want to share something with you. I mean for example recently we're learning about the national health service and several people have mentioned when they were in Germany or abroad they stayed in different sorts of hospitals, so I do try and encourage them to look at the differences between the countries and that's quite a good way in. And I think it's to be celebrated, that there are different things in different countries. Another thing that I've noticed, I came here from a Middle School, that was a small rural middle school and I used to teach French there and there was always a real feeling of why do we have to learn French, I'm never going to go to France. You know, why can't they speak English? And I don't think I've had one person here who has said to me why don't they speak English, why do we have to learn French? And it really surprises me that it's very much more accepted here and I do put that down to the fact that more children here have lived abroad and assume that, actually, in other countries they do speak other languages. And that they need to know them. And that really

surprised me because having heard what I heard about this school, I thought it was going to be more of a struggle to teach French here.

G Have you been told by any families that dad is going to Iraq?

T No, and I think that's probably something that we should develop, really, so that the whole school are aware. I mean the kids often say that their dad is away, or not, really, and I think that this is what's normal for them, and yet very often it's not mentioned, it's not even known. They accept it, I think, because it happens so often. I was talking to someone the other day, from my tutor group, and she said that her dad wasn't there when she was born, and I think that's quite affected her really, she says he wasn't there and he didn't really help to bring her up, so she's much closer to her mum, whether that would have happened anyway, I don't know. But it did sort of strike me that maybe we aren't doing as much for these children as we could.

G As a form tutor, what do you have to do to help a child coming into your tutor group mid-term?

T I would pair them up with another pupil who would be a good role model, really, and who would show them around. Um, I would check with them every day, on a daily basis, check that they've got all the things they need, timetable and all that. Check after the first couple of weeks that they have settled in. And if there were problems, I would contact parents by phone.

G How do you go about helping the student who hasn't covered all of the course that you are teaching?

T Well, I wouldn't give them different work to do, I would include them in what we're doing. I mean, we've just had someone join us in year 8. I talked to him before and I asked how much French he had learnt, he said he hadn't done a lot, and he told me some of the words that he knew. But then again, I try and use that positively, and if he knows some things that we haven't done, I try and bring that in. And again, I think it's good for them to see that and encourage them. And I would make allowances for him at the beginning, really. But I think that so much of what we do is topic based, so we might do food, then travel, you know, so if he hasn't done travel then my groups in years 7 and 8 probably haven't done travel anyway, so we start from scratch there. It's only the everyday words that are different and it might be that they would know them anyway. So I don't find it a huge problem, certainly not in year 7 or 8 and I don't teach year 9, 10 or 11 for French, so I imagine it would be probably higher up the school that it would be worse, because they've got more knowledge, haven't they.

G And when a child leaves, what do you do?

T Yeah, we have a leaving form and we have to put in their level. And the form tutor works with the office on that one.

G Do they give you quite a lot of notice?

T Some of them do, although some of them give a month's notice. And sometimes they go without you even knowing. They say that so and so has left and you think, have they? But I've certainly had different classes that I've taught and a pupil has left and I didn't know.

E7 - Interview with SC, Head of Science, Tuesday 15th June, period 2, Headteacher's office

G First of all, could you outline what your roles and responsibilities are here?

S Well, within the Science department, it's basically teaching the kids and checking that they have understood everything and with my role as a form tutor it's checking that they are enjoying themselves, they're not getting picked on, bullied or whatever. I'm a Key Stage 3 tutor.

G What is your perception of the difficulties that army children have?

S They come and go basically. And one of the problems that I've come across that I haven't come across before is that it's a stepping stone before they can get to the army. It's like at other schools they want to learn, they come in and they've got ambitions, here I don't think they have. It's like by law they've got to come to school and then they can go into the army. And the parents seem to drum this into them, oh yes, school is just something that has to be done. And that goes for homework and things like that.

G You say that they come and go, what difficulties does that pose for you as a teacher?

S Well they come for a few months, you know you work out where they are and then they're off again. They're gone for a few years and then they come back again. So you often find that other schools haven't done the same things as we do, so they haven't covered everything. Sometimes you can have four of these kids in the class at any one time and that takes a lot of your time.

G In Science you have a spiral curriculum, is that directly in response to the army children issue?

S Yes. So what we do is revisit everything every year, but we are changing that next year. So the new curriculum does cover some aspects of the spirals, but

there is a lot that is just done in year 7, year 8. But that's because we got poor results and the kids got bored doing the same thing every year and it wasn't stretching them enough. I don't know what havoc that is going to cause!

G When you are alerted to a child joining you mid-term, what do you do?

S Well first of all we get their levels from their previous school, then we'll put them in a set. Then we'll give them a quick assessment to find out what they have covered. If they haven't covered a part of the course that we need them to do, then they'll just have to take that home and do it there, or come in and see me after school.

G Do you find that a lot of them take you up on the offer of help?

S No they are not interested, basically they say that they don't remember what they've done and that's all. What I need is for them to say, look, I haven't done that and I haven't done that, not, I can't remember what I've done.

G When they say that they are going away the next week, what sort of thing do you do?

S I set them cover work, so you send around a brown envelope and get work from all the teachers. But not a lot of them do it.

G So if they leave the school and know that there is going to be a gap before they join a new school, they can get work set for that time?

S Yes. But this doesn't happen, not all the time now.

G Can you comment individually on the progress of the children that I'm working with?

S Nick, excellent, his progress is brilliant. He's one of the highest in the class. He's keen and he's enthusiastic and he tries hard to understand. So I'm really impressed with him because, you know, there's no problems with his behaviour, there's no problems whatsoever. Katie, um, she lacks confidence, she knows the right answer but you've got to ease it out of her, she's doing all right, and could do well if she builds up her confidence. Shelley, well, she did go through a stage earlier this year where she wasn't doing much, she wasn't interested in Science and she wasn't interested in doing any of the work, but for the last few months she's kind of coming out of that. If you compare her work for September/October and compare her work to now you can really see the difference. So I don't know what that was.

G Are you aware of any patterns of curriculum in other schools?

S No we aren't made aware of anything else but the levels. The rest is down to you to find out. And I ask them and they aren't aware of what they've done, they haven't got a clue what they've studied.

G Do you think it's genuinely that they don't know or because they don't want you to know?

S It could be, yeah, because you know if I went from one school where I was doing Exploring Science to another doing Spotlight Science, I would make sure that I said, look I've done this, this and this. But here they don't do that, they say, oh I don't know what it was and you can't really force it out of them, can you?

G Does it take up a lot of your time having to do this?

S I don't know because it depends how many kids come into your class. But I mean you can always give them a quick assessment I mean you've got the levels, you know what set to put them into, so you give them a quick test to find out what they've done. You have a look through and realise that they haven't done this or that. We've got module tests that we give them, so you can put it together fairly quickly and ask them to complete it. I suppose what would take time is if you have to go and set them work to make up for something they've missed, but in reality that doesn't happen.

E8 - Interview with TB, Inclusion Manager, Friday 21st May, period 2, Headteacher's office

G What is your role as inclusion manager and how have you interpreted it?

T I think in the first instance it's collecting children from classes when they've been red carded ie they've caused a disturbance or there's been some incident or whatever, the teacher can't cope with them anymore, so I collect them or they're sent to me. Then I data log, what room they've come from, what they've done etc. They are given the 5 W's form which is why, when, where, what if and so on, then depending on the time, if it's at the beginning of the lesson then I'll have work for them. If it's at the end of the lesson then they'll just sit in silence for the last five minutes or whatever. Occasionally, if the incident is serious enough then they are removed from the room pending further enquiries. Once it's all logged into the system, it automatically generates letters. Letter 1, you know the first misdemeanour, says (rap rap) naughty, we hope it won't happen again, it's actually quite a severe message something like if this persists you will be excluded and I've had quite a lot of parents phoning asking why their child is

about to be excluded. Letter 2 is "once again we've had to" you know and we would like to invite you to speak to the Key Stage manager. Letter 3, the third offence, is a senior staff detention, when they are put in the inclusion room out of school. Letter 4 is a short stay in the inclusion room and once they hit 4 they stay on 4. And after letter 4 for every misdemeanour, it's a stay in the inclusion room. That means that after registration, they are sent to the room, we have to look at their timetable and collect the work, they sit in silence. We used to take them for an early break, I will take them down the corridor for a comfort break, but I don't let them any further because of an incident, when a member of staff went with the children and the children locked them out of the canteen. When I got to the door and it was locked, I made some sort of sign to unlock it and they just sat and laughed. So as a result, everyone from then on lost the privilege. They do have an early lunch, I'll take them down a few minutes before everyone else, then we'll go for a walk out and around the premises. Then back here before everyone else comes out because the idea of being in the inclusion room is that you're out of circulation. And that tends to hurt more. I mean to be brought out during lesson time isn't quite as harsh, but it's the breaktimes they don't like.

G Would you describe it as reactive then, rather than proactive?

T Yes, that's the general idea of the room, I would think. The fact that it's there for any teacher when children become unruly, although at times we have children who shouldn't be there, at the end of the day. You have to be quite strict, for example, I've had some children come in who have actually been phoning their friends as they come through the door and you can be sure that their friends will try and get in too. So we've put a stop to that now, and I look at the groups in front of me and split up the friends, and put them in the office, in the staff room, so now they know that it's a waste of time. You know, before they were thinking that it's a good cop out. And occasionally you do find certain little groups who, for no reason, are out at the same time, so I do try when I am logging things to look at who's doing what and when.

G Obviously you have contact with the parents by letter, do you have face to face or telephone contact with them too?

T Quite often, yes, I mean not always, because there wouldn't be time. Some days you might have two call outs, perhaps three or four, other days it's standing room only, I had ten in the room, two outside in and I farmed about six others out. And I think I actually sent some home, too, because once they are in these groupings their behaviour, you know. And as this is the last step before being

excluded, if they can't behave in there, they should go home. So I'll phone the parents and say, look, your child hasn't behaved, etc etc, and send them home. And most parents are quite supportive, and the room itself is good in that the kids themselves really do not like coming, but it's got to the point now where several of them are sent to me, not just because they are misbehaving in class but they are misbehaving because they can't access the work. It's beyond them. And so very often I used to have 2 sides to the room, then, because I used to have the need help side and the naughty side, where it really was you sit in silence and you behave yourself. So the other side I'll sit and chat with them and give them strategies to help themselves.

G Do you say this to staff?

T Well I have made a few suggestions and I think that staff are quite aware of it to a certain extent, but some of the children who I could identify needed help, some of them haven't come back at all, because a spell in the inclusion room was enough to sort out the problem, but there are some who it's a combination of lack of ability and poor behaviour, they've got into a cycle and they're the ones with very little support from home. You know, the kids rule the roost. And they are the ones that need the help and the support because negativity breeds negativity.

G What is your perception of the difficulties that army children have?

T Because I've taught in several schools where it was predominantly army kids, I think army kids do have problems I mean it must be weird, mustn't it, moving and making friends all the time. A lot of the kids because of it come in and settle down quite easily, but there are a lot who can't. You know they have poor confidence levels and all the rest of it. Then you have issues with the syllabus, especially if they are in year ten, or something like that, and they can't access any of the work because it's all totally different. And I suppose in an ideal world, schools would be able to support them and help them make that jump across, but small schools aren't going to have the finance or the facilities to be able to cope with it. I really do feel sorry for some of them. Many years ago, you had 6 months postings and you had many who were literally thrown in and by the time they had settled were off again. And you end up with all sorts of behaviour problems that way.

G Do you think there is a need for more targetted support for army families?

T I'm not aware that we provide that here. I do have a lot of contact with parents and tend to be the first port of call when there's a problem. If there is a problem, I try my damndest to sort it out and find a solution and I mean most staff, if we can find a way around something, we will provide extra help, I mean obviously we

can't provide it in manpower because we don't have that here. I do think perhaps if we had stronger links with the army themselves, perhaps they might have resources that we don't, so perhaps forming a bond there might be as helpful if not more helpful than what we can do here you know the odd half an hour at lunchtime or whatever. Those that want to learn learn fine and they'll come to after school clinics and things. But a bonding, perhaps with some funding, from central government presumably. Perhaps these army camps should have something in the form of teaching assistants, whereby they could then provide help for the parents when there's a problem at school. There is a link with the garrison now, I was hoping to have gone to a meeting, but I wasn't allowed, I know the EWO went and the best thing was that everyone got to know who everyone else was. And I think that's the important thing, communication. They've got to realise that they are part of this community and that they can't be isolated any more really. I mean in the past I've always had quite close links with them and there was a welfare officer who you could phone, if there was a problem that you thought might have an impact on the whole family. I don't know if we've got one on the governing body?

G Can you comment on the four children that I've been working with?

T The two girls, Katie last year especially, with her mum. Katie found it very difficult and she was getting very distressed, I mean a couple of times she just walked out she left. Her mum was lovely, we used to have chats, when we have a situation like that I try and make contact at least once a week, to let them know that they haven't been abandoned. I think that's really important especially when you've got mum who's on her own, because dad's away or whatever. But no Katie, she had great difficulty forming relationships, and maintaining them, to start with and she was very sensitive, but she seems to be doing a lot better now. She was put into the gardening group, it was all confidence boosting and building up her self esteem. But that's social skills, she's not been long enough anywhere to actually have time to learn and use all the skills. Shelley, I've heard from her quite recently, she wasn't eating, things like that, she's got quite a complex homelife and, I suppose, like many of us, if you find it very difficult to cope with all the problems that there are, but she wasn't eating. She came to me and said she wasn't feeling very well and I said why and had she had lunch and she said she didn't and she's not having lunch, so I said why not, she said well I don't like it. Her mum couldn't afford to buy her an expensive roll, and she felt self conscious with her two little sandwiches, so I said well what do you like to eat? She said

what she really wanted was to be able to have her pound and go to the canteen and buy her lunch like all her friends, but she couldn't do that because David wouldn't let her. So I had a word with David and he was prepared you know to do it, so I spoke to mum and said if I can persuade David to let his sister have school dinners, would you give her the money? And mum said yes that was fine. So it was fine for a while, until David got in a bad mood and let loose. With Shelley I don't tend to see her because she's been misbehaving or whatever, it's usually because she's not well. It's problems with her periods, things like that. And I see her sometimes come in because she's supporting another student who's having problems. She's got a lot of mates, I think. Funnily enough, I do think that sometimes school provides the one stable norm in their lives, which is why it's so important for all of them to know exactly what they should be doing, when and where. I can't picture Del, Nick I see because of his brother, I just can't picture Del.

G Del seems to be having problems with attendance at the moment.

T With attendance, especially if both parents work, they can be out of the house before the kid leaves and they'll never know. But that's where we have our internal register and we were trying to combat that.

G So with someone like Del, if his attendance continues, what will happen to him?

T If it falls under 80% then it's picked up by the EWO, we contact the parents and explain in a letter what the problem is etc. That's usually followed up by a phone call or a visit. If there's no improvement, then there's another phone call, visit or letter, saying that unless there's an improvement, that school is a legal requirement, there will be court action. It's all right, I mean it's formal, but it's more it's all right we want to work together, and very often that's enough for parents to realise woops, because that letter spells out what steps there are along the road to prosecution. And now, whereas two or three years ago, it took forever, by the time you had got around to a prosecution the kid had left school. Whereas now we can fasttrack it. And they are willing to say look you've got 2 weeks, if there's no improvement we'll call in the courts. Usually that's enough to make parents realise, I mean sometimes they don't know what's going on, once they become aware they realise that you're not actually going to have a go at them. I mean I never approach them in any sort of aggressive manner. I say, look can we help, can you come in and discuss this? I mean if they choose to ignore all the help and advice then we take the legal route. But overall most

parents are quite happy when they come in and realise you want to work with them.

G What if the parents condone the absence and say it's for a medical reason?

T We've had cases like that, we did actually get to the point with a couple of families where we requested medical certificates. And the parent actually had to go and get the certificate from the doctor. There was one occasion when a medical certificate was sent in with a note saying copy this and send it back straight away, so I took one look at it and it had actually been altered because the date part the doctor had obviously written one thing and the parent altered it. And because of this it would have given the child another 2 weeks grace. So I went down to the medical centre and pointed out to them what was happening and after that the child tended to be in school more often! Quite often I'll see a child who I think has written a note and you contact the parents, you obviously have to be quite careful. So I phone the parents and if they say they've sent a note in, I'll say something like it hasn't got to me yet. And I have actually sent notes back in the past, you know, put them in the post. But sometimes when you look into it you find out that that's the day that mum has go off on a course or something, so there's a pattern.

G Have the army families come in to talk about the recent deployment to Iraq?

T I'm not aware of them coming in to talk about it. I did phone up a couple of parents because of their children's behaviour because I knew dad was in the army and I phoned up to see whether or not it had a bearing on that, and one of them, yes, dad had been posted to Iraq and the other one, no, and he wasn't going to be as he was medically unfit or something. But the child whose dad was away, you know I think there's a lot of children whose dads, uncles or whatever, are away and I feel there's a lack of tolerance around. It's always on the news, you know they can't get away from it, can they. And the fact that the army is a bit stiff upper lip also doesn't help. I had a child who came here because he was worried. His mum was finding it very difficult, his dad was in Iraq, mum couldn't cope and her reaction to it, she must have been so close to breaking point, was to go home, abandon him with a neighbour when the poor little boy needed support. And he already had problems anyway, I've had a lot of contact with him and his mum. He's quite a sensitive lad, he takes so much on board then all of a sudden he's had enough. But for a lot of the kids, they've got something here that they've got all the time, it's stable, because at the moment their lives are in turmoil. It's like this stiff upper lip and if I open up to someone it's going to reflect badly on me and

my family. There needs to be a lot more education all round, I think, not just in the schools but in the army as a whole.

E 9 - Interview with JS, School Bursar, Friday 12th December, period 1, Finance Office

G What difficulties does the school have financially because of its mobile population?

J Right, well a third of the school is from a service background, literally 32%. And inherently with a service background, the children are not guaranteed to be here for more than two and a half to three years. So the chances of them being here for a reasonable amount of time and taking their GCSEs are slim. So from the teaching staff's point of view it's not unsatisfactory but it's disappointing because they can't follow a product from year 7 to year 11. You get to know the strengths and weaknesses of that produce and build up a relationship with them. And if the pupil arrives in year 10 and you've got one year with them until their exams, there's very little the individual tutor or teacher can do to help them achieve a good grade because all the work's been done by another school. Now in educational terms this is called turbulence and clearly the turbulence factor at Upton is very high because the 66% of children that come from Loxley, quite a high percentage of those come from a free school meal background and usually those families go where the work is. So if they've been unemployed for a fairly long period of time, they look to move because it's unsustainable to live on benefits as a family. Now Southshire as the LEA are very mindful of what they call the service school factor so that increasingly over the last 3 years, they have come under great external pressure from the DfES not to treat it as a separate issue. And they have come under internal pressure, through an organisation called Sash, which is the Southshire Association of Secondary Headteachers, it's quite a powerful forum. And the minutes of Sash are distributed on quite a wide scale and goes to quite an influential crowd outside the headteachers' circle, like the leaders of the council. Now with all these pressures, from Sash and others, increasingly when the LEA gets its budget from the government, it sets aside a proportion of it which goes to the school. And as you know schools are paid for bums on seats, so every child is worth such an amount at key stage three and four. So that's a fixed income and it's taken out of the pot and it's paid to the schools in what they call the schools' budget share. Then we get the Standards'

fund which is now so consistent an amount, but they keep changing the Standards' fund on what you can spend it on. Now next year is a major change in that we'll get the same amount of money collectively but it will be under one heading, School Improvement, so there won't be a Standards' fund and a small school's grant and all these little subheadings which make the total, there'll just be one heading next year and it will increase by about 4%, which is the minimum that schools budgets are set to rise. Now when the LEA have taken the money out of the pot and put it into the schools budget, the money that they've got left they divide up into their own resources, so that they put a huge amount of money into what we would call the School Improvement Grant and that money is used by the LEA to directly support secondary schools it might be a failing school or it might be a school that's in what they call challenging circumstances, not special measures but certainly needs a lot of help. And then all the other schools can put in a series of bids which they ask for. For example, we might get told there is some funding available for re-furbishing the science blocks, please submit your bid by. And then they look at your bid and the quality of it will put your bid on a sliding scale and the money there would go to that school. And then right down, left in our barrel, as the money decreases, there's an amount of money which they keep for a slush fund and the schools never know how much it is and it's sort of controlled by the key players at county hall, like the head of school improvement, head of libraries, head of finance, and they can move that to help schools where they feel there are special circumstances. And when they give that money the other schools probably won't even know about it. Now that is the pot that Sash are becoming increasingly agitated about because they say, look we're laying off good people and all these external funds over which we have no control must be surrendered and the finances must become more transparent, which is of course what the government want. Some LEAs are and some LEAs aren't. By and large, Southshire is very open and supports its education budget really, really well and puts up its Poll Tax by more than an acceptable level. Now one of the elements in that little pot that I was talking about, is for the service schools factor for just a few schools in Southshire. Now Upton is one, Ablington is another, Ablington probably has more service children than we do, and then we have our cluster of primary schools, like Zennor and Charterhouse, and they are all service children. Now what county hall do, is that they divide a funding system, I'm going back five years now, where there are fixed points at which you receive an allowance per term. So if you are a service school and you had between 0 and

15% of service children, you would be given something like £3.50 per head of your form 7 roll. If you were 15 to 30%, that will go from £3.50 to £7 per child. If you then went from 30 to 45%, it went from £7 per child to £12. Now that was felt to be very unfair, because if the big jump was something like 30% and you were on 28.5, you would still only get the same as someone who was on 3%. And then two years ago, it was tabled to Sash, although the non-service school heads weren't that interested in it, it was eventually agreed that the funding would go on a graph and the graph would go from no pounds to £13 for anything above 50%. And correspondingly, if your form 7 was 400 children and you had 32.1% service factor, you went up the line and it would give you equivalent funding. Now that was deemed by everyone who received it to be a very fair system. And that is what is currently in operation. But I think the service school factor's days are numbered now. We might have it next year, but I very much doubt we'll see it in 05-06.

G The form 7 is difficult for a service school because the number of children on roll on the day is probably not indicative of the number of children you have across the school year. And that's why they give you this sum to supplement and help you out, in that sense?

J Yes, because obviously form 7 sets your budget for the following financial year. Arguably, January is not a good month for the school's roll. I personally think the school's roll should be set in the middle of September which is the beginning of the academic year. I especially believe that the school budget should run from September to September. A January number for us is not good because major units in the army, when they do what they call arms plot moves, generally do them during the summer. The Christmas period within the army is always seen to be a time when families should be given some stability. So if families are separated, say on account of an unaccompanied move to Kosovo, or somewhere like that, in the R and R system of the army, they try to ensure that over the Christmas period, staff are returned home for a set number of days. So movement at Christmas is frowned on by the planning department of the army. Most of the moves are taken during July and August because they are quite big logistical things, which is the worst possible time for children. Well, arguably it's the worst time. Some will say, well they've done their exams in July, so it's the best time. But it doesn't help our numbers. Now the funding department at the LEA will say well it shouldn't really matter because the trigger for generating more income to a school as the numbers go up is 5%. So if our form 7 number is a 1000 pupils, we

would need to have on roll in the September 1050 pupils to then trigger the additional income. But the crux of it is, we have to get 1050 to trigger it and we'll actually have to have 1051 to get more funding. Now we only get the funding for the 1 not for the 50 which made it up. Now that's unfair. Now for all sorts of reasons I can understand why you can't give the money in arrears, otherwise you wouldn't have enough money in the pot. So we, even though we have a high turnover and our numbers go up and down, we have never triggered extra funding in all the years that I have been here.

G What do you use that extra funding for more specifically? I mean, is it specific to the army children or is it used throughout the school?

J No, because in a school budget share. Well, the school budget share is only part of a school's income. But it's a very important calculation because now and in the years to come, schools will be judged on what they call benchmarking. So if you spend x amount of money on staffing per pupil, x amount on support staff and so much for curriculum, they theory is, and this is being organised by the audit commission, the theory is that all this information on your annual financial report, it's put in to the audit commission's website and they will maintain a database of all school's expenditure in the UK, so Ofsted or any other auditing type organisation, will be able to go to that website, and they will say what is the benchmark for a secondary school with pupils aged 11 to 16 whose number of roll is between 500 and 600? And then the benchmarks will turn up something like staffing must be less than 85%, money per pupil is more than £660. If your staffing, like ours is, is much more than 85%, it doesn't leave you very much left to run the school. Now in the running of the school, we have to take out things over which we have very little control, like electricity, maintenance and all of those sorts of things, but leave an amount of money that's really spent on the pupils, for example on rulers, blackboards, desks, carpets, everything for the environment. So what you do is you take the school's budget, you then take all the other income that the school makes, Standards' fund, lettings anything else, you then take away from your total income what you spend on staffing, and you divide it by the number of pupils in the school. Which gives you what you've got left to spend on the pupils. So there's roughly an average for a secondary school, ours is less, which is why we got such an appalling Ofsted report.

G So why is the staffing so high then?

J Well we have 28 teachers, most of then are fairly senior, so right on top of all our pay scales. We have 2 ASTs, which is most unusual for one school to have. I

mean they are almost on the same salary as what you would call the leadership team. So as a school, the cost of our 28 teachers is exceptionally high. We don't have sufficient who are coming in from teacher training college. They are all right up at the top end. Then we have the problem in that the form 7 number on roll in January this year was 382. Today we have 364. What do you reackon 22 are worth? A key stage 3 child is about £1750, a key stage 4 gets about £2800. So you can see we have lost 22 children so we've lost quite a bit of money this year. 28 teachers currently costs us £1.2 million in salaries and our school budget share is £1.15 million so the salaries cost more than we're given to run the school. So we can only prop it up by getting extra money into the school. (Discussion now about the intricacies of the budget.) The number of free school meal children is very much part of the way that the value added is calculated, the deprivation of an area, whatever. But it doesn't work for us because of our service children. So at the moment, we have 42 children that are eligible for a free school meal which is quite a high percentage and that would attract funding to enable us to give that child a free lunch every day. Now why it doesn't work for us is because a service child cannot be eligible for a free school meal. The regimental system looks after the welfare of the family. So a family that suffers financially will be looked after by its own and the child will always come to school with lunch. So arguably, this 42% is only for two thirds of our school. And this plays havoc with all our benchmarking and that's one of the down sides with a service factor school. So we then get a factor for SEN. And this is a very emotive thing at the moment. Because as the pot of money at County Hall gets smaller to make the school budget share bigger and more transparent, so the ability of the county to support SEN is getting less at a time when SEN is a subject which is raising in profile. Now in the last year, the whole method of funding has changed and its gone to a new system which is very simple and transparent and its to do with a child's reading ability when they leave primary school and their numerical ability. So certain categories attract money to bring them back up to the mainstream level. Now that calculation now has got as far as year 7 and 8 and by the next financial year, year 9. So 10 and 11 are still on the old system and will drop off by the end of next year. So we're not quite transparent yet but it's now at a much more acceptable level. Now for SEN in this school, this year, we got £19K. Then we get the service school factor, 32%, which attracted £17K, we're talking really small amounts now. And last year we got something called the small schools' salary factor, because county hall recognised that with few bums on seats, but still

needing to employ teachers to teach the national curriculum requirements, was beyond our means. So we qualified for a service school factor which last year gave us £23K, but through pressure from Sash this is now abandoned. So in April our budget will be roughly £25,000 less than in previous years.

G The SEN allocation, that assumes that every school is going to be assessing SEN in the same way?

J No, I think you're right. I think the whole assessment thing is currently being looked at under a microscope to give an element of standardisation. And one of the first things that started this was the Work Reforms in schools. The DfES were very anxious to look at the role of the TA. The Unions were very keen to get a proper pay structure which rewarded TAs as they gained qualifications. So the qualification system had to be agreed, because every LEA had a different agreement for TAs. (Discussion about pay for TAs) We have 3 TAs, no Learning Support Manager, no SENCO. If we had the right number of TAs for the level of SEN in this school, we would need a minimum of 6. We need a proper manager and a SENCO. We wouldn't attract a SENCO to this school without giving at least 3 management points for responsibility. So to staff our SEN department adequately, and I'm only saying adequately, Ablington has 8 TAs and it has a manager and it has a SENCO, we've only got £37,000 to meet the needs of the whole department. So this is the dilemma, do we decide to put more resources into SEN and decide to drop something else off the curriculum altogether? So at the moment, until the profile of the school improves and parents send their children here by choice, the numbers go up and bums on seats gives us the funding, then we can put in what is needed.

G You mention that you raise money elsewhere, what different things have you been doing?

J Well this side of the school has been leased to Westland Helicopters which will go from now until July 2007. That will bring us £430,000 over the four years. And I've also leased other bits of the school to three other small companies which will bring us around £32, £33K, so in total in four years we'll get in total about £575K. This is the difficult conundrum for us at the moment because while we're in Special Measures, as you're aware, we say on the action plan what needs to be done to make it better, whose responsibility it is, the date and time, and costs. We've got what we call a non-recurring cost (which means the LEA pays it once and it will make the school level with others) and provided the costs are non-recurring this sort of money will come from the school improvement grant from the

LEA. I mean, there will be some negotiation about this cost, but the other part of it, which is much more difficult to solve is recurring cost. This is a salary. When we were writing the action plan, the first thing that the head has to do is meet the statutory requirements for the national curriculum because Ofsted had said to us that we do not meet statutory requirement in several areas. So they reviewed the curriculum, restructured it from September 2004 and then we have to staff it. Now by and large that added to the staffing bill. Ofsted also said that our management was not cost-effective and they pointed out two posts, worth nearly £100,000, which should not be there. So the current bill for staffing from April will be £1.42 million. The head will go with her requirement for non-recurrable costs, but she will also ask for £375,000 next year for the extra staffing. So the argument is that the saving costs are going to come in the federation of the two schools for example, there will be one head of maths between the two schools, so you'll save several management points there.

G Obviously there are massive difficulties caused because of the turbulence. How aware are the army locally about these difficulties?

J Where the army puts the requirement that one of their members becomes a member of the governing body, they aren't there voluntarily. Therefore, they may attend the minimum number of meetings they can but their heart and soul is not in it. We're in that situation right now, where we've had to re-design our governing body and there's quite a lot of competition currently in the community for a place to move Upton forward. The Chair will require governors to attend training courses, they are required to be working members. So if they don't meet their quota of meetings, they will be slung out. At the end of the day, they feel that the army governor link is useless. And where the school has tried to get influence through the army network itself, we are aware that in the army that when units come in, by and large the message goes back that don't send them to Upton. Now that's not something we can tackle through one families officer on our board of governor. We've had the garrison commander on our board for the past three years and whilst, as the garrison commander he's given good advice, it has made an improvement on the relationship between the military and the school. So we're looking at this quite closely at the moment. We have no military member on the new governing body and we have no intention of having one. They are going to have to try and earn it. But we are going to have a very serious community committee and we will start to send governors out to military meetings to represent Upton School. On Project A we will get a school governor onto that

committee. So over the next year we are going to try and get onto the right committees with an idea to raise the level of awareness about Upton. We have to become proactive because of an apathy on the part of the military. We need to be proactive to bring the school's problems and its good points out to the community.

E10 - Interview with SH, School Counsellor, Wednesday 28th April, period 4, Counsellor's Office

G Can you tell me how long you've been working as a counsellor?

S I suppose since 1996. I started off doing some part-time work down at the A Family Centre, and then I got involved with things up here. I think I'm coming up for my 7th year now.

G Can you give me some sort of general idea about some of the issues that the army children bring to you?

S There are lots of issues about raised anxiety levels, about life in general, particularly with an absent dad, or sometimes an absent mum, especially when they go to Afghanistan, Kosovo or, more recently, Iraq. The absence of a father raises anxiety levels in the whole family. Not least of all in mum and if mum's more anxious, then the children get more anxious. So the issue surrounds separation from dad and however much they say that they're used to it, it still has an impact. The other thing about army life is the problem of mobility, the whole school pattern. I've known children come here who have been to 14 different schools. Certainly it is quite common for them to attend 4, 5, 6 schools in different parts of the country and in different countries, commonly there are students from Ireland, the north of England, Kent, so they move around a lot. The moving also means separation from grandparents, limited access to grandparents on both sides, and constantly having to say goodbye to friends, forming relationships, finding your way in a new school part way through the school year, being picked on or bullied, feeling different, or becoming more aggressive to compensate. There's a real sense of not belonging, not having roots. Another thing which happens to a lot of army children is the whole kind of macho image of the army. The more readiness to use force and aggression, getting your way by giving orders, rather than using negotiation or listening. A lot of the younger boys when they see a column of tanks drive past, for example, will stand still and wave and talk about how they want to join the services and have guns and shoot people. And there's this very, very strong role model of aggression, not just for the boys

but for the girls as well. Ironically, one of the best activities for kids around here is army cadets, it's lovely to go outside and have some clean fun, but underlying it is all of this. So it has an enormous impact.

G Is it immediately obvious, when they present to you, that they are from an army background? Do they make the links between the army and their difficulties themselves?

S No, I don't think they make the links at all. I think they identify with things when dad's away, I mean it's quite common, particularly for adolescent boys, to have power issues in the home, but they minute they're gone, they find it quite difficult. It isn't only army children, of course, who get separated from their parents, there's always family breakdowns, marital breakdown. But I think the issues are compounded by the army. For example, last year when the Iraq war was on, there was a lot of anxiety about parent's safety and, of course, not just fathers many had older brothers, older sisters away. And everyone's susceptible, the whole community is susceptible. There was a lot of fear, a lot of posturing against 'the enemy' around the school. And if anyone looked remotely foreign, they would get a really hard time.

G When we first spoke, you said that an understanding of attachment theory would help to understand these childrens' experiences. Can you explain what you mean by that?

S As you probably understand, it is important for a child's healthy development if, from an early age, they attach to one secure figure in their lives, usually mum, then dad. And this affects their safety and confidence in the world. And this helps them to explore experiences away from themselves. When there is a separation from either parent, one of the responses is devastation, which can show itself as anger. This can usually be seen in little children sitting down and howling, not co-operating, but the goal of that behaviour is to get that person back. Now kids don't understand that themselves, but anger is a very common expression. So behaviour can become a real problem. And that can happen with any situation of separation and loss. This also makes the formation of new relationships very difficult, as children try to protect themselves against feelings of loss. Children can also become over eager to please.

G What kind of strategies do you use to support children?

S Are you aware of the concept that, for a short time, you come to take the place of a parent? If it becomes clear that there has been a degree of attachment disturbance which has affected the child's development, for a while you become

the parent. So my role might be to be their confidante, to make the child aware that I'm not going to go away, to make them know that whatever they do they can come back, in a sense to work through some of the attachment anxieties, attachment anger. And the ultimate goal of that would be to make them feel more confident in their relationships, more confident about living in the real world. The other person involved in attachment theory was Wincall who talked about the good enough mother, not perfect, but up to it, able to carry out attachment development of the one person. So you are teaching them to deal with the knocks of life a bit more and not be so devastated by separation.

G Do your students refer themselves or do they come here because they have been advised to by a member of staff?

S A bit of both. Quite often a client will talk to a friend who will then come.

G Do you involve the parents in your therapy sessions?

S I've only done that once, when a parent asked to be involved. But there's just not enough of me to go around to do that, so whole family support isn't possible. If you go down to the A Centre, family support is possible if the children are under the age of 8, but if you have a family who only has adolescents, then they don't have anywhere to go. Another issue is that there is up to a two year waiting list down at the A, so some families don't get the input they need. They have to prioritise down there because they are absolutely overwhelmed.

G So are you employed by Southshire County?

S No I am self employed and am contracted by Upton School. It started because there was 3 year funding in Upton in 1991, as part of an urban regeneration project. There were all sorts of projects going on. I got to hear about it and contacted the school and said why don't we put in a bid. And when the funding for that finished at the end of that year, we thought it was important to continue, because the army being here has an effect on everybody in the community. In fact, sometimes there's good things, for example the army paid for the leisure centre, which was great, but a lot of the people around here can't afford to get into it! The fact that people come and go makes life really difficult for everybody.

G Do you work with other support services?

S The links that I have would be primarily Social Services and Health providers. I link with Children and Family conferences and Connexions. Most of the young people I deal with get told by their GP to go to school and they will set up the counselling for you. The other thing that I have noticed, amongst army families, is

the tremendous reluctance to draw on help because they are worried that it is going to make them look bad.

G If you weren't there and didn't support these children, what sort of problems would they have later on in life?

S They will have relationship difficulties, they may have anger or depression problems. The other thing which is quite important is the relationship between alcohol and substance abuse and violence. Alcohol is almost part of the army culture. Other issues that you have here with a very mobile community here are you have a group of very young people, you have sometimes mums who are living in a strange country, without family support, not only because their husbands are away but also because there are often marital breakdowns, so they make the decision to stay because the kids are in school, and this has a huge impact on the kids themselves as mum is so unhappy. Also, if the army moves these families about, what information gets passed on with them, which will help the family? I can think of one young person I worked with who had major difficulties and I was so worried about her, I made the decision to phone up her new school to say that her counselling really should continue, but that's not usual. It's certainly not done automatically.

E11 – Interview with CR, Representative of Southshire LA,, Wednesday 1st September, Upton School

G Can you explain what your role and responsibilties are within the LEA?

C I am advisor for Special Educational Needs at the LEA, and we have a number of schools that we are advisor for. I have been looking for a school in which to work as SENCO for some time as I feel that I have been out of schools for a long time now. I suppose my role here is to have an overview of the development of SEN and other things like curriculum, management and support teaching.

G So what are your perceptions of the difficulties that army children might have?

C Well I feel that they have a class system in the army where officers' children are sent to private schools with funded scholarships and then the majority of youngsters tend to go to a school where there are a lot of army children and that will create a number of issues.

G What are they?

C What we've found is that there is a problem throughout schools with the transfer of records. I don't know why in 2004 we can't find a way to transfer records easier

but the cry that I hear from many schools is that a regiment's moved in, 22 children have arrived and I still don't have their records. This is particularly difficult for children with special needs. I've no idea why that is – about four or five years ago there was a project looking into ways of making records more transferable but I don't know what happened to that. And I think that some of these youngsters have different needs to civilian children. Obviously they have a parent, and usually a father, in the army and they are used to their father spending varying amounts of time away. And there are different styles of parenting in the army that are pretty forceful in certain areas, coupled with mum being undermined when dad is away. So bring these two together and often we'll get mum coming into school saying that she can't get her son out of bed in the morning and what are you going to do about it. And the school goes well (he shrugs). To me, it looks like a mish mash of expectations between what the army mother or army family would want from the school and what the school is able to provide. And then there's the army parents, sometimes with a low level of education themselves and perhaps having an old fashioned view, asking why their child has to study French, so there's an element of being closed to different cultures. And what I've seen is that the army children tend to stay within the army camp and mix with other army children, whereas civilian children are maybe more confident to go into town and mix further afield.

G So what difficulties can this mobile population pose to an LEA?

C Well, big problems, when you think about the numbers and the number of places they come from and go to. One of the issues is that we have no group effort looking into this. I am not aware of discussing this with other advisors and there are no policies for dealing with this.

G So the LEA does not have a separate policy for army children?

C I don't think we do. I mean we have some support workers looking into the issues of traveller children, but they are primarily based around areas that we know have a traveller population. I don't know why we don't do it at the LEA, perhaps it's because we feel that the army does that. I mean I've sat in on meetings where someone has said that such and such a regiment is moving into Upton so this will mean so many places need to be available in schools.

G Planning creates various issues, obviously. What are the financial implications?

C I don't know if the army population is settled in terms of numbers of changeable.

G It's changeable.

C It may well be better for you to talk to someone in Finance on this one. You should also talk to Planning about what is in place for children coming in from Germany, I mean, how they are provided for. Another issue is the number of army youngsters that come in and are put into residential special schools. I have dealt with a number of army boys, really good kids who have lost the plot at some stage, usually having difficulties controlling their temper. And with all of them, they have dads who lose their temper. So they see dad fly off the handle and learn their behaviour that way.

G Moving on then and thinking about Upton, what is your assessment of the way that Upton includes its army children?

C In my professional opinion, this school has poor standards, it has low expectations of its pupils and low expectations on the part of some of the army families – but I don't know whether that's the army families here or whether, well, the feeling I get in other schools is very different. There is the expectation that children won't go on to further education. There seems to be staff who have been here for a long time, or at least longer than in other schools that I have worked with, and there is an understanding here that you need to be firm with the children and set certain boundaries. It's a more traditional way of looking at them, let's say. And there's an acceptance of low attendance and a feeling that education is something that you have to do, rather than being something to achieve and enjoy. There's a paucity of aspiration.

G Do you think that there should be a policy specific to the army population?

C I am not entirely happy with the use of policies – they tend to be written down and totally guide people's practice. What might be better is to establish a list of what is good practice, stating what the issues are and what are the best ways of dealing with them. I suspect that part of the problem within the LEA is that nobody has investigated these issues. But this might be a chance for Upton, to create best practice here, so that they can be good at something, which I think will be so important.

E12 - Telephone interview with RP, Southshire EA Finance Officer, September 24th, 2.30pm

Notes taken from interview 10% of Southshire school children are from an army background. The Head at Zennor sits on the NASSSC. (NASSSC made up of a "selective sample" organised by SCE. Initial meeting was people who had made

noise about service children's issues previously. Since then regional conferences, Southshire wrote to colleagues at schools about this. "The people who need to be are aware of the service school factor" ... it's "a reasonable network" of people involved.) He sees the problems as being 1) funding 2 years ago the DfES didn't like identification of service schools. The latest discussion is that the service schools factor is okay. New funding arrangements mean that service factor will be phased out as a new 3 year budget (won't take into account changes in pupils on roll every year) The Schools Forum is a useful place of discussion between LEA and Heads and last year the Forum was vehement about supporting service schools. 2) admissions, 3) ethnic minorities (Fijians, Nepalese = EFL), 4) SEN (Southshire calculated that 5% of service children have a statement compared to only 2% of civilian children), 5) movement of data, 6) in some RAF schools parents have been reluctant to identify themselves as being from the services worrying that this will get them 'labelled', 7) turbulence and movement, nationally this is less of an issue but Ofsted view service children differently (L schools are now rated as As rather than Ds due to the new 2 to 1 ratio), 8) joint planning between DfES, MOD and LEAs means good liaison. In the future Southshire feels that the half a million pounds a year it puts into supporting service children should be supported by central government. IP has asked for Standards Fund allocation.

E13 - Telephone interview with IP, Chair of NASSSC, Friday 23rd September 9.30am

Notes taken during phone call - the NASSSC has been active for about 4 or 5 years, the major issue they have campaigned on is to do with funding and, in particular, under-funding for service schools. With group moves the school has to cope with the children showing up who are behind academically, behind socially, movement of statements (assessment of children coming in with SEN), tensions between children in army and civilian children there is a polarisation of attitudes. Regimental moves, the children tend to have a 'group culture' there is no allegiance by the parents to the school (ie low PTA membership) and the school is not often asked to go into the Welfare office.

Over the summer, a letter was written to Charles Clarke. This was written after a series of regional meetings (March and May 2004), organised by Olivia Denson,

outlined regional issues. These were worked into a national working group, chaired by Olivia, containing reps from the SCE, MOD and DfES. The outcomes of all these were realisation that the main issues nationally were funding (eg schools might need a student services manager to manage movement, chase up files, liaise with army etc), data and transfer information, SEN and curriculum continuity. They calculated that it cost on average £1275 extra to educate an army child. Also issues with inconsistency of Ofsted and lack of recognition for service children as a special group.

The NASSSC calls for funding either Standards funding or additional funding from central sources. In Essex, for example, a turbulence factor is paid but only after the first 10 children have been discounted. Ofsted need some sort of national standard for social deprivation. Benchmarking should ensure that you compare service school with service school. There are about 80 000 service children in about 730 state schools. Charles Clarke's reply indicated that the DfES wants to establish a working group in this area. They maintain that funding is up to LEAs, Ofsted have now confirmed their requirements for service children (eg 20 to 1 ratio) PLASC might be a way forward to recognise service schools and areas of turbulence, there will be no funding for NASSSC. One of the problems is that there has been no research on army children.

At Alchester, there are 500 pupils on roll, one third of which are from an army background, there are 50 statements. At Ian's school, rewards are seen as important and contact with parents and army culture. Need to overcome the culture of macho.

Ian says that he is always optimistic but says that these are issues which are not being addressed. They are 'shoring up' these issues and it will cause future problems. Should the army be more involved? Army don't see giving money as their role and welfare is not their strong point.

E14 – Group interview with army and civilian pupils, Tuesday 6th July, Special Needs Centre, period 1

Present Carl, Steven, Matthew, Amy, Charlie, Emma, Nikiita

G Could you start by telling me your name and year group, whether you come from an army or civilian family and what year you came to Upton?

N I'm Nikiita and I'm in year 9, I come from an army family and I came to Upton at the beginning of year 7.

G How many schools have you attended?

N 3.

G Is it your dad in the army?

N Yes.

G And is he an officer?

N No.

G Okay, over to Emma.

E I'm Emma and I'm in year 10, I'm from a civilian family and I came to Upton in year 7, I've been to 2 schools.

G Thank you, over to Charlie.

Ch I'm Charlie and I'm in year 7, I'm from a civilian family and I came here at the beginning of this year. Before here, I went to one school.

G Thank you, now on to Amy.

A I'm Amy and I'm in year 7 and I'm from a civilian family. I came here at the . beginning of year 7 and I've been to two schools.

S I'm Steven and I'm in year 8. I'm army. I came here at the start of year 7 and I've been to 5 schools. My dad's in the army but I'm not sure if he's an officer or not.

C I'm Carl, I'm in year 9, from a civilian family, I came to Upton at the beginning of year 7 and I've been to two schools.

G Okay, I would like to talk to Steven and Nikiita first. What has it been like moving schools?

N It's just like leaving all your friends, I really didn't like that, that was really bad.

G What about work, has that been okay?

N It's sometimes a problem.

G How long does it take you to settle in?

N Not long.

G Steven, what sorts of issues have you had?

S Well, when I went to boarding school it got quite stressful because I didn't get to see any of my friends or my family for ages. Work was quite a problem because the work that I had done before was higher than the work they were doing, so I had to say, look I've done this before only a lot harder.

G What about friends?

S That wasn't too bad because my best mate came with me. Well, he's not my best mate anymore. Then I left there after a year and after a year I caught up. I didn't have many friends there until a few people from where we lived moved in then it got a lot better, but I still missed my mum and dad.

G Where did you go to school?

S The R Boarding School when I was in year 6. When I left there I went for a bit to Charterhouse, then I left there and came here.

G So what is it like for those of you that live here?

E Well in year 7 my best mate she moved because her dad was being posted to Cyprus. That was difficult, but we write to each other.

G Do you still write to her now?

E Yes.

G Would you go over and see her?

E Yes, I would like to do that.

C Where we live is right out in the country, so I don't really think about the army being here.

G Do the tanks rolling past not annoy you?

Ch No you're just used to it.

A No you can't hear the tanks from where we are. I live near some army people but their dad doesn't live with them.

C That's true, every time I walk to school I walk straight past the army camp and it's just normal. When I was in year 7 I was friends with someone who said that his dad was going to be posted somewhere else, then he went off.

(Matthew joins in)

M I'm Matthew and I'm in year 9, I'm from a civilian family. I came to Upton at the start of year 7 and I've been to one school before here.

G Have you thought about living near an army camp?

M No.

G Okay, let's move on to thinking about life here. What was it like moving up to this school?

S Well it was quite easy really because when I went to Charterhouse most of the people that I was with were in the army, so this was the main school that you got transferred to, so they just transferred all of us over. It was just another school that you went to. So it was quite easy for us. But when it comes to going to a school where there's not many army families it's harder.

G Why is that, then?

S Well I think that some schools, say over to A way, aren't used to army families. They don't know how to deal with the coming and going.

G What do the rest of you think about coming here?

A It's all right, it wasn't too hard. At primary school before we moved, they talked to you here about how it was going to be.

E I settled in quite well because on the first day they just had year 7 and they kept the year 11 away, so it was quite quiet really.

G Did quite a lot of planning go into it?

E Yes, because they spoke to us about it for quite a long time beforehand.

Ch I found it quite easy because I just asked my tutor group when I didn't know something. The teachers were quite helpful.

A We got paired off with someone so the people that had been here for a while took someone with them.

G Matthew, how did you find it?

M Pretty easy, because most of my friends from Loxley Primary came and my brother was already here in year 11.

C Yeah, I think the same thing, I had a lot of friends from Loxley Primary which I already knew here, so that made it easier. I still spent the first few days getting lost, though!

G Did you talk about it with your friends at Primary School?

S Yeah, all my friends were saying at Charterhouse that people got bog flushed here and that's the reason I really didn't want to come. But it's not true, they always say that those things happen here. But it was just a rumour.

G Those of you who are from civilian families, do you have many army friends?

Ch Yeah a few.

G Do you go and visit them?

Ch Yes, sometimes.

G And are their houses any different to yours?

Ch Yes, they are all the same and there's lots of them all together.

A On my road there are a few army houses.

C I have got some army friends who live on the Matthews estate, but they're not as close as my best friends so I don't really go and visit them.

G Steven, would you say that your friends are army or non army?

S They're all army. They understand you and I think that they know what it's like. Like, when I first came, I found it really hard getting used to the people with guns

and the tanks and stuff because we didn't have any of that when I lived in Manchester.

N I've got army and non army friends. My non army friends are really supportive when I have to move and they try and help you and they listen to you. I don't think my army friends are much good then, because they are so used to it themselves.

G One more thing to ask all of you, is there anything about Upton that you would change?

N It's really nice but sometimes there's a group of people that are a bit snobby and look down their noses at you and I would change their attitude.

E I wouldn't change anything, I've had a good time here.

Ch I think that I agree with what she just said, it's the snobby people.

A I don't think there's any snobby people here.

M I don't really mind it, comparing it to other schools that I've heard of, like JH School, where you have to ask a teacher if you can take your jumper off, because I've got some friends there and here is nothing like that. And the school day is longer at JH.

S I think that the civilians here are horrible. Because when I was bullied by people in year 9 they said it was because my dad was in the army.

C I think I would just try and change peoples' attitudes. Some people don't want to try and they muck around in lessons and it messes it up for everyone.

<u>O1 - Interview with PB, Deputy Controller, SSAFA, 19th November, 11.30am</u>

1974 Naval Welfare Committee, Seebohm and 1976 Spencer Army Review came out of a realisation in the 70s that there was a problem with retention. The 2 committees sat as an equivalent to the Royal Commission.

The mobility issues are different for Army, Navy and RAF. Army families move, whereas RAF and Navy fathers tend to be the ones to move. Need to be careful with the SCE as they will want to prove that the education they provide is the best. They do not have an holistic approach they only want to show that their results are good. There is a sense of embarrassment that the SCE schools are not as good as they could be. Need to compare poor results to the geographical location of service communities. Wilts LEA good at diagnosing and assessing SEN.

Enormous number of SEN amongst service children. SSAFA deals not specifically with education, but more often with SEN and disability issues.

Statementing why should an LEA accept another LEA's statement as this will require them to spend money? Also, why spend money on someone who is only going to be with you for 2 years "it is not in their interest to make all sorts of provision for someone who is going to be moving on."

Cynical view of welfare policy is that men (in 30s) with children are past their best as soldiers, so welfare is not important. People now marry later, so have children later. 2 year postings mean that the people dealing with welfare policies only have a short while to achieve results, so plump for short term answers to difficulties. Would having your family cared for be the main reason that you decide to join the army at the age of 18? Not. Therefore, welfare is not a recruitment issue. Greater family stability (the expeditionary model) in the Naval model might ease army welfare issues.

BSA the problem of boarding school is that it is not always appropriate for every child and yet it is seen as the only true solution to mobility. Also, at university boarding school kids often find they have huge problems as they are used to being spoon fed at school. SCE administer BSA because it is part of their orders, rather than because they have an interest in the individual child. How many children fall out of boarding school? If you send 1 pupil to BSA, you feel obliged to send others. Service wide policies are always difficult as one Service will always argue that they are different to another.

The Navy gave out house purchase loans for the last 30 years in order to encourage stability for spouses (jobs etc.), children (education), created economic independence and made the people part of the local community. This is an holistic approach which the army does not operate.

Cf the US State education differences to the Northern Ireland versus England difficulties that children experience.

There are other groups of people (travellers, oil riggers, truck drivers) who have all experienced mobility issues. Might be worth digging into their literature.

Some good experiences from mobility travel broadens the mind, if you are unhappy you can always move on. But perhaps army people can't/don't think long term. If you know that you aren't going to do your GCSEs in this school, why bother?

Labelling part of the nature prejudice. Do army kids sometimes play up to the label as well?

Major concern that there does not seem to be evidence of a good multi agency approach in the UK, so headteachers don't talk to Social Services/home nurses enough.

O2 - Interview with TA, Service Families Support Co-ordinator, 3rd December, 1pm, Headteacher's Office

G So, what are you all about?
T The A School were given the opportunity to bid for Early Excellence funding, being a DFES pot of money that primary schools could dip into if they already have a nursery on site. One of the key parts to all of their success, really, is the fact that their community is different. You've got a lot of army people first of all. It was put together to increase the childcare, so that families could access this wrap around approach, bringing their babies in from 0 upwards, through the Foundation Stage and then onto school. And part of that was addition support primarily focused on army families because of the issues around mobility. There is another smaller project going on at CL.
G You're talking about a significant amount of money, then, aren't you?
T Nearly a million pounds. We're one of two primary schools in W within the catchment of the army families. The school is quite central. A lot of the army families walk in because they don't have transport. There is transport for them but they have to pay and they don't like that when it was free in Germany. The Early Years team were very keen to bring parents in. We were concerned that some parents might have a low level of basic skills themselves, therefore they probably aren't that confident when it comes to bringing up their children.
G So it's fairly similar to Sure Start, then?
T The problem with saying it's like Sure Start is that Sure Start is predominantly focused on deprived areas, of which W is not classified as one. So I suspect that

we are not going to have any funding after a period of time. We are going to have to be self sufficient. One of the things that I want to do is organise a group for young mums involving a whole host of people, so it will be a really popular group. And hopefully some of the army wives will come along to that. Hopefully I'll start to get to know them quite well so we can start to plan things like their next move.

G So what kind of difficulties have you faced so far?

T The main problem we have is that children arrive on our doorstep, we don't know they're coming. It turns out that they have issues, be it School Action or School Action Plus. And then a lot of the families, particularly coming in from Germany and trying to put their kids into the system here, there is some concern from them that if they say that their kids have problems they won't get them in. There is often such a demand for support in the classroom and the parents seem to think that when they arrive they are going to have that provision. I just think there is this need to educate parents about what they can expect when they come home. And also about the processes about involving other agencies. So the difficulty for me is one, reaching the people that need the help. All that I can do is market the project, showing that there is this support when it's needed. And, two, the way in which the army works, often there isn't an awful lot of time before people are posted and unless the family have got special needs and the SCE are involved, there isn't really the education coming from the army saying the message that things must be set up before you leave. I mean, some families are very able, but there are a few families who struggle with the whole process. They arrive at a new school and expect it all to happen instantly and it doesn't. So you find yourself becoming a bit of an ally, we signpost them and we explain the process. You depersonalise it. And they say, "well I got that support before" and I have to say that it's different here.

G How much support do you get from the army? Do they recognise that there is an issue?

T It depends who you talk to! If you think of the AFF and SSAFA, they think it's wonderful and it's all about the army families. They like the money coming from another pot. They recognise the fact that some of their families need a bit more support. With the army, when it comes to the day centre, there's been no evaluation, no concrete evidence of how effective it is. There's only a few people who have gone through the system that I have been able to help. But the actual Army Welfare Service have welcomed the project, but it's been very nervous in terms of what it's all about. I've been talking about supporting mum, supporting

dad people come to the school with a whole host of issues. And I think the Army Welfare Service thinks I'm talking about army welfare. That's what their job's about. I've had to be very careful about not stepping on anyone's toes. But the bottom line is, I'm there, I'm accessible, but the Army Welfare Service covers the whole South West and they do most of their work over the phone. If a family goes to the Army Welfare Service, how much of it gets passed on to their Regiment? They are part of the establishment and there is a very real concern about that. I think there's a place for all of us and it's working out why someone would come to me as opposed to the Army Welfare Service or the AFF co-ordinator in the area. As far as I am concerned, the family's health and well being can have such a detrimental effect on the child and the child's ability to learn. And as long as I am prepared to signpost and send people on to the right people, I am quite prepared to take on a whole host of issues. The local army welfare people should have a say in the centre. They all think that I'm a teacher, and I'm not, I'm probably more from a welfare background myself.

G So do you think you will be able to take this approach elsewhere?

T Well, the vision is that we will. But there was something going on in this area, somebody somewhere, and at the C Centre the idea was that there could be support workers in these areas too. But from what I understand, the people in this area didn't go down that route. I don't know if they even put the bid in. The C Centre got the money but their idea is slightly different. Their setting is very different, it's very mobile, almost a stop-gap. What they needed was more of a counsellor.

G Who is your link person within the LEA?

T Well, we're a foundation school, so all of my work goes through the governing body. Ian is the headteacher's line manager. Maybe if they roll out this project in other areas, they could use us to evaluate what's going on. But I'm not convinced. People change, departments change. One of the problems is, we have no evidence to go on, so it's difficult to take it further. I mean, yes, I know that many of these families aren't deprived. But a small percentage of these children really struggle with the transient lifestyle. And I'm not pointing the finger and saying that it's right or wrong, I'm just saying that we could do things better. In order to deal with these issues, we need the full support of the army. We need them to talk to us about the planning to move a regiment, the trickle postings that come in that we don't know about. I'm very much the driver, though. I mean, I

sent out a questionnaire to army families. Well, that was wrong! They couldn't see why I would want to know about their lifestyles, their income.
T There are so many variables about why the children are the way that they are. Is it the army? Is it about the parents, the lifestyle? There are so many things that you can bring in to educational attainment.

O3 - Interview with MC, Unit Welfare Office, Upton, Wednesday 4th February

M describes himself now as a welfare officer, not a families officer, which was the old job title. In Germany, a lot of the work is families work, but here in the UK a lot of time is spent working with the single soldiers. He deals with everything housing, medical (soldier and his extended family), recreational activities, the regimental newsletter, he is a "conduit for knowledge and information." Spent a week on a welfare course at Bristol University (there is also a 3 day top up he has to attend) this covers issues like domestic violence, child abuse, housing etc. He says that he doesn't give answers but he sign posts people in the right direction. No set of rules to abide by so each Welfare Officer deals with the job slightly differently. In that sense it is personality driven. He finds the number of single guys presenting with issues quite difficult it is frustrating how reactionary the work is, how much he must try to pre-empt things. He can be told some seriously shocking things he always tells people about the confidentiality clause, but tells them that in cases of criminal incidents, or in cases where the soldier's work might be affected, he must inform the CO. The families, however, still have the perception that the WO is not confidential. But the families continue to live outside the wire, so they are not aware of the changes going on in the army. Training with regards to educational issues was touched on, but the difficulty is working out where he, the WO, fits into the system in the UK. (In Germany, he could get more involved.) In the past, the Welfare Office used to intervene directly, but now schools are quite guarded about the sorts of information that they want to give out. The major issue regarding the welfare office and education is when parents don't want their child to attend a particular school, so they come to the welfare office for advice. He does not have an awful lot of links with local schools, but he is under quite a bit of pressure from above and himself, in terms of his own social conscience, to get involved. Men attached to the QOD and men at ERE can either use local services or the QODoffice.

O4 - Interview with OD, Senior Education Officer, Service Children's Education (UK), Upavon, Wednesday 11th February

G I am interested in finding out about what your work is specifically and what you perceive to be the work of the SCE within the UK?

O Yes, here in the UK we have an entirely separate function to the SCE in Germany and, subject to the approval of the Adjutant General, we will be separating from them in September. So by the time you write anything up, we'll know whether we are or we aren't. Because our functions are so different and because it causes confusion to parents, the thought was it would be better if we had a different name, at least, and currently that proposal is being worked through at the moment. I am still unsure as to the outcome of that. So that leads to what we do because our role is about providing support, assistance and advice to service families, on matters of education wherever they are in the world. And it's because service families are mobile that their children experience upheaval at school, it's not a straightforward process moving around from one school to another, there are problems to do with access, various systems of education and there are issues to do with simply getting into schools, so it's all in that area that we work in. We help families and obviously we do a lot of work with children with Special Needs as there is a fairly complex arrangement of transferring information, so we can provide a higher level of support for families that have that need.

G Do you have any figures on how many children who come from a service background attend local schools in the UK?

O Yeah it's an estimate based on the same figures that people like the DHE use to determine housing, so we think there are around 85,000 children attending state schools throughout the UK, there are about 11,000 attending service schools overseas and just under 8,000 attending boarding schools.

G We've touched on it briefly, but what issues do you think are specifically related to children attending schools in the UK?

O One issue is that the UK doesn't have a single system of education, there are 4 completely separate systems that are getting more and more diverse. Because we've got devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, compared to England, the four countries have very different education systems. So when we talk about children moving around the UK, they could be moving to a different system. The National Curriculum is different, the age to move up to

secondary school is different, the process of transfer to secondary school is different, in Northern Ireland it is still very much based on exam at entry. In Scotland, the outcomes at the end are very different they don't do GCSEs and A levels. And even though the DfES runs Wales and England and you could expect Wales and England to be similar, there are issues to do with the curriculum there to do with the teaching of Welsh, to do with their inspection regime and all sorts of things that are quite different to England. But to tell you the truth, the biggest issue for us in the last few years has been admissions to schools.

G Do you find that the advice that you give is more for individual families, or are you trying to change policy higher up?

O We do both. What we have established over the last year with the policy branch in London, what we call the Tri Service School Liaison Committee, and we've identified a framework for communication effectively which enables us, because there's only a few of us focused on this, with a core team of people providing support on the help line, doing the donkey work, if you like, we couldn't possibly hope to meet the needs of every parent wanting our help, who might want individual support. And so with the help of the policy branch and the help of the three separate services, we've established a framework for area liaison, so there is somebody identified in every LEA area working within the services. They may not be a member of the armed forces, but they are there to provide liaison with the LEA. They identify, on a local level, where they need to work with individual groups and families. Other than that, we have rolled it out through seminars to these service points of contact, so that we can facilitate meetings with the service points of contact and their local people so that issues of contact can be kept alive in their area. Other than that, there's been a lot of interest, largely through correspondence with MPs, from groups of schools in different parts of the country, which has arisen as a result of the Iraq conflict, so that changes to the Arms Plot occurred which meant that several schools expecting lots of new children, didn't have them turn up, and the other schools, expecting to lose children, had them stay on. So all the planning, and all the teaching staff and all the finances was out of kilter and it caused some anxieties. And we've now got a working party with the DfES where we are looking at establishing, first of all, a national committee of state schools with service children, that will have representation from the DfES, from ourselves, from the local government association, or LEAs, we've already got some interest from the LEAs anyway, and the policy branch and they will start to look at this. By identifying what some of

the issues are, we can roll it out to others. By establishing this association, which schools can actively sign up to, and possibly become self-financing, because there's no funding elsewhere, and use that as a forum for discussing the issues and passing them on.

G Yes, I really do feel that some of the schools don't realise that there are other schools out there with exactly the same problem.

O We get involved with a lot of schools that have poor Ofsted inspections and they have usually gone into special measures, when the LEA calls us in to support and contact them. Well of course what they need is financial help, and of course we can't, but what we can do is provide some expertise and experience, to advise them of good practice, that sort of thing. And we often find when we visit schools like that, they say to us "we're unique, we're the only school in this area" and yes, they are the only school in the area, but in fact there's probably 2 or 3 schools in every LEA like that. And there's an awful lot of expertise and experiences they could be sharing themselves. One of the things we need to combat is that idea that because it's a school with service children it's that that is responsible for the poor results. We are very close to a school here that we had a lot to do with, that we became very concerned about after a few visits. Well they had an Ofsted inspection and have gone into special measures, but when we went into the school before the inspection, they said "well we've got all these service families, what can be expected?" And that is not good enough. There's this expectation that we don't have to do any more because we've got service children. Well, you know, if you have low expectations, you won't get the results, but if you have high expectations, high demands, you'll get it.

G Are you still involved with the school?

O No, it was particular cases we were involved in. Particular parents who had their own concerns about the support their children were getting and consequently, we've not been invited particularly to have an input there, we would be happy to. There are other schools there's a school in Oxfordshire also on special measures and I'm on the LEA's steering group. Similarly, there's one in Surrey and we've done exactly the same there. And you know, we go along, we keep the thing going, supporting what is going on. And that school in Surrey has been out of special measures for a year and it's now one of the schools with the highest growth in achievement in that particular area. There's a lot of support going on, a co-ordinated approach. We don't do anything specific or particular I mean we can hold training for teachers or a seminar for parents, we'll do whatever

is appropriate or helpful. Sometimes it's just not helpful being told "why have you put all your most difficult families into our catchment area" well it just doesn't work!
G I know that the Service Families Task Force has been highlighting some of the issues that we've been talking about, what have they achieved so far do you think?
O Well the Tri Service School Liaison is one. We were also able to meet with the DfES and agree to amendments to the draft paper on admission, the Code of Practice. Another thing they've achieved is a guidance form, a booklet, which is handed out to someone when they are posted to a unit, which basically says, by this time, this time, this time, you need to have done this, this and this. And it highlights the need to think about schooling. And I think that will be helpful because it also highlights our role in helping people.
G Yes, I have certainly heard of people who get posted, get the quarter and then think about schooling and it should come first, really.
O Yes, well, thinking about one of the cases I am dealing with at the moment. I have just spent some time talking to a Major who accepted a quarter because it was in the catchment area of the school she wanted for her children and she was promised a place in the school by the Head. So she's gone and accepted a poorer quality quarter than the one she's entitled to because it's closer to the school and the Head's said he won't admit the child. So we've presented the options available to her and we're supporting her through it. But you're right about not thinking about schooling, for some people who don't value education it's the last thing they think of. I also think there's the view that it's still as easy to get children into school as it used to be. Quite genuinely, some parents don't realise, well, if you haven't moved for a while, it's unlikely that they realise the impact of the admissions legislation on moving schools. For example, if you move to B where there are several schools near to the camp, they think that they will automatically get into the school nearest their quarter. And the chances are that they will, but they haven't experienced the difficulties that they've got going on in the Home Counties and Hampshire. And it's also the case that the DHE could contribute to this if you work at W, it could be that your quarter is in Basingstoke or Southampton way, you're not going to be looking for the local school it might be somewhere else, it might be full and it might not be used to service children. So there's issues of policy changes in the DHE recently that have had a cumulative impact here.

G We've looked at what the Service Families Task Force has looked at already, have you any idea what is coming up on the agenda?

O No because at the moment I've not been crystal ball gazing, the officer in charge, if you like, has just left post and the guy who is going to take it is a younger officer with young children, so I believe that there's going to be a focus on education. I mean you've got all the ... which is going to have an impact on schools, on record keeping, on inspection regimes and all that which could well have an impact on service children, especially record keeping. I mean families in care and all the things like that. The LEA have actually required some sort of co-ordinated effort and I think that it will make it a bit easier for service families in a way, it won't make any more places available but it will mean that there's only one source of information. But I suspect there are issues to do with health and spouse's employment that they will also want to take up over the years. The unit moves have never been a problem, it's always the trickle postings where you have the issues. I think that the impact of inclusion has yet to be felt by service children, particularly where parents feel that a Statement, an assessment, gives them some level of protection, it's a human rights issue and their child's difficulties must be recognised by the school.

G Do schools in Germany use the same method of assessment for Special Educational Needs that we have over here?

O A lot of them say that their Statements are not Statements in that sense, that they are written in the same style, have the same quality of advice and, as far as I know, where LEAs are concerned, they carry the same level of importance. I mean they are not required to recognise them by law but most do and it's good practice to recognise them. The problem is the differences in provision which is available. Over there there's not the same range of facilities and provision that there is here, there aren't the range of support services so there are differences. I think the problem for the service families is that their level of expectation that the assessment done by the SCE will get for them when they come from over here. That's a problem.

G Do you find that the LEAs contact you for advice, do you get involved with them?

O Well one of the things that we're not is a pressure group we're not there to put pressure on anyone to change their policies or get them to make special arrangements. We're not advocates in that sense. We aren't a pressure group who support their own cause. I mean, okay, if we come across a policy where

there are problems, the admissions code of practice for example, we draw their attention to the issues, we tackle it and say that it's not reasonable. I don't believe that we are there to provide anything other than quality support and advice to the families, to empower the families if you like. We'll make clear to them what their rights are in law, we'll make clear to them what we know about what that LEA is doing, we'll go with them to negotiate with the LEA, but it's within the confines of this is what you can realistically expect an LEA to provide. I mean, we belong to certain organisations, the NCH for example, where we will go along and put the case of the service children. It's quite complex.

G We've touched on the issues of the National Curriculum over here, do the schools in Germany follow the same curriculum?

O Well, there is that issue of doing the National Curriculum in the same order, but why would they? Children don't generally tend to move between service schools in Germany, they move from schools here, over to Germany, then back to Scotland or Northern Ireland, or somewhere else. So in a sense, that is a legitimate issue, but there isn't an answer to that one, about schools doing the same thing at the same time, or following the curriculum in a particular order. Schools are such different places, wherever you go, it depends on a whole range of factors really. I can see an argument for that but then that would assume that children move between service schools and they don't, or very rarely.

G One of the issues I've noticed is that the school I'm working with may not reach out to the local garrison, but equally the local garrison may not reach out to the school.

O I agree with you. It's partly, I think, because of the dire morale of the place that they had sunken into by the time of the Ofsted inspection, but also they are cutting all ties with the garrison and becoming defensive. I mean they even asked the LEA if there was a policy of placing all the difficult families in the area there? I mean, come on, it's got a fairly wide catchment area and for this part of the world it has a very varied civilian community, going from some very affluent families to some very, very poor areas. But over there you have some very, very competent primary schools, so it's not the children. But I suppose that one of the things is that mostly where you have a school with that range of people around it, they tend to come in areas of education action zones, and that kind of thing, where they attract additional funding. But it's seen as a rural community with no great problems. And I suppose if you come from Darlington or somewhere up North, and drive down here, the comparisons are quite stark.

G So do you think in Germany, then, there is more of a relationship between the school and the garrison it serves?

O Oh definitely because in some areas the school services the garrison and there is not the same problems with the admissions policies that you get here. I'm not sure of the policy but generally you will be found a place at the school nearest to the garrison or to your quarter area. I mean, in some bases, such as R, there are several primary schools and you tend to attend the one nearest the quarter. There's no cap on the admissions numbers they will take whoever is there. And of course they have their School Advisory Committee, which is not the same as a Governing Body, and they always have an input, and what is useful is that the Commanding Officer often sits on that. So there's much more involvement, there's much more, sort of, ownership than there would be on a base like this. They used to benefit more from that kind of relationship, because at one time, where you had an army education centre, an RAF education centre, the education officer had an expectation that part of their role would be sitting on the local school's governing body. Some people still do that out of personal reasons, but it isn't a requirement for anybody's terms of service any more. And I think that's a loss in a way. With the Tri-Service group, I think we'll start to see improvements in what goes on locally. I think what the problem is here, though, is that the garrison is somewhat, well the school is somewhat isolated from the garrison, it doesn't belong anywhere. And I think it's down to the school, there, to cross into those communities, maybe run adult classes, or use the British Legion Hall to run outreach programmes, there's all sorts of things, I'm sure, I mean there's all those sports facilities.

G Okay, playing devil's advocate, doesn't the garrison, then, have something of a responsibility for reaching out to the school?

O Why not? It doesn't stop them. I suppose it's a case of who might do it? Take C, for example, the army education centre there makes a point of holding a meeting with the heads of all the local schools and the LEA and they discuss all the local issues. And there's another one takes place like that in Shropshire. There's other places where that communication and that liaison is there because it's seen to be in the interests of everybody. It isn't difficult to facilitate. About two or three years ago we got together with local schools, and that one was one of them, to put together a bid to get money for the local area but because the bid didn't go anywhere, there was disappointment, I mean everyone put a lot of effort in. Then we put another bid in, which was tighter, it was more focused and that

failed again, almost at the point where we had been promised that if we did put another bid in, we would be successful. And everyone was very disappointed and I think the school at that point started to feel, well, if that's the way it's going to be, there's nothing we can do about it. But there is a problem and I think it's because of the geography of the whole area but that doesn't prevent us overcoming the situation. The lady in charge of the bid was Joy somebody, oh I don't remember her name, but the army officer who worked on it was in charge of the army education department here and he's now back as a retired officer. There was a mutual interest in doing something and it would have benefited the schools. Now I'm not sure what sort of relationship Upton has with its feeder primaries. I don't get a sense of community. I mean admissions policies are partly at fault there, because you used to be able to talk about feeder schools, it's cutting off the relationship at one level. I have to say that I think it's also to do with the leadership and perhaps things will change now that there is a change of personnality.

Discussion about what Olivia could do to help involvement in one of the local panels, documentation (data on service children's achievement), Ofsted information. We then discuss Ofsted's inclusion of statistics relating to children who move at 'abnormal' times in the school year and how the Services don't like this because it puts service children in the same category as traveller children, so this does not take into account the very different social factors.

G Obviously the area of my interest is army children, what differences do you think there are for RAF and Navy personnel?
O The RAF, although many people won't want to hear it, their postings tend to be for longer periods of time and there are many personnel in the RAF who tend to stay in one local area. So if they're really mobile it's either because they are at the fore-front of a fighter command, or they have chosen to do it. And the Navy are less mobile again. Here it's the serviceman and the family moves less and, in fact, there's a lot more unaccompanied service in the Navy and if the service is accompanied, what you tend to get is the family are posted to one of three or four areas of the world, say, and unless they get a specific duty away, they tend to be within one of those three or four areas. And the service person tends to be the person that travels. Of course, that has its other problems for families, the single parent family scenario, role models.

G Yes, one of the conversations I have had with a service family, one of the guys said that when he went to Iraq his son started playing up straight away.
O Yes, you just have to look at some of the service schools who have had an Ofsted inspection, and they have noticed a real change in behaviour and results. I will get you a copy of a report to the Tri Services Board which shows some of the work done to support schools and boarding schools. There, you had youngsters living away from home and they knew that one of their parents was away.
G I think that service families are used to the absence anyway, but the prospect of war puts an added stressor on the situation.

We discuss some of the resources available at the SCE in Upavon.

O One of the things is the Dobson report, but that, of course, pointed out to all the social factors influencing mobility, which of course doesn't come into play in this situation.
G Yes, and the issue there is that mobility was presented as an issue for the various institutions, rather than the individual child.
O One of the thing that I have noticed, when I am out and about, people say to me, "what do you do", and I tell them, then they say, "oh I'm a service brat" and they use that language! And they say, "oh I went to however many schools and I had a great time but I can't do long division because I always missed that out." It's the gap that they are left with for the rest of their lives and I believe that continuity is the critical thing really, there's always that confidence, they always seem on the surface ...
G That's it, it's on the surface, it's superficial.
O I think they've got that confidence because they go into so many schools and if they're not confident they don't survive. But they don't necessarily learn long division. So if we compare life skills to facts and knowledge, there isn't necessarily a problem there!
G Yes, we focus on the outcomes, rather than the input and the throughput.

We discuss our own teaching experiences.

G I must say that I have noticed recently that up until the late 90s, in Ofsted reports there was no mention of schools having a significant service population, but now, it's there in the report.

O The Ofsted framework changed in 2000 and they were required to comment more on the demographic context of the school, and the head agrees with the chief inspector a description about the school. And then from September last year the framework changed again and this time they are actually required to report on turbulence, they are required to note the number of children who move in our out outside the normal times. And the issue for schools, to do with their benchmarking data, is how to manage value added, when the cohort of students you get one set of results from is not the same as the students you get the final results from. So where do you get that value added from?

O5 - TELECON with DW, SCE Germany, Friday 25th June

I asked David to elaborate on his answer to my question at AFF Conference. During the 2nd Gulf War, some spending which was for schools did not go directly into teaching and learning, but, instead, had to be put towards improving the security of some of the schools which were located 'outside' of the wire. Within the past 12 months, however, there has been a big boost in the SCE's budget, so that the SCE can now be said to have 'parity' with a similar sized LEA within the UK.

I said to David that this suggested that the SCE had not, up until 12 months ago, had parity with LEAs in the UK. He confirmed this and said that the SCE had always fallen behind UK LEAs. The SCE have always had to approach the MOD for their funding and they have often needed to justify aspects of their spending to the Adjutant General. This has been particularly apparent when the SCE has wanted to implement policy changes in order to come in line with policy changes in the UK for example, extra training for the National Literacy Strategy. As a result, changes have often happened later in SCE schools. A policy comes on line in the UK, the SCE responds to this and goes to the AG, money is only handed over in the next budget (ie the next year.)

O6 - Interview with SH, Army Families Federation Education Representative, Tuesday 23rd August, Her Home

G I wonder if you could summarise for me what are the issues regarding army children's education in the UK today?

S In the UK, I think that it's the turbulence, the fact that you are not in one place and that you move at irregular times. First of all, in the UK there are the different education systems and the different age systems. If you have a child born before February, then they won't really be affected, but for children born between February and the summer then they will be affected, so it's about making a case for the child, of course, and it's making people aware of the different systems. So in the UK devolution hasn't helped us very much, although the Scottish system has been different for some time, of course. I've got a very interesting case at the moment, where a family have just won their admissions appeal which is great and with forces families that tends to end it, we've got this great thing with forces families of making the most of what we've got. You get used to the fact that what you get is not necessarily what you want or what you expect. And you alter your expectations. And what we forget is that once you get into the school there can still be issues. But this child who has got a place wasn't accepted in time for the summer camp with all of the new children, but has only just got the place so doesn't have things like uniform. Now that would have happened regardless of appeal, but for this child going to summer camp is about getting accepted into friendship groups and he won't. It's easier, in my opinion, for children who go to school with a lot of service children because they are a bit more adaptable, they will welcome people and embrace newcomers. And perhaps army children make friends very easily and they make the most of friends in a short time. So that's the plus and the minus thing, I think, is the children that go to school where there aren't many army children and the staff are unused to the turbulence issue, so say that the child appears happy and outgoing, even settled but we know that that masks the greater problems at home. The child might be coping but that doesn't mean that the child is happy. And I think that affects overall performance, it certainly affects esteem. And there's a huge knock on effect, you know when you do the first move with a child and that first change of school, they maybe look forward to something different and things they didn't like about their old school will be gone. But on the whole it becomes harder with every move, when they know that they're going to be there for two years. And when I say 2 years I don't necessarily mean two full years. It might be okay when they're younger but it seems to be harder for older children. The older the child, the harder it gets on both sides, the more reluctant they are to attempt to make friends. They find it more difficult to fit in and I think that the older children are the more wary they are about accepting new people, once the novelty factor has warn off. I think when

you first move in, it's okay, but after a while, they aren't friends anymore. But I think that the gang culture in secondary education, and I use that term very loosely, tends to go back to "well we were okay as we were" and it comes back to what I said at Conference, that it takes 5 players to make a 5 a side football team, not six. And I think that has to impact because the child then begins to think about themselves, is it me? As opposed to it's the situation, it becomes it's me. The situation was okay before I came along, I don't fit in. I had friends and now I haven't. And also there's the whole work and assessment, you know. I can't remember the phrase but it was in the Times Ed last week, when children revisit the same work that they've done before. I mean this happens from Primary through to Secondary, but it also happens for army kids when the maths systems that they have been using aren't the same as the ones in the new school, and they may even be well beyond there. And schools may assess, but they can't assess fully. And I'm not really sure what the solution is, I think that a lot of it is to do with human nature and relationships. And I think that you can't change something fundamental like that, perhaps the move towards the large garrisons with life being more fixed may make it better. I think it will certainly help to overcome turbulence and the issues with moving between different systems. I think of less impact is the affect of fathers going away. I mean maybe when it's a war and it's on the news and so on. But actually some of the research coming out of the Gulf War has shown that, actually, there's very little mental impact. If the child understands that the father has come back before then there's no reason why they won't come back this time. So I think that's why many people get around to thinking about the boarding school option, but for many parents it is an alien concept. Take me for example, I didn't go to boarding school, although my husband did. And my two children, I've always been told are bright and well liked and so on, but because of the impact of turbulence and because I felt that one of their special needs weren't being properly assessed. And I found it difficult to get my child past one level of assessment and I was told that he would never get to a further stage because he was a nice child who always did his work. So in the end, I went through the GP route and got a hospital report and he was immediately put on quite an intensive therapy session. But that was because I knew how to work the system. So one of the other problems is that you don't have the local knowledge and parents don't stay long enough in one place. These people don't have the local knowledge of how one local authority works and, perhaps, someone living on their road saying that they did this or this. So all

these support elements are missing. I think that the army is quite a mollycoddled environment, but I think that it's quite a blinkered mollycoddled environment, it's sort of within and from the army. But once you go externally there is this feeling that if it's nothing to do with the army, but if it's a problem within the army then they are very well supported, almost to the extent that they are put within a straight jacket and not allowed to go outside.

G Do you think that the issues are any different for children being educated by the SCE in Germany, say?

S I think that it is different whilst they are being educated there. I know from working out there myself that a lot of time is put into monitoring children as they come in and finding out what they've already done. There's a lot of work done diagnostically on the children as we realised that it was a two year rolling process, you know it took 6 months for them to settle in, then you got really good work out of them for a year, then the last six months, after they had received the posting order and they were going and they start to tail off. But in Germany I think there was more of an acceptance, being accepted as part of the school. But the problem is that there were so few children who would be in that system all of the time, you know, you're constantly moving. So you have that security while you are there and then you go somewhere else.

G Are there any other major targets, apart from the Admissions Process, that have been worked on for the sake of army children?

S Really, that's probably one more for Justin. But as far as I am concerned, the key work for me has definitely been on school admissions and also work with special needs. I mean, for example, in Northern Ireland, they have done some research and have calculated that 3% of their children are statemented, but that is raised to 5% for army children. In the early years, the key thing is that it's come piece meal. So, for example, SCE schools coped fairly okay, Scottish schools followed, but England was hopeless. And Northern Ireland is only getting sorted now and part of the problem was getting them to realise that they also had a responsibility towards service children too. Families are finding that their childcare allowances don't meet the cost of childcare. But the problem is as always that some of these issues affect so few families that there are not enough people to get their voice heard. Thinking about the emails that I receive, bullying is another issue, but I wouldn't say that it is an issue which affects army children any more than other families. I know that my husband has a soldier and the only school that he could get for his children was one where there was constant

bullying, so the only option he had was to take his children out, separate his family and now he's unaccompanied. And it's this wider group that needs to be looked at, even if you get them into a school, it's what happens afterwards that's important. And for a lot of families, when they move house, choosing a school comes last, so one of my jobs has been to talk families through how to pick the right school for their child, and to get them to look at schools and to not necessarily go on what other families say. It's amazing how many times families have been very keen for a particular school and have then changed their minds having gone to look at it. And we also know of cases where schools actively discourage applications from forces children. But they can't refuse them a place, it's illegal. And we also know of some schools which actively encourage forces children. There's a debate going on at the moment trying to secure central government funding for forces schools and this seems to be gaining cross party support, which would be quite nice. So there would be a weighting and any child with a turbulent lifestyle would have some kind of weighting to make them more attractive. Southshire have it, but that's separate, it comes from the costs to the school, but this would be paid separately. But Southshire it's still out of the same budget. I have to say that I think the chances of this being sorted out are very remote.

G So what do you think the future issues will be?

S I think that a lot will depend on, well, there's these government manifesto claims about school admissions and choice and I think a lot will depend on who gets in and how that affects our policies. And a lot of things are being bandied around. For example, schools in London are well known for creating problems for admissions for army and civilian families. And I think that if there is to be change it will probably come through them, rather than through the small voice of army families. I think if we have stability, if our conditions are the same as they are for any other family, then hopefully the issues will be the same. But we will need to monitor and check that the schools serving service communities are of a high standard. I mean, if we have super garrisons, we'll need to check that these schools don't become part of some sort of service ghetto but are models of good practice and so on because, I don't know whether being settled, would that mean that you lose the army identity or would it increase it, I don't know. That could work both for and against. Obviously a minority would remain mobile and that will probably come from the corps and the sorts of people that get attached to units, but that's where the boarding school allowance would still be available. But I

mean the BSA is an issue in itself because it doesn't cover the fees, so it becomes an issue of what sacrifices you as a family are prepared to make, do you have the family holidays or a new car or do you pay the fees? Deferred gratification, I think it's called. There's a huge discrepancy at the moment, as the FCO families have a realistic allowance of over £6000 per term per child and the forces' allowance of £4000 is nearly laughable now. And to find that money, not just for one child, but for two or three, is not affordable. However, all ranks, except for 2LT, have children claiming BSA. And I think that's why it's officer top heavy at the moment, because if you retire at 40 from the army and have done your 22 years, you will have had to have had children by 22 to benefit from the system. And you don't want children to be going in and out of the different systems. It would be very difficult for a child to go from a boarding school education into the state system, although there are some fabulous state schools out there.

G How would you assess the current balance of power between the MOD and the DfES?

S I don't think that they're battling against each other, but I do think there's a case of, well, we'll make a couple of little changes and you should be very grateful because you're not a special case and we're not a special case but we are different. We don't need special treatment provided that we have equality of opportunity and equality of access and I think that's what we don't have. And that's where we need to be recognised. I mean with the specialist schools, which will take so many children with an aptitude, well, that's fine if you happen to be there when the levels of aptitude are decided, but if you're not and the school is full, what then? If it's a specialist IT college and your child is the next Bill Gates, it doesn't necessarily mean that you'll get in. So we're not on a level playing field and also, from the school's point of view, here's a child who isn't going to be there in 2 years time and they have to look at what they're going to do with that place. So all these policies and these good ideas, they don't really take into account a population such as ours. And part of the issue is that people just aren't aware. And one of the things was that the government ministers at conference were not there in the morning to listen to our speeches. So they waffled on without actually having listened to the issues. And that's partly political, but I think if they had been there they would have a grasp of where we're coming from on all of the issues, not just education. We have to battle on and get some kind of equality and recognition, because we are the forgotten ones. It's not deliberate but I do

think that the parents need to be empowered to ask for things themselves, and they don't know how to. Also the army is not really permissive when it comes to expressing an opinion, you're not really allowed to shout and scream and people really should make their voices heard more. And I think the army is responsible for a lot of that because a lot of people worry if they make a fuss then that could count against them for their next promotion, but that's another problem, it's the army set up. I've heard from unit welfare officers who have been in touch with families who were very worried about people finding out about things. So again, it's peoples' perceptions. But not all the time, the idea that you'll get into trouble, that doesn't come from nowhere. It's got certain historical features. But again, I think it goes back to what is reasonable, what can be expected. Why should you have all the best schools? We shouldn't, but we should expect a certain equality of access and opportunity.

O7 - Discussion with JW, SFTF, MOD, Tuesday 24th August

Over the past 4 months, the SFTF have reviewed all of their targets and, along with the Tri Service Working Group, have reduced the 36 outstanding issues to 6. Within the field of education the main issue has been the school liaison policy and ensuring that this is monitored. Also on 7 Jan 04 there were debates in the Houses of Commons (Bob Russell, Alchester) looking at the issue of service children's education and turbulence due to the impact of the Gulf War. This has brought about the re-establishment of the NASSC Olivia Denson at SCE invited some heads of service schools to share issues and they have now moved forward by establishing the NASSC themselves. Ian Poulter, head of the NASSC, has recently written to Charles Clarke outlining the issues that service schools have. Primarily the issues are to do with funding they would like to see a new weighting for service children which would take into account the difficulties that turbulence can have. The letter also covered the issue of liaison. The SFTF tries to ensure that new legislation takes into account service families difficulties. They continue to monitor the progress of the NASSC and produce regular progress reports.

A1 - Interview with SA, Student Services Manager, Monday 4th April, Student Services Office, period 1

G Could you outline the nature and role of your job?

S Well, it's a bit like being a mum at school! I do all the lates and co-ordinate the medical room and the medical staff. I'm the named person for looked after children and the second named, no the first now, for child protection. I co-ordinate the after school and lunchtime clubs. I do home school liaison and liase with outside agencies and do outside agency referrals. I go out and visit children at home. I work I suppose with everybody but mostly with heads of year, learning support. I also work with the behaviour working party with a remit for bullying. I'm working with one of the people in IT at the moment, setting up a website on the intranet. I'm first point of contact for parents if they come in and can't get hold of the head of year, I think that's about it.

G Could you tell me about the funding?

S Yes, it has come from the Children's Fund. I think there were several layers to why the bid was put in. One was that the front office was having to deal with everything the front office has to deal with and all the children as well, with having to deal with the medical room as well, so it was a fairly impossible task really, to have all of that going on. It was felt that it would be beneficial to the children to have a person they could go to, their own reception, really. Obviously being an army school, we've got a transient population, so I've tried quite hard to link in with that but, because the army seem to have secret issues, they don't give them away a lot. I had hoped to be able to prepare for when regiments were coming in or leaving but it hasn't actually worked out all that well like that because that's not the information they can impart to the public, I suppose.

G So the army don't seem to inform you when there is a move?

S We work directly, I mean, the children will tell me where they're all going to go but what I can do is when there's big issues, like problems with Iraq or some sort of disaster somewhere, they call us up and I can pretty much work out who's army and who's not, possibly alert staff that there might be some children who are quite upset, get a counsellor in. With Iraq, for example, we used an outside counsellor a lot and organised a group that the children could go along to. They don't always want to use the family officers, strangely enough, and I think that's because quite often the family officers are on the estate and they want to be detached from that sometimes. And quite often parents will come in. Over these two years, I have tried to build up a whole bank of outside help that I could put parents in touch with, not always about school, so if they've got problems with difficult teenagers, and let's be honest most teenagers are a problem, let alone when they're going through their hormonal phases, so I've got lots of phone numbers and websites.

We've just recently run, along with the Pupil Referral Unit, a parenting course, they were really good, I mean, I sat in on one of those myself and they were really useful.

G How would you describe your relationship with the army then?

S I think as a school we've got a very strong relationship with the army, they are really good at supporting us with work experience, we're always invited over if there's something special going on. So I think with the army as an establishment and the school is very good. I think there's issues with links on a personal level with the families the army support the family in their way and we support the family in our way. We haven't really worked out a better way of doing that together, although we do have very good liaison with the army police and also our local police as well.

G Are you involved in the admissions process?

S No that's done by Mr R, they have an interview and if they've got spaces, and obviously they would have access to the spaces as they are in our catchment area, then they will start, you know, as soon as possible. What can be quite difficult is having their files passed on from other schools. Especially if they've come from Germany, being able to contact the schools is hard if you feel that there might be any problems. Of course, as well, if they move in year 11, that can be really destructive for them. Last year, some of the older children actually stayed behind with other families as their families had moved off. Of course, if they've done up to year 10 somewhere else, we may not have the same curriculum, especially if they've done Spanish as their second language, unfortunately because we can only offer French and German, so there's tonnes of difficulties with things like that.

G You obviously have a very open relationship with the kids, do you notice anything different about them?

S No. I don't think anyone could pick out who was civilian and who was army. There's always a culture of movement here because Alchester is an area where people tend to settle in. Apart from being an army school, we also pull children from all over Alchester. In a way, the fact that the army is transient, you would have thought that would separate them in a way, but the fact that we have children coming from so far afield means that they are much more tolerant of places that they don't know very well.

G What happens to them when they are new?

S They are given a buddy, their head of year will give them their timetable. They are buddied up for as long as that lasts it's difficult isn't it because you can pick a buddy and they'll either really get on or, after a couple of days, they'll say, no I've had enough and they go off with somebody else. But they do get eased in.

G Do you review their position formally after a few weeks?

S No, because the home school liaison works so well. The parents use the planners if they think that there's a problem with children settling in and they would let us know if they thought that there was a problem.

G Do you go out and visit families?

S If it's necessary, yes. If we've got school refusers, I'll go out and sit with them for about half an hour. I don't go for too long because it can be a bit intimidating having someone sitting there otherwise, talking about why you don't want to be in school. Then I'll get them to come in and sit here with me and they'll then work on a reduced timetable to ease them in. Quite often they'll spend breaktimes and lunchtimes with me. Then I'll try and bore them into going back into school! But it's a bit difficult because there's people coming and going all day long. The one thing that is good is that children who sit with me see a lot of faces and when they go out and around the school they see children that they recognise. I try to buddy them up, if I know that there's someone they've got on with previously, to make the transition back into school as pleasant as possible for somebody who, let's face it, just hates school. And they're never going to like it, no matter what you do.

A2 - Interview with PR, Deputy Headteacher, Monday 4th April, in his office, period 3

G How long have you been working at this school?

P 15 years.

G When you came here were you aware that you had an army catchment area?

P No although I believe the job description probably mentioned something about it. But I had no idea what that meant. At the time it was a very small school and I didn't know the Alchester area. There was about 340 children so the problems that were there were more minimal than they are now.

G Could you tell me a bit about the funding difficulties that you have in a school with a mobile population?

P Well the obvious one is that we often suffer on Form 7 or PLASC day. The army, well, there seems to be no pattern to when they move people and for security reasons probably they feel reluctant to give us advance warning. And when we have had advance warning it's often been inaccurate like maybe the move hasn't happened. So if they move a lot of families in December, with PLASC being the 2nd or 3rd week of January, then there might be time before the new families come in. Because often they move, they'll get a family holiday to help them settle in and we miss out on funding since even if children join the school at the end of January we still don't get any money for them for the whole of that year. So in that sense we're missing out. Then as we take children in, even if we do get the PLASC money for them, particularly given that they're forces children we've got to spend a lot of time looking at what they've done. In subjects particularly Science we have to teach x module but there's no prescription about which order we do them in, so they come to another school and have to repeat some work or have missed some work. That can cost time and effort, and a bit of money, to help them to catch up. But with funding, the biggest thing is the money we don't get. And there's no recognition about army families for example with free school meals, like there used to be. When I first came here there was turbulence allowance, it was something like one and a half army children were worth a free school meal. The only thing that was good for was for benchmarking the results. One thing the army are very resistant to admitting is that there might be penalties for children in terms of their academic progress by moving. When we suggested that they got very cross with us. They won't admit that.

G Did you get extra funding for your army children?

P In those days there was an army liaison person but that was worth something like one scale point only. But it was an insignificant amount. I mean I spend hours every year just inducting army families. Every army family that comes in has at least an hour of my time, probably an hour of office time, you know phoning up the previous school, putting the child onto the computer system. Some weeks I can have maybe five or six army families often at the drop of a hat who don't bother to phone and they just arrive. They want their child to start that afternoon. So a lot of my time is spent showing people around the school, filling in forms and talking to them. The admin people would do the actual donkey work on the computer and would phone the previous school and request records but I have to talk to them and maybe give them an assessment. Depending on what key stage they are in depends on what information we need. Some schools send good

information which is up to date assessments so that we can confidently place them into a group but if they say, I'm not all that good at something, we have to give an assessment. It can take quite a long time. In key stage 4 they inevitably won't have an option match so we've got all that negotiation, talking to heads of department. The worst scenario is the ones from Ireland where they have to repeat the year often because it's a completely different system so we've got one or two army kids who are down a year. And we've got one from Scotland whose a nightmare. Of course if he was in Scotland he would have been leaving school in 6 weeks time as in Scotland they leave when they're 15 or something but coming here, he's got another year and a bit to go.

G So how do you support children academically coming in? With the key stage 4 children for example?

P No we don't run anything especially for army children. With the new directed time and the 1265 hours you just can't ask staff to do that so the only way is within the 1265 hours as no-one would do it, I'm afraid. I mean we do have general revision activities, we have the computer rooms available, the library and so on, they could if they wished to catch up with study support. And you know you would have to be doing it throughout the year, as someone came in it would be ad-hoc, it wouldn't be structured.

G Do you find out where the children are at with their studies?

P No that would be done by their subject teachers. I have to say that the majority of children that move within the key stage four time don't tend to be academically inclined. I'm not making a leap there I'm just saying that generally they are operating at a modest academic level. If they were a grade A or grade B student then a slight hiccup could knock them back quite significantly but if they're kind of grade E, grade F student which many of them would be then a little bit of missed work is not going to make such a difference, if at all to their final grade. We obviously all want them to do their best however. Again, a higher grade, more academic student would be more motivated to make the effort and children like that we'd work with. We would show them what to revise and make available resources. So we'd say this is what you need to do to catch up. I mean we do do that but what we wouldn't do is run a session specifically for them. If they were motivated and wanted to do it we would give them the back up.

G What is your perception of the army support locally?

P I don't have much involvement with the army. We used to have, well there was notionally an army governor. But they rarely attend meetings and recently there

has been a very poor record. I'm not saying it's disinterest, you know the guy's on active service, things like that, it's nobody's fault. The army don't really give us any tangible support. If we ask for help, say, with our sports day, they come along with a few bits of equipment and things like that. But there's no financial support. That is a bit of an issue because when they come from MOD schools abroad they are so well funded, they have all these weekend activities and a good teacher ratio and more money, they come here and look at our 1950s gym and that's all we've got and that's a bit of a come down for them I think. We used to have quite a lot of contact with families officers so if there was a problem with a family and we were worried there would be a named person we could phone up and talk to. When I first came that was quite common. Well now that doesn't seem to exist at all. The only link with the army really is with the army police which will occasionally contact us because of anti social issues on the estate. But no, there's no tangible input from the army whatsoever.

G So they aren't very proactive?

P No, I mean they know about us as a school, obviously we provide them with information so that when a family is posted to Alchester with secondary age children one hopes that they are put our way. And I think that does normally happen. But pragmatically, we're the only school nearby so if they wanted to look elsewhere they probably wouldn't get a place. Pretty much every school in Alchester is full.

G Do you have any ideas of what difficulties army children might have?

P Most of them, because they have been in more than one school throughout their career, tend to settle in quite well. I suppose we've got such a wealth of experience at inducting new students that we do it unconsciously almost so when they join us we usually have minimal problems. So socially there's not really an issue. Quite a few of them will know people from previous postings, some of them have already been to Alchester, have gone away and now they've come back again. So they meet up with their friends again. A visitor walking around the school wouldn't really be conscious of it if you didn't mention it. There's no kind of army/civilian divide, never has been. It can be a strength that they are such neffarious people and have learnt to settle in in unfamiliar surroundings.

G Could you comment on the issue of fathers being away and parental support generally?

P Well first of all many of them are pretty much one parent families. We often don't meet the father from one year to the next and that's an issue. But that could

be said for all the parents in a way. I suppose with the army wives, these mums have to settle in as well, don't they. But on the base they probably have access to all the social clubs and things and they probably get inducted in. I don't have to think, however, well this is an army family or it's not an army family. But I think that we have a general lethargy amongst our parents in terms of support. But that's not unusual though considering the socio-economic background of most of our parents. And quite a lot of our civilian families are not from the local area, they are out of catchment. But no I imagine that if they aren't going to be here all the way through why would they want to help the school if you aren't here for the result of what you've done. I guess they might not see it as such a long term thing, you know. In the same way that if you're only going to be in your house for a year you probably won't bother decorating it.

A3 - <u>Interview with DB, Head of Year, Tuesday 5th April, period 1, In her office</u>

G Could we start off with H and C, could you describe them. What sort of contact have you had with their parents?

D The only contact I've had is with C's parents when I interviewed them when they wanted to bring him in. And I found them really pleasant and I knew that we would have a good boy on our hands. And all through that C was quite confident to speak to me. Having said that I haven't seen his parents since, but then we haven't had year 8 parents evening yet, so .. and I haven't had any cause to speak to them on the telephone. I have sent letters home to both C and H to say that they're both doing well based on tutor meetings, when the tutors have said to me, we do spoilers and achievers and they have come up on the achievers, so I've sent a letter home to say that they're doing really well at the moment. So other than that I haven't had much contact with parents.

G Can you tell me a bit about your induction interviews.

D Well with C the interview was with (the deputy head) and myself. Sometimes I'm not involved I mean he's brought me the details of someone whose come in today and I haven't been involved in that. But with C, I was there. He then did a maths test for us so we would know what set to put him in in the maths because the maths department is run quite differently from the other groupings in the school. So, for example, they could be in set 3 for maths and set B1 for English and everything else. Chris is A1 and obviously so is H which means that they are the top set of the A cohort (we've got an A cohort and a B cohort) but the maths

are completely separate and they go 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. So they mix up the A and B population which we don't do in the rest of the school. So he did his maths test and then his parents were there he was in his army outfit so I knew that it was an army move. They told me a little bit about C his mum said that it was better if he was put at the front of the class, things like that, his writing is pretty scruffy.

G Did they bring any files with them?

D No, they didn't have any files with them and that is always the main problem with the army. I've got some children who I have no files of and you wait and wait and you contact the previous school and it never comes. Sometime of course they come from a foreign country so it's really difficult.

G Is that why when we were looking at C's file on the computer yesterday there was no CATs or SATs marks available?

D Yes, exactly. I mean when C arrived in September within a couple of months I had to give me an expected level for his year 9 marks because we haven't got it and we had to put it in ourselves. But if we haven't got any prior knowledge it sometimes can be very difficult. So I mean he's obviously an able boy which is why I put him at a level 6 by the end of year 9. But I don't know how less able children would cope with that.

G What difficulties have you encountered as a classroom teacher with army children?

D Well, putting aside C and H, when with Iraq and the troops were sent out we had several children here who knew that their father was going away to a dangerous place and we set up a little lunchtime help club just for the people whose parents were out in Iraq and they came and talked about it because sometimes they don't want to tell their mum because they know that their mum is going through the same. Things like that we're dealing with real high level emotional issues at home. The rest of us just can't even comprehend can we, the fact that their dads are out in a dangerous place and it just doesn't bear thinking about. So they've got that to think about. Then, of course, there's the fact that they don't know when they're going to be posted or where they're going to be posted next. We often have people say oh we're leaving in a couple of weeks Miss and then that posting falls through. Then they come back and say oh we're not leaving and that has a massive effect on how they perform in school. Because the particular people that I'm thinking about who had 3 children in the school and the work that the pupils did went straight down because they were thinking well oh it doesn't matter because we're not going to be here for much

longer. Then of course when they realise that they're not posted they've got to pick themselves up once that posting has fallen through. So there are issues like that around the army pupils. But, something you were saying earlier about the curriculum, if someone transfers from a school here locally, then they tend to know generally what we're doing. Sometimes if they're a bit forward of us I'll say well that's okay you'll know what's going on and you can tell me what I should be doing! And you kind of have to muddle along like that. But if they've come from another country, not everyone has been doing what we've been doing and that's really difficult. I've got a lad in year 11 who literally arrived at the start of year 11, an army kid, and he's done really well, he's brought himself up, done all his coursework and hopefully he will achieve in his exam. But the main thing is that he's missed a whole year of the GCSE course and you know, sometimes, I really do feel for them because they've not got that continuity in their qualifications.

G So what kind of support can you offer as a teacher?

D Well the only thing is like I've done with this lad. I've said, here's the book we've looked at, we're obviously going to revise it in year 11. He arrived just as we started coursework so that was *good so we got the* coursework out of him, but I personally don't have the time to sit with him and go through, so I showed him the scheme of work, the work we've covered and the book and I gave him worksheets that he would need and would find useful. Whether or not he went away and read it is another issues, I don't know. Obviously I gave him the folder and gave him everything he needed. But as I say, we revise everything in year 11 anyway. So when we are revising things I am very conscious that he hasn't done it the first time and I'm always asking are you okay? You know he's okay as he's a bright boy. But then there are the ones that aren't so bright that can't cope with it. It's very sad really.

G Have you made changes to your curriculum to reflect the changes to the school population?

D We revise in year 11 what we've done in year 10. Although the different syllabuses overlap it's not often. From year 7 through to year 9 we do things in chronological order so we start off with the Romans and go through to World War 2. For GCSE we've just changed the course. We were doing Modern world history, so we were doing a lot of the Cold War, the First World War and the boys and I loved it. But it was a very hard course to do. So we've changed now and we do medicine through time and Nazi Germany. So it will be an easier course but this is the first year that they'll have taken it. One of the schools in Germany

follow the Modern world history syllabus so it was fine, so when the children came in year 11 they had often done the same. But we've now changed to medicine purely because this is a school with lower abilities and this is perceived to be an easier course to pass but it didn't help this lad that came from the Germany school coming in having done Modern world and then having to start all this business about medicine. So from that aspect there are problems.

G What kind of a relationship do you have with the army parents?

D I think that because they consider this to be the army's school they are fairly good at coming forward. You do get a lot of concern I had some parents in last night who were army and were concerned that their child was going a bit downhill. There are parents who do not hesitate. But then I'm not sure you can make a difference between whether they are army or not. There are parents who are on *top of their kids and there are parents who are not.* I wouldn't say that I could necessarily differentiate between the two.

Field Notes

The dates that comments were recorded appear throughout these field notes and refer to the citation within the main body of the thesis. For example, a field note recorded on 18th September would appear in the thesis as Fn 18/9.

1 - UPTON

18th September

Meeting with Mrs Turner - lives in 4 bed house in old quarter area of PIlton. Houses look like rabbit hutches! The house is situated quite a way from the road and does not have its own access. No front garden. Difficult to ascertain what facilities are in the local area. The house looked fairly run down old style curtains (not fully attached at the top), old carpets. Furniture fairly run down. Mrs T chain smoked throughout the interview. Appearance wearing old army t-shirt, gold chains. Watching television. Mrs T very angry at the way that the army have treated her family. Mr T is in the QOD and was especially requested to come over from Germany to take up an appointment here. They thought they would have one of the new houses, were given this one and were very disappointed. She feels betrayed by the families office and calls them "useless." Happy for Katie to take part in the study as she agrees that the issue of army children's education needs to be looked in to. She has felt in the past that, when in Germany, there is no choice of school and, often, the German schools would have been closed down if they had been subject to the same inspections and controls as schools here. She questions whether there are the same psychologist/welfare support arrangements for children in German schools and feels her children would all have had their difficulties recognised/documented and dealt with earlier if they had been in England. Now considering returning to Germany with her children and putting them into the German state system. K is a twin, her sister is doing well at school. K is dyslexic. Their younger brother has a lot of difficulties, was excluded from school in Germany and is now receiving diagnosis and treatment at a centre in the C (behavioural/autistic disorder?) The school in Germany was not suitable for her children as it was open plan. She is very happy with Upton as they take K out of class and give her individual tuition. Very bitter about the army and thinks that the family now "don't owe them anything." The family have had some

difficulties with children in the area, calling Mrs T a "nazi bitch" and making racist comments. Mrs T's way of dealing with it has been to ignore them and hope that they will go away. Told Katie not to play with them. Some of the kids have thrown stones at the windows. They called in the MOD and civilian police. The issue is resolved now, but Mrs T says that, on an army estate in Germany this would never have happened. A bit tearful.

Meeting with Mrs Gordon - live in one of the new, larger houses in Pilton. Very clean fixtures and fittings throughout. Lovely road with large front gardens, driveways etc. Play area at the end of the road. Mrs G was home working when I arrived, making cards for a centralised company and then sending them on for dispatch. She was smartly dressed and very clean in her appearance. Two children at home with her step son (slightly older than Suzy and about to start at a boarding school near R for children with behavioural difficulties?) and baby daughter. Mrs G has put up her own curtains and has decorated already as she "can't stand living with magnolia." Happy for S to be in the study. Husband away at BATUS at the moment. 2nd marriage for him, he has 2 children from previous relationship. This is the first time Mrs G has lived in a quarter as, up to now, she has lived away from the army. Commented that she was "not one of those women who wears her husband's rank on her sleeve," and says that she doesn't have much to do with the army. Husband is 1 DGR.

Meeting with Mrs Hobson - Briefly stopped in to say hello to Mrs H, who had returned the consent form earlier in the summer. Lives in a terraced house on the Zennor Estate in Upton. Very clean and tidy, house well presented. Her younger son was at home with her. This is her first posting as, previously, she has lived in Canterbury. Husband away at BATUS and she is hoping he'll be back for Del's birthday. She admitted that she was an alcoholic and that D had a "lot to deal with" at home. She was going to talk to the school about it.

<u>25th September</u>

Meeting with PS, Deputy Headteacher - was very keen to get the school involved in the research. He showed me a diagram that one of the KS4 history teachers had done some stats work on. In spite of the good KS3 scores of the teaching group, this teacher had found that their KS4 scores put them in the lower quartile of marks. This was in spite of a good working atmosphere in the group and no

perceived problems. We discussed whether this was because the group suffered some disruption during KS4 with some pupils arriving during year 10 and 11, causing difficulties with changing exam boards. Paul then mentioned the 1991 Census, when Upton and T had separate analysis. Then, 4% of Upton adults had some kind of FE qualification, with T having 10%. I wondered whether this was because T had the majority of the officer housing. We then went on to wonder how many children at Upton came from officer families. I agreed to lead INSET at the beginning of the next academic year. I also agree to talk to Ofsted inspector next week.

Meeting with Mrs Carter - Lovely, chatty, warm lady. Live in 3 bed terraced house on the Zennor Estate. House immaculate. Walls have all been painted different colours and own curtains up at the windows. Works mornings as a crèche supervisor. More than happy for Nick to be involved. Asked some pertinent questions about the research knew all about ethical approval etc. Was an army child herself. Is hoping that N will be able to remain in Upton until the end of KS4. She is worried that, as her husband's next posting might be N Ireland, there won't be anything for her son out there either further training or employment. Commented that it wasn't much of a life for kids to work on an army base out there. N has a younger brother, now in year 7 at Upton. N was bullied when he was in year 7 and now his brother is being bullied as well. She is going up to school next week to speak to JB about it. N's brother is bigger than him, even though he's a year younger! Interestingly, Mrs C said that Zennor Primary School had been suggesting to parents (and nearly all parents would be army given that the primary school is on the Zennor Estate) that Upton was not a good school and that the teachers there didn't like army kids. Mrs C commented that many army parents sent their kids elsewhere and that N and D were probably the only 2 that had gone up from their year group. Mrs C raised her eyebrows when I said that Mrs N was also taking part in the study. Does she know about Mrs N's alcoholism?

Meeting with the 4 focus pupils. Met Katie, Shelley, Del and Nick in RE's office during period 4. The kids were very relieved to be missing English although they had obviously been told that they will have to make up the work. Nick remembered more about the research because he had received his letter more recently. Shelley seemed a bit worried about the research, she said that she

wasn't sure what it entailed, so I went through the plan with her again. Nick and Del are both very cheeky chappies. Shelley more withdrawn. Katie happy to be involved. (Afterwards at the year 8 assembly, all the pupils made eye-contact and grinned at me. William also approached to say that he "wasn't allowed" to do the research. I promised to see him the next week to talk through why. I also noticed that JB kept Nick and another back to ask them to *keep an eye out for* another pupil in their tutor group who was being bullied. Is this because Nick is bullying or because he is a sensitive boy able to help other children?)

<u>30th September</u>

Letter on the staff noticeboard from a Mrs S Stocker of Loxley to staff and governors, responding to a letter (11/9/03?) in the A newspaper, says that Upton is a good school and needs more support from parents to back up the teaching staff. I wonder whether this is aimed at army families, from the point of view of someone who lives locally?

All the rooms are locked at breaktime? Wonder what message this is giving to the pupils, that they can't be trusted and don't have ownership of the school. Also there's CCTV!

Breaktime lower corridor. Meet 4 boys hiding in the cubby hole (hiding from CCTV cameras?) 3of them are in year 9 and 1 in year 8. Starts with one of the boys calling out 'bitch' (to me? To one of the passing girls?) Started talking to them about why they were inside and not outside playing football. They prefer to go and have a smoke and the front of the school is the best place for that. I asked the year 8 boys why he was with year 9s and he said that one of them was his brother. He was non-committal about whether he got on with anyone in year 8. I start to wonder whether they form relationships with army friends from outside school and can't break this inside school. These relationships might go back a long way.

2 considerations measuring the staff attitude towards army children (the more years of service, the worse the attitude?) The number of teacher to pupil interactions. Are the interactions positive or negative? Is their reaction different to other pupils?

Why are some of the pupils wearing gold/light blue/navy shirts? What messages do they give to each other about this?

Conversation between myself and Sarah (School Admin Assistant)
Said that I had been to see Mr R and she said how fantastic he and Ms C were. "With them, if they throw someone out it's for a reason and you know they'll follow it up."

Setting KS3 a lot of mixed ability. Some setting goes on and this will affect setting in other subjects. In KS4, setting in core skills then goes according to options.

13th October

Before school, signing in, asking Ali how Ofsted went. Ali says that "we've been told we aren't allowed to talk about that. We've got to wait until we get the report in a few months' time." Initially I am concerned that this is specifically aimed at me and I have, somehow, lost the support and trust of the school. In conversation with Jean, later, I find out that Ofsted was so awful that they are anticipating a bad report. People think that the inspectors came with a hidden agenda and that it was 'political'

Period 2 French teacher absent, so I end up talking to the cover teacher, Mr G, who is a late entry NQT, after many years in the Army Air Corps. I ask if his experiences are 'tapped in to' at the school, but he says that all of his previous life experiences have been ignored.

Period 2 French teacher absent, so I end up taking some of the lesson. I am somewhat concerned that this will affect Del's perception of me he will stop seeing me as an adult and more as a teacher. Fortunately, Del continues to call me Grace afterwards and talks to me.

Absences in the Parents' information booklet, absences are listed as being 'slightly above the average' for Upton. Feel that this may be because the school holiday does not coincide with father's leave (eg after a tour of duty, R and R)

Starting to get the feeling that lesson type focuses on individual work few examples of group work/pair work. Is this the same throughout the school?

13th November

Since Ofsted, the whole staff have been involved in a curriculum area and whole school SWOT analysis. This is now displayed on the staff room noticeboard. Interestingly, the army comes up as a threat to the community and also as an opportunity.

I speak to a new pupil in Nick's teaching group. I ask him what it has been like joining Upton in the middle of the year and he says that it has been really hard "you get told off for doing things wrong, but you don't get told what's wrong in the first place." He has been given a 'buddy' but he is away on that particular day. There is no brochure or pupil's view leaflet.

In room 039 there is evidence of a 'peaks and pits' PSHE session, where pupils are encouraged to talk about the highs and lows in their life. Few real lows are mentioned (mainly a cat dying!) Only one poster mentions a dad going off to the Gulf.

17th November

Need to check which books are read as part of the English curriculum here. Also need to talk to the SEN dept about IEPS. There are children in the SEN department who have English as a 2nd language need to check where they are from.

Discussion with PR at breaktime in the staffroom. He mentions that the whole school think that they are going to go on to special measures. Why else, he thinks, would they do all the work on the action plans (on noticeboard) if this wasn't the case? "There's no point hanging around waiting for it to happen." We go on to talk about the curriculum changes in MFL and at KS4 generally. Nice not to have to have things explained!

Many members of SMT are absent today (Head, Dep Head and Senior Tutor) the staff say that this is because they are all stressed. The difficulty in this comes when there is a fire bell practice before lunch and there is no one to take charge.

It seems to me that the army children do not interact with members of staff they do not seem to want to draw attention to themselves individually by showing that they NEED help or support. Very self sufficient. Compare the number of times that pupils fail to ask for help.

<u>25th November</u>

Incident with RO and SJ RO discovers a bottle of booze in Shelley's bag. I'm concerned as Shelley has mentioned once or twice before that she's worried that her mum and stepdad will split up, due to the impact of her brother and the worry that he causes the family? She was really upset about this incident, not because she might get into trouble, but because she said that she was worried how upset her mum would be.

Both Shelley and Katie have brothers who attend boarding schools due to their SEN. This represents 50% of my sample (more than the actual population) Due, perhaps, to the intolerance of 'abnormal' behaviour by army families normative constraints on behaviour compare to Price.

Jean wonders how many will attend the parents' meeting at the annual report by the governors only 5 families showed up!

Information from Parents' Meeting - Attending 39 parents (34 families represented)

Of these 20 of the 34 families were civilian, the rest army

26 out of the 39 attenders were Mums!

Surnames (with year groups, sorry for the spelling mistakes!)

Kennedy (10) (Mum, Civ), Pye (8) (Mum, Civ), Leak (9) (Mum, Army), Bennett (7) (Mum, Army), Adcock (9) (Dad, Army, but living locally), Lock (10) (Dad, Civ), Maybury (8) (Mum and Dad, Civ), Day (8) (Mum and Dad, Civ), Nicholson (7) (Mum and Dad, Army), Sparrow (7) (Mum and Dad, Civ), Mills Montana (9) (Dad, Army), Evans (8) (Dad, Civ), Cooper (9) (Dad, Army), Pickinell (10) (Mum, Civ),

King (10) (Mum, Civ), Cummins (10) (Mum and Dad, Civ), Brown (11) (Mum, Civ), Stevens (10) (Mum, Civ), Boulton (7) (Mum, Civ), Smith (7) (Mum, Civ), Kerr (10) (Mum, Army), Collacott (7/8) (Mum and Dad, Army), Tierney (11) (Mum, Civ), Whiting (8) (Mum, Civ), Stocker (9) (Mum, Civ), Rogers (11) (Mum, Army), Britten (8) (Mum, Army), Thomson (9) (Dad, Civ), Collins (7) (Mum, Civ), Lake (8) (Mum, Civ), Grejack ?(8) (Mum, Army), Kalies (11) (Dad, Army), plus 2 other attenders who I could not catch.

Issues/Questions from parents

- Concern about children who are about to leave the school before the 2 years of special measures are over. What quality of education will they get in the mean time?
- No SENCO parent concerned about "appalling" provision. What happens in the interim?
- Constant theme of the LEA and the Governing Body offering help and "it not being accepted before."
- Partnership between LEA, Governors, Staff and Parents required
- Disruptive pupils
- Response from another army dad "if we spread the negative attitude, I am sure that this school will close. We must start to spread a positive vibe. I'm in the army and the first thing that happens is that we're told don't send them there." Headteacher's response "we are actively talking to other agencies, including the army, to improve provision."

<u>26th November</u>

Del absent for the third day in a row, so misses his first interview. I phone home and speak to Mrs Hobson, who says that he has the 'flu. I am getting increasingly concerned about his attendance rate as he is away a lot. Sue (reception) says that the boy is on the 'cause for concern' list need to investigate this.

I ask Katie why her mum and dad didn't attend parents' meeting last night she says that dad had a mess meeting and mum can't drive! Perham Down is terribly isolated with few facilities of its own.

<u>8th December</u>

Information from Pupil Files

Only 2 files were available - Katie's and Shelley's. They don't know where the boys' files are. They might be with JB, which shows that files are kept in more than one place at the school. This is not good if you need to locate information in an emergency, or if you have to transfer the pupil information to another school. Angie (SMT Admin) says that new procedures are now in place, but that this will not help current students.

Shelley information from Charterhouse only (year 6). She was on the Code of Practice at a Stage 2 for spelling and numeracy difficulties. There were reviews in October 2001 and February 2002, where she came of the COP. No transfer documents.

Katie Ed Psych report from S School, H, 14/6/01. She was Statemented on 6/4/01 and initially assessed on 10/7/00. All the forms are from the SCE and show the father's military id. Initial referral to EP service due to speech and language, but now just literacy and numeracy and self esteem issues. Contact letter between Southshire CC and SCE to confirm statement before the move back to the UK. Annual Review from Upton for 2003. Also included are 2 information reports from Upton 18/2/03 she was called names by 2 girls; 29/1/03 name calling and racist grafitti on the walls of their house. Parents called police and MOD police. No transfer documents. No documents from Charterhouse School.

Del approaches me in the corridor and says that what I really should be doing is observing Nick and not him. He is always negative in front of his friends, but is okay by himself.

Discussion with new music teacher, Mrs L, in the staff room at lunchtime. She discussed Shelley's progress with her last week. Shelley admitted she was not making the progress she should do as she felt that she couldn't be seen to be clever in front of everyone. Mrs L and I agree that Shelley is the most able in the group. We feel that Shelley needs to be part of the group, whilst Katie seems to float more, seems to be more insular.

Was asked by Mr Smith (Head of Cover) if I would cover a lesson as they are really stretched today. Say no, that I am still too far into the research to be of any help at the moment. Difficult.

12th December

Talking to CK before the lesson she says that Katie is doing really well in the new group due to its size. She is getting more and more confident. She also thinks Shelley is doing well as she is more focused. Apparently last year, Shelley was sometimes quite vacant in lessons. CK says that this is not surprising given that "her life is a bit like a soap opera."

After the conversation with JS he said that Upton will not appoint army governors as they see it as a 'duty'. Instead, Upton will send its governors onto army committees and will inform people that way.

Talking to Ali - transfer documents are now the law, but the school can no longer interview all the in-coming children as they do not have the time or manpower. This is done by Ali and it takes time to input information on the new pupils on to the system. New button on the system for 're-joining' pupils.

7th January

Discussion with TA in staffroom after period 1 about Katie and why she did not mention that she had actually lived in another country. The TA said that Katie needed to be asked directly and prodded about it, in order to make the association between Germany and 'other' perhaps, to her, life in Germany was just an extension of life in the UK?

Del absent from period 4 as he is attending a counselling session why?

RE, at staff briefing, asks whether we can get together to discuss the 'interim admissions' work he has been doing for the Action Plan.

Headteacher mentions that she has taken another whole school assembly in which she dispelled rumours that she was leaving and that she was only a temporary head. Pupils had been expecting her to leave and move on how much do the army children expect this? Things don't go well, so move off?

Approached by B again about cover!

Discussion with new music teacher, KS, in the staff room at lunchtime she has moved to the school as it is closer to home. Says that when she said to people that the school had a big army population, they suggested that it was going to be a 'tough school' but she has been impressed with the level of co-operation by the kids.

<u>22nd January</u>

R gives me a copy of the 'interim admissions' section of the action plan. He is at a meeting period 1 so I can't observe him with Del. I observe RV teaching Katie and Suzy instead.

KS asks me how my work is going and what findings I'm at I manage to be non-committal. He is obviously personally interested as both of his children were educated in the army system he was an officer and did not opt for the BSA.

I ask Ali about the Ed Psych service she says they only see her about three times a year!

Multi agency Meeting 7th January minutes in the staff room. No representatives attended from Social Services, Army services, Youth services, educational welfare services (she was ill), police, youth offending team or Kandu arts. The main focus of the meeting is the decision to organise an off site centre for dealing with difficult cases.

I see RV in reception after his lesson. He asks to see my notes from the lesson I show him and explain my comment about 'deflecting him' that I am looking at my role as a researcher teacher. I ask if he is happy with my comments he said that yes, and he was only concerned if I saw things that he didn't. I reassure him that my comments are pupil focused.

<u>23rd January</u>

I ask Ps permission to speak to one of the inspectors. He says yes. P then says what did I think of the army section of the plan? I say it was too early to tell but I would be happy to give ideas when I had finished the data collection.

Speaking to the TAs at breaktime. Katie was chosen for the gardening club as she had difficulties fitting in last year and was bullied. She has difficulties with group work. Her sister is also in the club and it emerges that she and Katie loathe each other. Gardening club has been a way of getting them to work together. The TAs say that they are desperately worried about both of them the animosity between them is not natural and they can sometimes appear neglected and unkempt. The son has his own social worker and they can't understand why the family is not supported as a whole. Why is SSAFA not involved?

<u>30th January</u>

Del is absent has been absent all week as he fell off his bike last weekend and has a hairline fracture. He has been absent all week from school but the kids say he has been playing out. I phone Mum to organise her interview and Mum says she hasn't phoned in to school as she has run out of credit on her phone. (Del's absences connected to a need to look after his mum he's away at the most acute times?)

All the mums agree to an interview.

Registration I take register for an absent teacher as the absence list is horrendous. As a result, I come face to face with Katie who is in the tutor group I'm very relaxed with them and don't insist on silence. Katie and Amy talk to me quite normally on the way out.

<u>4th February</u>

I'm only in school for 2 lessons as I am off to visit the KRH. Del is away today. Steven is the school receptionist and when I am leaving I say to him that I've noticed that Del is still away. Steven reminds me that Del has broken his elbow. I say that I am aware of that, but that I thought Del was returning to school this week. Steven says that it doesn't matter anyway because nobody is talking to Del anymore. I ask why. Steven says that Del lied about how he broke his elbow and, in doing so, got someone else into trouble. Steven, Nick and a few others are not happy about this and have decided to stay away from Del. I wonder if Del knows this? It is also apparent to me how strong this sense of right and wrong is to the boys.

11th February

Period 3 is billed as a 'celebration assembly' for KS3 Nick wins 2 prizes, for poetry and the Upton News. Del does not win any prizes.

I have a discussion with Shelley outside room 40 at the beginning of period 2. She comes up to me and says 'there was an incident at the weekend. Damon ran away and I was chased by a man.' She was going over to a friend's house.

Whilst waiting outside Technology, period 5, Suzy and Shelley are throwing their arms around each other and pushing each other around. Suzy pushes Shelley into Mark Shelley rushes up to Mark to apologise and to check that he is okay. Sense of justice again?

There are 2 HMI in school today and tomorrow.

I consider comparing the army, as an employer, with another large employer for example, BMW at Cowley, or Vodafone in Newbury. Compare the employer's links to its employees' schools. Consider the number of employees and relocation packages available. Perhaps also compare to another state sector employer, such as the DVLC in Swansea.

23rd February

Talk to HG about Del, after the lesson. She asks how much I know about him. She says that she argued against Del moving down a set last year (to Shelley and Katie's set) as, although he has difficulties with his dyslexia, he has the intellectual capacity to stay in that group. HG is concerned that she doesn't have any extra support for Del and feels that she doesn't know how to respond to his difficulties individually.

Good report from the HMI visit before half term. Head says that the school is on track to come out of special measures within the time frame.

I put my head around CK's door during registration to ask permission to observe she asks if it's okay not to as she says she is really flummoxed coming back to school after half term and isn't ready. I say that this of course fine.

Lovely conversation with HG at breaktime she has a load of new books in her room. She says how angry she feels when people say that "these kids" don't need new books. She uses the example of her bottom set year 10 who begged her to let them take a book away. She has really high expectations of her pupils.

<u>26th February</u>

In conversation with some teachers before school I realise just how many teachers are concerned at the way that the school is going one teacher already has a new job set up for Easter and several teachers are seriously looking for other posts. This instability in staffing will have an impact on the kids' education.

After the tape ends, the Mums say the following

Mrs Turner - she didn't allow her children to take part in after school activities during the winter months because she had no means of picking them up (she can't drive and her husband has the car anyway.) There is no footpath between school and the quarter and she won't have the children walking along the road. I also sense that she felt isolated as she complained that her patch of quarters was all for engineers, all of their regiment were living elsewhere.

Mrs Gordon says that she is very happy with Upton school. They phone her whenever anything happens. She gives the example of when Shelley was caught smoking, they telephoned her straight away. She says that she thinks it's criminal moving older children around and cites the example of her step son David, who is now in year 10. She says it would mess him up completely if he was moved. She doesn't think that it is so bad with younger children.

Mrs Carter talks about her own experiences of being in the army and her concerns for the boys if they do go over to Northern Ireland. It's not so much the education system differences over there, but her concerns that there would be no work for them after school (after 16 years of age) if they stayed at home with her and her husband. The phone rings and she explains afterwards that she is waiting to hear if a friend is going into labour so she should go around and look after the other daughter.

3rd March

After interview with Mrs Hobson, we talk a bit about her difficulties. Mrs Hobson says that she is a recovering alcoholic now but that she is concerned what will happen when her husband goes away to Iraq next month. He is due to go away for a 6 month tour of duty. She says that Del is also worried about this and calls him her "little man about the house." She says that when her husband is away he always takes responsibility for her and she knows that he is worried about the next 6 months. She says that both her and Del are looking forward to the next posting (March 2005) to Northern Ireland, saying that neither of them are very happy here in Upton. She says that she is not very much into the army so she hasn't really settled here. Del does not get on with his middle brother as the middle brother is always difficult when his dad is away and Del does not like the fact that he causes problems for his mum. She alludes to the difficulties that she had with Del's real dad but says that she is sure that her new husband is just like a dad to Del. She mentions that Del has just joined the army cadets and went to his first meeting last Monday. She said that it was hilarious because the next morning, he called out and asked her if she wanted to come and do a room inspection!

March 9th

Interview 3 day all in Mr R's classroom

Pictures of pupils' art work around school you know that some of these pupils have already left, I recognise some of the names. A bit like having ghosts looking down at you.

Talk to RO before his lesson he was hoping to videotape his lesson but has had a complaint from a parent about this. I consider this and provide a written information sheet for PS, outlining the steps I have taken to ensure ethical correctness when using photos of the kids.

March 2004 edition of Military magazine - advert for the Friends of Upton School evening, 25th March, advertising for interest from the families and communities of Upton and Loxley.

Can't find files for anyone in year 8 as J points out this is her 3rd office move this year.

Conversation with RO at breaktime Sarah Turner kicked off last Thursday, claiming she was being bullied. I feel this is very coincidental as I interviewed Mrs T last Thursday, so perhaps Sarah is seeking attention and is jealous of the attention that Katie is getting with this project (this has already been mentioned to me by one of the TAs) RO says that Mrs T phoned in to school and suggested that she would take the matter into her own hands. Sounds like problems up at Pilton again.

<u>24th March</u>

Nick and Katie have been chosen as peer supporters (by JB?) and have to attend a meeting for their first training session period 3 today

Girl in year 8 (with ginger hair) is still moving to Banbury to live with her auntie, but will be attending day school not boarding. Her parents are being posted out to Germany and she would have to weekly board at the service school there, she and parents don't want this, so auntie is their only option.

Boys' files - Del - KS2 transfer form, entry profile to Zennor, reports, SEN = School Action for dyslexia, files and info from Zennor and K. but not from Charterhouse, SEN concerns focus on motor skills and dyslexia but also the anxiety attached to this. Anxiety may have another cause - not explored.

Nick - KS2 transfer forms, entry profile to Zennor, Zennor's enrolment form has army specific info on it, previous information from B Infants and refs to T County Primary, N Ireland and M Junior.

Neither have information from Upton - no copies of Upton's reports or annual review for Del.

Period 3 observe peer supporter training. JB has given the pupils the option of taking part but has then "vetted" the list. KS3 peer supporters are now deemed to be necessary due to the vertical tutor groups and the school's desire to provide support to younger pupils. Nick and Katie well involved in the discussion,

although Katie doesn't always appear to understand what is asked of her, or what is required.

Period 5 observe a video conference between year 9 students (of RO) and 2 schools in New Jersey, USA. The focus is culture of the 2 countries. Katie and Shelley should be being taught geography by Fm at the time, but are brought in to watch the conference, so that FM can deal with the technical issues. However, they are both extremely attentive and really enjoy themselves. Some of their class also get involved with the question and answer session, neither Katie or Shelley answer any questions.

After Easter, there will be a reorganisation of the year 8 teaching groups. This is because year 8 have been getting very 'cliquey' and getting into a lot of trouble. (says KS)

Staff meeting before school concern about Shelley's brother acting erratically. Ablington are having their Ofsted at the moment, so Head is absent the inspection is running over time because one of the inspectors did not arrive on time.

Ali says that a lot of mums have been coming into reception to say that their husbands are being deployed.

RE Friends of Upton meeting R says that it hasn't been advertised in the staffroom as he says that it is a governor initiative and it isn't involving the people who work there. He does not seem happy by this.

Friends of Upton Meeting - 7pm
NC Chair of Governors - present 6 parents and 1 admin lady.
Intro - here to set up links between Upton and the local community.
From parents - 2 sets of parents from army (one with child no longer at school is ex welfare officer of QOD) talks about need to create links with army. N states that the LEA will probably not add any extra money but will give expertise.
Reputation of the school is ingrained.
Aim of fundraising - to improve the fabric of the school and increase resources in the classroom.

The Regiment of W are coming into Upton - 1 of the army fathers mentions funding of the school by the MOD (I explain this isn't the case)
A states that the school had its problems and then got defensive about them so didn't bring anyone in to help.
Upton Festival has transferred its site from the Oval to the school - this should bring the community up there.
LInks to the community - former pupils experts in advertising to help the profile of the school / interview days / open day idea
Question to A about whether any teachers will be invited onto the group - he says he wants the teachers to be focused on the teaching and learning only, rather than fundraising. A says they weren't invited to the meeting that night.

2nd April

I meet Steven and Nick outside Science I see Nick's camera and he still has 10 shots left, so I tell him to take it away with him over Easter. Steven asks why Nick has a camera and I say it is part of the army project. He says that he doesn't see why army children are any different to civilian children and I agree with him and that I am doing this to check. It makes me realise that the children are probably the same, but the school don't seem to have the policies (and therefore the practice) in place to allow the army children to be the same.

Del says that he has 4 shots left to take so I tell him to use the camera over Easter.

Katie has forgotten her camera I write in her homework diary.

Katie says that her Gran and Uncle and 2 cousins are coming over from Germany for Easter she says she can't speak much German so she'll talk to them in English.

Before period 3, in the corridor, Jeff shouts to Del "here she is, here's your stalker." I ignore this, but Del says to me "glasses don't suit you." The pupils are talking about their new sets some friction between Del and Nick as Del says he's moving to a group with his "best buddy Nick" which he says really sarcastically. He then grabs Nick around the neck as he says this and Nick tries to pull away from him.

History, period 3 when Nick offers me a seat next to him is this because he feels he needs the support and can't cope without it?

Period 4, Music problems with Del. Del comes over about 15 minutes into the lesson and asks to see my notes. I say that I can't show him during the lesson. He replies "Okay then, what's flown up your arse and stung you?" I reply that I don't like being spoken to like that. Del says "well I don't like being spoken down to." At this time, I am sitting down and Del (and Nick) are standing up next to me. Nick says "she's not talking down to you Del, she's talking up at you." I say to Del that it is probably better if I leave and I get up and walk out. I wait in the practice room next door for 10 minutes to allow both myself and Del to calm down I was worried that if I had stayed in there things would have escalated and I would have had to act more like an adult/teacher to restore calm. Walking away seemed a better option. After 10 minutes, I ask St (the class teacher) if I can talk to Del. He comes outside with me and as he walks my way he straight away says "I'm really sorry, I was only joking, you know." I say that I am sure that this was the case but that I just wanted to check that things were okay between us. Del, without prompting, says that he finds he is snapping at an awful lot at the moment. His dad is deploying tomorrow and he is really worried about the effect this will have on his mum. I say that he must know that there are people who he can talk to (ie Sheila) but he says that he doesn't think anybody can understand him. I apologise for my part in the incident earlier and say that I hope he can try and have a good holiday and that I will be thinking about him tomorrow when his dad goes.

<u>22nd April</u>

Announcement in staff briefing about Shelley's brother and keeping an eye on him and reporting back to his tutor seen as something negative that he has done. Is this linked to what Shelley tells me? Shelley says that over Easter her step brother, Dillon, tried to throw a metal bar through a window, and his step sister, Tilly, was standing there and could have been hurt. Shelley's mum said she wouldn't take it anymore and arranged for foster care. Shelley's step-dad, in Iraq, is said to be "not happy at all" about it.

Shelley says that her dad's mate has been shot in the neck in Basra and has been flown home. I ask her if she's worried about her dad and she says yes.

I pick up the new timetables from Ali year 8 were split into new groups over Easter. I speak to a few members of staff about the reaction to this, in the staff room, and it seems quite positive. The previously small bottom group had lead to artificially large top groups.

Year 8 reports where are they and can I have a copy of them?

School is integrationist not inclusive towards army children?

Staff briefing discussion about 'guided choices' for year 9 options. Pupils are guided before they make their GCSE decisions what happens if the school don't know the child as they have only just arrived?

Need to check registers and find out where year 8 reports are stored.

No paper in school SF is very unhappy that the proposed new changes to make the school more 'dynamic' don't seem to be happening.

<u>7th May</u>

Haven't seen Del at school for the last 2 visits. I phone up Mrs N and she says that her dad has passed away her husband has been brought back from the Gulf and she and Del are going back to C for the funeral. This must be devastating for all of them as both Mrs N and Del have mentioned Grampa and how close they were to him. Can't imagine how he must be feeling, so I write a little card for him and send it off.

<u>13th May</u>

Steven is in the inclusion room today. His Dad is in Iraq and his Mum can't cope with the young baby. Mum has gone home to Gran in Manchester for a few days. Steven could have gone too but elected to stay. He is staying with a neighbour. He is very low and wobbly and clearly shouldn't be here. The pupils are commenting that he is in the inclusion room as he has been red carded. Nick can't understand why Steven isn't attending lessons, eventhough he knows about Steven's mum.

There is a big meeting after school on 20th May for all staff to discuss 'the future' of the school. There is a lot of gossip and guessing about this some people are saying that it will be announced that the school will close. In the local newspaper recently, the Chair of Governors one week has said how he would like the leisure centre to close and the next week has mentioned how much he wants the school itself to stay open. People are reading into this a lot.

I get a copy of the troop movement letter. Several things strike me the letter mentions a new regiment moving in but it talks in army speak! Secondary school figures do not indicate how many of the secondary age school children already draw down on BSA or will be doing this on the return to the UK. I feel that the letter sticks to the law on how much information it should provide and won't go any further than that. The final thing is that the letter has already, it seems, chosen which schools the children will attend as the only education representatives to be going on the visit are Upton and Charterhouse Infants. Obviously, parents are not allowed to know about Ablington etc.

<u>21st May</u>

Del, Nick and Shelley are all in PSHE with a supply teacher when I go past, Steven, Shelley and, nearly, Del have been excluded Steven and Shelley are working in the inclusion room. Del and I chat whilst he's outside about how things are going he seems more friendly and open than usual. I walk around the school for a bit with Shelley she is chatty as always.

<u>26th May</u>

Information gathering for Del his dyslexia is being reassessed so that the SEN team can target precisely which sort of dyslexia he has. Original assessment at primary school was not specific.

Hand out consent forms for focus group. Quite a good response from pupils at KS3 Celebration Assembly. Key Stage 3 Celebration Assembly none of the 4 children win an award. I notice that Sarah T and Miles C both go up for a certificate. Karen S says that Sarah T took part in the Talent Show on Friday and presented a "weird" poem that she had written by herself to do with suicide. I wonder if the T parents showed up? Need to ask Katie.

R tells me that there will be no MFL at KS4 next year only 4 pupils have applied in year 9 for French and 4 for German. R is outraged. Head has made the decision that such a small number is not viable.

New pastoral plan all behavioural issues are to be referred to Curriculum Team leaders. Debs feels that this will make tutors and Key Stage managers redundant. Parents will no longer have one focus for their concerns.

Pick up admissions form only space for one previous school. Mention army rank.

10th June

Shelley missing period 2 she says that she was attacked by a year 10 girl last night, she stole her pencil case, ripped up her bus pass etc. She is really upset by this and is very worried that the school will phone her mum. She doesn't want to worry her mum.

On my way out of the maths lesson period 3, I see Steven sitting in the corridor. I ask him what he's doing there and he says that he's been sent out of the lesson. He is angry because he says that Nick was also misbehaving and he didn't get sent out. I realise that Steven's behaviour is getting worse.

15th June

I go over to Dels house to pick up the camera. Mrs N reveals that she is finding things really tough at the moment. She and her husband are planning to have another child, as she really wants to have a little girl. She also says that they are due to be going to Germany in March for 6 years. She feels very worried about this as she doesn't want to leave her mum, but also says that remaining would signal the end of her marriage. Mrs N reveals that Del is going away on cadet camp this weekend (eventhough his dad is coming home from Iraq he didn't want to give it up because he was worried that his mum would be upset about losing the five pounds that the camp cost them!) He is also going away on the main camp for 2 weeks in the summer. Mrs N is really worried about this because she says that she realises that he is growing up and he isn't her baby anymore

I notice on the staffroom noticeboard that Steven has been picked for a YIPPS course on behaviour management/emotional literacy. Have the difficulties he has had since his dad left become too much for him?

16th June

Army Families Conference

Lizzie Iron

"if you had to divide the money, how would you do it?"

Geoff Hoon MP

"we need to have in place policies to attract and retrain high quality personnel." "Our support for families has tried to move with the times." Geoff Hoon commented that supported for families included

1. Housing 70 000 MOD quarters world wide "too much of the living accommodation is below the standard acceptable." This year upgrading quarters not met targets due to budget strain "not because of Iraq as the papers would have you believe."
2. Operational Welfare Package scope of improved communication
3. Op Telic majority who sought guidance were younger families. Army becomes more deployable and families more static. Community by membership not geography. "Not yet got to grips with separation."

Sandra Hutchinson

Good news

1. Admissions now a posting order can be accepted by LEAs as proof of a move, admissions can be organised before a move discretionary, LEA should treat late applications as if on time, service member of admissions forum, KS1 allowance of class size; postings centre working towards targets; DHE can give quarters up to 4 months before posting; local liaison officers
2. Curriculum
3. Turbulence difficult to settle as other kids have friends already

Difficulties when transfer documents arrive late; SEN resources aren't transferred as child won't be staying on long enough to have an impact on performance tables; transfer arrangements great if your child is already in year 6.

Possible concerns 6 term year, inclusion policy = reduction in the number of statements (so no guarantees that child's difficulties will be met), BSA the AFF do tell people about the possible negative impact boarding may have on children. Frequency, timing and stress of moves compound the issues of turbulence.

Sharon Manzur

Issues for families with SEN health, SEN services lack provision and funding, children need time to build up relationships with support workers, will schools delegate support for children if they have no statement? Cost to army children not progressing, family breakdown, soldiers weekly commute so family have stability, alterations to housing quarters expensive, children are at risk of outside influences if dad is away, registering that you are a carer of a SEN child with SCE families not doing this for fear of discrimination in chain of command. Support from SSAFE, Forces disability support, SCE and Army welfare.

Sally Williams

Spouse employment leads to greater spouse self esteem and can add a significant amount to the household budget (especially for younger soldiers.) Both of these add to feelings of stability in the home and familiy.

Q and A session

The National Association of State Schools for Service children renewed due to a parliamentary debate in January 2004, working to bring together policy across the UK.

Retention of quarters at a critical stage only (KS4 and A levels) and in addition when a child has on going assessment for SEN

4 months' notice for posting still not enough some say that their local DHE are not aware of the 4 month target

Devolved government in Eng, Scot, Wales and N Ireland has not worked in army childrens' favour as localised changes in curriculum etc.

My question to David Wadsworth (see notes)

Lizzie Iron says that the MOD are now moving towards devolving policy so that more and more local services are being provided by local service providers not the MOD

Nikki Peterson

Fewer and fewer surplus houses means there are less for separated families to use when visiting children come to stay. This is one of the issues leading to retention issues.

Adam Ingram MP

Currently 3 issues for the armed forces

1. Commitments the MOD quantifies the time away from home over a period of 30 months and they target welfare provision to these groups

2. Operational Welfare package communication, support to troops, support for families.

3. Housing medical, dental care and education are subsequent issues only.

Overstretch no decision to extend the number of forces, need to look at commitments in another way and choose 'good tours' with welfare provision. Difficult to persuade government that MOD needs more funding. Iraq has been an additional expenditure and not part of the usual MOD budget. MOD website calls for doing as much as you can with the minimum of resources. Claims that the British Army have got the best recruitment and retention figures of any army.

Alistair Irwin (AGC)

The role of the AGC is to support family welfare so that soldiers can go off to war and fight, knowing that their families are being looked after. They need to look forward to what families will be like in 5 to 25 years time. There is a divergence of aims between the army and its families the army supports accompanied service and families prefer stability. There is provision for unaccompanied service in the over 37 package etc. (need to see TACOS). Move towards a fixed base the idea is to remain within a super garrison so people can progress in a career in 1 garrison for longer periods of time.

Mike Jackson

The operational significance of stability is that it gives the serving member confidence and, thus, an ability to carry out their duties.

Q and A

Children aged 18 plus not taken into account for accommodation

Lizzie Iron the army used to be a very homogenous group, but now the army is a very mixed group and people need to be treated on an individual basis. The army must recognise the changes in the rest of society.

Duke of Westminster
Since December 2002, 11 000 TA troops mobilised without the same welfare packages.
Ivor Caplin MP
There will be a new consultation process about reserve forces

There is a larger role for Foreign and Commonwealth soldiers but no perceived change of direction in policy about them.

22nd June

Nick reveals that Steven left for Manchester last night his dad had been home but had returned to Iraq that w/end. Mum apparently couldn't cope again, so has gone back home and has taken Steven with her. Nobody knows if they will be back or not. I mention this to J and she says that this is not unknown. Sometimes parents will not register their child in a school at the other end, so the child misses months of schooling.

Del says that his dad came back from Iraq on Thursday last week, 2 days early, so he did get to see him before he went off to cadet camp. He says that his mum and dad are arguing already.

25th June

Note to self following interview with DW, this proves that the education that children have received in Germany is NOT equivalent to that in the UK. SEN provision may not always be the same, so children's needs are not met.

28th June

Key Stage 3 Review Day

Shelley chose some of her art work to show her mum, her targets are to focus on self confidence issues. Mr F asks mum and Shelley to tell dad about discussion. Mr F says how helpful Shelley is. Asks Shelley to help out her mum at home.

Shelley is moving to Germany in April 2005 but that they will remain in their quarter until the end of the school year so that Shelley can take her SATs. Mum is really happy with Shelley's progress. As Shelley's older step-brother has gone back to live with his mum, Mrs Gordon says that she no longer feels responsible for his education, so she is now happy to move to Germany. Also, they might have been moving to Northern Ireland but are now not, this is something to be happy about as she said it was like a prison over there.

Del Mum complains about the level of support for Del's dyslexia. She says she was unaware about the SENCO leaving, mum comments that Del's distractions are due to his problems with dyslexia (ie not about dad not being there.) Mum comments that dad is away so she is the only one responsible for the 3 children, so she is not always responsible for Del's homework. Del remains silent throughout. Mum comments that he only has a couple of months left then he's "out of here". Wants to get support for his dyslexia sorted out before they go to Germany in March 05. Mum and Del decide on his targets teacher guides Del towards asking for help when in doubt. Targets 1) ask for help 2) remain focused 3) be prepared for lessons with equipment. Mentions afterwards husband is away on course with cash card, if she gets no money from him then she won't be able to send the children to school on Thursday.

Nick Has a joint appointment with his brother. Nick has chosen his geography project to show his mum which he has put on to ICT. Mum comments that he mixes up the words 'there' and 'they'. Mum, Nick and Ms H go through last year's targets and strengths and weaknesses from this year. Dad was worried about PE but Nick's report is okay. Debs comments that sometimes Nick is happy just to hand in homework as so many of the others don't, so hw not always top quality. Targets 1) doing best of ability in hw 2) focusing during lessons. Debs directs targets but Nick is involved. Steven has taken Nick's planner from him and written all over it.

Katie Katie shows her work to her mum, she has chosen a poem (Mrs Turner sees the poetry and only comments on the poor spelling.) Mum says she was pleasantly surprised at Katie's report and progress. Says she is really pleased that problems with other kids are not affecting her work. Mrs S talks about aims and targets for GCSE (1 is to check spellings Mrs S will check spellings with her

in tutor group) (2 is to have all equipment with her, so mum agrees to have a copy of Katie's timetable at home. Mrs Turner wants Katie to drop French so that she can have extra English lessons (NB Head has contacts with the Spanish Embassy and wants to introduce Spanish.) Mum wants Katie to study German instead so that she can help her. Dad is working today the army have asked him to deliver some lorries. Katie asks if she is better than Sarah. Mum wants to talk to Mr E about the money being stolen as Katie doesn't know who took it from her.

12th August

Telephone call to Mrs Turner to find out about her own school experiences and what she thinks about boarding schools. Mrs Turner left school at 18, found it okay, not very enthusiastic about it. Corporal Turner joined the army at 17 as he said that he wasn't very good at school. They had thought about boarding school if Mrs Turner had a job and couldn't be there during the day to support her children. Bruno attended boarding school in Germany as no local SCE provision. Mrs Turner said that if they were to send them to boarding school she would probably have to work anyway as BSA doesn't cover everything.

2 – ALCHESTER

4th April

School situated in the middle of a 1950s housing estate main road divides the army side from the civilian. Garrison children, therefore, furthest half of estate from school, mixed housing (private and association on civilian half). Walking distance (ish) between garrison and school. Primary school near the school. No school buses children from villages would have to take local transport and walk from main road. Small row of shops nearby Martins newsagent, Co-op etc. the whole area, whilst built up, is neat and tidy private houses are well tended. Major refurbishment and building work at the garrison.

Reception area school motto "success for all" on door, wall and carpet! School awards displayed winners of DfES School Achievement award 2000/01, recognition of careers education award, 2001, IIP status. Before registration a stream of people coming in buying uniform, returning school trip money etc. Few pupils only wearing trainers. Year 11 prefects wearing badges. Absence reporting line goes straight through to the student services.

SA, Student Services Manager, after tape talk about Gurkha children. Had both language and cultural difficulties language was supported by Alchester's EAL service but cultural difficulties weren't helped (boys more aggressive and girls subservient) Sue researched this on the internet and got in a Nepali speaking teacher to talk to/train staff. No help from army. Some 'young' regiments (eg PARA) mean that children are younger, so they tend to go to primary schools. Black Watch influx has meant that there has been a more macho element in school. Father absence the school does notice disciplinary issues. Sue says that she phones the army liaison people but that they aren't really interested in 'low level' links there are some connections between senior officers and the headteacher but not below. Army don't seem to follow up on issues. Mentions the difficulty getting returns from parents for things.

Home School agreement / code of conduct on classroom walls in H/S agreement there is "developing purposeful community links"

Heads of year currently static but moving to a rolling HOY system within the lower school.

Conversation with DB after the lesson C came to the school at the start of year 8. She met his parents as part of his induction. H's parents have not come in (didn't come to parents evening the year before) but she is doing okay. D says that the 2 of them are very different to the army pupils she has taught better behaved. Perhaps army kids are not such well behaved. Computer in D's office which links into the school assessment system straight away C's Cats and Sats scores are not on the system. A and E scores (achievement and effort) H has 2s throughout (ie on target) C needs to make more effort in MFL. Tutors lead PSHE at this school after input from HoY.

SEN School Action, 51, SA+ 72, Statements 40 (including 15 children educated at on site dyslexia centre). The school tests all reading and spelling ages of new children so they check them then.

Mr R (Deputy Head) after the tape has finished. He has major concerns that mobility means that you can't perform early intervention, so basic skills amongst army children are not good. The army got cross when they did analysis of grades

and suggested that the army children had a bad time of it! Housing perhaps not good on garrison land some real anti social behaviour issues at night over there. When they had an influx of Scottish regiments, the older Scottish children got very angry because they were having to stay on at school longer than they would have in Scotland so it was difficult to get them to the end of year 11. No service schools factor in Alchester, so no extra funding. Less regimental moves more trickle postings now. Never had officers children at the school. Perception here is that the facilities and resources in SCE schools are excellent so children and parents have high expectations on return to the UK.

C - has been to 7 or 8 schools, last ones in Chatham, Kent, joined Alchester at the beginning of year 8. The good thing about moving schools is to try something different and seeing how other schools do things, the bad things is leaving behind his friends. He feels that he has close friends at Alchester now who are a mixture of army and civilian. Keeps in touch with one friend (army) from Chatham, lost contact with another friend (army) as he only had his old phone number. His favourite teacher was a primary school teacher called Miss Fowler because she used to ruffle his hair and say it was like her cat. Quite likes Mrs B (HoY) but doesn't have a favourite teacher at Alchester. If he was being physically bullied he would tell a teacher, if it was verbal bullying he would tell a mate or his parents. He would not talk to teachers about home issues. Dad is in the army but he's not sure what he does mum works on computers. He won't join the army himself as they always seem to be working and are too busy, always going away. When he has moved to a new school he has sometimes had work problems but he mostly remembers the social things.

Driving around the garrison estate at lunchtime 1) mixture of housing officers and soldiers housing, although officers on separate roads 2) some new build but some very old 1970s style terraced housing in poor condition, 3) one set of central facilities Spar, garrison radio, army welfare service 4) garrison some distance from quarters so soldiers would most probably need transport to offices as unable to walk (would they take their cars?) 5) M Primary School at the centre of the estate 6) welfare amenities centre (HIVE etc) nearby

Walk around school period 5. Quiet. In the library the librarian is trying to make a collection of worksheets for student who are not in lessons. Would like to try

and upload these on to the school's intranet so that they can be accessed from home. Great for catching up on work, too! No careers area in library. Poems from other cultures on wall but no Nepali. No army refs. Check on IT facilities students can use the computers at lunchtime and after school 1 room reserved for year 11 and another for games. Library for HW. Noticeboard outside HoY office Hannah is a Year 8 buddy (for year 7 students), member of school council and has had a letter of praise sent home.

Meet head of learning support in corridor he mentions that statements are either incomplete (Alchester tries to organise annual review within 6 months of child's arrival) or no statement at all (previous schools have ignored SEN or haven't managed to get assessment done in the time the child was there). The Ed Psych time is done according to the size of the school, rather than the number of SEN cases. He states that they 'never have enough Ed Psych time'

In reception - Military News bi-monthly glossy magazine sent by the garrison welfare officer (Major Ward). Round up of local military news. NB School's name is written incorrectly on the front cover. AB School is only state school to advertise in the magazine. One other private school advert.

<u>5th April</u>

School hall, multi purpose, some PE, assembly room, spill over for dining area.

EWO comes in once a week to school. Alternative weeks 1 weeks to see HoYs and the other to see the school's attendance officer.

Assembly once a week year 8 with their HoY and once a week year 8 and 9 with a member of SMT

Assembly targeted booster sessions for year 9 SATs. An advert from Deputy Head for school's annual ski trip to the Pyrenees for February 2006 will all the children be there then? Thank you to children involved in the Specialist College bid. Reply slips for year 9 SATs boosters classes being held during the Easter holidays. Few replies have come in. Change to Monday school menu design a recipe for using potatoes. No more chips in school on a Monday. Year 8 boys have got through to the local schools football final. School council wants to raise

money for something students can decide to spend the money on for students not for charity.

MFL choice of language on year 7 entry form, children can indicate a preference. In reality, it now depends on a child's timetable section whether they get one or the other. For late entries, they tend to go into the language that they've already studied. Choice to do French or German at the school is historical the previous HOD was a Germanist. The department feels that German best reflects the needs of the mobile population.

C's form tutor is PD , H's form tutor is DR

Speak to PR I get the KS3 and KS4 interview sheets. Each interview takes about 1 hr if the pupil is problematic it can take longer. Interview with pupil and parents first, then tour the school, buy uniform from reception and maths testing (to work out setting maths is the only subject to set) Pupils are never allowed to join on the day of enrolment. Interview form is then put onto the staff noticeboard after completion and an announcement is made in staff briefing. 5 or so new pupils a week = a lot of the deputy head's time.

Discussion with H (in music practise room at breaktime, with Chloe her best friend in attendance) she has been to four schools in total (St M's primary in Alchester before here, then before that schools in Newcastle and Lark Hill Wiltshire). Dad is in the army, in 7 PARA. For her moving schools is "all right, but I have to make new friends" ie social problems more worrying for her. She says that she has a group of friends but that Chloe is her best friend. She keeps in contact with her previous school friends. She remembers one of her primary school teachers, Mr C (at Lark Hill), because he used to play music in the lesson. When pushed, she mentions her HoY from last year who has now left. If she had a problem, she wouldn't tell a teacher if it was a school problem she would tell her friends, if it was a home problem she would tell her parents or her friends. She is not very interested in the army but she is aware of her accent a lot and the fact that people pick up on it (she has a slight northern twang!) She mentions that her parents are about to buy a house and they will all then move back to Middlesborough (where her mum and dad are from). Chloe's dad used to be in the army (in conversation with one of the senior teachers later, it transpires that he has only just come out

they bought the house in Alchester to settle down in to, whilst dad still worked in Wiltshire). Now that Chloe has settled in Alchester she only keeps in touch with one person from before who now lives in Germany by phone.

C was in set 1 for maths and was put into that set as soon as he came to ABS. However, he was moved down to set 2 as he was finding the work too hard. Generally, the school tries to leave a pupil in a set for a term to see how they are doing before they move them. C moved willingly because the teacher felt that he preferred to be at the top of the 2nd set rather than struggling in the 1st.

6th April

Conversation with Miss R (H's form tutor) before school her tutor group size is 24, she has had 8 leave and 5 join since the beginning of year 7. Interesting cases of Connor whose dad has just been sent to Basra. He is very angry with his dad and blames him. He has abandoned him. Lee's dad is in the army and is quite high. Mentions that discipline doesn't tend to be a problem at home dads are very strong. Mums can go to bits when dad goes away. Lee hero worships his dad and 'wants to be in the army like him'. When pupils leave, they have to go around all of their members of staff, get effort and achievement grades, tests etc. Hand back books. Take big envelope away with them. She mentions the need to make strong relationships with students very quickly. Science it's up to teachers to help students to make up work, they get bored if they've already done the work. Annoying when they register late at a new school in year 11 so their results are still counted here. Contributes to the low results of the school. Tomorrow period 1, the timetable has been disbanded so that the whole school can focus on attendance with their tutors. She hands out A and E forms for this term which the students sign and return to their tutor. Discussion about those with low grades being watched by tutor. After that free registration H and Chloe move to side of room to sit with another group of girls to chat. Connor moves to sit with Lee. As group have few unauthorised absences, the tutor has booked IT rooms for games etc tomorrow she reminds them that the pay back for doing this is them being good today!

SEN department 6 EAL students at last count (has been as much as 20), Ed Psych visits run according to SEN numbers not on the size of the school (although the figures are only updated every 3 years so are not reflective of the actual

situation). 59% of ABS statements are from out of catchment (LEA sends to Alchester as it is perceived that school is good for dyslexics (dyslexia unit) and behaviour issues as it is a small school). 1 LSA attended a course on working with EAL students but support from the LEA extended to language support not cultural support.

Visit to garrison Spar/Naafi small supermarket, café and post office, noticeboard area. Go into the welfare office of one regiment - they give neutral advice on schools, they send out a list of all local schools to their parents if asked but they don't advise on school choice. The Garrison Guide (written by the AWS, Major Terry Worcester) lists Alchester as the only comprehensive school, although other (selective, catholic) secondary schools are listed. The clerk felt that the perception amongst the army parents was that army families think that the SEN dept at Alchester is very good. Clerk confirmed that even though she sends out whole lists of schools, secondary age children tend to go to Alchester. However, her's is a young regiment, so most of their children are primary age. Housing is the most asked about issue. The clerk comments that the 'alleged incident with the headteacher at Alchester probably hasn't done the school any favours amongst the army families' she also commented that there was a great grapevine amongst the families and that rumours tended to escalate!

Connexions advisor 2 issues the first is tracking year 11 pupils after they have left there are targets on the number of pupils to be tracked, and this affects the service's funding. The second issues concerns army children coming into year 10 (even year 11) who are often unsettled they focus on trying to settle into school and making friends rather than thinking about their futures so it's difficult to administer careers guidance to them. She thinks that there are more incidents of pupils joining the armed forces here.

NB all staff wear ID tags and are really well dressed nearly all in suits.

NB need to get KS2 SATs results for C and H

<u>7th April</u>

Telephone conversation with H's mum In order to find out about new schools, her husband goes onto the internet and they always visit an area before moving.

They try and visit a couple of schools. If they have problems, they go to several schools. They are very happy with Alchester, their son did well there and H seems to be happy. They are good at keeping in contact and they sort out problems straight away you can go into school with no appointment. The army aren't really helpful but they haven't asked for help, haven't been approached by the army. They have not had any overseas postings. Dad's absence only affected them when they were younger he went away when H was 6 years old for 6 months. They mention this to the school. Her husband doesn't go away now and her son, who is 18, gives her a hand. She has had no involvement with the governing body or the PTA. She doesn't take her children's school files with her and says that it's up to the school to send on. She was happy at school, left at 16 and went on to college. She now works at S School in the office.

Telephone conversation with C's mum In order to find out about new schools, they ask the families officer, ask friends already living at the posting area and go and visit the schools. They get a prospectus. If the receptionist is nasty, they won't go there. They always try and take C for a visit. Previously, their tours have been the UK to Germany and back to the UK again. If they had problems, they would go to the school or perhaps talk to C's friends, maybe his tutor or head of year. They think that Alchester is fantastic C's previous school had little contact with parents, but this school always sends letters. They haven't ever approached the army for help the last few moves her husband has gone first and Mrs H has stayed behind with C to finish the school year, the DHE have allowed them to keep the quarter for up to 3 months. This way C has been able to start schools in September. Now her husband is RLC and is attached to the garrison. C is close to his dad before dad goes away, C just wants him to go to avoid dragging out the goodbyes. When dad comes back, C can play mum off against dad. But he seems to be very laid back about everything. Has not participated in governing body or PTA as moving around doesn't help them to establish relationships with people their previous tours have been only 15 months and 18 months long. She used to be a primary school helper. She always brings C's school files with her she thinks that schools seem to want to know an awful lot of information but thinks that this is justified. She loved school her dad was in the army and she went to a secondary school in Berlin between 13 and 18 years of age. Now, she works.

Speak to Mr Davis (C's form tutor) C is a really nice boy who has settled in well, plays football for the school team. Generally, he is aware that army kids can have literacy issues, social skills difficulties. There were problems in the school 4 to 5 years ago as the Scottish regiment left (children were very aggressive) and the PARAs came in (similar social skills but not as aggressive)

Talk to C on the way to geography unhappy as they lost the football match last night (7-2) but he had obviously been told by staff that they were the smallest school in Essex so they should be proud of themselves. He remembers his SATs results 4 in English, 4 in Science and 3 in Maths. He was a bit disappointed by Maths but he says that he finds maths very difficult.

Watching the play area at breaktime huge fields, boys and girls seem to be very divided. Little lovey-dovey here! A lot of children playing sport rugby as well as football.

Conversation with young MFL teacher feels that the children (even those who have lived abroad) are not receptive to languages. Often open racism in lessons eg when a child shouted 'hiel hitler' during a test! SMT don't understand MFL view it as one subject rather that distinct. Think that pupils can change over subjects too easily and new entrants are put into any MFL group regardless of previous knowledge. Only subject area in the school with mixed ability teaching as a result.