Teachers’ emotional work, support for their wellbeing and the role of compassion:

A critical exploration

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Abstract

This research aimed to critically explore teachers' emotional work, support for their wellbeing and the potential role of compassion to support the wellbeing of teachers in three special schools that support children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH). Three special schools in the South-East of England were invited to take part in the research as linked, comparative case studies. The research adopted an ontological position of social constructivism to gain insights into how participants made sense of their daily professional experiences. Adopting an epistemological position of interpretivism aimed to encourage teachers to reflect on their professional experiences while also recognising my positionality as a partial insider. Reflexivity with regards to my positionality prior to, during and after the research supported an empathetic awareness of participant experiences, a depth of engagement and a desire to understand more about teacher wellbeing in the context of SEMH settings. To guide the research process the overarching research question was: How is teacher wellbeing supported in the context of three SEMH special schools? Subsequently, stage 1 of the research involved undertaking one to one interviews with Head Teachers, teachers, and external visitors to learn more about teacher wellbeing in the context of the three schools. Head Teachers and teachers were also encouraged to share a recent event or experience that had had an impact on their wellbeing. Stage 2 of the research involved undertaking six one-hour focus group interviews in each of the three schools. As part of these focus group interviews, participants were introduced to a variety of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices through a series of interactive activities. During these sessions participants were encouraged to reflect together on the relevance of compassion to their professional roles and wellbeing. Stage 3 of the research involved developing a conceptualisation of how compassion might support teachers' emotional work and their wellbeing. Findings of this research revealed that the emotional work of teachers is much more substantial than has been previously recognised in research or policy contexts. Support for wellbeing varied between schools and school organisations had a particularly important role in supporting teacher wellbeing. Evaluations of the six compassion focused sessions revealed that all participants recognised the relevance of compassion to their professional roles and wellbeing. This research recognised that teachers' emotional work and support for their wellbeing is influenced by the interaction of organisational, professional, personal, and external factors.

Consequently, research implications are offered to schools, teachers, and Government. The research concludes with a conceptualisation of Compassion Focused Education which locates compassion at the core of every educational experience.

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Thank you to Professor Kolts for facilitating my visit to your University, and for organising a visit to the local High School. This visit crystalised my interest in learning more about the potential role of compassion in education. Thank you also for your recommendation to return to the UK and read the work of Professor Paul Gilbert, founder of Compassion Focused Therapy. To Professor Gilbert, your previous and ongoing explorations of compassion have inspired my interests and really resonated with my professional experiences of working with children who often exhibit high levels of distress. To Dr Mary Welford who kindly agreed to talk about compassion-based approaches at an Education for Mental Health conference during the early stages of this research, your work encouraged my interests in exploring the role of compassion in schools and I have enjoyed our conversations at other events that you have hosted. Thank you to Dr Chris Irons and Tobin Bell for hosting the Introduction to Compassion Focused Therapy workshops where I learnt more about the role of compassion in therapeutic contexts. Again, our conversations helped confirm my interest in exploring the relevance of compassion focused process, principles, and practices to teachers. Thank you to Dr Elaine Beaumont and, again to Dr Irons, for giving me permission to share some of your compassion focused activities with the teachers in this research. I am grateful to you, Chris, for also taking the time to have a look over my initial plans which aimed to explore the relevance of compassion with teachers. Thank you to Professor Frances Maratos for my invitation to lead a seminar for the Inaugural Compassion in Schools conference. An inspiring event. I look forward to joining you again this year. Your work in developing the compassion in school's movement, along with Dr Marcela Matos, Rory Cahill and others is exciting and important. I would also like to extend my thanks to wider compassion focused community. International thanks go to Dr James Kirby and Dr Stan Steindl, whose work I have admired from afar. I hope we get a chance to meet one day. In the UK a special thanks goes out to Chris Winson for his curation of #365daysofcompassion, a wealth of compassionate considerations.

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1. Introduction

This research was inspired by my previous professional experiences of supporting children and young people with complex profiles associated with social, emotional, and mental health needs (SEMH). Having worked initially in mainstream primary schools, I spent most of my teaching career working in various SEMH special schools. Throughout my teaching career I became interested in trying to learn ways to best support the learning and wellbeing of children and young people who often experienced heightened emotions and regularly exhibited distress. During my work with these children and young people, I often experienced complex emotions which affected my wellbeing both positively and negatively. Having worked in a variety of SEMH settings, I had also experienced different ways in which my wellbeing was supported, or not.

In recognition of my own extensive prior professional experiences, my ongoing considerations with regards to participant experiences were influenced by an awareness of my positionality within the research. Becoming familiar with literature and research which had previously explored teacher wellbeing influenced my outsider perspective and aimed to facilitate distancing and criticality with regards to participant experiences. However, in recognition of my previous professional experiences in similar SEMH school settings I remained reflexively aware of how such experiences might inform my own insider perspective throughout the research. Given that intentional distancing and criticality was informed by an outsider perspective and in recognition of my previous insider experiences, the adoption of a partial insider perspective guided this research.

This thesis begins with a review of literature in Chapter 2. Having spent time exploring conceptualisations of teacher wellbeing and identified factors that might influence teacher wellbeing, my examination continues through considering the potential impact of professional dilemmas, epistemological conflict, ontological insecurity, and emotional labour. I also spend time exploring the current policy context. Reflections on my previous professional experiences influenced my interest in learning more about the role of compassion in supporting wellbeing. In the context of compassion focused approaches, compassion is suggested to involve a sensitivity to difficulties or distress in self and others and a motivation to prevent or alleviate these difficulties or distress.

Having become familiar with a variety of compassion focused approaches, which aimed to support wellbeing in different contexts, I found that such approaches resonated with my previous professional experiences and interest in supporting teacher wellbeing.

Chapter 3 introduces the methodological approaches undertaken here and states the research questions. Ontological, epistemological, and ethical considerations are also explored here. The research procedure is described, and an overview of the analysis is provided.

Chapter 4 introduces the research findings. Four phases of analysis are initially described in relation to Stage 1 of the research and a summary of Stage 1 findings in relation to each of the four phases of analysis is then provided. In this chapter, findings are described in relation to research question 1, how do teachers describe the emotional work that they engage in as part of their professional roles? Findings are also described in relation to research question 2, how do teachers describe support for wellbeing in relation to their professional role? Chapter 5 describes findings in relation to Stage 2 of the research to respond to research question 3, what is the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices to teachers' professional roles? Chapter 6 describes findings in relation to Stage 3 of the research to respond to research question 4, what are the emergent theoretical constructs of compassion as a concept that supports teacher wellbeing?

Chapter 7, the discussion, offers insights into how key findings of this research relate to literature and research explored previously. Chapter 8 concludes the thesis and offers a variety of implications which relate to school ethos and culture, support for emotional work, acknowledgement of emotional dilemmas and guidance to Government. Reflections on this research are also offered here.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to the literature review

Given that this research aimed to explore the concepts of emotional work, wellbeing and compassion, an extensive and eclectic range of national and international literature was explored. In recognition of need to examine these concepts from inter-disciplinary perspectives, literature from diverse fields was examined including education, teaching and teacher education, educational research, psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience, sociology, history, philosophy, pastoral care, social care, and public health. A variety of academic databases were used to undertake the literature review including: one-stop search, British Education Index, Child and Adolescent Studies, ERIC, Emerald, MEDLINE and PsychINFO.

Key words used in literature searches, in various combinations, included teachers, children, schools, special schools, SEND, SEMH, emotional labor, emotional labour, emotional work, mental health, wellbeing, stress, distress, difficulties, mindfulness, supervision, compassion, compassion focused therapy and compassion-based initiatives. These key terms were selected in recognition of the need to explore the relevance of literature to the specific context of education and more specifically special education, while also appreciating the potential influence of therapeutic insights into examinations of teachers' emotional work, support for their wellbeing, and the role of compassion to support teacher wellbeing. In addition to academic research literature, policy documents and publications developed by National charities and organisations, think tanks and teacher unions were considered for the literature review.

While it was recognised and appreciated that the social and emotional needs of children were important to consider when examining teacher wellbeing, throughout this research, from the onset, a decision was made to limit the extent of literature examined to ensure that the focus remained relevant to teachers and their professional experiences. Additionally, throughout the review of literature, the specific school contexts in which the research was undertaken were recognised.

Because schools in the South-East of England were selected to participate in this research, literature was carefully selected because of a need to recognise the relevance of the English policy context. Literature was also reviewed in recognition that the research was undertaken in special schools. As special schools, all pupils attending had an Education, Health and Care Plan due to "severe social, emotional and mental health difficulties" (DfE 2015 p.9). Consequently, it was appreciated that such schools differ from mainstream schools in that they are "specifically designed, staffed and resourced to provide tailored education to pupils with additional and complex needs" (Brown 2018 p.67). For example, class sizes were smaller and there was a higher staff to pupil ratio than might be experienced in mainstream schools (DfE 2015).

Throughout the literature review the complex association between children's special educational needs/disabilities and social, emotional, and mental health needs was acknowledged (Rose et al 2009). While Hackett et al had previously found that 95.7% of children attending schools for pupils with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties "scored in the abnormal range for the summative scores on the four subdivisions of hyperkinesis, conduct disorders, peer problems and emotional disorders" as reported by teachers using the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (2010 p. 153), it was important to appreciate that 100% of children attending the special schools involved in this research exhibited a wide range of SEMH needs that are currently recognised in the SEND Code of Practice (DfE/DoH 2015). Consequently, it was recognised that teachers working in these SEMH settings may experience "challenges that arise in everyday practice" that differ from those experienced in mainstream schools (Willis and Baines 2017 p.260). Willis and Baines suggest that such challenges might be experienced in response to disruptive behaviour, regular physical and verbal abuse from pupils, safeguarding concerns and the emotional demands of the job (2017).

Having initially explored a variety of conceptualisations relating to mental wellbeing more generally and then teacher wellbeing more specifically, concerns about teacher wellbeing are contextualised before describing factors that might influence teacher wellbeing. Epistemological conflict and emotional labour have been selected to then guide a further examination of factors that may influence teacher wellbeing.

Epistemological conflict is explored through drawing mainly on the work of Berlak and Berlak, Eraut and Ball. Emotional labour is explored through drawing mainly on the work of Hochschild. Emotional labour is then discussed in relation to supporting children with more complex needs.

A critique of current support for teacher wellbeing is then offered through exploring the English policy context, National Union advice and charity guidance. Whole school approaches to supporting wellbeing, supervision, as an example of group support for wellbeing, and mindfulness, as an example of an individual approach to supporting wellbeing, are then considered.

In recognition of the potential role of compassion to support wellbeing, the literature review concludes with an examination of conceptualisations of compassion and an exploration of the development of compassion focused approaches to support wellbeing. Key principles, process and practices of compassion focused approaches are then introduced before considering key aspects of compassion focused approaches in school organisations.

2.2 Teacher Wellbeing

2.2.1 Conceptualising teacher wellbeing

Before exploring teacher wellbeing, it is useful to identify a broader definition of mental wellbeing. In a report aimed at policy makers, professionals, and researchers, The Government Office for Science provided the following definition of mental wellbeing;

'Mental wellbeing is a dynamic state in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others and contribute to their community. It is enhanced when an individual is able to fulfil their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of purpose in society.' (Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project 2008 p.8)

With regards to considering wellbeing in relation to work, The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence suggest that;

“Mental wellbeing at work is determined by the interaction between the working environment, the nature of the work and the individual” (NICE 2009 p.6).

Wellbeing is recognised as being difficult to conceptualise because, as suggested by Song, Gu and Zhang “wellbeing has been used in varying contexts, cultures and disciplinary traditions to mean rather different things to different people” (2020 p 4). When specifically examining the wellbeing of teachers, having undertaken an extensive literature review to explore teacher wellbeing, Wright and McLeod (2016) found considerable variation in how teacher wellbeing might be defined.

For Brady and Wilson wellbeing is suggested to be “a process which is constructed within a context of interacting factors” (2021 p.48). In relation to wellbeing and quality of life, Diener, Oishi and Lucas suggest the importance of considering and exploring subjective wellbeing, defined as *“*people’s evaluations of their lives—the degree to which their thoughtful appraisals and affective reactions indicate that their lives are desirable and proceeding well” (2015 p.234).

In recognition of some of the challenges of defining wellbeing in relation to teachers’ professional experiences, Acton and Glasgow define teacher wellbeing as;

“an individual sense of personal professional fulfilment, satisfaction, purposefulness and happiness, constructed in a collaborative process with colleagues and students” (2015 p.102).

With regards to teachers’ subjective wellbeing Song, Gu and Zhang offer a broad definition as;

“teachers’ self-reported experience and assessment of the quality of their working lives and the sense of purpose and capabilities that they need to live a happy and fulfilling life as a teacher” (2020 p.6).

2.2.2 Contextualising concerns about teacher wellbeing

Both in the UK and internationally, being a teacher has been found to be hard work and stressful, with research revealing that teachers have the highest levels of job stress among a variety of professions (Bermejo-Toro et al 2015**,** HSE 2021, Jepson and Forrest 2006, Stoeber and Rennert 2008). As recognised by Song, Gu and Zhang, teaching is recognised as being an "intellectually, physically and emotionally demanding job" (2020 p.3). Savill-Smith found that there has been year on year increases in the number of teachers stating that they plan to leave the teaching profession (2018), with the DfE suggesting that once they have left, the majority state that they do not plan to return (2018a). More recent research has indicated that that a consistently high percentage, between 53%-57% of staff had considered leaving the profession between 2017 and 2021 (Scanlan and Savill-Smith 2021). Lynch et al (2016) suggested that the reasons for leaving the profession are complex, however research has consistently revealed that stress is a significant feature of the work of teachers (Kyriacou 2001, Troman 2000) and that, prolonged experiences of stress can lead to experiences of distress, which plays a role in the development of mental health difficulties in teachers (Chan 2002; Chaplain, 2008). Cole (2010) suggested that experiences of stress and distress have been found to be more likely and to have more of an impact on teachers working in SEMH settings.

The term 'teacher stress', originally coined by Kyriacou in 1978, is associated with perceived threats to self-esteem and wellbeing that can be defined as being "the experience by a teacher of unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration, or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher" (Kyriacou 2001 p.28). Punch and Tuettemann (1990) propose that an individual experiences distress if levels of stress associated with tension, anxiety and depression are experienced at levels high enough to adversely affect physical and mental wellbeing. With regards to teacher distress, they provide a comprehensive overview of possible 'symptoms' which might be experienced or exhibited by teachers that include;

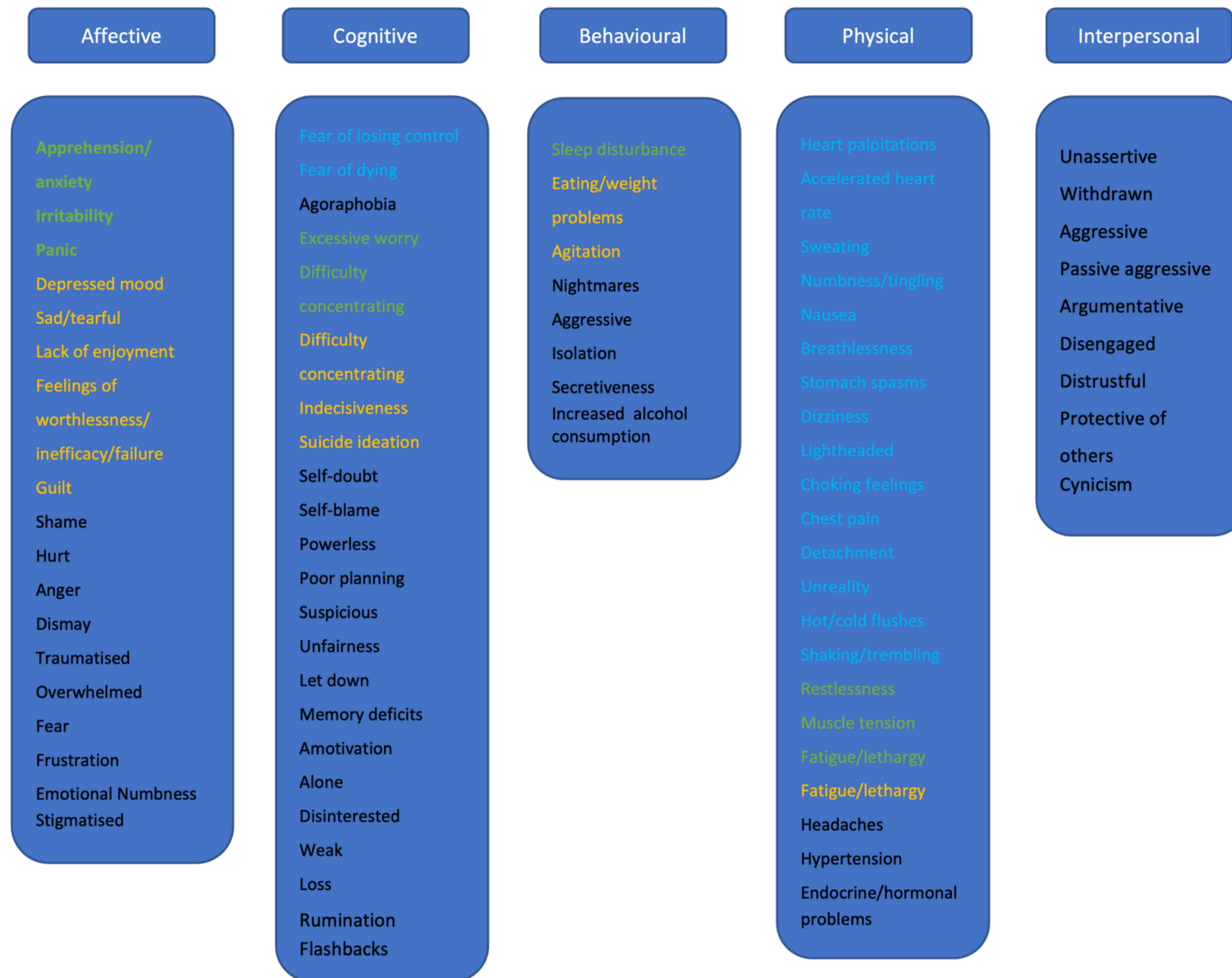
"physical or physiological manifestations such as body rashes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, peptic ulcers, sleep disturbances, stomach upsets and weight loss; behavioural manifestations such as abuse of alcohol or other drugs, deterioration in

interpersonal relations or in work performance, increased defensiveness or self-concern, irritability, extreme apathy or withdrawal: and psychological or emotional manifestations such as anxiety, confused thinking, depression, feelings of inadequacy, frustration, panic and phobias" (Punch and Tuettemann 1990 p.369).

Although 'very high' levels of psychological distress have been found among teachers, which can provide a useful measure of mental health, it is also important to recognise that stress and psychological distress are not necessarily synonymous with mental ill health (Chaplain 2008). However, findings from longitudinal research undertaken by Titheradge et al (2019) indicated raised and sustained levels of psychological distress among primary school teachers in comparison to a sample of professionals from the general population.

With regards to the prolonged experience of work-related stress Rothi, Leavey and Loewenthal (2010) found that teachers reported stress symptoms which could be categorised as relating to affective, cognitive, behavioural, physical and interpersonal symptoms that were also associated with distress and later mental health problems. Figure 1 shows how these symptoms were categorised. Here blue items are associated with symptoms in Panic Disorder; green items are associated with symptoms in Generalised Anxiety and, yellow Items are associated with symptoms in Depression.

Figure 1 Categories of stress related symptoms experienced by teachers identified by Rothi, Leavey and Loewenthal



At the onset of this research, the 2018 annual Teacher Wellbeing Index identified that 67% of educational professionals described themselves as stressed (Savill-Smith 2018). More recently, the annual Teacher Wellbeing Index found that in 2021 72% of educational professionals described themselves as stressed (Scanlan and Savill-Smith 2021). According to Scanlan and Savill-Smith, three-quarters of educational staff have reported at least one behavioural, psychological, and physical symptom due to work every year for the past five years (2021). Here, behavioural symptoms might be associated with changes to appetite, irritability, procrastination, and mood swings. Physical symptoms might be associated with raised blood pressure, muscle tension, sweating, dizziness, headaches, or migraines). Psychological symptoms might be associated with depression, anxiety, and panic attacks. 77% of education staff reported at least one symptom in 2021 compared with 74% in 2020.

Despite the global pandemic, anxiety levels in teachers have apparently remained the same over the last five years with between 43% and 45% of educational professionals reporting symptoms associated with work that could be associated with anxiety (Scanlan and Savill-Smith 2021). According to the NASUWT (2022a) concerns about poor teacher wellbeing and the quality of their working lives remined relevant and were exacerbated during the pandemic. The most recent NASUWT survey in 2022 found that:

- 90% of teachers had experienced more work-related stress in the last 12 months;
- 91% reported that their job has adversely affected their mental health in the last 12 months;
- 64% reported that their job has adversely affected their physical health in the last 12 months;
- 52% said that workload had been the main factor for increased work-related stress, followed by the consequences of the pandemic (34%), worries about pupil behaviour (24%), pupil wellbeing (24%), pupil academic performance (22%) and finances (11%);
- 72% said that organising remote learning has been the major pandemic contributor to adverse mental health (2022b).

The Teacher Support Partnership reported that in the last five years it has been found that between 28% and 37% of educational professional reported symptoms that could be associated with depression, between 21% and 31% reported symptoms that could be associated with exhaustion and between 20% and 30% reported symptoms that could be associated with acute stress (Scanlan and Savill-Smith 2021). According to the NASUWT, in 2022, 87% of teachers had experienced an increase in anxiousness; 82% have suffered loss of sleep; 28% have increased their use of alcohol; 10% have had a relationship breakdown; 7% have increased their use of prescription drugs and 3% have self-harmed (2022b).

According to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE 2021), of the 154,000 work related ill health cases recorded in relation to education, 54% were associated with stress, depression or anxiety. Compared to other industries with similar work activities, 4.3% of education workers suffered from work related ill health, which is statistically significantly higher than the rate for workers across all industries (3.7%). The HSE found that self-reported, work-related ill health increased during the global pandemic. The Anna Freud Centre found that school staff surveyed reported workload and work life balance, accountability (e.g. performance, tests and inspections), pastoral concerns relating to pupils (e.g. mental health or safeguarding), administrative tasks, relationships with colleagues and relationships with parents influenced feeling stressed or unhappy at work in the previous two weeks. Only 10% of school staff had not felt stressed or unhappy at work in the last two weeks (Garland et al 2018).

2.2.3 Factors that influence teacher wellbeing

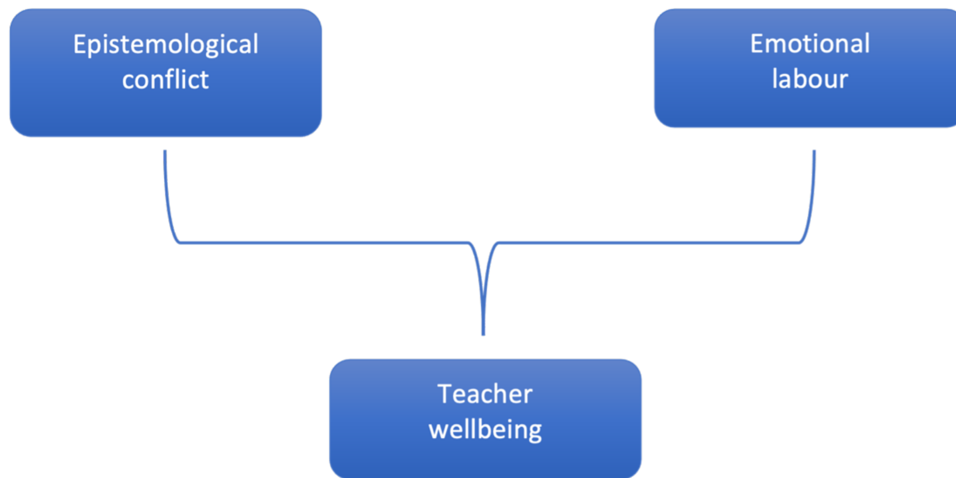
With regards to teachers' professional roles individual, occupational and contextual, and emotional factors have all be found to have an impact on their experiences of stress, distress, and wellbeing. A variety of individual factors have been found to contribute to an individual teacher's experiences of stress and distress such as how they attribute meaning to or appraise such experiences (Jepson and Forrest 2006), factors such as self-identity and self-efficacy (Punch and Tuettemann 2000), characteristics like perfectionism (Stoeber and Rennert 2008) and occupational commitment (Jepson and Forrest 2006).

Additionally, occupational and contextual factors relating to the role of teaching such as workload, long hours, bureaucracy and the amount of paperwork required, lack of resources and facilities, large classes, time pressures and pupil behaviour have been identified as factors that influence teacher experience of stress and distress (Jepson and Forrest 2006, Foster, 2018, Kokkinos 2007, Lynch et al 2015, Punch and Tuettemann 2000, Savill-Smith 2018, Worth, Bamford and Durbin 2015).

Emotional demands of teachers' professional roles have also been identified as contributing factors to teacher experience of stress and distress. Here emotional labour originally conceptualised by Hochschild (2003) is useful in supporting explorations of the complexity of emotional work of undertaken by teachers on a daily basis, particularly as it is recognised that teaching is a relational act (Loh and Liew, 2016). The emotional dimensions of teachers' experiences and interactions can be understood in terms of being able to regulate, what at times, can be a variety of challenging and difficult emotions (Kidger et al 2009, Kinman, Wray and Strange 2016, Taxer and Frenzel 2015).

To be able to more fully explore factors that may influence teacher wellbeing epistemological conflict and emotional labour have been selected. These themes will guide a further examination, as shown in figure 2. With regards to epistemological conflict, professional dilemmas, such as those previously investigated by Berlak and Berlak, will initially be explored in relation to teachers' beliefs and behaviours. Eraut's considerations in relation to how different knowledge and understandings about teaching practice can influence teachers' experiences will then be investigated. Ball's recognition of ontological insecurity in relation to ever-changing demands and expectations of what it is to be a teacher in an education system of accountability and performativity will also be examined. With regards to emotional labour, Hochschild's original conceptualisations will then be considered in relation to the under researched emotional dimensions of teachers' professional roles.

Figure 2 Epistemological conflict, emotional labour and teacher wellbeing



2.3 Teacher wellbeing and epistemological conflict

2.3.1 Professional dilemmas: Drawing on the work of Berlak and Berlak

In their daily professional roles teachers often experience professional dilemmas. These dilemmas might relate to pedagogy or practice, but also to moral and ethical considerations that can be experienced as conflicts, contradictions, and tensions. As part of their intensive in-depth studies of several English primary schools, Berlak and Berlak set out to initially "observe and record schooling acts and teachers' comments on why they behaved as they did in particular situations" (Berlak, Berlak, Bagenstos, and Mikel 1975 p 9). Through exploring a variety of 'schooling events' Berlak and Berlak identified complexity in schooling processes, particularly in relation to characterising the beliefs and behaviours of teachers in different contexts (1981 p.20). Following their preliminary analysis of data Berlak and Berlak concluded that teachers "did not hold an internally consistent set of educational commitments which could be linked to their behaviour" (Berlak, Berlak, Bagenstos, and Mikel 1975 p.9).

Teachers' values, assumptions, motives, educational philosophy, ideologies, social or political beliefs were found to rarely account for their behaviours in specific schooling events. Rather, when trying to understand the relationship between teachers' thoughts and actions, Berlak and Berlak suggested that their talk about "concrete problems, their ambivalent feelings about their own actions, their differing explanations of similar classroom events or of patterns of behaviour" was useful in developing a conceptualisation of 'dilemmas' in teaching (Berlak, Berlak, Bagenstos, and Mikel 1975 p.9).

"The dilemma language", originally conceptualised by Berlak and Berlak, was initially developed as a set of concepts to characterise their observations, represent the complexity of the schooling process in relation to teachers' beliefs and behaviours and to recognise the apparent contradictions experienced by teachers in their daily professional roles, in the social settings of schools and through their interactions with children (1981 p.125). Berlak and Berlak initially referred to these dilemmas as "apparent inconsistencies in observed teacher behaviour and in the ideas that teachers used in talking about their behaviour" (Berlak, Berlak, Bagenstos, and Mikel 1975 p. 10).

Consequently, Berlak and Berlak's 'dilemma language' attempted to represent the experiences of teachers, their thoughts, and actions within the particular social and institutional contexts of specific schools, as an on-going dynamic of awareness and behaviour (1981 p. 111). The language of dilemmas aimed to offer a representation of social, cultural, and personal 'lived contradictions' in the professional roles of teachers (Berlak and Berlak 1983 p.268). Berlak and Berlak suggested that while 'schooling' involves processes where adults influence the learning experiences of children through their behaviour or 'schooling acts', these acts should be recognised as being influenced by ideas that often compete and are in conflict, which may relate to, for example, childhood, learning and social justice (1975).

One such dilemma described by Berlak and Berlak related to classroom control (1981). This dilemma aimed to recognise that teachers resolve a variety of dilemmas differently "for different children, at different times of the day or year, and for different subjects or domains of children's development" (Berlak and Berlak 1981 p. 136). Consequently, they suggest that there might be an infinite number of different ways for a teacher to resolve classroom control dilemmas in their professional roles.

An example of a classroom control dilemma suggested by Berlak and Berlak was described as the whole child V child as student (*realms*) dilemma. This dilemma aimed to represent teachers' 'control' or responsibility for different realms of a child's development. While a wider range of realms was suggested to be associated with the whole child realm, a narrower range of realms was associated with the child as student realm. Whereas the whole child realm emphasised teacher responsibilities for children's "aesthetic, intellectual, physical, social-emotional and moral development", the child as student realm emphasised a narrower focus on teacher responsibilities for school subjects and children's intellectual and cognitive development (Berlak and Berlak 1981 p.137).

Berlak and Berlak suggested that 'behaviour management' represented the most extreme form of control in this dilemma because children are granted very little control over what is to be learned, how it is to be learned or how much is to be learned. At the other extreme, it is suggested that a teacher might support autonomy with regards to how learning tasks are undertaken and how much work is completed (1981).

With regards to the curriculum, for example, teachers may experiences dilemmas with regards to what ‘knowledge’ is considered to be worthwhile or adequate, whether knowledge is associated with content or process, whether knowledge is given or problematical, whether children’s learning should be motivated externally through praise, reward, consequences or exclusion or motivated internally through being initiated and sustained by the student.

Other curriculum dilemmas might be associated with viewing children as having shared characteristics or viewing children as unique, whether learning is an individual experience or a social experience, whether a child should be viewed as a ‘person’, as “a fellow human being, acknowledging the common bond of humanity between teacher and child” or that a child should be viewed as a ‘client’, a position that emphasises “what divides a child from professionals, focusing on the child’s ‘problems’ which require expert diagnosis and treatment” (Berlak and Berlak 1981 p. 156).

In exploring the complex phenomena of learning in schools as ‘social institutions’ (Berlak, Berlak, Bagenstos, and Mikel 1975 p.220), a teacher’s behaviour was understood as reflecting “innumerable conflicting beliefs, ideas, concerns, values, and views” (Berlak and Berlak 1975 p.22). As social institutions, Berlak and Berlak recognised schools as being settings where political and economic aspects of culture are ‘transmitted’ through the social activities of teaching and learning (1975 p2). Consequently, it was suggested that political, economic, and social issues, pressures, and forces influence and affect a teacher’s previous or current behaviours, which they may or may not be aware of. An individual may therefore, experience daily conflict when considering their responses to problematic situations, particularly in relation their awareness of how others might perceive them and in relation to the influence of broader cultural perspectives (Berlak and Berlak 1981).

Having identified apparent inconsistencies in how teachers resolve these conflicts, Berlak and Berlak suggested that teachers are drawn towards poles of a dilemma (1975). While fourteen polarised dilemmas were identified initially (1975) and subsequently extended to sixteen dilemmas (1981/1983), these were categorized in relation to:

- Those which dealt with the interrelationship of the child and society,
- Those which focused on the teaching-learning process, and
- Those which related to social justice, processes such as the allocation of schooling resources and aspects of social control over children (Berlak and Berlak 1975).

According to Berlak and Berlak, the concept of polarity provided a useful construct to explore patterns of resolutions to the dilemmas experienced by teachers in their professional roles and provided insight into the complexity of understanding contradictions and inconsistencies relating to teachers' meanings associated with different teaching and learning situations and their actual behaviour(s) (1975).

A pattern of resolution was defined as;

"a pattern of acts, each of which includes an "internal" process of responding to a dilemma, and an observable set of behaviors" (Berlak and Berlak, 1983 p. 272).

The patterns of resolutions to dilemmas were suggested to be unconscious, intuitive, or rationale and were thought to involve dialectic, internal processing of different or conflicting ideals, beliefs, values which might reflect the realities of the situation and could be influenced by past and present experiences (Berlak and Berlak 1981 p.131). Consequently, a teacher's apparently unrelated action(s) or behaviour(s) in a given situation were represented as being connected during resolutions to dilemmas experienced in teachers' conscious awareness, in relation to real or imagined situational constraints and to distant or recent past experiences, which were suggested to affect a teacher's behaviour in the present (Berlak and Berlak 1983). A teacher's resolution to a dilemma, could then, take into account and combine implicit or explicit aspects of both poles of the dilemma (Berlak and Berlak 1975).

With regards to appreciating patterns of resolution to dilemmas, these dynamic responses were understood as being reflexive opposites, including more frequent, modal, or dominant responses and less frequent, exceptional, inconsistent or minority responses, therefore reflecting the complexity and diversity of teachers' professional roles (Berlak and Berlak, 1981 p. 132-134, 1983 p.273). It is important to appreciate that there could be many different patterns of resolution to dilemmas, which might be influenced by, for example, different times of the day/month/year, experiences with different children, different subjects, or different learning activities etc. (Berlak, Berlak, Bagenstos, and Mikel 1975). Such contradictory dilemmas are essentially ongoing tensions that are experienced daily by teachers in their professional roles.

2.3.2 Knowledge and understandings about teaching: Drawing on the work of Eraut

In their professional roles, teachers may also experience dilemmas in relation to differing epistemological assumptions associated with their practice. Eraut's explorations of epistemological assumptions, knowledge and understandings about teaching, like the earlier work of Berlak and Berlak, also recognise that the complexity of daily interactions and frequently occurring changing educational demands often expose teachers to competing overt or covert ideological or political perspectives and differing theoretical, philosophical and psychological ideas, which can create experiences of epistemological conflict, uncertainty and distress.

However, whereas Berlak and Berlak developed their conceptualisation of a 'dilemma language' to account for the dilemmas experienced by teachers in relation to inconsistencies observed in their resolutions to problematic classroom situations, Eraut was more concerned with how knowledge is used by different professionals (1985), how different types of learning take place depending on different workplace contexts (2000, 2004, 2007) and how differing epistemological assumptions relating to 'theory' and 'practice' influence how these professionals "think about, evaluate and justify what they do" (2003 p.61). When considering epistemological conflict experienced by teachers in their practice, Eraut's distinction between personal or individual knowledge and social or cultural knowledge, is useful (2000).

From an individual perspective, Eraut suggested that learning and knowledge are associated with the process and content of learning and individual interpretations of what has been learned (2004). This personal knowledge is related to knowledge of procedures and processes, which have developed through experiences, are influenced by specific memories, and enable individuals to think, act and perform in specific contexts and situations (Eraut 2000). Personal knowledge was defined by Eraut as "the cognitive resource which a person brings to a situation that enables them to think and perform" (2000 p.114). According to Eraut, personal knowledge includes emotions and attitudes, knowledge of self and others, knowledge of events, episodes and situations and knowledge of practices and skills (2004).

Eraut (2002) provides examples where the professional work of doctors can be distinguished from teachers. While a doctor's diagnostic decisions might be based initially on 'best guesses' associated with their personal knowledge that has developed overtime through previous experiences with many *different* patients with a typical pattern of a particular condition, teachers' personal knowledge of children is developed over successive experiences with the *same* children in different circumstances. With regards to teachers' personal knowledge of children, it is important to appreciate that a teacher's behaviour towards a child will influence the child's behaviour and therefore, what the teacher learns initially about that child. Such considerations may be related to Berlak and Berlak's (1975) earlier suggestion that in their professional roles, a teacher's ideas will have developed over time, in a variety of contexts and through a variety of experiences. Consequently, as an integrated form of knowledge, the value of personal knowledge is related more to its use and application in practice and is available to be applied in contexts without deliberation.

From a social perspective, Eraut (2004) recognises the importance of considering the social construction of knowledge, such as academic or disciplinary knowledge, through particular cultural practices, learning contexts and products associated with resources of knowledge. Eraut (2003) extends the exploration of how social or cultural knowledge can influence teacher experiences of conflict through recognising that theoretical and disciplinary knowledge relating to aspects of education, pedagogy and practice often reflect differing epistemological assumptions that may be oppositional, disputed and change over time.

To understand the complexity of a teacher's thoughts and actions prior to or during interactions or, through the process of reflection, after teaching experiences, Eraut's epistemology of practice, which includes the following four distinct but interrelated elements, may be useful, where teaching was suggested to involve;

- Assessing and monitoring individuals or situations briefly or over a longer period of time,
- Deciding what action needs to be taken, if any, immediately or whether any action needs to be undertaken in the longer term,
- Pursuing or undertaking agreed actions, which may be modified as necessary or re-assessed over time, perhaps following consultation with others,
- Metacognitive monitoring of oneself, individuals needing attention and progress associated with the situation, problem, case, or project (2007 p. 406).

When considering the role of reflection in education, Eraut (2007) suggested that a teacher's thoughts, actions, and reflections are dependent on decision-making that is influenced by time, context, and situation. Time is a particularly important factor in teachers' decision making, given that some situations will require immediate responses, whereas others may require extended periods of deliberation and problem solving. Eraut (2008) suggested that in some situations, a teacher will be required to make almost semi-conscious decisions, where a meta-cognitive awareness of patterns in previous situations influence instant reflex responses.

However, in other situations, which may be associated with specific routines, a teacher may be required to make rapid intuitive responses, where more awareness of potential action is evident because these responses are influenced by comparing the present situation to previous situations (Eraut 2007). Such responses require rapid interpretation of a context or situation, particularly where a routine response might be disrupted and will, therefore, involve metacognitive implicit monitoring and immediate, short-term reactive reflections (Eraut 2008). If, however, a teacher is involved in decision-making or problem solving in group contexts, such situations are more likely to involve deliberative and analytical explicit thinking where different types of prior knowledge are consciously applied to new situations (Eraut 2007).

Given the inter-relationship between time, context, and situation, Eraut (2004) suggested that the complexity of demanding teaching environments influence the types of knowledge that is acquired by and is available to teachers. In extremely 'crowded' or busy contexts and environments like classrooms, where immediate action is required, a teacher may need to process information more rapidly than they would like and be more selective with their attention. Eraut (2008) argued that meta-cognitive processes are therefore limited to implicit monitoring and reactive reflection so responses may relate to more intuitive approaches. In situations that require rapid responses, where there is a shortage of time, the adoption of these more intuitive approaches can reduce the quality of responses and increase the likelihood of mistakes. In crisis situations that require urgent responses, and in contexts where there are on-going pressures with regards to greater productivity, quality is reduced, risk increases and job satisfaction falls. Additionally, Eraut (2004) suggested that when teachers feel overworked or alienated, they may lack the time or interest to consider appropriate or alternative approaches to situations and consequently, more personal, tacit knowledge, which they believe works well for them, may be used uncritically.

Unlike contexts where 'cool action' is required, where time is available for consideration, deliberation and decision-making, in classroom contexts, where immediate performance related 'hot action' is required, Eraut (1985) recognised that there may be difficulties associated with self-awareness and little time and opportunity to notice or think about actions so consequently teachers develop routines and habits in order to cope.

Eraut (1994) suggested that decision making in teaching often draws on practical knowledge associated with knowledge of individuals. Such knowledge is important when deciding, for example, how to approach and communicate with, allocate tasks to, interpret responses from and motivate specific children. According to Eraut (2004), a teacher's knowledge of individual children is influenced by different levels informed by, for example, simple constructs relating to individual attributes that are relevant to their classroom decision-making, more complex constructs that may relate to behaviour and learning and memories that relate to particular episodes or experiences.

Consequently, as recognized by Eraut (2002), the level of knowledge used is influenced by context, situation and time available for reflection. Eraut (2002) suggested that a teacher may, therefore, be influenced by stereotypes in contexts or situations where they must rapidly respond or react to a child's behaviour but draw on more complex constructs during more extended, peaceful conversations.

If tensions are greater in a classroom and more frequent rapid reactions become a normalised form of communication, teachers are less likely to be motivated to develop a more complex knowledge base about children and will, instead, become used to using less elaborate forms of knowledge. Consequently, Eraut acknowledges that, rather than use "complex 'pictures' of children in busy situations", teachers may become reliant on their knowledge of earlier episodes or experiences rather than adapting their views in response to new contexts or situations (2004 p.255).

2.3.3 Ontological insecurity: Drawing on the work of Ball

Ball's (2000) notion of ontological insecurity supports a further development of and extension to the discussion of factors that may have an impact on teacher wellbeing by recognising the impact of accountability, judgement, and performativity. Ball (2000) suggested that the social identity of teachers can be associated with ontological insecurity due to experiences of uncertainty and instability because of the frequently changing demands and expectations of what it is to be a teacher in systems of continual accountability and judgment that are often made against different indicators, by different individuals and by different means.

According to Ball (2003), public sector policy technologies of the market, managerialism and accountability have gradually introduced methods, cultures and ethical systems into the public sector, where judgments of what is valuable and effective have been influenced by the 'policy epidemic' of educational reform in the UK over the years.Ball stated that such reform produces "a state of conscious and permanent visibility at the intersection of Government, organisation and self-formation", associated with performance indicators that often serve contradictory purposes and lead to conditions of competition and comparison which influence teachers' motivation, feelings of stability and self-worth (2000 p. 4).

Ball (2018) argued that the current education system is now recognsised as being more associated with measured outcomes than with purposes and values because of introducing systems of testing and league tables, that have further increased competition between schools and individuals. Ball's (2003) conceptualization of 'performativity' is useful with regards to understanding and appreciating the 'struggles' that teachers may experience in response to these changes, particularly when their values, beliefs and commitment are challenged through the reduction of complex social processes and events into categories of judgment or simple figures. Here, performativity is defined as:

"a technology, a culture and a mode of regulation that employs judgements, comparisons and displays as means of incentive, control, attrition, and change based on rewards and sanctions (both material and symbolic). The performances (of individual subjects or organizations) serve as measures of productivity or output, or displays of 'quality', or 'moments' of promotion or inspection. As such they stand for, encapsulate, or represent the worth, quality or value of an individual or organization within a field of judgement" (Ball 2003 p. 216).

In relation to educational reform and performativity, Ball argues that teachers "live an existence of calculation" where they are encouraged to improve their productivity, aspire to excellence and success, be outstanding, add value to their performative worth, become more than they were and be better than others (2003 p.215). For Ball, these "terrors of performativity" represent the "struggle over the teacher's soul", where care for self, mental health, wellbeing and care for others may be influenced by systems of regulation, institutional self-interest and competitive performativity (2003 p.216/217). Ball (2003) argued strongly that performativity not only influences teachers due to external factors, from the outside in, but also internally, from the inside out.

Consequently teachers may experience professional conflicts associated with self-doubt, anxiety and uncertainty about their daily practice and their value as a teacher, through questioning the reasons for their actions in relation to, for example, whether what they are doing will be measured and compared, whether their actions will make them or others look good or whether they should maintain a belief and confidence in their actions, even if performance indicators suggest something different.

Ball (2000) recognised that these professional conflicts between the structural demands of performativity and individual teachers' own judgments about good pedagogy and student needs, can therefore, result in inauthentic relationships and practices and influence feelings of personal meaninglessness. More and Clarke (2016) argued that in addition to pressures of performativity, teachers can experience conflict when they disagree with particular pedagogical approaches, curriculum design and content, for example, but also when their social and ethical positioning's, convictions, motivations and beliefs in the purpose of education, are challenged or undermined by policy directives.

As explored with regards to Eraut's earlier epistemological explorations, Ball (2018) suggested that, through performativity, education is reduced to outputs, with the focus of policy initiatives on 'what works' rather than 'what for'. Consequently, teachers can experience dilemmas when their commitments, values and professionalism are neglected in favor of technical expertise and Government solutions to political and social issues. Such suggestions reflect previous considerations by Berlak and Berlak in relation to their examination of dilemmas experienced by teachers but their work is not acknowledged in these more recent accounts. For Ball (2003) such ontological insecurity can have psychological costs for teachers, particularly if they sacrifice their own judgment, authenticity and commitment because of expectations to produce measurable and improving outputs and when their performativity is related to a 'management of performance' to meet specific targets or external requirements.

Ball (2000/2003) suggested that accountability measures might distort teachers' day-to-day practice and suggested that their philosophical principles and social commitments to social justice, equity, and authentic, meaningful relationships, for example, may not be valued. Ball argued therefore, that performativity "which has no room for caring", influences the "heart of the educational project" by reducing the value of the individual and their social relations, so that rather than caring about and for others, individuals are encouraged to care about the fabricated representation and competitive performances of the organisation (2003 p.224/225).

For Perryman et al (2017) policy reform has also influenced the experiences of being a reflective practitioner by formalising an expectation of self-reflection by subtly, but deliberately, creating a discourse of self-improvement and reflexivity which encourages teachers to be responsible for their development and practice, but also for the performance of their students and the wider school community. However, according to Brookfield (2017), having formalized the expectation for reflection, teachers may experience conflict associated with pedagogical dilemmas and epistemological risk associated with engaging in a process of 'critical' reflection, when recognising the uncertainty and ambiguity of their professional roles. Consequently, Ball argues that performativity influences not only the autonomy and "collective ethical self of organisations", but also teaching, learning and the "inner-life or the teacher", their reflective self, which may further contribute to teachers' experiences of ontological insecurity (2003 p.226).

2.4 Teacher wellbeing and emotional labour

2.4.1 Emotional labour: Drawing on the work of Hochschild

According to Hochschild, activities involving emotional labour can be distinguished from other activities that may involve physical labour or activities that require mental labour such as thinking and problem solving. The emotional labour that is involved in a wide variety of personal, private, and public activities and interactions requires that individuals engage in 'emotion work' (2003 p. x). Hochschild developed the conceptualisation of emotional labour during her exploration of the daily emotional experiences, emotion work and occupational demands of both female and male American individuals involved in different corporate and commercial roles. Having initially involved female flight attendants, who as part of their daily roles, provided a personal service which involved *enhancing* customer experiences through ensuring customer satisfaction, Horchschild also involved bill (or debt) collectors who provided a very different, more impersonal or depersonalised service which may involve *deflating* customers status by provoking hostility, through for example, humiliation, accusations of being lazy, suggestions of low moral character or physical aggression to reclaim money owed through debt.

As such, it was suggested that the emotional labour of various professions, particularly those that involve interactions with others, draws on an individual's understanding of their own feelings and emotions by requiring them to consider the emotional impact of their behaviour and interactions on those others in particular contexts. Hochschild suggested that emotional labour may, therefore, require that individuals "induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (2003 p. 7).

Although Hochschild did not recognise the work of teachers, in teaching, like in other professions such as working as a flight attendant, there are expectations that individuals exhibit sensitivity, care, enthusiasm and enjoyment of and for their work, so that others feel safe, are comfortable and enjoy their experiences. If, however, during some activities required of their professional roles, individuals, at times, feel irritated, annoyed, or fatigued, for example, such feelings must be hidden, disguised or masked so they do not have an impact on the experiences and emotions of others. Emotional labour, therefore, often places demands on an individual's real, true, and authentic emotional self, such as their true feelings of interest, enthusiasm, and care and their 'acted' or re-defined self in the context of their professional role.

Hochschild made the distinction between deep and surface acting. Deep acting was described as the spontaneous expression and display of 'real' natural feeling, such as happiness or sadness. Whereas surface acting requires that individuals change how they outwardly appear to others by deceiving the other about what they really feel. Consequently, the emotional work undertaken as part of some professional roles, such as teaching, is demanding by requiring that individuals hide, repress, or disguise their true feelings, in recognition of the potential impact of their emotions on the experiences and emotions of others, such as children or colleagues. Where positive interactions and emotional exchanges with others are a frequent and expected part of the emotional work undertaken by an individual in their professional role, Hochschild suggests that there are often emotional costs associated with the expectation to consistently manage feelings.

Consequently, individuals often need to "give up control over *how* the work is to be done" (2003 p.119) by ignoring or hiding feelings and emotions which may eventually affect the "very capacity to feel" or the degree to which their feelings are recognised, understood, and expressed (2003 p.21). With regards to the potential psychological costs of emotional labour, Hochschild introduces the idea that individuals may adopt different 'stances' towards their work. In the first stance, the individual may engage deeply in their work and does not consider their role to involve any sort of acting. Consequently, they may be more likely to experience stress, which increases the risk of burnout, detachment, and an eventual lack of care in relation to their professional role. In the second stance, the individual can distinguish their 'self' from their work-related role through recognising when they are engaging in deep acting and when they are engaging in surface acting. Here, while the individual is less likely to experience burnout, they may eventually experience a lack of sincerity. In the third stance, the individual feels a clear distinction between their 'self' and their 'act' by seeing their professional role only as an act. This situation may be influenced by the context of work, where demands for emotional labour increase but are not supported appropriately. Here the individual may completely withdraw their emotional labour by refusing any type of 'acting', however the risk associated with this stance is that the individual will be perceived to be poorly performing in their work.

For Hochschild these potential psychological 'costs' can be reduced if "workers could feel a greater sense of control over the conditions of their work lives" (2003 p.187). The various contexts and conditions of 'work' in different professional roles can, therefore, influence an individual's experiences, particularly in relation to their deep or surface engagement with emotional labour and their potential risk of emotional burnout or emotional detachment. Loh and Liew suggest that teaching is "a relational act that requires of teachers a range of emotional investments" (2016 p.267). These emotional investments are often related to a wide range of complex and contradictory emotional experiences that are central to any teaching and learning situation involving interactions between individuals (teachers, children, parents/carers, Senior Leadership colleagues etc.) within specific contexts (interactions with pupils, responding to distress, supporting behaviour etc.) and environments (schools, classrooms, playgrounds etc.).

Partridge (2012) suggests that much of the stress experienced by teachers can be associated with relational stress, due to the high levels of human interaction in schools. When working with more vulnerable children and young people, the emotional dimensions of a teacher's work can be amplified. With regards to teachers support for children in care, for example, Edwards (2016) found that teachers frequently and explicitly commented on negative emotions experienced with regards to considering the situations and experiences of the children and young peoples they worked with. Consequently, teachers' daily emotional investments are associated with a variety of emotional experiences that can be considered to be particularly complex with regards to the how emotions are experienced and expressed, specifically in the context of their professional roles. Some emotions experienced, for example, may be deemed by teachers to be appropriate and are therefore freely expressed, others however, may be deemed to be inappropriate in general or due to their intensity and are, therefore, hidden or down regulated to a more appropriate intensity. In some situations, however, desired emotions are not actually experienced. In such situations, Taxer and Frenzel (2015) suggest that teachers must try to 'fake' the emotion they deem most appropriate to be expressed in the given situation.

Kinman, Wray and Strange (2016) recognised that teachers are often required to effectively 'manage' their own personal emotions, while also having the ability to influence desired emotional states in others. Despite recognition of the importance of understanding teachers' emotional investment, emotional experiences, and the expression of emotions, Hargreaves suggested that these emotional dimensions of teaching and learning are often neglected dimensions in research (2001). For Loh and Liew (2016), this neglect is particularly relevant to understanding teachers' emotions such as vulnerability, passion, and care. Similarly, Kidger et al (2010) highlighted the importance of understanding more about teachers' emotional investments and experiences because of a recognition that if the emotional needs of teachers are neglected, they may be reluctant, unwilling, or unable to consider meeting the emotional needs of their pupils.

Through their research with Primary school teachers, Tuxford and Bradley found that teaching often involved many competing demands. Consequently, they made the distinction between emotional and interpersonal job demands, such as those that relate

to the "experience and expression of emotions - in the self and in others" and non-emotional or general job demands such as time restrictions, workload, organisational barriers, and curriculum issues (2015 p.1008). Tuxford and Bradley (2015) categorised the emotional and interpersonal demands of teaching in relation to;

- Exposure to emotionally demanding situations,
- Emotional labour and
- Work focused on the emotional wellbeing other others (p.1006).

Building on the previous work of Hochschild, Tuxford and Bradley (2015) suggested that, in the context of teaching, 'emotional labour' relates to the emotional regulation of one's own emotions, feelings and behaviours due to an awareness of institutional or organisational 'rules' that are 'implicit' or 'explicit' regarding the appropriate means to express these emotions, feelings and behaviours.

With regards to appreciating the range of emotions experienced by teachers in their daily interactions, it is important to recognise that these emotions can be both positive and negative and can often not be predicted or planned for. Some emotions can be experienced as being naturally positive, such as when a child engages particularly well in a learning activity or supports a friend. During such experiences, Taxer and Gross (2018), suggest that teachers engage in deep acting where expressed emotions, reflect felt emotions. However, other emotions may require manufacturing or masking, such as when professional demands or working conditions make it difficult to achieve personal goals or when teachers must hide their emotions in consideration of the potential impact on others. Where teachers are expected to express an unfelt emotion, Taxer and Gross (2018) suggest that they may engage in surface acting.

Hargreaves suggested that daily teaching experiences require "hard emotional work, investment and labour" (2000 p. 814). Such experiences relate to continually planning and delivering engaging and dynamic lessons, while being able to self-regulate emotions through monitoring and managing potentially difficult emotions and, at times, remaining calm during situations of confrontation, particularly when children or young

people experience distress, anxiety or aggression leading to threatening behaviour towards other children, colleagues, or themselves.

Tuxford and Bradley (2015) summarise the emotional demands of teaching in relation to:

- The daily exposure to emotionally intense (both positive and negative) interactions with students,
- The need to exhibit high levels of a wide variety of emotional expressions, and
- The limited opportunities for recovery and replenishment of emotional reserves (p.1021).

They argued that, while research consistently highlights the negative impacts of non-emotional demands on teachers' emotional wellbeing due to organisational and strategic factors, less is known about the impact of emotional demands on teachers' emotional wellbeing. Consequently, Tuxford and Bradley propose a new conceptualisation of general job stressors that includes recognition of emotional job demands to provide "a clearer vision of the stressors that teachers face" (2015 p.1022). This is particularly important given an understanding of the interrelationship between teachers' emotional health and the emotional health of their children. Kidger et al suggested that "when teachers emotional health is in jeopardy, it reduces their ability to support and respond to pupils appropriately, which creates further difficulties within the classroom and more emotional distress for pupils and teachers alike" (2010 p.11).

Despite concerns about the emotional demands of teaching, it should also be recognised that emotional labour can be an enjoyable aspect of a teacher's role, particularly with regards to meeting the emotional needs of their children. Hargreaves (2000) suggested that teachers enjoy the emotional labour of working with pupils because such work relates to the core of their professional roles, particularly in circumstances that where they feel largely in control over aspects of the learning environment and learning.

2.4.2 Emotional labour involved in supporting children with more complex needs

With regards to emotional labour, teachers are required to effectively support the physical safety and emotional wellbeing of their pupils, while also managing and

modelling the expression of their own emotions. Consequently, Kinnman, Wray and Strange (2011) suggest that teachers are expected to interact with their pupils by exhibiting care, compassion, and warmth, while at times, supressing feelings of irritation, impatience, or anger.

Recent research into the mental health of children in the England undertake by NHS Digital (2021) revealed an increase in rates of probable mental health disorders in children and young people from 10.8% in 2017 to 16% in 2020. Additionally, schools are becoming increasingly recognised within policy initiatives as playing an important role in supporting the social and emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of children and young people (DfE, 2016a, DfE, 2018b, DfE/DoH, 2015). And yet, as recognised by Glazzard and Stones, schools and therefore teachers, often find themselves in a paradoxical position where "they are required to support children's mental health at the same time as subjecting young people to pedagogical approaches which can have an adverse effect on it" (2021 p.3).

As previously explored by Roffey (2016), this is particularly important to recognise, in that schools must continue to meet Government expectations with regards to educational targets, while also supporting and 'managing' the behaviour of children and young people who may exhibit complex learning needs and vulnerabilities associated with difficult life experiences, adversity, distress, trauma and family breakdown. Consequently, while teachers recognise that they are often well placed to support children's mental wellbeing due to having good knowledge of their pupil's development and wellbeing, Danby and Hamilton (2016) found that they are also concerned about a lack of training with regards to children's mental health and feel frustrated about lengths of time for referrals to external support services leading to increased expectations that teachers are able to support more complex needs.

Such findings were echoed in a 2017 NASUWT survey, which revealed that; 98% of teachers have come into contact with pupils who they believe are experiencing mental health problems, 46% of respondents stated that they have never received any training on children's mental health and only 24% of surveyed teachers said they were confident they would be able to get timely support from expert services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). So, while appreciating that they have a

duty of care towards their pupils, teachers appear concerned about the changing nature of their responsibilities with regards to supporting pupils social and emotional wellbeing and mental health needs, particularly with regards to feeling inadequately prepared and supported to meet these increasing expectations.

Although teachers felt concerned for pupils who were experiencing distress, Rothi, Leavey and Best found that they also felt incompetent, helpless, and frustrated because pupil mental health needs were suggested to contribute to their "classroom and management burden, lower 'job satisfaction', and more importantly affect their own psychological well-being" (2008 p. 1227). Similarly, Kidger et al found that some teachers were concerned about their increased responsibilities to support the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people with SEMH needs because such support may "interfere with their core academic duties or because they do not have the emotional energy or the necessary knowledge to do so" (2010 p.931).

Rae, Cowell and Field (2017) suggested that supporting the emotional wellbeing of teachers who support children and young people with a broad range of SEMH needs is an under-researched area. This suggestion is particularly important to appreciate with regards to understanding the daily experiences of staff who work in schools that cater specifically for children with complex learning needs, communication difficulties and 'challenging behaviours', such as those who work in special schools. Cole found that these daily experiences were more likely to have an impact on staff wellbeing, than those working in mainstream settings, because staff regularly experienced "emotionally draining, physically exhausting and occasionally dangerous" interactions (2010 p.1). Such experiences were found to be more likely when children and young people exhibit anxiety and heightened emotions (Rae, Cowell and Field 2017). Nelson, et al (2001) found that teachers who support children and young people with SEMH needs are at a higher risk of experiencing job related stress. As suggested by Warin (2017), working with vulnerable children and young people requires that teachers must negotiate complex and challenging social and emotional relationships on a daily basis.

With regards to aspects of teacher roles in SEMH settings that reduce job satisfaction and have a negative impact on staff wellbeing the following classroom-based stressors were identified by Adera and Bullock (2010):

- Having a broad range of social, emotional, and cognitive difficulties in the same classroom, making teaching challenging,
- Overcrowded classrooms due to increased pupil referrals,
- Inappropriate placements of children and young people with more complex needs,
- Challenging, out of control pupil behaviour leading to emotional out-bursts, meltdowns, and peer conflict,
- Inconsistency in responses to rule violations and lack of meaningful consequences,
- No options for exclusion,
- Lack of appropriate therapeutic support for children and young people and a
- Lack of commitment of mainstream teachers to support the re-inclusion of children and young people with SEMH needs.

In more recent research, Rea, Cowell and Field (2017) explored teachers' work related stress in SEMH settings and identified the following significant and on-going stressors; the volatile nature of children and young people as a factor that affected teachers both physically and emotionally, paperwork associated with demonstrating differentiated learning opportunities and that which was required to follow up incidents involving physical management, lack of colleague support, particularly Senior Leadership colleagues and external constraints, such as the influence of OfSTED.

2.5 Support for teacher wellbeing

At the onset of this research, most policy documentation neglected to incorporate any reference to teacher wellbeing. Consequently, there was very little guidance offered to teachers with regards to support for their wellbeing. Where guidance was offered to teachers, this only related to managing workload.

Despite more recent Government recognition that "policies can have both direct and indirect impacts on the wellbeing of staff" (DfE 2022a p.3), much of the current support for wellbeing is aimed at children and young people, rather that educational professionals. Perhaps due to Government's previous neglect of teacher wellbeing, it

seems that teacher Unions and National Charities have been required to offer guidance and support. Consequently, the English policy context will be explored initially in relation to teacher wellbeing, followed by Union and National charity guidance and support. Supervision and mindfulness will also be explored here to extend the examination because these have more recently been recommended as research informed approaches to support for teacher wellbeing.

2.5.1 The English policy context and teacher wellbeing

Research conducted by OfSTED to explore occupational wellbeing and the general life satisfaction of teachers found that;

"while most teachers enjoy teaching and are positive about their workplace and their colleagues, self-reported well-being at work is generally low or moderate. Positive factors – such as school culture and relationships with colleagues – contribute to teachers' well-being. However, they are counterbalanced by negative factors, such as high workload, lack of work–life balance, a perceived lack of resources and a perceived lack of support from leaders, especially for managing pupils' behaviour" (2019 p.1).

The OfSTED report revealed concerns about teachers' occupational wellbeing being "worryingly low" (p.16), while also finding that teachers' general life satisfaction was low (p.17). These low levels of occupational wellbeing and general life satisfaction were associated with staff absence, staff health problems caused by or made worse by work which included work related stress, worrying about work when not working, feeling drained of energy, with fewer respondents experiencing positive emotions or state of mind, which also affected staff retention (OfSTED 2019). A variety of factors associated with low occupational wellbeing included; high workload, administrative demands, limited work life balance, lack of funding, lack of support from SLT, particularly with regards to managing pupil behaviour, external bodies such as the DfE and OfSTED, excessive focus on data and results, lack of respect for educational professionals, being under-valued as a profession, lack of opportunities for professional development and progression and relationships with parents (OfSTED 2019). OfSTED suggested that, as a matter of priority, action should be taken to improve occupational wellbeing in schools (2019).

While the updated Education Inspection Framework makes no reference to teacher wellbeing, the OfSTED School Inspection Handbook clarifies the leadership and management judgement for leaders, managers and those responsible for Governance with regards to a specific focus on "the extent to which leaders take into account the workload and well-being of their staff, while also developing and strengthening the quality of the workforce" (2022 p.54). Subsequently, the overall school judgement of 'Outstanding' now requires that "staff consistently report high levels of support for well-being issues" (2022 p.74), while a 'Good' judgement requires that "leaders engage with their staff and are aware and take account of the main pressures on them…they are realistic and constructive in the way they manage staff, including their workload" (2022 p.74). Although OfSTED identified that workload was associated with low occupational wellbeing in 2019, the DfE had already provided the following guidance with regards to reducing workload;

- Reducing teacher workload: Data management review group report (DfE 2016b)
- Reducing teacher workload: Marking policy review group report (DfE 2016c)
- Reducing teacher workload: Planning and resources review group report (DfE 2016d)

None of these publications however made any references to teacher wellbeing.

Additionally, as part of the School Workload Reduction Toolkit introduced in 2022, the DfE published a well-being and workload toolkit, which shared examples from of how schools had "tackled workload through a wellbeing centred culture" (p.1). In 2019 an Expert Advisory Group on Wellbeing was announced, which was set up "to provide advice and work with the Department to understand the causes of poor teacher and leader wellbeing" (Gibb 2020 p.1). In 2020 the group provided recommendations to the DfE which included the need to view wellbeing as a cultural issue, rather than an 'extra' responsibility and that future policy should encourage systematic change through interventions that could have an impact at multiple levels. The Expert Advisory Group offered recommendations which included integrating and embedding wellbeing related

considerations into aspects of school life and developing a Wellbeing Charter for all education staff.

In 2022, the DfE published 'The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter' which states that "everyone working in education should have the opportunity to enjoy the highest possible standard of wellbeing and mental health" (p.2). Within the charter, the DfE recognise their role in shaping the educational policy environment and also that their policies "can have both direct and indirect impacts on the wellbeing of staff" (p.3). The DfE claim that, by working with others, they will lead the way in "protecting, enhancing and promoting wellbeing" (p. 3). The Wellbeing Charter includes rhetoric relating to integrating wellbeing into policy changes, measuring and responding to changes in staff wellbeing, reducing unnecessary workload, ensuring that DfE guidance covers staff wellbeing where appropriate, and increasing access to online mental health and wellbeing resources. Progress will apparently be reviewed in 2023. Interestingly, wellbeing within the charter is rather simplistically associated with workload, professional development, and behaviour management, while support for wellbeing has been related only to improving access to online resources.

With regards to DfE guidance, the Teachers Standards, which had not been update since 2011, make no reference to teacher wellbeing and despite recognising that schools and therefore teachers "play a central role" in "enabling pupils to be resilient and to support good mental health and wellbeing" there is also no reference to teacher wellbeing in the 2018 Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance either (p. 4). The updated DfE ITE Core Content Framework articulates a 'shared ambition' relating to "how trainees should be supported to manage their own workload and wellbeing whilst they train and as they embark on their career in school" (2019a p.7). However, within the framework, it is suggested that trainees should be supported to manage workload and wellbeing through observing and deconstructing how expert colleagues use and personalise systems and routines for efficient time and task management and discuss and analyse with expert colleagues the importance of the right to support, for example, in dealing with misbehaviour (DfE 2019). Trainees are also encouraged within the framework to protect time for rest and recovery and be aware of "support available to support good mental wellbeing" (DfE 2019 p. 30). The Early Career Framework also contextualises teacher wellbeing alongside workload in relation to 'Professional Behaviours' (Teacher

Standard 8 – Fulfil wider professional responsibilities) through repeating same guidance offered in the ITE Core Content Framework and encouraging that teachers 'learn how to…' "manage workload and wellbeing" (DfE 2019b p.25).

Essentially, Government only appears to recognise wellbeing as being associated with the 'amount' of workload undertaken by teachers, which often relates to directed, performative and accountability expectations while neglecting to consider the 'quality' of workload or the actual work of teachers that is more associated with being a teacher. Importantly, no current Government policy guidance, DfE or OfSTED publications mention the emotional dimensions of teachers' professional roles or the potential impact of emotional work on their wellbeing.

2.5.2 Union recognition of teacher wellbeing

In recognition of concerns raised about teacher wellbeing and a more recent increased focus on wellbeing in policy guidance, it has been suggested that "anything that is not measured and/or monitored in the workplace is ignored" and consequently teacher wellbeing is "often the furthest from the minds of decision makers" (National Education Union 2020 p. 2). However, National teaching Unions do offer guidance and support which aims to ensure that "issues around stress, mental health and wellbeing are firmly on the global agenda" (NASUWT 2020). The NASUWT, for example, regularly asks questions about teacher wellbeing in annual surveys and offers training with regards to stress management and mental health first aid, while the NEU provides guidance in relation to "Tackling Stress (NEU 2019a) and "Protecting Staff Mental Health – Guidance on working with Governors" (NEU 2019b). The NEU has also developed a "Mental Health Charter" for teachers (2020).

With regards to tackling stress, the NEU guidance recognises that schools, as employers, have a general duty to ensure, "so far as is reasonably practicable, the health of their employees at work" and to try and to ensure "that employees do not suffer stress-related illness as a result of their work" (NEU 2020 p.3). A variety of approaches to exploring stress in the workplace are suggested, including the 'Management Standards' to risk assess causes of work-related stress and undertaking a stress audit to identify 'hazards', which can include anything that causes stress (NEU 2020 p. 4/5/6). The NEU Mental Health Charter aims to 'change the workplace, not the worker'

through ensuring that the wellbeing of staff is a central feature of school culture, organisation, and management through being embedded in policy, practice, and ethos (NEU 2020 p. 2).

2.5.3 National charity support for teacher wellbeing

In addition to National teacher Unions, National charities also offer guidance and support in relation to teacher wellbeing. The Education Support Partnership (ESP) claims to be the "only UK charity dedicated to the mental health and wellbeing of education staff" (ESP 2022) and also undertakes the "Teacher Wellbeing Index" annual surveys. Drawing on previous Teacher Wellbeing Index findings, the ESP offer suggestions with regards to improving the school culture and environment, which relate to workload, staff support, control, and autonomy, creating positive professional relationships, conflict management and management of change (ESP, n.d).

The Anna Freud Centre offers a model of universal, targeted and specialist support with regards to staff wellbeing in schools (Anna Freud Centre 2022). At the universal level, support for wellbeing is suggested to involve the development of a staff wellbeing policy and staff wellbeing team, ensuring staff have dedicated staff rooms, providing drop-in sessions or feedback boxes for concerns, and creating a no-blame, no-stigma culture for the mental health needs of the school community. At a more targeted level it is suggested that supervision and training around mental health be provided, that regular mandatory wellbeing check-in meetings take place and specific wellbeing events are hosted. At the specific level it is recommended that employee assistance programmes and crisis support are offered and referrals to occupational health and the Educational Support Partnership are made (Anna Freud Centre 2022). In addition, exploring how ethos, culture and environment can impact on wellbeing, specific guidance is offered to SLT in relation to ethos and culture change to prioritise staff wellbeing (Anna Freud Centre 2022).

Although recognised as being less widely developed in schools, the Anna Freud Centre describe supervision, which may be unfamiliar to teachers and school staff, as being a regularly planned "opportunity to think about the needs of pupils who staff have concerns about, or to consider an area of work that the teacher or staff member is finding especially challenging and difficult" (Anna Freud Centre 2022 p.10). Supervision is

recommended to support staff to feel confident in their decision making, particularly when they are supporting children with complex safeguarding or mental health issues, for example (Garland et al 2018). Schools are encouraged to consider whether supervision can be offered "outside of the management" for teachers who do not feel comfortable about sharing concerns about mental health with their manager (Garland et al 2018 p.4). Approaches to promoting and maintaining personal wellbeing are also suggested by the Anna Freud centre, such knowing personal limits and when to say 'no', identifying supportive people and taking up hobbies or activities to extend supportive networks, talking about situations that have been emotionally challenging, being flexible about change and engaging in self-compassion are also recommended.

Heads Together suggest that a "school's caring ethos and environment can have a major impact on the wellbeing of its staff and pupils" through clearly defining what behaviours, values and beliefs underpin the school culture and through building a culture of trust where staff feel valued, can be open about health and wellbeing and know how to access support if they need it (Heads Together 2020). Heads Together suggest that Head Teachers and SLT need to look after their own wellbeing and mental health, in addition to their staff and model good mental health behaviour, self-care, and practice in relation to work life balance (2020). At the level of school policy, Heads Together recommend that schools have a wellbeing strategy and policy in place which has been co-produced with staff, Governors and parents/carers, is effectively implemented and routinely reviewed. A variety of strategies are also recommended to promote good staff wellbeing through for example, providing staff mindfulness, relaxation and managing stress sessions (2020). Heads Together recommend creating a sense of belonging through team staff development opportunities, encouraging staff collaboration through reflective practice and problem-solving school-based challenges. Staff recognition and praise are also recommended with regards to schools creating a positive culture and working environment to support staff wellbeing (2020).

2.5.4 Whole school approaches and support for teacher wellbeing

Weare and Gray (2003) suggest that, in developing whole school approaches to support emotional wellbeing, schools must focus on the social and emotional needs of teachers first. Indeed, Weare suggests that school approaches to supporting wellbeing in schools must "start with the staff" because being genuinely motivated to promote wellbeing in

others is difficult if teachers feel "uncared for and burnt out" (2015 p.6). Warin (2017) suggests that compassionate leadership is associated with nurturing and caring principles and practices which have been found to support whole school collaboration to create and develop 'nurturing cultures' and a 'whole school ethos of care'. In developing whole school approaches that recognise the importance of staff-wellbeing, Weare recommends supporting staff to develop a sense of control in response to externally driven sources of stress associated with increasing expectations, targets, inspections, and standards (2015). These recommendations included staff development and counselling to develop stress reduction skills including assertion, self-efficacy, resilience, and relaxation (Weare 2015). Weare also recommends creating a school culture and ethos where it is safe to acknowledge the reality of staff and leadership stress, where difficulties, weaknesses and distress can be shared and where help and support for mental health needs can be sought in non-stigmatising ways (2015).

2.5.5 Supervision as an example of group support for teacher wellbeing

In recognition of the increasingly difficult environment of schools with regards to competing and often conflicting demands of external pressures, and an appreciation of teachers' direct responsibilities for the health and wellbeing of the children in their care, including some who may have experienced trauma and adversity, Barnardo's (2019) have suggested the importance of needing to understand the impact of vicarious and secondary trauma. While it is recognised that "there has been a lack of consensus" across various sectors including education, health and social care of how trauma informed practice is defined, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities has developed the following working definition;

"Trauma informed practice is an approach to health and care interventions which is grounded in the understanding that trauma exposure can impact an individual's neurological, biological, psychological and social development" (2022 n.p).

In addition to supporting education staff through the provision of guidance in relation to embedding trauma informed practice into whole school approaches, Barnardo's recommends the development of professional supervision structures to support the mental health and wellbeing of teachers. In response to findings from recent research which identified a need for supervision in schools, Barnardo's advocate that reflective

or professional supervision should be an entitlement that is "universally available any staff who wish to access it" (Barnardo's 2020 p. 50).

In the context of education, Carroll (2009) suggested that supervision aims to encourage a therapeutic relationship of trust where individuals can be respected for who they are and where hidden feelings and negative emotions can be shared in a safe, non-judgemental, and supportive way. Steel suggested that through supervision and the sharing of issues, individuals can be "better informed and empowered to communicate and work more effectively; to understand themselves better; to become more aware of their own reactions and responses to situations; to understand the dynamics of interactions; to consider new ways in which to intervene and the consequences of interventions; to explore alternative ways of working; and to plan long-term strategies" (2001 p.100). Through the establishment of a safe and non-judgemental environment, Reid and Soan (2019) propose that supervision in educational settings can support individuals to evaluate, reflect and resolve complex and often difficult issues.

With regards to the perceived benefits of supervision, Willis and Baines found that attending group supervision sessions provided "opportunities to share emotional experiences, the feeling of a range of therapeutic effects and the development of professional practice" (2018 p.270). Despite the emotionally stressful and at times negative experience of working in an SEMH setting, regular attendance at supervision sessions was found to improve staff relations and provided a space to offload associated pressures and alleviate stress in a context where colleagues felt supported and were able to share expertise and coping strategies (Willis and Baines 2018). Austin (2010) also found that participation in supervision sessions supported self-awareness, self-esteem generally and in relation to the workplace, increased confidence and provided opportunities to off-load, de-stress and see things from different perspectives. According to Austin (2010), individuals also perceived the benefits of supervision with regards to reducing staff absence, increasing understanding of children's behaviour, and gaining insights into how their own feelings and issues may be related to feelings and issues being experienced by children.

However, Christensen and Kline (2000) found that participation in supervision sessions could initially be associated with lack of trust for others, fear of being negatively

evaluated by others and feelings of anxiety and insecurity associated with negative self-evaluations and self-perceptions. Additionally, with regards to the confidential nature of supervision sessions, Willis and Baines (2018) found that individuals may experience frustration with regards to a lack of changes in school policy and practice in response to issues raised in sessions. Osbourne and Bourton (2014) identified concerns relating to participation in supervision, particularly when the supervisor was difficult to talk to, did not listen or did not have sufficient knowledge in relation to context or concerns raised, where individuals felt unable to speak honestly or openly and where it was felt that other individuals dominated sessions. Moriarty, Baginsky and Manthrope (2015) suggested that tensions within the supervision process can also be experienced if there is a perceived management function relating to the consideration of organisational resources and goals and individual performance management and support. In such contexts, rather than admitting to experiencing emotional responses to their work, individuals may feel the need to present a professional 'face' (Moriarty, Baginsky and Manthrope 2015).

2.5.6 Mindfulness as an example of individual support for teacher wellbeing

Other recent developments with regards to whole school approaches to supporting teacher wellbeing have been associated the development of contemplative approaches (Weare 2019) and mindfulness-based approaches in schools (Sanghvi 2019). In recognition that whole school approaches to wellbeing may involve organisational changes that are associated with policies, practices, and structures, Weare and Bethune suggest that mindfulness, "as a foundational human capacity", can be central to transforming whole school climates "to help them to cultivate deep and authentic learning, self-knowledge, wellbeing and flourishing, and to become more compassionate and connected" (2020 p.4). While increasing in number, Weare (2014) had previously recognised that there were relatively few specific studies of mindfulness for teachers previously, a suggestion more recently confirmed by Hwang et al (2017).

In concluding their review Emerson et al (2017) recognised the relative infancy of research in relation to how mindfulness might support teachers, indeed Weare (2019) reports that most of the school-based research has focused on the impact of mindfulness and health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people, with Weare and Bethune (2020) suggesting that there is not enough research exploring such outcomes

for younger children and teachers. With an increased interest in research, publication, and school-based programmes, Weare (2019) suggests that quantitative evidence relating to research outcomes and more qualitative evidence associated with practice-based knowledge are now informing theory and practice relating to mindfulness in schools.

In recognition of the social nature of teaching, which often involves high levels of uncertainty associated with changing attentional demands and emotional interactions which may require the expression of socially acceptable emotions at times and the regulation of distressing emotions at others, Roeser et al proposed that mindfulness training programs offered emerging areas for research and practice to explore teachers emotional regulation, stress reduction, health and pro-social dispositions (Roeser et al 2012). With regards to occupational stress and the emotional distress that may be experienced in teaching, Gold et al (2010) explored mindfulness-based approaches in relation to increasing self-awareness, self-confidence, motivation, concentration, and achievement of relevant goals, in addition to exploring the impact of mindfulness on experiences of stress, anxiety and depression.

More recently, Guidetti et al (2019) explored teacher stress and burnout and identified mindfulness as a personal 'psychological resource' associated with developing a perception of meaningful work, sustained through authentic and true-self values and behaviours. Guidetti et al (2019) suggested, therefore, that mindfulness, as a re-perceiving process and personal resource adapted to teaching contexts, supported wellbeing through the development of non-judgmental attitudes and a more detached view of work-related problems through the adoption of an affectionate, open-hearted and compassionate orientation towards present moment teaching experiences.

While Weare (2019) suggests being cautiously positive with regards to emerging research that has explored the role mindfulness-based approaches to support teacher wellbeing, such approaches are open to critique. One particular concern raised by Ergas relates to the move from the contemplative, spiritual origins of mindfulness practices towards scientific study and then into the context education. In recognition of paradigmatic hierarchies with regards to science and education, the 'acceptability' of mindfulness in Education followed normalisation through science and medicine,

initially (Ergas 2014). Ergas (2014) raised this concern particularly in relation to mindfulness research in educational contexts where medical terms like ‘intervention’, ‘dosage’ and ‘frequency necessary for beneficial effects’ suggest a standardisation of approaches associated with a scientific ethos of ‘control’ or the ‘prescription’ of mindfulness to moderate stress levels, for example. This compartmentalisation of mindfulness in relation to measurement and standardisation and the accompanied interest of educational policy makers with regards to ‘outcomes’ such as; ‘stress reduction’ and the ‘enhancement of executive functions’, creates tensions associated the paradigmatic contemplative turn in education which intended to offer a radical pedagogy of ‘self’ inquiry (Ergas 2014 p.67).

Consequently, mindfulness-based approaches and ‘interventions’ may be critiqued in relation to their association with an economic orientation associated with cultivating mental stability and resilience (Ergas 2019). Such critiques have been raised previously by Purser who coined the term ‘McMindfulness’, to describe how the mindfulness movement had been influenced by dominant neoliberal ideologies which minimise the social, political and economic dimensions of risk and responsibility for wellbeing and where “individuals are compelled to constantly self-monitor and self-regulate their internal states and ‘destructive emotions’ by ‘being mindful’” (Purser 2018, p.106).

So, while mindfulness-based approaches have been found to be beneficial with regards to a variety of ‘inner conditions’, O’Donnell (2015) suggested that insufficient attention has been paid to the ‘outer conditions’ that shape an individual’s inner experiences, such as structural inequality and the drive for efficiency, productivity, standardisation and functionality, in additional to potentially exploitative and unhealthy work practices, that can be problematic. Lomas et al suggest, therefore, that mindfulness-based approaches should not be regarded as a “panacea for stress” or a “remedy” for the stress imposed by education systems (2017 p.139), while Emerson et al (2017) suggest that offering mindfulness-based initiatives in schools to support teachers might be appropriate *in addition* to employers taking responsibility for supporting a healthy working environment.

2.6 The role of compassion in supporting wellbeing

This research set out to explore the relevance of compassion to teachers who support children who often exhibit high levels of distress because of a recognition of potential to support their emotional work and wellbeing. The importance of compassion with regards to wellbeing has long been recognized in many areas of society, with most of the world's religious traditions, for example, placing compassion at the centre of their belief systems. Anstiss, Passmore and Gilbert suggest that while compassion, and training in compassion was initially associated with contemplative traditions such as Jainism and Buddhism, compassion focused interventions and practices have more recently been associated with pro-social behaviour, wellbeing, personal growth, thriving and flourishing in therapeutic contexts, in addition to workplaces and organisations which are beginning to explore “the compassionate concept of being helpful not harmful, both in activities in the world, and treatment of employees” (2020 p.42).

Welford & Langford suggest that approaches which incorporate compassion have been associated with a wide variety of professional contexts and organisations including health services, such as the NHS, business settings, and uniformed services, such as the armed forces (2015), while Strauss et al recognise that international professional bodies in healthcare, education, and the justice system, for example, now emphasize the importance of compassion (2016).

Of particular interest to this research was the role of compassion in education, particularly in relation to supporting teachers’ emotional work and their wellbeing. At the onset of this research Welford and Langmead (2015) had provided the only account of introducing a structured compassion-based approach to schools. Their research described the process of adapting a compassionate framework, which had been applied previously in therapeutic contexts, to the context of mainstream schools. A variety of positive findings in relation to wellbeing were described both for individuals and the wider school community.

In recognition of the limited previous research which had specifically explored the introduction of compassion focused approaches in education, this research aimed to contribute new understandings in relation to exploring the relevance of compassion to

teachers' emotional work and support for their wellbeing, specifically in the context of SEMH special school settings. Consequently, to develop an understanding of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices that might be relevant to teachers' emotional work and support for wellbeing in the context of SEMH special schools an extensive examination of previous conceptualisations of compassion and compassion focused approaches was initially undertaken.

2.6.1 Conceptualisations of compassion

As a concept, compassion is difficult to define due to an appreciation of a wide variety of theoretical considerations, principles and applications that have been developing over time. For Nussbaum "compassion is, above all, a certain sort of thought about the well-being of others" (1996 p.28). As noted by Nussbaum in her exploration of compassion as a basic emotion, the juxtaposition between emotion and reason has been apparent from Sophocles to the present day and influences a broad range of philosophical traditions and positions located in distinct fields from politics, economics and law through to health, social care and education (1996).

According to Singer and Kimecki, the origins of the term compassion derive from the Latin origins of "com", together or with and "pati", to suffer, which was introduced to the English language through the French word compassion (2014). Shih et al suggested that because ''compassion'' means a willingness ''to suffer with'", there is an association with "a deep awareness of the suffering of another coupled with the wish to relieve it" (2012 p.114). Like Nussbaum (1996), Hofmann, Grossman and Hilton suggested that compassion can be defined as an emotion (2011 p.3). Miller suggested that compassion can be conceptualized as one form of emotional work that involves noticing, feeling, and responding, which "involves ''connection'' to others (either cognitively through perspective taking or affectively through empathy) and ''caring'' for those others (often in communicative or behavioral ways)" (2007 p.226). In recognition of lack of consensus with regards to a definition of compassion as a construct, Stauss et al (2016) undertook a systematic review of research to synthesise conceptualisations of compassion which explored a variety of Buddhist and Western psychological perspectives and included an exploration of related constructs such as empathy, kindness, pity, and empathy. Following their review Stauss et al define compassion as;

"a cognitive, affective, and behavioral process consisting of the following five elements that refer to both self and other-compassion: 1) recognizing suffering; 2) understanding the universality of suffering in human experience; 3) feeling empathy for the person suffering and connecting with the distress (emotional resonance); 4) tolerating uncomfortable feelings aroused in response to the suffering person (e.g. distress, anger, fear) so remaining open to and accepting of the person suffering; and 5) motivation to act/acting to alleviate suffering" (2016 p.19).

Following an evolutionary functional analysis and empirical review of compassion, Goetz et al define compassion as "as the feeling that arises in witnessing another's suffering and that motivates a subsequent desire to help" (2010 p.351). They also suggest that from an evolutionary perspective compassion can be associated with "distinct appraisal processes attuned to undeserved suffering; distinct signalling behaviour related to caregiving patterns of touch, posture, and vocalization; and a phenomenological experience and physiological response that orients the individual to social approach" (2010 p.351). Their review revealed that compassion can relate to both 'states', such as love, sadness and distress and 'traits' such as empathetic concern for others, which are associated with specific behaviours, experiences, and physiological responses.

For Anstiss, Passmore and Gilbert (2020), similarly, compassion can be understood as being related to an "evolved motivational system growing from mammalian caring" which informs an evolutionary based definition of compassion as "a sensitivity to suffering of self and others, with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it" (p.40). According to Gilbert et al (2019), over the last 20 years, studies of pro-social behaviour have explored different domains associated with morality, empathy, kindness, caring, cooperation, altruism, love, sympathy, and compassion. While it is suggested that these constructs can overlap and are sometimes used interchangeably, Gilbert et al (2019) recognise that they also have distinctive features. In exploring the pro-social constructs of kindness and compassion, for example, Gilbert et al (2019) suggest that while kindness is more focused on the motive to see others flourish and be happy, and does not require any analysis of suffering, compassion can be conceptualised as a multi-textured response to pain, sorrow, and anguish, which can include kindness, empathy,

generosity, and acceptance. So, for Gilbert et al (2019) while compassion often involves kindness, kindness does not need to include suffering and compassion.

2.6.2 The development of compassion focused approaches to support wellbeing

Gilbert originally conceptualised the role of compassion in therapeutic contexts through the development of Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT), which is suggested to be an "underpinning theory and process of applying a compassion model to psychotherapy" (2009a p.199). Founded on a philosophy of compassionate humanism, compassion focused approaches, in a therapeutic context, aim to de-pathologise mental health difficulties and support wellbeing by offering "alternative models to the medical pathology model" (Gilbert, 2017 p.xi). Gilbert suggests that a variety of theoretical perspectives have informed the development of CFT (2009). Such perspectives include Buddhist psychology (Gilbert and Choden 2013), evolutionary psychology (Gilbert 2014a), social and developmental psychology (Gilbert 2009a), attachment theory (Gilbert 2006) and affective neuroscience (Kirkby et al 2017).

Consequently, Gilbert states that CFT aims to promote and provide an integrated "biopsychosocial science of psychotherapy" (2009a p.199) which is conceptualised as being informed by;

"an evolutionary, functional analysis of basic social motivational systems (e.g., to live in groups, form hierarchies and ranks, seek out sexual partners, help and share with alliances, and care for kin) and different functional emotional systems (e.g., to respond to threats, seek out resources, and for states of contentment/safeness) (Gilbert 2014b p.6).

2.7 Key *principles* underpinning compassion focused approaches

2.7.1 Buddhist perspectives on compassion

According to Gilbert, compassion focused therapeutic approaches draw explicitly on Eastern, Buddhist philosophies, psychologies, and the practices of "deliberately developing compassion" (2009b p.6). For Gilbert and Choden, introspection, reflection and an ethic of compassion support the cultivation of qualities associated with personal and social health (2013). From a Buddhist perspective compassion has been defined by

the Dalai Lama as “a sensitivity to the suffering of self and others, with a deep commitment to try and alleviate it” (Gilbert 2010 p. 3). Gilbert suggests that this Buddhist conceptualisation of compassion can be related to the development of the different individual psychological ‘mindsets’ of sensitivity, attention, awareness, and motivation with regards to experience of distress and suffering in oneself and in others (Gilbert 2014b p.19).

Gilbert (2014b) suggests that there are two psychologies of compassion. The first psychology of compassion relates to individual intentions, motivations, and competences with regards to experiences of distress and suffering in self and others by recognising the importance of paying attention to, attending to, and engaging with such distress and suffering, rather than avoiding it through denial, disassociation or feeling overwhelmed. According to Gilbert, whether individuals are motivated to turn towards distress and suffering, or turn away, is a central concept of many psychological therapies and states that the second psychology of compassion requires that individuals have the knowledge and skills to consider their motivations to learn how to be compassionate to self and others (2017).

2.7.2 The evolution of caring behaviours and compassion

Gilbert suggests that compassion is linked to the evolution of caring behaviours in recognition that the human species has evolved to “be caring and to need caring” (Gilbert 2009b p.49). Compassion is thought to have evolved to support and facilitate cooperation, protect the weak and support those who suffer through the development of;

- Distinct appraisal processes attuned to suffering,
- Distinct signalling behaviours related to caregiving patterns of touch, posture, and vocalization and
- Phenomenological experiences and physiological responses that orient the individual to social approaches (Goetz, Keltner and Simon-Thomas 2010 p.351).

Mascaro and Raison suggest that evolutionary perspectives on the development of compassion recognise the earlier influence of Darwin (2017). According to Goetz, Keltner, Simon-Thomas, Darwin conceptualised compassion as a kind of sympathy, which was associated with "the strongest of humans' evolved "instincts" (2010 p.354). Darwin recognised that the development of sympathy, and therefore, compassion, "will have been increased through natural selection; for those communities, which included the greatest number of the most sympathetic members, would flourish best, and rear the greatest number of offspring" (Darwin 1871 p. 130). Gilbert suggests that, having initially evolved as a motivational system which included basic neurophysiological mechanisms and processes to support survival of offspring, particularly with regards to immediate family, then others, such systems, mechanisms, and processes were then extended to support strangers and non-humans (2014b).

2.7.3 Psychobiological accounts of compassion

Colonnello, Petrocchi and Heinrichs (2017) suggest that there is a lack of consensus with regards to psychobiological mechanisms that might be associated with compassion. Goetz, Keltner, and Simon-Thomas suggested that with regards to the evolution of emotion-related action tendencies or potentials that guide fight or flight, withdrawal or caring and compassionate responses to specific situations, the autonomic nervous system, a system of bundles of neurons "originating in the spinal cord that receives signals from regions of the cortex, the amygdala, the hypothalamus and that activate different organs, glands, muscles and blood vestals throughout the body" has been implicated (2010 p.362).

According to Sapolsky, the automatic nervous system has two parts, the sympathetic nervous system, which mediates responses to "arousing circumstances" by producing stress responses, such as 'fight or flight' and the parasympathetic nervous system, which is associated with feelings of safeness and calm (2017 p.26-27). Kirkby et al suggest the relevance of Porges Polyvagal Theory to compassion in relation to understanding how the parasympathetic nervous system supports the regulation of the autonomic nervous system and therefore the fight or fight response by enabling soothing and calmness through experiencing interpersonal pro-social behaviours that are associated with close proximity to others and receiving or giving care (2017). According to Porges, through the process of evolution, social connectedness evolved

as a primary biological imperative. Porges suggests that Polyvagal Theory supports an understanding of how the nervous system, influenced by physiological and behavioural states, monitors cues of risk and safety (2015). Porges and Furman suggest that Polyvagal Theory "emphasizes unique features in neural regulation of the autonomic nervous system that distinguish mammals from reptiles and explains how these features serve as a biobehavioural platform for the emergence of face-to-face social behaviours" (2011 p.109). For Porges, Polyvagal Theory emphasises that humans "are on a quest to calm neural defence systems by detecting features of safety. This quest is initiated at birth when the infant needs for being soothed are dependent on the caregiver. The quest continues throughout the lifespan with needs for trusting friendships and loving partnerships to effectively co-regulate each other" (2011 p.114).

Rockliff et al (2008) suggest that pro-social behaviours such as caring, social affiliation and sharing evolved alongside the attachment system to support infant calming in response to parental caring behaviours. According to Kirkby et al (2014), these pro-social caring behaviours, which enable humans to connect and co-regulate emotions, have also been found to be associated with specific hormones, such as oxytocin. Gilbert (2014b) acknowledges that while the parasympathetic nervous system is associated with emotions involved with safeness, soothing and feelings of calm, the sympathetic nervous system, when activated under threat, is associated with emotional responses such as anger, anxiety and disgust. Consequently, Gilbert suggests that "sympathetic–parasympathetic balance, immune and cardiovascular functioning, frontal cortical competencies, genetic expression, and a range of psychological processes all appear to operate more optimally in conditions of safeness and caring" (2015 p. 239).

2.8 Key *concepts* in compassion focused approaches

The role of caring:

According to Anstiss, Passmore and Gilbert (2020) compassion is related to evolved caregiving, which enables parental sensitivity to the needs and distress of infants and their abilities to meet those needs and distress through, for example, protecting, comforting feeding or rescuing. Caring then, is suggested to involve evolved competencies to process and respond to reciprocal and changing interactional social signals.

Old brain, new brain, tricky brain concepts:

For Gilbert (2010), the "tricky brain" concept reflects an understanding that different psychologies, which include motivations, emotions and various cognitive capacities and competences have developed at different times throughout the evolution of the human species.

The 'flow of life' concept:

According to Gilbert and Choden (2017) the 'flow of life' concept is related to the Buddhist philosophical idea that all things change and that nothing is permanent. Therefore, because of evolution and the constant struggle for food, survival and reproduction, the human species is "riddled with conflicting motives and desires that are propelled by powerful emotions" (p. 34).

The concept that "it's not your fault but it is your responsibility":

Irons and Beaumont (2017) suggest that from an evolutionary perspective, an individual's identity can be considered to be a reflection of their experiences in a specific socio-cultural context, at a specific time in history. Kolts (2016) suggests that this awareness can support individuals to appreciate that conflicts associated with motives, emotions and behaviour are not their fault.

The concept of the Affect Regulation System:

According to Gilbert, a core concept of compassion focused approaches is understanding the interaction of emotions through a framework conceptualised as the Affect Regulation System, which draws on evolutionary perspectives and the neurophysiology of emotions to explore how certain evolved functions can be understood in terms of specific types of feeling and styles of social relating (2009).

The Three circles concept:

Figure 3 provides a visual representation of the Affect Regulation System concept to provide an overview of the theoretical framework for understanding three types of emotional systems, by grouping emotions together that have specific functions (Gilbert 2009b p.24). Welford suggests that these systems have been colour coded to represent specific feelings or emotions (2016).

The threat and self-protection system:

According to Gilbert (2009b) the threat and self-protection system functions to quickly detect threats and initiate a burst or flush of emotions such as fear, anxiety, anger, jealousy, or disgust. Such feelings direct attention, thinking and behaviour in specific ways to ensure self-protection by alerting and urging individuals act against the threat(s).

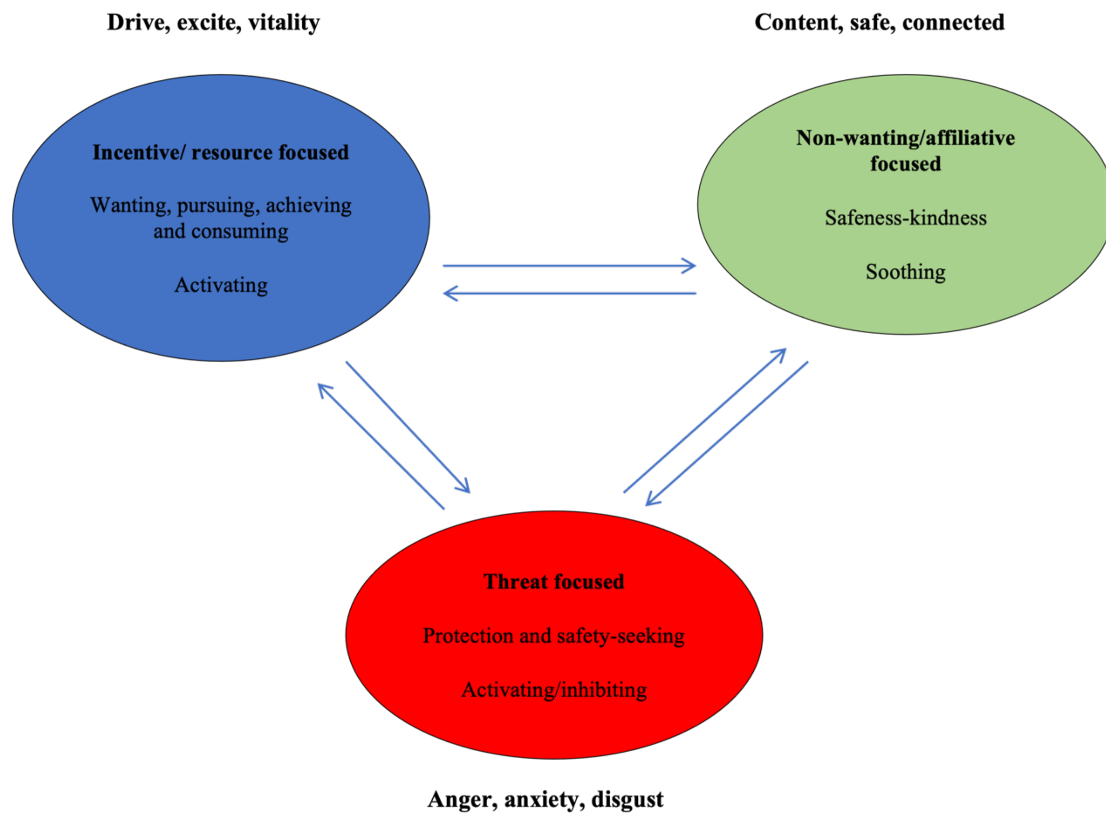
The incentive and resources seeking system:

Gilbert (2009b) suggests that incentive and resources seeking system functions to give positive feelings that guide, motivate, and encourage individuals to detect and increase interest and pleasure in securing important resources to survive and prosper.

The soothing and containment system:

For Gilbert (2009b) the soothing and containment system functions to bring about feelings of contentment and balance when individuals are not defending themselves against threats and problems and are not driven to achieve anything or motivated to seek resources.

Figure 3 The Affect Regulation System



Compassionate attributes and compassionate skills:

According to Gilbert (2009a) compassion focused approaches aim to develop a variety of compassionate attributes and skills. Gilbert (2009a) suggests that the interaction of attributes described in Table 1 are important to support compassion for self and others.

Table 1 Compassionate Attributes

Compassionate Attributes	Description
Care for wellbeing:	Caring for self and others harness a desire and motivation to take a genuine interest in caring for and about self and others when in distress and to support wellbeing.
Sensitivity	To distress and needs in self and others and recognising and distinguishing different feelings and needs.
Sympathy	Being emotionally moved and engaging with feelings and distress in self and others.
Distress tolerance	"Being able to contain, stay with and tolerate complex and high levels of emotion, rather than avoid, fearfully divert from, close down, contradict, invalidate or deny them".
Empathy	"Working to understand the meanings, functions and origins of another person's inner world so that one can see it from their point of view".
Non-judgement	"Not condemning, criticising, shaming or rejecting" (p.201).

With regards to experiencing compassion for self and developing compassion for others, Kolts et al (2018) suggest that individuals can choose to purposefully cultivate different motivations and ways of relating to self and others. According to Gilbert (2009b), the compassionate skills described in Table 2 are associated with engaging compassionately with self and others, in helpful ways and with feelings of warmth, support and kindness.

Table 2 Compassionate Skills

Compassionate Skills	Description
Compassionate attention	Involves focusing attention in ways that are helpful and supportive. Such attention relates to experiences of refocusing attention with warmth, support, and kindness such as focusing on strengths, skills or positive attributes, positive memories and experiences of kindness or directing attention to encourage appreciation or gratitude.
Compassionate reasoning	Compassionate thinking and refocusing involves encouraging kind, helpful and supportive thoughts and reasoning about the world, self, and others.
Compassionate behaviour	Involves engaging with "genuine compassionate helpfulness" (p.235) and behaviour that is focused on preventing or alleviating distress and facilitating development and growth in self and others.
Compassionate imagery	Involves engaging in activities to encourage compassionate feelings for self and others. Such activities may involve, for example, exploring the image of an 'ideal' of compassion.
Compassionate feeling	Relates to experiencing compassion from others, for others and for the self through, for example, focused attention, thinking, behaviour and imagery.
Compassionate sensation	Relates to exploring physiological sensations associated with feelings of warmth, support and kindness when being compassionate, experiencing compassion from others and being self-compassionate (2009).

The concept of the 'flow' of compassion:

A key feature in compassion focused approaches is the concept of the flow of compassion in relation to self, for others and from others. For Irons compassion for self involves self-compassion (2019). Irons and Beaumont suggest that cultivating a compassionate self is related to the conceptualisation of compassion as an identity, which can be developed through compassionate intentions and motivations with regards to thinking, attention, and behaviour (2017).

Irons suggests that compassion for others involves being sensitive to difficulties and distress in others and "being able to engage with it and tolerate their distress and having the motivation and commitment to try and alleviate their distress and suffering" (2019 p.98). For Welford experiences of compassion for others is beneficial for both self and others with regards to increasing feelings of emotional warmth and connection (2016). Irons and Beaumont suggest that feelings associated being kind, compassionate and caring to others has a variety of positive effects in relation to wellbeing that can be experienced and developed through recalling memoires of being compassionate to others, directing positive emotions and intentions such as joy, warmth and kindness to others and acts of kindness or compassionate actions (2017). Irons suggests that receiving and therefore experiencing compassion from others has a reassuring and calming physiological effect (2019). Irons and Beaumont suggest that being cared for and feeling cared for helps individuals regulate distress, tolerate difficulties in life and engage and explore the world with confidence (2017).

2.9 Key *processes and practices* in compassion focused approaches

According to Gilbert and Choden, cultivating and developing compassion can be associated with "the active stimulation of positive emotional systems and training in qualities of kindness, strength and courage", which can support the development of "mindful – noticing, allowing and accepting the experiences of kindness and empathetic validation that come to us from other people and developing self-kindness" (2013 p.325). Consequently, a key feature of compassion focused approaches is the concept of 'practice', where individuals are encouraged to engage with a variety of suggested exercises and training experiences. Gilbert suggests that such practices can involve, for example, developing mindful awareness and experiences, breathing rhythm exercises, sensory focusing, imagery and intentions (2009b). Additionally, Gilbert and Choden recommend using method-acting techniques to support visualisation and imagination with regards to exploring and developing compassionate qualities (2013). Anstiss, Passmore and Gilbert suggest that "guided, intentional practice of compassion focused activities and exercises have significant impact on a range of psychological and physiological systems including the frontal cortex, amygdala sensitivity, heart rate variability and immune functioning" (2020 p.41).

2.10 Key aspects of compassion focused approaches in school organisations

Of particular interest to this research are previous implementations of compassion focused approaches in schools which had the intention of supporting wellbeing. An early example of research exploring the implementation of compassion focused approaches in schools is that of Welford and Langmead (2015). Welford and Langmead (2015) suggested that a compassionate universal provision for supporting mental health and wellbeing in education could support greater understanding of self and others, connection with oneself, others and the community and a collective motivation to improve and achieve. While recognising that compassion focused approaches developed initially in therapeutic contexts, Welford and Langmead (2015) proposed that the framework and methods developed offered an approach to working or organising ideas for practitioners of all theoretical backgrounds to support individuals who may be experiencing difficulties or distress. Consequently, Welford and Langmead suggested that compassion focused approaches in education are *process* driven, rather than *technique* driven, and are associated with encouraging "a compassionate view of ourselves and others and a deep sense of 'common humanity' or commonality between us all" and the development of compassionate behaviour, attention, motivation, imagery, thinking, reasoning, and emotions (2015 p.74). As part of their development of compassion focused approaches in schools, Welford and Langmead incorporated principles, processes, and practices of compassion focused approaches into INSET days initially, with the intention of encouraging staff to "adopt an empathetic, compassionate and reflective approach to their roles" (Lee-Porter 2015 p. 2). Following the introduction of key processes, principles, and practices of compassion focused approaches to staff, training days, experiential classes, parent's evenings, and one-to-one sessions were offered. Core concepts relating to compassion focused principles, process and practices introduced by Welford and Langmead included;

- Understanding compassion
- Understanding the affect regulation system
- Understanding and developing a compassionate mind and
- Addressing shame, self-criticism and blocks to compassion (2015).

Having become familiar with concepts introduced, individuals apparently began to apply the approaches in their own lives and developed other ways of applying and adapting them. Examples of spontaneous applications provided by Welford and Langmead included staff, student and community-led innovations involving "adaptations to school policies and procedures, the development of a specific drama group, mindfulness walks, art displays, parent coffee mornings, shared lunch days and strategies for alumni engagement" (2015 p.75). According to Welford and Langmead (2015) informal feedback from the schools participating in the initiative suggested positive impacts including increased staff wellbeing through self-report and a decrease in sickness, increased parental engagement as measured by parental attendance in school activities and a decrease in low level disruptive behaviour and fixed term exclusions.

Al-Ghabban (2018) provides an additional example of the development of compassion focused approaches in a special school context. Having drawn on literature and research relating to psychology, mental health and wellbeing, Al-Ghabban explored a mixture of experiential vignettes and previous research drawn from his work as a teacher, senior leader and SEMH consultant to develop a "compassion framework" which aimed to "bring cohesion to the disparate approaches, systems and practices that have been designed to promote well-being and improve mental health in schools" (2018 p.177). Through drawing on a definition of compassion proposed by Gilbert and Choden (2013), Al-Ghabban (2018) initially explored the concepts of sensitivity to others and to self and a commitment to prevent and alleviate distress in relation to the context of SEMH schools. Al-Ghabban then explored Gilbert's (2009) compassionate attributes and skills in relation to the selected vignettes to further develop the compassion framework (2018). In addition to exploring vignettes which related mostly to interactions between staff and pupils, Al-Ghabban (2018) also recognised the importance of creating compassionate cultures, with compassionate leadership. Al-Ghabban (2018) suggested that the following considerations were important if a compassionate framework were to be successful and for compassionate cultures to be impactful:

- That compassion flows in different directions via all members of the school community and should underpin all interactions,
- That Government policy should reduce the factors that inhibit compassionate practices in schools,
- That schools should be encouraged to reflect on and decide what roles all individuals, including school leaders, can play in creating and developing compassionate cultures and communities,
- That school systems and structures are developed to facilitate compassionate practices and cultivate key compassionate competences (attributes and skills) in staff to support this process.

More recently Maratos et al (2019) undertook an in-depth exploration of the impact of introducing compassion focused approaches in a school setting. As part of this exploration, 78 participants including teaching staff, support workers, managerial staff, and counselling staff employed at a school specialising in supporting excluded 11-18 year olds, participated in six, 2.5hr CPD sessions, which introduced a variety of compassion focused principles, process and practices. To evaluate the effectiveness of implementing compassion focuses approaches, a questionnaire pack containing a variety of self-completion inventories and scales were provided two months prior to the CPD, one week before the CPD and one month after the CDP. A focus group interview was also undertaken. As part of the CPD sessions Maratos et al (2019) introduced a variety of core concepts relating to compassion focused principles and process, which included:

- Why we need compassion,
- What compassion is,
- Evolution, Genetics and the Brain,
- Built in biases,
- Old brain, New brain & Tricky brain,
- Interactive flow of compassion,
- Why develop and practice compassion?
- Defining compassion,
- The three circles model of emotion,
- Stimulus-response behaviours & imagery and

- Losing your self-critic – what would you fear?

A variety of compassion focused practices were also introduced, which included:

- Soothing rhythm breathing and kind/warm facial expression and tone,
- Soothing rhythm breathing and introduction to compassionate imagery (including mindful attention),
- Developing compassionate self-imagery (using compassionate self and compassionate other imagery),
- Developing ideal compassionate self (what would your ideal compassionate image look like, sound like, be like?).

According to Maratos et al (2019), the research aimed to explore the potential of introducing compassion focused approaches to support staff emotional difficulties. Key themes following data analysis were identified in relation to conflicts with colleagues and the benefits of the approach, coping with student's behaviour, the role of self-compassion in supporting the emotional demands of participant's professional roles and difficulties with disengaging from the school role. Maratos et al (2019) found that most participants would recommend the training to others and that those who had engaged in the compassion practices demonstrated increases in self-compassion and decreases in self-criticism. According to Maratos et al given that "high quality implementation was achieved", they suggest that their findings tentatively suggest that compassion focused approaches are feasible in school settings (2019 p.2255). Consequently, for Maratos et al the research offered additional support for previous research in other stressful employment settings, such as health care, suggesting the potential utility of compassion focused approaches outside of clinical settings (2019). Maratos et al concluded that compassion focused approaches "could prove useful in providing some relief from the negative well-being factors teachers experience" and recommend further examination of such approaches to improved staff wellbeing in school settings (2019 p.2255).

The most recent study to explore the impact of introducing a compassion focused approach in school settings was undertaken in Portugal by Matos et al (2022). The study investigated the effectiveness of introducing compassion focused principles, processes, and practices to teaching staff, in groups, as part of an 8-session programme. Sessions were approximately 2.5 hours each. The content of the programme was a revised version of a brief programme previously introduced to a general public group (Matos et al 2017) and the Maratos et al (2019) programme for schools discussed previously. The randomised control study involved 155 teachers. 80 teachers participated in the compassion focused programme, while 75 teachers participated in a waitlist control group. All participants completed self-report measures of psychological distress, burnout, overall and professional wellbeing, compassion and self-criticism at prior to participation, immediately after participation and again after 3 months. Resting Heart Rate Variability (HRV) prior to and after the programme was also measured in a sub-sample of participants. Findings indicated that teachers who participated in the programme showed improvements in self compassion, compassion to others, positive affect and HRV and reductions in fears of compassion, anxiety, and depression. Teachers who scored higher in self-criticism at the beginning of the programme also revealed improvements following their participation in the programme. The study concluded by stating that participation in the programme enhanced compassion and wellbeing and reduced psychophysiological distress.

These studies offered useful insights into the development of programmes where compassion focused principles, processes and practices were introduced in schools with the intention of supporting teacher wellbeing. The core concepts and practices descried in these studies and other studies, influenced those introduced to teachers in this research to explore the relevance of compassion to their professional experiences.

3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction to the methodology

In recognition of concerns previously identified in the literature review in relation to teacher wellbeing, and because of a lack of Government guidance with regards to support for their wellbeing, this research aimed to examine teachers' professional experiences in the context of SEMH special schools and to explore how their wellbeing was supported, or not. The section of special schools that support children with complex profiles associated with communication difficulties, SEMH needs, and 'challenging' behaviours was important because Adera and Bulldock (2010) found that such experiences can have an impact on teacher wellbeing. Cole (2010), Nelson et al (2001) and Warin (2017) found that daily experiences and interactions when supporting children with complex profiles can be physically and emotionally draining and that such experiences can impact on teacher wellbeing and increase the risk of developing job-related stress.

Undertaking research in SEMH special schools was also recognised as being particularly important because Rae, Cowell and Field found that such experiences were more likely when children exhibit heightened emotions (2017). Given previous suggestions by Hargreaves (2000), Loh and Liew (2016) and Kidger et al (2010) that the emotional work of teachers has been a neglected dimension of previous research and in recognition that the emotional demands of a teacher's work can be amplified when working with more vulnerable children (Edwards, 2016), this research also aimed to develop greater understanding of the emotional work of teachers in SEMH settings by exploring Hochschild's previous conceptualisations of emotional labour.

At the onset of this research only Welford and Langmead (2015) had previously investigated of how teacher wellbeing was supported following the introduction of compassion focused approaches in mainstream schools. Consequently, this researched aimed to explore the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to teachers' emotional work and support for their wellbeing in the specific contexts of SEMH special schools.

While this research was being developed and undertaken, it is recognised that more recent research by Maratos et al (2019) and Matos et al (2022) also identified several benefits to teacher wellbeing following participation in a structured compassion focused programme. Given these considerations the following research questions guided the research rationale and procedure.

3.2 Research questions

Figure 4 provides a visual representation of the research process designed to examine teachers' emotional work, support for their wellbeing and the role of compassion. To guide the research process the overarching research question was: How is teacher wellbeing supported in the context of three SEMH special schools? To develop a depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding in relation to teachers' experiences in schools that support children with complex SEMH needs and to be able to compare these experiences, three special schools in the South East of England were selected as case study schools.

The research aimed to respond to the following research questions:

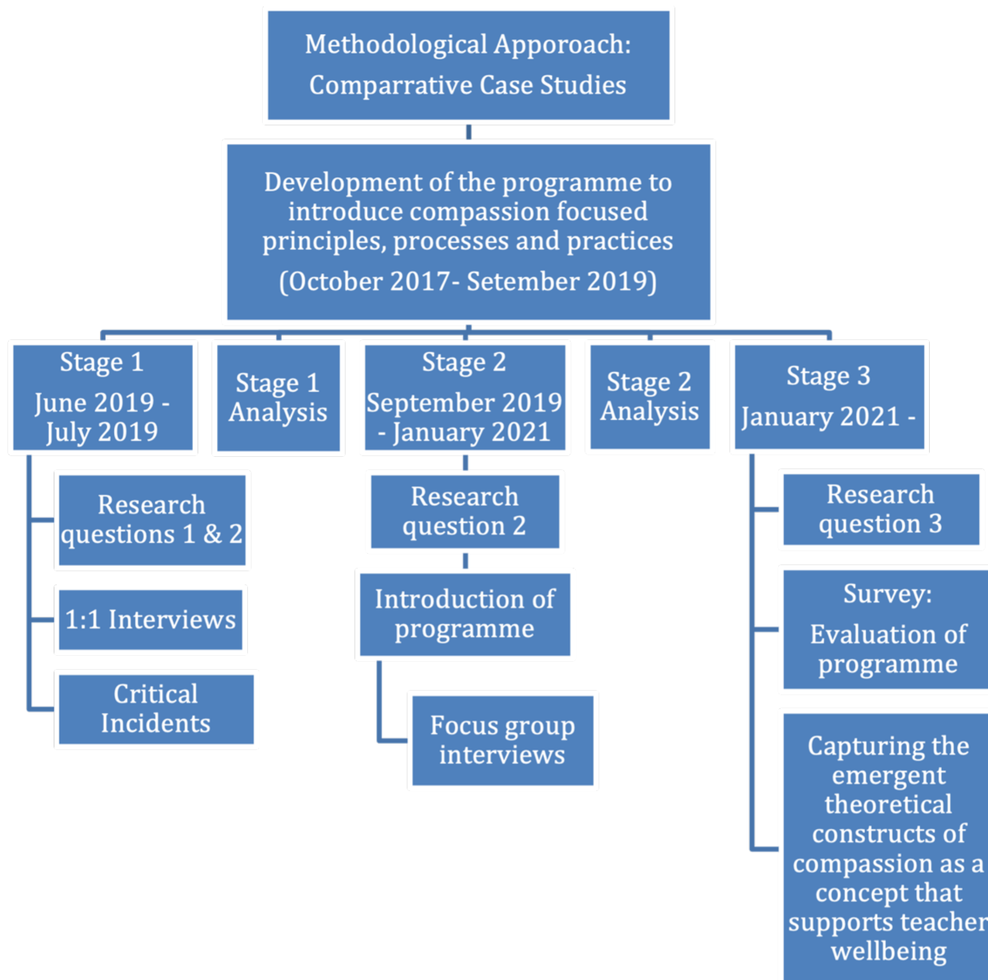
- How do teachers describe the emotional work that they engage in as part of their professional roles? (RQ1)

- How do teachers describe support for wellbeing in relation to their professional roles? (RQ2)

- What is the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices to teachers' professional roles? (RQ3)

- What are the emergent theoretical constructs of compassion as a concept that supports teacher wellbeing? (RQ4)

Figure 4 An overview of the research process



3.3 Research rationale

3.3.1 Ontological and Epistemological considerations

Given the potential interaction of a variety of individual, occupational, and contextual factors that may or may not influence the emotional work of teachers, their wellbeing and support for their wellbeing, Critical Realism initially guided the research process given the ontological complexity of exploring such factors in the social contexts of schools.

Bhaskars concept of reality being stratified or laminated was particularly useful in exploring factors which may influence social phemomena such as teachers' experiences in the specific social contexts and circumstances of each selected SEMH setting (Bhaskar, Danemerark and Price, 2017). Additionally, Rothi, Leavey and Loewnthahl (2010) provided a useful categorisation of work-related factors that have been associated with teacher wellbeing by identifying affective, cognitive, behavioural, physical, and interpersonal factors which can be associated with different symptoms of stress, distress and mental health problems. These, again, can be understood from the perspective of Critical Realism by considering how potential contexts and circumstances may influence teacher wellbeing. An awareness that a variety of factors might influence teacher wellbeing also supported the analysis of findings reported here.

Recent research which has explored the impact of introducing compassion-based approaches to teachers have tended to use empirical methodological approaches. Consequently, pre and post intervention measures or Randomised Control Trials have been employed. In addition to questionnaires and focus group interviews, Maratos et al (2019), for example, employed the use of various psychometric scales and measures, which were completed by teachers before a 6-module compassion focused intervention and then compared sometime after the intervention. Similarly, Matos et al (2022) undertook an 8-session compassion focused intervention and employed the use of pre and post intervention scales, but also undertook a Heart Rate Variability Assessment to examine changes in physiological measures.

While the empirical use of scales and measurements offer useful insights into potential psychological and physiological change in response to participation in pre and post

intervention studies, this research was more interested in exploring teachers' professional experiences in relation to emotional work, support for their wellbeing and their reflections on the relevance of compassion to their professional roles. Consequently, to gain insights into teachers' interpretations of the interaction of individual, occupational and contextual factors that may have influenced their professional experiences, qualitative methodological approaches associated with the use case studies, one-to-one interviews and focus group interviews were deemed to be more appropriate than the use of scales and measures associated pre and post intervention studies. Qualitative research was selected as a research approach because of the importance of exploring "the 'meanings' through which personal and social reality can be understood" (Pring, 2000 p.45). It is recognised that knowledge of the social world is influenced by and affected by the research process, so is essentially constructed. Consequently, Pring suggests that the reality being researched cannot be independent from the researcher (2000).

Having carefully engaged with such considerations, this research adopted an ontological position of social constructivism in recognition that "social phenomena and meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors" (Bryman 2008 p.19). In the context of this research, a social constructivist ontological position recognised the need to reveal how teachers understand and make sense of their professional experiences in the context of the three SEMH special schools (Robson 2011). With regards to attempting to understand the social world of teachers, this research recognised that "reality is neither objective, nor singular but multiple realities are constructed by individuals" (Waring 2017 p.16 in Coe et al). Consequently, perspectives were sought from participants across three settings. Given that this research aimed to explore emotional work, wellbeing and compassion, social constructivism was considered an appropriate position to adopt in recognition that such "social phenomena and categories are not only produced through social interaction but that they are in a constant state of revision" (Bryman 2008 p.19).

According to the epistemological position of interpretivism this research focused on "how the social world is interpreted by those involved in it" (Robson 2011 p.24). By encouraging teachers to reflect on their professional experiences, this research aimed

to explore how they interpret the world around them. The adoption of an interpretivist epistemological position was also able to accommodate my positionality, described previously, with regards to a reflexive recognition of my previous professional experiences and my ongoing engagement with research and literature. Consequently, as recognised by Bryman this research involved the following levels of interpretation:

Level 1: Teachers' interpretations of their professional experiences,

Level 2: My interpretations of their interpretations and

Level 3: A further interpretation of teachers' interpretations in recognition of "concepts, theories, and literature" (2008 p.17) having engaged in a process of deep engagement with previous research.

Level 1 of this interpretivist process involved encouraging teachers' interpretations of their professional experiences through their participation in one-to-one interviews and their sharing of critical incidents during stage 1 of the research and their engagement during the focus group interviews during stage 2 of the research.

Level 2 of this interpretivist process was ongoing throughout the research and involved my reflective considerations during and after the individual interviews, my engagement with the critical incidents provided by participants and my further reflective considerations during and after the focus group interviews. These reflective considerations were also undertaken during the extended process of data analysis described later.

Level 3 of this interpretivist process was guided by my ongoing engagement with previous and current research which informed my interpretation of findings, the conclusion and the implications and recommendations offered at the end of this research.

3.3.2 Positionality

From the onset, this research was developed with an ongoing reflexive awareness of my own extensive prior professional experiences of working in SEMH special school settings that support children who at times exhibited high levels of distress.

Laurie and Jenson (2016) make the distinction between insider research, where the researcher already belongs to the researched community or is undertaking research in a setting which they are personally or professionally familiar with and outsider research, where the researcher conducts research in an unfamiliar environment. It is recognised that there may be advantages to being an insider researcher in that the researcher is likely to have considerably more knowledge than an outsider researcher would (Salvin-Baden and Major 2013). This knowledge may relate, for example, to an increased understanding of group culture, increased likelihood for participants to share personal information or insights and less impact on social interactions due to researcher presence (Laurie and Jenson 2016).

However, it is also important to appreciate disadvantages associated with being an insider researcher, such as the possibility of the 'blurring of boundaries' between the researcher and the researched, which could introduce potential bias and subjectivity, leading to missing important information, making false assumptions, or misinterpreting data (Salvin-Baden and Major 2013 p.343). Within the context of research, it is important to appreciate that the dichotomous conceptualisation of 'inside' and 'outside' has been suggested to be too fixed to examine the complex social construction of knowledge in specific contexts (O'Boyle 2017).

Identity is recognised as being "a complex, multi-layered, and dynamic phenomenon that is both fluid and situational, yet retaining core characteristics" (Muhammad et al 2015 p.1047). Muhammad et al suggest that individuals have multiple identities, which are influenced by 'ascribed' characteristics (e.g., cultural background, ethnicity/race, sexual orientation, ability and gender), 'achieved' characteristics (e.g., education, employment, social position), self-perception of one's own identify and how others view an individual's identity (2015 p.1047). This understanding of multiple identities can be related to the concept of 'levels of insiderness' where a researcher may experience being both an 'insider' and an 'outsider' during the research process depending on aspects of the research design and process (Flyod and Arthur 2010 p.4).

Spiro and Chrisfield (2018) propose that the concept of 'insider/outsider' might be more appropriately considered as "points on a spectrum" (p.3). Such a conceptualisation supports a recognition that balance can be achieved between what an insider "sees and

knows" and the "distancing and criticality" that can be supported from an outsider perspective (Spiro and Chrisfield 2018 p.4).

Reflexivity or self-reflection is recognised as being a particularly important process within qualitative research, which encourages evaluating assumptions, feelings, and ways in which personal responses to research participants and situations might affect data collection and analysis (Laurie and Jenson 2016). While the process of reflexivity may be useful in socially situating knowledge claims, Haney suggests the importance of critically in considering this process, particularly in that reflexivity "must be understood in relation to specific research settings" (1996 p. 776). Consequently, despite examining teachers' emotional work and exploring support for wellbeing from the position of an 'outsider' researcher to maintain objectivity, all research developments, and reflections throughout have been informed by an 'insider' perspective. My own 'insider' professional experiences of supporting children with complex SEMH needs, who often experienced heightened emotions, regularly exhibited distress and could be verbally and emotionally abusive supported my empathetic awareness of participant experiences.

My insider-outsider positionality prior to, during and after the research supported an empathetic awareness of participants professional experiences, a depth of engagement and a desire to understand more about teachers' emotional work and support for their wellbeing in the context of the three selected SEMH special school settings. In recognition of complications with regards to a dichotomous separation of 'insider-outsider' within this research and the problem of positioning identified by Haney, the conceptualisation of being an outsider-evaluator with '*partial insider* experience', will be adopted here (Spiro and Chrisfield 2018 p.35).

3.3.3 The use of comparative case studies

To provide a variety of opportunities for participants to share their professional experiences, comparative case studies were designed. As recognised by Pring, the use of a case study is an important strategy to explore "the uniqueness of events or actions, arising from their being shaped by the meanings of those who are the participants in the situation" (2015 p.54).

Yin defines a case study as;

“an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomena within it’s real life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomena and context are not clearly evident” (2003 p.13).

Given that the aim of this research was to explore teachers’ emotional work, support for their wellbeing and the role of compassion, case studies were selected as an appropriate research strategy. According to Yin, case studies are particularly useful when exploring ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions which have an explanatory intention, such as developing insights into teachers’ emotional work and how well teacher wellbeing is supported, or not, in the context of the three SEMH schools (2014). Yin suggests that using more than one case study supports the development of a “rich theoretical framework” (2003 p.43) and enables ‘cross-case’ comparisons (Yin 2014). Consequently, three SEMH special schools in the South East of England were purposefully selected to enable a detailed comparison of participant experiences. To examine a variety of participant experiences Head Teachers and teachers were invited participate in this research. To develop further insights into participant experiences, well informed external visitors who had engaged with each school over a prolonged period of time were also invited to take part in this research.

3.3.4 Ethical decision making

Given the potential sensitivities associated with discussing emotional work, wellbeing and support for wellbeing, an extended process of ethical engagement took place. In addition to seeking formal ethical approval from the University Research Ethics Committee which is described in more detail later, ethical decision making was ongoing and adaptations to the research process occurred on several occasions in response to difficult contextual circumstances. Given an awareness of potential sensitivities associated with discussing emotional work and wellbeing with participants that might be associated with their own wellbeing, the wellbeing of children or colleagues, ethical considerations were deemed to be particularly important prior to undertaking the research.

Because the research was carried out in schools that support children with complex SEMH needs, it was also important to recognise that participants may regularly encounter professionally demanding situations, may have concerns about the children they work with or their colleagues, and may experience a variety of difficult emotions. This awareness influenced ethical considerations throughout the research process. Given that stage 2 of the research involved visiting participants in each school on six separate occasions, the ethical process was ongoing and was responsive to contextual circumstances and participant experiences.

Throughout stage 2 of the research, several circumstances and experiences required ethical responses, where planned activities had to be changed. On one occasion, for example, a participant arrived at a session concerned about a pupil. The pupil had recently deliberately swallowed a battery and had been taken to hospital. On another occasion, a participant arrived at a session having just been spat at in the face. Following these and other concerning circumstances, sessions were delayed so participants could be emotionally supported. Some sessions were cancelled and re-arranged because of, for example, a power cut, an OfSTED visit and a school trip where children had damaged property, absconded and verbally and physically abused staff. Tragically, during stage 2 of the research, two participants from the same school died. Participants were clearly emotionally distressed by these experiences and the research process was postponed. Because participants were keen to continue with the research, sessions began again when participants stated they were ready. In the final stages of research, sessions were cancelled due to Covid-19. Because of uncertainty about being able to visit schools, the final focus group interview in one school took place virtually.

3.4 Methodological approaches undertaken

3.4.1 One to one semi structured interviews

One to one interviews took place during stage 1 of this research. According to Mears, interviews attempt to reveal what another person "has experienced, what he or she thinks and feels about it, and what significance or meaning it might have" (2017 p.184 in Coe et al). The use of open questions developed for the interviews and described in more detail later aimed to encourage participants to "answer freely based on personal reflection, knowledge and experience" (Laurie and Jenson 2016 p. 173). The one-to-

one semi structured interviews aimed to initially explore teachers' emotional work, their wellbeing and support for their wellbeing to learn more about personal and professional perspectives and experiences and events in the specific contexts of each SEMH special school (Mears, 2017 in Coe et al).

3.4.2 Critical incidents

Each one to one interview concluded by encouraging participants to reflect on a critical incident by describing a recent event or experience that had had an impact on their wellbeing. Critical incidents were initially conceptualised by Flanagan in the following extended definition;

"By an incident is meant any observable human activity that is sufficiently complete in itself to permit inferences and predictions to be made about the person performing the act. To be critical, an incident must occur in a situation where the purpose or intent of the act seems fairly clear to the observer and where its consequences are sufficiently definite to leave little doubt concerning its effects" (Flanagan 1954 p.1)

Critical incidents are suggested to provide useful insights into experiences because they provide "a record of specific behaviors from those in the best position to make the necessary observations and evaluations" (Flanagan 1954 p.30). Yair suggests that, within the context of education, critical incidents can influence practitioner thinking and can, therefore, support their professional development (2008). Critical incidents can provide examples of exceptions to routine practice and consequently often contain "rich information that allows one to go beyond mundane experiences" (Yair 2008 p.94).

Critical incidents are recognised as being "major events" that can be both positive, such as affirming events and challenging with regards to negative experiences (McGarr and McCormack 2016). With regards to this experience, McGarr and McCormack define a critical incident as "a significant event in the experience of the teacher whether or not it initiates a deep level of reflection and analysis" (2016 p. 29-40). Given that this research aimed to provide opportunities for participants to share reflections in relation to their daily professional experiences, critical incidents were selected to encourage their interpretations of emotional work and support for wellbeing.

3.4.3 Focus group interviews

To explore the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to participants that were introduced during the six sessions in stage 2 of the research, focus group interviews were used in recognition of their appropriateness to examine a particular situation, phenomena, or event and to gain an in depth understanding about the perspectives of individuals who had been involved in such experiences (Robson 2011). It was also recognised that because focus group interviews involve group interaction, interesting perspectives would be offered as participants might agree, challenge, or influence each other with regards to exploring the relevance of compassion focused principles, process, and practices to their professional roles together (Laurie and Jenson 2016). The process of developing the six sessions to introduce selected compassion focused principles, processes and practices through the focus group interviews is described in more detail later.

3.5 Analysis

3.5.1 Analysis of stage 1 interviews to inform development of stage 2 of the research

Following completion of stage 1 of the research, data from interviews and 'critical incidents' were analysed using a Computer Assisted Qualitative Analysis (CAQDAS) programme in recognition of the amount of data to be analysed and their complexity (Gibbs 2017 in Coe et al). Interviews were fully transcribed to begin the process of analysis. The process of full transcription supported initial familiarisation with data and the generation of initial codes. These codes represented potential and emerging themes (Roberts 2011). Emerging themes were identified and classified initially into nodes, from which themes and sub-themes were developed (Bryman 2008).

NVivo was used to analyse the interview data which enabled the comparison of units of analysis following this thematic coding (Roberts 2011). After an extended process of becoming familiar with interview transcriptions and the NVivo programme, a forensic and prolonged analysis of data was undertaken. Appendix 16 provides a detailed overview of the coding analysis schedule and shows how NVivo was used to compare emergent themes in relation to the different schools and different participant roles. The creation of different nodes supported the thematic analysis of data gathered from the various participants and enabled individual, with and between school

comparisons. Findings of relevance were then explored with teachers in stage 2 of the research during the focus group interviews. These themes supported the contextualisation of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices with regards to individual participant experiences and in recognition of their specific school contexts. A more detailed description of the processes of analysis is described at the onset of the research findings section.

3.5.2 Analysis of Stage 2

NVivo was used again to analyse the transcripts of the six focus group interviews. Interviews were fully transcribed, and text was coded against the specific aspects of the compassion focused principles, process and practices introduced during focus group interviews. Content of the interactive six focus group interview where compassion focused principles, process and practices were introduced are described in Appendix 5. This content guided the coding of stage 2 interview transcriptions.

3.6 Research Procedure

The following describes the research procedure and includes details relating to defining the cases, participant selection and gaining ethical approval. Methodological approaches undertaken are then described in detail with regards to stage 1 and 2 of the research and an overview of stage 3 of the research is then provided.

3.6.1 Defining the 'cases'

Given the intention of this research, the case studies undertaken here aimed to "make explicit a problem or pattern of difficulties that is recurrent and in the main relates to a given context" (Savin-Baden and Major 2013 p. 156). Three case study special schools were purposefully selected to participate in this research due to sharing similar characteristics. Each special school provides support for children with a broad range of SEMH needs and were selected due to an appreciation of the increasing complexity of needs exhibited by the children. Consequently, an academy special school (Cherry Blossom School), an independent special school (Apple Wood School) and a residential special school (Birch Tree School) which all cater for primary school aged children, were purposefully selected as the individual cases for comparison.

3.6.2 The purposefully selected SEMH Special Schools

Cherry Blossom School

OfSTED 2012/16 Rating:	Outstanding
OfSTED 2020 Rating:	Inadequate
2020 school closed	New Academy Trust opened

Cherry Blossom School is an academy primary special school of average size, which caters for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health difficulties. Many pupils have additional needs including Autistic Spectrum Disorders and Speech Language and Communication Difficulties. Every pupil attending the school has an Education, Health and Care Plan. While the majority of pupils at the school are boys, this is a co-educational school. The school caters for pupils from across the county. The majority of pupils at the school are from While British backgrounds and all speak English as their first language. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is more than the national average. There are very few pupils in the care of the local authority.

Number of pupils: 86

Apple Wood School

OfSTED 2012/16 Rating:	Good
OfSTED 2019	Outstanding

Apple Wood School is an independent co-educational day primary special school which caters for pupils with a broad range of Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties, Social Communication Difficulties, Speech, Language and Communication Difficulties, anxiety, gaps in learning and physical and sensory difficulties. Pupil's needs are primarily associated with Autism, Emotional and Behavioural difficulties and Speech and Language or Communication Difficulties. All pupils attending the school have an Education, Health and Care Plan and are placed in the school by their Local Authority. The school is registered for 30 pupils, the vast majority of whom are boys. A large majority of pupils are White British. A few pupils speak English as an additional language.

Number of pupils: 36

Birch Tree School

OfSTED 2012/2016/2017 Rating:	Outstanding
OfSTED 2018 Short Inspection:	Outstanding

Birch Tree School is a residential primary special school which caters for pupils with a wide range of severe Emotional, Behavioural and Social Difficulties. The school provides integrated 38 and 52 week specialist therapeutic care, treatment and education for vulnerable children from all over the UK. While the majority of pupils at the school are boys, this is a co-educational school. The proportion of pupils from ethnic groups is lower than average. A high proportion of pupils are eligible for pupil premium relating to those children who are in the care of the local authority and pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

Number of pupils: 22

In addition to the contextual conditions and specific circumstances of each school with regards to supporting pupils with a broad range of SEMH needs, the case study schools were also purposefully selected because all schools were known to the researcher due to previous professional experiences. Consequently, the researcher had the advantage of having some 'insider' knowledge of each setting and had already established a good rapport with each Head Teacher, as Gatekeepers. With regards to the use of linked case studies, these three SEMH special schools offered opportunities to explore contextual conditions and specific circumstances (Yin, 2003), while also exploring 'embedded' aspects of each case with regards to "one or more projects being carried out within a school" (Ashley 2017 p. 114 in Coe et al). For example, it was recognised that each school was likely to already have in place various approaches and strategies to support teachers' emotional work and wellbeing. The use of linked case studies provided opportunities to explore teachers' considerations with regards to aspects of these schools that were deemed to be effective with regards to supporting wellbeing and those that were not. It also was thought that teachers would be able to provide useful information with regards to any barriers experienced with regards to supporting

wellbeing and could offer useful ideas about how wellbeing could be better or further supported.

3.6.3 Participant Selection

Given the focus of this research, participants were purposefully selected because they shared characteristics that were deemed to be typical and of interest to the research process (Robson 2011). With regards to the intentions of this research, it was hoped that participants could provide valuable insights into experiences within each school (Laurie and Jenson 2016). Consequently, Head Teachers and teachers were invited to participate in this research. While these individuals made up a sample of the population of each selected school, it is recognised that they are only representative of each school and not, therefore, the wider national population of SEMH special school professionals. In addition to Head Teachers and teachers, three well-informed external visitors were also invited to participate in a one-to-one interview as part of stage 1 of the research process. The identification of the well-informed visitors involved a conversation between the researcher and each of the three Head Teachers.

It was intended that well-informed visitors would have an established relationship with each school and as outsiders, would be able to provide useful insights into teachers' emotional work and support for wellbeing in each school. All teachers in each school were invited to participate in a one-to-one interview during stage 1 of the research. The same teachers were also invited to share a recent event or experience that had had an impact on their wellbeing, to provide examples of critical incidents. Only teachers who participated in stage 1 of the research were invited to participate in the semi structured focused group interviews as part of stage 2 of the research.

Tables 3 and 4 show pseudonyms given to each participant to ensure anonymity. The average age of participants and average length of time working in each school is also given here.

Table 3 Stage 1 Participants

Role	**Apple Wood School**	**Birch Tree School**	**Cherry Blossom School**
Head Teacher	**Oliver**	**Imogen**	**Sebastian**
Deputy Head Teacher	Olivia	Oscar	Clara
Teacher	Alice	Arthur	Ella
Teacher	Charlotte	Grace	Lily
Teacher	Chloe	Finn	Phoenix
Teacher	Evelyn	Phoebe	Poppy
Teacher	Levi	Zara	
Teacher	Mia		
External Visitor: School Counsellor			Lucas
External Visitor: Director		Theodore	
Average Age	37 Years	41 Years	40 Years
Average length of time working at school	9 Years	5 Years	5 Years

Table 4 Stage 2 Participants

	Apple Wood School	Birch Tree School	Cherry Blossom School
Head Teacher	**Oliver**	**Imogen**	
Deputy Head Teacher	Olivia	Oscar	
Teacher	Alice	Arthur	Ella
Teacher	Charlotte	Grace	Lily
Teacher	Chloe	Finn	Phoenix
Teacher	Evelyn	Phoebe	Poppy
Teacher	Mia	Zara	

3.6.4 Ethical approval

The process of gaining ethical approval for this research initially involved completing an E2U form as part of the application for approval of a project involving human participants, data or material. The E2U form was initially approved by the relevant Research Ethics Officer, before being submitted for approval by the University Research Ethics Committee (Appendix 7). The E2U form required a declaration that conduct, and procedures undertaken as part of the research were in accordance with the University's Code of Practice for Ethical Standards for Research involving Human Participants (Oxford Brookes University 2016). The development of the research was also informed by the British Education Research Association Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (BERA 2018). Having reviewed the E2U form, the Faculty Research Ethics Officer and University Research Ethics Committee provided feedback which required that several conditions be met before approval was confirmed. Having met the conditions by responding to feedback and revising the E2U form, the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) approved the research by considering that methodological, technical and research ethic aspects of the research were appropriate to the tasks proposed and recommended approval of the project. It was confirmed that necessary qualifications, experiences, and facilities were evident to be able to conduct the research set out in the E2U application, and to deal with any emergencies or contingencies that may have arisen. The UREC approval letter can be found in Appendix 8.

In addition to stating the aims of the project and significance of the project, the E2U form provided opportunities to provide a justification for why the research should proceed and to propose expected benefits of the research to the community. Having provided a brief outline of the research and described what participants would be required to do as part of the research, methodological aspects of the research were also made clear. Here it was stated that three school settings had been purposefully selected on the basis that participants in these school's supported children with complex SEMH needs. Prior to undertaking the research, Head Teachers, as gatekeepers, provided oral permission to undertake research in each of their schools. E-mail correspondence from Head Teachers also provided informal written permission that the research could be undertaken in principle. Following approval from the University Research Ethics Committee, these Head Teachers provided formal written consent for members of their

schools to participant in both stages of the research and for themselves to participate as individuals. Information relating to potential participants was described and the inclusion criteria for participation was stated. The inclusion criteria required that participants were Head Teachers or practicing teachers at the selected schools or were well informed external visitors, recommended by Head Teachers, who were likely to have a good knowledge and understanding of the school through undertaking regular visits and having contact with staff, including participating teachers.

With regards to participant recruitment, having gained ethical approval from the University Research Ethics Committee to proceed with the research, a visit to each school was arranged to meet Head Teachers to provide details of the research project including the research aims and potential benefits of participation, an overview of methodological approaches, the inclusion criteria for participation, a timeline of research activities and future opportunities for the dissemination of findings. A second visit was then arranged to meet potential participants. During this meeting, a presentation was given to describe the research, provide information about participation and offer the opportunity for participants to ask questions.

The same presentation was given to participants in all three schools and included;

- An overview of the focus of the study
- A brief overview of the context of the research
- How participants would be invited to contribute to Stage 1 and Stage 2 of the research
- A brief overview of compassion focused approaches
- An overview of research approaches
- An overview of potential benefits of participation and
- An overview of potential disadvantages of participation

At these meetings, an overview of next steps with regards to considering participation was provided. The following documentation (Appendix 8- 13) was also provided at this stage:

- A brief research overview for participants
- A detailed research overview for participants and
- Participant consent forms

After the presentation and time allocated to read the paperwork, participants were invited to sign participant consent forms. Participants were offered the opportunity to read the documentation and sign consent forms, which were then collected at the end of the meeting or were offered additional time to read the documentation and were asked to give signed consent forms to their Head Teacher, to be collected on another occasion. Having voluntarily agreed to participate in the research process, all participants were made aware of their right to withdraw from any aspect of the research process, at any stage of the research, without explanation. It was stated that any data previously collected and, or subsequently analysed that was associated with a participant who later decided to withdraw from the research process, would be immediately destroyed and would not be included in any aspects of analysis of future publication. Following a third visit to each school to collect any additional voluntary consent forms, the research process began.

At a later date, all Head Teachers were then contacted to identify appropriate times for the one-to-one interviews to be undertaken. A schedule relating to the organisation of one to one interviews can be located in Appendix 14. Having completed the Stage 1 interviews, Head Teachers were contacted again to arrange the six one hour focus group interviews in each of the three schools as part of Stage 2 of the research. A schedule relating to the organisation of the focus group interviews can be found in Appendix 15.

While it was anticipated that no aspects of the research process would cause any physical, social, legal or economic risks associated with participation that were greater than those encountered in participants normal day to day life, it was recognised that exploring the emotional work of teachers and support for their wellbeing may be, at times, a sensitive area and may, therefore, represent a psychological risk. Recognition of psychological risk associated with exploring emotional work and support for wellbeing was particularly important given that participating teachers worked with and supported children who often exhibited high levels of distress. While it was recognised

that teachers are often encouraged to reflect on their daily experiences with regards to teaching and learning, it was also acknowledged that in schools that support children with complex SEMH needs, teachers may have in place established systems and procedures to support them, particularly in relation to their emotional wellbeing. It was thought that such systems and procedures could include encouraging teachers to discuss emotional concerns with colleagues, daily opportunities for staff briefings and de-briefings, and in some schools, regular supervision with senior colleagues. Consequently, it was hoped that participants in each school would have experience of sharing, discussing, and reflecting on experiences that may affect their emotional wellbeing, both positively and negatively.

With regards to the 1:1 semi-structured interviews, participants were asked open questions which aimed to explore personal opinions and experiences related to their professional roles, emotional work and support for wellbeing. Interviews took place in a location of participants choice within each school setting to help ensure they felt at ease. Because participants worked in each school on a daily basis, it was hoped that they already felt safe and secure within that environment. Prior to each 1:1 interview, participants were provided with the interview questions so that they were able to consider each question.

Definitions of key terms referred to in the interview questions were also provide prior to interviews. During the 1:1 interviews participants were encouraged to only share information that they felt comfortable sharing. If participants felt uncomfortable responding to any questions, they had a right not to respond. When providing examples of critical incidents, participants were encouraged to share a recent event or experience that had had an impact on their wellbeing. Because the question was open to interpretation, participants chose how to respond and self-selected the focus and content of these incidents.

Stage 2 of the research involved re-visiting each of the three schools for six one-hour sessions. During these sessions participants were encouraged to engage in a variety of activities to explore the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices.

At the beginning of each session participants were reminded of the following responsibilities:

- During sessions participants will be invited to participate in various activities and exercises
- All activities and exercises are completely voluntary
- Participants are responsible for their own wellbeing during these sessions
- Participants have the right to withdraw from any aspect of sessions by not participating
- All shared information is confidential
- All shared information will be anonymised prior to any future publication

It was hoped that participating in the research would support teacher wellbeing. Additionally, while all aspects of the research aimed to minimise and, if possible, eliminate completely any adverse effects on participants, it was recognised that the requirements of the research process would take up participant's time. It was anticipated that participating in the interviews would take approximately 20-30 minutes for each participant and that the semi-structured focus group conversations would require 360 minutes of each participant's time.

Following discussions with all Head Teachers, it was agreed that voluntary participation in aspects of the research would take place after school so that teaching commitments were not interrupted. Given that teachers are often expected to attend meetings and training after school for an hour, the focus group interviews were developed to fit the expectations of a regular teaching day. Each semi-structured focus group interview was anticipated to take 1 hour and was suggested to take place between 15:30 and 16:30 on an afternoon where no other after school meetings were taking place. Appendix 15 shows that the average time across all focus group interviews was 61 minutes. For Apple Wood School the average session length was 61 minutes, for Birch Tree School the average session length was 56 minutes and for Cherry Blossom School the average session length was 66 minutes.

It was hoped that the focus group interviews would take place every other week in each school, however school related circumstances and experiences described previously meant that sessions took place at the convenience of schools and participants. Consequently, the timings of the focus group interviews varied. Appendix 15 shows variation between sessions.

Data confidentiality, anonymity and privacy was ensured through the use of pseudonyms for individual schools and individual participants. With regards to ensuring the anonymity of the school localities it was important to provide a broad geographic area, so schools were only described as being in the South East of England.

With regards to data protection, access and security, all data was accessed by the researcher only. Data was stored in accordance with the Research Ethics for Research Involving Human Participants Code of Practice (Oxford Brookes University 2016) and Oxford Brookes University Research Data Management Policy (Oxford Brookes University 2017). Consequently, responsibility for research data management was considered initially through the implementation of a sound research data management plan that was checked and agreed by the Supervision Team initially and as part of seeking ethical approval. All data was saved on a password protected device.

All audio recordings of one-to-one interviews and video recordings of the focus group interviews were made using the researchers own lap-top, which is password protected. Back up audio recordings were made on a digital audio recorder which had USB connectivity. Before leaving the location of each school, each back up was uploaded onto the researcher's password protected lap-top. To ensure all digital data was further backed up, a Google Drive folder was created that was only accessible by the researcher.

3.7 Stage 1 of the research

3.7.1 Semi structured one to one interview's

One to one semi-structured interviews were undertaken to examine the following research questions:

- How do teachers describe the emotional work that they engage in as part of their professional roles? (RQ1)

- How do teachers describe support for wellbeing in relation to their professional roles? (QR2)

These one-to-one semi-structured interviews involved asking a series of pre-set questions with opportunities to ask additional, prompt questions in response to participant reactions and comments (Savin-Baden and Major 2013). Examples of interview questions can be found in Appendix 1.

With regards to strengths of the interview process, prior to each interview, all participants were provided the interview questions and definitions used throughout the research relating to emotional work and wellbeing (Appendix 2). These definitions were provided to support consistency in approach and to ensure that all participants understood key terms prior to each interview. It was hoped that, by providing interview questions before undertaking the interviews, participants would be able to consider their professional context and to reflect on aspects of their daily experiences that were particularly meaningful to them, prior to the interviews.

All interviews took place in person and were undertaken in participants schools because it was hoped that participants felt comfortable within their school environments. Interviews took place during the school day and at times that participants suggested were convenient. Encouraging participants to suggest a time to take part in the interview hoped to recognise professional demands experienced by teachers and aimed to facilitate a calm, relaxed interview context. Adopting a semi-structured interview format aimed to encourage a conversational style of engagement to encourage participant reflections. My positionality within the research process, as a partial-insider, supported my rapport with participants and encouraged open and honest dialogue. Participants were aware of my previous professional experiences of working in SEMH settings and during the interview process I was able respond to reflections in an affirming manner (Jenson and Laurie, 2016). During the interview process rapport was established through non-verbal communication such as exhibiting an open posture,

nodding, smiling, and maintaining focus on the speaker. Verbal encouragement using phrases such as: 'yes', 'right', 'would you like to tell me more about' aimed to facilitate participant reflection and discussion (Salvin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013).

Challenges experienced during the interview process were associated with trying to make prior arrangements to organise the individual interviews. Having gained Head Teacher permission to undertake the research, I initially communicated directly with them to identify days and times that might be convenient to visit each school. Having identified days and times that might be convenient, I then contacted individual participants to organise a specific day and time that would be convenient for them to take part in an interview. Given that 24 participants were invited to take part in one-to-one interviews, this process involved an extended period of email correspondence. While some participants responded quickly to enquires about organising interview times, others took longer and so the process of organising interviews was rather prolonged. Although all one-to-one interviews took place on one day in Apple Wood School, most interviews in Birch Tree School and Cherry Blossom School took place on different days. Consequently, I was required to travel to the different schools on different days and at different times which increased the time taken to complete this phase of the research.

As shown in Appendix 14 some interviews took place towards the end of the summer term which caused me some concern with regards to whether some one-to-one interviews might need to be delayed until the autumn term. Given the research timeline and the need to begin the process of analysis of interview data during the summer prior to beginning Phase 2 of the research, such delays would have negatively impacted on the overall research design. Fortunately, all interviews were completed prior to the end of the summer term and so the research schedule continued as planned.

3.7.2 Piloting the interviews

Developing, crafting, trialling, and refining the interview questions and interview technique is recognised as being an important aspect of the research process and provides an exploratory opportunity to check the feasibility of the research approach through undertaking a small-scale version of the intended research design (Robson 2011). Piloting the interview questions offered a chance to check how well the

questions operated with regards to phrasing and participant understanding, explore the relevance of responses in relation to the research questions and to consider the question order and flow of interview questions and responses (Bryman 2008). With regards to the interview technique, the pilot interviews offered opportunities to gain experience and confidence in organising the interview process, asking the specific semi-structured questions, and experimenting with spontaneous follow up questions to prompt, probe, specify, interpret, extend responses and if required, consider more indirect questions to explore more sensitive issues (Laurie and Jenson 2016). With regards to selecting participants for the pilot interviews Bryman recommends identifying a small set of respondents who are comparable and are therefore, representative of the population from which the full study will be drawn (2008). Of importance is that the pilot interview sample is not drawn from members of the full study population due to potentially influencing the representativeness of further sampling (Bryman 2008).

Six pilot interviews were undertaken two months prior to stage 1 interviews taking place. A Primary School Head Teacher, a Primary School teacher who had been teaching for four years, one 3rd Year Primary Initial Teacher Education student and three 2nd Year Primary Initial Teacher Education students took part in the pilot interviews.

The pilot interviews offered an opportunity to time the overall interview process to ensure that an accurate approximate interview length time could be given to future participants. The interview questions were trialled and in response to the pilot, the number of questions were subsequently reduced. The analysis of the pilot interviews revealed that participant responses were interesting and varied and responded well to the overall research questions.

Reflection on the interview approach following pilot interviews and having listened back to questions asked and responses given revealed the need to incorporate more silence and pauses, to slow the pace of questioning, give additional time for responses and to prevent interruptions to responses with further questioning or prompt questions. Listening back also revealed the need to develop a more boundaried approach to questioning by remaining focused on the semi-structured questions and not engaging in a more informal conversational style of interaction, which occurred during the early

stages of pilot interviewing. Reflection on the pilot interview process influenced future interviews for the main study. The pilot study confirmed accuracy with regards to the relationship between interview responses and the research questions, provided greater accuracy with regards to approximate interview timings and developed the interview approach. With regards to the interview process, welcoming and thanking each participant for their time, mirroring respondent's body language and providing positive affirmations throughout the interview process supported the development of rapport with respondents and the flow of the interviews. Providing additional time during the interviews through silence and pauses gave respondents opportunities to elaborate and provide additional information and being boundaried with regards to focusing questions on the semi-structured interview questions ensured greater consistency with regards to the interview structure.

3.7.3 Critical incidents

An additional research approach which aimed to provide further insight into teachers' emotional work and support for wellbeing, was the collection of 'critical incidents', described previously. As part of this research, at the end of each one-to-one interview during stage 1 of the research, all participants were encouraged to share an event or experience that had had an impact on their wellbeing. In their original conceptualisation, Flanagan documented a variety of approaches for recording critical incidents including interviews, group interviews and questionnaires (1954). However, 'recorded forms' in the form of written records were also described. During stage 1 of the research, shared examples of events or experiences that had had an impact on wellbeing were audio recorded. All critical incidents were then fully transcribed and analysed to develop themes for comparison.

Of interest to this research were significant events that had specifically had an impact on participants wellbeing. Given the ambiguity of definitions and recognition that critical incidents can be both positive and negative, participants self-selected what to share. As recognised by Harrison and Lee, critical incidents can be conceptualised as being important or significant personal episodes which may provide interesting and important insights into participants experiences of particular events within specific contexts (2010). By introducing an open-ended activity and encouraging participants to self-select critical incidents following reflection, teachers had the "freedom to

'choose' critical events" (Harrison and Lee 2010 p.200). The analysis of these self-selected critical incidents provided useful insights into teachers' emotional work and wellbeing. Following the analysis of critical incidents at the end of stage 1 of the research, selected elements formed the basis of vignettes which were then explored with participants in their final semi-structured focus group interview to conclude stage 2 of the research.

3.8 Stage 2 of the research

3.8.1 Developing a six-session programme to introduce compassion focused principles, processes, and practices to participants

In preparation for stage 2 of the research, a six-session programme was developed between October 2017 and September 2019 to introduce participants to compassion focused principles, processes, and practices. Participation in these six sessions hoped to support responses to the following research question;

- What is the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices to teachers' professional roles? (RQ3)

Figure 5 shows the process of becoming familiar with compassion focused principles, processes, and practices, which informed the ongoing development of the programme that was then introduced to participants during stage 2 of the research.

Developing an in-depth understanding of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices involved ongoing engagement with research and a community of others interested in the role of compassion to support wellbeing. Appendix 3 details the process of becoming familiar with compassion focused principles, processes and practices. A list of references relating to key readings that informed the development of the six session programme introduced to participants in stage 2 of the research can be found in Appendix 4.

Figure 5 Process of familiarisation with compassion focused principles, processes and practices

To ensure consistency in the delivery of the programme across all three schools, a detailed presentation was also developed for each session. Each presentation reflected the content described in the planning document and included;

- An overview of the relevant theoretical concepts and ideas that underpinned the compassion focused *principles* for each specific session,
- A variety of images to represent theoretical concepts and ideas explored in each session,

- A variety of interactive activities and exercises which related to specific compassion focused *processes* and *practices* for participants to engage in during each session,
- A variety of questions for participants to respond to during sessions which encouraged reflection on the relevance of the specific compassion focused principles, processes and practices that were introduced in each session,
- A variety of suggested follow up activities.

Prior to starting each session, a laptop was set up to enable the session to be video recorded and a digital audio recorder was placed in the centre of the table where participants sat in a circle. Any resources used in each session, such as A3 paper and coloured pens, were arranged prior to participant's arriving. Before sessions started participants were encouraged to get refreshments, were welcomed on arrival, and some time was dedicated to catching up and emotionally checking in with each other. It was possible, therefore, to gauge participant wellbeing based on experiences shared and to make a judgement about how the session would proceed. On some occasions, due to contextual circumstances and participant distress following various incidents and experiences, sessions were reorganised, re-arranged or cancelled. Having proceeded with a session, participants were initially encouraged to try to recall any aspects of the previous session and to consider the relevance of introduced compassion focused principles, processes, and practices to their professional roles.

Each session also began with participant reminders about the following questions that they would be encouraged to reflect on:

- What is familiar?
- What is unfamiliar?
- What may be supportive?
- What wouldn't be supportive?
- What might be relevant (or not) to you and other individuals?
- What might be relevant (or not) to this organisation?

Session structures remained the same over the six sessions and reminders were also given at the beginning of each session in relation the following research aims:

- To introduce some theoretical concepts and ideas relating to compassion focused principles, processes and practices
- To engage in some activities and exercises relating to compassion focused principles, processes and practices
- To explore the relevance of the compassion focused principles, processes and practices introduced in each session to participants, others and the school organisations.

At the end of each session, paper copies of suggested additional readings were given out and the relevant presentation was then sent via e-mail to all participants. Other post session follow up activities, including; additional readings, audio recordings and video recordings were also shared with participants via e-mail. The interactive 6 session compassion focused programme, including post session follow up activities can be found in Appendix 5.

3.8.2 Structure of the focus group interviews

To support consistency in exploring the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to participants professional roles, a semi structured focus group interview format was followed. Laurie and Jenson (2016) provide a useful example for the structure of a focus group interview, which is summarised in Table 5

Table 5 Example structure of a focus group interview

Task	Organisation	Activity
Initial briefing	Researcher led	Researcher convenes the focus group and reiterates information provided to participants during recruitment.
General discussion	Researcher led using pre-selected open questions	Facilitated by researcher, open-ended questions are asked to probe participants views.
Group activity	Participant led	Facilitated by researcher, participants are encouraged to engage in group work which may involve pre-prepared activities relating to the focus of the interview sessions.
Presentation of group activity output	Participant led	Participant led. Results from group work are shared. Here participants describe the content of the results of the group activity. All participants are encouraged to comment.
Follow up questions	Researcher led	Researcher may like to ask follow up questions about the output of the group activity.
Final questionnaire	Individuals	Participants may be asked to complete a questionnaire to provide opportunities to share anything they, as individuals, feel have been missed during the session and to reflect on their experiences of taking part in the focus group interview.

An adapted version of Laurie and Jenson's (2016) semi structured focus group interview format guided the development of stage 2 of this research.

As previously described in section 3.8.1 each focus group session followed a consistent structure. A strength of following a consistent focus group structure was that participants became familiar with the interview process. Such familiarity provided regular opportunities for participants to engage in-depth discussion (Salvin-Baden and Howell Major, 2013) and to explore collective perspectives (Gibbs, 2017) in relation to the compassion focused principles, processes and practices that were introduced. Having undertaken the one-to-one interviews during phase 1 of the research, I had already had opportunities to develop a rapport and connection with participants. Prior to taking part in each focus group interviews, steps were taken to try and support participants to feel relaxed and comfortable. On one occasion, I made a vegan cake to take to each school and on another occasion, I took a box of chocolate into each school to share at the beginning of the session, for example.

Beginning each session with some form of refreshment was influenced by my prior professional experiences of working in SEMH settings. Having an awareness of the kinds of professional experiences that might be involved in teaching all day in such settings informed my attempts to try and provide a calm space in which the focus group interview would take place.

Another strength of undertaking focus group interviews was associated with being able to develop a variety of activities for participants to take part it. Because participants were encouraged to take part in these activities, sessions were interactive and provided space and time to collaboratively reflect on professional experiences. Robson suggested that "participants tend to enjoy the experience" of focus group interviews (2011 p.294) and reflections during and after sessions suggested that participants appeared engaged and interested. An advantage of undertaking focus group interviews, as recognised previously by Laurie and Jenson, was related to participants feeling able to openly discuss professional experiences and issues (2016). At times, for example, participants reflected on experiences that they were unsure of how to resolve or described issues that they were worried about. Having openly shared such experiences and issues, participants demonstrated empathetic concern for each other through offering support and guidance. At other times, individual participants shared emotions or feelings that they assumed were only relevant to them, however, often, other participants confirmed that they had also experienced such emotions or feelings. Such examples suggest that participants felt comfortable with the interview experience and felt able to reflect together about experiences and issues that were particularly meaningful for them. Consequently, the focus group interview sessions were suggested to be helpful in developing shared understandings of professional experiences and issues. Feedback following participation in the six focus group sessions suggested that participants found it useful to be able to talk openly, honestly and confidentially with an impartial person about their professional experiences.

Challenges associated with the focus group interviews were associated with time. Organising the six one-hour sessions involved regularly communicating with Head Teachers. Although sessions were anticipated to take place every other week, this was not always possible due to changes in school circumstances. Consequently, the organisation of sessions required flexibility and responsiveness to participants on-going

professional commitments. Sometimes, having arrived at a school, due to contextual circumstances, there was a need to cancel and re-arrange a session. As shown in Appendix 15, a number of delays were experienced between sessions. Consequently, when encouraged to reflect on the relevance of content from the previous sessions, participants often required reminders to support initial session discussions. For example, due to Covid-19, session 6 was undertaken on-line with Apple Wood School 330 days after session 5. Another challenge associated with undertaking the focus group interviews was the time at which these sessions took place. In recognition of the need to try and minimise the impact of taking part in these sessions, it was agreed that the focus group interviews would take place during participants working hours. Consequently, sessions took place between 15:30 and 16:30. Despite encouraging a warm welcome to sessions, on occasions it was evident that some participants had experienced difficulties associated with their professional roles prior to joining the group. Some were also distracted by tasks that they were required to complete before leaving school after the session. An awareness of such experiences guided my interactions with participants, and I tried to respond to participant difficulties with care and sensitivity.

A final questionnaire was distributed in the form of a post session survey which provided the opportunity for participants to offer feedback with regards to their engagement during sessions, the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to their professional roles and suggestions for how the sessions could be further developed. The survey can be found in Appendix 6.

3.9 Stage 3 of the research

Stage 3 of the research aimed to respond to the final research question:

- What are the emergent theoretical constructs of compassion as a concept that supports teacher wellbeing? (RQ4)

This stage of the research involved no participants but instead required that Stage 1 and Stage 2 findings were revisited so that important emergent constructs and experiences

could be considered in relation to developing a conceptualisation of how compassion might support teacher wellbeing.

4. Stage 1 research findings

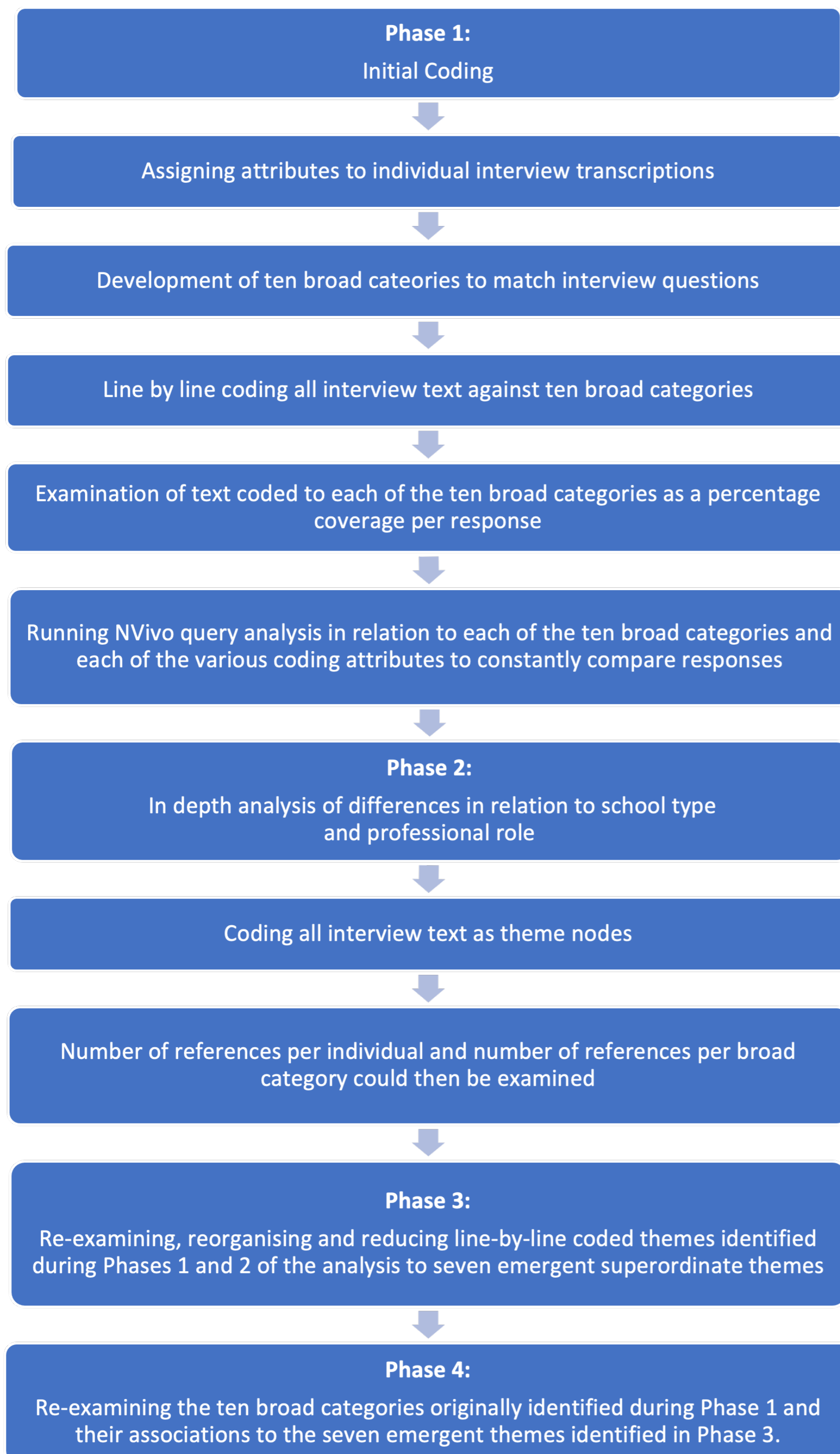
4.1 Stage 1 Analysis

This chapter provides an overview of data analysis relating to stage 1 of the research, which involved interviewing 24 participants from the three different schools. Initially, the four phases of data analysis show in figure 6 are described. A summary of findings in relation to these four analysis phases is then provided, before examining the following research questions:

- How do teachers describe the emotional work that they engage in as part of their professional roles? (RQ1)

- How do teachers describe support for wellbeing in relation to their professional roles? (RQ2)

Figure 6 Overview of the stage 1 data analysis



4.1.1 Phase 1: Initial coding and identification of ten broad categories

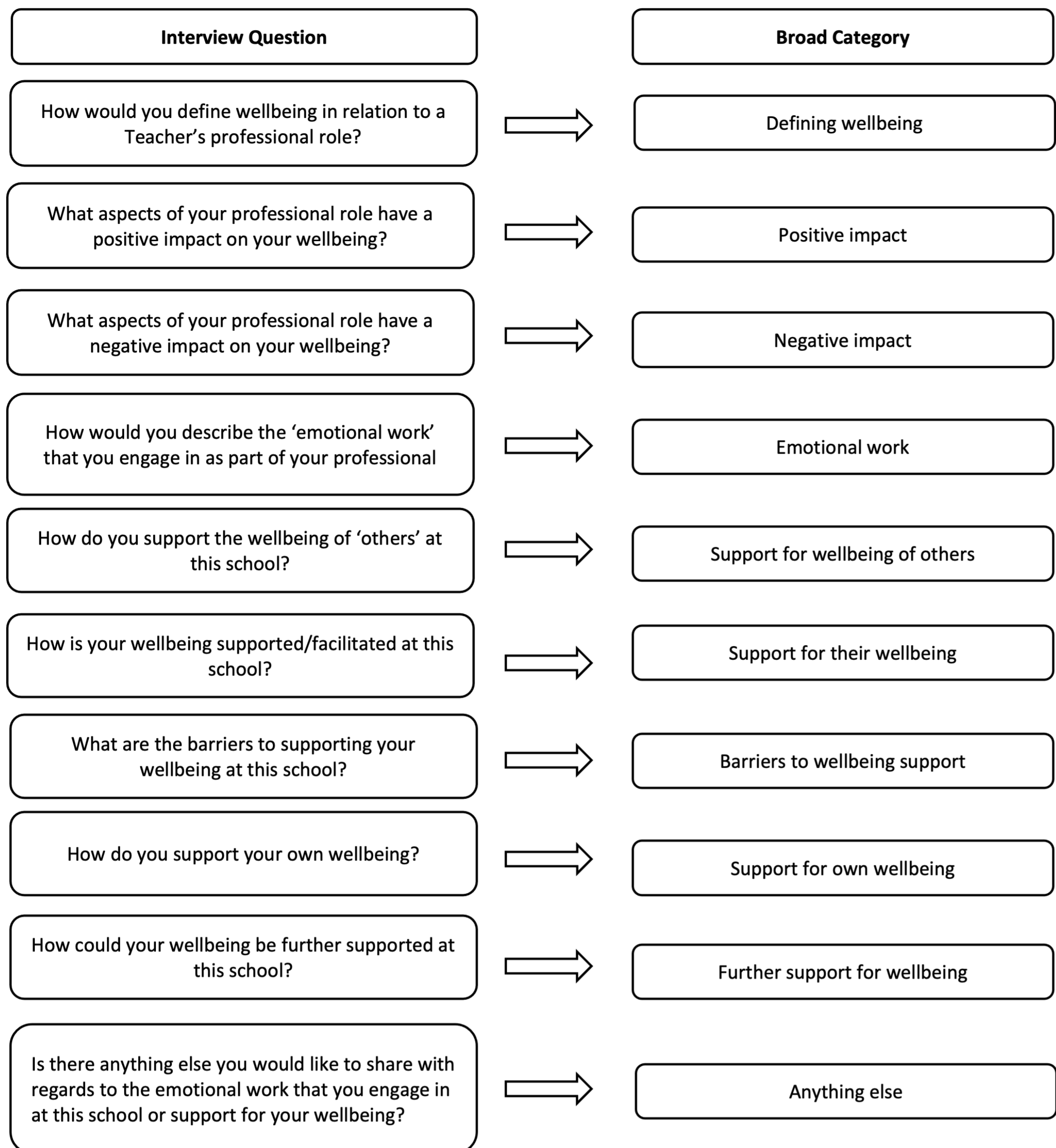
During phase 1 of the coding process all interview transcriptions were uploaded to NVivo and were assigned the following coding attributes:

- 24 individual participant pseudonyms
- School pseudonyms:
  - Apple Wood School
  - Beech Tree School
  - Cherry Blossom School
- School type:
  - Apple Wood School: Independent
  - Beech Tree School: Residential
  - Cherry Blossom School: Academy
- Professional role
  - Teacher
  - Deputy Head Teacher
  - Head Teacher
  - Director
  - School Counsellor

Figure 7 shows how ten broad categories were developed to match the stage 1 interview questions. These broad categories, referred to as *nodes* in NVivo, were descriptive and aimed to summarise each interview question. Line by line coding enabled all interview text to be coded initially against each of these ten broad categories.

Coding all interview text against the ten broad categories allowed for comparisons to be made in relation to the specific transcription attributes. Consequently, response comparisons were made between individual participants, school types and participant roles.

Figure 7 Ten broad categories which guided initial interview coding



Having coded interview text against the transcription attributes, and in relation to each of the ten broad categories, it was possible to analyse how much interview text, referred to as *source content* in NVivo, was associated with each interview question. Differences in the amount of text coded to each of the ten broad categories were revealed as percentage coverages per response.

4.1.2 Phase 2: Additional coding analysis by running NVivo queries

Having initially undertaken line-by-line coding of all interview transcriptions, phase 2 involved undertaking additional coding analysis, again, using NVivo to re-explore the specific transcription attributes assigned to each transcript during stage 1 of the analysis. This phase involved running *queries* in NVivo to compare the line-by-line coding of each transcript in relation to each of the ten broad categories and to each of the various coding attributes. Each time a query was run, the number of times each broad category was discussed by participants was then compared with each of specific coding attributes. A summary of the coding analysis schedule, developed by running queries to constantly compare the ten broad categories to the various coding attributes can be located in Appendix 16. Phase 2 of the analysis provided a more in-depth overview of differences in relation to school type and professional role than the analysis undertaken during phase 1 because it was possible to examine finer variation between participant responses associated with the ten broad categories and specific coding attributes. Rather than only referring to responses as a specific percentage coverage of response, phase 2 identified more subtle differences in relation to specific references that were coded. Phase 2 of the analysis involved coding interview transcription *source material* as *theme nodes*. These *theme nodes* represented a collection of references about specific themes that were both descriptive and analytical. Having coded all interview text against various *theme nodes*, the number of *references* per individual and the total number of *references* per broad category could be shown. Phase 2 analysis indicated additional differences in relation to:

- Specific schools at an organisational context level and
- Individuals at professional role or personal levels

4.1.3 Phase 3: Identification of seven superordinate emergent themes

Phase 3 of the stage 1 data analysis involved revisiting NVivo to further examine the interview transcripts. Here *files* related to the number of participants who responded to specific interview questions. While 24 participants were interviewed, this phase of data analysis revealed that an average of 22 participants responded to all questions, across all interviews. Table 6 provides a summary of the initial outcome of phase 3 of the analysis.

Table 6 Summary of the initial outcomes of phase 3 of the analysis

Broad categories	Files	References	Line by line coded node themes	Total number of line by line references
Defining wellbeing	24	191	51	97
Positive impact of professional role on wellbeing	24	121	43	80
Negative impact of professional role on wellbeing	24	181	60	101
Emotional work in relation to professional role	24	297	42	156
Support for teacher wellbeing	17	152	49	96
Support for own wellbeing	20	189	84	131
Support for wellbeing of others	24	294	90	179
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	24	140	53	79
Further support for wellbeing	18	161	58	75
Anything else	20	139	49	64
Total	**219**	**1865**	**579**	**1058**
Average	22	187	580	106
Max	24	297	90	179
Min	17	121	42	64

Having initially coded the 124,677 transcribed words of *source material* derived from the 24 interviews, phase 3 of the analysis revealed the number of times each broad category was discussed by participants. These responses were coded as *node themes* and *references* in NVivo. A total of 1865 individual *references* were initially coded against each of the ten broad categories during phase 2 of the data analysis. The number of line-by-line coded themes was then calculated by counting the number of references under each of the ten broad categories.

Overall, a total of 579 line by line coded themes were identified at this stage of coding. Having identified 579 themes, the frequency of *references* against each theme was revealed in relation to the number of times each node theme was discussed by participants. Consequently, a total of 1058 line-by-line *references* were then recorded against the 579 *node themes*.

Following this process of further thematic analysis, phase 3 of the analysis involved re-examining, reorganising, and reducing the line-by-line coded themes identified during Phases 1 and 2 of the analysis to seven superordinate themes that emerged. Line by line coded themes were transferred initially into Excel documents so that text relating to these themes could be easily moved around. Lists of line-by-line coded themes under each of the broad categories were then organised in descending numerical order, so that the most frequently occurring number of references were at the top of each list and the lowest frequently occurring number of references were at the bottom of each list. These lists provided insight into aspects of teachers' professional roles that appeared most and least relevant with regards to the interview questions explored.

Through this process themes began to emerge which appeared to be particularly meaningful for participants. These themes became the seven superordinate emergent themes. While phase 1 and phase 2 of the analysis was both descriptive and analytical, phase 3 of the analysis involved an extended interpretive process. Consequently, the line-by-line coded themes were re-arranged and re-organised on a number of occasions by moving previously identified line by line coded themes and creating new emergent themes. The descriptive and analytical processes involved phases 1 and 2 of the analysis supported a deep understanding of the data and the generation of interpretive categories that then became the seven emergent themes. Because phase 1 and phase 2 of data analysis had revealed interesting differences at organisational and individual levels, these became two initial superordinate emergent themes. On further exploration of these organisational and individual levels, it became apparent that differences were also evident within these superordinate themes.

Seven emergent themes were eventually identified that appeared to reflect aspects of participant's professional roles that were particularly meaningful to them in relation to conceptualisations of wellbeing, influences on teacher wellbeing, teachers' emotional work and support for their wellbeing.

The following seven superordinate emergent themes were identified:

- Organisational
- Professional
- Personal
- Support (-)
- Care for wellbeing (-)
- Children
- Additional

4.1.4 Brief descriptions of the seven superordinate emergent themes

The *organisational* superordinate emergent theme included the coding of references that appeared to be specifically relevant to the organisational contexts of the specific schools.

Within this category references related to:

Formal, structured approaches to supporting wellbeing in the three different schools that were more associated with logistical aspects of the specific organisational contexts such as daily briefings and de-briefings, supervision, and reflective spaces and

Informal, unstructured approaches to supporting wellbeing in the three different schools that were more associated with cultural aspects of the specific organisational context like school ethos, for example, that was described by participants in relation to openness, honesty, and non-judgement.

The *professional role* superordinate emergent theme included the coding of references that appeared to relate specifically to, for example, aspects of teachers' professional experiences like workload and work-life balance, reasons for being a teacher, individual considerations in relation to pedagogy, practice, behaviour management and support for children's learning and wellbeing. These references appeared to be relevant to participant reflections and descriptions of their professional experiences, at the time of interview, and in relation to the specific organisation contexts of the three different schools.

The *personal* superordinate emergent theme included the coding of references that appeared to relate more to individual reflections and experiences than to specific organisational contexts or to professional roles. References coded here were associated with, for example, self-care or difficulties shared with regards to personal wellbeing, aspects of home life and the impact of their professional experiences on their relationships outside school.

The *support (-)* superordinate emergent theme included the coding of references that appeared to relate to criticisms and concerns about support for wellbeing in the specific organisational context of the school where they worked, such as sharing critiques of their personal experiences of structured support or airing concerns about how the wellbeing of others was supported in their specific schools.

The *care for wellbeing (-)* superordinate emergent theme included the coding of references that appeared to relate to criticisms and concerns that were associated specifically to how individuals supported their own wellbeing. References coded here, for example, related to expressions of difficulty with regards to supporting their own wellbeing or not doing enough to support their own wellbeing.

The *children* superordinate emergent theme included the coding of references that appeared to relate to, for example, specifically supporting the wellbeing of children as part their professional roles.

The *additional* subordinate emergent theme included the coding of references that related to responses where participants asked for clarification with regards to an interview question or where 'don't know' responses were given.

Consequently, the additional emergent theme included responses that were of no subsequent interest to the interpretation and are not discussed further.

4.1.5 Phase 4: Re-examining the ten broad categories and their associations to the seven emergent themes

Phase 4 of the stage 1 analysis involved re-examining the ten broad categories originally identified during phase 1 and their associations to the seven emergent themes identified in phase 3. Here the frequency of references relating to each of the ten broad categories could be compared with the frequency of references relating to the seven emergent themes. Findings here revealed how the 1058 references previously associated with the ten broad categories were then re-organised following phase 3 data analysis into the seven emergent themes. Phase 4 of the analysis revealed variations in relation to how the frequently references were coded to each of the seven subordinate emergent themes. Because all participant responses, irrespective of school type or professional role are included here, this level of analysis is suggested to give a good indication of the relevance of each theme to all participants.

Phase 4 findings appear to indicate that specific aspects of participant experiences and reflections were particularly meaningful to them in relation to conceptualisations of wellbeing, influences on wellbeing, emotional work, and support for wellbeing.

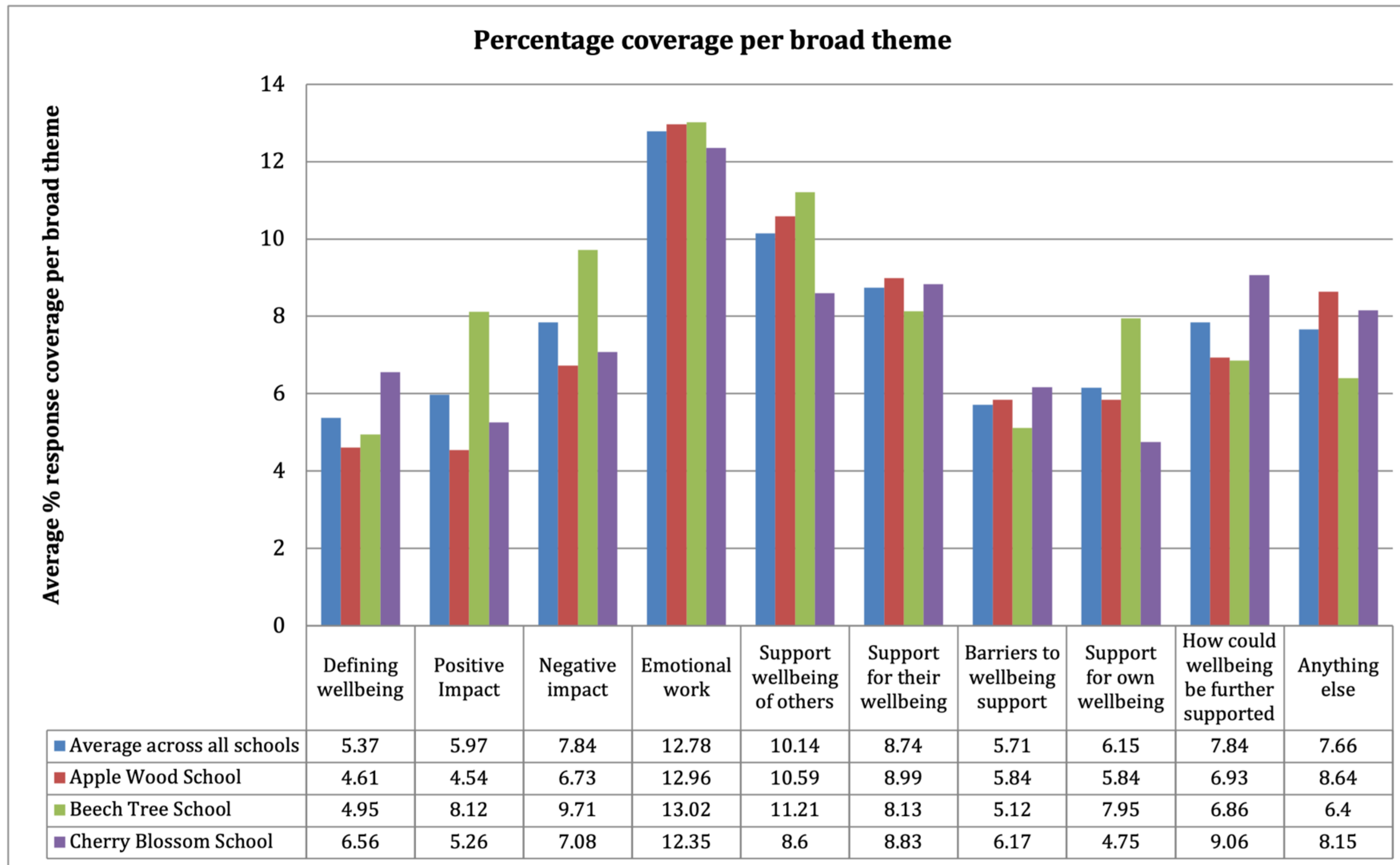
The outcomes of Phase 4 of the analysis are shown in Appendix 17.

4.2 Summary of Stage 1 findings following Phases 1-4 of the Analysis

4.2.1 Phase 1 summary of findings

Comparisons of the average percentage coverages per response in relation to school type revealed interesting variations in relation to each of the ten broad categories, which are shown in Graph 1.

Graph 1 Average percentage coverage per response across all three schools and in relation to each broad theme



	Defining wellbeing	Positive Impact	Negative impact	Emotional work	Support wellbeing of others	Support for their wellbeing	Barriers to wellbeing support	Support for own wellbeing	How could wellbeing be further supported	Anything else
Average across all schools	5.37	5.97	7.84	12.78	10.14	8.74	5.71	6.15	7.84	7.66
Apple Wood School	4.61	4.54	6.73	12.96	10.59	8.99	5.84	5.84	6.93	8.64
Beech Tree School	4.95	8.12	9.71	13.02	11.21	8.13	5.12	7.95	6.86	6.4
Cherry Blossom School	6.56	5.26	7.08	12.35	8.6	8.83	6.17	4.75	9.06	8.15

Graph 1 shows that participants spent a similar amount of time defining wellbeing and discussing the emotional work that they engage in, which perhaps reveals relatively similar experiences in relation to their professional roles, irrespective of the organisational context.

With regards to aspects of roles that had a positive impact on participant wellbeing, percentage coverages per response was highest for Beech Wood School, followed by Cherry Blossom School then Apple Wood School. Percentage coverages per responses in relation to aspects of roles that had a negative impact on participant wellbeing was highest for Beech Wood School then Cherry Blossom School followed by Apple Wood School. Variations in individual responses were also reflected in the data, which may indicate the influence of aspects of professional roles or more personal experiences and considerations.

Most importantly, participants across all three schools spent the most amount of time talking about the emotional work that they engage in, which may reveal the significance of this aspect of their work in relation to their professional experiences and wellbeing.

Participants across all three schools spent longer talking about support for the wellbeing of others than they did talking about how their wellbeing is supported. They talked even less about how they support their own wellbeing. This finding may suggest that at the organisational level, participants experienced more support strategies for wellbeing for others and themselves than they did at an individual level with regards to supporting their own wellbeing.

While participants from all three schools identified barriers to supporting wellbeing and suggested ways that wellbeing could be further supported, participants from Cherry Blossom School spent more time talking about barriers to supporting wellbeing and participants from Beech Wood School spent more time talking about how wellbeing could be further supported. Across all three schools, participants offered additional responses with regards to support for their wellbeing or emotional work.

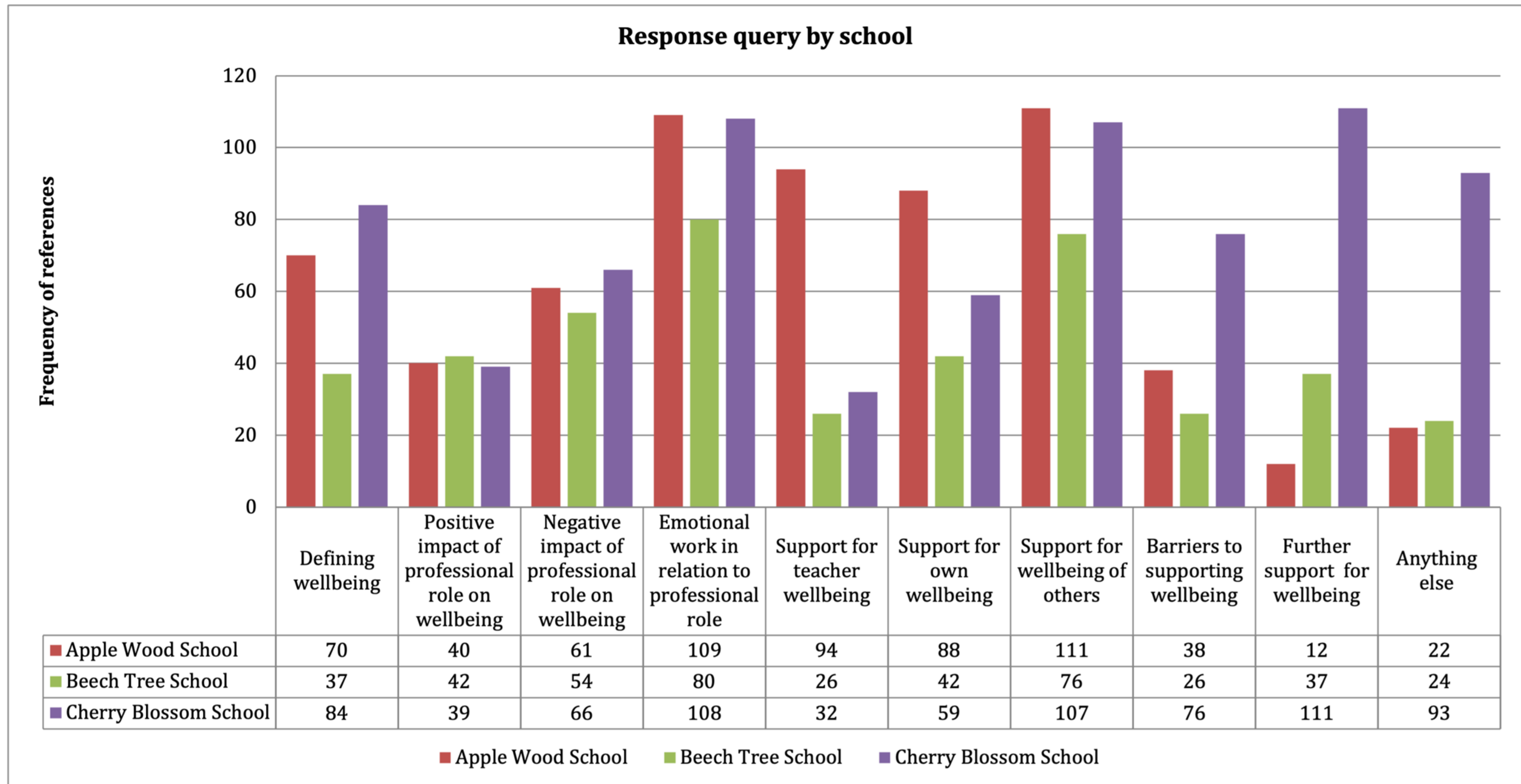
Appendix 18 shows the percentage coverages per response in relation to each of the ten broad categories. This table shows different percentage coverage per response rates across individuals and schools.

Appendix 18 also provides overviews of how percentage coverages per response varied within and between schools, which may reflect organisational, context level differences and also differences in relation to professional or personal experiences at an individual level.

4.2.2 Phase 2 summary of findings

A visual summary of query results in relation to the ten broad categories and school type is shown in Graph 2.

Graph 2 Visual summary of query results in relation to the ten broad categories and school type



	Defining wellbeing	Positive impact of professional role on wellbeing	Negative impact of professional role on wellbeing	Emotional work in relation to professional role	Support for teacher wellbeing	Support for own wellbeing	Support for wellbeing of others	Barriers to supporting wellbeing	Further support for wellbeing	Anything else
Apple Wood School	70	40	61	109	94	88	111	38	12	22
Beech Tree School	37	42	54	80	26	42	76	26	37	24
Cherry Blossom School	84	39	66	108	32	59	107	76	111	93

With regards to defining wellbeing, fewer responses were coded during phase 2 of the analysis for participants from Beech Wood School than Apple Wood School or Cherry Blossom School. That the number of references coded in relation to participant definitions of wellbeing differed from the outcome of phase 1 of the analysis may reflect individual level variations in relation to professional experiences or personal considerations in the context of each school. A similar number of references were coded for all participants across the three schools when discussing aspects of their professional roles that have a positive impact on their wellbeing, however again, across all three schools more references were recorded when participants were discussing aspects of their professional roles that have a negative impact on their wellbeing. Most references were coded for Cherry Blossom School with regards to aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing, which may reflect experiences within the specific organisational context of this school. Again, phase 2 of the analysis revealed the significance of emotional work to participants across all three schools.

While percentage coverages per response revealed during phase 1 of the analysis showed that participants from Beech Wood School spent the most amount of time talking about emotional work, phase 2 of the analysis revealed that a higher frequency of references were associated with Apple Wood School and Cherry Blossom School. Whereas Beech Wood School is a residential school, Apple Wood School is an independent special school and Cherry Blossom School is an academy special school. Because Apple Wood School and Cherry Blossom School are day provisions and consequently the children return home after school and at weekends, it may be that participants from these schools experience a greater variation in the emotional work that they engage as part of their professional roles within these specific organisational contexts.

Phase 2 of the analysis revealed increased variation with regards to support for wellbeing. Differences were evident with regards to support for teacher wellbeing and support for the wellbeing of others. These differences may reflect aspects of support for wellbeing at the organisational level. Variation in relation to how participants describe support for their own wellbeing was also evident and may reflect differences at the individual level.

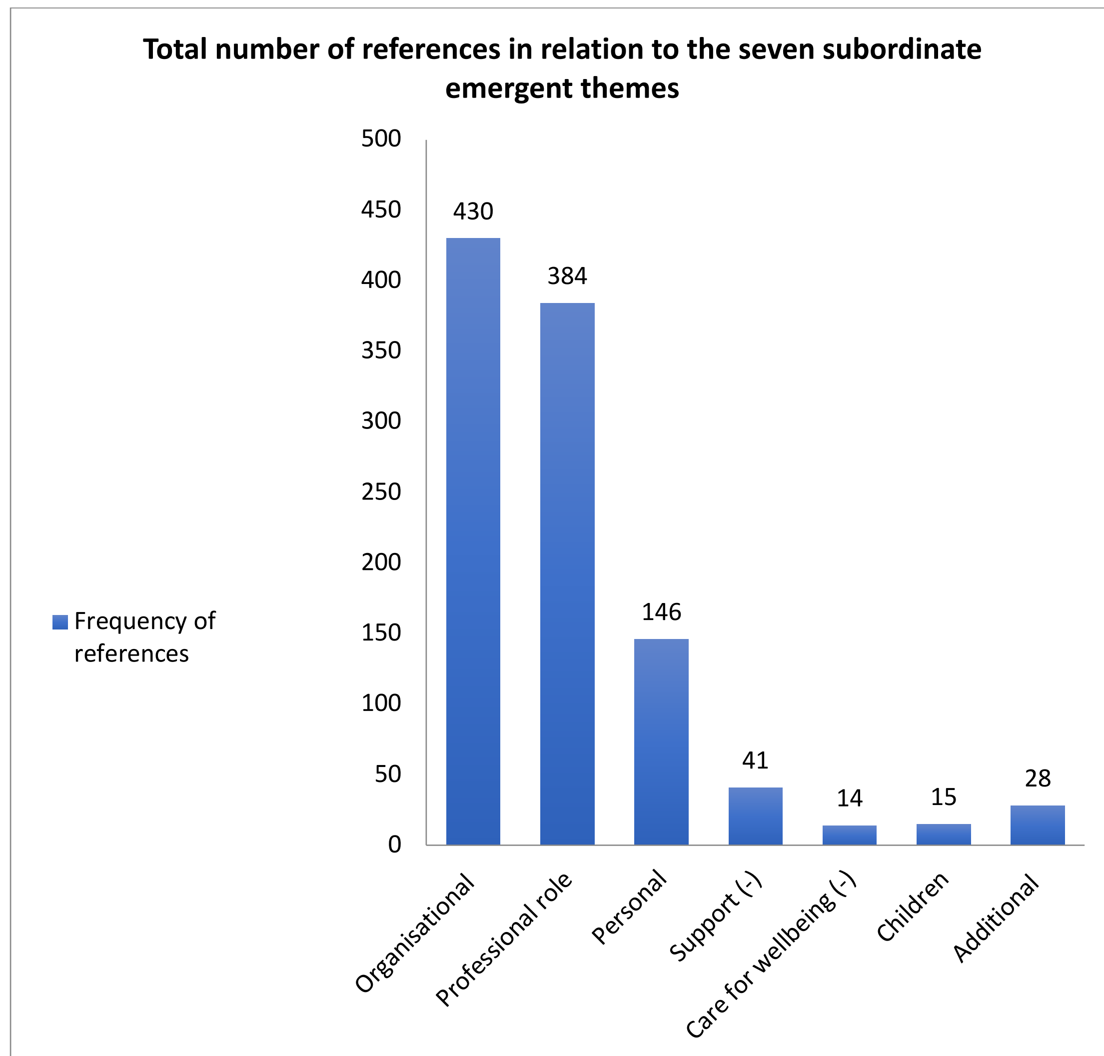
With regards to identifying barriers to supporting wellbeing and discussing how wellbeing could be further supported, phase 2 of the analysis revealed that most references were coded for Cherry Blossom School. This finding may offer important insights into the organisational context of this school with regards to support for wellbeing. Across all three schools, participants were able to offer additional responses with regards to support for their wellbeing or emotional work, which extended previous contributions.

Appendix 20 appears to show greater variation in the total number of references that were coded in relation to the ten broad categories and school type, than the percentage coverage response analysis during Phase 1.

4.2.3 Phase 3 summary of findings

Graph 3 provides an overview of the total number of references coded in relation to the seven subordinate emergent themes to provide a visual overview of phase 3 of the data analysis.

Graph 3 Visual overview of the total number of references in relation to the seven subordinate emergent themes



Significantly, phase 3 of the analysis revealed that, overall, the organisational emergent theme was associated with the highest frequency of references. This finding appears to indicate that particular aspects of the organisational contexts of the three schools were highly relevant to participant reflections on their experiences in relation to wellbeing and emotional work. A high frequency of references was also found to be associated with participant's professional roles which may suggest that participant reflections on their experiences in relation to their professional roles more generally, and in the specific organisational contexts of each of the three schools, were significant in relation to understanding wellbeing and emotional work in the context of schools.

References coded at the personal emergent theme suggest that individual reflections and considerations that did not appear to be related to specific organisational contexts or their professional roles were also identified as being important to participants with regards wellbeing and emotional work.

References coded to the support (-) emergent theme suggest that some participants were critical or had concerns about organisational support for wellbeing. These references appear to reveal that these participants found aspects of organisational support, in the specific organisational context of their schools, to be problematic with regards to support for wellbeing and emotional work.

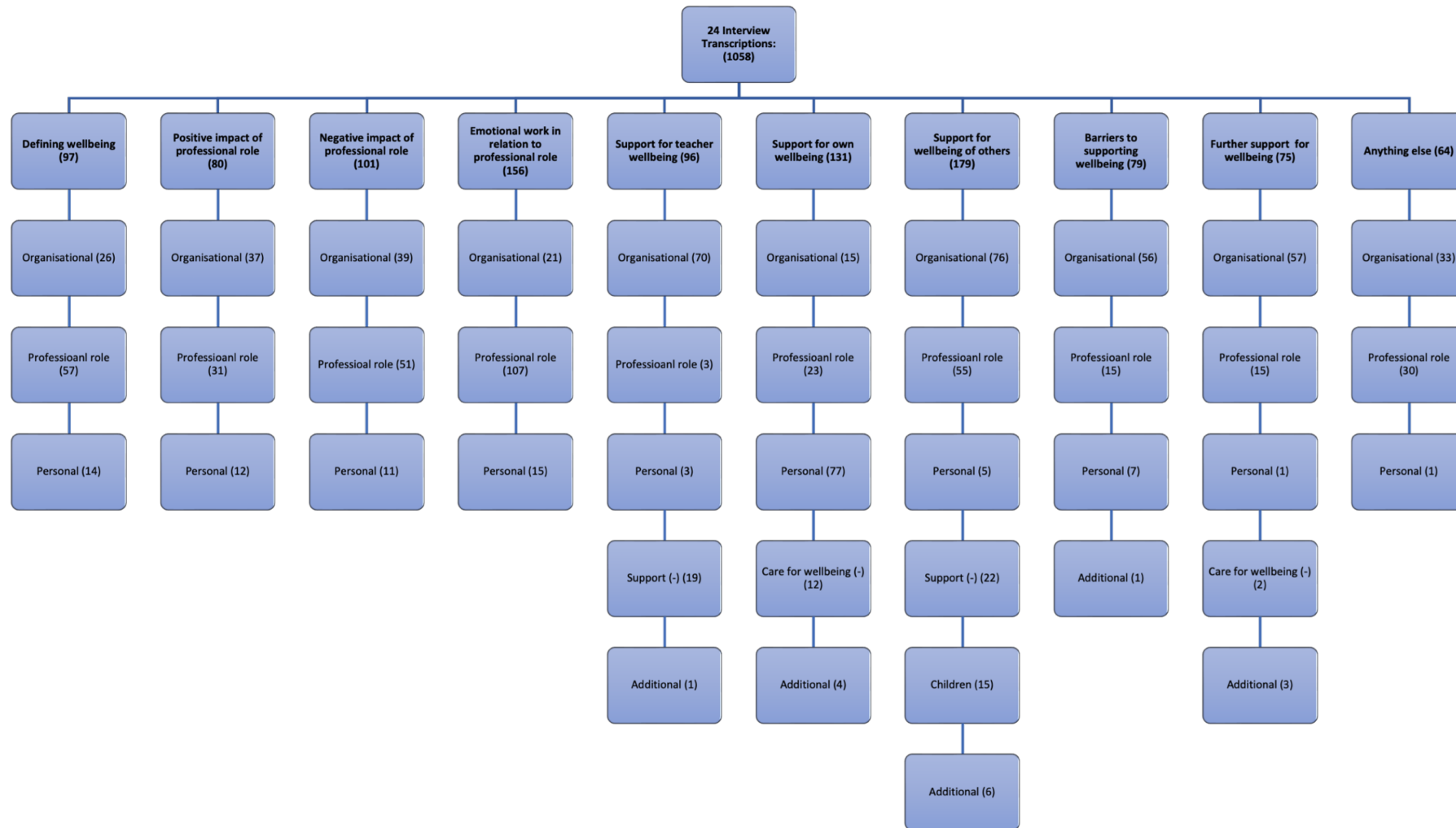
References coded to the children emergent theme appear to reveal that participants view supporting the wellbeing of children as an important aspect of their professional roles.

References coded to the care for wellbeing (-) emergent theme revealed that some participants experienced difficulties in relation to supporting their own wellbeing.

4.2.4 Phase 4 summary of findings

Phase 4 of the data analysis supported the development of figure 8, which aims to summarise the relationships between the ten broad categories and the seven subordinate emergent themes.

Figure 8 Phase 4 data analysis to summarise relationships between the ten broad categories and the seven emergent themes



This visual summary reveals variation across the ten broad categories and associations with each of the seven subordinated emergent themes. The frequency of references reveals stronger associations between particular broad categories and emergent themes which may indicate that specific aspects of participant experiences and reflections are particularly meaningful to them in relation to conceptualisations of wellbeing, influences on wellbeing, emotional work, and support for wellbeing.

Appendix 21-27 shows variations that are evident when comparing the seven emergent themes to the ten broad categories.

4.3 Research Question 1: How do teachers describe the emotional work that they engage in as part of their professional roles?

Emotional work featured in participant definitions when they were encouraged to describe wellbeing in relation to their professional roles. These responses were associated with 'coping' with relationships with children and colleagues and the impact of emotional work.

"there is an emotional wellbeing, as in 'am I coping with the children, and the relationships, and the emotions with the children?'" (Chloe).

*"coping with some of these really traumatic experiences that either they see on a day to day basis or sometimes reading through paper work about children with these early life hood experiences that are just horrific and then seeing those played out in front of you…But it's difficult when you're sat there in a reintegration meeting with a pupil and a member of staff who has just had their head smashed in a door or broken nose or you know been attacked with a shard of glass or whatever and there are real emotions that are laid there and you are constantly the balance between what's right for staff, and you know sometimes they bay for blood, but also what's right for the pupil" (**Oliver**).*

"It's more mental than physical, I would say, especially in our setting; we do have children who will hurt us…But it's when there is an emotional impact of that, that's wellbeing" (Oscar).

Emotional work also featured in participant responses when they described aspects of their professional roles that had a negative impact on their wellbeing, particularly in relation to emotional exhaustion, being hyper-alert and experiencing vulnerability;

"I think that being the emotional container for children so damaged is just emotionally exhausting to a level again that I've never experienced before. I've not been a teacher all my life, I only trained a few years ago, but having worked in mainstream and special needs, what the children can put into you and like a bad day here is like a bad day nowhere else. So I find the day-to-day, being beside the children the hardest bit" (Finn).

"Even if you have a good day, because you are hyper-alert here all the time, listening out, change of tone of voice with the children, little bit of movement, you know the different movements – that in itself is emotionally –you are so high alert, it's exhausting" (Clara).

For **Imogen**, "what the children are bringing" was associated with feeling vulnerable;

"the fact that the children are able to get so deeply into things that you didn't know you were vulnerable about. I mean I think it's amazing how quickly they can do that".

Emotional work was also associated thinking about children and their experiences.

"The emotional work here; it can be quite challenging for you emotionally because you know, it's not just one kid in your class, all of these kids come with so much baggage and the attachment for me, the attachment is a huge thing because I can't even go to the toilet without them kicking off, you know? We do the physical intervening but actually holding them kids and keeping them in mind is hard, it's really hard" (Mia).

"I guess the other thing emotionally is when you hear about some of their backgrounds and you think about either the trauma that they have experienced or the kind of home like that they have, and there's almost – you just feel bad for them" (Ella).

During the interviews, participants were specifically asked to describe the emotional work that they engage in as part of their professional roles.

Reflections here related to recognition that emotional work is exhausting;

"*When I go home, I've got no energy to do anything else*" *(Alice).*

"*Going home and feeling completely emotionally exhausted and just I have nothing left to give*" *(Charlotte).*

"If you are working with SEMH children, it is so draining and people might not realise the emotional toll that it's having on them" (Audrey).

Participants described feeling low, powerless or useless in recognition of all encompassing experiences relating to the emotional turmoil of the children and also reflected on the impact of emotional work on their social life and relationships. Additionally, teachers described thinking about the emotional aspects of their work out side of school because;

"Emotionally it's quite hard to turn off quite a lot of the time" (Grace).

"You do find yourself sort of thinking about it all the time" (Phoenix).

The impact of their emotional work on mental health and wellbeing was described by a number of participants;

*"A member of staff was injured because a pupil slammed her head in the door and she had flash backs" (**Oliver**).*

*"Staff who have had panic attacks this half term and aren't sure where that's coming from…staff who are sitting in my office crying saying they can't go into the classroom and I don't know why" (**Imogen**).*

"It's not the best for your mental health I suppose. I think it has a very big impact on my wellbeing" (Levi).

Half the participants interviewed described their emotional work as demanding and draining. Emotional work here was described as being;

*"Probably the biggest part of the job, the most challenging part of the job and the most rewarding part of the job. It's emotionally draining" (**Oliver**).*

"Exhausting. It is holding a child in mind, holding a child in mind and that is both physical because it is a physical attunement and mental and emotional. And, because people care" (Theodore).

"It's constant, isn't it really? I think it leaves you exhausted" (Zara).

In addition to emotional work that was associated with reflection, Poppy described on-going, dynamic emotional work throughout the day;

"I spend the whole day looking at the children, you know rapidly looking at all of their faces thinking, being in a really heightened state of awareness and constantly trying to guess what is happening in a child's head and what they are experiencing; that can be really tiring".

Participants also associated emotional work with the children's emotions. Here participants described the *'displacement'*, *'transfer'* and *'projection'* of emotions within school communities, described by Phoebe as being where;

"The children are very traumatised and will find ways to put their feelings consciously and unconsciously into you".

With regards to the impact of the emotional work, Zara suggested that there are;

"things that are more difficult to switch off from and sometimes you are just left, you've taken in feelings, emotions that you don't understand and that you don't know where they've come from and that can be quite debilitating".

This aspect of emotional work was also associated with being concerned about children's emotions when they are upset, anxious, angry, or aggressive and also about teachers own difficult feelings towards children. Lucas suggested that such feelings might be associated with hatred, for example, and described the importance of being able to talk about difficult feelings.

Many participants described the impact of their emotional work on their home-life. **Oliver**, for example, stated that it is;

"really difficult to walk into your own house and leave these kids behind".

For Phoebe;

"You can be fine when you are here and get home and have a little moment where you reflect on the day, or could you have done something differently or just be overwhelmed by the feelings which you have held together for the children".

A number of participants talked about the need to 'off-load' and 'vent' when they got home.

Aspects of emotional work often related to teachers on-going concerns about the wellbeing of children, particularly in relation to safe-guarding concerns. Audrey, for example, discussed;

"taking on board the situations that the children are in, the crises that they're in, it may be their home lives".

While Phoenix recognised that *"the safeguarding aspect can really take its toll".*

Emotional work was also associated with supporting the children's wellbeing through curriculum opportunities, therapy and therapeutic communication, drawing and talking and multi-professional work.

In addition to describing the emotional work associated with working with children, negotiating and navigating adult dynamics was also discussed by participants within their professional environment. Comments were made with regards the challenges of interacting with colleagues due to having different perspectives in relation to working with the children, for example.

Some participants described the emotional aspects associated with Restrictive Physical Interventions. **Sebastian**, for example, stated;

"*Is this how I earn my money? Is this how I make a living? Holding children in crisis".*

This kind of dilemma was also discussed by participants in relation to supporting learning *and* meeting children's social, emotional and mental health needs. Due to the complexity of decision-making and the pace of the school day it was suggested that there was not always time to reflect on the emotional aspects of the work.

Appendix 28 reveals variation in the frequency of references relating to emotional work as a distinct broad category. With regards to the professional role emergent theme, responses are show in Appendix 29. More than half the participants interviewed described the impact of their emotional work on their wellbeing.

With regards to the organisational emergent theme references related to support opportunities in each of the specific organisational contexts and reveal that the highest frequency of references related to support for emotional work. Being able to talk about and reflect on emotions through formal and informal opportunities was described as being important.

Morning briefings, daily de-briefs and supervision were also discussed, in addition to being encouraged to share emotions openly and honestly, both with children and with colleagues. Clara, for example, suggested the importance of listening;

"Just turning around to say 'how are you?' In this environment, someone's got to listen. They might not give the answers you want, but they've got to listen, because it can be shocking some days and you know when your classroom is trashed and you've been emotionally – you are quite wrecked and exhausted".

Planning and pedagogy was described by participants in relation to emotional work and was associated with feeling able to navigate the curriculum to develop relationships with children, in addition to ensuring classroom resources are prepared so that teachers are able to respond to children's needs.

Planning was also associated with feeling prepared and therefore more relaxed during teaching but also in relation to;

"Focusing on being a teacher, delivering the curriculum that you've planned but at the same time you're just having to monitor all the time, what's going on with the emotional wellbeing of that child" (Audrey).

Planning and dynamic responses were also associated with;

"All the really complex kind of analytical stuff of why the kids are doing what they're doing and how you should react to that and planning your response to children's certain behaviours and noticing patterns and thinking, oh I wonder why she is doing that, I need to change my approach, I need to do this and then you think, oh that worked so I'm going to do – and you are always thinking about that" (Poppy).

Additional findings are shown in Appendix 30.

With regards to the personal emergent theme responses suggest the importance of self-management and self-regulation for some participants with regards to coping with emotional work, while for others the importance of self-reflection was discussed. Additional suggestions related to the need to try and separate emotional work from personal wellbeing and the need to maintain approaches to self-care. Individual approaches also included 'managing', 'learning strategies' and 'coping with' the emotional work that participant's experience. Additional findings are shown in Appendix 31.

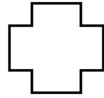
4.4 Research Question 2: How do teachers describe support for wellbeing in relation to their professional roles?

Before exploring how teachers describe support for wellbeing in relation to their professional roles, summary tables are included to provide a brief overview of factors that were identified by participants in relation to aspects of their professional roles that were suggested to have a positive impact on their wellbeing and aspects of their professional roles that were suggested to have a negative impact on their wellbeing.

Figure 9 provides a summary of factors that influence Head Teacher wellbeing. This summary provides useful insights into Head Teachers professional experiences in relation to the specific organisational contexts of each of the three schools.

Figures 10-12 provide a summary of factors that influence teacher wellbeing. These summaries provide useful insights into both organisation factors and professional role factors that influence wellbeing in relation to the specific organisational contexts of each of the three schools.

Figure 9 Summary of factors that influence Head Teacher wellbeing



Oliver
45 minute drive home
Honesty about emotions
Open and honest Communication with staff
Support from SLT

Oliver
Accountability
Lack of space
Quality assurance
Resources
Seen to be coping
Support only in relation to quality assurance

Imogen
Acceptance of feelings and emotions
Being present
No blame
Non-hierarchical support
Structured support

Imogen
Behaviour
Emotional work
Priority – children's wellbeing
Vulnerability

Sebastian
Few RPIs
Observing good practice
Parents not causing problems
Staff in school
When school is settled

Sebastian
Administration (emails)
No supervision
Not able to talk to staff about own wellbeing
Pressure to increase numbers
Quality of staff
Responsibility:
budget, staffing, reports, behaviour
Staff absence
Staff adding to workload:
children's behaviour, their wellbeing
Staff turnover

Figure 10 Summary of factors that influence Apple Wood School Teacher wellbeing

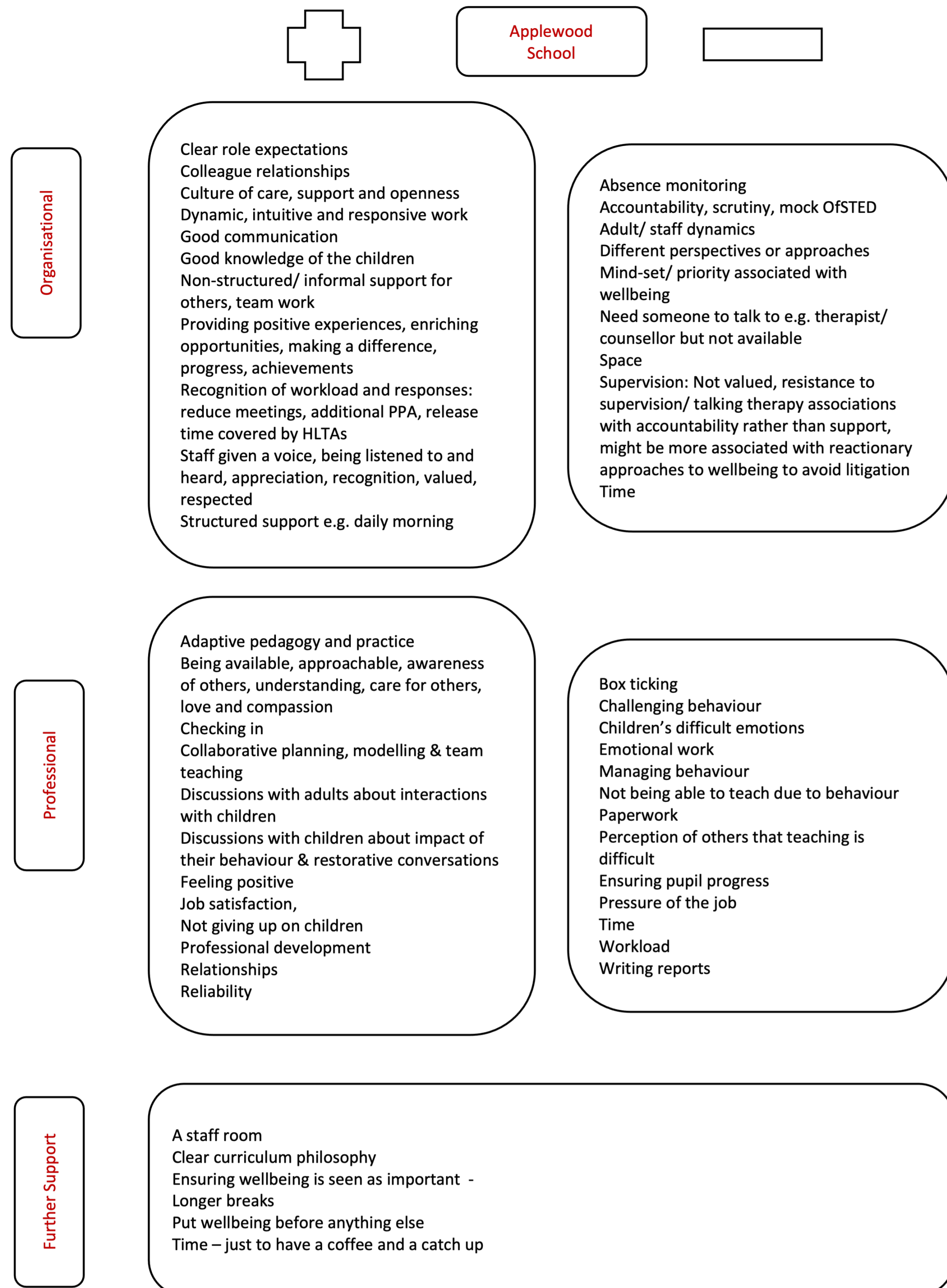


Figure 11 Summary of factors that influence Beech Tree School Teacher wellbeing

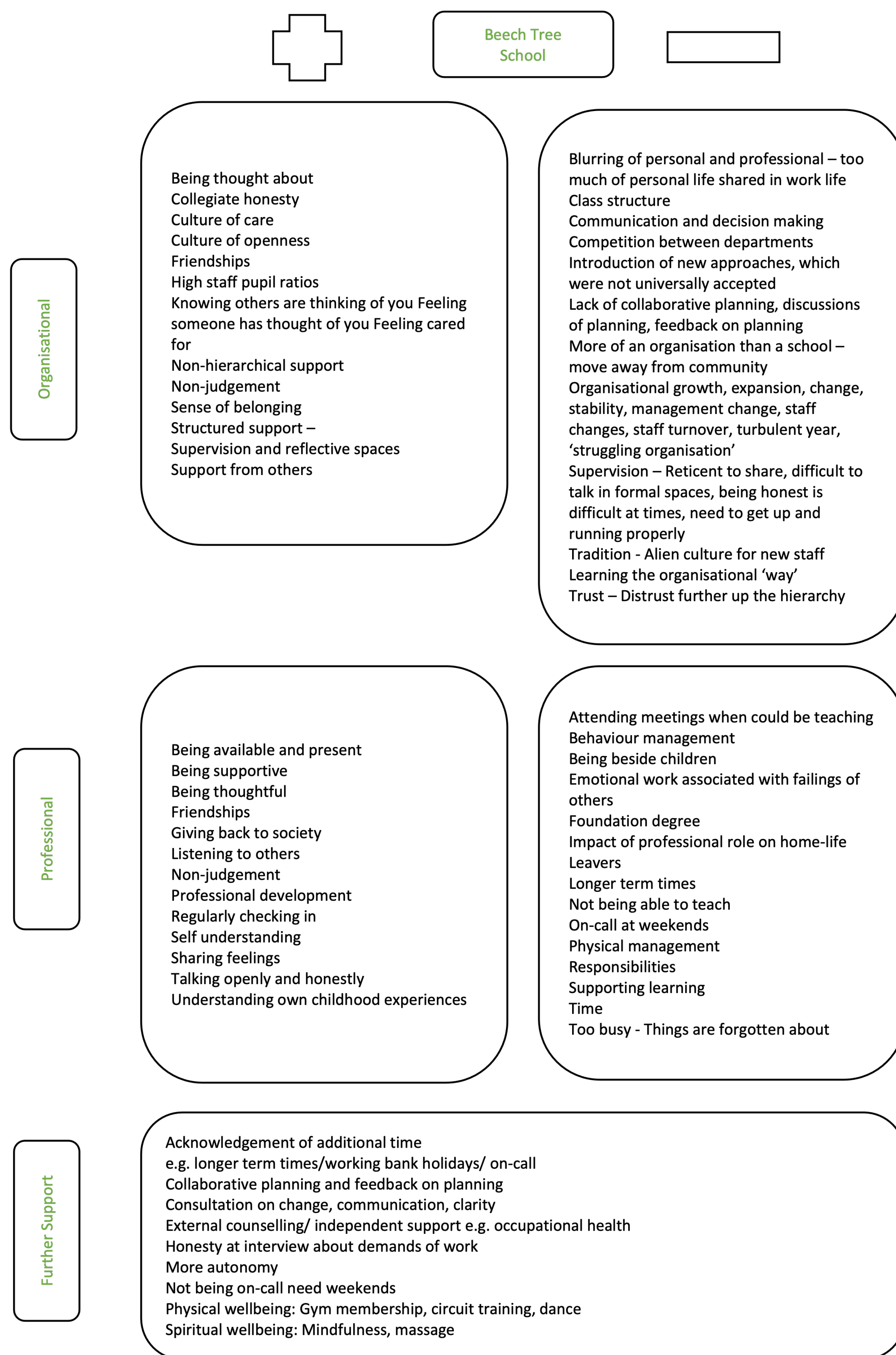
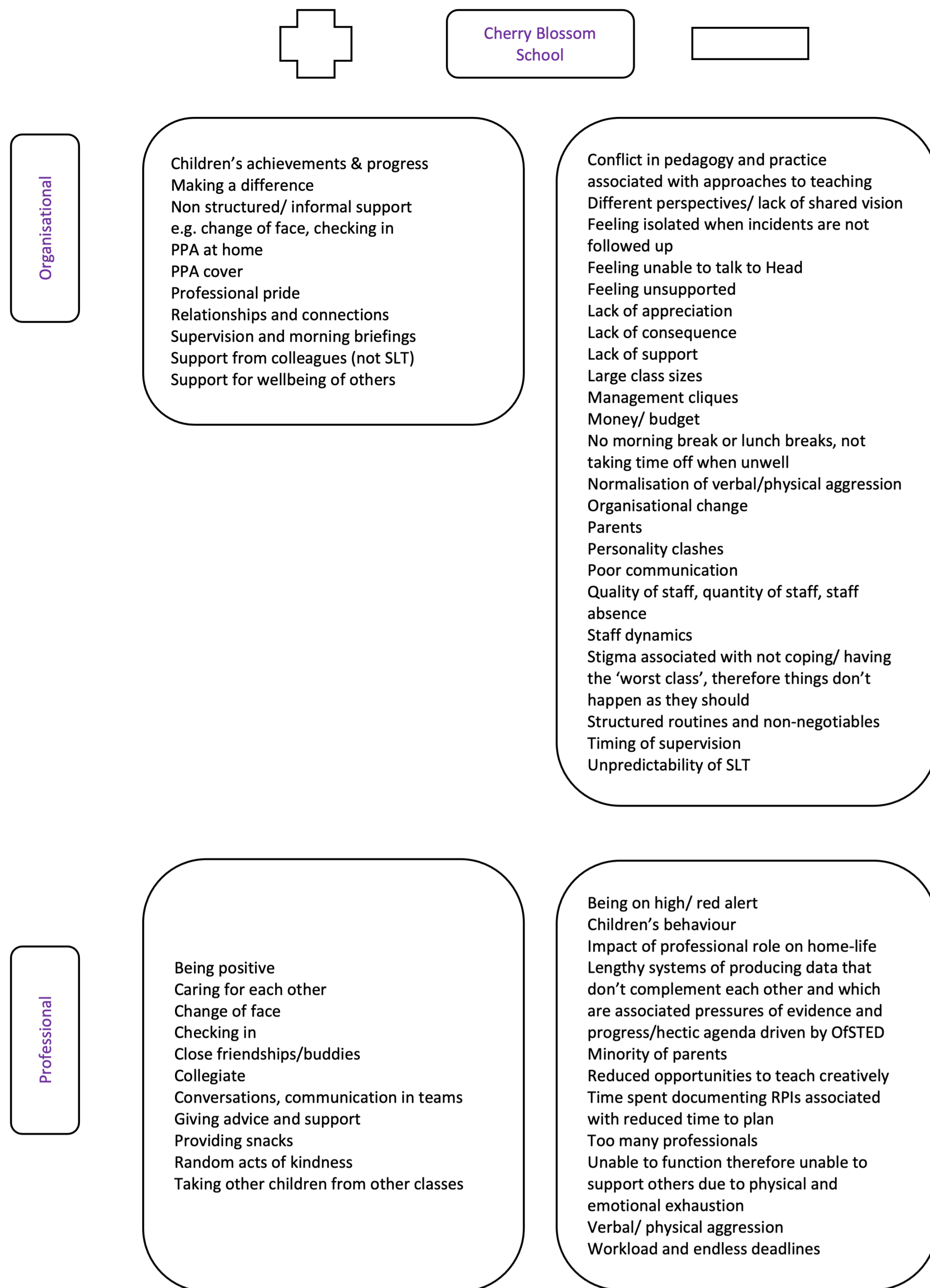


Figure 12 Summary of factors that influence Beech Tree School Teacher wellbeing



Further Support

Asking staff about support for their wellbeing
Better supply staff
Feeling listened to
Freeing up meeting times
Increased staff to increase capacity to be able move children somewhere else but system is too fragile so when in crisis there are not enough people
Increased team work e.g. planning together
More flexibility to adapt pedagogy and practice to address where children are at emotionally
Protected PPA
Quality time
Reminding people to look after themselves/ each other
Show staff are valued e.g. Providing refreshments at INSET
Someone in charge of wellbeing who actually cares
Staff absence
Time for communication
Timetabled morning and lunch breaks
Wellbeing part of induction

Difficulties experienced in relation to wellbeing

Difficulties in supporting own wellbeing
Not doing enough to support wellbeing (from others and own wellbeing)
No energy
Ground down – stop looking after self
Get home – no food – bed
Decline in wellbeing
Not enough time at weekends to recover
Worried about money
Drinking too much “to switch off and get away from it”
Poor diet – false economy poor diet = “makes you feel shit”
Put on weight

With regards to examining how teachers describe support for their wellbeing, findings will be discussed in relation to;

- Conceptualising and defining wellbeing
- Experiences that impact on wellbeing
- Support for teacher wellbeing and the wellbeing of others
- Support for own wellbeing
- Negative considerations in relation to support for wellbeing
- Improving wellbeing support
- Additional considerations relating to wellbeing or emotional work

4.4.1 Conceptualising and defining wellbeing

Close examination of findings revealed that, in relation to defining wellbeing the highest frequency of references were coded at the professional emergent theme, followed by the organisational emergent theme then the personal emergent theme. Participant reflections in relation the organisational emergent theme appear to indicate that both structured/formal and unstructured/informal aspects of their experiences were important with regards to their conceptualisations and definitions of wellbeing. However, given that more references were coded at the professional emergent theme, it may be that for participants, being able to undertake their professional roles and coping with demands, while being able to maintain both physical and emotional health was deemed to be particularly important. For participants, their reasons for and passion for being teachers in the specific organisational contexts of the three schools and their considerations in relation to self-care and being in a good emotional place, also appeared to influence their conceptualisations and definitions of wellbeing in relation to teachers' professional roles. It is important to recognise that for a quarter of participants, well-being in relation to a teachers' professional role was difficult to conceptualise and define. Olivia suggested that wellbeing was *"quite difficult to define"* while **Imogen** suggested that wellbeing was *"a very difficult concept"*. With regards to describing wellbeing, Theodore did not want to *"idealise that state or dismiss it"*. Oscar described wellbeing as *"unquantifiable"* and *"variable" and* Sebastian recognised wellbeing as being layered and *"multifaceted"*.

With regards to participants professional roles, wellbeing was also recognised as being fluctuant and that the impact of the their professional roles can be attritional. Participants described the importance of masking their own difficulties or struggles, in that teachers must "*be able to put those aside for the time you're with the children" (Clara).* Finn described this masking as *"the coat of presentation that we wear*", which for Theodore is part of *"the task of maintaining a creative illusion of all togetherness"*.

The organisational emergent theme revealed considerations associated with wellbeing that appeared to be related to participant's specific organisational contexts. Findings revealed that for many participants feeling supported was important.

Additional participant descriptions suggested that non-hierarchical or equal support opportunities were relevant to support for teacher wellbeing.

Apple Wood School participants described teacher wellbeing as being associated with;

"They feel that they're being supported, by colleagues and SLT" (Levi).

"The best form of wellbeing that you can have is each other" (Mia).

*"There is an equal support structure" (**Oliver**).*

This notion of support was also shared by participants from Beech Wood School;

"Everyone is very preoccupied by it, line managers but also everyone that is around you no matter what sort of hierarchy situation they sit in, everyone is very conscious about making sure that you are okay and if there is anything they can do to help" (Grace).

*"I am very aware of the importance of wellbeing here because the structures are all so clear to support teachers wellbeing" (**Imogen**).*

For Poppy, *"having supportive colleagues, having people that can understand or listen"* was described as being important for wellbeing.

Knowing that SLT regularly check in with teachers to gauge wellbeing was described as being important.

Participants in Beech House School and Cherry Blossom School discussed structured support opportunities. These structured support opportunities related to regular experiences of supervision. Participants in Beech Wood School also described the importance of feeling able to be open and reflective;

*"being able to talk openly and safely about how you're feeling without fear of judgement…because there are structures for reflective spaces and group supervision and individual supervision" (**Imogen**).*

Despite not experiencing supervision, Mia suggested the importance of feeling able to share difficulties. For Audrey space to reflect was suggested to be important, however there was also recognition that;

"there have been periods of times when that hasn't been available and you've maybe be overwhelmed, either from an incident, or just in general, and you've still had to go straight back into class and try and get on with it. That's not good, that's not healthy at all for anybody. That's when you'd find periods of sickness, absence and understandably so".

Non-structured/informal aspects of specific organisational contexts, such as being open and reflective outside of structured/ formal opportunities and having space to reflect were also identified as being particularly meaningful for participants when conceptualising and defining wellbeing;

"I feel like I am able to be open and reflective to anyone in the school. Again no matter what their position" (Grace).

*"being able to talk openly and safely about how you're feeling without fear of judgement" (**Imogen**).*

"Being able to have the space to reflect and what I like to call dump the junk"(Aurdery).

In addition to aspects of organisational contexts that appear to offer support for teacher wellbeing, other contextual aspects were identified as not supporting wellbeing. **Oliver**, Head Teacher of Apple Wood School suggested that if you are seen to be coping, support for wellbeing is limited. Lucas shared his concerns in relation to whole school approaches to supporting wellbeing through INSET days by suggesting that schools may suggest that they are;

"really paying attention to what you said in the staff questionnaire survey about wellbeing, you know about how put upon and how hard worked and knackered and unsupported you all feel, so next INSET the whole of the second half of the day we are going to have a choice of things that you can do, you can do Indian Head massage, you can do yoga, you can do you can go for a walk…this is going to make you feel really good about yourselves and about each other and it's just bollocks".

The most frequent reference associated with conceptualising and defining wellbeing was associated with undertaking professional role.

For Finn, wellbeing related to;

"The ability to come to work and to be emotionally, physically resilient enough to be present and not overreact to the situations that arise regularly".

Clara suggested that wellbeing was associated with *"being mentally able to cope with the children"* while, **Sebastian** suggested the importance of recognising teacher wellbeing in relation to being a *"person in role"* to *"help them define the emotional distance and the professional distance between at teacher and a child".*

Role was also suggested to be important by Lucas who stated that;

"There is an issue about how comfortable people are playing that role and I suppose wellbeing for me, there is something about how you connect the personal and the professional that constitutes wellbeing. How comfortable are you personally in playing that professional role and are those two things integrated or are they mildly at odds with each other".

For **Sebastian** wellbeing related to teachers *"being able to complete their duties",* while for Arthur wellbeing was associated with teachers being able to *"present themselves in a way that is conducive to educating others".*

Many participants mentioned coping with demands, in addition to increasing expectations, workload and the physical demands of their professional roles. Coping with their own difficulties and emotions was also discussed by participants

With regards to the personal emergent theme, participants discussed wellbeing in relation to self-care and being in a good place emotionally in relation to getting *"the time to take care of your own needs"* (Alice), *"taking care of the way that I feel"* (Charlotte) and *"keeping yourself sane really, it's about kind of looking after yourself"* (Ella). Participants also reflected on their reasons for being a teacher as influencing their wellbeing such as recognising teaching as a lifestyle and having a passion for supporting children with SEMH needs. Having self-awareness and being able to switch off were also seen to be important. As was being boundaried with regards to leaving work on time. Findings summarised in Appendix 32-35 reveal that aspects of participant's professional roles are particularly important with regards to wellbeing, however, variations were also apparent within each of these emergent themes, which provide additional insights into specific aspects of participant experiences, professionally and personally.

4.4.2 Experiences that impact on wellbeing

Irrespective of school type or professional role, participants across all three schools were more likely to describe aspects of their professional role that had a negative impact on their wellbeing, than had a positive impact on wellbeing. Between school differences were also evident with regards to experiences that impact on their wellbeing. These findings appear to indicate that specific aspects of organisational contexts can influence participant's wellbeing experiences. With regards to aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing, the most frequently coded emergent theme was organisational. With regards to regards to aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing, the most frequently coded emergent theme was professional. Teacher wellbeing, therefore, appeared to be less associated with aspects of participant's personal experiences and more associated with organisational context and aspects of their professional role. With regards to aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing aspects of the organisational context appeared to be most meaningful to participants. Here, structured/formal approaches relating to the school contexts were described such as supervision, reflective spaces, daily morning briefings and de-briefs, in addition to non-structured/ informal aspects such as relationships with colleagues, sharing openly and honesty.

Of the responses relating to structured support, five participants from Beech Wood School referred to group supervision, individual supervision and reflective spaces. This finding suggests that support structures in the specific organisational context of Beech Wood School were positively associated with wellbeing.

For Grace structured supervision provided a safe space to;

"air and talk about some of the dynamics which arise and also the impact of the work that it has on us".

Reflections with regards to supervision were also associated with being able to discuss emotional challenges, 'sharing the load' and mutual understanding that teachers are not expected to be 'functioning' all the time. Participants from Cherry Blossom School also discussed the value of group supervision with a psychotherapeutic counsellor and being able to talk privately about issues relating to their professional roles. These supervision sessions were described as being valuable and useful opportunities to talk and vent. Individual supervision sessions were suggested to offer a space where teachers from Beech Tree School can explore practical aspects of the work but also discuss how specific children are affecting them, or impacting on them with regards to how they are feeling. Reflective spaces, however, were described as offering opportunities to;

"talk about how we're feeling, dynamics which have arisen between the teams, or between our own teams, impact of the work on each other" (Grace).

Participants also described informal aspects of teachers' professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing. These informal opportunities related to ad hoc conversations with colleagues during PPA, for example, teachers offering to support each other, emotional support from colleagues and being able to communicate with others. Feeling able to be open and honest, being listened to and being heard were also suggested to be important, in addition to having good relationships with colleagues. In relation to the professional role emergent theme, participant experiences such as making a difference, supporting children's successes, relationships with children and experiencing good pedagogy and practice were described.

These findings appear to suggest that teacher wellbeing is positively associated with aspects of their professional role that are enjoyable and that also relate to children's enjoyment of school, learning and successes. In relation to the personal emergent theme positive associations with wellbeing appeared were related to job satisfaction, professional development, feeling and being positive, recognition, appreciation and self insight. With regards to aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing, comments coded at the professional role emergent theme that appeared to be most meaningful to participants related to managing workloads, particularly if workload feels un-manageable. Participants across all three schools discussed children's behaviour in relation to this emergent theme. Here the impact of children's behaviour on other children was discussed and also the exhaustion experienced when being "*regularly involved in challenging behaviours*" (Olivia). For Phoenix, the extent of abuse "*takes its toll*".

He suggested that the;

"*constant verbal (abuse) is more draining and taxing and wears you down more than any sort of physical aspects of it, because that's the one that really pushes you to wonder or question why you are doing what you are doing*".

Participants also described being on high alert and "*always expecting something to happen*" (Levi) as constantly as being draining, in addition to feeling intense pressure to find a solution to the difficulties experienced by the children. The pressure of the job, performativity and accountability and the level of responsibility were also described as having a negative impact on wellbeing. Conflicts and dilemmas experienced by teachers were described in relation to their professional roles. These conflicts and dilemmas related to; having to ensure consistency with regards to behaviour management when they think more flexible approaches would be more appropriate, trying to balance expectations to support children's academic achievements with supporting social and emotional aspects of their learning and wellbeing, organisational aspects relating to grouping "*dysfunctional children together*" (Zara) and being required to engage in Restrictive Physical Interventions at times.

Organisational aspects related to the specific contexts of the three schools also appeared to negatively impact on wellbeing. Adult dynamics was the highest recorded frequency response. Factors associated with staff were discussed in relation to managing TAs, staff absence, lack of staff and the quality of staff. Unpredictability in relation to poor communication, feeling unsupported, not having breaks, having to work at the weekends and not feeling listened to also appeared to be meaningful in relation to experiences that have a negative impact on wellbeing. While the highest frequency of references related to adult dynamics, often these responses related to reflections on working in previous schools. However, examples provide here related to negative work environments that can have a detrimental impact on wellbeing, dynamics of classes, *"where people clash*" in relation to teachers and support staff (Olivia), negativity associated with feeling unsupported, staffroom gossip, professional differences, and projection of intense emotions. Lack of staff and staff absence was discussed by four participants. Significantly all these participants were from Cherry Blossom School. When reflecting on lack of staff and staff absence, these participants discussed having no breaks or lunch breaks, feeling unable to take time off when unwell, needing to work with different adults in the classroom, which can unsettle children, or working alone during part or all of the day. These experiences were described as being exhausting because remaining staff must then take on additional workload. Participants in Cherry Blossom School also discussed unpredictability and communication with regards to having a negative impact on wellbeing, particularly in relation to increasing teacher anxiety. Descriptions here related to last minute changes that had an impact on children and staff and also in relation to unpredictability in relation to *"management responses to you"* (Clara). These findings perhaps suggest that while organisational aspects influence participant's professional experiences, so do relational aspects with regards to experiences with colleagues.

The personal emergent theme in relation to negative experiences that impact on wellbeing was more associated with the impact of participant's professional roles on their relationships and aspects of the self including acceptance of difficulties, emotional expression, being human, the availability of the self, self-awareness and self-reflection.

Appendix 36-38 show participant responses relating to aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing. Appendix 39-4 show participant responses relating to aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing.

4.4.3 Support for teacher wellbeing and the wellbeing of others

The frequency of responses in relation to support for teacher wellbeing and support for the wellbeing of others broad categories revealed that the organisational and professional role emergent themes appeared to be particularly meaningful for participants. With regards to the organisational emergent theme, participants appeared to particularly value both structured/formal opportunities for support that is provided in specific school contexts, in addition to more unstructured/informal support opportunities. A higher frequency of references relating to more structured/formal approaches were coded for participants from Beech Wood School and Cherry Blossom School, while for participants from Apple Wood School, a higher frequency of references relating to unstructured/informal approaches. This finding might suggest that, in the absence of specific structured approaches to wellbeing support, such as supervision, support for wellbeing is experienced in relation to other aspects of the organisational context such as culture, ethos and relationships.

Phoebe describes examples of structured support opportunities at Beech Wood School;

"we're really lucky…I have a group supervision every other Monday, I have a reflective space every other Wednesday and then on travel days we have a whole educational reflective space with a seminar technique, so two teams can brings a child or dynamic or problem and explain that to the group and then the team in the middle are quiet while the group reflect on what they've heard, and then also every opposite Wednesdays to my reflective space, I have teachers' supervision".

For **Sebastian** supervision provides the opportunity for staff to;

"process what it means to work like somewhere like this and they can talk in a confidential environment".

Organisational aspects such as supervision and reflective spaces, daily briefings and de-briefs, a telephone helpline and PPA for example, were also identified by participants as being supportive for their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

More unstructured/informal support for wellbeing was associated with classroom support, discussing aspects of pedagogy and practice, providing guidance and advice, supporting pupil behaviour, and supporting colleagues by responding to radio calls. Feeling that others are looking out for you was also recognised as being supportive. Support from others and internal, informal support was also discussed by participants in relation to being able to talk to someone about difficulties experienced. Unstructured/ informal aspects of support that were described as being supportive for their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others also included relationships, listening, being available and being heard, trust, checking in with colleagues, non-judgement and non-hierarchical support, positivity, encouragement and mutual respect. A number of participant's mentioned school culture and ethos in relation to care, honesty and a family approach to supporting wellbeing. With regards to support for teacher wellbeing, the professional role emergent theme was associated with being able to undertake professional development activities. With regards to supporting the wellbeing of others, relationships were described as being particularly important;

*"For them to be open to those relationships and be invest in the colleagues that they are working with" (**Oliver**).*

"Certainly for the people I work directly alongside, I try and make sure they are okay" (Phoebe).

Listening and availability appeared to be important with regards to supporting wellbeing;

"I think just always being available, so for adults, for children. If somebody needs me, I'm available" (Charlotte).

"I think it's about being there, available...And then for me to be you know, make it so they can talk to me, to be their emotional container really" (Finn).

*"I think most of the emotional support is about being present for somebody having the time and the space creating the time and space to just be with them and be alongside" (**Imogen**).*

Other aspects of support for teacher wellbeing and the wellbeing of others were associated with exhibiting an awareness of others, showing an active interest in others, being approachable and showing caring concern for others.

These suggestions appear to indicate that participants value the relational aspects of their interactions with colleagues in the specific organisational contexts of the different schools. With regards to the personal emergent theme, for some participants, talking about experiences of wellbeing was recognised as being difficult;

*“You have to be aware that some people don’t want to talk” (**Oliver**).*

Additionally, given the complexity of working in each of the specific school contexts, some participants found it difficult to talk to others;

“There’s a weird thing about this work, like it is so specific that it’s sort of really annoying to talk to anybody who hasn’t worked in this field before because they either don’t get it or they are flabbergasted” (Poppy).

Experiences of sharing drinks and food were associated with random acts of kindness and an awareness of the importance of feeling healthy;

“Hot drinks, little things like, I think I came in this morning to this little treat on my desk with a little post it note saying we’re going to have a good day and there is quite of lot of that that happens around school to scoop each other up” (Poppy).

“I would always make sure that everybody was fed and that would include – my TA and I would look after each other, we’d have drawers of snacks, bananas, that sort of stuff, because again, it is that – to bring it back to Maslow’s Triangle, if you’re not feeling healthy in that way, you’re not going to be emotionally able to keep going” (Audery).

When discussing support for wellbeing and supporting the wellbeing of others many responses related specifically to participants support for the wellbeing of children.

According to Phoenix;

“You have to work out what their benefit is, their need is, so for some of them, it’s more about nurture and coming alongside, than it is about you know reminding them for the umpteenth time that they need to be doing this, this and this. I suppose that is something that you’re always learning, because it’s about discernment, it’s about discerning the child and where they’re at”.

Additional responses related to aspects of pedagogy and practice such as consistency and fairness, patience, having a fresh start everyday, nurture and support and trying to support the development of self–esteem and self worth.

Appendix 42-47 show participant responses in relation to support for teacher wellbeing and the wellbeing of others.

4.4.4 Support for own wellbeing

With this broad theme, the highest frequency of references were coded to the personal emergent theme, followed by the professional role emergent theme, then the organisational emergent theme. These findings appear to suggest that individual level experiences were more highly associated with how participants support their own wellbeing than aspects of participant's professional roles or organisational level experiences. Closer examination of findings in relation to the personal emergent theme revealed differences in relation to how participants support their own wellbeing. Forty-five different themes were identified in relation to the support for own wellbeing broad category and the personal emergent theme. This finding appears to suggest that participants support their own wellbeing in a wide variety of ways. The highest frequency of references coded here were associated with exercise, spending time with family and friends and socialising. References coded at the professional emergent theme in relation to support for own wellbeing related to how teachers manage their workload, aspects of their professional identity and work-life considerations. Not taking work home and time management were the highest frequency of responses and part-time work was also discussed in relation to how participants support their own wellbeing. Professional identity was associated with participants role, workload and work with children;

*"Not letting the identity of the job be my identity" (**Oliver**).*

"I've done loads of work toady I'm going to go home early, because it's okay to do that. I have done enough, this is okay. Give yourself a break" (Olivia).

"Just being aware that you can't fix anything either and you can't save every child and you can't change everything" (Audery).

Work-life considerations were associated with creating physical or geographic distance;

"So you need some distance and sometimes it's physical distance as well as emotional distance and things that are attractions rather than just distractions" (Theodore).

And emotional/ relational distance;

"It's the state that workers get in, this would include teachers, who get so over invested in the person and get so worried about them that it turns from having a caring concern for the child to a worrying" (Theodore).

"I keep my relationships – I don't create strong relationships at work I don't think. It stops when I leave from here" (Evelyn).

With regards to how participants reflected on how specific organisational contexts support them to support their own wellbeing structured/formal approaches were associated with supervision, the development of a wellbeing committee, SLT support and a telephone helpline. Unstructured/informal approaches were associated with honesty, communication, non-judgement and space to take time out and talk. Support for the work, communication and sharing personal skills and interests were also suggested to be important. Honesty was the highest frequency response, where encouragement to be honest and feeling able to be honest appears to be important for participants;

"I'm honest I think, you know – if there is something annoying me, me being honest instead of my going to this buddy and saying, 'I'm fucking fed up with her'" (Mia).

*"I think it is about being very open with staff, I mean, I don't really hide too much and I if I'm pissed off about stuff then I will say it. If something is emotional for me I don't try and hide it" (**Oliver**).*

"Think it's to be open; an open and honest culture is very much encouraged" (Arthur).

Appendix 48-51 show participant responses relating to support for their own wellbeing.

4.4.5 Negative considerations in relation to support for wellbeing

Concerns raised in relation to organisational support were associated with structured support opportunities already in place but also in relation to improving support for wellbeing. Four participants raised concerns about their experiences of structured support. One comment, for example, related to the expectation to undertake a Foundation Degree, which included University level work that took the individual out of the classroom. Another comment related to a delay in beginning supervision, during a time of organisational change, which was described as being;

"Really traumatic and it was the trauma of that happening at that level of the school, it really impacted on everything going on…it was just like I had walked into this place that everyone was just falling apart" (Zara).

The same participant described experiences of supervision as *"hit and miss"*.

While recognising the benefits of supervision, according to Phoenix;

"If you took it over the course of the whole year, would I have preferred to have been in my classroom, at that time I would probably argue, yes, I would rather have been here. You don't feel the benefit of it really outweighs what you can sometimes come back to and some of the situations that you come back to you feel, or I feel genuinely often may not have happened or could have been avoided had I been here".

Supervision experiences, at times, were described by Poppy as being;

"Quite draining, like you might go in feeling fairly resilient and okay and yeah things were alright and then everybody offloads and you leave you feeling oh gosh".

For **Imogen**, the expectation to be open and honest about emotions was associated with vulnerability;

"I keep reflecting this term particularly on how hard I'm finding that. I almost feel like I have trained myself to leave all of my emotions at the door…so to kind of allow myself to connect again with how I'm feeling and being a bit more honest about that to myself and then to my colleagues is actually really hard. I have found that emotionally very, very difficult. And then the more in touch I am with how emotional I am feeling the more vulnerable I am and sometimes I have found it really difficult to talk about that because I feel like I might cry and I don't want to cry at this point in my role in working with colleagues I am supposed to be supporting".

For three participants, one in each school, support for wellbeing was describes as being:

*"Not well enough still, better than it's ever been but not well enough" (**Oliver**).*

"Quite hit and miss here, because as well as the changes within my staff team, there were changes in my supervision team, my line management team…" (Zara).

"I don't think it is being supported very much. It's been a tough couple of years. There have been lots of lots of changes and that's really difficult" (Lily).

Participants from Apple Wood School mentioned the need for more wellbeing support.

Suggestions to improve wellbeing support related to reducing meetings, doing more wellbeing focused whole staff activities and doing more team activities. Additional suggestions related to revisiting the structure of the school day to give teachers time for themselves and more space to think. Other negative comments related to micromanaging, a lack of support for Head Teacher wellbeing, external accountability pressures, a lack of time and physical space for PPA and a lack of joined up thinking and school vision. In addition to concerns about wellbeing that related to the specific organisational contexts, some participants questioned school responsibilities for supporting the wellbeing of teachers in addition to discussing the prioritisation of wellbeing. When discussing support for wellbeing, **Sebastian** reflected on the complexity and challenges that staff might experiences outside school;

"Ultimately it is my responsibility to monitor the wellbeing of staff but there is also the feeling sometimes that they expect me to be able to make them well and that isn't the case".

The prioritisation of support for teacher wellbeing was also discussed;

*"I guess part of me feels that's not the priority. The priority is the children's wellbeing so I guess there is, it's like the oxygen mask on a plane isn't it, it's important that the adults wellbeing is good in order that they can support the children but ultimately the children should and must come first" (**Imogen**).*

"My interest is not primarily in the emotional wellbeing of the teachers except as teachers. The person who they are, they can be responsible for that. And I wouldn't put things in their way and say it's not important but my focus is primarily on the primary task, the educational task, the overall therapeutic task and so my thoughts have to do with supporting them in role" (Theodore).

Concerns were also raised in relation to support for own wellbeing. The highest frequency of references here related to difficulties in relation to supporting own wellbeing. These difficulties were associated with not having enough time or energy to engage in healthy experiences to support wellbeing such as having a good diet, exercise.

Poppy suggested that;

"You get ground down, you stop looking after yourself basically – at this point in the year I hardly ever make dinner for myself, so last night I didn't even eat dinner, I just went to bed. I got home from work and I was just exhausted".

Other participants stated that they do not do enough to support their own wellbeing. There was also a critique in relation to schools not doing enough to facilitate teachers in supporting their own wellbeing, which was associated with not enough attention being paid to wellbeing. According to Lucas, the Head Teacher of Cherry Blossom School's view of wellbeing might not be supportive of teacher wellbeing, in recognition of an attitude that;

"If you don't want to work here fuck off, you know, you took this job on so you ought to be able to deal with it".

He also critiqued tokenistic approaches and rhetoric with regards to wellbeing support, when support for wellbeing isn't integrated into the life of the school. For **Sebastian** his decision to leave the profession was related to feeling unable to support his own wellbeing in addition to stating;

"*I don't want to be stuck behind a desk dealing with other peoples problems all day*".

Additional concerns about support for own wellbeing related to not having enough time in a weekend or holidays.

For Phoenix;

"It shouldn't be that you are always literally dragging yourself over the line through your half term and so that you're really at the end of your tether and you're struggling over the half term".

Concerns were also raised about the impact on friendships of talking about stress experienced at work;

"I realised that I was really stressed out and talking about it all the time and you know that was probably – it was quite a while before I felt I had my breakdown, but it was certainly a lead, it was a long run up to that. I kind of just found myself talking about it all the time" (Phoenix).

Appendix 52-53 show that participants shared concerns about aspects of organisational support for wellbeing and about support for their own wellbeing.

4.4.6 Improving wellbeing support

In relation to barriers, specific aspects of the organisational contexts appear to be important to participants with regards to supporting wellbeing. Time was the highest frequency response coded here. Concerns also related to competing demands;

"I would say that the time is probably the biggest barrier. Just in that there is so much going on at all times that I feel maybe staff wellbeing kind of takes a back foot over stuff like safeguarding and training and other administrative things" (Levi).

"I think its probably the biggest barrier is having too many things to do and not enough time" (Olivia).

It was also recognised that finding time to support wellbeing might then impact on other aspects of teachers' professional roles. The pace of the school day was also recognised as being a barrier to supporting wellbeing;

"I guess some days it might feel like you're lurching from incident to incident, so you know, if it is a really tricky time and once something's resolved, you're having to go straight back into another thing, so there is the block of not being able to offload, so almost having to hold onto stuff and store stuff up is tricky" (Audery).

"Sometimes it's really hard because you just don't see each other. It's just so busy. We don't get breaks" (Lily).

Workload was described by participants as having an impact on wellbeing, particularly in recognition of the perceived value of some workload activities and an awareness of externally driven agendas;

"We have a lot of quite lengthy systems of producing data and evidencing progress and I think that those – I think we've got too many of them that are sometimes at odds with each other so don't necessarily complement each other, so you have to wonder what the point of them is. But that all just feeds into workload and I think workload and wellbeing are quite inextricably linked" (Phoenix).

Dilemmas associated with behaviour management and pedagogy and practice were also evident;

"I think that there's not enough consequence, so like I say, so certain behaviours are normalised and across the school we are looking at each other and going, how has it come to this?" (Phoenix).

"People just having a different agenda, or a different opinion of how things should be done" (Poppy).

Colleagues in the Apple Wood School identified not having opportunities to talk about the emotional aspects of their work as another dilemma. While the first comment related to concerns about the impact of talking about emotional work, the second comment related to the impact of not talking about emotional work.

*"I think quite scared of the idea of regular discussions of impact of emotions caused by working with these pupils. It's almost like raising awareness to the difficulty of this might have a negative impact on how it is seen…there has certainly been resistance in the past to having those sort of regular supervision or group kind of counselling or talking therapy meeting type things" (**Oliver**).*

"Just having I suppose someone to maybe talk to about issues or yeah, I don't know if there is like some kind of therapist or someone you could speak to or a counsellor of some form, because the stuff that we have to deal with on a daily basis can be quite traumatic and hearing about the things that have happened to some of our young people is quite harrowing and you know we come in every day and we have to deal with the repercussions of what they're faced with in their lives and yeah it's not good for our mental health either. Yeah, I'd feel if there was that kind of support available for us as well, it would be beneficial. (Levi).

With regards to further support for wellbeing in relation to the specific organisational contexts of the schools, the highest frequency of responses related to staffing. Importantly all five comments related to Cherry Blossom School.

Staffing concerns were associated with the quality of staff;

"I think the right quality of staff, that's really harsh to say. We have significant staff absence, partly because there is not that support. Being brutal partly, because we can't appoint the right people, we can't recruit quality people" (Clara).

"I think that a big problem here is the staffing crisis we have, we just don't have enough people and so the people that come in, they take on the load of a much bigger workforce and so you'll have days when, you know, we'll have three teachers phone in sick and so those classes will be split so the teachers here might have twelve children in their class, three of which are from different teachers who are unsettled and maybe causing problems and then you might be getting really run down from that" (Poppy).

Participants in Beech Wood School and Cherry Blossom School also mentioned lack of communication.

"I think that there's been a lack of communication around some decisions, lack of clarity around others" (Finn).

"I actually think for wellbeing at school, proper time for communication. I'm on SLT and I still know what the hell is going on next year. Not a clue. Classes are being announced tomorrow, there's been no conversation about what class you would like to teach, you know, what year group, nothing. Things get thrown at you, and that's damn hard when you are dealing with the unpredictability of these children" (Clara).

The need to have wellbeing as a school priority, ensuring the member of staff with responsibility for wellbeing actually cares, being given explicit guidance about wellbeing and having a wellbeing committee were discussed, in addition to being able to access external support and having more SLT support. Increased honesty at interview with regards to the challenges teachers may face and ensuring wellbeing becomes part of school induction, were also suggested. Gym membership, mindfulness and massage were also discussed by participants in relation to other ways that wellbeing could be further supported by schools. Adult dynamics was coded as the highest frequency response in relation to barriers to support for wellbeing that were associated with teachers' professional roles. However, for Theodore, working in these specific organisational contexts requires that teachers experience *"being a part of, rather that apart from"*. It was suggested that there needs to be more recognition of the challenges of a teachers' professional role and, therefore, more support for teachers;

"I feel like the mentality that you got into teaching and you should expect it to be hard, well yes, and it is hard, but there needs to be more support in terms of well, then how do you support that then? As opposed to well, all these things need doing, you just need to do them if you haven't got the time then that's just too bad. That's not really helpful to anyone" (Charlotte).

Recognition was also associated with teachers' individual strengths and *"what people can bring to the table as a team" (Chloe).*

With regards to further support for wellbeing in relation to the professional role emergent theme, the highest frequency responses related to increasing pay, particularly in relation to Teaching Assistants.

*"You know when you are having a really crappy day, to know that you are earning what you can earn in Tesco's is very difficult" (**Imogen**).*

*"I would like to be able to pay the staff more, especially the TAs because they get paid peanuts. I know there are some people who have left Cherry Blossom School because they didn't feel the work they were doing was reflected in their pay cheque" (**Sebastian**).*

For Finn, increased autonomy was suggested to be important;

"I would like to be left alone to do my job. I think, Yes, so it's again that managerial and change level".

For Phoenix, dilemmas associated with pedagogy and practice and balancing academic expectations with the need to support emotional wellbeing were discussed in relation to personal concerns about getting through each day;

"Ultimately we are expecting them to sit down and get on, do the work, you know, to varying levels and degrees according to what they can cope with and everything else. I think that expectation can sometimes be a real trigger…I suppose the biggest pressure constantly is to be just – and I do this a lot, you think of it going to bed and you think if it waking up – you know what can I do, how do I, how can they access it and this time of year, how can I get through the day".

Finn shared concerns about increasing demands in addition to the challenges of supporting the children in the classroom every day;

"There's a certain level of – there's a sense I get of, there is a lot of take and not a – there is always more to be doing, and I get that but going back to actually being in my class on a daily basis, trying to get these children through the day, is incredibly hard work".

For **Sebastian**, the impact of his professional role on his wellbeing, influenced his decision to leave the school;

"There are lots of reasons why I'm not going to continue working at this school. And I guess you could put all those under the wellbeing umbrella. My emotional wellbeing, physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing. In the sense that it's not, it doesn't stretch you mentally. It's just mentally taxing".

Barriers to supporting wellbeing in relation to the personal emergent theme were associated with being new to the specific organisational context of their school.

Autobiographical reasons for working in the specific organisational contexts of these schools were also suggested to be important with regards to wellbeing by Lucas;

"What actually made you want to go there in the first place and that's where it goes back to the autobiographical, you know, what were you trying to resolve for yourself by going to work in a really difficult behavioural school. Was it about trying to find a parent for yourself? Was it about trying to find siblings? Was it trying to you know… And you haven't got it. Maybe because you never were going to get it, because actually you need to go into therapy to get that. Rather than to go to Cherry Blossom School for some oblique therapeutic experience and then hate it when you don't get that experience".

Additional responses related to recognition that life away from school can be complex and demanding and that, as suggested by Grace, aspects of personal lives can impact on professional lives;

"I think there are some views across the school that people sometimes bring too much of their home life into work and maybe share too much information, but there are also people who don't share anything and then when they are stressed in the daytime and it's not just all about the workload, and they're making it all about the workload, but actually there is other stuff going on".

With regards to further support for wellbeing and the personal emergent theme, Theodore suggested the importance of therapy for some individuals;

"There is the difference between support for people to be able to understand the task and do it and then a point where you say actually I think what you are struggling with at source is something for yourself, you may wish to get help yourself. You can't take on either the responsibility of insisting or providing the therapy route for other people".

With regards to further support for wellbeing and the children emergent theme, supporting their emotional development was suggested to be important;

"You have a child who is overwhelmed by their feelings and discharge it in impulse so there is a feeling and an emotion and it gets discharged rapidly into a behaviour which we know is largely unhelpful to the child and others. The teacher is here, in a position with perspective and is there to invite the child up, not to say don't do that but to say, let's think about what's going on, it must be very hard for you and you bring the child alongside you, not face on, so what's going on when you're feeling that, can we think about that (Theodore).

Appendix 54-58 show that participants identified a variety of ways in which support for wellbeing could be improved. These related the barriers to supporting wellbeing and further support for wellbeing broad categories.

4.4.7 Additional considerations in relation to support for wellbeing or emotional work

With regards to additional considerations in relation support for wellbeing or emotional work, most references were coded at the organisational emergent theme, then the professional role emergent theme. Only one reference was coded at the personal emergent theme. These findings appear to suggest that the aspects of each specific organisational context were perhaps more meaningful for participants.

The highest frequency of responses for the organisational emergent theme related to needing more support for SLT colleagues. With regards to her Head Teacher, Alice recognised that;

"He is supporting everybody and holding everything, so I don't know what kind of support he gets, but I think that the school has got to invest a lot more in that".

With regards to the wellbeing of teachers, Lucas suggested that;

"I do think a lot of it you know you have to look after the Head Teacher".

Organisational aspects were associated with ethos and culture, the school community, school vision, organisational change and staff turnover. For Authur, Beech Wood School recognised the importance of nurturing children and staff';

"I think it is a nurturing environment, not just for the children but I think as an organisation I think it is aware that the teachers need to be in the right place and I get that totally for this, because if they are not, the children will pick up on that straight away and that's not fair because you know, they deserve to be given the best opportunities because of where they are and the journey they've done to get here".

For Grace, *"when I say we are a community, we really are a community".*

Organisational change was discussed in relation to Beech Wood School and Cherry Blossom School, who were being taken over by a new Academy Trust at the time of interviews;

"So obviously the Trust is disbanding, we talk about wellbeing – a letter got read out on Wednesday morning, the parents got told on Wednesday night and we're dealing with the fallout. Great. You know, that's the extent of how much notice we were given" (Clara).

Staff turnover was discussed by participants in Cherry Blossom School and Apple Wood School, with Alice suggesting that;

"I think there would be less staff turnover if people are supported".

Responses also related to the need for a clear school vision and professional experiences of dilemmas in the specific organisational context of Cherry Blossom School. Phoenix, for example, discussed the need for a clear school vision;

"I think that the biggest factor for wellbeing for us is if you know what the approach is and you are being told what it is then you have something to signup to, haven't you? If you know, if you don't and you've got your idea of what it should be, you're either going to get frustrated because what you are being asked to do isn't what necessarily you've – what your vision is. It's much harder and it causes a lot more confusion".

While other dilemmas were related to having to teach curriculum subjects;

"alongside all the nurturing…that doesn't work" (Clara).

And behaviour management;

"You end up being more and more of the enemy, because you're just layering all these quite mundane sanctions on and it's all quite boring and you end being this sort of person who just takes all my breaks away. Whereas this is a cycle, no-one wants to be in any sort of negative cycle and so I avoid that but then technically I'm not following procedure, so it's like I'm doing this balancing act between the two" (Phoenix).

The importance of wellbeing was recognised in relation looking after staff;

"It's really important for schools to put stuff in place to look after their staff teams. The schools that look after their teams are the schools that get the best out of their children. Because if your staff team are feeling emotionally happy, their wellbeing is looked after, they feel safe, they feel secure, they feel confident, they feel calm – that will spread to the children" (Audery).

While listening and being heard was discussed, whether change actually takes place was also suggested to be important,

"I guess that sometimes I feel that it's, we have a voice, and we're heard but not listened to perhaps, you know somebody will be there, at some level, somebody will say something, 'oh I will do something about that'. And you will always get somebody saying, 'Thank you for sharing that with us' and 'I'm hearing what you're saying', and 'I'll look into changing that'. And it doesn't" (Finn).

For **Sebastian**, wellbeing was related to performing in role;

"If you haven't got the energy or the verve or the enthusiasm or the want or the good health to be able to perform it's going to have a negative impact on the pupils you teach, the colleagues you work with and the school that you work for".

While Lucas re-iterated that wellbeing support should be structured, stating that;

"One thing that supports wellbeing is that it has to be structured in not left to chance…And that is has to be talking support not, you know, nothing wrong with Indian head massage but that is tokenistic".

For Alice wellbeing support was related to mind-set and thinking about wellbeing more broadly by offering regular choices of different activities that could be led by staff themselves. However, as was appreciated by Ella, that with regards to supporting wellbeing;

"It is really hard in a school like this, because everyone is different and everyone takes things differently".

In addition to the role of schools in supporting teacher wellbeing, **Sebastian** suggested the importance of individuals also caring for their own wellbeing;

"You have your own personal responsibility to look after your own wellbeing".

For Poppy, wellbeing was associated with understanding;

"A bit of understanding, but I get it. It seems like a bit of an impossible system really. Please just be more understanding".

The highest frequency of responses coded to the professional emergent theme were associated with emotional work. Participants from across all three schools commented on the emotional work and the impact of that emotional work;

"The emotional work here; it can be quite challenging for you emotionally because you know, it's not just one kid in your class, all of these kids come with so much baggage" (Mia).

"I don't understand how people who have four children, go home to their four children. I live on a small boat with two dogs and I'm happy with that. I don't have much to give once I leave here…I have no idea how people go home to four children under eight, and then slip into that life, get through that and then do that. I can't imagine what's it like, if then you've got to play nice daddy" (Finn).

"To me, and other people might tell you something different, but it isn't the physical stuff, it isn't the spitting, or the 'I don't like you, I hate you, you're the worst teacher I've ever had'. I've heard that, but yeah, whatever. None of that really affects me" (Zara).

Wellbeing was also associated with what it is to be a teacher in the specific contexts of these schools;

"You always need to understand your position. You are a teacher and they are a pupil, with their own needs" (Evelyn).

"We are not perfectly good, we are not perfectly awful…Lets try to do good enough, that Winnicott good enough, and for that kind of good enough, which is reliable and predictable and delivering something that is going to introduce them to a world that is very, very different to the world they experienced and offer them a present that will open up a future for them that isn't the reproduction of their awful past. Those are the things we need to do because it is in service to the children." (Theodore).

"I am a strong believer that the children have academic potential and we are doing them a disservice by not giving them the opportunity to do that in whatever way… We *are pushed on that front; where is your monitoring, where is your progress? You know, all the time and yet we are dealing with children with complex, volatile, horrible home lives" (Clara).*

"You know they're coming school and being supported whilst they are in school so it's not all bad for them. You're giving them some good experiences" (Ella).

Some participants, however, had considered leaving the teaching profession;

"Since I've started in the role, I think my mental health has deteriorated quite a lot. And you know there have been times when I've felt, you know, particularly after one incident, which I ended up in hospital for, you know I did consider not coming back. Yeah, I think it's just very – it's a very difficult job" (Levi).

"I haven't been doing this all my life, it's something I always wanted to try and have a go at. I won't – it's not something I will do forever" (Finn).

Other aspects that were associated with teachers' professional roles included; demands associated with responsibilities, accountability and external pressures, poor pay, paperwork, distress associated with physical management and children's behaviour.

Experiences in relation to her professional role were described by Phoebe as being like a roller-coaster;

"It's a bit of a roller-coaster working here. Some days I'm like I love this job, everything is great and other days I know I just need to knuckle down and get though it, because it will feel better, but it is bloody hard work".

While in addition to aspects of professional roles that might have a negative impact on wellbeing, Ella suggested that her job was rewarding;

"It's rewarding as well and it's – I think it's easy to moan about all the bad bits, but then actually it's not like that every day and there are – you are not coming in the whole day and taking children into holds and being sworn at – you've got the nice moments as well, and you see the kids making the progress and I think having the smaller class you get to know them a lot better and you can work with them a lot more closely…You are helping them and you know that you're helping and for me that is why I do the job, to come in and help the children".

Appendix 59-60 show additional considerations in relation to support for wellbeing or emotional work.

4.4.8 Critical incidents

At the end of each one-to-one interview, participants were invited to share a recent event or experience that had had an impact on their wellbeing. These critical incidents were transcribed and categorised in relation to impact on wellbeing. Events or experiences were coded as having either a positive impact on wellbeing or a negative impact on wellbeing.

Overall, as shown in Table 7 71% of critical incidents were coded as negative, while 29% of critical incidents were coded as positive. Such a finding provides useful insights into events or experiences that had an impact on participants wellbeing. Importantly, significantly more negative events or experiences were shared.

Table 7 Summary of critical incidents which were coded as positive or negative

Coding	Frequency	Percentage
Positive	6	29%
Negative	15	71%
Overall Total	21	100%

Table 8 shows how critical incidents were coded for Apple Wood school. Table 9 shows how critical incidents were coded for Beech Tree school and Table 10 shows how critical incidents were coded for Cherry Blossom school.

These tables include a brief description of the events or experiences shared by each participant and show how incidents were coded. Interesting variations are evident both within and between schools in relation to the types of critical incidents described and the frequency of positive or negative events or experiences.

Table 8 Critical incident coding for Apple Wood School

Name	Brief description of event or experience	Coding of impact on wellbeing	
Alice	Handing in notice	+	
Charlotte	Being able to support children who are experiencing loss or grief because of empathy and connection	+	
Chloe	Developing and introducing a new reading scheme that is not being followed by colleagues	-	
Evelyn	Not many opportunities for professional development	-	
Levi	Physically injured to the extent of needing to go to hospital on two occasions has had an impact on mental health	-	
Mia	Expectation to visit a parent to discuss child's behaviour - my job is for him, not for her	-	
Oliver	Success with individual pupils	+	
Olivia	Successful managing an overnight camp	+	
		+	4 (50%)
	Total	-	4 (50%)

Table 9 Critical incident coding for Beech Tree school

Name	Brief description of event or experience	Coding of impact on wellbeing	
Arthur	On-going induction which provides a space for reflection on practice	+	
Finn	Staff changes and losing an experienced TA to another class	-	
Grace	Returning to an intense environment after a relaxing holiday and feeling like "I can't do this job"	-	
Imogen	Experiencing professional dilemmas in relation to the balance between children's emotional wellbeing and their academic progress	-	
Oscar	Significant staff change and the need to re-start lesson observations and monitoring of teaching and learning with increased staff anxiety	-	
Phoebe	Extent of physical injury following an incident at school	-	
Zara	A vulnerable child leaving school without a placement secured	-	
		+	1 (14%)
	Total	-	6 (86%)

Table 10 Critical incident coding for Cherry Blossom school

Name	Brief description of event or experience	Coding of impact on wellbeing	
Audery	Reflection on positive impact of work with pupils	+	
Clara	Crying in a professionals meeting “spit dribbling down my face, being bitten and being called an f’ing c and all sorts of horrible things, because I asked **** to stop swearing”	-	
Ella	An e-mail at 16:00 when taking PPA day at home regarding an issue at school which was too late to follow up so spent the evening worrying and having difficulties sleeping	-	
Phoenix	“Being physically assaulted and the realisation that you come in and every morning and you’re like ‘morning’ and you are ready to be positive and you just get the same shit and you just think – I find that really demoralising, to just keep on going and just the madness of you know you’re being kind and you’re trying to set the children up for a really nice day and you’ve thought about it all night and all morning and you’re thinking well, this can’t go wrong because – and they just throw it in your face”	-	
Poppy	Guilt associated with reporting a safeguarding concern which resulted in the child being removed from home. Child still but still attends Poppy’s class.	-	
Sebastian	Parents who are aggressive and persistently harass the school.	-	
		+	1 (17%)
	Total	-	5 (83%)

5. Stage 2 research findings: Research Question 3: What is the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices to teachers' professional roles?

Stage 2 of the research aimed to respond to the following research question:

- What is the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to teachers' professional roles? (RQ3)

5.1 Relevance of compassion focused principles

No participants were aware of school-based initiatives that are informed specifically by compassion focused therapeutic principles. However, from Apple Wood School, Levi had experience of mindfulness and Mia had experienced counselling. From Birch Tree School, Phoebe described potential relevance of compassion-based initiatives to Nurture Group approaches.

5.1.1 Defining Compassion

When encouraged to define compassion, Simone, from Apple Wood School suggested kindness through understanding. For Charlotte, compassion was associated with "*thinking about someone else's feeling before your own*". Olivia thought empathy was important, while being non-judgemental and "*trying to understand where someone might be coming from*" was described by Charlotte. Evelyn suggested that;

"*we've talked about understanding and empathy to other people's feelings, maybe we would stress the fact that we must first of all need to have to listen to our own feelings and then to show compassion to others*".

From Birch Tree School, Grace associated compassion with compassionate leave, suggesting the importance of;

"*being understood and understanding, being given that time, but feeling confident enough to be honest about what's happening at home and things like that*".

When describing compassion, **Imogen** suggested;

"*I think it's active, whereas empathy or sympathy might be a response to something but you don't have to actually do anything with it. I think to be compassionate you have to*

act, so I've said it's a behaviour or an active response based on love, kindness and empathy".

For Zara;

"*that there's always a balance between your own needs and the needs of other people, because it is easy to think you are behaving in a compassionate manner when you might be actually fulfilling your own needs and not the other person's needs. And equally the other way round. It's easy to miss other people's needs because you are so centred own your own needs.*"

Arthur suggested that compassion related to;

"*understanding or empathy to other people's feelings and emotions, but both in how you understand their feelings but how your actions impact on them*".

From Cherry Blossom School, Lilly suggested that compassion involves kindness and empathy towards others. Phoenix suggested;

"*compassion towards the children in our care. Compassion towards our peers in relation to work demands and resulting stress and I've got being kind to ourselves.*"

Poppy suggested that compassion is associated with;

"*relating to the issues that people face, caring, reflecting, active listening, empathising, taking time to consider how other people are feeling, and helping others and yourself*".

For Clara, compassion was suggested to involve sympathy and listening;

"*really listening and actually engaging in what somebody's telling you*".

5.1.2 Relevance of Buddhism and Buddhist Psychology

Having described how compassion focused therapeutic principles are influenced by Buddhist psychology, participants were asked about the relevance of the Buddhist ideas to their professional roles. Oscar and Lilly suggested that Buddhism featured in their school curriculums, while Imogen suggested that "*the world seems like a less compassionate place than it once was*".

With regards to working with children, Phoenix suggested that "*it's quite an anti-Buddhist mantra*", in that children are often encouraged to be self-focused, rather than thinking about others. In relation to self-regulation, Phoenix suggested that children are often asked;

"*what are you thinking, what are you feeling. Don't worry about them, think about yourself*".

With regards to their professional roles, Poppy suggested that there is "*martyrdom of teachers being very, you know – we do not put ourselves first, like, how dare we, we live to serve".* She continued by explaining that *"for me to be a good teacher, I have to drive myself into the ground. Burn out".* Phoenix extended the discussion by suggesting that "*there's that sort of notion that you're not doing your job properly if you are not completely exhausted and on the verge of breakdown…this kind of norm that teachers are just really focused on other people to the detriment of themselves".*

Teachers from Cherry Blossom School also discussed their concerns about a lack of compassion with regards to teachers, at National level, specifically in relation to the "*value of teachers*" and *"anti-teacher sentiment which has come from a governmental level"* (Phoenix) but also in relation to their current school experiences involving being taken over by a different Multi-Academy Trust. These experiences were described as being "*unsettling"* (Phoenix) because *"we're all in a very unknown position"* (Clara).

Additional concerns were related to a lack of perceived compassion from some parents or others outside the school context, as explained by Clara;

"You know, and if you're sitting there covered in spit or butter or whatever else it is, you know, actually where's the thought for your wellbeing and we can sympathise because we understand what that is like, but you step out of those gates, and people literally don't believe you. You know, 'what do you mean a child has done those injuries to you?' 'what do you mean a child' – you know. 'They're only little' and that is really hard".

Phoenix discussed different responses in schools following unpleasant incidents;

"I think in some schools, if you were pelted in spit at and you know margarine, I think it's really unpleasant, massively unpleasant – you know, some schools would say, look, you need to go away for an hour, that's not okay and then in other settings you might feel like you are being, like some sort of lightweight and a wimp to say I don't feel comfortable trying to do my job wearing my colleagues t-shirt and covered in spit and margarine, you know".

For *Phoenix,* teachers have "*a right to dignity".*

Reflecting on current school experiences, Poppy suggested that;

"*we've definitely seen a bit of a kind of hardening from the senior leaders in their kind of approach and their lack of compassion for what we do".*

A "*complete lack of compassion" (Poppy)* was experienced in relation to having to remain in classrooms, even if others were experiencing difficulties, not knowing if someone will come to offer help if a support call is made on radios, a lack of autonomy and being micromanaged. Clara suggested that;

"I think we are becoming less compassionate to each other because actually we are all under so much scrutiny".

5.1.3 Relevance of evolutionary and psychobiological accounts

To explore the relevance of compassion to wellbeing, social and emotional needs and experiences of distress, particularly in relation to the complex interaction between biology and social contexts, evolutionary perspectives and psychobiological/biopsychosocial accounts were discussed with participants.

Following discussions of evolutionary perspectives, Phoebe reflected on her interactions with children suggesting that "*I know it's really daft, but knowing – them, knowing that you care and knowing that they are going to be looked after*" was associated consistency and trust.

For Poppy, "*we teach the children that they have a reptilian brain, the whole blow your lid thing and we, you know, probably actually spend quite lot of our time in fight or flight, don't we? While we are at work, just waiting for what's going to be the next thing that*".

Fight or flight responses were also discussed by Chloe in relation to adult experiences of difficulties;

"I'm thinking particularly because obviously my son works in the school, when he saw me punched in the head, that took a lot of rational – to not then want to – you know quite frankly hurt that child. Which you know I think something none of us like seeing any of us get hurt, so there will be that defence to try and – but actually it's managing that when you are in that situation managing that inner fury sometimes of yourself".

For Phoenix, such experiences were associated with protecting others or protecting yourself and were described as being related to "*instinct, isn't it as well? So your instinct is to protect someone that you care about. Your instinct might be to protect yourself in you are under attack*".

In relation to her professional experiences, for Chloe, the biopsychosocial perspective "*sums it up*", while for **Oliver** *"we see massive amounts of the social circumstances especially, and the impact on or the link there to mental health".*

Participants from all three schools recognised the relevance of evolutionary perspectives to their professional roles.

With regards to physical aggression exhibited by children, **Oliver** described fight or flight experiences where;

"*It's controlled, but effectively we fight and if we are protecting ourselves and we're managing them in a safe position, but it becomes very physical and you know we regularly will have moments afterwards, a massive outlay of kind of emotion, endorphins and then and then staff are supposed to go back into the classroom after that and adrenaline starts kicking through".*

Other examples suggested related to conflict, arguments or confrontations with colleagues. Olivia, for example, described having her experience being challenged or questioned as being associated with "*having a bit of a fight-flight".*

5.1.4 Relevance of basic emotions and difficult feelings

Basic emotions and difficult feelings such as anger, anxiety and disgust were discussed in relation to teachers' professional roles, in addition to exploring examples of self-criticism and self-doubt.

Evelyn discussed experiences of worry in relation to lesson observations;

"*If the pupils are going to behave, will they be engaged, they will follow the lesson, it will make sense, then it's again about performing also because someone is looking at you".*

Chloe also described anxiety associated with the experience of being observed by external visitors;

"The outside people, and then we've even had people from outside going no, no. I do know the context and it's like, no you don't. That's what makes me really anxious because like you say, then you are busting a gut to do your best and then someone comes in and just goes no".

Imogen reflected on the interview process for applying for the job of Head Teacher;

"I was thinking of applying for this job and having to constantly talk myself back in to a place of calm. I was going both ways into, why have I even driven there, how embarrassing, I'm turning up with all of these people who know much more than I do".

While Phoebe shared her doubts about becoming a teacher;

"*I was just like, what am I doing, and I've got some people going, you can really do this, and then I've got some people going why is she doing this, she shouldn't be doing this*".

Feeling like "*you're faking it, and some day someone is going to work out that you were faking all along"* was also discussed by Imogen, while Arthur described experiences of Imposter Syndrome.

Experiences of self-criticism and experiences of anxiety and anger were also discussed in relation to the children's daily experiences.

For Oscar, daily transitions were experienced as being difficult, where "*transitions could be from the fish fingers to the chips, but they can't handle that*". Oscar also discussed children's anxiety and anger in relation to their inability to understand and articulate difficult feelings and "*to realise that they are not angry at the work, they are not angry at you, they are angry at all the writing off that was done of them*".

Oscar suggested that;

"*it's far more comfortable to sit with actually, this worksheet was designed by an idiot, and that idiot is you. It's a much better position to sit in, than actually go through the next step which is anxiety, self-doubt*".

Participants from Cherry Blossom School discussed their daily professional experiences with regards to basic emotions and difficult feelings. Poppy described an experience of a child absconding and "*putting himself in harms way*", which 'triggered' an anxious response. She went on to suggest that;

"I just think because of the emotional sort of state that I personally am in from working here, I'm just generally quite – like if there is a loud noise I'll be like oh! I'll have a physiological response to something that probably when I haven't worked here for six months might subside, I don't know. I definitely think that we spend a lot more of our time than people who work in offices maybe, on the edge".

Other difficult feelings were associated with fear, shame, embarrassment and guilt, leading Poppy to wonder;

"*I wonder what our cortisol levels are like – I bet they are shocking compared to other human beings".*

Phoenix discussed decision making involved in daily interactions;

"I think I operate just below the panic level, because you just, you know, you are aware that every decision you make and you make a million a day. Every interaction, everything you say and also I mean recently I've just been confounded by reactions I've had from maybe giving some praise or just saying something that I thought was a positive actually, or being really kind and or trying to be kind at least and actually being the response to that being abuse and it being a kick off".

Other difficult feelings were associated with the organisational context of Cherry Blossom School such as "*feeling on edge*" (Phoenix), undermined and belittled (Poppy).

Chloe suggested that these difficult feelings related to;

"*inconsistencies in what we are supposed to be doing that actually it's led to everybody being very, very confused*".

Difficult feelings were also discussed in relation to "*professional mistrust*" (Poppy), increased workload and pressure, unrealistic expectations, increased professional responsibilities, organisational change and feelings of coping rather than succeeding.

Difficult feelings were also discussed in relation to recent professional experiences. Clara discussed a situation where a meeting with the new Academy Trust was cancelled leading to feeling upset, frustrated and angry, while Phoenix described an experience in class involving;

"a moment today and I was, and I was just really beating myself up. I got really, really cross and I overreacted and it's like, how do you get yourself back, how do you bring it back – they've all seen it, you know, you can't un-see it".

He went on to share feelings of frustration and anger in response to children's lack of engagement in learning despite his attempts to support the children;

"You know there is no compassion in that moment, for me. I mean I may feel it every minute of every day, but it's how you express, it's how you show what you're feeling and in that moment I was just angry and everyone was a bit like, wow".

5.5.5 Relevance of Attachment theory

Attachment theory was suggested to be relevant to participants from all three schools. **Oliver** suggested that an understanding of attachment theory informed the schools responses to "*challenging behaviours*," while Olivia recognised the importance of building and developing good relationships with children.

With regards to teachers' professional roles, understanding attachment theory was associated with a conscious awareness of how children's difficult emotions might be displaced and have an impact on adult wellbeing, through "*living those emotions through us*" (**Oliver**).

Olivia also suggested the relevance of attachment theory to adults revisiting their own childhood "*issues*", in addition to appreciating how a "*parents struggle is affecting the child*".

For Phoebe, attachment theory is "*incredibly relevant*" to her professional role, with regards to;

"*everything to do with how we behave towards each other, how we behave to the children and the children's behaviours towards each other and how they behave towards us, and then their networks and their families. It's massively relevant*".

For Phoenix, an understanding of attachment theory was associated with feelings of pressure in recognition of children's experiences of vulnerability, sense of loss and adults "*walking out on them'*. Becoming a child's "*dependable person*", as well as being described as being a privilege, was recognised as being "*a massive responsibility*", with Phoenix considering;

"what are they going back to, you know because of the weight of that sort of, of pressure associated with attachment, it makes it very hard to step away from it I suppose, detach yourself from the job and be able to have a life away from it".

An understanding of attachment theory was also discussed in relation to professional dilemmas. Despite expectations that Cherry Blossom School is "*a school like any other*", Phoenix stated that;

"*it's taken me quite a long time to unpick that in my mind, because, I'm convinced now that we are not a school like any other*".

Rather than developing a play-based curriculum and supporting children to make friends, for example, academic pressures and having to track learning using school based assessment systems, were experienced as pedagogic tensions.

The relevance of attachment theory was also discussed in relation to not taking PPA because "*the kids cannot cope with us not being there*" (Chloe) and the impact of no-touch school policies.

5.1.6 Relevance of Polyvagal theory

No participants were familiar with Polyvagal theory prior to the session discussion. Having introduced Polyvagal Theory and discussed the role of the autonomic nervous system in relation to evolutionary adaptations to experiences of safety and threat, participants were asked to reflect in the relevance of such theoretical ideas to their professional roles.

Participants across all three schools described experiences of high levels of alertness and hyper-vigilance.

Participants from Apple Wood School described physiological responses to radio calls for support, for example, both in relation to children and themselves. **Oliver** suggested that;

"We try to, hope to calm them, but then in some ways actually by creating and other people coming to a situation to help or to try to solve that, maybe actually we are creating a fight or flight reaction even more so for the child who is already in that fight or flight. And then the level of aggression we can get from them is then the fight or flight there isn't it? But from us as well. We are being prepared to be punched at or those sort of things".

Later, **Oliver** recognised that;

"Essentially we go from fight to flight to fight to flight here, don't we? Constantly, throughout out the day".

For Chloe;

"This is important because you think if you go from well, you'll know particularly, school run in the morning, so you are starting at like, six o'clock in the morning, getting up, you're getting kids up, getting stuff sorted, you know it's really hard and then you've got to get in here, then you are on the go all day, and so you think if you've hyper for twelve hours a day, you need your down time".

Olivia described a high level of alertness when she first started at the school;

"You train yourself to listen and to be able to cope with different – you've got that going off and you've got somebody walking up and then you've got a noise in the classroom, and somebody is walking out and shouting. Is that something to worry about, no it's okay, that's normal. It's kind of getting used to it".

Oliver suggested that staff become desensitised to such experiences, which Olivia discussed in relation to getting to know the children and support available in the school. Participants also reflected on children's responses to anxiety, which might be related to not feeling good enough, interactions with peers or "*work that they might need to be completing"* (Oliver).

It was recognised that some children seek safety through their behaviour such as setting fire alarms off or causing large amounts of damage. With regards to children seeking safety in school, Chloe suggested that;

"I would say it's quite often like being a mum and a teacher all in one, because you've got to do that caring and give them that caring and warmth to make them feel safe, to then be able to do the teacher bit and so it's about those relationships"

Participants at Birch Tree School also described their experiences of being attuned and alert to changes in children's behaviour. Phoebe suggested that;

"the children are experiencing a rapid change in heart rate and what it makes them do, and how they behave and how they respond to the environments, and we're highly attuned to that, and trying to help them to regulate or recognise what is going on in their bodies and then calm them as much as possible".

Participants at Cherry Blossom School described feeling on-edge, hyper-vigilant and experiencing increasing pressure in their professional roles.

Such experiences were associated with putting on weight and "*sleepless night*" (Clara), "*having to not use my bladder a lot of the time"* (Lilly) and wondering "*how is this job possible in a relationship"* (Phoenix). Phoenix went on to describe feeling depressed because of being unable to engage in conversations with his new partner and was;

"Actually panicking about committing to being with her when I was – when I felt I needed to be processing everything I needed to do in my job".

For Clara;

"I think the level of threat is very much under-estimated. You know in this environment or anybody who is dealing with children – demanding children. And the attitude is, but they're children".

In addition to adults experiencing high levels of alertness, it was recognised that some children were hyper-vigilant, which was discussed in relation to children's wellbeing.

In Apple Blossom School, such hyper-vigilance was associated with children struggling, low-level disruption, the affect of children's behaviour on other children and physical incidents, while also teaching, monitoring learning and planning next steps. Pedagogical strategies to support children to reduce anxiety included careful consideration of seating arrangements, temperature control in classrooms through the use of air conditioning, predictability and using visuals "*to really make things clear and you know, what's going to happen, how it's going to happen, when it's going to happen*" (**Oliver**). In relation to Birch Tree School, Phoebe described the importance of recognising early warning signs of distress. Such recognition was associated with children's eye movements or tapping, but also in relation to the importance of having an awareness of children's experiences before coming into class so that teachers can consider their behaviour and responses. Knowledge of the children was suggested to be important with regards to supporting their self-regulation through offering a blanket, a lie down, tea and toast or five minutes to kick a ball around, for example. With regards to supporting children to feel safe in school, Oscar discussed the importance of trust;

"What we do is making children able to tolerate being in groups and transfer that to other people. We're synthesising trust because they do not have any trust".

Offering and accepting hugs, visiting children in their residential homes before they return to school after a holiday and saying goodbye before they go on holiday were also suggested to be important by Phoebe;

"*Say goodbye and I'll be thinking about you, take care I'll be thinking about you on your holiday, take care*".

Participants from Apple Wood School also discussed the importance of staff support in relation to Polyvagal theory. Daily briefings and debriefs were suggested to provide spaces for staff to;

"discuss what's going to happen and there is a sense of that there and but also then to reflect on what's happened… the emotional dynamics of the day are kind of held within school then. You are able to move on" (**Oliver**).

These spaces were also suggested to provide opportunities to recognise successes through staff star of the week awards. When asked about the importance of connection, affiliation, warmth and affection in relation to their professional roles, Chloe suggested that;

"I think it's like you said to start with, you've got to look after yourself first. I think you forget that, because it is so busy here and because you are on the go and you are worried about all the children, you forget to look after yourself".

5.1.7 Relevance of Gilbert's Affect Regulation System

Gilberts Affect Regulation System conceptualisation was introduced to participants through discussing the three-circle model that represents experiences of threat, drive, and contentment. Participants were then asked to consider the relevance of the three-circle model to their professional roles.

According to **Oliver**, the threat focused aspect of the three-circle model was "*obviously*" related to their professional roles;

"*we are going into these threat focused situations; we by the nature of what we do, maybe seeking protection and safety seeking in those incidents. Yeah, we are driven by those elements, aren't we? You know if you look at people that have been in these situations – you can see after incidents, you know, nobody can keep going into physical interventions or show signs of anger for colleagues being hurt, or anxiety because that situation didn't go well".*

A variety of complex emotional dilemmas were also discussed during these conversations. Feelings of disgust, for example, were associated with experiences of physical interventions, while a lack of recovery time after incidents and a lack of space where children and adults can go for 'quiet time' to calm and relax following incidents was also recognised in relation to feelings of anxiety in the context of Apple Wood School. In addition trying to create experiences of safeness through kindness and soothing for children following incidents, it was recognised that adults may experience difficult feelings towards children who have hurt colleagues, while also appreciating that children may feel shame and increased anxiety following incidents. Empathising with and balancing the needs of both children and adults was suggested to be experienced as a "*whole tangled web of emotions*" (**Oliver**). Complex emotional experiences were also associated in relation to colleague responses to children's behaviour;

"We have an on-going, not conflict, but it's a difficult feeling when you've been in that incident and you've been left in that incident and you come out of that incident feeling anger and anxiety and you know, you're shaking and all the rest of it, and then and it happens the next time you walk past the room with that child in and somebody is taking the approach of providing safeness and kindness and soothing that child, to get them to a point where they need to be and for the situation to have a positive outcome, but at that time, fuck, are you pissed off, no-one's soothing me" (**Oliver**).

Chloe also described feelings of embarrassment "*because if you have been caught off guard and there's been an incident and you haven't managed to manage it, and you think now I've got a fistfight*".

During such situations, Chloe suggested the need to find a space and somewhere quiet, which was often difficult;

"*You're in **** room and someone comes in, or you're at the top of the steps but someone is there and then sometimes you don't actually need that 'are you okay?', 'are you okay?', you do just want, as you say, to find some space away, somewhere quiet for yourself*".

Participants from Birch Tree School reflected on children's difficulties with experiences of contentment. According to **Imogen**;

"*one of the most interesting and the saddest things about so many of the children here is how intolerable those good feelings are to them and I think when you see those negative behaviours or responses at the bottom, its often not that the they are prevented from getting to the goal, they have got to the goals and they can't cope with it*".

Zara described children's experiences of success that were then sabotaged, such as refusing to accept, throwing away or ripping up certificates. Success for some children was suggested to be painful.

With regards to the classroom context Finn stated that he was;

"*struggling to see a traditional classroom as a content, safe and connected place. And here, even creating that space is challenging and scary because there is a sense that contentedness, stopped, we are not doing anything, we've got a limited time in this group. Just sitting and being. I've got Target tracker, I've got this, phonics, I'm behind on maths, I'm behind on literacy and you know I've got to do this, I've got to do that, so you know, actually sometimes just to enable us to be safe, is terrifying".*

While connectedness and safety were recognised as being important and were associated with the contentment aspect of the three circles model, **Imogen** suggested that learning was more associated with drive and threat. Zara suggested that learning could also be associated with drive and contentment when children achieve, but which can quickly become a threatening experience for children;

"but too often they then realise that – they realise those feelings and then realise, oh no, I'm starting to feel pleased about this, I've got a lot to lose, I don't want it to be taken away from me, so then the threat comes in and then they tip into self-sabotage because, oh they might take it away or they throw it away before anyone can".

Oscar recognised that for some children, safety, contentment and connection was experienced as threat because of feelings of uncertainty. Therefore children "*go through a red, red, green cycle. But I think we want blue-green cycle"* (Oscar).

For participant's from Cherry Blossom School, experiences of threat were associated with being physically assaulted by children and physical management. According to Clara;

"none of us want to physically manage and all the rest; however there is no consideration for the level of threat that we feel under and then that sometimes we – other children might feel under and I think we're really criticised for that".

Phoenix also shared experience of threat;

"*on numerous occasions I get told **** is going to being a knife in and stab me, you know, they're going to kill my mum, you know, I've had that this year, I'm going kill you, you know. They are verbal threats and I often laugh them off and then you think you are working with children who, you know, you think hang on, I'm working with children who have social, emotional and mental health needs, you know.*"

5.2 Relevance of compassion focused processes

5.2.1 Reflecting on the three circles model

Having explored the relevance of Gilbert's Affect Regulation System previously, participants were encouraged to re-consider the three circles model in relation to a professional experience.

Following a conversation about aspects of the Affect Regulation System and a reminder about the key features of the three circles model, participants were provided with A3 paper and blue pens to represent experiences of drive, green pens to represent experiences of contentment/affiliation and red pens to represent experiences of threat.

Participants were then invited to think about a recent experience in their professional roles and to draw circles to represent the different aspects of the circles model. Participants were encouraged to consider the size of each circle when representing their professional experience in relation to the aspects of the drive, contentment/ affiliation or threat. Examples of participants three circles model images and descriptions can be found in Appendix 61.

In all reflections, participants began their discussion by sharing threat-based experiences first, with Zara stating;

"*we are all starting with red, isn't that funny?"*

Seven out of the twelve participants shared reflections that involved threat-based experiences that were associated with the children's behaviour. The remaining five participant reflections were more associated with difficult aspects of participant's professional roles.

5.2.2 Relevance of threat-based experiences

Threat based experiences associated with children's behaviour related to responding to a racist incident, experiencing physical aggression from children, being spat at, escalation of children's behaviour or being involved in physical interventions.

Examples of threat-based reflections included experiences with children who were;

- Attempting to abscond
- Banging on windows
- Involved in physical interventions
- Racism
- Running around out side interrupting the learning of others
- Screaming
- Slapping staff in the face
- Spitting at adults
- Throwing objects at staff

Participants described the impact of these threat-based experiences, which included feeling;

- Angry
- Annoyed
- Anxious
- Devastated
- Difficult
- Fight/ flight
- Frustrated
- Fucking pissed off

- Sad
- Self-protection
- Stressed
- Survival
- Unsafe

Threat based experiences associated more with aspects of participants professional roles included; an OfSTED visit, morning meetings, returning to school after attending a course and uncertainty about professional role.

Reflecting on the OfSTED visit, Olivia discussed her concerns about being relatively new to the school and not wanting to let people down. Threat had been experienced in relation to pre-OfSTED Quality Assurance visits and "*having had loads of people on our backs over the past however long, there is a big threat*".

Phoebe discussed attending morning meetings as a threat-based experience that was associated with worry and anxiety;

"There is a huge sense of anxiety; there's all this going on, we've got this visitor, this is happening by Friday, this meeting is happening and it's like, oh my god, what?"

For Oscar, threat-based experiences were associated with not being able to attend all morning briefings and feeling like he had to "*catch up all the time*". **Imogen** described returning to school having attended a "*brilliant*" course where she felt motivated and balanced to feeling tired, exhausted, muddled, vulnerable, and disconnected on her return to school;

"Today, I just feel like I'm missing loads of deadlines, I haven't shared enough things, we've had teachers in today, nobody knew until we got in this morning that that was happening, I feel like I'm, you know, juggling a thousand things and I should have taken the time to ask for some help and I haven't, and therefore like, disgust and anger with myself really, and like anxiety today, which then I keep thinking makes me hide and then that makes it worse".

Although Clara began by discussing uncertainties about her professional role, she moved on to describing other aspects of her professional experiences that were associated with feelings of threat.

According to Clara, in relation to staff at Cherry Blossom School "*we're in the red zone*". Clara shared concerns which related to the level of injury to staff, staff managing their emotions when being physically attacked by children, exhaustion, lack of leadership, aggression from leadership, lack of consistency, unpleasant and uncomfortable morning meetings, managing deadlines and workloads.

In relation to morning briefings, Clara suggested that;

"So literally everyone comes out pissed off and then goes straight to dealing with the kids. Pissed off".

5.2.3 Relevance of drive-based experiences

With regards to participant reflections that were associated with the behaviour of children, drive-based experiences were often associated attempts to resolve difficulties. With regards to trying to resolve a racist incident, Mia was driven to offer support both for her colleague and for the child involved in the racist incident. Having shared a reflection relating to a child's physical aggression, Chloe was driven to quickly and effectively resolve the issue, while protecting others.

Having reflected on being spat in the face by a child, Grace was driven by an acknowledgement that;

"*Actually this child was just in complete breakdown right now and then the point of going back to them regulating and me just sort of walking away, cleaning my face*".

Following her reflection on children's behaviour escalating in the classroom, Zara was driven to try and calm and refocus the children, while Finn arrived to school "*ready for Monday morning*".

Despite her threat-based experience of being attacked by two pupils, Lily's drive-based reflection recognised that;

"*Assembly this morning was beautiful. Three of my children, and lots of children from the rest of the school played their ukuleles*".

Poppy's drive-based experiences was associated with undertaking an MA;

"*In contrast to how stressful everything is here, I feel like thank god I've got my plan B, my masters working through, I've got like a different goal that I'm set on and am achieving it, so I am sort of looking forward*".

In relation to drive based reflections associated with participant's professional roles, in relation to an OfSTED visit, Olivia suggested that;

"*There was a kind of drive because of everybody being so good and supportive and come on, we can do this*".

Olivia described preparing a crib sheet to reduce her own anxiety, but also to support others. She also recognised that others were experiencing threat during the OfSTED visit, which provided increased motivation to support them.

When reflecting on drive experienced before the threat based morning briefing example, Phoebe suggested feeling;

"*feeling really organised and safe and happy and ready to go and I've got everything ready and it's going to be really exciting*"

After the meeting Phoebe recognised the need to;

"*rewind myself back here and go, actually you know what, I'm just going to focus on what is happening in the next hour, and then the next hour and then the next hour".*

After reflecting on another threat-based morning meeting example, Oscar shared his drive to spend time supporting a pupil. With regards to her professional experience of drive, Imogen stated that;

"I went from here on Friday which was lovely, the course was brilliant. I felt really clear and really confident about what I was doing, everything kind of balanced…Feeling motivated and feeling that sort of a positive kind of anxiety, which fed into these other circles and it all felt balanced and good".

Clara's drive based experience was associated with being recognised;

"that actually I work hard, I deserve, I've done lots of courses, I hope that I support and can be a good part of leadership but it's all out of my control and so it's where do you go forward with that and that drive to actually career wise because actually as I've got to manage finances".

5.2.4 Relevance of contentment/ affiliation-based experiences

With regards to reflections relating to children's behaviour, contentment/ affiliation experiences were often associated with how incidents were resolved and how others were supported. For Mia, contentment/ affiliation was experienced following a positive outcome to a meeting that aimed to resolve the racist incident. Feeling able to empathise with both her colleague and the child who had been involved in the incident and feeling like she did a good job was also associated with contentment/ affiliation. In relation to reflections that related to experiences of physical aggression from children, contentment/ affiliation was associated with being calm, showing affection and being caring.

Some participants also reflected on positive interactions with children, including Grace;

"*Then I did horse-riding with this same child that spat at me. I had a really amazing time horse-riding with him on Friday and he was so sweet and he was showing me how to groom the horse and he grabbed my arm and said you are too close to the bottom, and walked me at a distance, he wanted me to walk round the back of the horse to keep - he wanted to keep me safe and he was really calm and quiet*".

For Zara her "*intention going in there was to create a connection, an attachment, to inject some calm and some kindness and to add a diversion into safety*".

Lily reflected on the end of the day where;

"*some of my children were still in my room and I put a short film on, a really short film on, and we just sat back and chilled and then they had a bit of target time and they were really nice and some of them, like **** is – will come and give me a hug and say you know, I can see that you have had a bad day, I'm really sorry, are you okay and that was really lovely*"

Lily also received "*some apology notes, and that made me feel a bit better*".

For Poppy, colleagues checking in, making coffee, texting or sending e-mails were associated with contentment/ affiliation and children "*responding well*" in the context of the classroom. With regards to reflections relating to professional experiences, Olivia shared that the school being judged as outstanding was associated with contentment/ affiliation.

While **Imogen** discussed talking a walk with a child, the "*familiar pattern to certain things that happened today*" and her staff team. Oscar also reflected on a walk with a child, where contentment/ affiliation was associated with being outside and "*that breeze that actually took everything away*".

Three participants did not discuss experiences that were associated with contentment/ affiliation.

5.2.5 Relevance of attributes of compassion

During session four, participants were encouraged to discuss the relevance of the six attributes of compassion to their professional roles. The six attributes of; empathy, sensitivity, distress tolerance, non-judgement, sympathy and care for wellbeing were included on separate strips of paper and randomly selected by participants to encourage discussion.

Empathy

With regards to Empathy, Mia provided an example of supporting a child with diabetes by inviting in a young person to the school to meet him, who also had diabetes. Mia suggested that "*being able to talk to him about her experiences and that's, you know, really powerful*".

Oliver described some of the complexities of experiencing empathy with regards his professional role and provided an example relating to a recent decision to exclude a Year 6 pupil;

"*Empathy there was an absolute head mash for me, because you know you've got so many different directions to go with that, so for me, knowing **** is year six, the reason we are getting everything we're getting from him is because he's breaking down relationships before they get broken. Empathising with him about that, actually*

*knowing that me saying that we don't want you in for two days is a rejection that can possibly feed into that and so then how do you go about addressing that with him, but still being able to bring him back in. Empathising with **** (Staff member), who's gone through those situations today, that you've got a duty of care to, and a duty – therefore care for his well-being, but actually knowing that that – in our core really, that's not what we want to be doing. We don't want to be excluding children for any period of time because we know the rejection and shame goes with that*".

Rachel revealed that her understanding of empathy changed following a conversation with a pupil;

"*What is real empathy? I've been getting it wrong my whole life. I always thought that empathy was how would I feel if something happened to me, and ****, corrected me. Something had happened, really stupid, and one of the kids was really upset about it, and he said no, no, that's really important to him, that would be like my Spiderman magazines to me and I realised true empathy is understanding what it means to them, not to me*".

Mary shared a person classroom-based interaction relating to empathy;

"*we have a child who is going through some traumatic events right now, so I decided to let them know about my mum, who is in the hospital, to kind of start the discussion and he actually came to me and he said, 'Miss, we are in a very similar situation' and he said that he would talk about nan dying, you know so that was very powerful, it was a safe space for him to talk about it and as well that other people will know what he is going through*".

Imogen suggested that empathy was associated with;

"*being alongside and kind of experiencing – you are separate, but you are alongside, which is what we are doing all the time*".

While Zara explored both sympathy and empathy;

"*that sympathy is something about climbing in there with them, you kind of to me if I'm really getting involved in sympathy, I'm losing touch with that slight distance, that makes me be able to see things a bit clearer, whereas empathy is about sympathising, but in a way that just keeps that clarity of detachment, not actually 100 percent climbing in right with you*".

For Phoebe;

"*Every time I think I have empathy and sympathy sorted out, I just get completely confused by them again*".

Sensitivity

When exploring sensitivity in relation to her professional role, Chloe explored some difficulties associated with sensitivity at times;

"I think sometimes it's both actually, sensitivity and empathy, sometimes that can be hard, you know you said to think about your – my perfect compassionate self. Well as soon as the stress levels go up, those can get difficult and sometimes you don't want to empathise with someone because of something that's happened, the child has done something, or I don't know – because you are not in a place to – so there is a little bit about you've got to be emotionally in a place to be you know, empathetic and sympathetic to people".

Chloe also suggested that;

"*sometimes you don't need to be too sensitive or too, you know – kids just want to be in class and be normal and like everyone else*".

For Phoebe, sensitivity was associated with "*not shaming the child*", while **Imogen** reflected on;

"*attunement as well, kind of being sensitive to and not sensitivity in terms of not taking things personally and responding*".

For Phoenix, sensitivity was associated with being compassionate and understanding in relation to children's needs but also;

"*to be aware of the sensitivities around my colleagues, you know because I think we've become very aware of pressures, you know health and all the rest, of one another. I think that it has required probably now more than ever*".

Phoenix suggested that "*a lot of us are really on the edge*" and in the absence of sensitivity from SLT, "*we are not getting it from above then we need to do it more for each other".*

Phoenix also recognised the importance of learning to being more self aware and sensitive to self;

"I suppose as a result of these sort of meetings Jon, then the third part of that might be learning or being more aware of how to be more sensitive to ourselves, you know, and maybe being even more self-aware".

Sensitivity from others was also discussed as being difficult at times, particularly, according to Lily at the end of a term. It was also suggested that with regards to sensitivity exhibited by the children;

"*They are really not sensitive to us or each other*" (Lily).

Distress Tolerance

With regards to distress tolerance, **Oliver** shared the example of arriving late to school in the morning having been stuck in traffic, again;

"Walking into school this morning, after yet another hour-plus journey, and you know, you're walking in after that journey and then that person is not in, or we've got this issue that you need to follow up with, oh and then I had…no time to do anything whatsoever, I had a nightmare journey in, we were already late, I was in a pissy mood, wasn't I?"

Oliver also recognised that colleagues often arrive to work having experienced their own difficulties or challenges;

"*Sometimes you start your day like that and you, I don't mind, but sometimes people bring their problems straight in and you can, you've already had that as you walk in and then as you are walking you can sometimes go from the carpark to your office and this is my job, so I'm not moaning, I'm just sharing, you know, but every time you see someone they've got, well this is something, and this is something and can I do that and you're like, arghh. You know, and then you know, the children arrive and you have to be…"*

Phoenix described distress tolerance as;

"*How you learn to cope with what you are confronted by, so the stress that you have imposed upon you, whatever that may look like, well tolerance is the level at which you are at breaking – you know, you break…and is linked to a load of factors which allow you to be able to cope bette*r".

Examples included experiences of working with specific children, which may influence future interactions, or going for a walk on a Sunday morning, which had a positive impact on being able to "*gather your thoughts for Monday.*"

Distress tolerance, or becoming "*desensitised*" was also discussed in relation to the children's behaviour;

"*because it is not normal, what we do, by any stretch of the imagination…But I've got to the stage with even children spitting at me now, I would rather just let myself be spat at, and it just drips down. I'm that desensitised to it, because I know if I put a towel on me, the children will try and pull that off and it becomes part of the struggle and actually – I'm basically de-escalated by sitting in spit and that's not normal"* (**Oliver**).

Levi provided an example of exploring tolerance in class:

"*We talked in class yesterday about distress tolerance and we talked about the jar of tolerance and I gave an example of my jar of tolerance, and examples of what happens when it goes, it overflows and you know the children found that really easy to relate to*".

Distress tolerance was also recognised as being associated with empathy;

"*But some of our kids, on the worst day of my life, that's their normal*" (Rachel).

Participants also talked about the importance of teachers sharing their emotions with children such as feeling happy, upset, annoyed and angry through, for example, using an emotions board or by explicitly stating emotions experienced in particular contexts.

For Chloe, it was also important to explore how teachers cope with distress and difficulties in their professional roles;

"The other thing is though we talk about how to deal with this – we were saying about distress tolerance and obviously the kids are always absolutely full up with it, actually that's for our job, I think compared to any other mainstream primary, this is massive about how do you cope with it, and how do you keep yourself in your window of tolerance?"

Examples provided included offering children work breaks throughout the day and in relation to colleagues;

"*everybody is very aware if there has been an incident and somebody has been involved, to try and move that person away, because they can see that they might be in distress and they might not be very tolerant, for future situations*" (Olivia).

For Phoebe, distress tolerance was associated with;

"*Sitting with whatever the difficulty is, without trying to quickly bypass it or move it on or fix it, just being able to sit with it*".

While Zara suggested not trying to cover up the difficulty or panic.

Oscar related distress tolerance to children's behaviour;

"Ability to sit with it because, you hear it all the time and it's hard sometimes to remember that behaviour is communication and different children will behave or cause you to feel, so child A and child B can have something identical happen to them, one you will be oh, that's really terrible, give me a cuddle, the other one will just really irritate you… (depending on) *state of mind, your feelings for – your tone of voice, something to do with an ability to sympathise; well sympathise or empathise".*

Non-judgement

Non-judgement was described as being "*really hard, especially dealing with parents, not to judge*" (Rachel). Imogen also shared difficulties associated with non-judgement in that;

"*I think sometimes we can be quite judging of the families and networks and that it can be quite poisonous to the relationships and it's when we've sort of gone beyond that or tried to understand what might be going on, or the motivations of people, gone more into empathy I suppose, that then it works more smoothly*".

In the context of working with children, Mia suggested;

"*It is about being able to connect – so there is something went on, and it is being able to hear you and you and you and you, on an equal playing field, and that's what we do in circles, because it allows the children to feel safe and able to say how they are and how they feel, because somebody has had and everybody – and that's quite hard to, but it's just practice really*".

Oscar suggested that non-judgement related to children's behaviour;

"*If we spent our afternoons, even the little behaviours, judging them and reacting to them, then I think that would cause us a lot of issues or – because we you know – or build-up of stress or, losing an ability to step back and to understand behaviour as communication*".

For Olivia, non-judgement was associated with;

"*It's about knowing that you were listening to them, or the adults are listening to them, and the other children listening*".

Mia also explored some of the challenges associated with non-judgement;

"*But I think I mean, to be honest on this one, and you know, we can all sit and say well oh well, we're non-judgmental about this, but that is a load of crap. We're judgmental about everything. Because if it doesn't sit in your space and how you see things, and how you try this, that's not yours, because my experience is different to every single person in here and if somebody says something to me, or does something, I'm like what the fuck?*"

Given the complexity of the children, Chloe recognised that being non-judgement in relation to her professional practice was difficult at times;

"*I think that can be difficult in this setting, because, I don't know, I think as a general rule, I'm pretty tough on myself, about it's not good enough, it's not good enough, it's not good enough, it's not good enough, and that every day, every week… there is a massive amount that you are trying to deal with and cope with and kind of as a teacher to try and provide that for them and all the planning set up and all their work, and social skills targets and…*"

For Finn, non-judgement was experienced as being more difficult towards the end of a school term;

"*I know that as the term goes on when they get – when my little spiral gets tighter and tighter and tighter, I become less open and not necessarily deliberately so, but I become – and I feel more judged and I feel I am judging, I don't know if I am perceived in that way, and if I am being compassionate towards myself. Goes back to all the stuff I mentioned here. Powerlessness, judged, getting it wrong*".

Mia also recognised that her profession role requires judgement at times, through for example, work scrutiny exercises or lesson observations, but hoped that these

experiences were carried out in a non-judgemental and a supportive way. Charlotte suggested that she had experienced Mia's work scrutiny in a caring way;

"*Otherwise if she would have said oh well, that's crap that you haven't done that, I might have been judging her, thinking she was judging me and it would have turned into a whole thing, but it was coming from a place of caring, so that's why it was, oh okay great*".

Olivia commented that;

"*I think as a teaching profession, you are always feeling judged aren't you? Every day, you're never finished anything, you're like there is always things you can do, but you are always not good enough, there is always that feeling of, I need to do better*".

With regards to non-judgement, Lily suggested that;

"*We don't have any of that. I think everything is judgmental…I think there is a lot of judgment over like, you know oh why is that person off sick, or why is that person late, or why is that person doing it like that, or you know, the walkie is going off yet again.*"

Phoenix described;

"*A sense of guilt for behaviour within your class because of the judgment of some…I went through a period where I felt that I was getting battered for my kids not doing what they should be, and it's like you know, like, what are you not doing, what have you not done and what have you not – you know*".

Sympathy

With regards to sympathy, examples were shared in relation to the children's experiences. According to Charlotte;

"I had quite a few sleepless nights just worrying about him, if he's okay, is he safe – so the fact that now he is in a safe place, I can feel my stress levels going down, so it was actually really quite stressful in the beginning, but it just makes you – it reminds you how much you love these kids and how much they mean to you and you just want them to be safe and be okay".

Rachel also recognised that sympathy was also extended to colleagues;

"And sometimes we've had staff and they are coming in and doing a really good job and you know what is going in in their private life and you are like, my god, I don't – I couldn't get up in the morning".

Lily also discussed sympathy in relation to colleagues with regards to their workload, children's behaviour and TA pay. However, Phoenix described feeling judged by some TAs, who he suggested were not sympathetic to teachers at times;

"*You can argue quite rightly but it's not always reciprocated in terms of how they support us or how much they think we do or don't do, you know whether we are deserving of even our status as teachers*".

Claire reflected on personal difficulties in the context of her professional role;

"*It's not the best thing in the world, but if you are having a bad time at home, or you are having a difficult time yourself, you have to come in and always put on a role, don't you, a face of like 'hi everybody! Hi children how are you?' and 'I really care about you' and that's about caring for your own wellbeing as well but – yeah, it's a hard one*".

Discussions in Birch Tree School also related to defining sympathy as "*feeling sorry for someone*" (**Imogen**), "*quite patronising, belittling or pitying – oh poor you*" (Zara).

Finn suggested that;

"*sympathy for what has happened or gone before and then it's a reason but not an excuse – it's very hard to empathise with what somebody is experiencing if you haven't had that to understand, feel something for them that's happened to them, but I think it can very easily then slip into pity*".

Oscar recognised potential difficulties in relation to sympathising with children's experiences;

"*I think if you sit in a child's you know, if a child has been abused or neglected, if you sit in that, I don't know that you can do the work, you can empathise with that – but I don't think you can pretend to know – how do you know what it is like to not have had food, and to be attacked for…"*

Care for wellbeing

During discussions in Apple Wood School, Chloe began by providing an example where Mia had supported a colleague;

"*you were really, really caring to ****, there'd been an incident. You really were looking out for him, making sure he was alright*".

Oliver discussed the importance of the school ethos;

"*For me it's probably about school ethos, that we do care for well-being of each other. That has to be – it's not one person that who can do that, not just Mia that does that, and that should be what we do for each other*".

According to Phoenix;

"I think that schools probably – I think there is a lot of talk about it, certainly coming to – like I mean, it's been discussed as long as I have been around, which isn't that long, but – and it is probably discussed more now than ever, but what delivering that looks like I think is probably what schools are trying to – or society whichever it is – is trying to work out really, because it's like anything, I think anything that involves nurture and support often involves money".

A wellbeing group was mentioned by Charlotte who suggested;

"*That shows that the school ethos is about caring for each other, not just the children but each other as professionals and people".*

For Levi, one to one weekly meetings with the Deputy Head to touch base was said to be "*very beneficial".*

Lily discussed having received cup-cakes that day and described experiences at a previous school where the Head Teacher encouraged wellbeing days, such as a day off, wrote notes and put them in peoples pigeon holes, regularly checked in with colleagues and encouraged staff to come and talk to her, if they needed to.

Phoenix discussed the arrival of a new Head Teacher at Cherry Blossom School;

"*There was a lot of talk about work-life balance and stuff like that and – but then very quickly we thought well this is bullshit because it is like, you'd be told that you've got this and this added to your job description or what needs to be done, and then in the same sentence told to go home and relax*".

For Phoenix, caring for teacher wellbeing was actually about re-structuring the school day or working week to support teachers to "*do their job within those directed hours*", addressing issues with workload and protecting or extending PPA;

"*You know that for me is direct care for well-being because I don't need a cupcake in my pigeon hole. In fact, fuck off*".

With regards to care for wellbeing, Chloe suggested that feeling able to talk about difficulties or problems was associated with an open and honest school culture.

For Olivia care for wellbeing was also associated with;

"*Care for your own wellbeing has got to be as important as like your physical, your mental health, all those things – I always say the pilot always says make sure you put on a mask before helping other people; you do have to look after yourself and feel good and love yourself before you can help other people*".

Phoebe also recognised the importance of caring for own wellbeing;

"*So I guess with that one it would be taking care of ourselves. You have to look after your own wellbeing to be here at all*".

Zara suggest the importance of;

"*having strategies to care for yourself emotionally and mentally as well when you leave here. Care for well-being is massive, for everybody in here; for us, for the children, for the other people that we worked with, for everyone but if we don't start with ourselves, how can we care for the children if we burn out?*"

Having been provided with definitions of each of the six attributes of compassion, Chloe reflected on her previous description of distress tolerance;

"I think just – I've got distress tolerance wrong, if you'd said to me distress tolerance, I would have said, yeah, I'm really good at that, because kids can hit, spit, kick, do things to me, I can do, you know, a million things at once with a high level of stress,

*got to do this that and the other, so I can take a lot of stress. So my distress tolerance is quite high, but reading this, being able to tolerate rather than avoid difficult feelings – I think actually I do like distress avoidance. That I just blank it out, so if I'm getting spat at and kicked, I just blank it out, shut off, so I'm not – I don't know, I'm not experiencing the emotions of being really, really pissed off, and then keeping my cool because I'm in with the kids, I'm literally – a bit like **** said, cold, when you go cold".*

Chloe also reflected on her work with children who;

"*wouldn't enter in and engage with their emotions, and I can kind of guess it's because that they are too scared of what will come out*".

5.2.6 Relevance of skills of compassion

Participants were also provided with information relating the six compassionate skills of; reasoning, behaviour, sensation, feeling, attention and imagery.

With regards to compassionated imagery, Oscar suggested;

"I like the imagery. It seems quite concrete, I like that idea. When you are self-doubting or self-negating it can be hard to remember yourself as somebody who's compassionate, and I like the idea of being compassionate to yourself through consciously thinking about how you are when you are compassionate. It's very clever".

Imogen discussed the importance of compassionate sensation;

"I think the bit that is the newest for me, so perhaps quite important here is the sensation, being really aware of what your body is telling you, what you are feeling and what is happening around you".

5.2.7 Relevance of exploring difficult emotions

Following discussions relating to compassion focused attributes and skills, participants were invited to reflect on the relevance of difficult emotions in relation to their professional roles and were invited to share examples of difficult emotions that might experienced in relation to their professional roles. Descriptions provided by participants provided insights into specific contexts or experiences that were associated with the difficult emotions shared.

Chloe, Charlotte and Mary from Apple Wood School shared difficult emotions associated with feeling overwhelmed, frustrated and disappointed with ones-self. These emotions were described in relation to having too much to do and not enough time, not knowing what to do in certain situations or feeling that what they had done was wrong.

According to Mary;

"*It is really, really frustrating when you just don't know what to do, you know like you feel you've tried everything and it's not working, and what else can I do you know to make it better, so I struggle with this feeling*".

In addition to self-doubt, participants also described experiences of self-judgement, incompetence and hopelessness. According to Charlotte hopelessness was also associated with frustration;

"*Self-judgment because you can't do that, I can't help, so I'm just hopeless. Frustration. Sometimes it's very frustrating just on a daily basis, so many things can frustrate you*".

For **Imogen** some difficult emotions were described in relation to;

"*I don't know if this is the right word, but incompetence or kind of challenge to your self-esteem, self-doubt, that kind of thing*".

Due to school circumstances, Clara described feeling unable to support colleagues who were experiencing difficulties, which was associated with feeling;

"Lost, for me and worthless, that kind of self-doubt questioning that you – it all kind of links in, because I want to try and support people but I'm trying to manage my own class".

Anger and anxiety were difficult emotions identified by some participants.
Charlotte suggested that;

"*sometimes I just feel so angry, that you can't fix everything*".

Anxiety was associated with recognition that every school day is different and not knowing what might happen during the school day. Worry and anxiety was also suggested to be experienced after school, in the mornings, at weekends and during the school day.

For Finn;

"I think I'm continually still, after two and a bit years, surprised when I get these quite strong bursts of feeling and I don't tend to overanalyse them because they are so many of them hanging all the time and I probably go into that overanalysing stage at the end of the day and that is where my trickiness sits, but because I don't have an ability to leave it behind so is it reflection? Is it rumination? Is it just a narrative that goes around?"

Anxiety was also associated with driving into school in the mornings;

"*Often driving in, that's something, you know that it's going to be worry, guilt, you know – but it's not or necessarily all – I don't know actually. I'm trying to say – it's not always like that but I don't drive in excited if that makes sense*" (Finn).

While for Phoenix, anxiety was associated with the weekends;

"*But also I think it's that fear of, in the morning – like I get very – I have had times, still get it quite a lot, I get quite anxious on Sundays, like mid-afternoon, I start getting really quite anxious".*

Phoenix also discussed his experiences of anxiety during his PPA time;

"*I just felt so anxious about going that I just ended up staying and then of course, I just had children with me the whole time, toing and froing the whole afternoon*".

Lily described "*fear sometimes….If you've got **** or **** coming at you*", while Phoenix also recognised experiences of fear in relation to returning to challenging classroom contexts;

"*I've had it last year and I've had it at times this year where there you know you are going back into the same thing, which isn't being resolved…. And there is a sense of fear behind that, because you know you are going to get battered, you know that it's not going to work*".

Hopelessness, heartbreak and sadness were also discussed in relation to participants concerns for children;

"*Hopelessness, like ****'s situation, I just feel so sad and hopeless about that, like we just hear about home life and you're just like, oh I really feel for the kids"* (Chloe).
"*Heartbreak, because there are certain kids you just wish you could take home and look after because my god your life is awful, and I want to make it better*" (Charlotte).

"*Sad, upset, especially with lots of the safeguarding and stuff we have to deal with here. Worried, disappointed*" (Lilly).

Other difficult emotions were associated with experiences that were described by Charlotte as being demoralising, or overwhelming, by Lily as being associated with feeling buried and exhausted and by Phoenix as being confusing. Phoenix also went on to describe experiences of depression and low self-esteem, which were associated with feelings of despair;

"*I've actually got despair, which is like – which I think, you know, I could relate very much to some of our briefings, where you just go – you know, you kind of just feel like, I give up*".

Lily described feeling;

"*Selfish sometimes, I just have to be, otherwise I get overwhelmed*".

Clara and Phoenix also described feeling selfish. For Clara, selfishness was associated with trying to cope with the professional demands of being a class teacher and a member of the SLT and consequently;

"*Working ridiculous hours, I am sat working all weekend and actually, I know I feel selfish in terms of actually I'm not putting my parents or my family first*".

For Phoenix a recognition he couldn't *"go to as darkest a place as I went last year",* selfishness was associated with;

"*Sort of belligerently saying I need to have Saturday or Sunday or one or the other, not working, or just please, getting away from thinking about the job and stuff*".

Selfishness and guilt for Phoenix were also associated with not feeling able to support others through intervening in difficult situations because of needing to support his own class. Clara recognised that in the context of Cherry Blossom School;

"*we are all at such breaking point that actually no-one's got any compassion or thought for anybody else*".

Phoebe recognised that a variety of different difficult emotions can be experienced as a "*pattern of feelings…*"

"I kind of have been through a pattern of feelings which kind of start with guilt, sorrow, responsibility, anxiety, worry, then sadness and then overanalysing situations which then leads to me feeling accountable for what happened or what could have been done differently, which then makes me feel angry, then I try to reason it out and then I go to judging myself, then I try to be kind to myself, and then I go back to guilty again".

While difficult emotions were shared by all participants, more positive emotions were associated with "*something going well*" and when "*it is all working*".

For Phoenix;

"*I think I have kind of covered those positives in this sort of matrix of the extremes because you know, that happiness and elation that comes with something going well is there, it exists, but I suppose at the moment, I'm not feeling a great deal of that*".

While for Clara;

"*when it is all working…you feel good, you feel good about what you are achieving*"

The difficult emotions experienced by participants, many of which were shared across the three schools and are summarised in Appendix 62.

5.3 Relevance of compassion focused practices

5.3.1 Relevance of the ideal compassionate self

During session 3, participants were encouraged to reflect on and consider their ideal compassionate self. The activity was introduced by discussing different versions of the self.

Participants were encouraged to think about the kind of qualities that would be relevant in relation to their professional roles when considering their ideal compassionate self and to use imagery and visualisation to consider how their compassionate self might think, behave or interact with others.

Participants were also asked how they might embody their ideal compassionate self through their intentions to be compassionate to themselves or to others. Participants described physical aspects of their ideal compassionate self that included; non-threatening body language, being open and relaxed, using a calm tone and soft voice and smiling.

It was suggested that their ideal compassionate self could be supported through; getting enough sleep, having a healthy body, experiencing strong social networks and connecting with others and spending time with family and friends. Time was discussed by a number of participants in relation to being generous with time, taking time to listen, being present, taking time for one-self and making time for self care in order to show compassion for others. With regards to behaviours associated with their ideal compassionate self, participants discussed listening effectively to others, being supportive of others, being there for others, being positive, seeing positives in others, praising others, and highlighting strengths in others. Qualities of their ideal compassionate self included being; empathetic, caring and nurturing, thoughtful, understanding and accepting, optimistic, patient, considerate towards self and others and being good at communicating. It was also suggested that their ideal compassionate self should be forgiving of one-self and others, recognise frustration and anger and accept that it is not possible to do everything. Participant reflections in relation to their ideal compassionate self are summarised in Appendix 63.

5.3.2 Relevance of the ideal compassionate other

In session 4 participants from Birch Tree School were invited to engage in discussions to explore the relevance of the ideal compassionate other to their professional roles. During these discussions, participants were encouraged to think about an ideal compassionate other that could be human or non-human, familiar or imagined. It was suggested that participants consider what their ideal compassionate other might look like and sound like and to also list the kind of compassionate qualities that might be

exhibited by their ideal compassionate other. It was suggested that these qualities might overlap with the qualities suggested for their ideal compassionate self, explored previously during session 3. Qualities associated with their ideal compassionate other are shown in Table 11

Table 11 Birch Tree School qualities associated with their ideal compassionate other

Phoebe	Finn	Imogen	Oscar
Being able to listen Being able to talk calmly, quietly, and peacefully Feeling brave to have the difficult conversations although they may be difficult at the time, they could actually be quite helpful. Thoughtful Time – being able to give time to others	Kind and caring, and then question-marked them because when I think about them it seems almost vacuous. I mean we use them a lot but I'm not sure, I don't really know what they mean Non-judgemental Patience Time Time to process, listen and hear	Accepting Brave Courage to kind of go there with things that might be difficult Empathetic and not sympathetic Forgiving Honest Looking forward – not dwelling all the time in what might have gone wrong, but helping people to move ahead	Patience The ability to simplify, because I think one of the issues that we have as an organisation is the ability to make things remarkably complicated and just maybe hold onto the simplicity of the task, we know what we want to do

5.3.4 Relevance of considering a self-critic image

Having engaged in discussions to explore an ideal compassionate self and an ideal compassionate other in previous sessions, during Session 5 participants were encouraged to consider the relevance of an image of their self-critic to their professional roles.

When encouraged to reflect on difficult feelings associated with their professional roles in previous sessions, participants had discussed experiences of self-criticism in relation to, for example, self-doubt, self-judgement, disappointment, frustration and incompetence. For this activity participants were encouraged to consider an image of their self-critic by thinking about what they might look like such as their age, gender, size and facial expressions, think about the actions of their self critic such as being static, walking around, making gestures and to consider their voice tone, think about what emotions might be directed towards them and experienced in their presence and to consider the functions of their self-critic. A variety of imagery was shared during discussions which included; a mother, a former boss, a good cop bad cop image, a grey haired pain in the arse, a floating head and a broken mirror maladaptation of the self. Not all participants experienced an image associated with a self-critic, such as Chloe who stated;

"*I didn't have one. So do you literally have like a person*?"

While **Imogen** questioned the assumption that individuals have a self-critic;

"*there's an assumption in our conversation that we have a self-critic, and maybe that's not true, and then I was thinking what does it feel like because what I tend to do is withdraw and hide when I'm feeling like that and then I thought what it actually is, is a child – it's a child's voice for me, so it's not about being talked down to or being criticised, it's more like my own voice saying I can't do this or I'm feeling terrified*".

With regards to experiences associated with self-criticism, Olivia discussed an inner voice saying "*don't be silly*", "*no you can't*". Although Chloe described not having an image she talked about being highly competitive and about perfectionism through experiencing a "*literal*" set of rules associated with working hard, not being lazy and having high standards suggesting;

"*you need to do it, you need to do better, you need to do it all, it all needs to be done right*".

Oscar described an image of self-criticism that was an unreasonable, grey faced, pain in the arse that was unbending, venomous, sardonic, contemptuous and associated with guilt. **Imogen** discussed an internal feeling of lacking in confidence, which was associated with becoming withdrawn, hiding and feeling small and feeling terrified "*that everybody is looking at me*". Grace described self-criticism in relation to weakness when feeling upset and feeling belittled, or worrying that she might run out of time to complete things. Finn described a "*bad version*" or "*maladaptation of myself*" that was associated with sarcasm, contemptibility, a negative self-reflective process and self-doubt. While recognising that self reflection can be positive, particularly in the context of supporting others through questioning and challenging, for Finn, at times, self-reflection was associated with negative outcomes, suggesting that "*the narrative can become quite bleak quite quickly… and that's where that sits for me.*"

Appendix 64 summarises participant descriptions in relation to their image of the self-critic.

5.3.5 Relevance of compassion from others

During session 5 participants from Apple Wood School were asked to reflect on their experiences of compassion from others in their professional roles. Charlotte and **Oliver** discussed the importance of openness, honesty and transparency with all staff. **Oliver** suggested that honesty can make difficult conversations easier. Experiencing support from others was also mentioned in relation to when colleagues offer to replace a staff member in the classroom if they have been involved in an incident, or if they have been injured or hurt through a change of face approach. Knowing that staff are available to support (**Oliver**) and that "*people look out for you*" (Chloe) was also associated with colleagues being "*accepting and compassionate*" (Charlotte) and appreciating other people's role. Compassion from others was also associated with recognition that everyone is busy, while understanding that;

"*we are in it together - we're all struggling and we all have bad times*" (Rachel).

This recognition could be experienced when colleagues say;

"*I know that was really hard for you"* (Oliver).

Which could sometimes be difficult to embrace, as suggested by Mia;

"*because if you're in it and you are distressed and you are trying your hardest to keep your shit together and somebody comes along and goes, you alright? That's actually hard to embrace that at that time*".

Other suggestions relating to compassion from others were associated with human connection, humour, experiencing compliments from others and recognition when something has gone well. Knowing about colleague's lives outside school, communicating with colleagues via text to check in and non-hierarchy were also associated with experiences of compassion from others.

Participant suggestions relating to their descriptions of compassion from others can be found in Appendix 65.

5.3.6 Relevance of self-compassion

Participants were encouraged to share ideas about the relevance of self-compassion to their professional roles during Session 5 at Apple Wood School and Session 6 at Cherry Blossom School. Examples provided included listening to music, walking, gardening, knitting, writing poetry or running a bath. Some participants described a preference for social activities involving social connection, such as spending time with partners, children or friends, while others suggested a preference for time and space alone, perhaps in the garden or doing nothing;

"*I like to be alone, that's what I do for myself, I don't want to be anyone, I don't want to be a teacher, I don't want to be a mum, I don't want to be a daughter, sister, you know, I just want to be, not even myself, you know just nothing*" (Mary).

For Phoenix self-compassion was associated with recognition of personal needs and trying "*to live within those sort of constructs"*. He also discussed the importance of not working on a Sunday "*because you are trying to survive yourself I suppose"*. For Phoenix;

"I think what I am probably doing now, which I think is trying to engage in that whole sort of notion of compassion for one's self, but it's more about keeping me there as opposed to actively doing things which will actively promote me benefiting".

In relation to self-compassion Lily talked about the importance of being able to;

"Take some time for myself every so often otherwise it is just all about what everyone needs from me and there is no kind of 'what about me?' I can't give any more".

For Lily, finding time for herself was associated with taking two hours to do the supermarket shop and going home via a coffee shop or going to bed early to read a book.

Additional considerations relating to compassion for self can be located in Appendix 66.

6. Stage 3 research findings: Research Question 4: What are the emergent theoretical constructs of compassion as a concept that supports teacher wellbeing?

Stage 3 of the research aimed to respond to the final research question:

- What are the emergent theoretical constructs of compassion as a concept that supports teacher wellbeing? (RQ4)

To develop a conceptualisation of how compassion might support teacher wellbeing, findings from stage 1 and stage 2 of the research were revisited. To guide the re-examination of stage 1 and stage 2 findings it was useful to return to selected conceptualisations of compassion located in previous literature. When identifying the emergent theoretical constructs of compassion that appeared to support teacher wellbeing the following definitions were useful.

- Compassion "is, above all, a certain sort of thought about the well-being of others" (Nussbaum 1996 p.28).
- Compassion "involves ''connection'' to others (either cognitively through perspective taking or affectively through empathy) and ''caring'' for those others (often in communicative or behavioral ways)" (Miller 2007 p.226).
- Compassion is "a sensitivity to suffering of self and others, with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it"…and…"being helpful not harmful, both in activities in the world, and treatment of employees" (Anstiss, Passmore and Gilbert 2020 p.42).

In addition to revisiting previous conceptualisations of compassion, examining how compassion was experienced by participants was useful. The process of identifying how participants experienced compassion in their professional roles was guided by considering stage 1 and 2 findings in relation to the concepts of compassion for self, compassion from others and compassion for others.

According to Irons compassion for self involves self-compassion (2019). Irons and Beaumont suggest that compassion for self involves compassionate intentions and motivations and cultivating compassion as an identity (2017).

Compassion from others was described by Irons as being associated with the reassuring and calming effects of receiving and therefore experiencing compassion (2019). Experiences of being cared for and feeling cared for were suggested by Irons and Beaumont to help individuals regulate distress, tolerate difficulties in life and engage with and explore the world with confidence (2017). Compassion for others was suggested by Irons to be associated with a sensitivity to difficulties and distress in others and "being able to engage with it and tolerate their distress and having the motivation and commitment to try and alleviate their distress" (2019 p.98).

6.1 Compassion for self

Stage 1 findings revealed variation in the ways in which participants engaged in compassion for self to support their own wellbeing. Most responses related to exercise, spending time with family and friends and socializing. Participants also discussed self-compassion in relation to aspects of their professional roles, such as work-life balance considerations, how they manage their workload by trying not to take work home and attempts to separate their personal and professional identities. Creating an emotional, relational and, at times, physical distance from work was suggested to be important. Participants also discussed how the school organisations supported them to support their own wellbeing. Such support was discussed in relation to structured, formal opportunities such as supervision but also in relation to unstructured, informal ways.
These unstructured, informal ways were associated with interpersonal and relational experiences such as non-judgement, honesty, communication, and space to take time out and talk.

Stage 1 findings also revealed that some participants struggled to engage with compassion for self and to care for their own wellbeing. Difficulties in relation to supporting own wellbeing were associated with not having enough time or energy to engage in healthy experiences that support wellbeing, such as having a good diet and exercise. Such concerns were also shared in relation to not having enough time at weekends or during holidays to recover and refresh from difficult professional experiences. It was suggested that schools do not pay enough attention to wellbeing and could do more to support teachers to support their own wellbeing.

Suggestions for improving organisational support for teacher wellbeing included having wellbeing as a school priority, ensuring the member of staff with responsibility for wellbeing actually cares, being given explicit guidance about wellbeing and having a wellbeing committee. Gym membership, mindfulness and massage were also discussed by participants in relation to how wellbeing could be further supported by schools. Stage 2 findings revealed the importance of self-compassion. When participants were encouraged to define wellbeing, self-compassion was suggested to relate to;

- Listening to own feelings
- Balancing own needs and the needs of others
- Understanding how own actions might impact on others
- Taking time to care for own needs and feelings
- Helping others and yourself
- Being kind to self

When discussing the attributes of compassion, self-compassion was associated with caring for physical and mental health, taking care of personal wellbeing and having strategies for caring for yourself. When describing their ideal compassionate self, participants suggested a variety of physical characteristics including using a calm, soft voice and smiling, in addition to behaviours such as being there for others, being positive and highlighting strengths in others.

Qualities associated with self-compassion included being empathetic, caring and nurturing, thoughtful, understanding and accepting, optimistic, patient, considerate towards self and others and being good at communicating. Activities associated with self-compassion included individual examples such as knitting, gardening, and listening to music or more social examples involving connections with others such as spending time with partners, children, or friends. Some participants preferred solitary activities such as time and space alone.

6.2 Compassion from others and for others

With regards to identifying compassion from others where participants felt reassured and calmed through being care for and feeling cared for and identifying compassion for others where participants exhibited a sensitivity to difficulties in others and engaged with or tried to alleviate those difficulties, stage 1 and 2 findings revealed the importance of both organisational and individual compassion. While organisational compassion was associated with school ethos, culture and structured support opportunities, individual compassion was more associated with professional attributes and relational experiences with colleagues.

Organisational compassion was associated with a school ethos and culture where wellbeing was experienced as a preoccupation for all staff. Feeling part of a family or community, in a nurturing environment where wellbeing is looked after, and staff feel cared for was suggested to support wellbeing. Non-hierarchical, equal support was associated with clear support structures, where support for wellbeing was not left to chance. Structured support was associated with supervision, reflective spaces, morning briefings, and daily de-briefs. Knowing that colleagues are available to offer support, through for example, replacing a staff member in the classroom if they have been involved in an incident, or if they have been injured or hurt through a change of face approach was suggested to be important with regards to support for wellbeing. Sharing food and drinks and random acts of kindness were also associated with organisational compassion.

Organisational compassion was experienced by participants as feeling safe, secure, confident, and calm. Where participants experienced openness, trust, and non-judgement, they felt able to be honest and reflective. Individual compassion was associated with exhibiting an awareness of others, showing an active interest in others, being available for others and being emotionally present and approachable. Understanding others, experiencing being understood by others, empathy, being able to listen to others and being heard by others were associated with feeling supported. Experiencing compliments and recognition, appreciating others, and accepting others were associated with compassion, in addition to encouragement and positivity.

Human connection, mutual respect, being thoughtful and kind and showing caring concern through colleagues checking in, including SLT, to gauge wellbeing, knowing about colleagues lives outside school and opportunities to discuss pedagogy and practice or difficult professional experiences were also associated with compassionate support for wellbeing.

7. Discussion

7.1 Discussion summary

The discussion chapter begins by reconsidering teachers' emotional work in the context of SEMH settings. While Hochschild's original conceptualisation of emotional labor was useful in illuminating participants' experiences, this research suggests the need to reconsider teachers' emotional experiences through re-framing teaching, in these settings, as emotional work. The chapter then draws on the work of Berlak and Berlak by recognising emotional work as a set of persisting dilemmas for teachers. To discuss different ways of thinking about emotional work and different opportunities for thinking about emotional work, the chapter is then informed by Eraut's extensive research into learning in professional contexts. A "therapeutic dilemma" in education is then conceptualised to reflect the experiences of participants who supported children's emotional difficulties and distress, while also being expected to support their learning. The chapter then explores factors that influenced teacher wellbeing and identifies ways through which wellbeing was supported. The role of compassion in supporting teachers' emotional work and wellbeing is then described before exploring participant evaluations of six focus group sessions. The discussion concludes by considering the relevance of this research to other school contexts and other professional roles.

7.2 Emotional work

7.2.1 Re-framing teaching as emotional work

The findings of this research appear to suggest that emotional work is more significant in relation teachers' daily experiences than has been previously recognised in both research and policy contexts, where the extent and impact of emotional work has been neglected or underestimated. Emotional work occurs daily, is pervasive, and is often complex and contradictory. Because emotional work is difficult to contain, such work was found to have an impact on teachers both professionally and personally. The management of emotions and feelings as part of their daily professional experiences was particularly pervasive for teachers and was particularly significant with regards their wellbeing. Given how pervasive emotional work was for teachers, it is suggested,

therefore, that this research extends the earlier work of Hochschild by developing her original ideas.

While Hochschild (2003) did make the distinction between physical and mental work or "labor", her work on "emotional labor" was most useful in illuminating participant's experiences. However, it is argued that there is a need to reconsider the management of feelings and emotions by recognising the specific experiences of teachers working in the context of SEMH settings. While '*emotion work'* was originally associated with how emotions and feelings are managed in personal or private contexts, '*emotional labor'* was associated with how emotions and feelings are managed in public contexts. 'Emotion work' was suggested to be influenced by human connections and relational associations, while in contexts where professional expectations or organisational requirements influenced the management of emotion and feeling and were, therefore, "sold for a wage", the term 'emotional labor' was used (Hochschild 2003 p.7). Hochschild also suggested that 'emotion work' and 'emotional labor' involve coordinating an awareness of feeling, which "draws on a source of self" that is integral to one's individuality (p.7). This research revealed that participant's daily experiences frequently involved situations where teachers were required to manage their emotions or feelings during their interactions with others.

Given that these interactions involved human connections and relational associations that were also influenced by professional expectations and organisational requirements, neither of Hochschild's conceptualisations of emotion work or emotional labor capture fully participants daily experiences. Although participants, as teachers, do receive a wage for their professional work, their experiences and subsequent management of feelings and emotions were often guided by and influenced by personal authenticity, which appears to draw on Hochschild's "source of self".

Consequently, it is suggested that teachers' daily experiences with regards to their management of emotions and feelings be re-framed as involving *emotional work.* Emotional work best describes the daily emotional experiences of teachers by acknowledging that their professional roles involve human connection, relational associations, and personal authenticity, while also recognising that their professional experiences are influenced by professional expectations, organisational requirements,

and external demands. Teachers often exhibited sensitivity, care, and enthusiasm during their interactions with children, so that they felt safe and encouraged to learn, while also, at the same time, feeling unsafe, threatened, and hyper-vigilant. Consequently, in their daily experiences, participants were professionally required to disguise, mask, supress or hide difficult, but authentic feelings.

Such experiences can be associated with Hochschild's previous explorations, particularly in relation to understanding how an individual's authentic emotional self can be thought of as being re-defined as an 'acted' self in the context of their professional role. While the spontaneous expression and display of 'natural' feeling was described by Hochschild as being related to deep acting, surface acting was suggested to require that individuals change how they outwardly appear by deceiving others about what they really feel. It is suggested that participants in this research regularly engaged in both deep and surface acting. Participants deep acting often involved emotional work that was associated with authentically demonstrating empathy, sensitivity, care, and kindness as part of their professional experiences to support children's learning and wellbeing.

However, their emotional work was also associated with on-going experiences of being hyper-alert and hyper-vigilant with regards to the behaviour of children, in addition to feelings of helplessness, hopelessness and powerlessness when reflecting on professional experiences and children's experiences. Emotional work could then be associated with experiences of self-criticism, self-doubt, and self-judgement. With regards to such experiences, teachers were often, therefore, required to engage in surface acting to hide from others how they were really feeling.

When exploring the emotional work of participants in this research, it was revealed that teachers often experienced a range of difficult emotions that had a negative impact on their wellbeing, home-life, and personal relationships. Examples of such experiences included feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, vulnerable, and having nothing left to give. With regards to the difficult emotions experienced by participants, teachers were often concerned about children's previous experiences, present experiences, and possible future experiences. Difficult emotions experienced by teachers were also associated with thinking about or observing the impact of children's experiences of abuse or

trauma. In their professional roles, teachers were concerned about children's welfare and wellbeing, children's behaviour, their engagement in learning, uncertainty about how to support children and a wide variety of professional expectations and requirements.

According to Hochschild, a "healthy estrangement" from self and role (2003 p.188), where an individual can clearly define and decide when they are engaging surface or deep acting, rather than responding to professional or organisational expectations, was suggested to protect individuals from distress. This research revealed the importance of teachers understanding their responsibilities as a 'professional in role' through maintaining professional distance in relation to their daily interactions. At times, however, during their interactions, participants revealed that they often had to disguise, mask, supress or hide their difficult emotions or feelings, through exhibiting an 'illusion of togetherness' or a 'coat of presentation'.

7.2.2 Recognising emotional work as a set of persisting dilemmas for teachers

This research has revealed that participants regularly experienced dilemmas in relation to their professional roles. These dilemmas were associated with their thoughts and behaviours that related to pedagogy and practice but were also associated with moral and ethical considerations. A variety of dilemmas were experienced by participants in relation to, for example, curriculum design and delivery, opportunities to recognise and support children's social and emotional needs, ways of interacting with children and expectations with regards to 'managing' children's behaviour. Professional dilemmas, such as these, were originally conceptualised by Berlak and Berlak as "apparent inconsistencies in observed teacher behaviour and in the ideas that teachers used in talking about their behaviour" (1975 p. 10). Participants in this research, across all three schools, shared similar dilemmas. That these dilemmas were shared offer support for Berlak and Berlak's conceptualisation of schooling, particularly in these SEMH settings, as set of 'persisting dilemmas'.

The most persistent dilemma's experienced by participants were associated with the emotional work that they engage in on a daily basis. While these dilemmas were situated in the social and institutional contexts of the three specific SEMH special schools or were associated with concerns about how others might perceive their

behaviour, other, external influences, associated with current educational policies, ideas and practices, also appeared to influence teachers' patterns of resolutions, thoughts and behaviours, as they attempted to resolve problematic situations and the professional dilemmas experienced.

Emotional dilemmas can be conceptualised as representing inconsistencies in teachers' behaviour and the ideas that teachers use in talking about their behaviour, particularly in relation to emotional work. Participant reflections on emotional dilemmas appear to represent an on-going dynamic of polarity or reflexive opposites, which, it is suggested, offer useful insights into their professional experiences and their patterns of resolution that aimed to resolve problematic situations. Emotional dilemmas, as a persisting set of problematic situations, aim to capture contradictions in the ways in which participants were required undertake their professional roles.

7.2.3 Thinking about emotional work

This research has revealed that teachers' daily interactions can be influenced by both, *ways of* thinking about and, *opportunities for* thinking about their emotional work. While *ways of* thinking about the emotional work can be influenced by different knowledge and assumptions, *opportunities for* thinking about emotional work can be influenced by factors associated with time, context, and situation.

7.2.4 Ways of thinking about emotional work

With regards to ways of thinking about emotional work, this research suggests that teachers demonstrated an awareness of complex situations and utilised their personal knowledge of others when supporting children. When their children exhibited distress for example, participants described ways to de-escalate situations through a variety of approaches which took into consideration their knowledge of specific children, their prior experiences, present contextual circumstances, resource availability and their positive intentions with regards to how to comfort, calm, and support them. This personal knowledge appeared to be particularly relevant to teachers' emotional work and informed their daily interactions with children. With regards to emotional work, this personal knowledge will have been acquired over time and is related to participants in depth knowledge of the children they support. During situations involving emotional work, this research revealed that personal knowledge was applied during experiences

where interactions were informed by emotions and attitudes, knowledge of self and others, knowledge of events, episodes and situations and knowledge of practices and skills. According to Eraut (2003) this type of knowledge is suggested to be applied in contexts in the absence of deliberation.

It is suggested, therefore, that teachers' ways of thinking about emotional work in relation to their interactions and decision-making is influenced by "complex pictures" of their children (Eraut 2004 p.255) that are accumulated over time, through encounters in a variety of contexts. This research has also revealed that teachers' daily interactions are also often informed by other ways of thinking about emotional work which are associated with different knowledge and assumptions about how to effectively support children with SEMH needs. Such knowledge and assumptions can be associated with ways of working with children that are reflected in organisations through, for example, school policies.

However, with regards to teachers' emotional work, this research has shown that differing knowledge and assumptions relating 'theory' and 'practice' can influence how they "think about, evaluate and justify what they do" (Eraut 2003 p.61). Importantly, as was explored previously, ways of thinking in relation to 'theory' and 'practice' must be recognised as being temporarily situated, because, as suggested by Eraut (2004), such knowledge and assumptions might be oppositional, disputed and change over time. Ways of thinking about emotional work can also be informed by professional learning during or after specific situations or contexts. While some of this learning will have been unplanned and will have developed unintentionally, over time, some learning will happen after specific experiences. Consequently, learning in relation to emotional work may happen after an event through reflecting individually on teaching and learning or thinking about how to prevent or alleviate children's distress in future. However, learning in relation to emotional work can also be facilitated in schools when time is specifically dedicated to problem solving, planning and collaborative inquiry through formal, structured school support.

7.2.5 Opportunities for thinking about emotional work

This research indicated that opportunities for thinking about emotional work varied. While some experiences of emotional work required immediate decisions, other

experiences required time and consultation with others. Opportunities for thinking about emotional work were, therefore, found to be influenced by time, context, and situation.

Participants described some situations where opportunities for thinking about emotional work were limited. This emotional work required rapid, analytical, and dynamic thinking and decision-making. Given the intense interactions that occurred daily with small groups of children, this emotional work was associated with emotional attunement and rapid evaluations of children's emotions, communications, and behaviours. Analytical and dynamic thinking and decision making was associated with trying to guess what a child was thinking or feeling and, therefore, trying to understand the reasons for their behaviour. Such thinking and decision making was also associated with having an awareness of children's prior or on-going experiences and recognising early warning signs of children's distress through observing changes in their behaviour. Participants described this thinking and decision-making as being associated with experiencing a heightened and constant state of emotional awareness, both in relation to self and others. This heightened and constant state of emotional awareness was described as feeling hyper-alert and hyper-vigilant.

This type of thinking in relation to emotional work can be associated with Eraut's (2008) description of 'crowded' or busy classrooms, in situations where rapid and intuitive responses require immediate action. In such situations, information may need to be processed quickly. To illustrate teacher experiences of crowded or busy classrooms, participants in this research described emotional work that was associated fluctuations in children's behaviour from laughing and playing together to aggression, but also in relation to expectations to be positive following experiences of verbal abuse or physical assault. In these situations, despite experiencing potentially negative emotions, participants had to try to remain calm to be able to support children. Emotional work was also associated with observing children's distress and their feelings of frustration, fear, and anger, but also in relation to their behaviour. Behaviours associated with emotional work included intimidating behaviour, verbal abuse, racism, homophobic language, sexualised language and swearing, physical abuse through kicking, punching, biting, and spitting, sexualised behaviour, and damage to property. Experiences of Restrictive Physical Interventions (RPIs) were also

described as being related to emotional work in recognition of distress experienced by children and staff, but also in relation to feelings of guilt and disgust about having to participate in RPIs. Often these experiences were associated with emotional work that required immediate decision-making, where little time was available to think about actions. Here, Eraut's (1985) conceptualisation of 'hot action' is useful. Hot action situations refer to those where pressure for action is immediate, such as where a child or others is at risk of harm. In these 'hot action' situations, there is limited time to reflect and so responses must be intuitive and may be guided by habit or routine.

Participants also described other opportunities for thinking about emotional work, where more time was available, sometimes in specific contexts or situations, that were more associated with how they reflected on daily professional experiences involved in teaching, learning and the behaviour of children. Such reflections were often critical and involved considerations of 'what could I have done differently?' when children appeared to lack motivation or engagement or when the behaviour of some children impacted on the learning of other children, for example. This type of thinking was also associated with self-awareness in relation to the importance of self-regulation and self-care and their individual approaches to 'coping with' or 'managing' emotional work. However, emotional work involved in this type of reflection was often associated with difficult feelings such as helplessness, hopelessness, and powerlessness, which had an impact on participant's wellbeing and subsequent mental health. Such reflection was experienced as self-criticism, feelings of vulnerability, not feeling food enough or feeling demoralised.

Additionally, this research revealed ways of thinking about emotional work in groups. This type of emotional work occurred during more formal, structured opportunities for discussion, where colleagues were encouraged to discuss their emotional work with regards to their professional experiences such as classroom dynamics and individual children. This type of emotional work, which involved deliberate, analytical thinking, particularly when considerations, decision making and problem solving happened in groups, appears to be more relevant to Eraut's conceptualisation of 'cool action' (1985). Cool action emotional work was evident in participants experiences of de-briefs, supervision, or reflective spaces. While such opportunities offer important implications for developing teacher knowledge and understanding, these collaborative opportunities

for inquiry, problem solving, and decision-making were also found to support teacher wellbeing.

7.2.6 The therapeutic dilemma in education

The "therapeutic dilemma" is introduced to education when teachers support children who regularly experience emotional difficulties and distress. Conceptualising the therapeutic dilemma aims to recognise the emotional work that teachers engage *when* supporting children, while also appreciating that teachers may experience emotional dilemmas as part of this work in response to professional expectations about *how* to support children.

This therapeutic dilemma also acknowledges concerns raised about the introduction of 'therapeutic ideas and practices' to education, which have been critiqued because of a suggested "rapid expansion of a market of psycho-emotional interventions promoted by…'pseudo-psy-experts'" (Ecclestone and Rawdin 2016 p.383/378) and "de-regulated claims to expertise" associated with the introduction of 'pycho-emotional approaches' in schools (Ecclestone, 2017 p.54). Additionally, Baker and Mills suggest that the "increasing diffusion of psy-expertise within educational spaces" (2017 p.639) may increase the risk "that psychotherapeutic discourse frames structural issues as 'resolvable' through interventions which focus, almost exclusively, on the need for improvement in an individual's emotional literacy, self-esteem, social skills and family dynamics" (2017 p.651).

While recognising these concerns it is also, however, important to appreciate that while all children who attend the special school settings involved in this research exhibited a wide range of social, emotional, and mental health needs, some children were care experienced, some had or continued to experience adversity, and some had experienced trauma. This appreciation is important with regards to the therapeutic dilemma because concepts such as 'attachment', 'trauma' and 'adverse childhood experiences' are becoming more frequently cited in educational discourse through various policy initiatives and through some pedagogic approaches and initiatives that are being introduced to schools.

With regards to the current policy context, the therapeutic dilemma is evident in two seemingly opposing documents which relate to responding to children's behaviour. While the current DfE policy document 'Behaviour in Schools' makes no reference to attachment, trauma, or adversity in childhood (2022c), 'Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools' recognises all three concepts (DfE, 2018b).

Consequently, with regards to support for children who have "suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences" (DfE, 2018b p.19), the DfE (2018b) encourages:

- "Whole school trauma and attachment awareness informed approaches" (p.19)
- "That school staff are aware of how these children's experiences, and their high prevalence of special educational needs and mental health needs, can impact on their behaviour and education" (p.19)
- That this awareness is reflected in "the design and application of behaviour policies, including through individualised graduated responses, balance with the needs of the whole school community and its physical and mental health" (p.19)

With regards to the introduction of pedagogic approaches and initiatives to schools that are apparently informed by an understanding of 'attachment', 'trauma' and 'adverse childhood experiences', selected examples include Nurture Groups, the Attachment Aware Schools programme, and Trauma Informed Practice. All these approaches are suggested to be informed by "psychotherapeutic and social care models" (Parker and Levinson, 2018 p.877).

Nurture Groups, for example, have been described as therapeutic interventions (Cunningham, Hartwell and Kreppner, 2019), that have a nurturing atmosphere (Sanders, 2007) and are informed by attachment theory (OfSTED, 2011). As a 'psychosocial intervention' (Warin and Hibbin, 2016 p.36), the Nurture Group approach aims to promote "the importance of relationships" and "a vision of whole school as therapeutic community" (Warin and Hibbin, 2016 p.5).

The Attachment Aware Schools programme aims to promote "the importance of attachment, attunement and trauma-informed practice, along with accompanying strategies and interventions that support pupils, particularly more vulnerable groups" (Rose, McGuire-Snieckus, McInnes, and Gilbert, 2019 p.3). According to Kelly, Watt and Giddins 'attachment awareness' is "founded on understanding attachment theory and using this knowledge to shape pedagogy and practice" (2020 p.336). It is suggested that increasing attachment awareness aims to develop "a deeper understanding and knowledge of the neuropsychology of child development, and in particular, the processes of the flight/flight/freeze response, toxic stress, and trauma" (Kelly, Watt and Giddins, 2020 p.337). According to Zsonai and Szabo "all teachers have to understand the process of attachment, because they might establish 'attachment-like' relationships with their students, particularly with vulnerable and challenging children" (2021 p.322).

It is recognised that the introduction of Trauma Informed Practice in the context of schools is a more recent development and that empirical research which informs trauma-informed teaching is less established than literature relating to 'trauma informed systems' in other contexts such as social care, for example (Thomas, Crosby and Vanderhaar, 2019 p.423). However, despite a lack of literature and research relating to Trauma Informed Practice in schools in the UK, from an American perspective, Gubi, Strait, Wycoff, Vega, Brauser and Osman suggest that "trauma-informed (also known as trauma-sensitive) schools systematically acknowledge the prevalence of trauma; recognise how trauma can impact children, families, educators, and school staff; and incorporate a comprehensive perspective on trauma that enacts trauma-informed practices throughout the entire school system" (2019 p.179). They do not, however, elaborate on how schools might enact trauma informed practices. Little and Maunder suggest that teachers are currently "an untapped source of support" for children who have experienced trauma because "'therapeutic' responses" are perceived to be "the sole responsibility of 'specialist' responses beyond the classroom" (2021 p.58). They suggest however, that, in considering "the evidence for what therapeutically supports young people to move out of a pattern of trauma-influenced coping", which might be associated with disruptive behaviour in the classroom, schools could play "a systematic part in building positive interpersonal relationships" (2021 p.54).

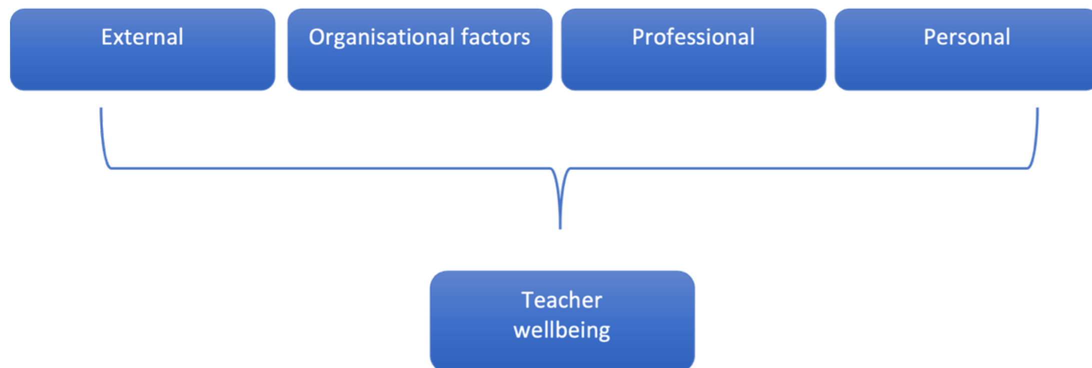
Despite concerns about the introduction of therapeutic ideas and practices into education, it is suggested that, in the context of SEMH settings, such ideas and practices have important implications for the ways in which teachers support their children. Because these children exhibit a wide range of social, emotional, and mental health needs, which might also be associated attachment difficulties, trauma and adversity, teacher support for these children is necessarily influenced by therapeutic ways of working.

However, in addition to supporting children's social and emotional needs, these teachers are also responsible for supporting the children's learning. Such considerations further enhance and exacerbate the therapeutic dilemma experienced by teachers. Because the teachers in this research described the importance of trying to develop positive relationships with children through exhibiting care, sensitivity, and attunement, clearly empathised with children's ongoing experiences and attempted to create feelings of emotional safety through their sympathetic responses to difficulties and distress, it is suggested that the daily work of these teachers is influenced by therapeutic ideas and principles. However, as described previously, their responsibilities in relation to supporting children's learning introduced different dilemmas that were associated with pedagogy, practice, school related expectations and external demands, which influenced their ways of teaching. The therapeutic dilemma is experienced, therefore, when teachers try to support children's emotional difficulties and distress, while also trying to support their learning.

7.3 Support for teacher wellbeing

The findings of this research suggest that teacher wellbeing in the context of the three SEMH special schools was influenced by the interaction of a variety of factors. These factors related to influences that were external to the schools, influences that were associated with individual school organisational contexts, influences that were related to teachers' professional roles and influences that were more related to personal factors, as shown in figure 13.

Figure 13 Interaction of factors that influence teacher wellbeing



Influences that were external to the schools were most often associated with issues of accountability and performativity that impact on school life and, therefore, teachers' professional and at times, personal experiences. External influences were also associated with curriculum design, pedagogic inflexibility, forms of assessment, behaviour management recommendations and a lack of external support for children's complex needs.

Organisational factors were associated with individual school contexts. These organisational factors were most frequently related to participant discussions about professional experiences that had a positive impact on wellbeing, how their wellbeing and the wellbeing of others was supported, the identification of barriers to supporting wellbeing and their suggestions for how wellbeing could be further supported.

Influences that related to teachers' professional roles were associated with their daily experiences. Participant discussions about their professional role experiences were mostly related to how teachers defined wellbeing and about experiences that had a negative impact on their wellbeing.

Influences associated with personal factors were associated with how organisational and professional role experiences impacted on the lives of individual teachers and how teachers supported their own wellbeing. The analysis revealed that the organisational contexts of each of the three schools were highly relevant to participant reflections in relation to their professional experiences, emotional work, and wellbeing.

7.3.1 Organisational support for teacher wellbeing

As an emergent theme, it is significant to note that responses related to the organisational contexts of each school represented the highest frequency of all responses. Participants suggested the importance of school organisations prioritising wellbeing and were concerned when wellbeing was neglected by their school organisation. The importance of organisational support for Head Teacher wellbeing was recognised as being particularly important. In providing recommendations in relation to how wellbeing could be further supported, participants suggested that teacher wellbeing should be integrated into the life of a school and should be reflected in the school's vision, ethos, and culture.

It was suggested that organisational support for teacher wellbeing should facilitated through ensuring wellbeing is cared about in a nurturing school community where staff to feel safe, secure, confident, and calm. Structured, planned 'talking support' was suggested to be more important for teacher wellbeing than tokenistic gestures, such as one-off INSET days or cupcakes in pigeonholes. Given the pervasiveness and complexity of emotional work, this research revealed the importance of non-structured and structured support for teacher wellbeing.

7.3.3 Non structured and structured support for teacher wellbeing

Informal, non-structured wellbeing support opportunities were associated with experiencing a school culture and ethos of support, emotional safety, and care, where wellbeing is a preoccupation for all colleagues, irrespective of role and is associated with non-hierarchical, equal support opportunities. Within such school cultures participants described feeling part of a community or family. A school culture and ethos of support related to an organisational awareness of the importance of supporting wellbeing and having supportive colleagues, including SLT, who regularly check in on each other's wellbeing. Where wellbeing was not prioritised, teachers experienced a lack of support from colleagues and were also concerned that they were unable to support colleagues who may be experiencing difficulties. Having time and space to offer emotional or practical support to others was also suggested to support teacher wellbeing. A lack of time and space, both physical and emotional, were identified as concerns in relation to teacher wellbeing, particularly in relation to the need to recuperate after distressing incidents.

School culture supported wellbeing where teachers experienced trust, relationships with colleagues, feeling able to communicate, being listened to, feeling heard, positivity and mutual respect. Support for wellbeing was also associated with colleagues exhibiting an awareness of each other, showing an active interest, being approachable, being available and showing caring concern. Colleague caring concern was demonstrated through, for example, sharing food and drinks and random acts of kindness, such as post it note messages of encouragement or hidden treats.

Participants also recognised organisational aspects that did not support teacher wellbeing. Such aspects included the assumption that individuals were 'coping' with professional demands and therefore, support for wellbeing was absent and where whole school approaches to wellbeing support, such as one-off days with a suggested activities that purported to focus on wellbeing and that included a choice of wellbeing activities, were deemed to be ineffective.

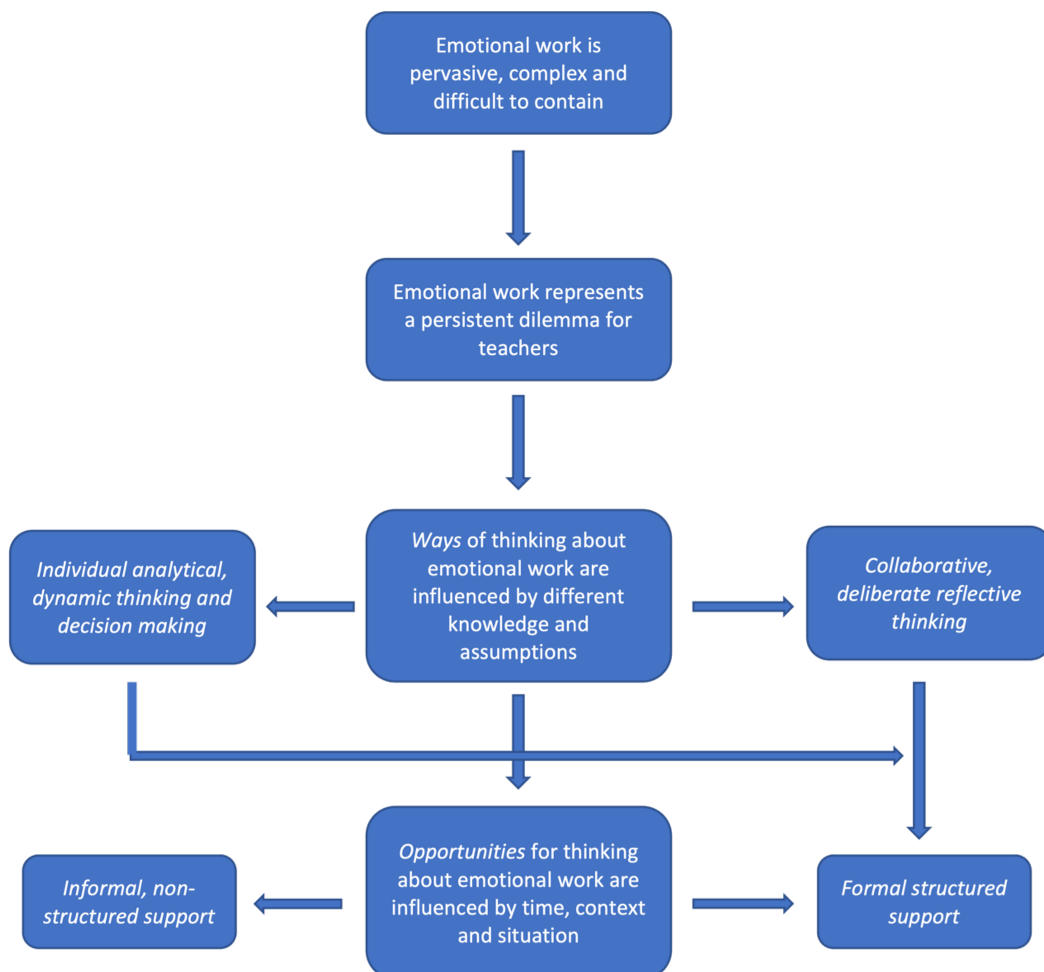
Formal, structured opportunities to support teacher wellbeing were associated with organised, regular spaces to talk and reflect. These spaces were associated with morning briefings and daily de-briefs, group supervision, individual supervision, and reflective spaces. To support teacher wellbeing these spaces provided regular opportunities for teachers to reflect together and talk openly, safely, and honestly about their professional experiences, emotions, and feelings without fear of judgment. Additionally, these opportunities offered time to process and develop shared understandings of professional experiences in a confidential space.

Through sharing professional experiences, emotions and feelings with others, colleagues were encouraged to collaboratively reflect together on their experiences with children, group dynamics or professional problems and dilemmas, and therefore, to examine the impact of their professional work on themselves and each other. Such formal, structured opportunities were identified as being supportive of both individual teacher wellbeing and the wellbeing of others within the school communities. With regards to organisational considerations, importantly, some formal, structured opportunities which aimed to support wellbeing were also suggested to have a negative impact on teacher wellbeing.

In relation to experiences of supervision, for example, it was suggested that delays in starting supervision had a negative impact on wellbeing. Additionally, it was recognised that the timing of supervision sessions (e.g., before school) may not be beneficial to teachers, particularly if, having attended supervision, they then return to unsettled classrooms. Supervision sessions were also recognised as having the potential to negatively impact on wellbeing because of expectations to be open and honest about professional experiences, which were suggested to be draining and difficult at times, increasing feelings of vulnerability.

Figure 16 shows a conceptualisation of emotional work which details how different ways of thinking about emotional work can be supported through different opportunities for thinking about emotional work.

Figure 14 A conceptualisation of emotional work



7.3.4 Teacher support for their own wellbeing

Despite suggestions that schools should facilitate teachers to support their own wellbeing, some participants shared concerns with regards to not having the time or energy after school, at weekends or during school holidays to engage in healthy experiences associated with, for example, diet or exercise and therefore, felt that they were not doing enough to support their own wellbeing. For some participants their professional roles were also negatively impacting on their friendships and relationships. However, when asked to consider support for their own wellbeing, a wide variety of suggestions were offered by individual participants. Exercise, spending time with family and friends and socialising were the most frequent responses.

Participants also described work-life considerations in relation to managing workload such as time management and trying not to take work home. Appreciating that their professional identity is only part of their personal identity and creating relational, emotional and, at times, physical distance from their professional roles were also suggested as being important with regards to their wellbeing.

7.4 The role of compassion in supporting teachers' emotional work and wellbeing

7.4.1 Relevance of compassion focused principles

During Stage 2 of the research, participants were encouraged to reflect on the relevance of selected theoretical principles that underpin compassion focused approaches. These theoretical principles were incorporated into the six focus group sessions and have been described, at length, previously in the literature review and methodology (Appendix 5). Although no participants had encountered any school-based initiatives that were informed by compassion focused therapeutic principles, mindfulness, counselling, and nurture group approaches were mentioned. When offering definitions of compassion, participant reflections included reference to empathy, understanding, kindness, care, and love. Thinking about the needs of others, understanding how their actions might impact on others and balancing their own needs and the needs of others also featured in participants definitions of compassion.

When examining wellbeing and distress experienced by both teachers and children, evolutionary perspectives and biopsychosocial appeared to be particularly relevant to participants. It was suggested that the children's social circumstances were linked to their experiences of distress, and it was recognised that this distress can impact on their behaviour and mental health. Participants across all three schools described the relevance of 'fight or flight' experiences with regards to the physical aggression exhibited by children, but also in relation to their professional experiences with colleagues. It was suggested that, during their daily experiences, teachers in these schools spend much of their time in a state of hyper-alertness. Protection of others and self-protection associated with survival instincts were also described by participants in relation to feeling threatened at times. Physiological responses experienced by participants were described in relation to endorphins, adrenaline and raised cortisol levels, while psychological responses were experienced as difficult feelings and emotions. A wide range of difficult feelings and emotions were relevant to participants professional role experiences, such as anger, anxiety and disgust, self-criticism, and self-doubt. These experiences were influenced by the children's behaviour or lack of engagement in learning, feeling on edge and operating psychologically, just below panic level. Professional experiences such as organisational change, uncertainty, inconsistency, confusion, mistrust, increased workload, pressure, and increased responsibilities were also associated with difficult emotions and feelings.

Attachment theory was recognised as being 'incredibly relevant' to professional experiences in these schools and was suggested to inform understandings of and responses to children's 'challenging behaviour'. The importance of building and developing trusting relationships was identified as influencing interactions with children, colleagues, and broader networks. Pressures associated with being dependable adults highlighted participants responsibilities for vulnerable children and was discussed in relation to having difficulties in detaching from professional roles and having a life away from school.

Despite having no previous awareness of Polyvagal Theory, participant reflections suggested that such conceptualisations in relation to experiences of safety or threat were particularly relevant to their professional roles. Again, high levels of alertness and hyper-vigilance were suggested to be experienced across all three schools. A constant

physiological preparation for threat was described in relation to experiences prior to starting the school day and in response to incidents throughout the day, often involving the children's behaviour. Opportunities to create experiences of safety for children were described in relation to developing knowledge of children, being attuned and alert to early changes in children's behaviour, pedagogical considerations, and environmental adaptations. Experiences of feeling on edge and being hyper-alert were suggested to have an impact on participants health and relationships. Such experiences were also suggested to be under-estimated by others. In addition to adult experiences of hyper-vigilance, participants also described children's high levels of alertness which could be associated with other children struggling, low-level disruption, the effect of children's behaviour on others or incidents involving physical aggression.

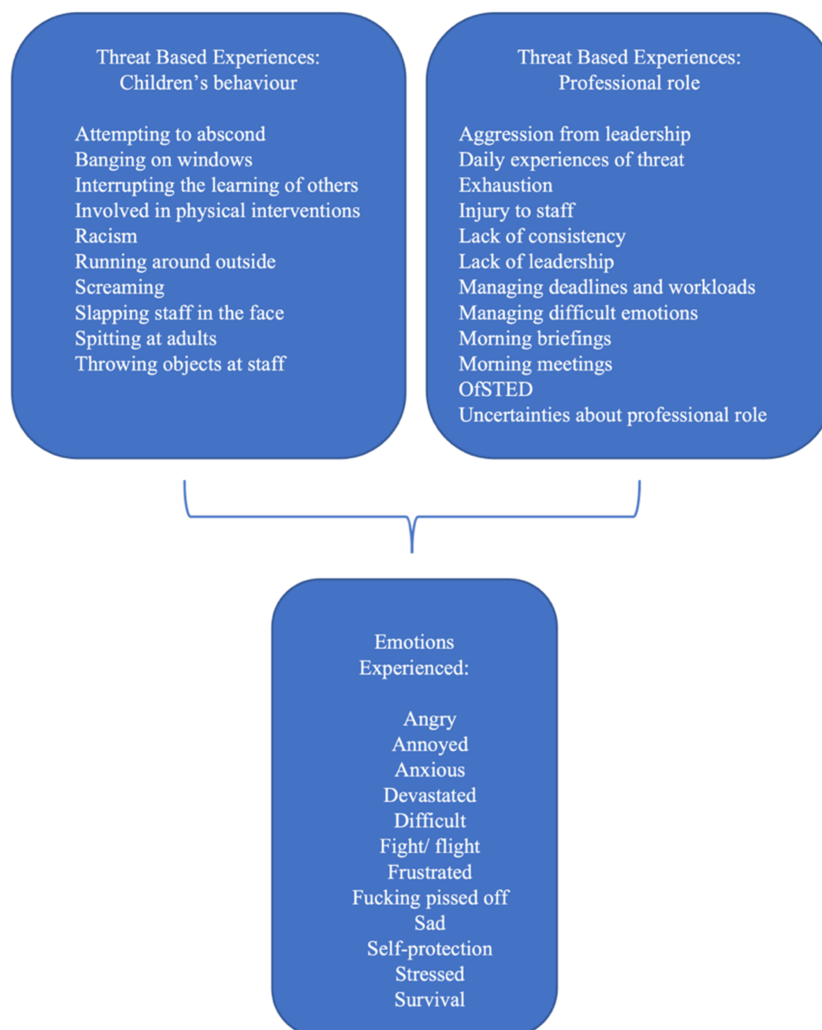
With regards to exploring the relevance of Gilbert's (2009b) Affect Regulation System model, participants were encouraged to reflect on professional experiences that could be associated with threat, drive, and contentment. During initial discussions, participants suggested that threat-based experiences were 'obviously' relevant to their professional roles. Threat-based situations were described in relation to feelings of anxiety, being threatened or hurt by children or engaging in physical interventions. However, such situations were also influenced by a desire to protect others or seek safety. Threat-based experiences were also associated with complex emotional dilemmas such as shame and disgust following physical interventions, embarrassment when incidents occur, or having difficult feelings towards children who have hurt other children or colleagues. Despite a recognition of these difficult feelings and emotions, lack of time or space to calm and relax in between incidents were suggested to further contribute to experiences of anxiety.

7.4.2 Relevance of compassion focused processes

Having introduced the theoretical principles that underpin compassion focused initiatives, subsequent sessions provided opportunities to engage in a variety of interactive activities to explore the relevance of compassion focused processes to their professional roles. These activities involved encouraging participants to engage in processes of reflection, drawing and discussion.

When further considering Gilbert's (2009b) Affect Regulation System model it is particularly significant to recognise that *all* participants began their reflections by focusing on threat-based experiences. Examples of threat-based experiences were associated with the children's behaviour, their professional roles and difficult feelings and emotions. Different threat-based professional experiences were evident with regards to the organisational contexts of each school and are summarised in figure 15.

Figure 15 Threat based experiences described by participants in relation to their professional roles



Drive-based experiences were often also associated with the children's behaviour, however reflections here also related to attempts to support children to resolve difficulties or to try and calm and re-focus children. Drive-based examples were also

associated with feeling motivated to support children's successes, preparation for an OfSTED visit, feeling prepared to teach, being recognised for professional achievements or undertaking MA study. Participant's contentment-based experiences were described in relation to successfully resolving incidents, positive interactions and connections, children engaging with their learning and experiencing support from colleagues.

Despite recognising the relevance of attributes of compassion, discussion of each attribute offered insights into daily dilemmas. Some of these dilemmas were associated with difficult emotions. When encouraged to reflect further on difficult emotions experienced as part of their professional roles, participant discussions revealed that these emotions are influenced by the interaction of a variety of complex factors. Difficult emotions could be experienced as frustration and incompetence were often associated with critical self-reflection, self-judgement, and self-doubt. While fear of children was recognised, anger was suggested to be experienced when participants felt unable 'fix everything' or solve children's problems. Anxiety and worry could be experienced before, during and after school and heartbreak, hopelessness and sadness were often related to an awareness of children's past or on-going experiences and safeguarding concerns. Some professional experiences were described as being demoralising, overwhelming and confusing and could be associated with feeling buried and exhausted. Depression and low self-esteem were described in relation to feelings of despair. In trying to cope with difficult emotions, professional demands and feeling overwhelmed, participants described feeling selfish and guilty when trying to look after themselves or being unable to support colleagues. When feeling at 'breaking point', it was suggested that colleagues may not have any compassion or thought for others. With regards to difficult emotions, a 'pattern of feeling', as shown in figure 16, was suggested by one participant in relation to reflection on professional experiences. This 'pattern of feeling' usefully illustrates how a cycle of difficult emotions can be experienced at times.

Figure 16 A ‘pattern of feeling’ relating to difficult emotion experienced

7.4.3 Relevance of compassion focused practices

Exploring the relevance of compassion focused practices with participants involved engaging in a variety of activities that encouraged reflection, visualisation, imagination, and discussion. Initially, participants were encouraged to imagine an ideal compassionate self by considering physical attributes, approaches to self-care, behaviours and attributes that were associated with compassion. Though using visualisation and imagery, these participant reflections provided useful insights into how teachers might embody their ideal compassionate self through compassionate intentions or behaviours towards themselves or others. Participants were also encouraged to think about attributes and behaviours that could be associated with an ideal compassionate other, to reflect on their experiences of compassion from others and to consider how they engage in self-compassion. Engaging in similar activities and reflecting on compassionate intentions, attributes, behaviours, and experiences could usefully inform the development of individual or school-based practices to support teachers’ emotional work, their wellbeing, and the wellbeing of others within schools.

7.4.4 Participant evaluations of the six compassion focused sessions

Participants found it useful to engage in open discussions and to talk with colleagues during the six, one-hour sessions which provided time and space to reflect individually and then to openly discuss professional experiences in a confidential, non-judgemental space. Professional discussions were supported through a variety of interactive activities where the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to education were discussed. Most participants suggested that they remained engaged throughout the sessions, however, engagement with post session audio recordings, additional readings and online activities was mixed.

All participants recognised the relevance of the focus group sessions to their professional roles. It was suggested that participation in the sessions had led to better understanding of others in their schools and the emotional impact of the work on themselves and their colleagues. *All* participants recognised the relevance of sessions to their own wellbeing, particularly in relation to compassion for self, compassion for others and compassion from others. With regards to improving the six compassion focused sessions, time was the most frequently discussed consideration. It was suggested that the having sessions after school could be difficult, particularly after a 'tricky' day. Some participants would have liked to have had more time to reflect and discuss compassion focused principles, processes, and practices and some would have liked less time between sessions. It was also suggested that more time to engage in practical activities would have been beneficial. Participant evaluations of the six compassion focused sessions can be located in Appendix 67.

7.5 Relevance of research to other school contexts and other professional roles

It is suggested that the findings of this research have important implications for other school contexts and other professional roles, particularly given previous and ongoing concerns about the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and teachers. Conceptualisations offered here in relation to teachers' emotional work and the therapeutic dilemma in education therefore have important implications for acknowledging and supporting the emotional aspects of teachers' professional roles in *all* educational settings.

Recognising the different ways through which teachers may experience and think about emotional work also has important implications for professional development. It is suggested that teachers may need support to understand that thinking about emotional work is influenced by, for example, experience, context, and the availability of time. All school organisations, therefore, can better facilitate thinking about emotional work through the provision of opportunities for teachers to reflect together about such work.

This research might also resonate with other professionals who support children and young people who experience emotional difficulties, distress, or mental health needs. Although it is important to acknowledge that professional roles, experiences, and contexts will differ significantly from teachers working in schools, it is suggested that findings reported are relevant to colleagues working in health, social care, and youth work, particularly in relation to the emotional work that they are likely to experience and the need for organisations to support their wellbeing. One difference between teaching and other professional roles relates to the expectation that teachers teach children in addition to supporting their social and emotional needs. As described previously, such expectations can be experienced as professional dilemmas for teachers. Other differences might be associated with the number of children professionals support, the amount of time professionals spend with children, locations of support and professional expectations with regards to how children are supported.

Despite a recognition of such professional differences, it is suggested that the concept of compassion, as explored in this research, might usefully encourage dialogue between professions about how best to support children’s social, emotional and mental health needs, while also supporting the associated emotional work and wellbeing of those professionals. By talking together about the relevance of compassion to their experiences, professionals undertaking different roles and responsibilities could develop a shared understanding how of compassionate principles, processes and practices might usefully inform their work.

8. Conclusion

Given the significance of emotional work this research offers a series of implications with regards to how such work might be acknowledged, recognised, and supported. The suggested implications are informed by compassionate principles which aim to prevent or alleviate difficulties and distress that might be experienced by teachers. These compassionate principles relate to compassion from others, compassion for others and compassion for self. Because of the association between emotional work and teacher wellbeing, the research offers with implications relating to school ethos and culture, structured support for wellbeing, professional dilemmas, and Government. The research then offers a conceptualisation of Compassion Focused Education to support a radical, structural change to the current education system before concluding with some reflections on the research.

8.1 Implications for school ethos and culture

To support the emotional work of teachers, organisational compassion with regards to school ethos and culture were found to be particularly important. This research implies that teacher wellbeing can be supported when a school ethos and culture ensures that teachers feel thought about and feel part of a caring community. To support teacher wellbeing schools can facilitate various non-structured, informal support opportunities. Non-structured, informal support opportunities are established when teacher wellbeing becomes a preoccupation for all colleagues, irrespective of role and where wellbeing and compassion permeates all aspects of school life. As a fundamental aspect of school ethos and culture, teacher wellbeing could be reflected, for example, in a school's mission statement and values, could feature in school policies and could be considered from initial staff induction. Non-structured, informal support for wellbeing is also associated with non-hierarchical, equal experiences of support where all teachers feel able to communicate, feel listened to and heard. Such support can also be related to teachers feeling valued, respected, trusted, and feeling positive about their professional role.

This research also indicated that teacher wellbeing was associated with emotional safety. Creating a school ethos and culture of emotional safety can support teacher wellbeing by encouraging teachers to talk openly and honestly about the emotional

work that they engage in. Emotional safety can be enhanced through compassion from others and for others when teachers exhibit an awareness of others by being approachable, available, and emotionally present. Additionally, this research found that teacher wellbeing was associated with compassionate caring concern. A school culture and ethos of caring concern for teacher wellbeing is demonstrated when experiences of difficulty are recognised, acknowledged, and supported. After a distressing incident, for example, in recognition of the physiological and emotional impact of such an event, caring concern could be shown through ensuring that a teacher is given physical and emotional space and time to rest, reflect and recover.

Caring concern can also be exhibited when schools encourage teachers to maintain an emotional, relational, and physical distance from their professional role experiences through engaging in activities that support self-compassion and self-care. Schools can also demonstrate caring concern and compassion from others by organising activities that support teacher wellbeing. Such activities could be led by teachers who might offer sessions to other teachers that reflect their interests or hobbies. Teachers' caring concern and compassion for others can be demonstrated through emotionally 'checking' in on others during the school day or afterschool, or through random acts of kindness.

8.2 Implications for support for emotional work

To support teacher wellbeing, this research revealed the need for schools to provide space and time for teachers to talk about the emotional work that they engage in through structured, formal support opportunities. It is suggested that supervision offers an appropriate space for teachers to experience compassion from others and exhibit compassion for others through reflecting together to collaboratively and deliberately explore the impact of their experiences of emotional work on themselves and others. Supervision can be organised for individuals and for groups. Because school communities are made up of individuals in different roles, supervision groups can be organised to reflect these roles. Consequently, supervision groups can include, for example, all teachers or a mixture of teachers, SLT and teaching assistants. So that structured support for emotional work does not become an addition to teachers' responsibilities, it is important that supervision becomes an integral part of their professional experiences.

With regards to the regularity of supervision sessions, individual supervision could take place at least once a term, while group supervision sessions could take place either weekly or every other week. To ensure that supervision sessions are most useful for teachers and are least impactful on their professional experiences, it is suggested that timings of sessions are agreed together, that session timings are consistent, and that time for supervision is protected. To support teachers to feel comfortable before, during and after supervision, classes could be covered so that teachers can be repeatedly released from teaching at a particular time.

While supervision sessions can be facilitated by an experienced external professional, such as a school counsellor, an educational psychologist or therapist, it is recognised that such facilitation has financial implications for schools. To reduce or eliminate costs, schools could facilitate supervision themselves. Importantly, supervision sessions require a non-managerial approach to ensure that reflective conversations remain unrelated to teacher performance. Because supervision sessions encourage open, honest, and reflective conversations about emotional work, such sessions can be supported through non-judgemental, sensitive, empathetic, considerate, and compassionate leadership. Although discussions during supervision sessions might relate to policy, pedagogy and practice, children's behaviour, relational experiences, group dynamics and professional dilemmas, the focus and direction of reflective conversations will be led by teachers.

To support such conversations, teachers need to feel emotionally safe so that they feel able to authentically express emotions and describe professional experiences that are of importance to them. Through providing space and time to talk about emotional work, teachers can share experiences that are meaningful and relevant. By reflecting together, teachers can deliberately explore and examine the emotional work that they engage in and collaboratively consider how best to respond to such experiences.

8.3 Implications with regards to emotional dilemmas

This research found that teachers' experiences were influenced by professional expectations, organisational requirements, and external demands that were often associated with school policy, pedagogy, and practice.

Experiences of emotional dilemmas were more likely, were more frequent, appeared to be more intense and negatively impacted on teacher wellbeing where organisational principles underpinning school policy, pedagogy and practice decisions and expectations were unclear, confused or impacted on children's experiences of learning and their wellbeing. Such decisions and expectations were also found to have a negative impact on teachers' relational experiences with children and their feelings of authenticity when their beliefs about how best to support their children were oppositional to these decisions and expectations.

Where organisational principles were underpinned by a depth of knowledge and understanding about how best to support children's social and emotional needs, school policy, pedagogy and practice decisions and expectations were clearer, explicitly aimed to support children's experiences of learning and supported their wellbeing and the wellbeing of teachers. These organisational principles then influenced teachers' responsibilities and professional experiences with regards to, for example, class sizes and grouping, curriculum design and delivery, ways of interacting with children and expectations with regards to managing children's behaviour.

By having smaller class sizes and grouping children based on their social and emotional needs rather than their chronological age, dilemmas associated with supporting social and emotional development and age-related academic expectations were reduced. By designing an engaging, flexible, and relevant curriculum that was influenced by knowledge of the children and an understanding of their learning needs, dilemmas associated with curriculum delivery were reduced. By ensuring that interactions with children created experiences of calm and increased feelings of safety, dilemmas associated with distress and confrontation were reduced. By encouraging children's self-awareness and self-regulation, dilemmas associated with managing behaviour were reduced.

Such findings suggest the importance of developing compassionate organisational principles that support teachers' connections and relational experiences with children and their feelings of authenticity. When teachers' beliefs about how best to support their children's social and emotional needs align with those of an organisation, emotional dilemmas can be eliminated, reduced, or more effectively supported.

Given that teachers' professional experiences can be influenced by professional expectations, organisational requirements, and external demands this research suggests that schools and teachers challenge, oppose, and resist any influences and directives that might create professional dilemmas that are likely to have a negative impact on teachers' connections and relational experiences with children or their feelings of authenticity. Such compassionate non-conformity should be informed by teachers' beliefs, experiences, and knowledge of their children. If the pedagogic decisions that influence their practice are informed by their social and ethical convictions, teachers should feel confident in their decision making and actions.

When teaching is founded on authentic, relational, and meaningful pedagogy that is informed by teachers' knowledge of their children and their own judgements about children's learning needs, interests and motivations, practice can be more innovative, flexible, and responsive. Because teachers care about their children, their learning and their wellbeing, school policy, pedagogy, and practice decisions and expectations should increase teacher autonomy, facilitate compassionate interactions, encourage authenticity, and promote creativity in teaching.

8.4 Implications for Government

Because this research found that teachers' experiences of administrative duties and bureaucratic demands associated with performativity, accountability and judgement had a negative impact on their wellbeing and created experiences of distress, it is suggested that Government exhibit more compassion by paying increased attention to aspects of teachers' professional roles that actually facilitate children's learning, their wellbeing, and the wellbeing of teachers.

The research revealed that teachers' current experiences of Government expectations created a variety of emotional dilemmas which had a negative impact on children's learning, their wellbeing, and the wellbeing of teachers. Such dilemmas were associated with curriculum inflexibility and irrelevance, expectations that children make continual progress against performance indicators that do not reflect their learning needs, problems with monitoring and assessment procedures that do not accurately measure children's development, a focus on cognitive aspects of learning associated with knowledge, memory, retention and recall rather than social and emotional aspects of

learning and behaviour management guidance and expectations that are founded on outdated expectations of compliance and control that increase experiences of confrontation.

It is suggested therefore, that teachers be given more autonomy with regards to their pedagogic decision making, curriculum considerations and interactions with children in recognition of their knowledge of the children in their classes and their learning needs. By increasing teacher autonomy, teachers would be more able to plan and deliver learning experiences that motivate and engage. By motivating and engaging children, responding more compassionately and sensitively to their experiences of difficulties and distress, and encouraging self-awareness and self-regulation, rather than adopting ineffective approaches associated with, for example, rewards and consequences, it is suggested that teachers' emotional dilemmas can be reduced or eliminated.

To support teacher wellbeing there is also a need for Government to recognise and acknowledge the emotional work that teachers engage in as part of their professional roles. Such a compassionate response would help to reduce the difficulties and distress experienced by teachers that is associated with emotional work. Having recognised and acknowledged the emotional work of teachers, the significance of such work could be reflected in policy documentation and guidance could then be provided to schools and teachers with regards to how such work can be identified and supported. Government funding for schools could support the facilitation of regular, structured support for such work where teachers are provided with protected space and time to talk about the emotional work that they engage in as part of their professional roles. It is suggested that supervision offers an appropriate approach to provide such structured support.

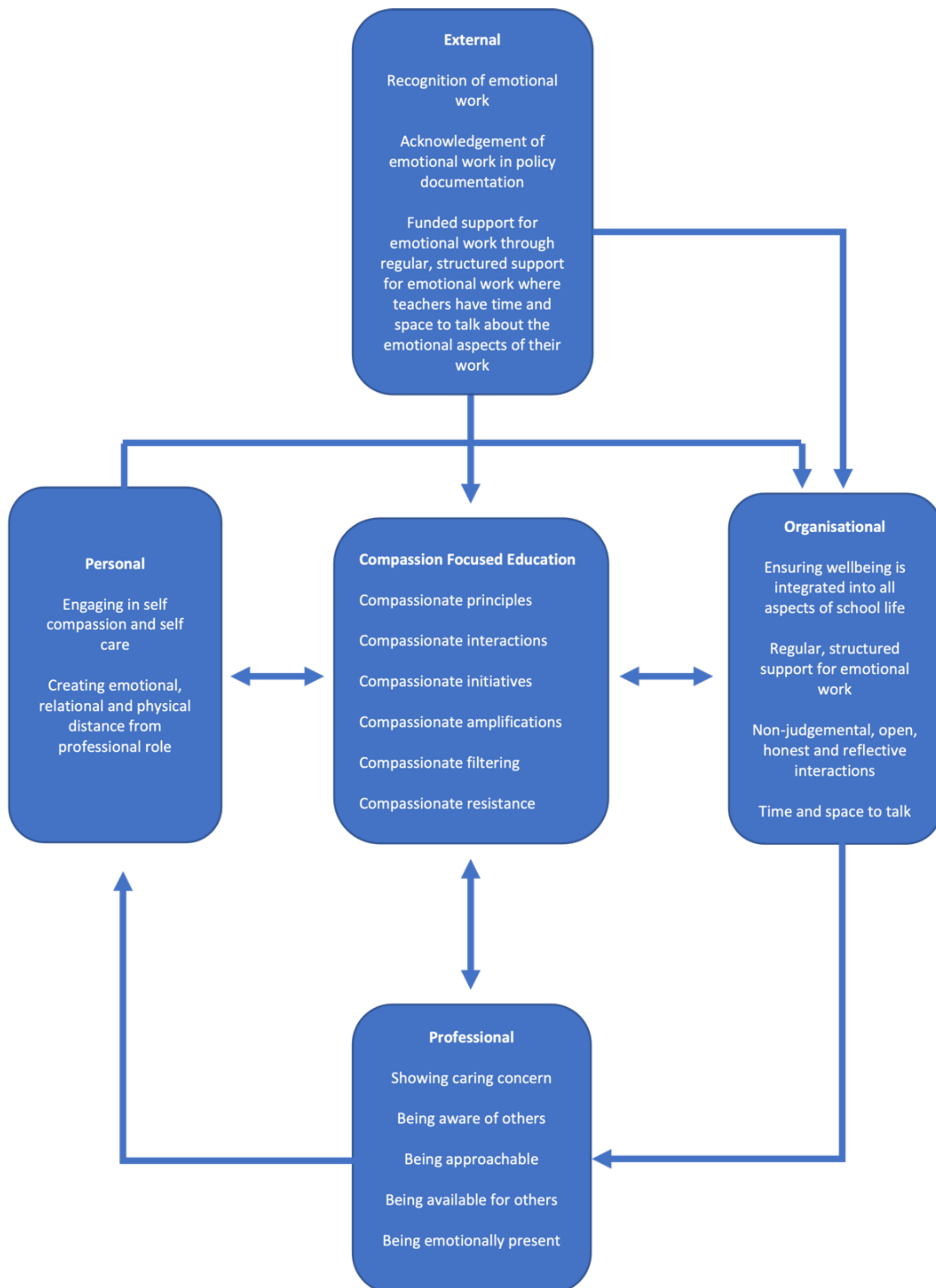
8.5 A conceptualisation of Compassion Focused Education

This research calls for a radical and structural change to the current education system by developing a conceptualisation of Compassion Focused Education. Underpinning all research implications is a philosophy of schooling which locates compassion at the core of every educational experience. Compassion Focused Education is founded on compassionate principles, interactions, initiatives, amplifications, filtering, and resistance.

Compassionate *principles* are suggested to be essential elements of all educational endeavours and include; facilitating the wellbeing of self and others, empathetic connection with and care for others, awareness of difficulties in self and others, being motivated to prevent or alleviate those difficulties and engaging in activities and experiences that are helpful and healthy. Compassionate *interactions* will involve ensuring that others know that they are thought about and feel cared for. These interactions happen when caring concern for others is exhibited. Compassionate *initiatives* can include any activity or experience which has the intention of promoting, encouraging, and facilitating wellbeing in self and others. Compassionate *amplifications* aim to further enhance experiences of compassion for self and others through increasing experiences that support wellbeing. Compassionate *filtering* ensures that any activities or experiences that might have a negative impact on wellbeing are carefully (re)considered or adapted to eliminate or reduce such an impact. Compassionate *resistance* refers to professional action that prevents or inhibits any activity or experience that might cause distress in self or others.

Figure 18 shows how recommendations relating to a conceptualisation of Compassion Focused Education should influence all external, organisational, professional, and personal activities and experiences to support school communities, teachers' emotional work and their wellbeing.

Figure 17 A conceptualisation of Compassion Focused Education



8.6 Research reflections

Having engaged in an extended processes of becoming familiar with the interview transcriptions and taking time to learn how to use NVivo, I became immersed and at times, lost, in the process of data analysis. Following a forensic, in-depth analysis of data, I remember a feeling of revelation with regards to the significance of emotional work to the teachers' daily experiences. Having engaged in further analysis it also became clear that organisational context of teachers' experiences appeared to be particularly important with regards to their experiences of emotional work and support for wellbeing. By the end of the analysis, I felt that I had developed a depth of knowledge about each individual participant. I hope that I have told their stories well here. Participants qualitative accounts of their professional experiences of emotional work and support for their wellbeing were incredibly insightful, informative and at times, moving.

Given my previous professional experiences I felt able to empathise with their accounts and experiences, which could be, as was revealed in their reflections and conversations, difficult and distressing. My reflexive engagement throughout the research process prompted ongoing personal reflection, which was informed by my interest in the potential role of compassion as a construct to support teacher wellbeing. I often felt empathetic concern for participants, particularly in relation to an appreciation of their daily experiences and became aware that, throughout this research, I had engaged in a prolonged experience of emotional work, while exploring the emotional work of others. This meta-level awareness guided my engagement in ethical decision making through being responsive to participant experiences and informed, I am sure, my interpretations of their accounts and experiences.

With regards to research improvements, I recognise and appreciate participant feedback with regards to the structured introduction of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices during Stage 2 of the research. With regards to the least effective aspect of the focus group sessions, time was identified most frequently. Engaging in sessions after school, for example, was suggested to be difficult sometimes because some participants had experienced distressing events during the day, so were unable to concentrate, or were distracted by work commitments that needed to be undertaken before they went home. Despite trying to engage with some of the compassion focused

practices, these aspects of sessions were occasionally interrupted by children banging on windows, for example, or non-participating colleagues needing to ask questions about some issue or other. Due to a variety of different circumstances, it was not possible to arrange for sessions to take place every other week. Consequently, there were some delays between sessions. Although resources were shared with participants as follow up activities, most participants suggested that they did not have the time to engage with these because of other professional commitments.

While some participants enjoyed the more theoretical aspects of the sessions, others preferred the more interactive aspects. Given the importance of exploring, *with* teachers, the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to their professional experiences, this feedback suggests a dilemma for future research because of the need for consistency with regards to the design and delivery content. The research was also designed to maximise the potential to explore teachers' reflections, perspectives, and ideas in relation to more theoretical ideas, while also providing a variety of interactive activities for teachers to engage with, together. As an extension to this research, it would, therefore, be interesting to return to each school to encourage teachers to reflect again on their participation in this project. I would be keen to identify any positive organisational, professional, or personal changes in response teachers' participation in this research to re-examine emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of compassion. Such a follow up study might also help to illustrate ways of collaboratively working with teachers which they identify as being particularly helpful and effective. This kind of collaboration, would, it is hoped, offer useful insights into the design and delivery of a compassion focused approach in education.

Participant feedback also provided useful insights into developing and implementing professional development opportunities for teachers. Given the time constraints of the research, it was not possible to extend the data collection phase, which provides useful insights into additional ethical considerations. Because teachers had generously agreed to engage in six hours of focus group conversations to explore together the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes, and practices, it was not possible to adapt the session structure.

The research, therefore, raises additional considerations with regards to teachers' professional development experiences and engagement in collaborative research. Essentially, the findings of this research suggest that teachers need to be provided with more time and space to participant in such opportunities, which should be recognised as being important for their professional development and wellbeing. If future opportunities to extend this research arise, a more ethnographic study design would support the examination the role of compassion to support teacher wellbeing. Participating in an ethnographic study would support a further exploration of individual, occupational, and contextual factors that may influence the emotional work of teachers, their wellbeing and support for their wellbeing.

Given previous examinations of care and nurture in education, which may be seen as being inherently gendered (e.g., Johnstone and Bradford 2022, Noddings, 1986 and Taggert, 2011), the concept of emotional work and professional experiences of such work could be further examined. Because factors relating to gender and emotional work were not evident in the findings of this research, such an examination, while falling outside the scope of this study, would offer an interesting extension to this research.

It is hoped that this research makes unique, valuable, and useful contributions to research. Most importantly, perhaps, is a recognition of the pervasiveness and complexity of the emotional work that teachers experience when they support children who exhibit high levels of distress. Such work may be experienced as a therapeutic dilemma in education because of competing demands associated with their professional roles. In recognition of the incongruity of the wider educational context, it is important to appreciate that, presently, professional demands associated with accountability, conformity, comparison, competition, inspection, performativity, and quality assurance will continue to be experienced as constraints by teachers as they remain concerned with children's learning, emotional wellbeing, and mental health.

The therapeutic dilemma in education is also important to recognise because although concepts such as 'attachment', 'trauma' and 'adverse childhood experiences' are being introduced to schools through various policy initiatives and through some pedagogic approaches and initiatives, current Government policy guidance relating to such concepts is vague and unhelpful. Consequently, while appreciating the importance of

therapeutically supporting children who experience distress, teachers are likely to feel uncertain about how their pedagogy and daily practice can be therapeutically informed. Such uncertainty could be experienced as self-doubt, self-criticism, and feelings of inadequacy, which this research found, had a negative impact on wellbeing. An appreciation of the therapeutic dilemma in education, therefore, has important implications for school organisations, the initial education and ongoing professional development of teachers. For teachers to effectively engage in therapeutically informed pedagogy and practice, such work must be better conceptualised, and the associated emotional work must be more appropriately supported. It is also important to appreciate that currently, the emotional work of teachers is neglected or underestimated both in research and in policy.

Consequently, given that emotional work had such an impact on the professional and personal lives of teachers, this research offers important insights with regards to the acknowledgement, recognition, and support for such work. Given the significance and neglect of teachers' emotional work, the therapeutic dilemma in education and professional experiences of ongoing competing demands, this research urgently encourages the need to locate compassion at the heart of all educational experiences. Through developing a conceptualisation of Compassion Focused Education this research offers a unique philosophy of schooling founded on compassionate principles, interactions, initiatives, amplifications, filtering, and resistance. Compassion Focused Education aims, therefore, to provide a useful framework for external, organisational, professional, and personal activities and experiences to support wellbeing in all school communities. Given that colleagues working in health, social care and youth work also support the wellbeing of children and young people who may experience distress, it is hoped that the findings of this research also resonate with a wide variety of professional experiences outside education.

The following participant quotation, provided in the anonymous evaluation survey, provides additional insight into the potential for compassion to support teachers and the wider school community.

"*I'd like to say thank you because, actually, it's been really useful, particularly for the establishment we work in and you know we do, it is very heightened emotions place.*

So, actually, just having that time to think about things and to discuss and go through and share I think that's been really useful for all of us you know personal development and…professional development and even with the children” (Anon).

Finally, I hope that findings of this research lead to greater recognition and acknowledgement of teachers’ emotional work and that such understanding leads to change with regards to support for their wellbeing. Having now completed this research, I am even more certain of the need to ensure that compassion underpins all educational experiences.

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Appendix 1: Example interview questions

1. How would you define wellbeing in relation to a teachers' professional role?

2. How would you describe the 'emotional work' that you engage in as part of your professional role at this school?

3. How do you support the wellbeing of 'others' at this school?
    a. Children?
    b. Colleagues?

4. How is your wellbeing supported/facilitated at this school?

5. How do you support your own wellbeing at this school?

6. Can you describe a recent event or experience that has had an impact on your wellbeing?

Appendix 2: Definitions used in research process to be sent to participants prior to interviews

'Wellbeing' definition:

'Mental wellbeing is a dynamic state in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others and contribute to their community. It is enhanced when an individual is able to fulfil their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of purpose in society.' (Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project, 2008) Final project report. London: The Government Office for Science. Link here (p.8)

Mental wellbeing at work is determined by the interaction between the working environment, the nature of the work and the individual (NICE, 2018 p.8)

'Emotional work' definition:

Emotional work is different from physical work or the intellectual work involved in thinking or problem solving.

Emotional work involves emotional experiences. These can involve considering the emotional impact of our own behaviour on others or the behaviour of others. This emotional work occurs during social interactions in particular contexts. While some interactions and contexts, for example, may involve care, enthusiasm and sensitivity to ensure that others feel safe and are comfortable, other interactions and contexts may require that feelings be hidden or disguised such as irritation, annoyance, fatigue, anxiety or fear.

Teaching is a relational experience that often involves exhibiting a variety of emotions and investing emotionally during daily experiences. These emotional investments are often related to a wide range of complex and sometimes contradictory emotional experiences that are central to teaching and learning situations.

Such emotional experiences can involve interactions between individuals (children, colleagues, parents/carers, Senior Leadership colleagues etc.) within specific situations (teaching, responding to distress, supporting behaviour etc.) and environments (schools, classrooms, playgrounds etc.). In their daily roles teachers are required to regulate their own emotions, feelings and behaviours due to an awareness of what is deemed to be acceptable, given the situation or environment.

Consequently teachers may or may not express these emotions, feelings and behaviours. This is particularly relevant where teachers are also supporting the social, emotional and mental health needs of children.

The emotional work of teachers can, therefore, be both positive and negative depending on different interactions, individuals, situations and environments.

Appendix 3: Process of becoming familiar with compassion focused principles, processes and practices

Date	Purpose
October 2017	Visit to Eastern Washington University USA to meet Professor Russell Kolts, Internationally recognised for his research and work involving compassionate-based therapy for anger and other powerful human emotions. Informally interviewed Professor Kolts about compassionate-based therapy and visited a local High School to observe his work with students and staff.
January 2018	Dr Mary Welford was a guest speaker at the Education for Mental Health Conference hosted at Oxford Brookes University School of Education. Title of workshop: The Nature and Case for Whole School Compassion Focused Initiatives.
March 2018	Attended the Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Compassion Focused Therapy 3 day workshop led by Dr Chris Irons - Clinical Psychologist and Tobin Bell - Psychotherapist and Trainer The 3 day workshop explored the following: - Introduction to the evolutionary model of human psychology and vulnerability to mental health difficulties - Understanding an evolutionary approach to affect regulation and affect dysregulation - The role of attachment and early secure base and safe haven for development and compassion cultivation - The nature of the two psychologies compassion with a 12 constituent elements and their link to the care- giving and receiving motivational systems - Compassion as flow: compassion to others, been open to compassion from others and self-compassion - Practices that stimulate compassionate mental states and build a sense of the compassionate self-identity - How to use compassionate mental states and the sense a grounded compassionate self to address problems such as self-criticism and shame - Therapy as creating different patterns in the mind conducive to well-being
May 2018	Attended the Compassionate Mind Foundation's International Leadership and Business Conference
March 2019	Attended the workshop: Why wait until Adulthood? Using the power of Compassion Focused Therapy with Children, Young People and Families led by Dr Mary Welford Consultant Clinical Psychologist

July 2019	Professor Paul Gilbert sent the following presentations and gave permission to share aspects as part of the 6 focus group sessions: Compassion and Life An overview of CFT processes by Professor Paul Gilbert
September 2019	Communication with Dr Elaine Beaumont – Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist regarding the development of the 6 focus group sessions Permission to use examples from Compassionate Mind Workbook Communication with Dr Chris Irons regarding the development of the 6 focus group sessions Permission granted to use Balanced Minds audio clips Permission granted to use examples from Difficult Emotions book Sent draft version of 6 focus group session content to Dr Chris Irons for feedback Adapted 6 focus group session content in response to feedback
November 2019	Invited to present at the Inaugural Compassion in Schools Conference Other invited speakers included: Professor Paul Gilbert Professor Katherine Weare Dr Frances Maratos Dr Mary Welford Wendy Wood Rory Cahill

Appendix 4: References that informed the development of the programme introduced to participants in stage 2 of the research to explore the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to their professional roles.

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Gilbert, P (2017 Ed) *Compassion: Concepts, Research and Applications*. Abingdon: Routledge

Houghgaard, R., & Carter, J (2018) *The Mind of the Leader: How to Lead Yourself, Your People and Your Organization for Extraordinary Results.* Massachusetts: Harvard Business Review

Irons, C (2019) *The Compassionate Mind Approach to Difficult Emotions Unsing Compassion Focused Therapy.* London: Robinson

Irons, C., & Beaumont, E (2017) *Then Compassionate Mind Workbook: A step-by-step guide to developing the compassionate self.* London: Robinson

Kolts, R (2016) *CFT made simple: A Clinician's Guide to Practicing Compassion-Focused Therapy.* Oakland: New Harbinger, Inc.

Kolts, R., Bell, T., Bennett-Levy, J. & Irons, C. (2018) *Experiencing Compassion-Focused Therapy from the Inside Out.* London: The Guilford Press

Richard, M (2103) *Altruism: The Science and Psychology of Kindness.* London: Atlantic Books

Sapololsky, R (2017) *Behave: The Biology of Humans at our Best and Worst.* London: Bodley Head

Tomasello, M (2019) *Becoming Human: A Theory of Ontogeny.* Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University

Welford, M (2016) *Compassion Focused Therapy For Dummies.* Chichester: John Wiley & Sons Ltd

Wilson, D.S (2019) *This view of life: Completing the Darwinian Revolution.* New York: Pantheon

Research which describes structured approaches to introducing compassion focused principles, processes, and practices

Al-Ghabban, A (2018): A compassion framework: the role of compassion in schools in promoting well-being and supporting the social and emotional development of children and young people. *Pastoral Care in Education*. pp.1-3

Beaumont, E., & Hollins Martin, C.J. (2016) A proposal to support student therapists to develop compassion for self and others through Compassionate Mind Training. *The Arts in Psychotherapy.* 50 pp.111-118

Beaumont, E., Irons, C., Rayner, G., Dagnall, N. (2016) Does Compassion-Focused Therapy Training for Health Care Educators and Providers Increase Self-Compassion and Reduce Self-Persecution and Self-Criticism? *JCEHP* 36:1 pp. 4-10

Beaumont, E., Rayner, G., Durkin, M., Bowling, G. (2017) "The effects of compassionate mind training on student psychotherapists", *The Journal of Mental Health Training, Education and Practice*. 12: 5. pp.300-312

Gilbert, P (sent 2019) Overview of CFT Process (sent via e-mail: Permission to use and adapt)

Gilbert, P (sent 2019) Compassion and Courage 29 September Round House (sent via e-mail: Permission to use and adapt)

Irons, C. and Heriot-Maitland, C. (nd.) *Compassion to the People: The development of an 8 Week Compassionate Mind Training (CMT) Course* (Overview ppt)

Irons, C., & Bell, T. (2017) *Introduction of Compassion Focused Therapy (CFT) – Working with Shame and Self-Criticism* (3 Day workshop hand-out)

Maratos, F.A., Montague, J., Ashra, H., Welford, M., Woods, W., Barnes, D.S., & Gilbert, P (2019) Evaluation of a Compassionate Mind Training Intervention with School Teachers and Support Staff. *Mindfulness*. pp. 1-14

Matos, M., & Duarte, J., Duarte, C., & Gilbert, P., & Pinto-Gouveia, J. (2017) How One Experiences and Embodies Compassionate Mind Training Influences Its Effectiveness. *Mindfulness*

Welford, M & Langmead, K. (2015) Compassion-based initiatives in educational settings. *Educational & Child Psychology*. 32:1 pp. 71-80

Appendix 5: Compassion focused principles, processes, and practices session plan: Principles

	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Focus	What is “Compassion?” 2 Psychologies of “Compassion” Bodhisattva and the Mahayana tradition Motivation and Cultivation The self we might choose Realities and flow of life Non-pathologising Evolutionary perspective Biopsychosocial perspective Born into a different life Tricky Brain and the challenges of life: Old Brain/ New Brain Loops Not your fault… But your responsibility	Affiliation, caring and attachment Sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous system Social mentalities: Competing or Caring? 3 Circles model Understanding and balancing the Affect Regulation System Flow of compassion: Compassion for self, for other, from others Thoughts, Body, Actions & Memories Why develop and practice compassion? Importance of developing soothing affiliative system: Warmth & affection The development of compassionate insight, introspection and ethics Mindful attention and awareness: Thoughts, Body, Actions & Memories	Developing ideal compassionate self Qualities of compassion 6 Attributes and Skills What would your ideal compassionate self be like? Practices of wisdom, courage and playfulness Method Acting Fake it until you make it	Multiple self Compassion and emotions Exploring the role of Compassion to support difficult emotions and thoughts Exploring nature and function of shame and self-criticism Image of self-critic Responsibility Vs Self-critical blaming Developing Compassion for self Blocks or barriers to Compassion for self Fears of compassion Facilitators of compassion for self	The nature of compassion Compassionate actions and behaviour Compassionate/ affilaitive relationships build courage Compassion flowing out Facilitators of “Compassion” for others and from others Blocks or barriers to Compassion for others and from others	Review of compassion principles, processes and practices Planning for the future Encouraging, developing and cultivating compassionate school communities Compassion and enhancing wellbeing for self and others Bringing our Compassionate self into everyday if and its difficulties Considering the relevance of Compassion focused principles, processes and practices to individuals and organisations

Note: Session content may change slightly in response to previous sessions.

Compassion focused principles, processes and practices session plan: Processes and Practices

Session:	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Activities	**Personal definition of "Compassion"** **Exploring** **Old brain New brain** **Thinking loops**	**Reflection on previous session** **3 circles exercise:** Attention Thinking/ reasoning Behaviour Emotions Motivation Imagery/fantasy **Relevance of 3 systems model to teachers** **The role of imagery and memory**	**Reflection on previous session** **1st and 2nd Psychologies:** Reflection on 6 qualities Reflection on 6 skills	**Reflection on previous session** Exploring the role of Compassion to support difficult emotions and thoughts **Challenges** Exploring blocks, barriers and fears of compassion Challenges of mindful attention	**Reflection on previous session** **Considering menu of small joys** **Developing your Compassionate toolkit** **Compassionate letter writing**	**Reflection on previous session** **Compassion in action** Bringing "Compassion to the world" Practicing everyday to be a "Compassionate" person
Exercises	**Using the body to support the mind 1:** Compassionate body posture Mindful attention and posture	**Using the body to support the mind 2:** Soothing rhythm breathing, facial expression, voice tone	**Compassionate imagery 1:** Developing ideal compassionate self Compassionate self-practice	**Compassionate imagery 2:** Directing our Compassionate self to ourselves: Developing the ideal Compassionate other Develop awareness of difficulties: How can I bring compassionate awareness and attention to these?	**Compassionate imagery 3:** Compassionate place of safeness	**Compassionate imagery 4:** Directing the Compassionate Self – to others: Someone you care for

Compassion focused principles, processes and practices session plan: Session activities and exercises informed by…

<table>
<tr>
<td>Session 1:
Exploring Old brain New brain
Irons & Beaumont (2017 pp. 3-6)
Irons (2019 p.39)
Kolts, Bell, Bennett-Levy, & Irons (2018 pp.58)
Welford (2016 pp. 40-41)

Thinking loops
Irons and Beaumont (2017 pp.7-12)
Irons (2019 p.41-45)
Kolts, Bell, Bennett-Levy, & Irons (2018 pp.66)
Welford (2016 pp. 42)

Not your fault…But your responsibility…

Irons and Beaumont (2017 pp.7-12)
Irons (2019 p.46)</td>
<td>Session 3:
1st and 2nd Psychologies:

Reflection on 6 qualities

Reflection on 6 skills

Irons & Beaumont (2017 pp. 71-88)
Irons (2019 p.85-93)
Welford (2016 pp. 25-38)</td>
<td>Session 5:
Considering daily menu of small joys

Developing your Compassionate toolkit

Compassionate letter writing
Irons & Beaumont (2017 pp. 291-299)
Irons (2019 pp.361-368)
Kolts, Bell, Bennett-Levy, & Irons (2018 pp.257-360)
Welford (2016 pp. 213-228)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session 2:
Relevance of 3 systems model to teachers
3 circles exercise

Irons & Beaumont (2017 pp. 22-44)
Irons (2019 pp. 29-35; 50-64)
Kolts, Bell, Bennett-Levy, & Irons (2018 pp.43-47)
Welford (2016 pp. 55-68)

The role of imagery and memory
Irons & Beaumont (2017 pp. 101)
Irons (2019 p.106, 142)
Kolts, Bell, Bennett-Levy, & Irons (2018 pp.94)
Welford (2016 pp. 133-149)</td>
<td>Session 4:
Challenges

Exploring blocks, barriers and fears of compassion

Challenges of mindful attention

Irons & Beaumont (2017 pp. 342-347)
Irons (2019 pp.168-169)
Kolts, Bell, Bennett-Levy, & Irons (2018 pp.112-113)
Welford (2016 pp. 107-116)</td>
<td>Session 6:
Compassion in action

Gratitude

Daily acts of kindness

Bringing “Compassion to the world”

Practicing everyday to be a “Compassionate” person

Irons & Beaumont (2017 pp. 353)
Kolts, Bell, Bennett-Levy, & Irons (2018 pp.193-201)
Welford (2016 pp. 231-247; 277-283; 303-308)</td>
</tr>
</table>

Compassion focused principles, processes and practices session plan: Exercises: Audio Resources

Session 1: Mindful attention and posture Dr Chris Irons (Mindfulness of body and breath) https://balancedminds.com/audio/	Session 4: Directing our Compassionate self to ourselves Dr Chris Irons (Directing our Compassionate self to ourselves) https://balancedminds.com/audio/
Session 2: Soothing rhythm breathing, facial expression, voice tone Dr Chris Irons (Soothing Rhythm Breathing) https://balancedminds.com/audio/	Session 5: Safe Place Imagery: Place of safeness Dr Chris Irons (Calm Place Imagery) https://balancedminds.com/audio/
Session 3: Ideal Compassionate Self, Dr Chris Irons (Developing the Ideal Compassionate Self) https://balancedminds.com/audio/	Session 6: Directing the Compassionate Self – to others Dr Chris Irons (Calm Place Imagery) https://balancedminds.com/audio/

Additional follow up activities:

Session 1: Introducing compassion focused approaches (Hand out)

Gilbert, P (2009) Introducing compassion-focused therapy. *Advances in psychiatric treatment.* 15. pp.199-208

Additional reading (attached)
Gilbert, P (2014) The origins and nature of compassion focused therapy. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology*. 53. pp.6–41

Gilbert, P (2018) Compassion is an antidote to cruelty. *The Psychologist.* 31. pp.36-39
https://thepsychologist.bps.org.uk/volume-2018/february-2018/compassion-antidote-cruelty

Additional Audio
Dr James Kirby
https://soundcloud.com/jamesn-kirby/track-1-postures?in=jamesn-kirby/sets/compassionate-mind-training

Professor Paul Gilbert
https://soundcloud.com/compassionatemind/postures-faces-and-voice-tones/s-9OPud?in=compassionatemind/sets/compassionate-minds

Cultivating the Compassionate Mind – Professor Paul Gilbert
https://soundcloud.com/headtalks/paul-gilbert

Compassionate Mind Training: Mindfulness – Dr James Kirby
https://soundcloud.com/jamesn-kirby/track-4-mindfulness?in=jamesn-kirby/sets/compassionate-mind-training

Videos:
Interview with Prof. Paul Gilbert, founder of Compassion-Focused Therapy (1:34:00): Celia Roberts, Professor Paul Gilbert and Dr James Kriby (2019)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zy7hDAzb2xI&feature=youtu.be

Evolution and Compassion Focused Therapy (1:29:57): Professor Paul Gilbert (2019)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2YN-vMDb-8

Introducing and defining Compassion (12:54): Chris Winson: Chris offers a personal perspective rather than professional
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uU4kjtPXJhE

Session 2: Soothing Rhythm Breathing (Hand out)

Kirkby, J.N., Doty, J.R., Petrocchi, N., & Gilbert, P (2017) The current and future role of Heart Rate Variability for Assessing and Training "Compassion". *Frontiers in Public Health*. 5:40 pp.1-6

Article discussed during the session relating to the Polygaval perspective

Porges, S. (2015) Making the World Safe for our Children: Down-regulating Defence and Up-regulating Social Engagement to 'Optimise' the Human Experience. *Children Australia.* 40:2 pp.114-123

Additional reading: Blog Post
Bullock, B.G. (2019) How Your Breath Controls Your Mood and Attention*. Mindful: Healthy Mind, Healthy Life*
https://www.mindful.org/how-your-breath-controls-your-mood-and-attention/

Additional Audio:
Dr James Kirby: Facial expressions and voice tones
https://soundcloud.com/jamesn-kirby/track-2-facial-expressions-and-voice-tones?in=jamesn-kirby/sets/compassionate-mind-training

Dr James Kirby: Soothing Rhythm Breathing
https://soundcloud.com/jamesn-kirby/track-3-cmt-soothing-rhythm-breathing?in=jamesn-kirby/sets/compassionate-mind-training

Professor Paul Gilbert: Soothing Rhythm Breathing
https://soundcloud.com/compassionatemind/soothing-rhythm-breathing-practices/s-JA0g8?in=compassionatemind/sets/compassionate-minds

Uploaded with kind permission from Dr Mary Welford.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KNCXvXp6dUM

Additional Videos
TEDxPortsmouth - Dr. Alan Watkins - Being Brilliant Every Single Day (Part 1)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q06YIWCR2Js

Soothing Breathing (9:56) Chris Winson: Chris offers a personal perspective rather than professional
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwxTMK-mw4w

Session 3: Mindful Attention (Hand-out)

Tirsch, D. (2010) Mindfulness as a context for the cultivation of compassion. *International Journal of Cognitive Therapy*. 3:2. pp. 113–123, 2010

Additional reading

Feldman, C & Kuyken, W. (2019) Mindfulness: Ancient Wisdom Meets Modern Psychology. Gilford Publications: Chapter 1: Unpacking Mindfulness

Additional Audio:
Dr James Kirby
Compassionate Self
https://soundcloud.com/jamesn-kirby/track-5-cmt-compassionate-self?in=jamesn-kirby/sets/compassionate-mind-training

https://soundcloud.com/jamesn-kirby/track-7-compassion-for-self?in=jamesn-kirby/sets/compassionate-mind-training

Professor Paul Gilbert
Building and cultivating the Compassionate Self
https://soundcloud.com/compassionatemind/building-the-compassionate-self/s-c7EQJ?in=compassionatemind/sets/compassionate-minds

Additional Videos:
3 Circles (13:45) Chris Winson: Chris offers a personal perspective rather than professional
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=peC-bB4DqXQ

Compassion Flows (10:49): Chris Winson: Chris offers a personal perspective rather than professional
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jIESQUIobH0&t=38s

The Compassionate Self (11:45): Chris Winson: Chris offers a personal perspective rather than professional
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jov5gOdTQWQ

Session 4: Compassion for others (Hand-out)

Al-Ghabban, A (2018): A compassion framework: the role of compassion in schools in promoting well-being and supporting the social and emotional development of children and young people. *Pastoral Care in Education*. pp.1-3

Welford, M & Langmead, K. (2015) Compassion-based initiatives in educational settings. *Educational & Child Psychology*. 32:1 pp. 71-80

Additional reading:

Additional Audio:
Dr Chris Irons (Ideal Compassionate Other)
https://balancedminds.com/audio/

Dr James Kirby: Compassionate Safe Place
https://soundcloud.com/jamesn-kirby/cft-safe-place-imagery

Professor Paul Gilbert
Compassionate Image and community
https://soundcloud.com/compassionatemind/compassionate-image-and-compassionate-community/s-oQoMN?in=compassionatemind/sets/compassionate-minds

Uploaded with kind permission from Dr Mary Welford.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jjAkNZaPu4E

Uploaded with kind permission from Dr Mary Welford.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XLmHpvi07WA

Additional Videos:
Compassionate Imagery: Compassionate Place (14:35) Chris Winson: Chris offers a personal perspective rather than professional
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoF6uCWLSr0&t=1s

Session 5: Self Compassion to address self criticism (Hand-out)

Neff, K. D. & Germer, C. (2017). Self-Compassion and Psychological Wellbeing. In J. Doty (Ed.) Oxford Handbook of Compassion Science, Chap. 27. Oxford University Press.

Compassionate letter writing guide:
https://compassionatemind.co.uk/uploads/files/compassionate-letter-writing.pdf

Additional reading:

https://self-compassion.org

https://self-compassion.org/category/exercises/#exercises

Dr Kristin Neff (2017)

Self-Criticism or Self-Compassion: Which Works Best? Huff Post here

Gale, C., Schröde,r T., Gilbert, P (2017) 'Do You Practice What You Preach?' A Qualitative Exploration of Therapists' Personal Practice of Compassion Focused Therapy. *Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy*. 24. pp. 171–185

Additional Audio:

Uploaded with kind permission from Dr Mary Welford.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fx8xrsNQCi4

Compassionate Letter Writing (11:28) Chris Winson: Chris offers a personal perspective rather than professional
https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=85&v=j9aEaGiSVio

Session 6: (Hand-out)

Maratos, F.A., Montague, J., Ashra, H., Welford, M., Woods, W., Barnes, D.S., & Gilbert, P (2019) Evaluation of a Compassionate Mind Training Intervention with School Teachers and Support Staff. *Mindfulness*. pp. 1-14

Additional reading/ audio/ activities

Dr James Kirby

Compassion for others

https://soundcloud.com/jamesn-kirby/track-6-compassion-for-others?in=jamesn-kirby/sets/compassionate-mind-training

Uploaded with kind permission from Dr Mary Welford.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_w2PJkbaIM8

Jonny Benjamin

Seven steps to self-care:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4wmsiqfBhbnCU1X8PChFLg

Dr Mary Welford:

Developing Compassion focused approaches in schools
https://soundcloud.com/tobyn-bell/compassion-focused-podcast-interview-with-mary-welford

Additional Compassion Focused Resources:

Compassionate Mind Foundation link here

Overcoming links to free resources here

#365 Days of Compassion Newsletter here

Twitter:
@365daysofcompassion

@actionhappiness

Professor Paul Gilbert: Addressing self-criticism
https://soundcloud.com/compassionatemind/addressing-self-crticism/s-U19Fd?in=compassionatemind/sets/compassionate-minds

Professor Paul Gilbert: Deepening the Compassionate Self
https://soundcloud.com/compassionatemind/deepening-the-compassionate-self/s-lHjCn?in=compassionatemind/sets/compassionate-minds

Appendix 6: Post Session Feedback Survey

Compassion Session Feedback

Good morning, good afternoon or good evening,

I hope that all is well during these challenging circumstances...

Many thanks for your previous engagement in the one to one interviews and the 6 sessions where we explored the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to your professional roles and wellbeing.

This questionnaire hopes to collect some demographic information initially and then provide an opportunity for you to provide feedback with regards to your reflections on these sessions.

It is anticipated that this questionnaire will take between 5-10 minutes to complete.

Your considerations and comments will offer valuable insights into the relevance of compassion focused principles, processes and practices to your professional roles and wellbeing.

It is hoped that information collected here will be useful in developing more understanding about how compassion might support wellbeing in school communities.

Many thanks in anticipation of your support.

If you have any questions please feel welcome to e-mail me p0076635@brookes.ac.uk

*Required

Demographic Information

This section aims to gather demographic information about you and your professional role.

1. Name: *

2. Gender: *

3. Age: *

4. School name: *

5. Professional role: *

6. How long have you worked at this school? *

Reflections on effectiveness and engagement

The six sessions aimed to introduce and explore with you a variety of compassion focused principles, processes and practices.

This section aims to gather your reflections with regards to how effective you think the sessions were in meeting these aims.

You will also be encouraged to reflect on your engagement in different aspects of the six sessions.

7. What aspects of these sessions were most effective with regards to introducing and exploring with you a variety of compassion focused principles, processes and practices? *

8. What aspects of these sessions were least effective with regards to introducing and exploring with you a variety of compassion focused principles, processes and practices? *

9. How would you describe your engagement during the six sessions? *

10. How would you describe your engagement with the audio recordings? *

11. How would you describe your engagement with the additional readings and on-line resources? *

Reflections on the relevance of these sessions to your professional roles and wellbeing

12. How would you describe the relevance of these sessions to your professional role? *

13. How would you describe the relevance of these sessions to your wellbeing? *

14. How would you describe the relevance of the concept of compassion for self in the conte of your professional role? *

15. How would you describe the relevance of the concept of compassion for others in the context of your professional role? *

16. How would you describe the relevance of the concept of compassion from others in the context of your professional role? *

17. How would you describe the relevance of these sessions to recent experiences in the context of your professional role? *

Future considerations

18. How could the sessions be developed or improved? *

19. Would you be interested in engaging in future collaboration to explore the role of compassion focused approaches to support wellbeing in the wider school community? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

20. If you are interested in being contacted about future collaborations please include an e-m address here. *

Many thanks...

Many thanks for your previous participation in the one to one interviews and six focus group sessions.

I very much appreciate your contributions to this research which will provide valuable insights into the potential role of compassion to support wellbeing in our schools.

Again, if you would like to get in contact, please feel welcome to e-mail me p0076635@brookes.ac.uk

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms

Appendix 7: Registration for Professional Doctorate

Form RDC-
Reg Prof Doc
(2017)

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY
RESEARCH DEGREES COMMITTEE

Application to Register for the Research Component of the Professional Doctorate

This form should be wordprocessed and completed by the candidate under the guidance of the supervisors, with reference to the Oxford Brookes University Research Degree Regulations, Faculty Programme Handbook and the Research Degrees Committee's Notes for Guidance. All the necessary documentation can be downloaded from the Research Degree Team's web page at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/research-degrees-team/current-students/research-students/research-degree-forms/.

Degree applied for: ☐ (i) Professional Doctorate in Coaching and Mentoring

☒ (ii) Professional Doctorate in Education

Timely submission and completion for the research component of a Professional Doctorate is within 3- 4 years

1 The applicant

First Name: Jonathan

Title: Mr

Surname (Second) Name: Reid

Private local postal address:

Present place of work or student status:

Effective date of first enrolment:
18th September 2013

Particulars of any scholarship, studentship or other award held in connection with the proposed research programme:

Qualifications gained (regulation 2 refers; include place(s) of higher education, courses completed, main subjects, classification of award, date and name of awarding body):

B.A Hons: Psychology of Education (2:1)	University of Wales Cardiff
Post Graduate Certificate in Education (Primary)	Westminster Institute of Education
Post Graduate Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education	Oxford Brookes University
Post Graduate Diploma in Education	Oxford University
MSc Education	Oxford University

Source of funding for payment of fees:
(provide details of the nature of funding)

☐ Self-funding . . . .

☒ Sponsor/Employer: Oxford Brookes University: School of Education

☐ Government. . . . .

☐ Studentship/other funding . . . .

1.1 English language qualifications:
(If applicable)

Has this been recorded at first enrolment? Yes ☐ No ☐

If No, please attach form RDC.ELQ - qualification held and level achieved.

Tick if form attached: ☐

English language qualification not applicable:

Tick if not applicable: ☐

1.2 Ethical Approval:

Is Ethical approval required at registration Yes ☐ No ☒

If Yes, attach a copy of the approval letter and tick the box ☐

If ethical approval has not been granted state the month and year that the application will be submitted for ethical approval

Following an initial meeting with the Faculty Research Ethics Officer to discuss aspects of Stage one of the research process on the 21st February 2019, the completed UREC Form EU2 will be signed by the supervision team by the 26th February 2019 and will be sent to the Faculty Research Ethics Officer on the 28th February 2019. Following feedback from the Faculty Research Ethics Officer, the final version of the UREC Form EU2 will be sent again to the Faculty Research Ethics Officer on the 6th March 2019. Following amendments, the completed, signed UREC Form EU2 will be sent to the UREC Administrator by the 13th March 2019 in time for the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) on the 28th March 2019.

1.3 Intellectual Property Rights:
Students who enrolled on or after September 2005 have agreed to assign their Intellectual Property Rights to the University
when signing the acceptance of a place on the programme and agreeing to accept the University's Terms and Conditions,
therefore please complete (a) below.

If Intellectual Property Rights have been assigned by way of a formal agreement before enrolment , or if for some other reason
you are unable to assign the IP, please complete (b) and attached a letter explaining the reasons as to why the Intellectual
Property cannot be assigned.

(a) Please tick this box if you assigned your IP to the University when accepting the University's Terms and Conditions as part of
signing to accept the offer of a place on the programme, and also to make the express assignment of your future and
incorporated background intellectual property as already agreed by accepting your offer of a place on the programme.
Tick box : ☒

b) If Intellectual Property Rights were formally assigned prior to enrolment or cannot be assigned now, attach a copy of the
agreement or a letter explaining why:
Tick box if letter attached: ☐

1.4 Previous training and experience (include details of activities (with dates) relevant to this application, and details of any
research or other relevant papers, books, etc which have been published):

Training:

2018 International Leadership and Business Conference: How Purpose and Compassion Unlock Positive Impact:	9th May 2018
Introduction to Theory & Practice of Compassion Focused Therapy	1st March 2018 to 3rd March 2018
NVivo Part 2	13th December 2017
Multiple Methods in Education Research: Symposium	11th November 2016
Appointed Research Group Lead for new 'Inclusion and Wellbeing' Research Group	4th September 2016
NVivo Part 1	15th May 2014

Publications:
Reid, J (2019) *Using Research to Change Classroom Practice*. #ResearchSEND. Forthcoming.

Reid, J (2019) Member of DfE Expert Advisory Group for the development of the Early Career Framework. (here)

Reid, J (2018) UNESCO and European Agency For Special Needs and Inclusive Education: Inclusive Education in Action (here) Inclusive Pedagogy and Practice at Oxford Brookes University here

Reid, J (2018) Not working for a significant minority: A critical exploration of SEMH and SEND in the context of schools. In Hollisley, J (Ed) *An Educators guide to Mental Health and Wellbeing*. London: NET: A John Catt Publication. Link here

Reid, J (2017) Contributor to the SEND Reflection Framework in association with WholeSchoolSEND, London Leadership Strategy, National Education Trust and the Department for Education. Link here

Reid, J (2017) Emotional Development and approaches to Classroom Management. In Colley & Cooper (Eds). *Emotional Development and Attachment in the Classroom: Theory and Practice for Students and Teachers*. London: Jessica Kingsley Link here

Conferences:

Reid, J (2019) A very brief introduction to Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs. #obuinc19 Inclusion Conference: Oxford Brookes University

Reid, J (2018) Education Policy Institute: Panel Discussion. SEND: Is there a postcode lottery for access to support, and can we quantify this? Festival of Education (here)

Reid, J (2018) The case for Compassion Focused Therapy in Schools. Invited Key Note: SEBDA Residential Conference

Reid, J (2018) Emotional Health at School: Supporting good mental health for a flourishing classroom and school community. Presentation in collaboration with Family Links, Emotional Health at School and Emotional Health at Work.

Reid, J (2017) Mental Wellbeing, Teacher Fears and Identity. Oxford Brookes University School of Education Research Conference

Reid, J (2017) Perspectives on SEND and Inclusion: A Critical Realist Exploration of Social, Emotional and Mental Health and behaviours that may challenge. #ResearchSEND. University of Wolverhampton. Link here

Reid, J (2016) Supporting the Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs of children and young people: Is it what we know or what we show ? National Education Trust (NET) Vulnerable Learners: Creating Excellent Education for All Conference.

Consultancy:

Department for Education: Invitation to join consultation on strengthening Qualified Teacher Status (QTS) and improving career progression for teachers, particularly in relation to supporting children and young people with additional learning needs.

All Party Parliamentary Group on Autism (APPGA): Autism Employment Gap Roundtable briefing: Private Round Table.

WholeSchoolSEND, London Leadership Strategy, National Education Trust and the Department for Education: Contributor to the SEND Reflection Framework (here)

1.5 Professional Doctorate candidates should confirm that they have completed all the required taught modules and provide a list below:

P72001	Researching the 'Real' World (Part 1)	74%	Distinction
P72001	Researching the 'Real' World (Part 2)	70%	Distinction
P72003	Writing for Academic Practice (Part 1)	80%	Distinction
P72004	Writing for Academic Practice (Part 2)	75%	Distinction
P72006	Learning and Teaching (Double)	63%	Merit
P72007	Preparing your Research Proposal (Triple)	65%	Merit
P72008	The Independent Doctoral Researcher		Ungraded Pass
P72009	Advanced Research Methods (Treble)		Ungraded Pass

2 Academic referees (regulation 2 refers; only required for candidates who hold non-standard entry qualifications – please attach references to application):

3 Name of collaborating establishment(s) and the nature of the association:

If any collaborating establishments have been agreed, a letter from a senior member of the collaborating department or organisation must be attached to the application for registration. The letter must state that the facilities to be provided will be available for the duration of the programme (for example, access to specialist equipment, specific population of subjects or records, etc) and confirm that the institution will act as a collaborating establishment - If this is the case, the nature of the collaboration should be specified here.

(Regulation 10. refers) Please tick box if a copy of the letter is attached: ☐

4 The programme of research

4.1 Title of the research thesis:

This is not expected to be the final title of the thesis, but it must be as concise and informative as possible, specifying the research project.

Teachers' emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of "Compassion": A critical exploration

4.2 a) Aims of the investigation (A1-3)

(One overarching aim/research question should be listed with no more than two other aims if necessary. The aims of the investigation should be listed in a systematic and logical way. Care should be taken to make the aims as clear as possible - a series of bullet points may be used. It is often helpful if the aims can be linked to the proposed plan of work, where appropriate.

To explore the emotional work of teachers and support for their wellbeing in schools that support children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

b) Objectives (01-5)

(Four or five objectives should be listed as bullet points detailing the main objectives for the project – care should be taken not to prejudge the outcomes. Explain how each objective will be met when describing the proposed research in the plan of work)

1. To investigate the emotional work of teachers in Social Emotional and Mental Health settings
2. To identify key principles, process and structures that currently support teacher wellbeing in each setting
3. To introduce and explore the concept of 'Compassion" as a way of supporting teachers wellbeing
4. To capture the emergent theoretical constructs of "Compassion" as a concept that supports teacher wellbeing

4.3 Proposed plan of work should written by the candidate with the advice and assistance of the supervisors. It must indicate that a viable programme of research has been formulated, which has been set within the appropriate context and is likely to be achievable within the time permitted for the programme i.e. completion within 3-4 years of part-time study.

The plan of work should present the background to the project and set the research in its academic context. It should include details of: the relationship to previous work if appropriate; avoid excessive use of technical terms but when unavoidable provide a glossary of terms in section 4.5; only use the space provided below using no more than 1,000 words; write for a non specialist audience; clearly explain the proposed methodology and/or techniques stating what you will do and how; deal with each aim and objective stating how they will be addressed during the programme; provide a brief account of the new contribution to knowledge; if undertaking group work or a variation of a larger project – explain your individual contribution and the relationship between this and the larger project; include a timetable covering when the work will be done with timescales for each stage; include up to 10 key references attached on a separate sheet and number these in the text.

It is essential that candidates refer to **Section 8** of **The Guidance Notes** for completing this form - available to download at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/research-degrees-team/current-students/forms/

Background to the project:

Both in the UK and internationally, being a teacher is recognised as being hard work and stressful, with teachers having the highest levels of job stress among a variety of professions (1). Research consistently reveals that prolonged experiences of stress in teachers can have a negative impact on their wellbeing leading to experiences of psychological distress and the development of mental health difficulties (2). Such difficulties have been associated with acute challenges in UK with regards to teacher recruitment and retention (3). Recent findings from longitudinal research indicated raised and sustained levels of psychological distress among primary school teachers in comparison to a sample of other professionals from the general population (4). These experiences are more likely and have more of an impact on teachers working with children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), particularly those with more complex profiles and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs (5) While individual factors, such as occupational commitment (6) self-identity and self-efficacy (7) and contextual factors, such as workload, long hours, bureaucracy and time pressures have been found to have a negative impact on teacher wellbeing (8), the emotional demands of teaching have also been implicated (9).

The emotional work of teachers and the emotional demands of teaching (10), previously conceptualised in 1986 by Hochschild as emotional labour (11), have been associated with teacher burnout (12) and emotional exhaustion (13). This has been found to have more of an impact on teachers who support children with SEMH needs (14).
In recognition of current concerns about teacher wellbeing there is increased need to explore the emotional work of teachers and approaches to supporting their wellbeing, particularly in SEMH settings where these are under-researched areas (15).

Approaches to supporting wellbeing which incorporate a focus on “Compassion” have been explored over the last 40 years having been initially conceptualised by Gilbert (16). “Compassion” focused approaches are underpinned by a philosophy of compassionate humanism (17) by explicitly encouraging, cultivating and supporting “Compassion” for self and others (18). Within these approaches "Compassion” is defined as “a sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it” (19 p.19). “Compassion” focused approaches have been have been found to improve wellbeing in a variety of different contexts including clinical populations (20), Health professionals (21) and non-professional populations such as students and the general public (22).

New contribution to knowledge:

Currently there is little research that has explored the impact of “Compassion” focused approaches for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools. Research undertaken previously has involved informal staff feedback (23), staff testimonials and surveys (24) and reflective experiential vignettes (25) all of which lack depth and rigor. The role of “Compassion” to support the wellbeing of teachers is therefore an emerging area of interest, which currently lacks rigorous research. Consequently, this research will contribute to new knowledge in a number of ways. Firstly, this research may provide insight into the emotional work of teachers and support for their wellbeing in the contexts of schools that cater for children with SEMH needs (Objectives 1 and 2). Secondly, while “Compassion” has been found to be effective in improving wellbeing in a variety of diverse populations, no studies to date have involved teachers in developing understanding of the potential role of “Compassion” to support wellbeing in the contexts of schools (Objective 3). Finally, this research aims to capture the emergent theoretical constructs of “Compassion” as a concept that supports teacher wellbeing (Objective 4).

Methodology:

To understand more about the role of "Compassion" to support teachers emotional work and wellbeing in different schools, a realist evaluation, originally developed by Pawson and Tilley (26), involving three linked case studies will be undertaken over three stages. An academy special school, an independent special school and a residential special school which all cater for Primary school aged children with increasingly complex SEMH needs have, therefore, been purposefully selected as individual cases. A realist evaluation aims to support understanding of "what works for whom in what circumstances" by following the realist evaluation cycle involving four stages of; theory, hypotheses, observation and programme specification (27 p.85).

Stage 1 of the research process reflects the theory and hypothesis elements of Pawson and Tilley's realist evaluation cycle through investigating the emotional work of teachers (Objective 1) and identifying key principles, process and structures that currently support teacher wellbeing in each setting (Objective 2).

Stage 1 will involve initially exploring 'theory' through "eliciting and formalising the programme theories to be tested" (26 p.10) by gathering demographic and documentary evidence from each school and carrying out 1:1 semi-structured interviews with 4-6 teachers in each school, Head Teachers, Governors and well-informed external visitors. Teachers will also be encouraged to provide 1 or 2 self-selected examples of 'incidents' per week over a period of 1 month, that have influenced their wellbeing. Flanagan's (1954) original 'Critical Incident Technique' will be used to gather "a record of specific behaviors from those in the best position to make the necessary observations and evaluations" (28 p.30). Analysis of data gathered at Stage 1 will inform 'hypotheses' about "what might work for whom and in what circumstances" (26 p.11) to inform how key principles, processes and practices of "Compassion" focused approaches will be introduced and explored with teachers at Stage 2 of the research process.

Stage 2 of the research process will be informed by the analysis of data collected during Stage 1 and is related to the 'observation' element of Pawson and Tilley's realist evaluation cycle. Here multiple methods can be used to explore the theory and hypotheses developed during Stage 1. Stage 2 will involve explicitly introducing the 4-6 teachers in each school to key principles, processes and practices of "Compassion" focused approaches that have been developed previously and that have been found to positively support wellbeing in different professional contexts. This stage will involve meetings the teachers in each school every other week for one hour to participate in semi-structured focus group conversations to introduce "Compassion" focused principles, processes and practices and to explore the potential relevance of these as a way of supporting their wellbeing (Objective 3). Self selected 'critical incidents' that relate to wellbeing provided by teachers at Stage 1 will also be used to facilitate these conversations. Teachers will then be encouraged to continue to provide 1 or 2 'critical incidents' per week over a period of another month to further explore the relevance of "Compassion" focused principles, processes and practices to support their wellbeing over time.

Stage 3 of the research process relates to Pawson and Tilley's 'programme specification' element of the realist evaluation cycle by identifying "what works for whom, in what circumstances" (27 p.85) and will not require any further involvement of participants. This analytical stage will emerge from the previous stages through drawing together and analysing previous explorations with teachers at Stage 1 and Stage 2 to capture the emergent theoretical constructs of "Compassion" as a concept that supports teacher wellbeing (Objective 4).

Timeline for research:

March 2019	Thesis Registration Ethical Approval
April 2019	Pilot research tools in a selected Primary Special School Internal Transfer to include an exemplar chapter
May – July 2019	Stage 1 of Data Collection for Objective 1 and 2 On-going Thesis writing
July – September 2019	Analysis of data from Stage 1 to inform Stage 2 On-going Thesis writing
September – December 2019	Stage 2 of Data Collection for Objective 3 On-going Thesis writing
January – March 2020	Stage 3: Analytical. No participants (Objective 4)
March – October 2020	Thesis write up and editing
October 2020	Thesis submission

References:

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2. Chaplain, R.P (2008) Stress and psychological distress among trainee secondary teachers in England. *Educational Psychology.* 28:2. pp. 195-209
3. Sibieta, L. (2018) *The teacher labour market: a perilous path ahead?* Education Policy Institute
4. Titheradge, D., Hayes, R., Longdon, B., Allen, K., Price, A., Hansfield, L., Nye, E., Ukoumunne, O.C., Byford, S., Norwich, B., Fletcher, M., Logan, S., & Ford, T. (2019). Psychological distress among primary school teachers: A comparison with clinical and population samples. *Public Health.* 166. pp.53-56
5. Adera, B.A., & Bullock, L.M. (2010) Job stressors and teacher job satisfaction in programs serving students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties.* 15:1. pp.5-14
6. Jepson, E. & Forrest, S (2006) Individual contributory factors in teacher stress: The role of achievement striving and occupational commitment. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*. 76. pp.183–197
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16. Gilbert, P (2009) Introducing compassion-focused therapy. *Advances in Psychiatric Treatment.* 15:3 pp. 199-208
17. Gilbert, P. (2017) *Living like crazy*. York: Annwyn House

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23. Welford, M & Langmead, K. (2015) Compassion-based initiatives in educational settings. *Educational and Child Psychology* 32:1 pp. 71-80
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28. Flanagans, J.C. (1954) The Critical Incident Technique. *Psychological Bulletin*. 51:4 pp.1-33

4.4 Details and location of any specialist facilities available for the investigation if not available at Oxford Brookes:
(Please tick the box and attach copy of letter guaranteeing access to facilities for the duration of the programme): ☐
NA

4.5 If appropriate, provide a list of the glossary of terms used in the plan of work in section 4.3 and attach it to the form.

5 The programme of related activities

5.1 Details of programme of related activities to be undertaken during the course of this programme must be list here.
Attendance at both Faculty and University training programmes is expected. A list of the various sessions and external activities should be provided and reflect those listed in the Personal, Professional & Career Development Planner.
(refer to regulation 8.2) Specific examples of seminars and at least one external conference to be attended should be included. The Graduate College training programme and Planner are available at: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/students/research-degrees-team/current-students/graduate-college/events/training-and-networking/

Programme of related activities

Research degrees – strategies for successful part-time study

Date and time: 20 March 2019, 12.00pm - 2.00pm

Location: TBC

Presenter: Professor Susan Brooks, Director of Researcher Development

Description: While studying for a research degree shares many common features, whether you are doing it full time or part time, part time students do face unique challenges. Part time students are often more mature and have more complicated lives than their full time counterparts. Some are returning to study after periods of time spent doing other things and many live geographically distant from the University, or are physically present on campus only occasionally. All share the issues inevitably associated with pursuing a research programme over an extended time period. This session explores some of these issues, is an opportunity for part time researchers to share their experiences, and looks at some practical strategies for successful part time study.

The Viva Examination

Date and time: 17 April 2019, 4.00pm - 5.00pm

Location: TBC

Presenter: Professor Susan Brooks, Director of Researcher Development

Description: Most students find the idea of the viva rather scary! This session is aimed at all those who will be facing their viva in the near future, but may also be helpful to research students at earlier stages in their studies, who are not sure what is involved. It clarifies what the University regulations say is required. It also demystifies the process by outlining what is going on behind the scenes, what the examiners are looking for and what procedures they are following. It also provides practical and useful advice about what you can do to make the process as painless and successful as possible.

Attendance at NVivo Advanced training workshop 2019

Regular attendance at the School of Education Research circle drop in sessions

Seminars and conferences:
Application to present at the 2019 Graduate College Research Student Exhibition.

Presentation at the School of Education Research Seminar series May 2019

Attendance to present preliminary findings of research as Research SEND National Conference June 2019

Presentation at the Teaching and Learning Conference: Rising to the Challenge June 2019 for the Resilience, Persistence and Wellbeing Section: Exploring Teacher Distress and the potential role of compassion in Education

5.2 If appropriate, provide details of any programme of formally assessed studies, (refer to regulation 8.3):

6 Supervision of programme of work (regulation 9 refers; a current RDC-CV form must be provided for all supervisors who have not previously supervised any Oxford Brookes University research degree candidates)

6.1 a) Director of Studies:
(full details must be provided and supervisory figures indicated in the table below):

Name: Ms Georgina Glenny

Post held: Senior Lecturer

Place of work: Oxford Brookes University

Qualifications: BA in Psychology, PGCE, MSc in Educational Psychology

b) Co-Director of Studies: (if required)
(full details must be provided and supervisory figures indicated in the table below):

Name:

Post held:

Place of work:

Qualifications:

6.2 Second supervisor(s):
(Full details must be provided and supervisory figures indicated in the table below):

c) Name: Dr David Colley

Post held: Senior Lecturer SEND

Place of work: Oxford Brookes University

Qualifications: Phd (Leicester); B.Sc Hons (Open) B.Ed Hons (Newcastle)

d) Name: Professor Barry Carpenter CBE

Post held: Visiting Professor of Mental Health in Education

Place of work: Oxford Brookes University

Qualifications: B,Ed Hons (Oxon) : DPSE (Dist) , (London.) : M.Phil (Dist) (Nottingham) PhD (Anglia Ruskin)

e) Supervisor with responsibility to act as Mentor to the supervisory team:
(full details must be provided and supervisory figures indicated in the table below):

Name:

Post held:

Place of work:

Qualifications:

Supervisory figures:		a	b	c	d	e
Currently Supervising	enrolled research degree candidates as Director of Studies	1				
	enrolled research degree candidates as Second supervisor			1	1	
Previously Supervised to completion as Director of Studies	MPhil candidates				1	
	PhD candidates	3			3	
	MA, MSc, LLM by Research candidates					
	Professional Doctorate candidates	1				
Previously Supervised to completion as Second Supervisor	MPhil candidates	1				
	PhD candidates	3			2	
	MA, MSc, LLM by Research candidates			6	8	
	Professional Doctorate candidates				1	
Supervisor with responsibility to act as Mentor to the Supervisory Team	MPhil candidates					
	PhD candidates				1	
	MA, MSc, LLM by Research candidates				1	
	Professional Doctorate candidates				3	
Attended the University's Supervisor Training Programme		**Yes** No	Yes No	**Yes** *No*	**No**	Yes No
Attended the University's Experienced Supervisor up-date Training Session		**Yes** No	Yes No	Yes **No**	Yes No	Yes No

6.3 Details of any other person(s) who will act in an advisory capacity:

Name:

Post held:

Place of work:

Qualifications:

7 Period of time for completion of programme of work (regulations 4 and 5 refer)

7.1 Date of registration (regulation 5.2 refers):

1st of October (month)

2017 (year)

(Date should be the first day of the month following first enrolment on the research component of the Professional Doctorate)

7.3 Mode of study: Part-time ☒

7.4 Amount of time (hours per week average) allowed for programme: *(Minimum 15 hrs part-time)* – 20 hours per week

7.5 Expected duration of programme (in years) on the above basis: 3 years

NB : timely submission and completion timescales for the research component of the Professional Doctorate is 3-4 years of part-time study.

---

8 Statement by the candidate

I wish to apply for registration for the degree of EdD on the basis of the proposals given in this application.

I confirm that the particulars given in Section 1 are correct. I understand that, except with the specific permission of the Research Degrees Committee, I may not be a candidate for another award during the period of my registration. I understand that, except with the specific permission of the Research Degrees Committee, I must prepare and defend my thesis in English.

Signed: Electronic Signature removed Date 07/02/2019

---

9 Recommendation by the supervisors

We support this application and believe that **Jonathan Reid** has the potential to complete successfully the programme of work proposed. We recommend that this applicant be registered as a candidate for the University's research degree.

Signed: Electronic Signature removed Date 07/02/2019

Signed: Electronic Signature removed Date 07/02/2019
.

Signed: Electronic Signature removed Date 07/02/19

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10 Recommendation on behalf of the candidate's Faculty

On behalf of the Faculty I support this application for registration of. . . . . Jonathan Reid . . . . as a candidate for the University's research degree and confirm that the appropriate facilities are available.

Signed: Electronic Signature removed Date 7/2/2019. . . . . Faculty . . .FHSS . . . .
(Postgraduate Research Tutor /)

---

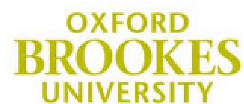
11 Approval of registration for a research degree on behalf of Oxford Brookes University

I confirm that . . . . has been registered by the Subject Committee of the Research Degrees Committee for the degree of DCM / EdD at the meeting

on . . . . with effect from . . . . date of registration.

Signed . . . . Date . . . .
Chair / Vice-Chair / of the Subject Committee of the Research Degrees Committee)

Appendix 8: UREC Approval letter



Ms Georgina Glenny
Director of Studies
School of Education
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Oxford Brookes University
Harcourt Hill Campus

2nd December 2019

Dear Georgina

UREC Registration No: 191291
Teachers' emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of 'compassion': a critical exploration

Thank you for the email of 29th November 2019 outlining the response to the points raised in my previous conditional approval letter regarding the PhD study of your research student, Jonathan Reid, and attaching the revised documents. I am pleased to inform you that, on this basis, UREC is happy to grant full approval for this study.

The UREC approval period for the data collection phase of the study is two years from the date of this letter, so until 2nd December 2021. If you need the approval to be extended please do contact me nearer the time of expiry.

Should the recruitment, methodology or data storage change from your original plans, or should any study participants experience adverse physical, psychological, social, legal or economic effects from the research, please inform me with full details as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Dr Sarah Quinton
Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee

cc David Colley, Supervisory Team
Barry Carpenter, Supervisory Team
Jonathan Reid, Research Student
Carol Brown, Research Ethics Officer
Jill Organ, Research Degrees Team

www.brookes.ac.uk

Appendix 9: Brief Research Overview

Study title:

**Teacher's emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of "Compassion":
A critical exploration**

What is the purpose of the study?

This research aims to investigate the emotional work of teachers in the context of SEMH schools and to learn more about support for their wellbeing.

The first stage of this research aims initially:

1. To investigate the emotional work of teachers in schools that support children with SEMH needs,
2. To identify approaches that currently support teacher wellbeing in these schools.

The second stage of the research aims to introduce and explore the concept of "Compassion" as a way of supporting teacher wellbeing. Within this research "Compassion" is defined as "a sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it". Approaches to supporting wellbeing that incorporate "Compassion" have been explored over the last 40 years and explicitly aim to encourage, cultivate and support "Compassion" for self and others.

In previous research "Compassion" focused approaches have been found to improve wellbeing in a variety of different contexts including Health professionals and non-professional populations such as students and the general public. However, there is currently little research that has explored the impact of "Compassion" focused approaches for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools.

Importantly, no studies to date have involved teachers in developing understanding of the potential role of "Compassion" to support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others in the context of schools.

What will I be expected to do?

Stage 1:
Between May – July 2019 you will be invited to participate in **one 30 minute semi-structured interview**. This will provide the opportunity to talk about the emotional work that you engage in during your day-to-day work as a teacher. Questions will also be asked about current support for your wellbeing.

Stage 2:
Between September – December 2019 you will be invited to participate in **six focused group interviews** with other participating teachers from your school. These conversations will take place after school for one hour between 15:30-16:30, every other week. These conversations will be arranged at the convenience of the group.

During these focused group conversations, some key principles, processes and practices of "Compassion" focused approaches that have been developed previously and that have been found to positively support wellbeing in different professional contexts will be introduced and explored. As a group, we will then discuss the relevance of these principles, processes and practices as ways to support your wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. With agreement of other participating teachers these focused group conversations will be video or audio recorded.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Your contributions to this research will help to contribute to developing new knowledge and understanding about the potential of "Compassion" to supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools, particularly in schools that support children with SEMH needs.

By initially exploring the impact of your emotional work and current support for your wellbeing, it is hoped that research findings provide new insight and increased awareness, knowledge and understanding of such experiences that will be relevant to and useful for other individual teachers and school communities.

These findings will be beneficial to identifying ways to support the wellbeing of teachers in a variety of different schools, in recognition of a better understanding of how their emotional work impacts on their well-being. Your participation, experiences and insights are important and will be valuable to other teachers, your school community and the wider community.

Possible benefits of participation in this research include increased personal insight into the potential role of "Compassion" to support your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. It is also hoped that your experiences and insights will support an understanding of how "Compassion" can inform wider whole school developments that will be of benefit to all members of your school community.

Through increasing awareness and understanding of how "Compassion for self, for others and from others support well-being in schools that support pupils in SEMH settings, it is hoped that the dissemination of research findings will be beneficial to other teachers and school communities at local and National levels.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you would like to participate in this study please complete and sign the attached 'Consent Form'. This will be collected from the school in person by the researcher.

Definitions used in research

‘Wellbeing’ definition:

'Mental wellbeing is a dynamic state in which the individual is able to develop their potential, work productively and creatively, build strong and positive relationships with others and contribute to their community. It is enhanced when an individual is able to fulfil their personal and social goals and achieve a sense of purpose in society.' (Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project, 2008 p.8) Mental wellbeing at work is determined by the interaction between the working environment, the nature of the work and the individual (NICE, 2018 p.8)

‘Emotional work’ definition:

Emotional work is different from physical work or the intellectual work involved in thinking or problem solving. Emotional work involves emotional experiences. These can involve considering the emotional impact of our own behaviour on others or the behaviour of others. This emotional work occurs during social interactions in particular contexts. While some interactions and contexts, for example, may involve care, enthusiasm and sensitivity to ensure that others feel safe and are comfortable, other interactions and contexts may require that feelings be hidden or disguised such as irritation, annoyance, fatigue, anxiety or fear.

Teaching is a relational experience that often involves exhibiting a variety of emotions and investing emotionally during daily experiences. These emotional investments are often related to a wide range of complex and sometimes contradictory emotional experiences that are central to teaching and learning situations. Such emotional experiences can involve interactions between individuals (children, colleagues, parents/carers, Senior Leadership colleagues etc.) within specific situations (teaching, responding to distress, supporting behaviour etc.) and environments (schools, classrooms, playgrounds etc.). In their daily roles teachers are required to regulate their own emotions, feelings and behaviours due to an awareness of what is deemed to be acceptable, given the situation or environment. Consequently teachers may or may not express these emotions, feelings and behaviours. This is particularly relevant where teachers are also supporting the social, emotional and mental health needs of children.

The emotional work of teachers can, therefore, be both positive and negative depending on different interactions, individuals, situations and environments.

‘Critical Incidents’ definition

For the purpose of this research, a ‘critical incident’ is defined as being a significant event or experience that has an impact on a teachers’ emotional wellbeing.

Interview Questions for Head Teachers, Governors and well-informed external visitors.

1. How would you define wellbeing in relation to a Teachers professional role?

2. How would you describe the 'emotional work' that teachers engage in as part of their professional roles at this school?

3. How do Teachers support the wellbeing of 'others' at this school?
    a. Children?
    b. Colleagues?

4. How is Teacher wellbeing supported/facilitated at this school?

5. How are Teachers encouraged to support their own wellbeing at this school?

Interview Questions for Teachers

1. How would you define wellbeing in relation to a Teacher's professional role?

2. How would you describe the 'emotional work' that you engage in as part of your professional role at this school?

3. How do you support the wellbeing of 'others' at this school?
    a. Children?
    b. Colleagues?

4. How is your wellbeing supported/facilitated at this school?

5. How do you support your own wellbeing at this school?

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Name, position and contact address of Researcher:

Jonathan Reid
Doctoral Researcher

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐
3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Please initial box

	Yes	No
4. I agree to the interview consultation being audio recorded	☐	☐
5. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications	☐	☐

______________________	______________	______________________
Name of Participant	Date	Signature

______________________	______________	______________________
Name of Researcher Signature	Date	

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Name, position and contact address of Researcher:

Jonathan Reid

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐

3. As Head Teacher, I agree for this Doctoral Research to be undertaken in this school. ☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature

Name of Researcher   Date
Signature

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Privacy Notice

Oxford Brookes University (OBU) will usually be the Data Controller of any data that you supply for this research. This means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The exception to this is joint research projects where you would be informed on the participant information sheet as to the other partner institution or institutions. This means that they will make the decisions on how your data is used and for what reasons. You can contact the University's Information Management Team on 01865 485420 or email info.sec@brookes.ac.uk.

Why do we need your data?

Your data will contribute to results and findings of a research study that will be used initially as part of the a Doctoral Thesis. To ensure that findings of benefit can be disseminated widely to other teachers, school communities and wider audiences, it is intended that various aspects of the research will be shared through publication in academic journals and book chapters. With regards to the potential benefits to teachers and other professionals, it is intended that key research findings, particularly in relation to supporting staff wellbeing, will be disseminated via local and national conferences.

OBUs legal basis for collecting this data is:

- You are consenting to providing it to us; and / or,
- Processing is necessary for the performance of a task in the public interest such as research

If the university asks you for sensitive data such as; racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade-union membership, data concerning health or sexual life, genetic/biometric data or criminal records OBU will use these data because:

- You have given OBU explicit consent to do so; and / or
- Processing is necessary for scientific or research in the public interest.

What type of data will Oxford Brookes University use?

One audio recorded 1:1 interview with you
Audio recorded 'incidents' that have had an impact on your wellbeing sent by you to the researcher (optional)
Video or audio recorded semi-structured focused group conversations

Who will OBU share your data with?

Third party processors that host or have access to the data for which the

University has a security agreement:

Google email
Google Drive

Will OBU transfer my data outside of the UK?
No

What rights do I have regarding my data that OBU holds?

- You have the right to be informed about what data will be collected and how this will be used
- You have the right of access to your data
- You have the right to correct data if it is wrong
- You have the right to ask for your data to be deleted
- You have the right to restrict use of the data we hold about you
- You have the right to data portability
- You have the right to object to the university using your data
- You have rights in relation to using your data automated decision making and profiling.

Where did OBU source my data from?
Voluntary participation in this research project

Are there any consequences of not providing the requested data?
There are no legal consequences of not providing data for this research. It is purely voluntary.

Will there be any automated decision making using my data?
There will be no use of automated decision making in scope of UK Data Protection and Privacy legislation."

How long will OBU keep your data?
In line with Oxford Brookes policies data generated in the course of research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of time in accordance with the University policy. Therefore data generated by this study will be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity, therefore, data generated in the course of the research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of ten years after the completion of a research project.

Who can I contact if I have concerns?
You can contact the Information Management team.
Postal Address: Information Management Team, IT Services, Room 2.12, Gibbs Building, Headington Campus, Gipsy Lane, Oxford, OX3 0BP

Email: info.sec@brookes.ac.uk

Tel: 01865 485420 in UK
+44 1865 485420 outside the UK.

Interview Schedule School A: 01.07.19 – 12.07.19

Role	Name	Contact details	Interview Type Face to Face (F) Telephone (T) Online (O)	Date/ Time of interview

Interview Schedule School B: 17.06.19 – 28.06.19

Role	Name	Contact details	Interview Type Face to Face (F) Telephone (T) Online (O)	Date/ Time of interview

Interview Schedule School C: 04.06.19 – 14.06.19

Role	Name	Contact details	Interview Type Face to Face (F) Telephone (T) Online (O)	Date/ Time of interview

Appendix 10: Participant Information Sheet: Head Teachers for School Permission

Jonathan Reid

Study title:

Teacher's emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of "Compassion": A critical exploration

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?

Both in the UK and internationally, being a teacher is recognised as being hard work, with teachers having the highest levels of job stress among a variety of professions. Research consistently reveals that prolonged experiences of stress in teachers can have a negative impact on their wellbeing. Findings from recent research have indicated raised and sustained levels stress among primary school teachers in comparison to other professionals. These experiences are more likely and have more of an impact on teachers working with children and young people with more complex Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH).

While school related factors such as workload, long hours, lack of leisure time, policy changes and pressures of inspections and individual factors such as striving for perfection, being committed to the work and being highly motivated, for example, have been found to have a negative impact on teacher wellbeing, the emotional demands of teaching have also been implicated.

Teaching is recognised as being a relational activity that involves daily emotional work as a consequence of regular social interactions. Consequently, in their professional roles, teachers frequently experience a range of complex emotions, which can positively or negatively influence their wellbeing.

In schools where teachers support children with SEMH needs, teachers more frequently negotiate complex and challenging social and emotional relationships on a daily basis, particularly because the children they work with and support are more likely to exhibit heightened emotions and behaviours.

Supporting the emotional wellbeing of teachers who support children with a broad range of SEMH needs is important, however currently there is a lack of research in this area.

Consequently, this research aims to investigate the emotional work of teachers in the context of SEMH schools and to learn more about support for their wellbeing.

The first stage of this research aims initially:

1. To investigate the emotional work of teachers in schools that support children with SEMH needs,
2. To identify approaches that currently support teacher wellbeing in these schools.

The second stage of the research aims to introduce and explore the concept of “Compassion” as a way of supporting teacher wellbeing. Within this research "Compassion” is defined as “a sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it”. Approaches to supporting wellbeing that incorporate “Compassion” have been explored over the last 40 years and explicitly aim to encourage, cultivate and support “Compassion” for self and others.

In previous research “Compassion” focused approaches have been found to improve wellbeing in a variety of different contexts including Health professionals and non-professional populations such as students and the general public. However, there is currently little research that has explored the impact of “Compassion” focused approaches for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools. Importantly, no studies to date have involved teachers in developing understanding of the potential role of “Compassion” to support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others in the context of schools.

What will colleagues be expected to do?

Stage 1:
Between May – July 2019 you as Head Teacher, a Governor, a well-informed external visitor and all teachers will be invited to participate in **one 30 minute semi-structured interview**. This will provide the opportunity to talk about the emotional work that teachers engage in during their day-to-day work. Questions will also be asked about current support for teacher's wellbeing.

Stage 2:
Between September – December 2019 participating teachers from your school will be invited to participate in **six focused group interviews**. These conversations will take place after school for one hour between 15:30-16:30, every other week. These conversations will be arranged at the convenience of the group. During these focused group conversations, some key principles, processes and practices of "Compassion" focused approaches that have been developed previously and that have been found to positively support wellbeing in different professional contexts will be introduced and explored.

As a group, together we will discuss the relevance of these principles, processes and practices as ways to support teacher wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. With agreement of other participating teachers these focused group conversations will be video or audio recorded.

Why have I been invited to participate?

Due to a need to understand more about the emotional work of teachers' in SEMH schools and approaches to supporting their wellbeing, you have been invited to participate in this research due to your professional experiences and insights. These experiences and insights will be particularly relevant with regards to your awareness and understanding of the emotional work that the teachers' in your school engage in. You will also be able to provide valuable information about how the wellbeing of teachers' is supported in your school. Sharing these experiences and insights will be particularly useful given current concerns about teacher wellbeing.

Because there is currently little research that has explored the role of "Compassion" to support teacher wellbeing, participating in this research will be particularly important in developing new understandings of the potential role of "Compassion" to support wellbeing in the contexts of schools. It is hoped that this research may be of benefit to the wellbeing of all participants and that the findings of this research will then be shared to support the wellbeing of other teachers and the wider school community.

How many other people will be asked to participate.

Three schools will be involved in this research. In addition to you as Head Teacher, a Governor, a well-informed external visitor and teachers from each school will be invited to participate in a 30 minute interview to support Stage 1 of the data collection. The participating teachers will also be invited to participate in other aspects of Stages 1 and 2 of the research.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this research study. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet along with a privacy notice that will explain how your data will be collected and used, and be asked to give your consent. A consent form will be given to you to sign. If you decide to take part in this research you are still free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

If at any point you decide not to take part in any aspect of the study, this decision will have no impact on your current or future employment.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part in this research, you will be invited to take part in the following:

- **One 30 minute semi-structured interview** at a time of your convenience between May – July 2019. The interview will take place in a location of your choice in the school that you currently work in. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.

As a 'gate-keeper' to the school, you will also be providing permission, in principle, for a Governor, a well-informed external visitor and teachers from your school to be invited to take part in:

- **One 30 minute semi-structured interview** at a time of their convenience between May – July 2019. The interview will take place in a location of each participant's choice, in the school that you currently work in. With permission from each participant, the interview will be audio recorded.
- Between September – December 2019 the participating teachers' (only) will be invited to participate in **six focused group interviews** with other participating teachers from your school. These conversations will take place after school for one hour between 15:30-16:30, every other week. With agreement of other participating teachers these focused group conversations will be video or audio recorded. These video or audio recordings will be saved on the researchers password protected lap-top and a back up copy will be saved in a secure Google Dive folder for the period of the research.
- During the write up of the research and future opportunities for dissemination of findings, all data will be anonymised.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

It is hoped that participating in this research will support teacher wellbeing so all aspects of this research aim to minimize and, if possible, eliminate completely any risks or adverse effects on you and all other participants.

While it is anticipated that no aspects of this research will cause any risks to you or other participants that are greater than those encountered in your/ their normal day to day life, it is recognized that exploring the emotional work that you/participants may engage in as part of your/their role and discussing support for your/their wellbeing may be, at times, be a sensitive area. This is particularly important to appreciate given that you and participants work with and support children with SEMH needs.

With regards to the 1:1 semi-structured interviews, you and participants will be asked open questions that aim to explore personal opinions and experiences related to your/their professional role. Interviews will take place in a location within each school setting that you/ they have selected to ensure that you/they feel at ease.

Because you/participants work in the school on a daily basis, it is hoped that you/they already feel safe and secure within this environment. Prior to the 1:1 interview, you/participants will be provided with the semi-structured interview questions so that you/they are able to consider each question.

During the 1:1 interviews, you/participants will be encouraged to only share information that you/they feel comfortable sharing. If you/they feel uncomfortable responding to any questions you/they have a right not to respond.

With regards to the providing examples of ‘incidents’ that have had an impact on teachers emotional wellbeing, they will choose what to share.

Because the semi-structured focus group conversations will take place following the analysis of data collected during Stage 1 of the research process it is not possible at this stage to provide detailed information here. However, before proceeding with this part of the research, teachers will be given a detailed overview of these sessions.

It is recognized that there are requirements of this research process that will take up your time and the time of participants.

Participating in one interview will take approximately 30 minutes of time for you, a Governor, a well-informed external visitor and the participating teachers from your school.

Participation in the 6 1hr semi-structured focus group interviews, between September and December 2019 will take approximately 360 minutes of each teacher's time.

Following discussions with you as Head Teacher, it is intended that all aspects of this research will take place after school so that teaching commitments are not interrupted. Therefore each of the 6 semi-structured focus group interviews will take 1 hour and will take place between 15:30 and 16:30 on an afternoon where no other after school meetings are taking place. The semi-structured focus group interviews will take place every other week in your school.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

From a research perspective it is recognised that there is currently little research that has explored the impact of "Compassion" for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools, particularly in schools that support children with SEMH needs. Consequently, your contributions to this research will help to contribute to developing new knowledge and understanding in this area.

By initially exploring the impact of emotional work teachers' and current support for their wellbeing, it is hoped that research findings provide new insight and increased awareness, knowledge and understanding of such experiences that may be relevant to and useful for other individual teachers and school communities.

These findings may be beneficial to identifying ways to support the wellbeing of teachers' in a variety of different schools, in recognition of a better understanding of how their emotional work impacts on their well-being.

Additionally, while "Compassion" focused approaches have been found to improve wellbeing in a variety of diverse populations, no studies to date have involved teachers' in developing an understanding of the potential role of "Compassion" to support well-being in the contexts of schools. Consequently your participation, experiences and insights may be valuable to other teachers, your school community and the wider community.

Possible benefits of participation in this research include increased personal insight into the potential role of "Compassion" to support teachers' wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. It is also hoped that your experiences and insights may support an understanding of how "Compassion" can inform wider whole school developments that will be of benefit to all members of your school community.

Through increasing awareness and understanding of how "Compassion" for self, for others and from others support well-being in schools that support pupils in SEMH settings, it is hoped that the dissemination of research findings may be beneficial to other teachers and school communities at local and National levels.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All information collected about you and participants will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations).

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of research material through ensuring anonymity during the write up of the research. No school or individual names will be included in any aspect of the final Thesis, future publication or dissemination.

Research data will be kept securely at all times. Any data collected during visits to your school will be initially encrypted and then stored on a password protected laptop. Encrypted audio/ video recordings will be uploaded to the password protected laptop before leaving the school site. The 'incidents' that are written or recorded by teachers on their personal mobile device will be sent via e-mail to the researcher.

These written records or audio recordings will then be encrypted and stored on a password protected laptop. A second back up copy of all data will then be uploaded to a secure Google Drive folder, for which the University has a security agreement.

Data generated by the study will be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity, therefore, data generated in the course of the research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of ten years after the completion of a research project.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you would like to participate in this study and agree to this research being undertaken in your school, please complete and sign the attached 'Consent Form'. This will be collected from the school in person by the researcher.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results and findings of this study will be used initially as part of the researchers Doctoral Thesis. To ensure that findings of benefit can be disseminated widely to other teachers, school communities and wider audiences, it is also intended that various aspects of the research will be shared through publication in academic journals and book chapters. With regards to the potential benefits to teachers and other professionals, it is intended that key research findings, particularly in relation to supporting staff wellbeing, will be disseminated via local and National conferences.

You will be offered the opportunity to be provided with a summary of the Doctoral Thesis and will be asked if research findings would be of interest to the wider school community. If so, a summary of key findings will be provided during a whole staff meeting.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is being conducted by the named student researcher as part of a Doctorate of Education (Ed.D) and is associated with the Oxford Brookes University School of Education.

Who has reviewed the study?

This research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University.

Contact for Further Information

Jonathan Reid

p0076635@brookes.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, you should contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Your involvement in this research process is important and valued.

Version Number

Version 1.1 2019

Appendix 11: Participant Information Sheet: Head Teacher Individual Participation

Jonathan Reid

Study title:

Teacher's emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of "Compassion": A critical exploration

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?

Both in the UK and internationally, being a teacher is recognised as being hard work, with teachers having the highest levels of job stress among a variety of professions. Research consistently reveals that prolonged experiences of stress in teachers can have a negative impact on their wellbeing. Findings from recent research have indicated raised and sustained levels stress among primary school teachers in comparison to other professionals. These experiences are more likely and have more of an impact on teachers working with children and young people with more complex Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH).

While school related factors such as workload, long hours, lack of leisure time, policy changes and pressures of inspections and individual factors such as striving for perfection, being committed to the work and being highly motivated, for example, have been found to have a negative impact on teacher wellbeing, the emotional demands of teaching have also been implicated.

Teaching is recognised as being a relational activity that involves daily emotional work as a consequence of regular social interactions. Consequently, in their professional roles, teachers frequently experience a range of complex emotions, which can positively or negatively influence their wellbeing.

In schools where teachers support children with SEMH needs, teachers more frequently negotiate complex and challenging social and emotional relationships on a daily basis, particularly because the children they work with and support are more likely to exhibit heightened emotions and behaviours.

Supporting the emotional wellbeing of teachers who support children with a broad range of SEMH needs is important, however currently there is a lack of research in this area.

Consequently, this research aims to investigate the emotional work of teachers in the context of SEMH schools and to learn more about support for their wellbeing.

The first stage of this research aims initially:

1. To investigate the emotional work of teachers in schools that support children with SEMH needs,
2. To identify approaches that currently support teacher wellbeing in these schools.

The second stage of the research aims to introduce and explore the concept of "Compassion" as a way of supporting teacher wellbeing. Within this research "Compassion" is defined as "a sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it". Approaches to supporting wellbeing that incorporate "Compassion" have been explored over the last 40 years and explicitly aim to encourage, cultivate and support "Compassion" for self and others.

In previous research "Compassion" focused approaches have been have been found to improve wellbeing in a variety of different contexts including Health professionals and non-professional populations such as students and the general public. However, there is currently little research that has explored the impact of "Compassion" focused approaches for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools. Importantly, no studies to date have involved teachers in developing understanding of the potential role of "Compassion" to support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others in the context of schools.

What will I be expected to do?

Stage 1:
Between May – July 2019 you will be invited to participate in **one 30 minute semi-structured interview**. This will provide the opportunity to talk about the emotional work that teachers engage in during their day-to-day work. Questions will also be asked about current support for teachers wellbeing in this school.

Why have I been invited to participate?
Due to a need to understand more about the emotional work of teachers in SEMH schools and approaches to supporting their wellbeing, you have been invited to participate in this research due to your experiences and insights as Head Teacher. Sharing these experiences and insights will be particularly useful given current concerns about teacher wellbeing.

Because there is currently little research that has explored the role of "Compassion" to support teacher wellbeing, participating in this research will be particularly important in developing new understandings of the potential role of "Compassion" to support wellbeing in the contexts of schools. It is hoped that this research may be of benefit to the wellbeing of all participants and that the findings of this research will then be shared to support the wellbeing of other teachers and the wider school community.

How many other people will be asked to participate.
Three schools will be involved in this research. You as Head Teacher, a school Governor and a well-informed external visitor from each school will be invited to participate in a 30 minute interview to support Stage 1 of the data collection. Teachers in each school will be invited to participate in an interview and additional stages of the research.

Do I have to take part?
It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this research study. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet along with a privacy notice that will explain how your data will be collected and used, and be asked to give your consent. A consent form will be given to you to sign. If you decide to take part in this research you are still free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part in this research, you will be invited to take part in the following:

- **One 30 minute semi-structured interview** at a time of your convenience between May – July 2019. The interview will take place in a location of your choice in the school that you are currently Head Teacher. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.
- During the write up of the research and future opportunities for dissemination of findings, all data will be anonymised.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

It is hoped that participating in this research will support teacher wellbeing so all aspects of this research aims to minimize and, if possible, eliminate completely any risks or adverse effects on you as a participant.

While it is anticipated that no aspects of this research will cause any risks to you that are greater than those encountered in your normal day to day life, it is recognized that exploring the emotional work that teacher's engage in as part of their role and discussing support for their wellbeing may be, at times, be a sensitive area. This is particularly important to appreciate given that you and other participants work in a school that supports children with SEMH needs.

With regards to the 1:1 semi-structured interviews, you will be asked open questions that aim to explore personal opinions and experiences related to your role as Head Teacher. Interviews will take place in a location within each school setting that you have selected to ensure that you feel at ease.

Because you work in the school, it is hoped that you already feel safe and secure within this environment. Prior to the 1:1 interview, you will be provided with the semi-structured interview questions so that you are able to consider each question. During the 1:1 interviews, you will be encouraged to only share information that you feel comfortable sharing. If you feel uncomfortable responding to any questions you have a right not to respond.

It is recognized that there are requirements of this research process that will take up your time. Participating in one interview will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

From a research perspective it is recognised that there is currently little research that has explored the impact of “Compassion” for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools, particularly in schools that support children with SEMH needs. Consequently, your contributions to this research may help develop new knowledge and understanding in this area.

By initially exploring the impact of teacher’s emotional work and current support for their wellbeing, it is hoped that research findings provide new insight and increased awareness, knowledge and understanding of such experiences that may be relevant to and useful for other individual teachers and school communities.

These findings will be beneficial in identifying ways to support the wellbeing of teachers in a variety of different schools, in recognition of a better understanding of how their emotional work impacts on their well-being. Consequently your participation, experiences and insights are important and will be valuable to other teachers, your school community and the wider community.

Through increasing awareness and understanding of teachers emotional work and support for their well-being in schools that support pupils in SEMH settings, it is hoped that the dissemination of research findings may be beneficial to other teachers and school communities at local and National levels.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations).

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of research material through ensuring anonymity during the write up of the research. No school or individual names will be included in any aspect of the final Thesis, future publication or dissemination.

Research data will be kept securely at all times. Any data collected during visits to your school will be initially encrypted and then stored on a password protected laptop. Encrypted audio/ video recordings will be uploaded to the password protected laptop before leaving the school site.

Data generated by the study will be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity, therefore, data generated in the course of the research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of ten years after the completion of a research project.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you would like to participate in this study please complete and sign the attached 'Consent Form'. This will be collected from the school in person by the researcher.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results and findings of this study will be used initially as part of the researchers Doctoral Thesis. To ensure that findings of benefit can be disseminated widely to other teachers, school communities and wider audiences, it is also intended that various aspects of the research will be shared through publication in academic journals and book chapters.

With regards to the potential benefits to teachers and other professionals, it is intended that key research findings, particularly in relation to supporting staff wellbeing, will be disseminated via local and national conferences.

You will be offered the opportunity to be provided with a summary of the Doctoral Thesis and as the Head Teacher of this school you will be asked if research findings would be of interest to the wider school community. If so, a summary of key findings will be provided during a whole staff meeting.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is being conducted by the named student researcher as part of a Doctorate of Education (Ed.D) and is associated with the Oxford Brookes University School of Education.

Who has reviewed the study?

This research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University.

Contact for Further Information

p0076635@brookes.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, they should contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Your involvement in this research process is important and valued.

Version Number

Version 1.1 2019

Appendix 12: Participant Information Sheet: Teachers

Jonathan Reid

Study title:

Teacher's emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of "Compassion": A critical exploration

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?

Both in the UK and internationally, being a teacher is recognised as being hard work, with teachers having the highest levels of job stress among a variety of professions. Research consistently reveals that prolonged experiences of stress in teachers can have a negative impact on their wellbeing. Findings from recent research have indicated raised and sustained levels stress among primary school teachers in comparison to other professionals. These experiences are more likely and have more of an impact on teachers working with children and young people with more complex Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH).

While school related factors such as workload, long hours, lack of leisure time, policy changes and pressures of inspections and individual factors such as striving for perfection, being committed to the work and being highly motivated, for example, have been found to have a negative impact on teacher wellbeing, the emotional demands of teaching have also been implicated.

Teaching is recognised as being a relational activity that involves daily emotional work as a consequence of regular social interactions. Consequently, in their professional roles, teachers frequently experience a range of complex emotions, which can positively or negatively influence their wellbeing.

In schools where teachers support children with SEMH needs, teachers more frequently negotiate complex and challenging social and emotional relationships on a daily basis, particularly because the children they work with and support are more likely to exhibit heightened emotions and behaviours.

Supporting the emotional wellbeing of teachers who support children with a broad range of SEMH needs is important, however currently there is a lack of research in this area.

Consequently, this research aims to investigate the emotional work of teachers in the context of SEMH schools and to learn more about support for their wellbeing.

The first stage of this research aims initially:

1. To investigate the emotional work of teachers in schools that support children with SEMH needs,
2. To identify approaches that currently support teacher wellbeing in these schools.

The second stage of the research aims to introduce and explore the concept of "Compassion" as a way of supporting teacher wellbeing. Within this research "Compassion" is defined as "a sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it". Approaches to supporting wellbeing that incorporate "Compassion" have been explored over the last 40 years and explicitly aim to encourage, cultivate and support "Compassion" for self and others.

In previous research "Compassion" focused approaches have been found to improve wellbeing in a variety of different contexts including Health professionals and non-professional populations such as students and the general public. However, there is currently little research that has explored the impact of "Compassion" focused approaches for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools. Importantly, no studies to date have involved teachers in developing understanding of the potential role of "Compassion" to support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others in the context of schools.

What will I be expected to do?

Stage 1:
Between May – July 2019 you will be invited to participate in **one 30 minute semi-structured interview**. This will provide the opportunity to talk about the emotional work that you engage in during your day-to-day work as a teacher. Questions will also be asked about current support for your wellbeing.

Stage 2:
Between September – December 2019 you will be invited to participate in **six focused group interviews** with other participating teachers from your school. These conversations will take place after school for one hour between 15:30-16:30, every other week.

These conversations will be arranged at the convenience of the group. During these focused group conversations, some key principles, processes and practices of "Compassion" focused approaches that have been developed previously and that have been found to positively support wellbeing in different professional contexts will be introduced and explored. As a group, we will then discuss the relevance of these principles, processes and practices as ways to support your wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. With agreement of other participating teachers these focused group conversations will be video or audio recorded.

Why have I been invited to participate?

Due to a need to understand more about the emotional work of teachers in SEMH schools and approaches to supporting their wellbeing, you have been invited to participate in this research due to your professional experiences and insights. Sharing these experiences and insights will be particularly useful given current concerns about teacher wellbeing. Because there is currently little research that has explored the role of "Compassion" to support teacher wellbeing, participating in this research will be particularly important in developing new understandings of the potential role of "Compassion" to support wellbeing in the contexts of schools. It is hoped that this research will be of benefit to the wellbeing of all participants and that the findings of this research will then be shared to support the wellbeing of other teachers and the wider school community.

How many other people will be asked to participate.

Three schools will be involved in this research. A Head Teacher, a Governor and a well-informed external visitor from each school will be invited to participate in a 30 minute interview to support Stage 1 of the data collection. Teachers in each school will be invited to participate in Stages 1 and 2 of the research.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this research study. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet along with a privacy notice that will explain how your data will be collected and used, and be asked to give your consent. A consent form will be given to you to sign. If you decide to take part in this research you are still free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

If at any point you decide not to take part in any aspect of the study, this decision will have no impact on your current or future employment.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part in this research, you will be invited to take part in the following:

- **One 30 minute semi-structured interview** at a time of your convenience between May – July 2019. The interview will take place in a location of your choice in the school that you currently work in. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.
- Between September – December 2019 you will be invited to participate in **six focused group interviews** with other participating teachers from your school. These conversations will take place after school for one hour between 15:30-16:30, every other week. With agreement of other participating teachers these focused group conversations will be video or audio recorded. These video or audio recordings will be saved on the researchers password protected lap-top and a back up copy will be saved in a secure Google Dive folder for the period of the research.
- During the write up of the research and future opportunities for dissemination of findings, all data will be anonymised.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

It is hoped that participating in this research will support teacher wellbeing so all aspects of this research aims to minimize and, if possible, eliminate completely any risks or adverse effects on you as a participant.

While it is anticipated that no aspects of this research will cause any risks to you that are greater than those encountered in your normal day to day life, it is recognized that exploring the emotional work that you may engage in as part of your role and discussing support for your wellbeing may be, at times, be a sensitive area. This is particularly important to appreciate given that you work with and support children with SEMH needs.

With regards to the 1:1 semi-structured interviews, you will be asked open questions that aim to explore personal opinions and experiences related to your professional role. Interviews will take place in a location within each school setting that you have selected to ensure that you feel at ease.

Because you work in the school on a daily basis, it is hoped that you already feel safe and secure within this environment. Prior to the 1:1 interview, you will be provided with the semi-structured interview questions so that they are able to consider each question. During the 1:1 interviews, you will be encouraged to only share information that you feel comfortable sharing. If you feel uncomfortable responding to any questions you have a right not to respond.

With regards to the providing examples of 'incidents' that have had an impact on your emotional wellbeing, you will choose what to share.

Because the semi-structured focus group interviews will take place following the analysis of data collected during Stage 1 of the research process it is not possible at this stage to provide detailed information here.

However, before proceeding with this part of the research, you will be given a detailed overview of these sessions.

It is recognized that there are requirements of this research process that will take up your time.

Participating in one interview will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

Participation in the 6 1hr semi-structured focus group interviews, between September and December 2019 will take approximately 360 minutes of your time.

Following discussions with your Head Teacher, it is intended that all aspects of this research will take place after school so that your teaching commitments are not interrupted.

Therefore each of the 6 semi-structured focus group conversations will take 1 hour and will take place between 15:30 and 16:30 on an afternoon where no other after school meetings are taking place. The semi-structured focus group conversations will take place every other week in your school.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

From a research perspective it is recognised that there is currently little research that has explored the impact of "Compassion" for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools, particularly in schools that support children with SEMH needs. Consequently, your contributions to this research will help to contribute to developing new knowledge and understanding in this area.

By initially exploring the impact of your emotional work and current support for your wellbeing, it is hoped that research findings provide new insight and increased awareness, knowledge and understanding of such experiences that may be relevant to and useful for other individual teachers and school communities.

These findings will be beneficial to identifying ways to support the wellbeing of teachers in a variety of different schools, in recognition of a better understanding of how their emotional work impacts on their well-being. Additionally, while "Compassion" focused approaches have been found to improve wellbeing in a variety of diverse populations, no studies to date have involved teachers in developing an understanding of the potential role of "Compassion" to support well-being in the contexts of schools. Consequently your participation, experiences and insights are important and may be valuable to other teachers, your school community and the wider community.

Possible benefits of participation in this research include increased personal insight into the potential role of "Compassion" to support your own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others. It is also hoped that your experiences and insights will support an understanding of how "Compassion" can inform wider whole school developments that may be of benefit to all members of your school community.

Through increasing awareness and understanding of how "Compassion for self, for others and from others support well-being in schools that support pupils in SEMH settings, it is hoped that the dissemination of research findings may be beneficial to other teachers and school communities at local and National levels.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations).

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of research material through ensuring anonymity during the write up of the research. No school or individual names will be included in any aspect of the final Thesis, future publication or dissemination.

Research data will be kept securely at all times. Any data collected during visits to your school will be initially encrypted and then stored on a password protected laptop. Encrypted audio/ video recordings will be uploaded to the password protected laptop before leaving the school site. The 'incidents' that you produce or record will be sent via e-mail to the researcher. These will then be encrypted and stored on a password protected laptop. A second back up copy of all data will then be uploaded to a secure Google Drive folder, for which the University has a security agreement.

Data generated by the study will be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity, therefore, data generated in the course of the research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of ten years after the completion of a research project.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you would like to participate in this study please complete and sign the attached 'Consent Form'. This will be collected from the school in person by the researcher.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results and findings of this study will be used initially as part of the researchers Doctoral Thesis. To ensure that findings of benefit can be disseminated widely to other teachers, school communities and wider audiences, it is also intended that various aspects of the research will be shared through publication in academic journals and book chapters.

With regards to the potential benefits to teachers and other professionals, it is intended that key research findings, particularly in relation to supporting staff wellbeing, will be disseminated via local and national conferences.

You will be offered the opportunity to be provided with a summary of the Doctoral Thesis and your Head Teacher will be asked if research findings would be of interest to the wider school community. If so, a summary of key findings will be provided during a whole staff meeting.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is being conducted by the named student researcher as part of a Doctorate of Education (Ed.D) and is associated with the Oxford Brookes University School of Education.

Who has reviewed the study?

This research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University.

Contact for Further Information

p0076635@brookes.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, they should contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.

Your involvement in this research process is important and valued.

Version Number

Version 1.1 2019

Appendix 13: Participant Information Sheet: Well informed external visitors

Jonathan Reid

Study title:

Teacher's emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of "Compassion": A critical exploration

Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

What is the purpose of the study?

Both in the UK and internationally, being a teacher is recognised as being hard work, with teachers having the highest levels of job stress among a variety of professions. Research consistently reveals that prolonged experiences of stress in teachers can have a negative impact on their wellbeing. Findings from recent research have indicated raised and sustained levels stress among primary school teachers in comparison to other professionals. These experiences are more likely and have more of an impact on teachers working with children and young people with more complex Social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH).

While school related factors such as workload, long hours, lack of leisure time, policy changes and pressures of inspections and individual factors such as striving for perfection, being committed to the work and being highly motivated, for example, have been found to have a negative impact on teacher wellbeing, the emotional demands of teaching have also been implicated.

Teaching is recognised as being a relational activity that involves daily emotional work as a consequence of regular social interactions. Consequently, in their professional roles, teachers frequently experience a range of complex emotions, which can positively or negatively influence their wellbeing.

In schools where teachers support children with SEMH needs, teachers more frequently negotiate complex and challenging social and emotional relationships on a daily basis, particularly because the children they work with and support are more likely to exhibit heightened emotions and behaviours.

Supporting the emotional wellbeing of teachers who support children with a broad range of SEMH needs is important, however currently there is a lack of research in this area.

Consequently, this research aims to investigate the emotional work of teachers in the context of SEMH schools and to learn more about support for their wellbeing.

The first stage of this research aims initially:

1. To investigate the emotional work of teachers in schools that support children with SEMH needs,
2. To identify approaches that currently support teacher wellbeing in these schools.

The second stage of the research aims to introduce and explore the concept of “Compassion” as a way of supporting teacher wellbeing. Within this research "Compassion” is defined as “a sensitivity to suffering in self and others with a commitment to try to alleviate and prevent it”. Approaches to supporting wellbeing that incorporate “Compassion” have been explored over the last 40 years and explicitly aim to encourage, cultivate and support “Compassion” for self and others.

In previous research “Compassion” focused approaches have been found to improve wellbeing in a variety of different contexts including Health professionals and non-professional populations such as students and the general public. However, there is currently little research that has explored the impact of “Compassion” focused approaches for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools. Importantly, no studies to date have involved teachers in developing understanding of the potential role of “Compassion” to support their own wellbeing and the wellbeing of others in the context of schools.

What will I be expected to do?

Stage 1:
Between May – July 2019 you will be invited to participate in **30 minute semi-structured interview**. This will provide the opportunity to talk about the emotional work that teachers engage in during their day-to-day work. Questions will also be asked about current support for teacher's wellbeing in this school.

Why have I been invited to participate?
Due to a need to understand more about the emotional work of teachers in SEMH schools and approaches to supporting their wellbeing, you have been invited to participate in this research due to your experiences and insights as a well-informed external visitor. Sharing these experiences and insights will be particularly useful given current concerns about teacher wellbeing.

Because there is currently little research that has explored the role of "Compassion" to support teacher wellbeing, participating in this research will be particularly important in developing new understandings of the potential role of "Compassion" to support wellbeing in the contexts of schools.

It is hoped that this research will be of benefit to the wellbeing of all participants and that the findings of this research will then be shared to support the wellbeing of other teachers and the wider school community.

How many other people will be asked to participate.
Three schools will be involved in this research. A Head Teacher, a school Governor, you, as a well-informed external visitor from each school will be invited to participate in a 30 minute interview to support Stage 1 of the data collection. Teachers in each school will be invited to participate in an interview and additional stages of the research.

Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this research study. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet along with a privacy notice that will explain how your data will be collected and used, and be asked to give your consent. A consent form will be given to you to sign. If you decide to take part in this research you are still free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

If you decide to take part in this research, you will be invited to take part in the following:

- **One 30 minute semi-structured interview** at a time of your convenience between May – July 2019. The interview will take place in a location of your choice in the school that you currently visit. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded.
- During the write up of the research and future opportunities for dissemination of findings, all data will be anonymised.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

It is hoped that participating in this research will support teacher wellbeing so all aspects of this research aim to minimize and, if possible, eliminate completely any risks or adverse effects on you as a participant.

While it is anticipated that no aspects of this research will cause any risks to you that are greater than those encountered in your normal day to day life, it is recognized that exploring the emotional work that teacher's engage in as part of their role and discussing support for their wellbeing may be, at times, be a sensitive area. This is particularly important to appreciate given that you visit and other participants work in a school that supports children with SEMH needs.

With regards to the 1:1 semi-structured interviews, you will be asked open questions that aim to explore personal opinions and experiences related to your Governor role. Interviews will take place in a location within each school setting that you have selected to ensure that you feel at ease.

Because you visit the school regularly, it is hoped that you already feel safe and secure within this environment. Prior to the 1:1 interview, you will be provided with the semi-structured interview questions so that you are able to consider each question. During the 1:1 interviews, you will be encouraged to only share information that you feel comfortable sharing. If you feel uncomfortable responding to any questions you have a right not to respond.

It is recognized that there are requirements of this research process that will take up your time.

Participating in one interview will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

From a research perspective it is recognised that there is currently little research that has explored the impact of "Compassion" for supporting teacher wellbeing in the contexts of schools, particularly in schools that support children with SEMH needs. Consequently, your contributions to this research will help develop new knowledge and understanding in this area.

By initially exploring the impact of teacher's emotional work and current support for their wellbeing, it is hoped that research findings provide new insight and increased awareness, knowledge and understanding of such experiences that may be relevant to and useful for other individual teachers and school communities.

These findings will be beneficial in identifying ways to support the wellbeing of teachers in a variety of different schools, in recognition of a better understanding of how their emotional work impacts on their well-being. Consequently your participation, experiences and insights are important and may be valuable to other teachers, your school community and the wider community.

Through increasing awareness and understanding of teachers emotional work and support for their well-being in schools that support pupils in SEMH settings, it is hoped that the dissemination of research findings may be beneficial to other teachers and school communities at local and National levels.

Will what I say in this study be kept confidential?

All information collected about you will be kept strictly confidential (subject to legal limitations).

Confidentiality, privacy and anonymity will be ensured in the collection, storage and publication of research material through ensuring anonymity during the write up of the research. No school or individual names will be included in any aspect of the final Thesis, future publication or dissemination.

Research data will be kept securely at all times. Any data collected during visits to your school will be initially encrypted and then stored on a password protected laptop. Encrypted audio/ video recordings will be uploaded to the password protected laptop before leaving the school site.

Data generated by the study will be retained in accordance with the University's policy on Academic Integrity, therefore, data generated in the course of the research must be kept securely in paper or electronic form for a period of ten years after the completion of a research project.

What should I do if I want to take part?

If you would like to participate in this study please complete and sign the attached 'Consent Form'. This will be collected from the school in person by the researcher.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results and findings of this study will be used initially as part of the researchers Doctoral Thesis. To ensure that findings of benefit can be disseminated widely to other teachers, school communities and wider audiences, it is also intended that various aspects of the research will be shared through publication in academic journals and book chapters.

With regards to the potential benefits to teachers and other professionals, it is intended that key research findings, particularly in relation to supporting staff wellbeing, will be disseminated via local and national conferences.

You will be offered the opportunity to be provided with a summary of the Doctoral Thesis and the Head Teacher of this school will be asked if research findings would be of interest to the wider school community. If so, a summary of key findings will be provided during a whole staff meeting.

Who is organising and funding the research?

This research is being conducted by the named student researcher as part of a Doctorate of Education (Ed.D) and is associated with the Oxford Brookes University School of Education.

Who has reviewed the study?

This research has been approved by the University Research Ethics Committee, Oxford Brookes University.

Contact for Further Information

p0076635@brookes.ac.uk

If you have any concerns about the way in which the study has been conducted, they should contact the Chair of the University Research Ethics Committee on ethics@brookes.ac.uk.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet.
Your involvement in this research process is important and valued.

Version Number

Version 1.1 2019

Appendix 14: Consent form

Full title of Project:

Teacher's emotional work, support for wellbeing and the role of "Compassion": A critical exploration

Name, position and contact address of Researcher:

Jonathan Reid

Please initial box

2. I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions. ☐

3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving reason. ☐

3. I agree to take part in the above study. ☐

Please initial box

	Yes	No
4. I agree to the interview consultation being audio recorded	☐	☐
6. I agree to the use of anonymised quotes in publications	☐	☐

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Name of Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix 15: Schedule of one-to-one interviews

Table 12 Schedule of one-to-one interviews

Activity	Date	Time (minutes)
Alice Apple Wood School Interview	18.06.19	25
Charlotte Apple Wood School Interview	18.06.19	21
Chloe Apple Wood School Interview	18.06.19	28
Evelyn Apple Wood School Interview	18.06.19	13
Levi Apple Wood School Interview	18.06.19	19
Mia Apple Wood School Interview	18.06.19	30
Oliver Apple Wood School Interview	18.06.19	43
Olivia Apple Wood School Interview	18.06.19	29
Arthur Birch Tree School Interview	24.06.19	28
Imogen Birch Tree School Interview	24.06.19	33
Oscar Birch Tree School Interview	24.06.19	43
Clara Cherry Blossom School Interview	04.07.19	45
Lily Cherry Blossom School Interview	04.07.19	18
Lucas Cherry Blossom School Interview	04.07.19	37
Audrey Cherry Blossom School Interview	11.07.19	38
Ella Cherry Blossom School Interview	12.07.19	18
Phoenix Cherry Blossom School Interview	15.07.19	49
Sebastian Cherry Blossom School Interview	15.07.19	33
Poppy Cherry Blossom School Interview	18.07.19	30
Finn Birch Tree School Interview	23.07.19	35
Grace Birch Tree School Interview	23.07.19	25
Phoebe Birch Tree School Interview	23.07.19	26
Theodore Birch Tree School Interview	23.07.19	50
Zara Birch Tree School Interview	23.07.19	31
Session 1 Birch Tree School	09.09.19	61
Session 1 Apple Wood School	10.09.19	57
Session 2 Birch Tree School	24.09.19	59
Session 2 Apple Wood School	08.10.19	65
Session 3 Birch Tree School	15.10.19	57
Ali PRU *	04.11.19	27
Anna PRU *	04.11.19	18
Elain PRU *	04.11.19	26
Kate PRU *	04.11.19	19
Rory PRU *	04.11.19	27
Ruth PRU *	04.11.19	29
Sarah PRU *	04.11.19	22
Session 4 Birch Tree School	11.11.19	52
Session 1 Cherry Blossom School	18.11.19	77
Session 2 Cherry Blossom School	20.11.19	62

Session 3 Apple Wood School	03.12.19	60
Session 3 Cherry Blossom School	10.12.19	75
Session 5 Birch Tree School	16.01.20	49
Session 6 Birch Tree School	21.01.20	58
Session 4 Apple Wood School	23.01.20	64
Session 4 Cherry Blossom School	29.01.20	66
Session 5 Cherry Blossom School	03.02.20	64
Session 6 Cherry Blossom School	10.02.20	51
Session 5 Apple Wood School	13.02.20	66
Session 6 Apple Wood School	07.01.21	54
	Total Minutes	2020
	Total Hours	33 hours 67 minutes
	Date Range	570 Days = 1 Year 6 months 21 days

* Interviews not included in Stage 1 data analysis

Table 13 Apple Wood School Interview Schedule

Pseudonym	Role	Interview Date	Interview length (minutes)
Alice	Teacher	18.06.19	25
Charlotte	Teacher	18.06.19	21
Chloe	Teacher	18.06.19	28
Evelyn	Teacher	18.06.19	13
Levi	Teacher	18.06.19	19
Mia	Teacher	18.06.19	30
Oliver	Head Teacher	18.06.19	43
Olivia	Deputy Head	18.06.19	29
		Average	26
		Maximum	43
		Minimum	13
		Total	210
		Date Range	18.06.19

Table 14 Birch Tree School Interview Schedule

Pseudonym	Role	Interview Date	Interview length (minutes)
Arthur	Teacher	24.06.19	28
Finn	Teacher	23.07.19	35
Grace	Teacher	23.07.19	25
Imogen	Head Teacher	24.06.19	33
Oscar	Deputy Head	24.06.19	43
Phoebe	Teacher	23.07.19	26
Theodore	Director	23.07.19	50
Zara	Teacher	23.07.19	31
		Average	34
		Maximum	50
		Minimum	25
		Total	271
		Date Range	24.06.19-23.07.19

Table 15 Cherry Blossom School Interview Schedule

Pseudonym	Role	Interview Date	Interview length (minutes)
Audrey	Teacher	11.07.19	38
Clara	Deputy Head	04.07.19	45
Ella	Teacher	12.07.19	18
Lily	Teacher	04.07.19	18
Lucas	Counsellor	04.07.19	37
Phoenix	Teacher	15.07.19	49
Poppy	Teacher	18.07.19	30
Sebastian	Head Teacher	15.07.19	33
		Average	34
		Maximum	49
		Minimum	18
		Total	270
		Date Range	04.07.19-18.07.19

Appendix 16: Schedule of focus group interviews

Table 16 Stage 2 Focus Group Interview Schedule

	Session dates					
School Pseudonym	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6
Apple Wood School	10.09.19	08.10.19	03.12.19	23.01.20	13.02.20	07.01.21
Birch Tree School	09.09.19	24.09.19	15.10.19	11.11.19	16.01.20	21.01.20
Cherry Blossom	18.11.19	20.11.19	10.12.19	29.01.20	03.02.20	10.02.20

Days between sessions:

Apple Wood School	Minimum 22	Maximum 330
Birch Tree School	Minimum 6	Maximum 67
Cherry Blossom School	Minimum 2	Maximum 50

Table 17 Stage 2 Focus Group Interview Schedule

	Session length						
School Pseudonym	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5	Session 6	Average length of session
Apple Wood School	57	65	60	64	66	54	61
Birch Tree School	61	59	57	52	49	58	56
Cherry Blossom School	77	62	75	66	64	51	66
Average length of session	65	62	64	61	60	64	

Average length of session across all three schools, over all six sessions was 61 minutes.

Appendix 17: Summary of coding analysis

Table 18 Summary of coding analysis schedule by running queries relating to comparing broad categories to various coding attributes

Query Run			Date of query	
Broad category	**Compared with**	**Coding Attribute**	**Created on**	**Modified on**
Negative impact on wellbeing	BY	Teacher	31.08.20	04.09.20
Negative impact on wellbeing	BY	Head Teacher	31.08.20	30.09.20
Positive impact on wellbeing	BY	Head Teacher	31.08.20	30.09.20
Positive impact on wellbeing	BY	Deputy Head	31.08.20	04.09.20
Positive impact on wellbeing	BY	Teacher	31.08.20	04.09.20
Emotional work	BY	Head Teacher	01.09.20	30.09.20
Emotional work	BY	Deputy Head	01.09.20	01.09.20
Emotional work	BY	Director	01.09.20	03.09.20
Emotional work	BY	Counsellor	01.09.20	01.09.20
Emotional work	BY	Teacher	01.09.20	01.09.20
Negative impact on wellbeing	BY	Deputy Head	04.09.20	04.09.20
Negative impact on wellbeing	BY	Director	04.09.20	04.09.20
Negative impact on wellbeing	BY	Counsellor	04.09.20	04.09.20
Positive impact on wellbeing	BY	Director	04.09.20	04.09.20
Positive impact on wellbeing	BY	Counsellor	04.09.20	04.09.20
Negative impact on wellbeing	BY	Apple Wood School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Negative impact on wellbeing	BY	Beech Tree School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Negative impact on wellbeing	BY	Cherry Blossom School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Emotional work	BY	Apple Wood School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Emotional work	BY	Beech Tree School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Emotional work	BY	Cherry Blossom School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Positive impact on wellbeing	BY	Apple Wood School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Positive impact on wellbeing	BY	Beech Tree School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Positive impact on wellbeing	BY	Cherry Blossom School	04.09.20	30.09.20

Definitions of wellbeing	BY	Apple Wood School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Definitions of wellbeing	BY	Beech Tree School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Definitions of wellbeing	BY	Cherry Blossom School	04.09.20	04.09.20
Definitions of wellbeing	BY	Director	04.09.20	04.09.20
Definitions of wellbeing	BY	Head Teacher	04.09.20	30.09.20
Definitions of wellbeing	BY	Deputy Head	04.09.20	04.09.20
Definitions of wellbeing	BY	Teacher	04.09.20	04.09.20
Definitions of wellbeing	BY	Counsellor	04.09.20	30.09.20
Support for wellbeing	BY	Head Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for wellbeing	BY	Deputy Head	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for wellbeing	BY	Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for wellbeing of others	BY	Head Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for wellbeing of others	BY	Deputy Head	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for wellbeing of others	BY	Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for own wellbeing	BY	Head Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for own wellbeing	BY	Deputy Head	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for own wellbeing	BY	Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Further support for wellbeing	BY	Head Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Further support for wellbeing	BY	Deputy Head	28.10.20	28.10.20
Further support for wellbeing	BY	Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	BY	Head Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	BY	Deputy Head	28.10.20	28.10.20
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	BY	Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Event or experiences impact	BY	Head Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20

Event or experiences impact	BY	Deputy Head	28.10.20	28.10.20
Event or experiences impact	BY	Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Any thing else to share	BY	Head Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Any thing else to share	BY	Deputy Head	28.10.20	28.10.20
Any thing else to share	BY	Teacher	28.10.20	28.10.20
Support for wellbeing	BY	Apple Wood School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for wellbeing	BY	Beech Tree School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for wellbeing	BY	Cherry Blossom School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for wellbeing of others	BY	Apple Wood School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for wellbeing of others	BY	Beech Tree School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for wellbeing of others	BY	Cherry Blossom School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for own wellbeing	BY	Apple Wood School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for own wellbeing	BY	Beech Tree School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for own wellbeing	BY	Cherry Blossom School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	BY	Apple Wood School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	BY	Beech Tree School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	BY	Cherry Blossom School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Further support for wellbeing	BY	Apple Wood School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Further support for wellbeing	BY	Beech Tree School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Further support for wellbeing	BY	Cherry Blossom School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Any thing else to share	BY	Apple Wood School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Any thing else to share	BY	Beech Tree School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Any thing else to share	BY	Cherry Blossom School	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for own wellbeing	BY	Counsellor	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for own wellbeing	BY	Director	15.01.21	15.01.21

Support for wellbeing of others	BY	Director	15.01.21	15.01.21
Support for wellbeing of others	BY	Counsellor	15.01.21	15.01.21
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	BY	Director	15.01.21	15.01.21
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	BY	Counsellor	15.01.21	15.01.21
Further support for wellbeing	BY	Director	15.01.21	15.01.21
Further support for wellbeing	BY	Counsellor	15.01.21	15.01.21
Any thing else to share	BY	Director	15.01.21	15.01.21
Any thing else to share	BY	Counsellor	15.01.21	15.01.21

Appendix 18: Phase 4 analysis outcomes

Table 19 Phase 4 analysis outcomes to show how the seven subordinate emergent themes relate to the ten broad categories

	Seven Emergent themes: Frequency of references							
Ten Broad Categories	**Organisational**	**Professional role**	**Personal**	**Support (-)**	**Care for wellbeing (-)**	**Children**	**Additional**	**Total number of references**
Defining wellbeing	26	57	14	0	0	0	0	**97**
Positive impact of professional role on wellbeing	37	31	12	0	0	0	0	**80**
Negative impact of professional role on wellbeing	39	51	11	0	0	0	0	**101**
Emotional work in relation to professional role	21	107	15	0	0	0	13	**156**
Support for teacher wellbeing	70	3	3	19	0	0	1	**96**
Support for own wellbeing	15	23	77	0	12	0	4	**131**
Support for wellbeing of others	76	55	5	22	0	15	6	**179**
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	56	15	7	0	0	0	1	**79**
Further support for wellbeing	57	12	1	0	2	0	3	**75**
Anything else	33	30	1	0	0	0	0	**64**
Total	**430**	**384**	**146**	**41**	**14**	**15**	**28**	**1058**
Average	43	38.4	14.6	4.1	1.4	1.5	2.8	**105.8**
Maximum	76	107	77	22	12	15	13	179
Minimum	15	3	1	19	2	15	1	64

Maximum frequency of references
Minimum frequency of references

Appendix 19: Percentage coverage per response

Table 20 Percentage coverage per response

			% Coverage per question									
Individual pseudonym	**Role**	**School**	**Defining wellbeing**	**Positive Impact**	**Negative impact**	**Emotional work**	**Support wellbeing of others**	**Support for their wellbeing**	**Barriers to wellbeing support**	**Support for own wellbeing**	**How could wellbeing be further supported**	**Anything else**
Alice	Teacher	Apple Wood School	1.93	6.31	13.42	12.79	13.82	7.63	2.42	7.05	*	10.33
Charlotte	Teacher	Apple Wood School	2.45	4.95	4.81	14.12	8.03	14.27	6.99	4.81	*	7.26
Chloe	Teacher	Apple Wood School	1	2.66	2.37	17.86	15.67	4.68	5.64	8.48	*	*
Evelyn	Teacher	Apple Wood School	2.35	1.1	4.28	5.62	4.95	7.47	2.6	4.94	*	12.77
Levi	Teacher	Apple Wood School	2.08	5.36	5.68	16.23	8.61	3.45	13.34	1.61	*	7.05
Mia	Teacher	Apple Wood School	7.41	4.83	5.14	8.71	6.85	14.7	3.15	6.04	7.44	5.78
Oliver	Head Teacher	Apple Wood School	12.24	4.9	8.02	13.48	15.76	12.72	6.13	5.35	*	*
Olivia	Deputy Head	Apple Wood School	7.4	6.19	10.13	14.84	11.03	6.96	6.43	8.45	6.42	*
Arthur	Teacher	Beech Tree School	2.67	8.72	7.95	17.65	12.29	5.37	2.74	8.95	7.44	2.8
Finn	Teacher	Beech Tree School	3.64	3.68	3.8	8.13	7.8	6.88	4.78	*	13.01	20.94

Grace	Teacher	Beech Tree School	8.15	23	7.75	10.11	9.54	*	2.5	*	4.93	4.25
Imogen	Head Teacher	Beech Tree School	6.76	2.71	5.9	10.77	21.42	*	3.95	3.91	5.18	*
Oscar	Deputy Head	Beech Tree School	8.14	1.66	8.23	17.63	10.47	*	9.2	10.73	3.36	2.58
Phoebe	Teacher	Beech Tree School	2.13	2.53	11.07	15.75	14.19	14.92	5.57	10.45	3.19	1.73
Theodore	Director	Beech Tree School	5.56	11.68	19.69	14.4	7.86	*	7.73	6.02	8.24	5.26
Zara	Teacher	Beech Tree School	2.52	11	13.32	9.71	6.14	5.33	4.47	7.65	9.49	7.23
Audrey	Teacher	Cherry Blossom School	14.54	8.19	6.46	14.22	5.33	7.63	6.81	6.95	6.3	3.93
Clara	Teacher	Cherry Blossom School	3.76	6.62	16.92	14.3	12.09	*	3.71	*	7.71	10.01
Ella	Teacher	Cherry Blossom School	2.58	5.99	3.39	10.15	6.23	13.89	4.9	4.67	5.15	9.96
Lily	Teacher	Cherry Blossom School	4.11	7.51	5.22	17.99	11.92	3.16	6.29	3.13	8.27	7.3
Lucas	School Counsellor	Cherry Blossom School	10.95	5.48	4.34	13.75	9.46	*	8.92	4.65	11.03	10.08
Phoenix	Teacher	Cherry Blossom School	1.81	4.61	3.84	7.1	6.79	6.71	5.79	*	19.04	12.67

Poppy	Teacher	Cherry Blossom School	2.35	2.63	9.85	14.47	8.04	12.76	7.32	6.76	4.26	4.89
Sebastian	Head Teacher	Cherry Blossom School	12.37	1.05	6.61	6.82	8.95	*	5.6	2.34	10.68	6.37
		Average	5.37	5.97	7.84	12.78	10.14	8.74	5.71	6.15	7.84	7.66
		Maximum	14.54	23	19.69	17.99	21.42	14.92	13.34	10.73	19.04	20.94
		Minimum	1	1.05	2.37	5.62	4.95	3.16	2.42	1.61	3.19	1.73

Maximum Percentage coverage per response

Minimum Percentage coverage per response

* Question not asked during the interview.

Table 21 Percentage coverage per response in relation to each of the ten broad categories for Apple Wood School

Pseudonym	Role	Defining wellbeing	Positive Impact	Negative impact	Emotional work	Support wellbeing of others	Support for their wellbeing	Barriers to wellbeing support	Support for own wellbeing	How could wellbeing be further supported	Anything else
Alice	Teacher	1.93	6.31	13.42	12.79	13.82	7.63	2.42	7.05		10.33
Charlotte	Teacher	2.45	4.95	4.81	14.12	8.03	14.27	6.99	4.81		7.26
Chloe	Teacher	1	2.66	2.37	17.86	15.67	4.68	5.64	8.48		
Evelyn	Teacher	2.35	1.1	4.28	5.62	4.95	7.47	2.6	4.94		12.77
Levi	Teacher	2.08	5.36	5.68	16.23	8.61	3.45	13.34	1.61		7.05
Mia	Teacher	7.41	4.83	5.14	8.71	6.85	14.7	3.15	6.04	7.44	5.78
Oliver	Head Teacher	12.24	4.9	8.02	13.48	15.76	12.72	6.13	5.35		
Olivia	Deputy Head	7.4	6.19	10.13	14.84	11.03	6.96	6.43	8.45	6.42	
	Average	4.61	4.54	6.73	12.96	10.59	8.99	5.84	5.84	6.93	8.64
	Minimum	12.24	6.31	13.42	17.86	15.76	14.7	13.34	8.48	7.44	12.77
	Maximum	1	1.1	2.37	5.62	4.95	3.45	2.42	1.61	6.42	5.78

Table 22 Percentage coverage per response in relation to each of the ten broad categories for Beech Tree School

Pseudonym	Role	Defining wellbeing	Positive Impact	Negative impact	Emotional work	Support wellbeing of others	Support for their wellbeing	Barriers to wellbeing support	Support for own wellbeing	How could wellbeing be further supported	Anything else
Arthur	Teacher	2.67	8.72	7.95	17.65	12.29	5.37	2.74	8.95	7.44	2.8
Finn	Teacher	3.64	3.68	3.8	8.13	7.8	6.88	4.78		13.01	20.94
Grace	Teacher	8.15	23	7.75	10.11	9.54		2.5		4.93	4.25
Imogen	Head Teacher	6.76	2.71	5.9	10.77	21.42		3.95	3.91	5.18	
Oscar	Deputy Head	8.14	1.66	8.23	17.63	10.47		9.2	10.73	3.36	2.58
Phoebe	Teacher	2.13	2.53	11.07	15.75	14.19	14.92	5.57	10.45	3.19	1.73
Theodore	Director	5.56	11.68	19.69	14.4	7.86		7.73	6.02	8.24	5.26
Zara	Teacher	2.52	11	13.32	9.71	6.14	5.33	4.47	7.65	9.49	7.23
	Average	4.95	8.12	9.71	13.02	11.21	8.13	5.12	7.95	6.86	6.40
	Maximum	8.15	23	19.69	17.65	21.42	14.92	9.2	10.73	13.01	20.94
	Minimum	2.13	1.66	3.8	8.13	6.14	5.33	2.5	3.91	3.19	1.73

Table 23 Percentage coverage per response in relation to each of the ten categories themes for Cherry Blossom School

Pseudonym	Role	Defining wellbeing	Positive Impact	Negative impact	Emotional work	Support wellbeing of others	Support for their wellbeing	Barriers to wellbeing support	Support for own wellbeing	How could wellbeing be further supported	Anything else
Audrey	Teacher	14.54	8.19	6.46	14.22	5.33	7.63	6.81	6.95	6.3	3.93
Clara	Deputy Head	3.76	6.62	16.92	14.3	12.09		3.71		7.71	10.01
Ella	Teacher	2.58	5.99	3.39	10.15	6.23	13.89	4.9	4.67	5.15	9.96
Lily	Teacher	4.11	7.51	5.22	17.99	11.92	3.16	6.29	3.13	8.27	7.3
Lucas	Counsellor	10.95	5.48	4.34	13.75	9.46		8.92	4.65	11.03	10.08
Phoenix	Teacher	1.81	4.61	3.84	7.1	6.79	6.71	5.79		19.04	12.67
Poppy	Teacher	2.35	2.63	9.85	14.47	8.04	12.76	7.32	6.76	4.26	4.89
Sebastian	Head Teacher	12.37	1.05	6.61	6.82	8.95		5.6	2.34	10.68	6.37
	Average	6.56	5.26	7.08	12.35	8.60	8.83	6.17	4.75	9.06	8.15
	Maximum	14.54	8.19	16.92	17.99	12.09	13.89	8.92	6.95	19.04	12.67
	Minimum	1.81	1.05	3.39	6.82	5.33	3.16	3.71	2.34	4.26	3.93

Appendix 21: Total number of references in relation to the ten broad categories and school type

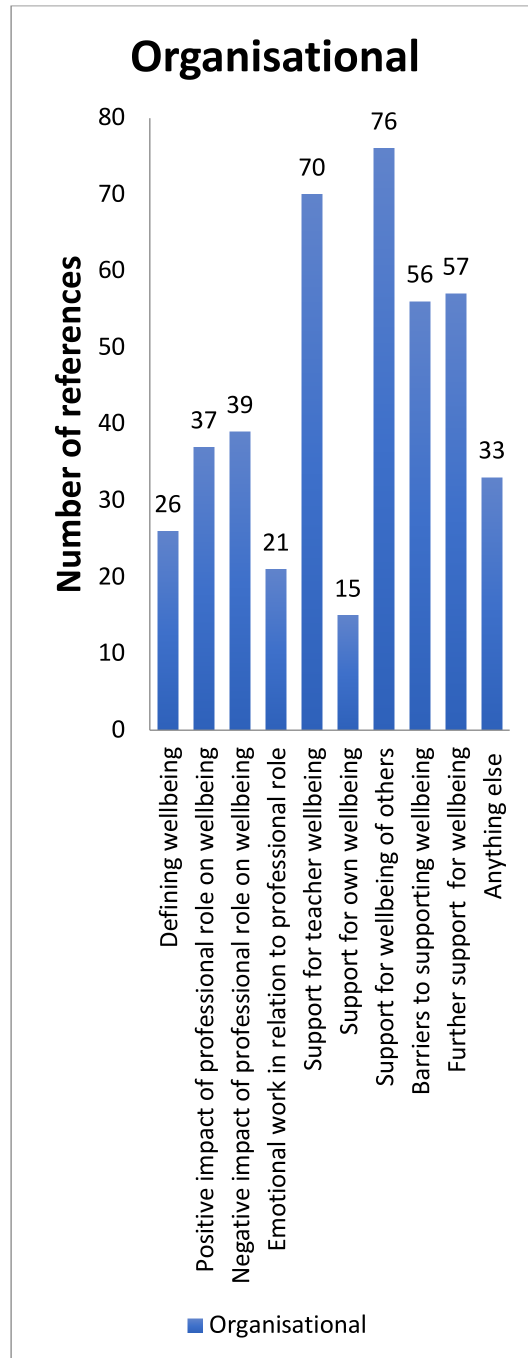
Table 24 Total number of references in relation to the ten broad categories and school type

	School Type: Number of references per broad category			
Broad Category	**Apple Wood School**	**Beech Tree School**	**Cherry Blossom School**	**Total number of references**
Defining wellbeing	70	37	84	191
Positive impact of professional role on wellbeing	40	42	39	121
Negative impact of professional role on wellbeing	61	54	66	181
Emotional work in relation to professional role	109	80	108	297
Support for teacher wellbeing	94	26	32	152
Support for own wellbeing	88	42	59	189
Support for wellbeing of others	111	76	107	294
Barriers to supporting wellbeing	38	26	76	140
Further support for wellbeing	12	37	111	160
Anything else	22	24	93	139

Highest frequency of references

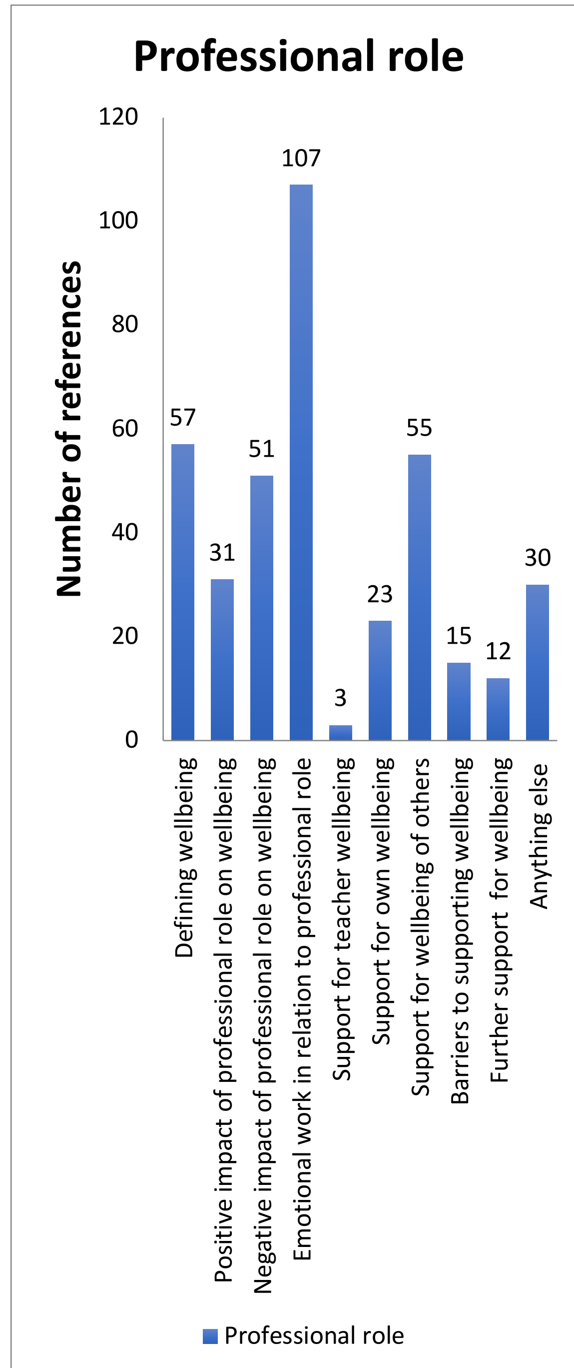
Appendix 22: Organisational emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories

Graph 4 Organisational emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories



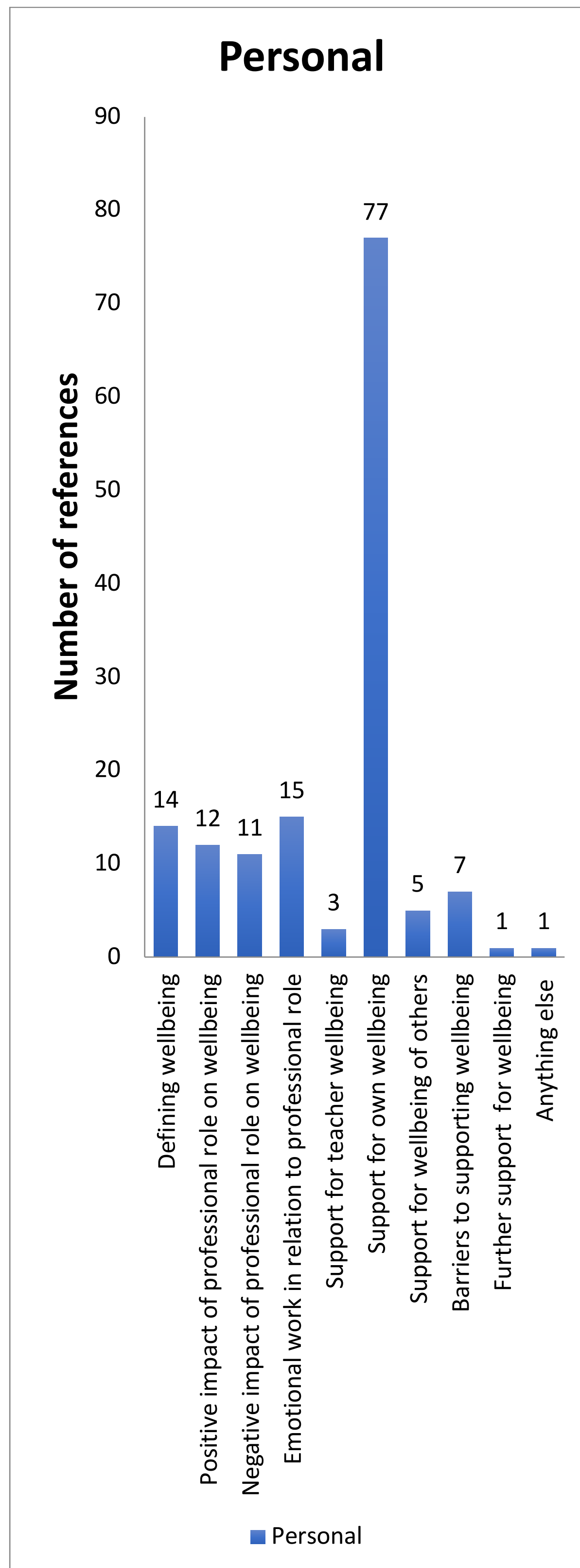
Appendix 23: Professional role emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories

Graph 5 Professional role emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories



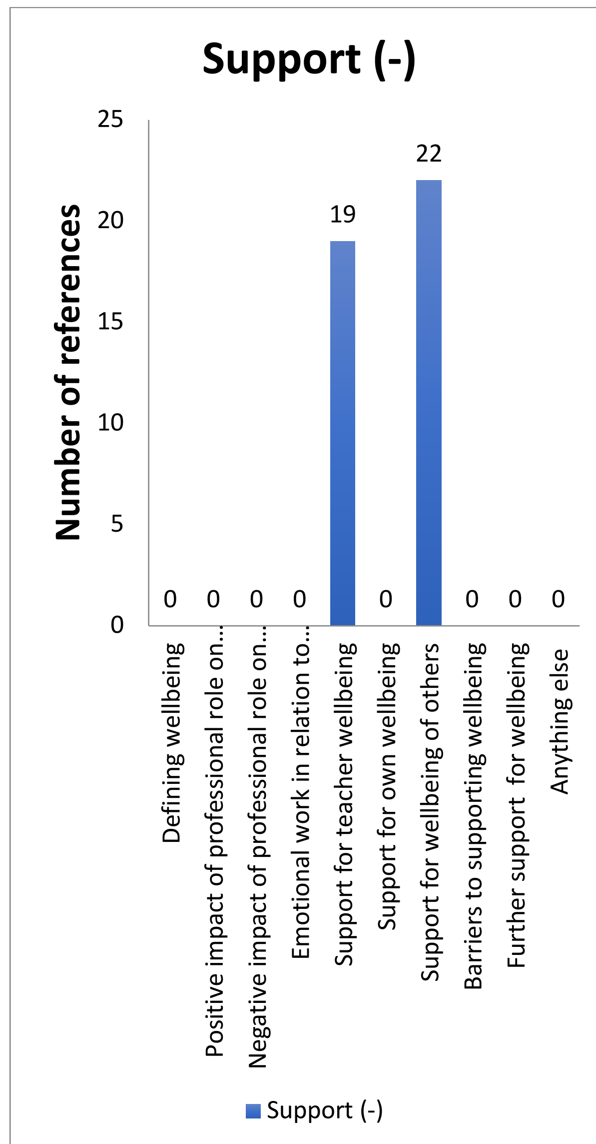
Appendix 24: Personal emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories

Graph 6 Personal emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories



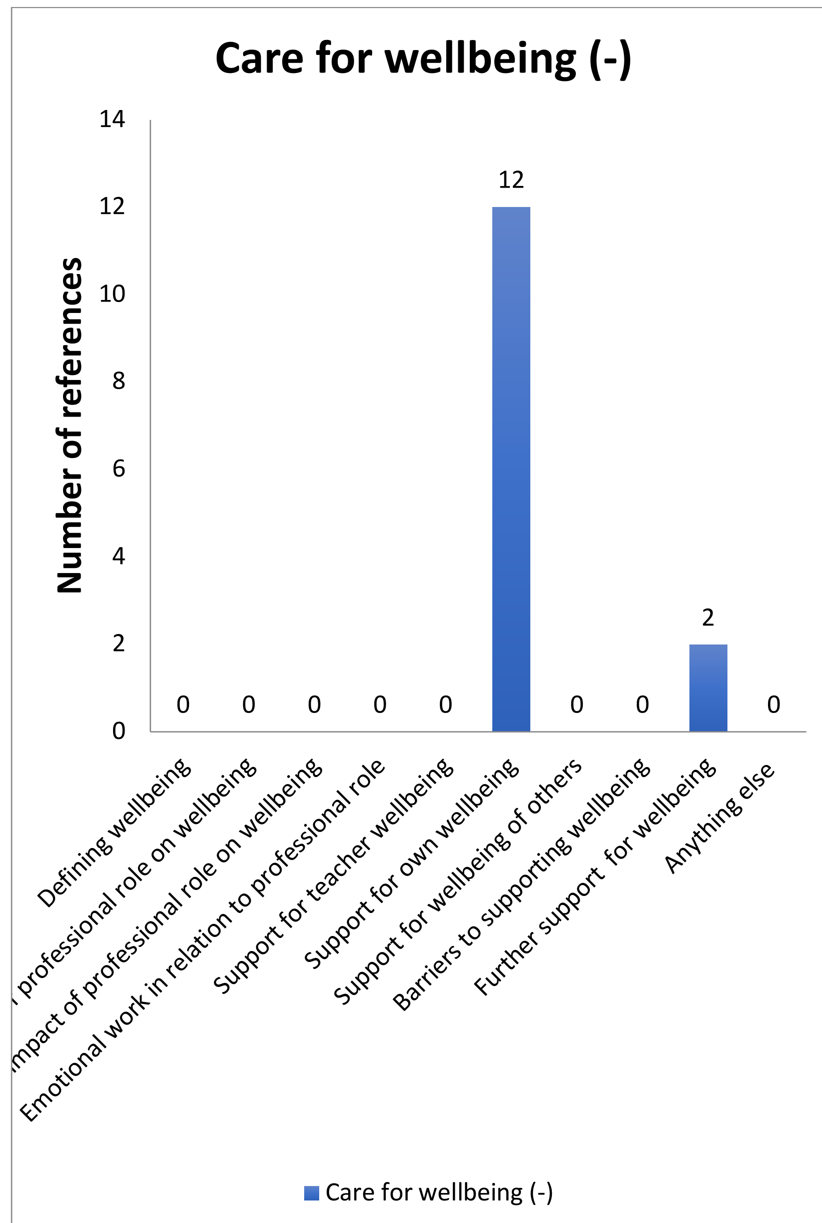
Appendix 25: Support (-) emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories

Graph 7 Support (-) emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories



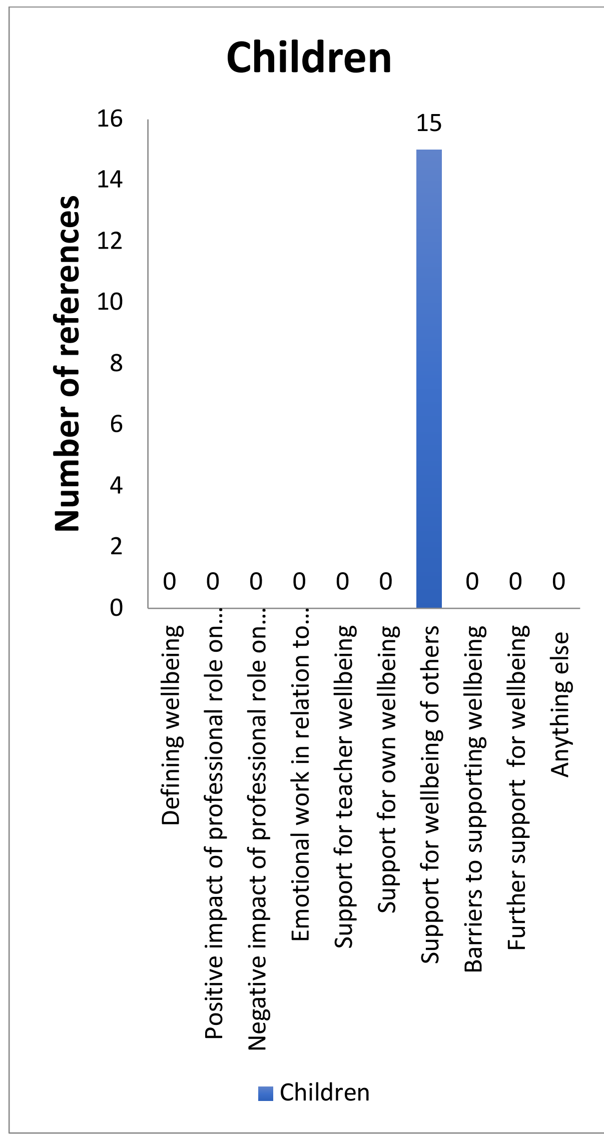
Appendix 26: Care for wellbeing (-) emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories

Graph 8 Care for wellbeing (-) emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories



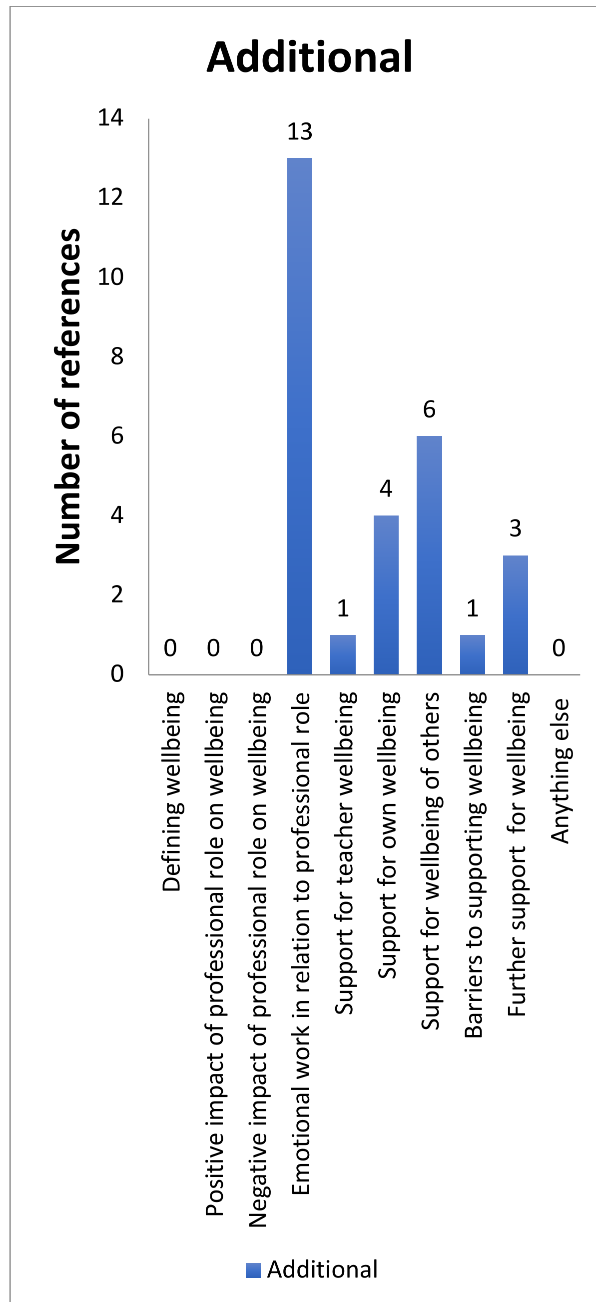
Appendix 27: Children emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories

Graph 9 Children emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories



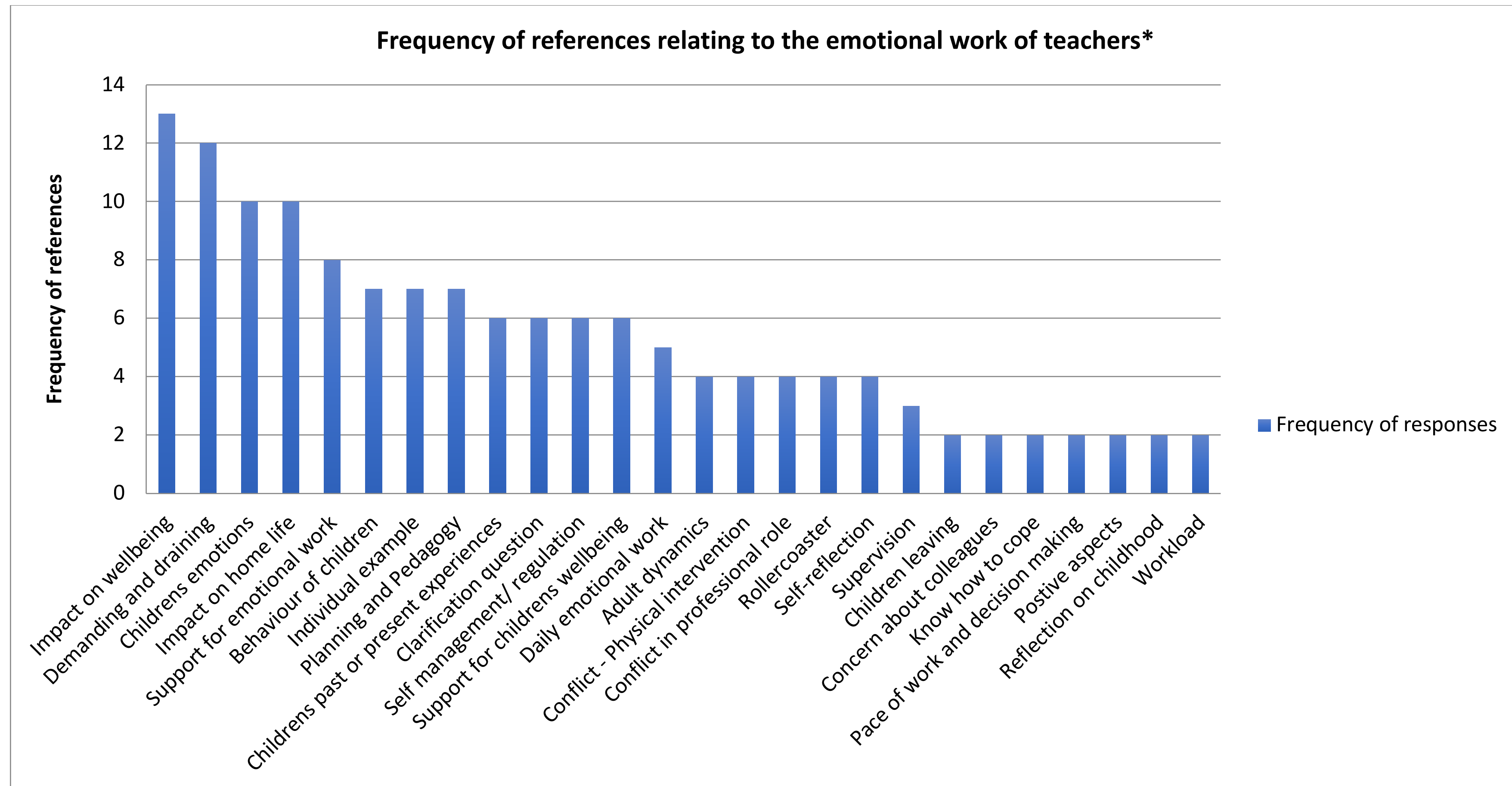
Appendix 28: Additional emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories

Graph 10 Children emergent theme references in relation to the broad categories



Appendix 29: Frequency of references relating to the emotional work of teachers

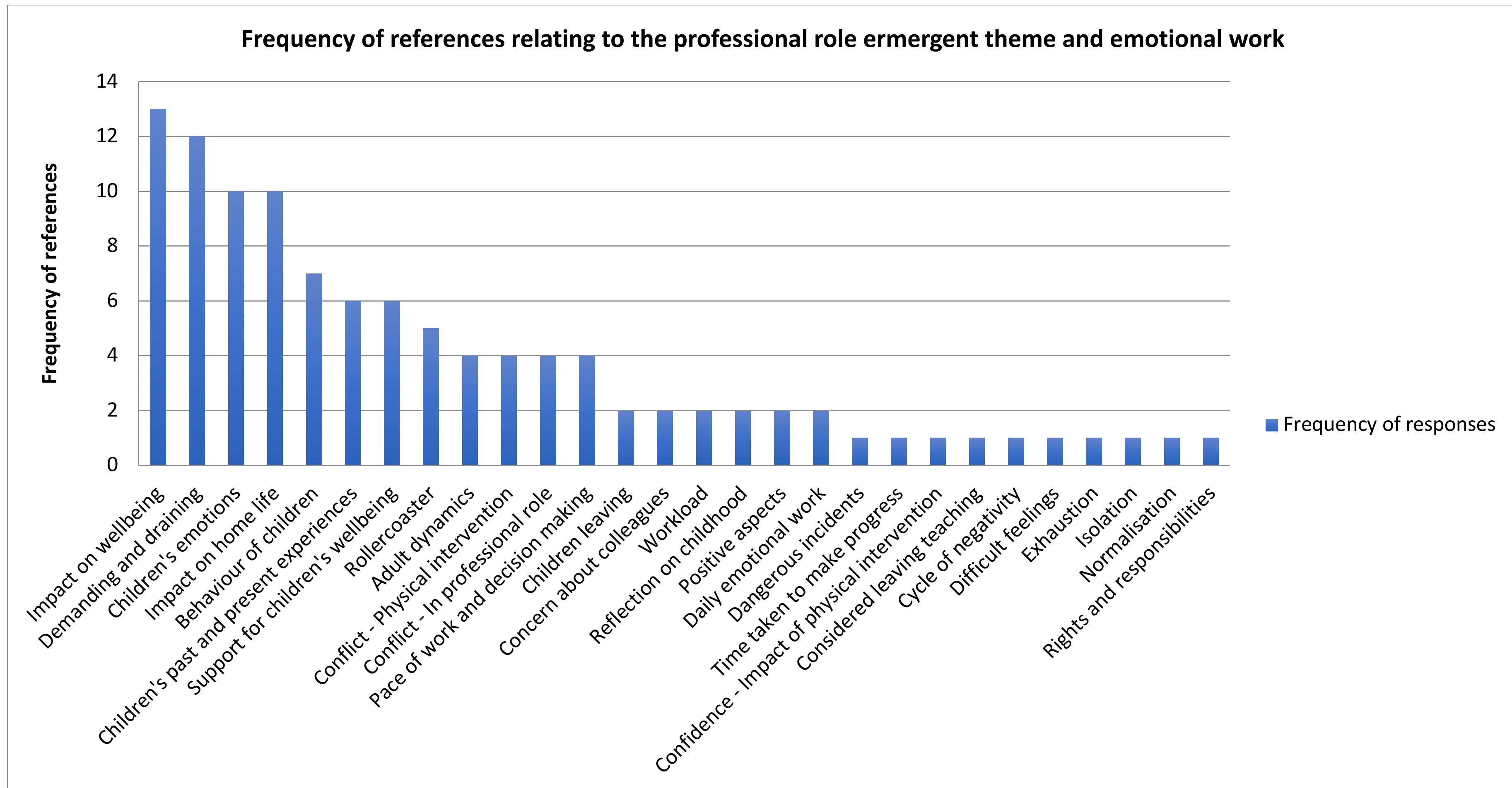
Graph 11 Frequency of references relating to the emotional work of teachers



* where more than 1 reference was coded

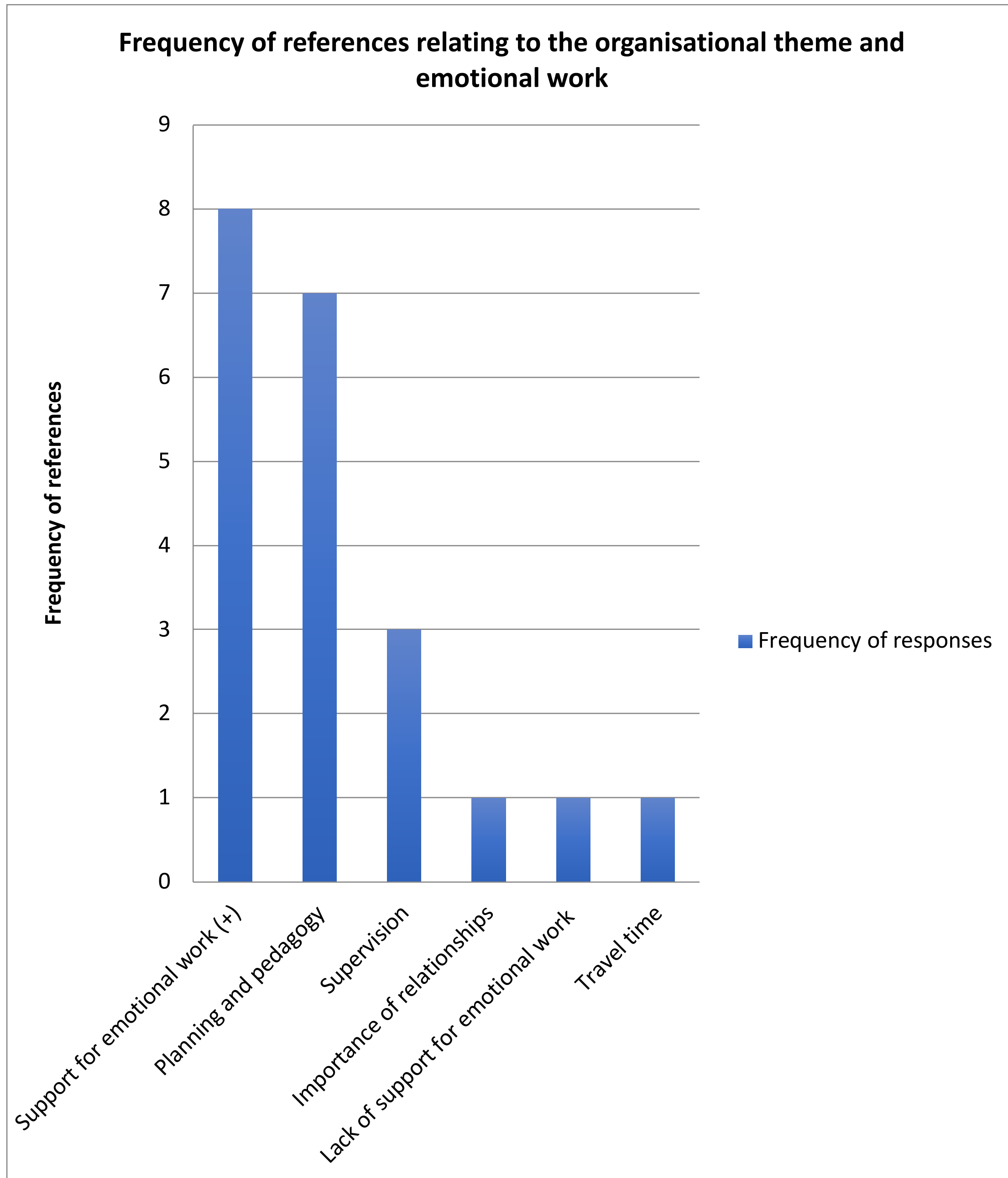
Appendix 30: Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and emotional work

Graph 12 Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and emotional work



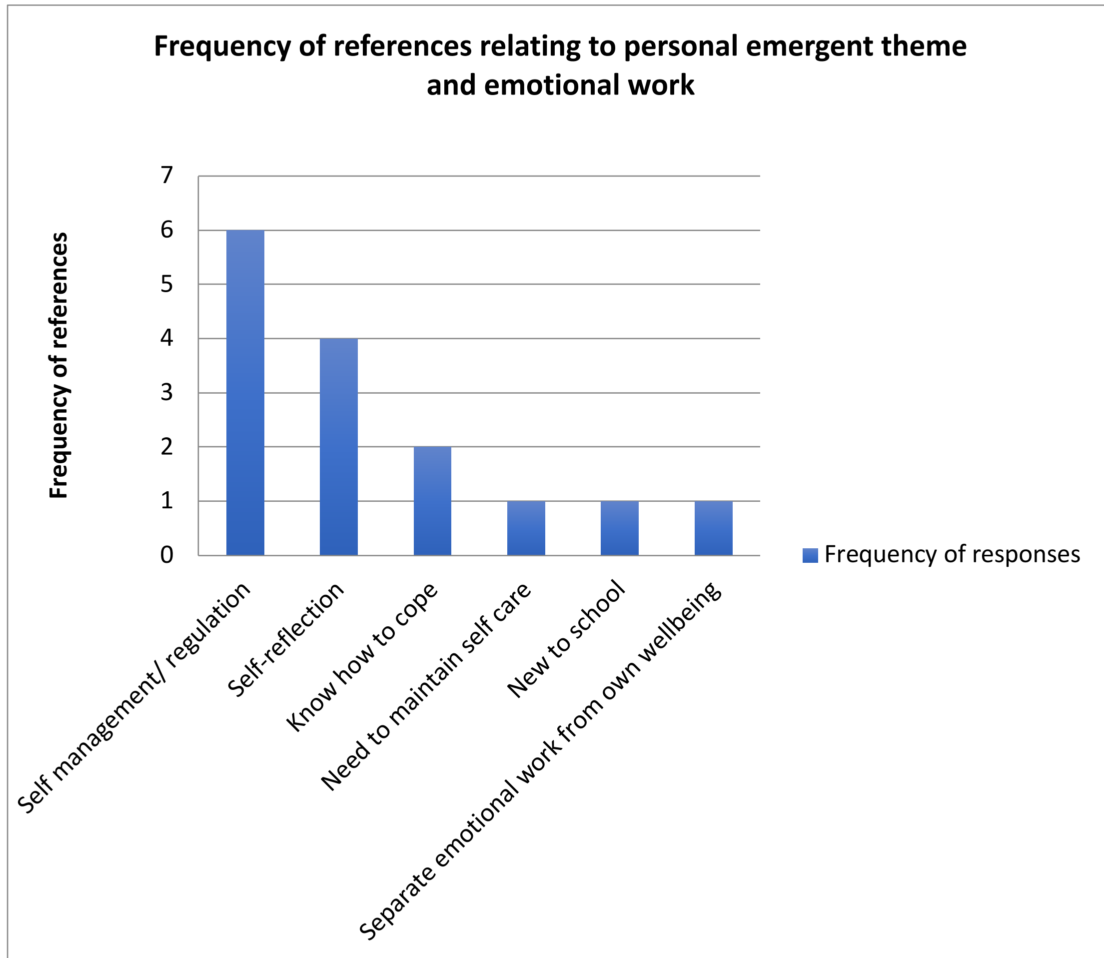
Appendix 31: Frequency of references relating to the organisational theme and emotional work

Graph 13 Frequency of references relating to the organisational theme and emotional work



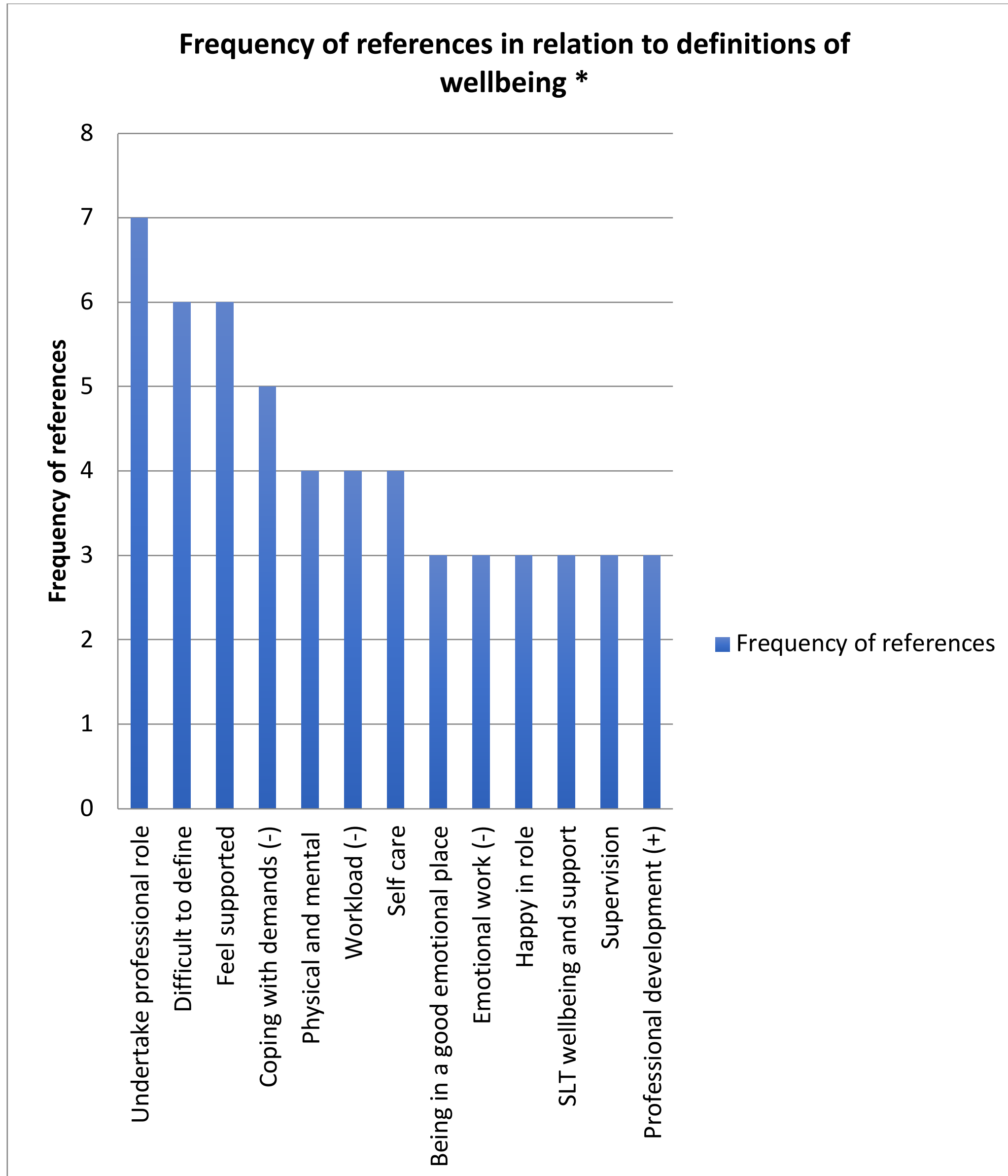
Appendix 32: Frequency of references relating to the personal role theme and emotional work

Graph 14 Frequency of references relating to the personal role theme and emotional work



Appendix 33: Frequency of references in relation to the definitions of wellbeing broad category

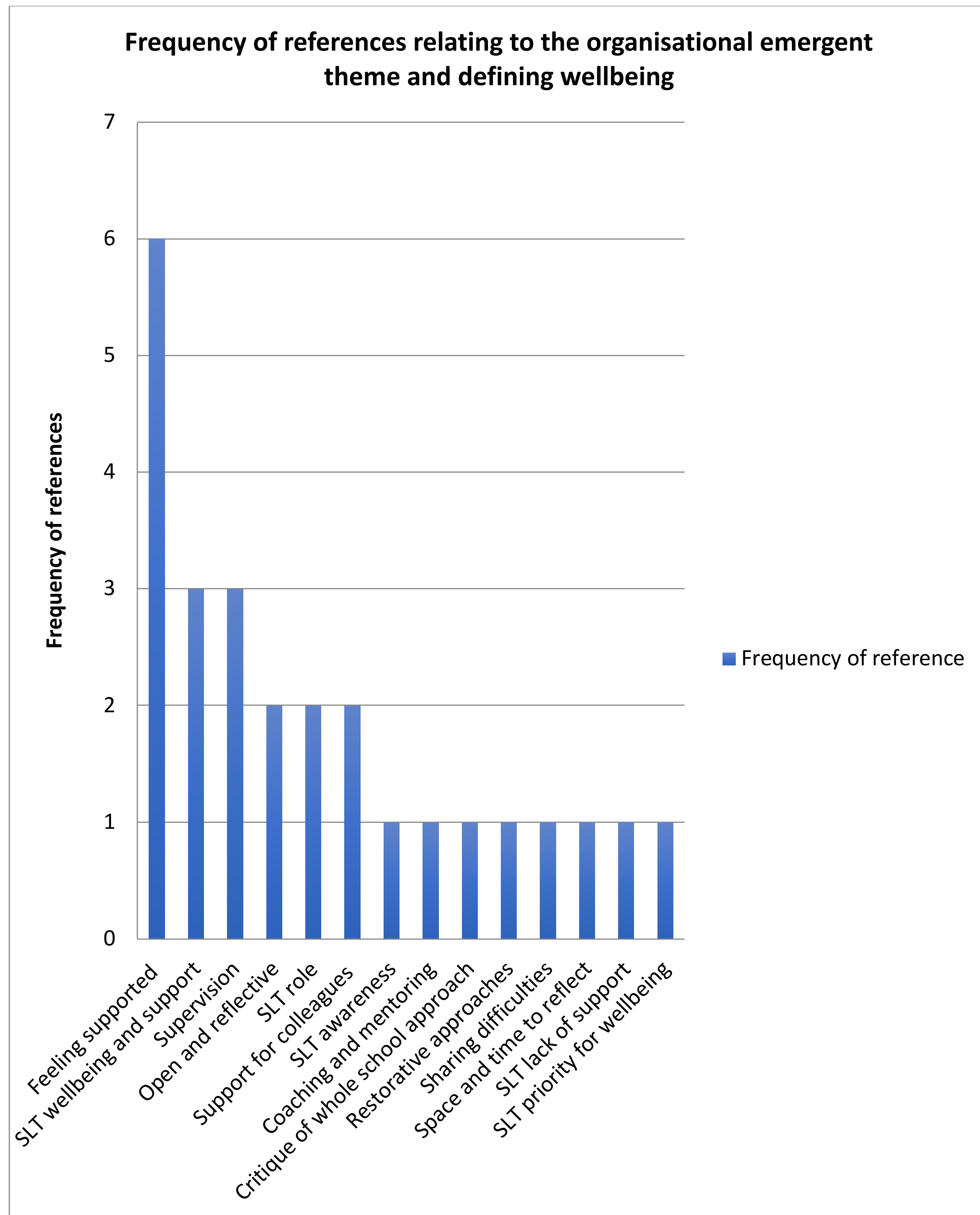
Graph 15 Frequency of references in relation to the definitions of wellbeing broad category



* where more than 1 reference was coded.

Appendix 34: Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and defining wellbeing

Graph 16 Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and defining wellbeing



Appendix 35: Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and defining wellbeing

Graph 17 Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and defining wellbeing

Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and defining wellbeing

Frequency of references

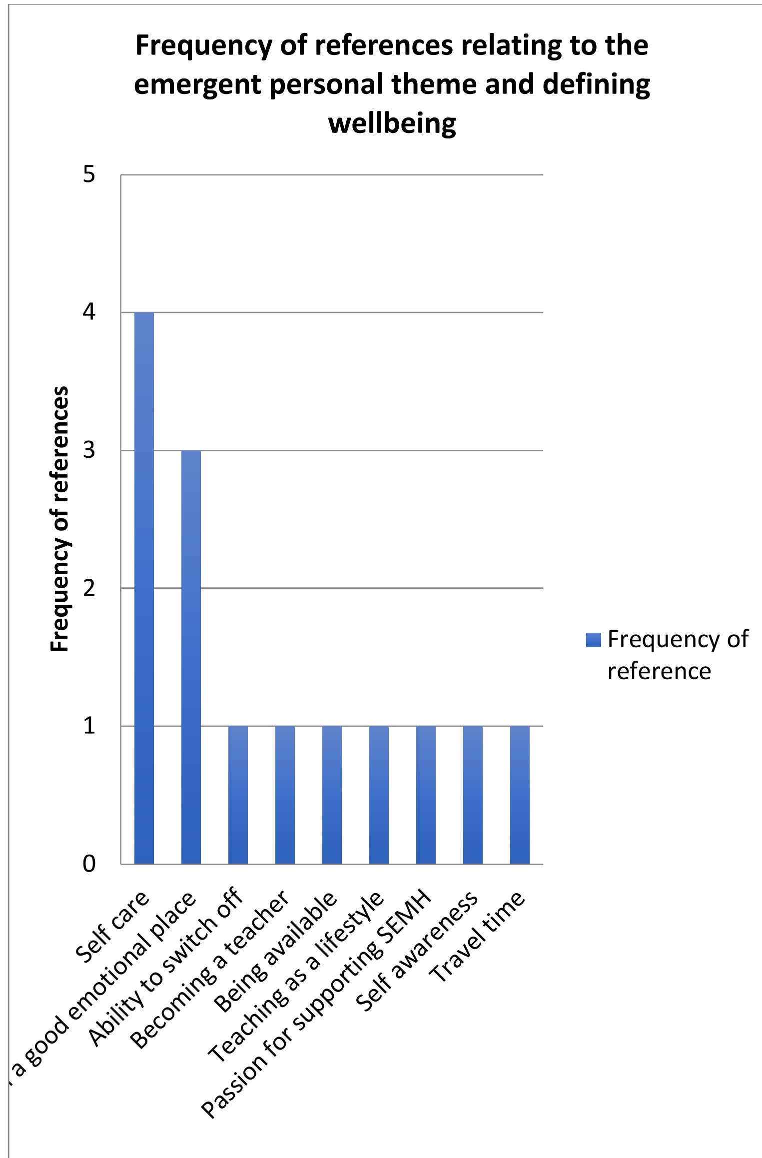
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
1
0

Undertake professional role
Coping with demands (-)
Physical and mental
Emotional work (-)
Mask
Balance
Conflict staff V pupil wellbeing
Attritional
Fluctuant
Refreshments (+)
Parents (-)
Be respected
Impact of low wellbeing (-)
Personal dimension of teaching

Frequency of reference

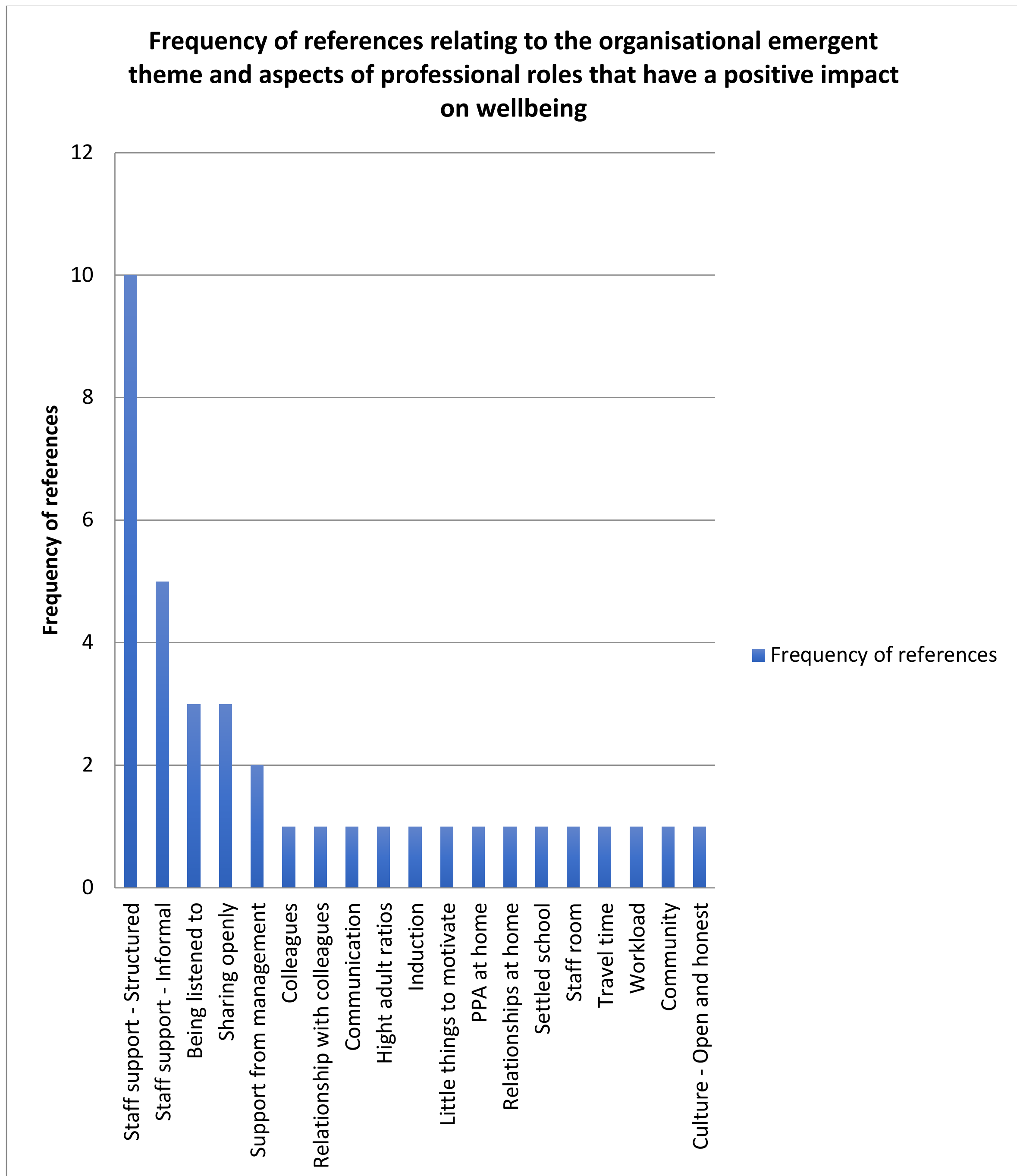
Appendix 36: Frequency of references relating to the personal emergent theme and defining wellbeing

Graph 18 Frequency of references relating to the personal emergent theme and defining wellbeing



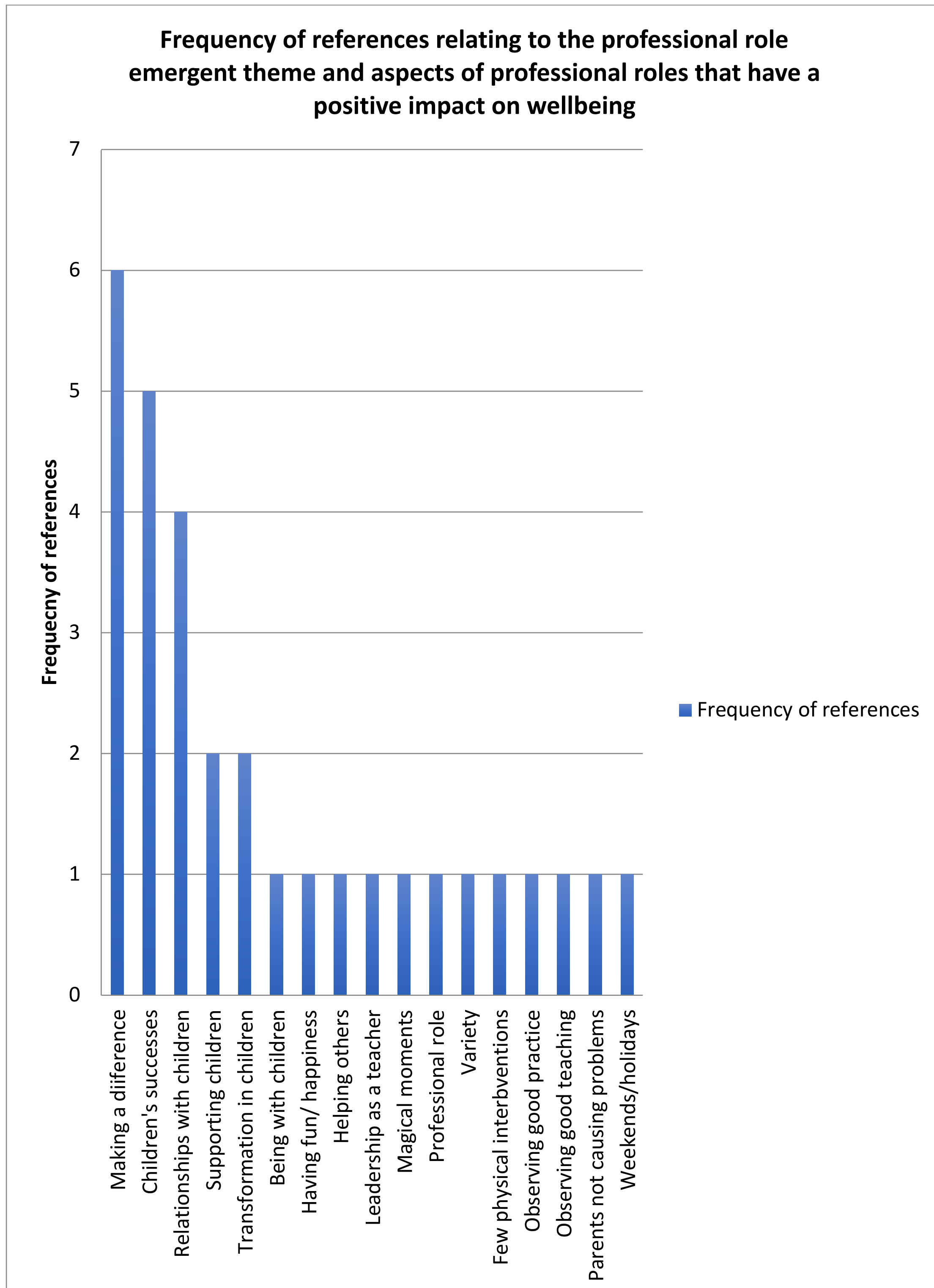
Appendix 37: Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing

Graph 19 Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing



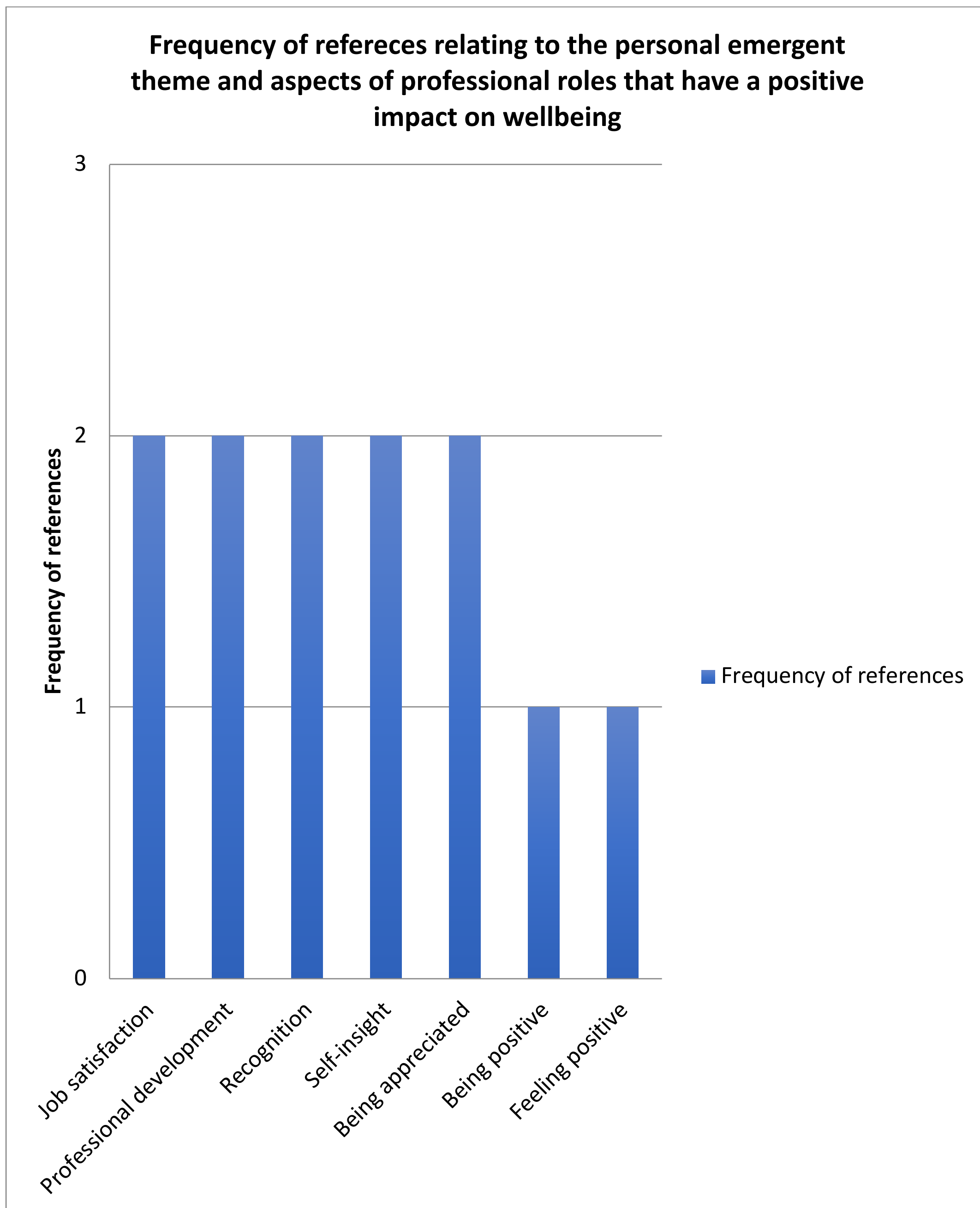
Appendix 38: Frequency of references relating to the professional role theme and aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing

Graph 20 Frequency of references relating to the professional role theme and aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing



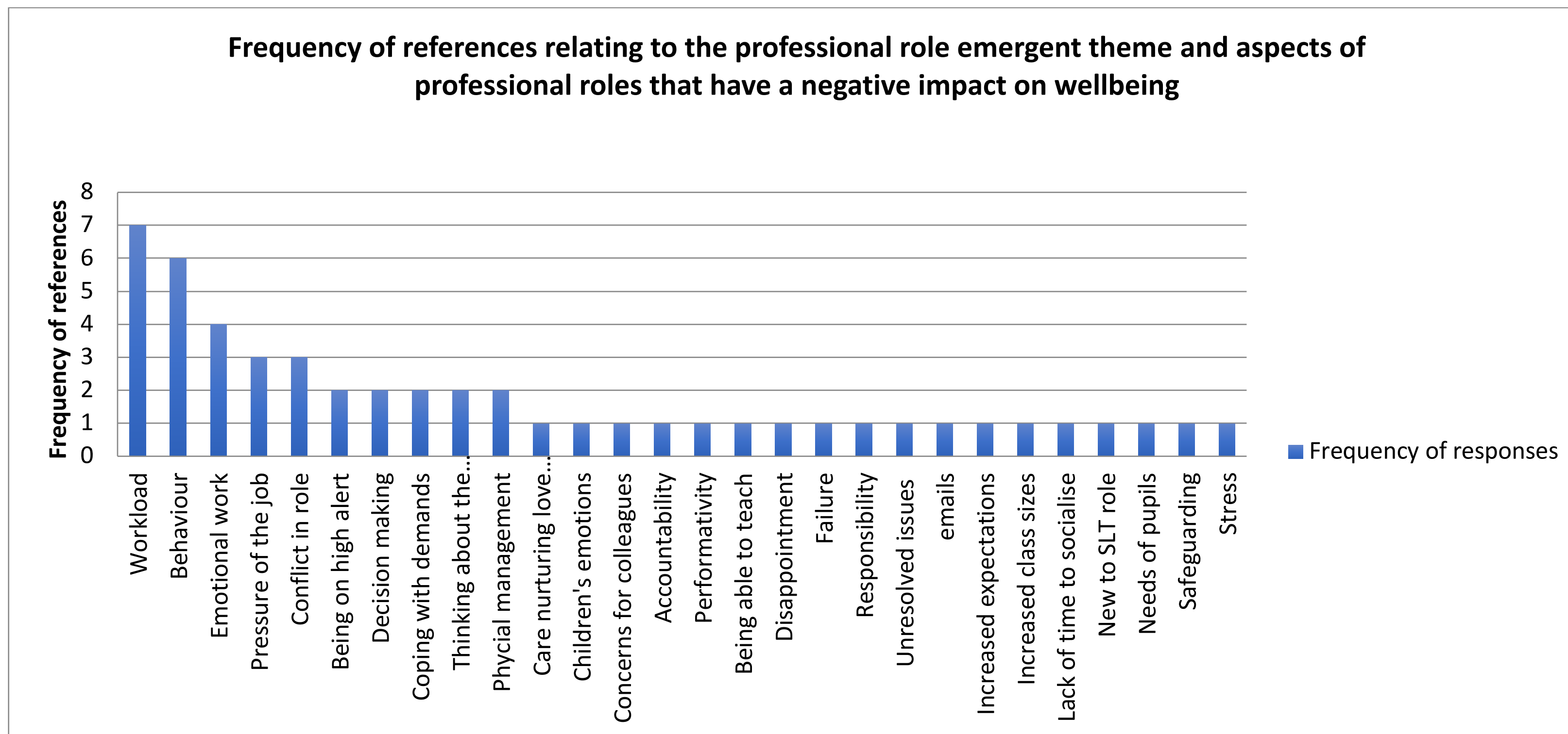
Appendix 39: Frequency of references relating to the personal emergent theme and aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing

Graph 21 Frequency of references relating to the personal emergent theme and aspects of professional roles that have a positive impact on wellbeing



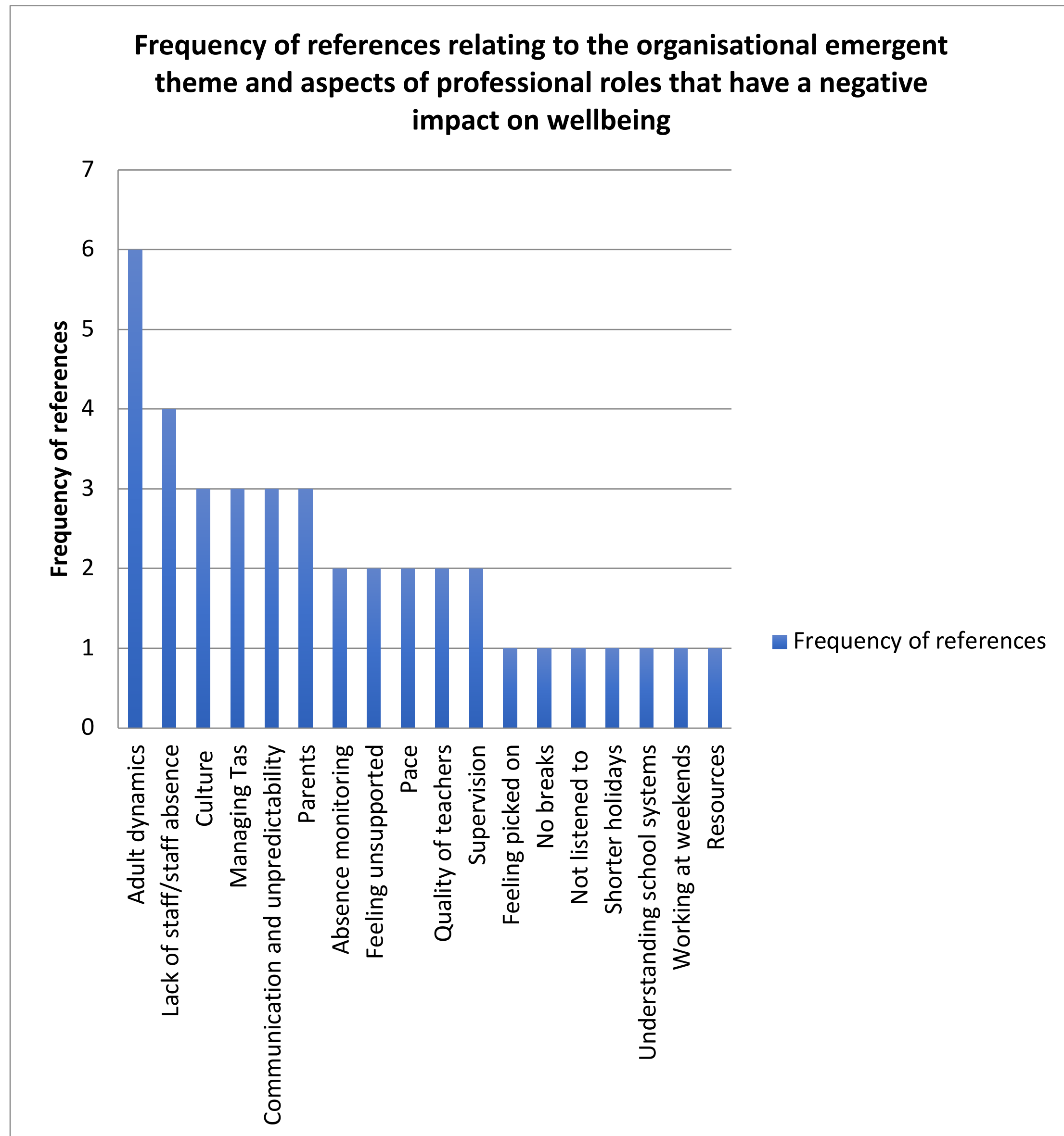
Appendix 40: Frequency of references relating to the professional theme and aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing

Graph 22 Frequency of references relating to the professional theme and aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing



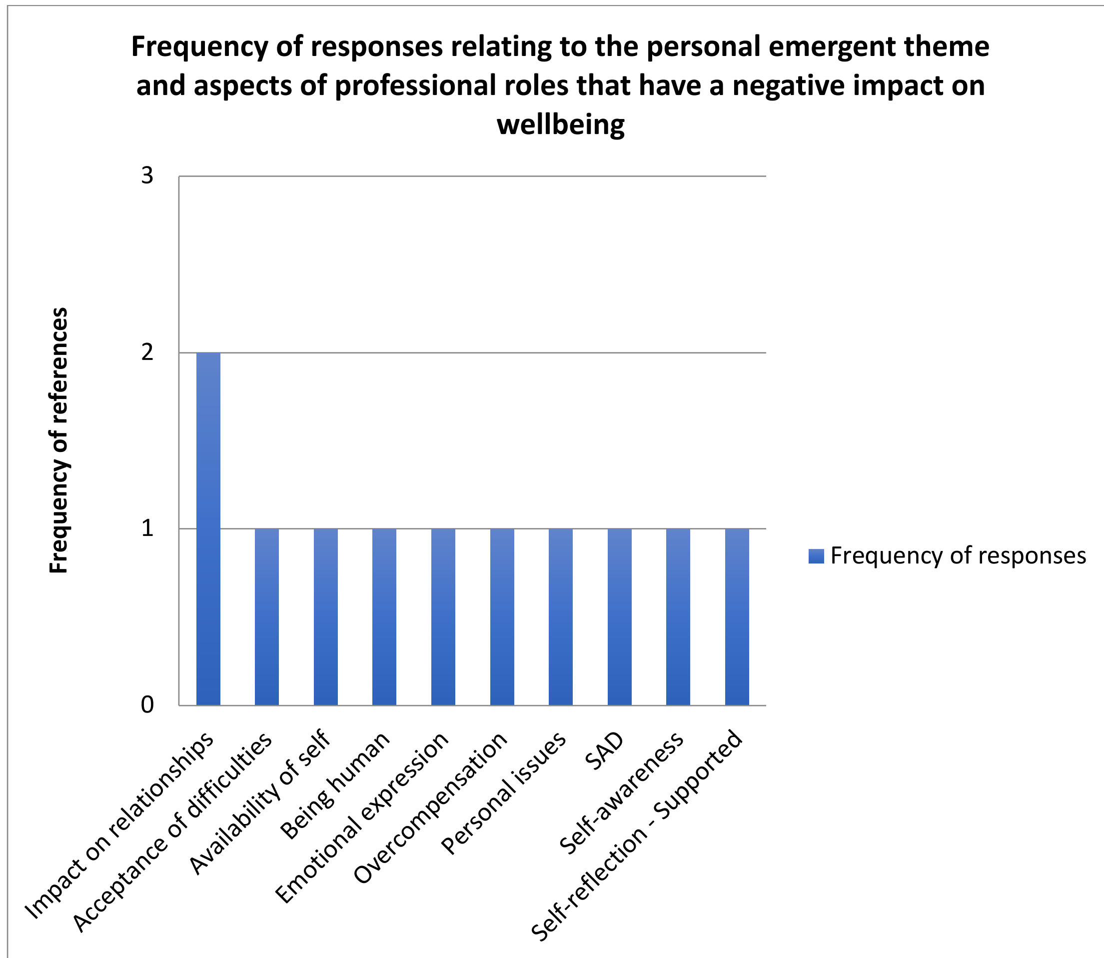
Appendix 41: Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing

Graph 23 Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing



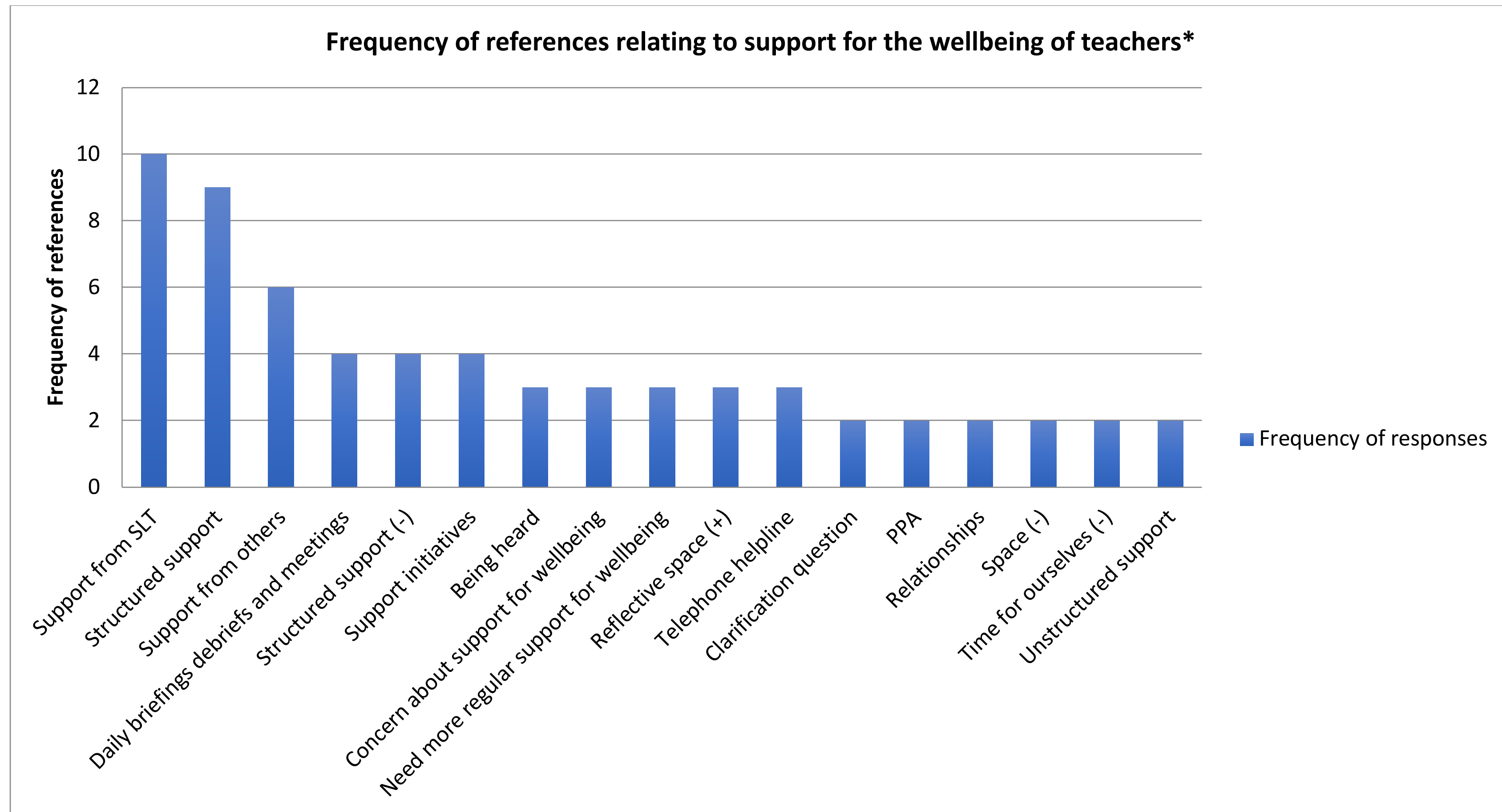
Appendix 42: Frequency of references relating to the personal emergent theme and aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing

Graph 24 Frequency of references relating to the personal emergent theme and aspects of professional roles that have a negative impact on wellbeing



Appendix 43: Frequency of references relating to the support for wellbeing

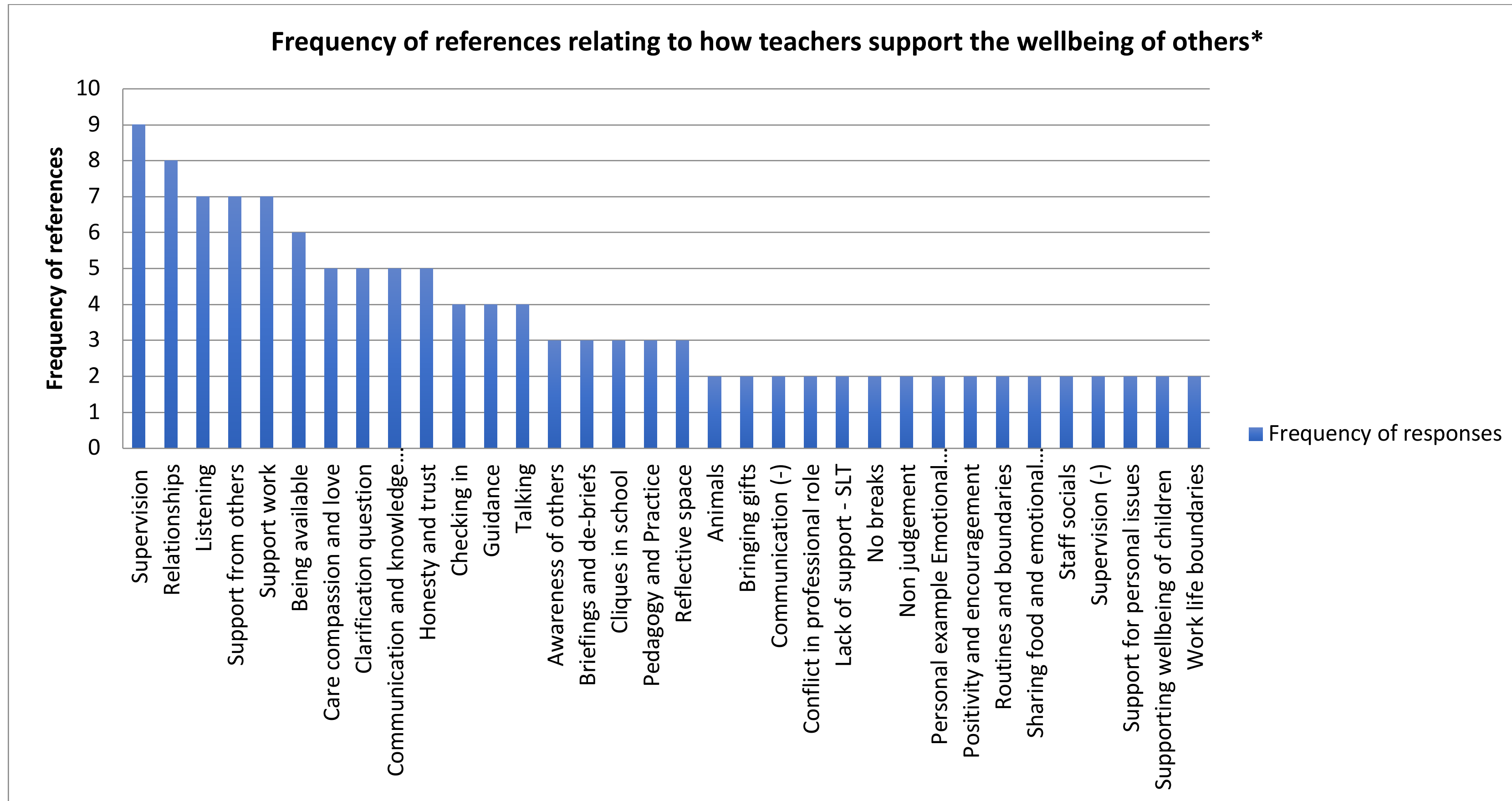
Graph 25 Frequency of references relating to the support for wellbeing



* where more than 1 reference was coded.

Appendix 44: Frequency of references relating how teachers support the wellbeing of others

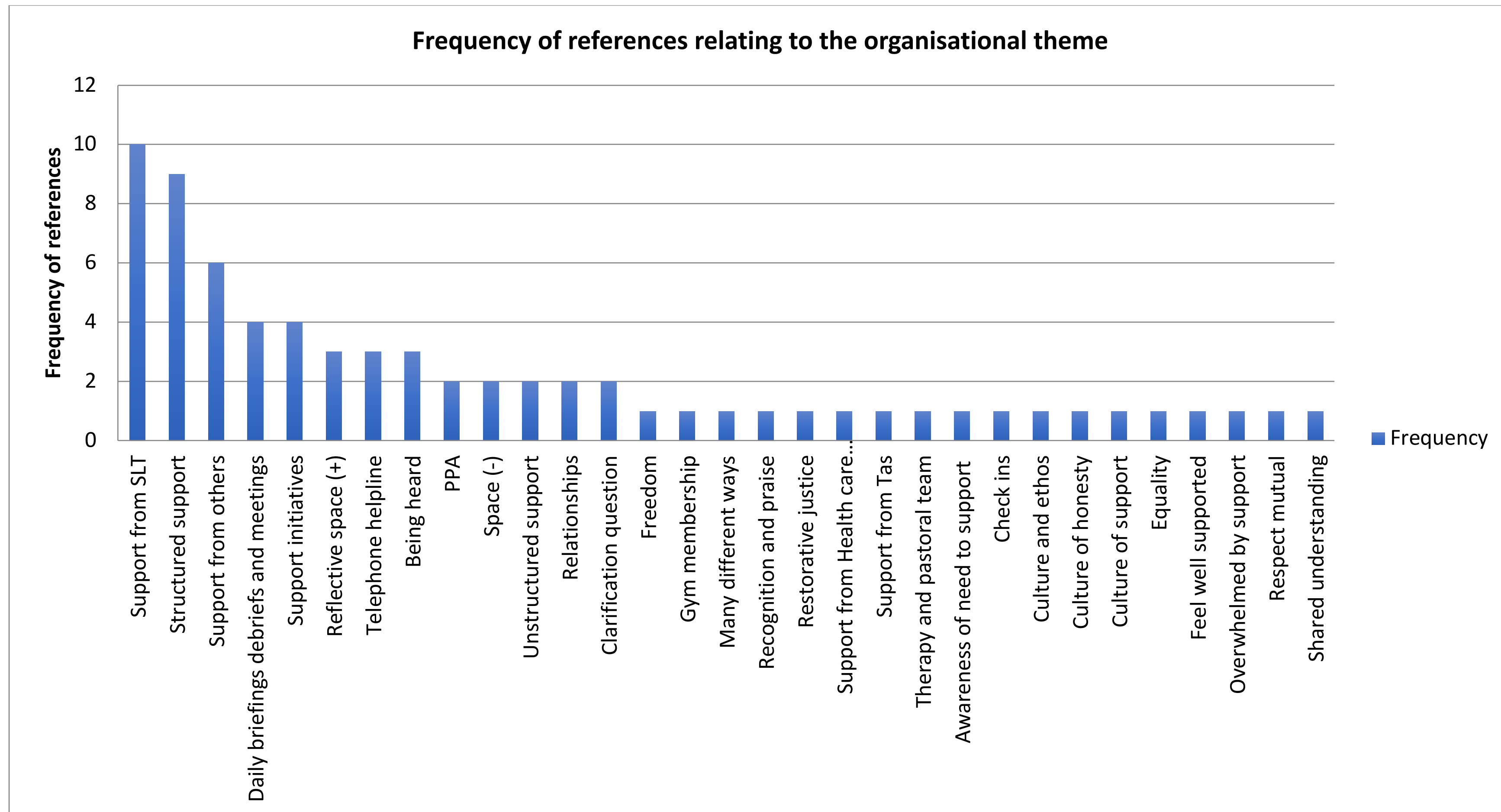
Graph 26 Frequency of references relating how teachers support the wellbeing of others



* where more than 1 reference was coded.

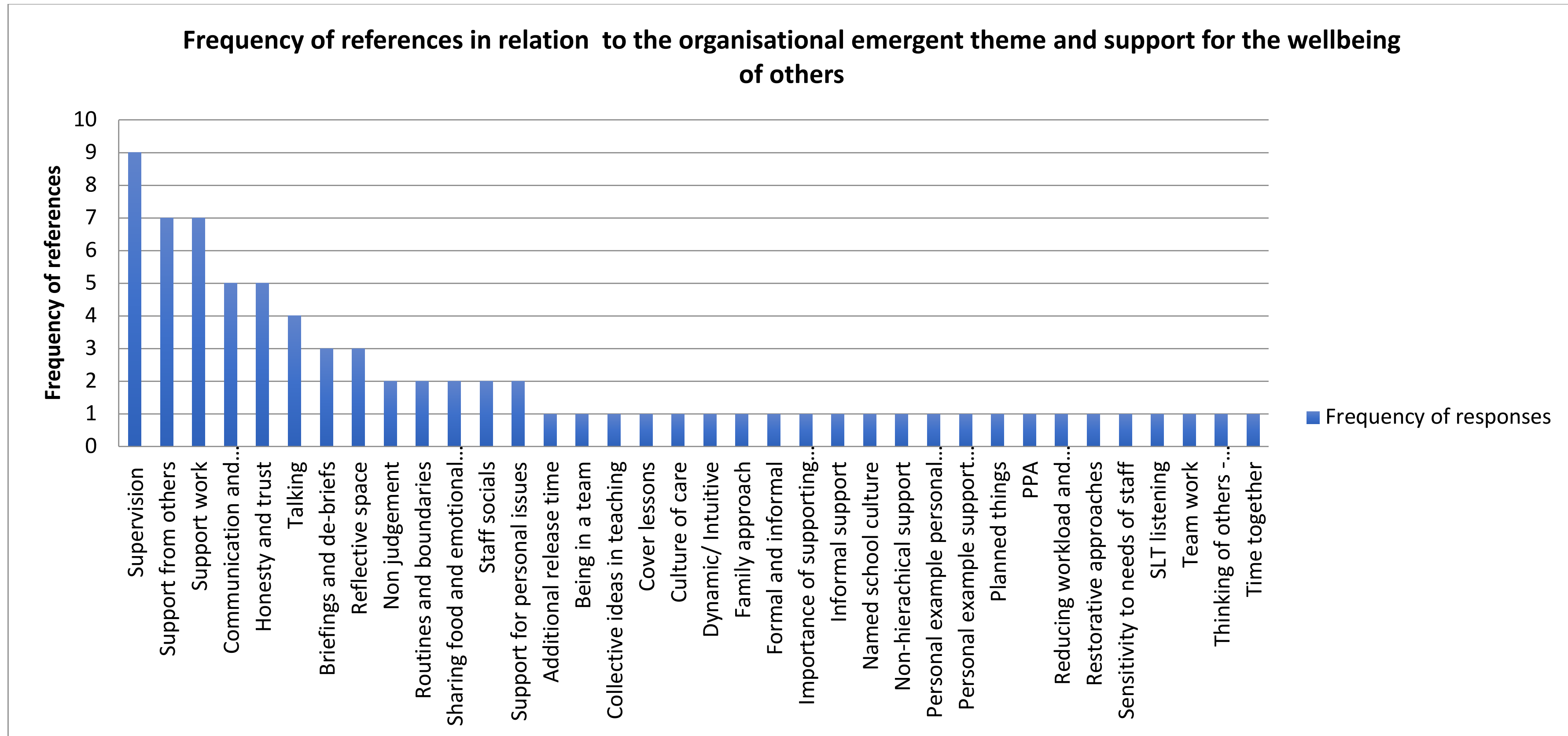
Appendix 45: Frequency of references relating to the organisational theme and support for wellbeing

Graph 27 Frequency of references relating to the organisational theme and support for wellbeing



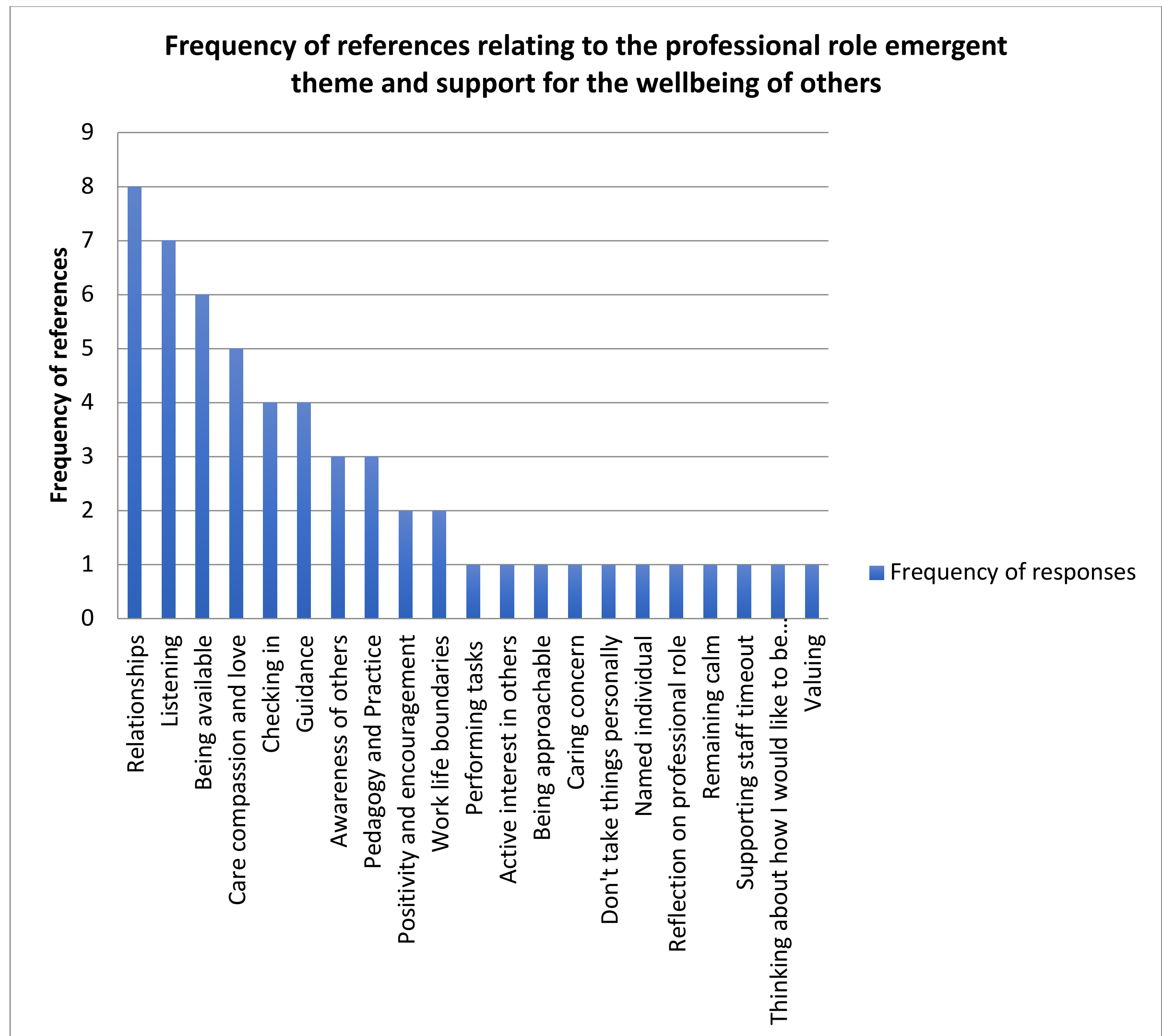
Appendix 46: Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and support for the wellbeing of others

Graph 28 Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and support for the wellbeing of others



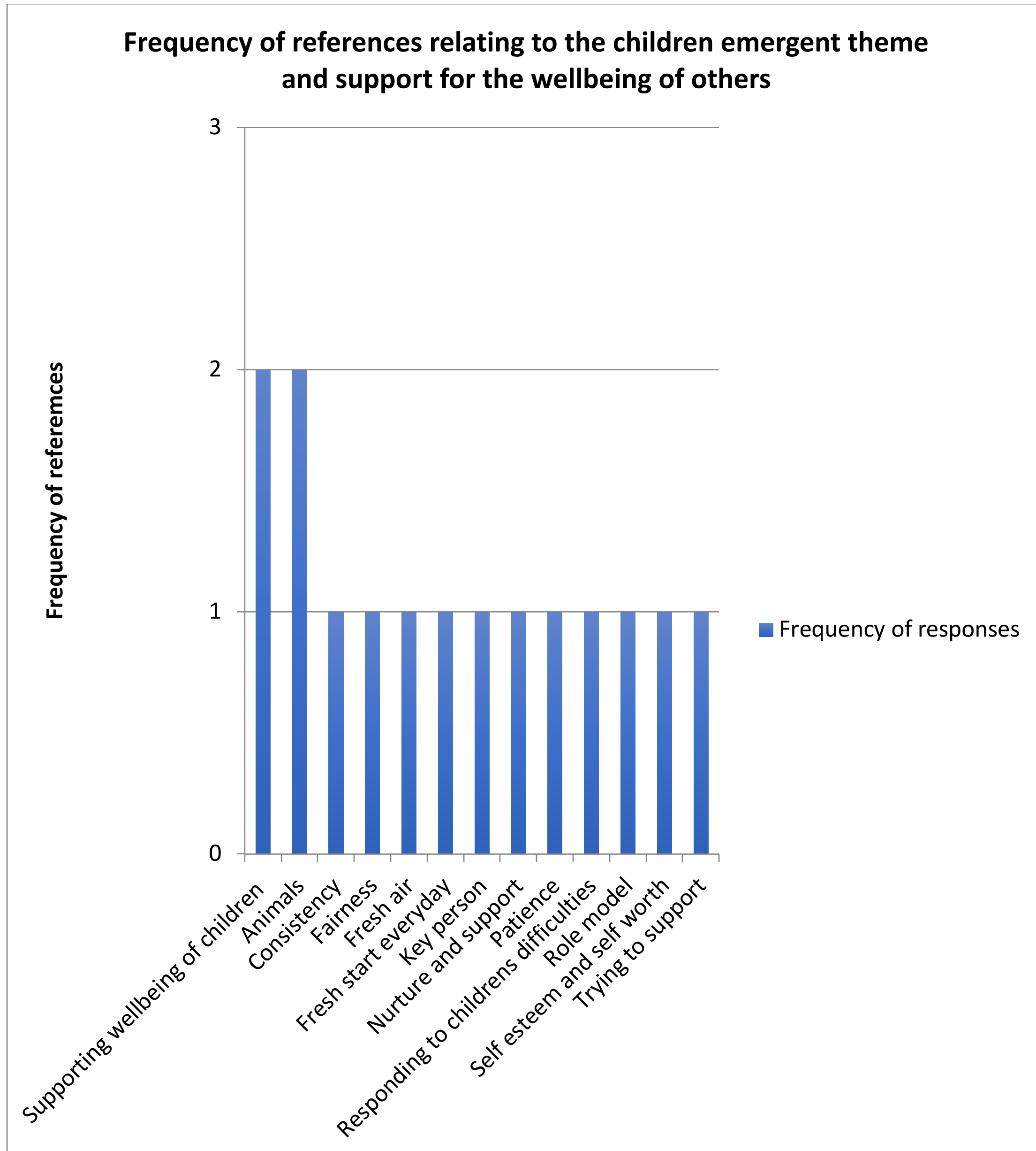
Appendix 47: Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and support for the wellbeing of others

Graph 29 Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and support for the wellbeing of others



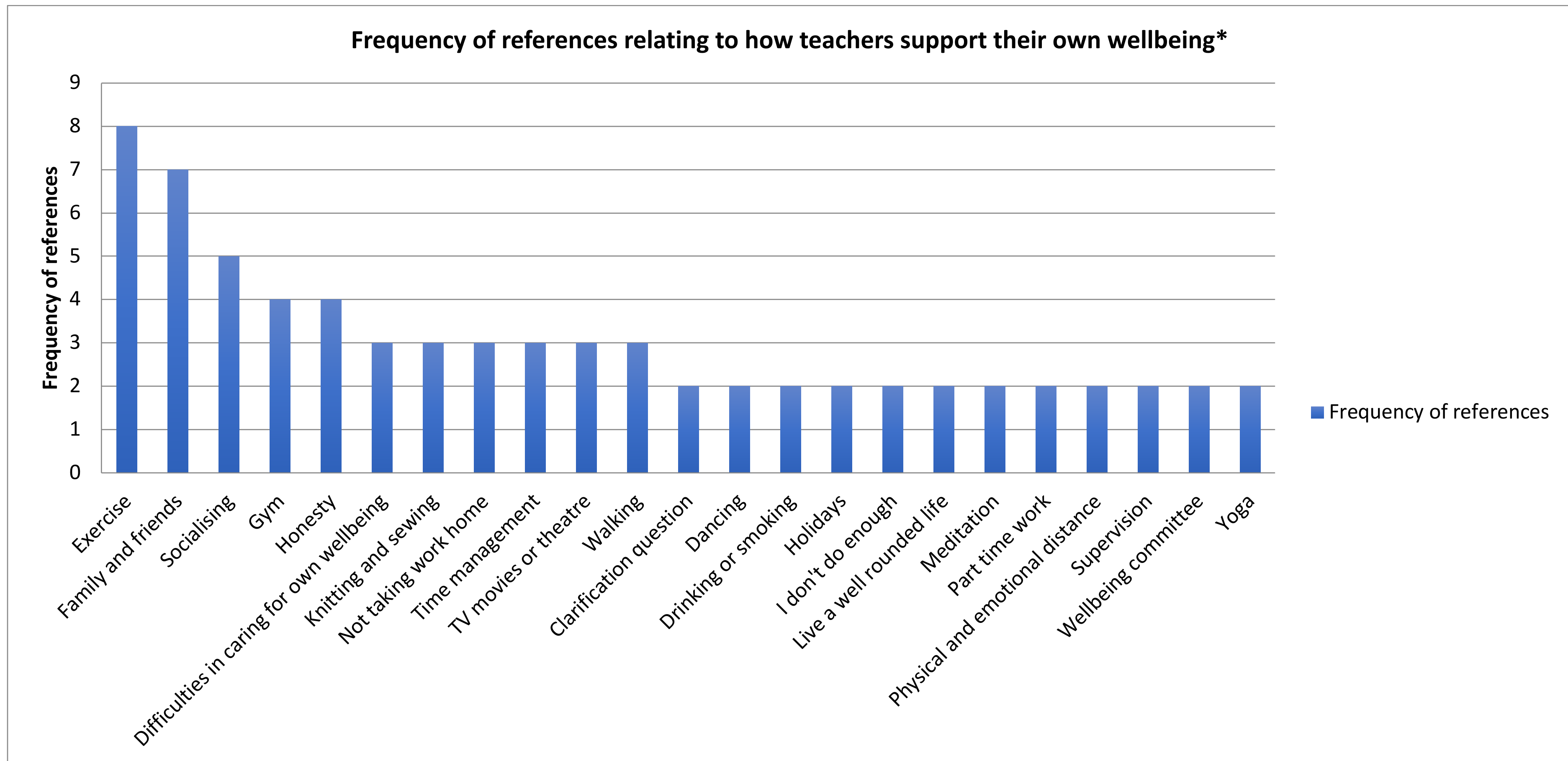
Appendix 48: Frequency of references relating to the children theme and support for the wellbeing of others

Graph 30 Frequency of references relating to the children theme and support for the wellbeing of others



Appendix 49: Frequency of references relating to how teachers support their own wellbeing

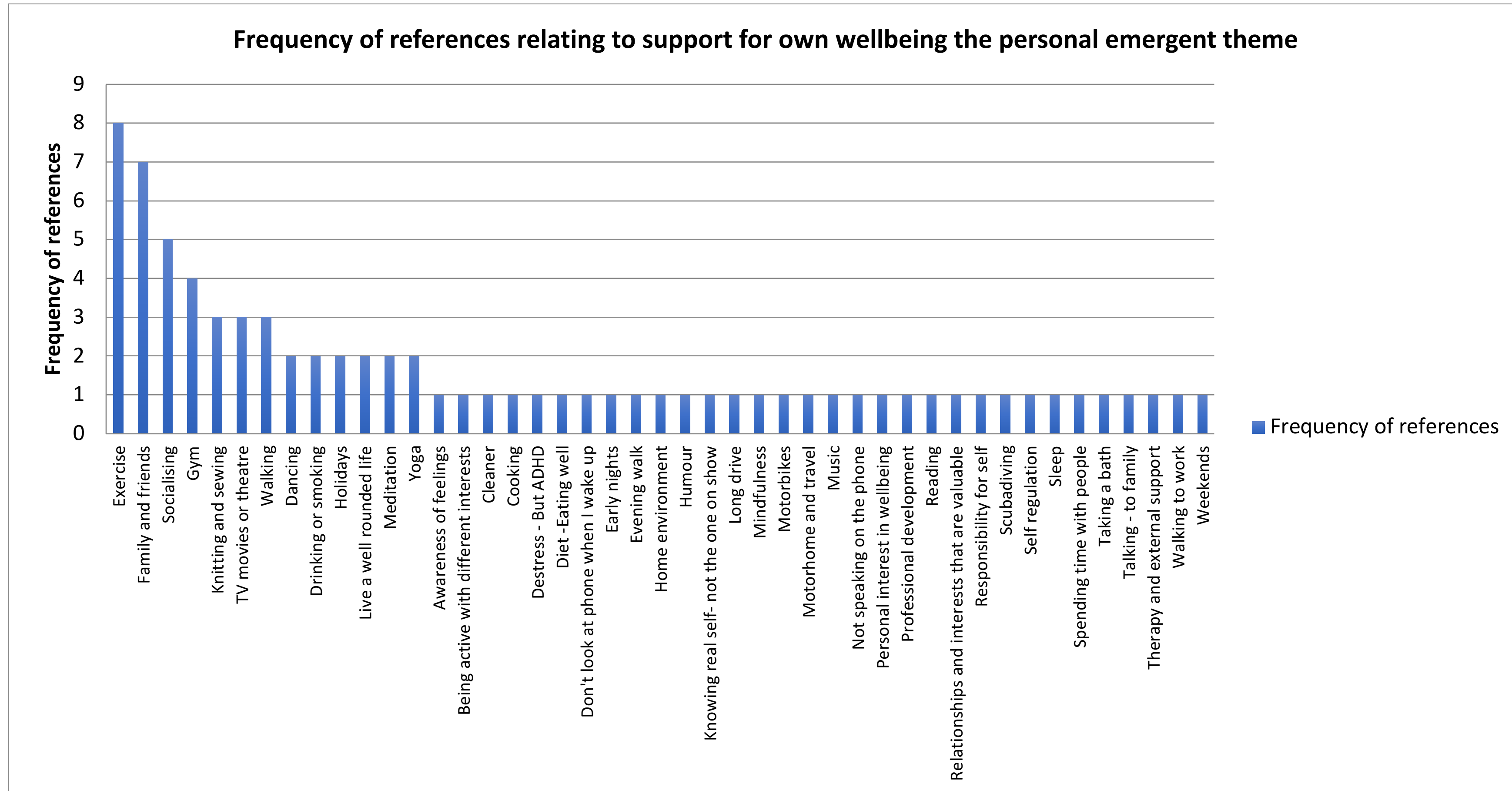
Graph 31 Frequency of references relating to how teachers support their own wellbeing



* where more than 1 reference was coded.

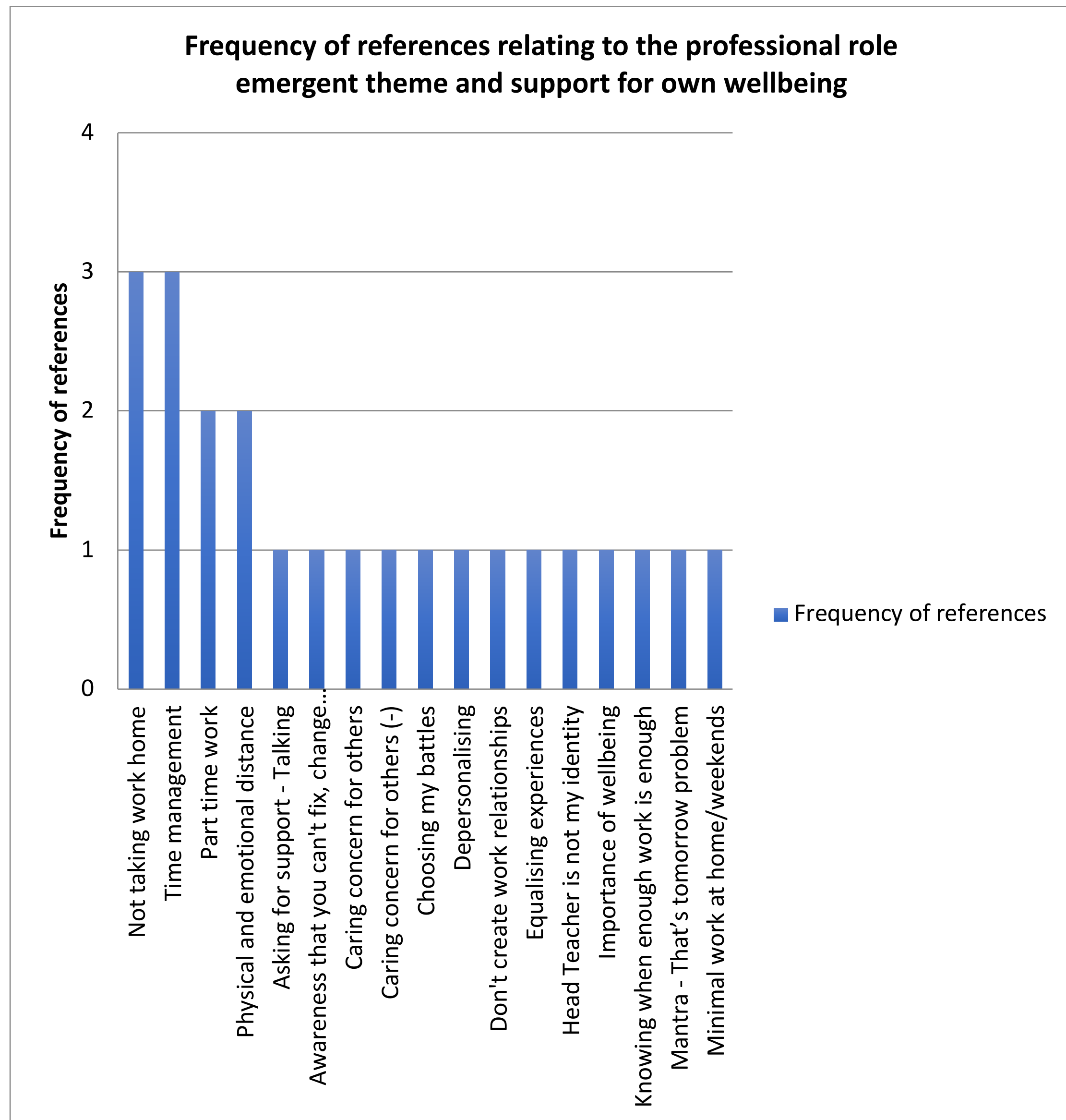
Appendix 50: Support for own wellbeing and the personal emergent theme

Graph 32 Support for own wellbeing and the personal emergent theme



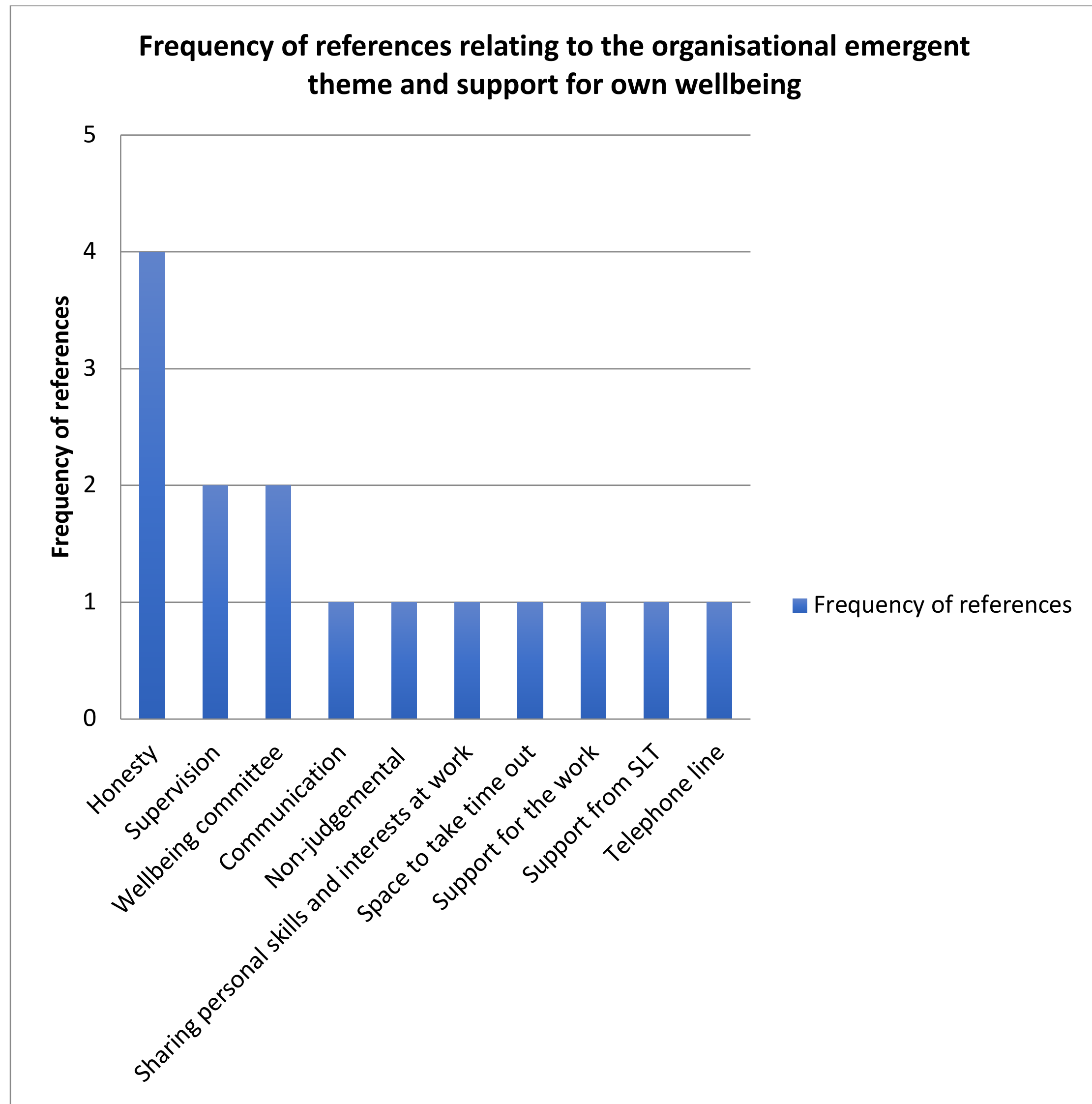
Appendix 51: Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and support for own wellbeing

Graph 33 Frequency of references relating to the professional role emergent theme and support for own wellbeing



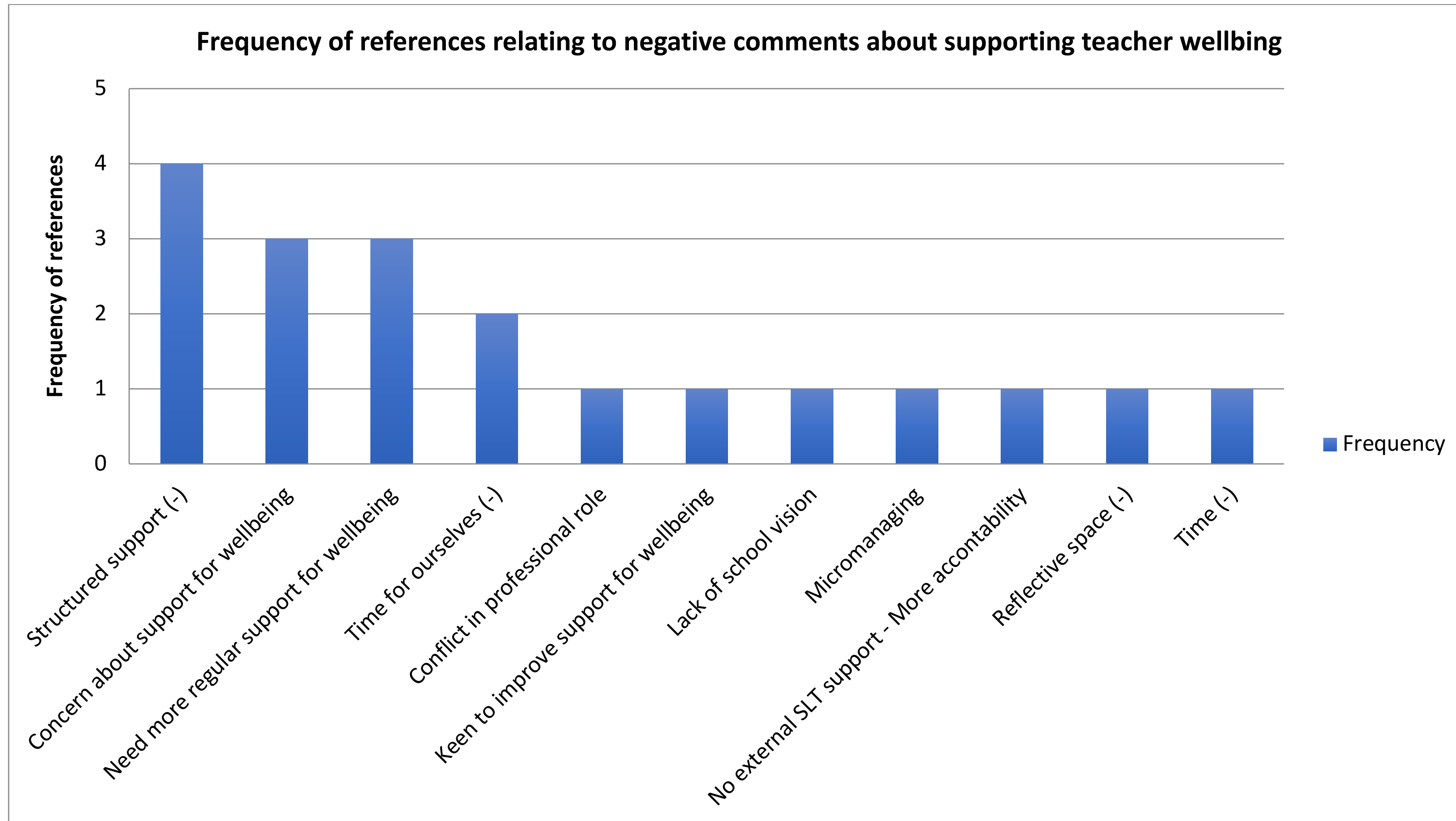
Appendix 52: Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and support for own wellbeing

Graph 34 Frequency of references relating to the organisational emergent theme and support for own wellbeing



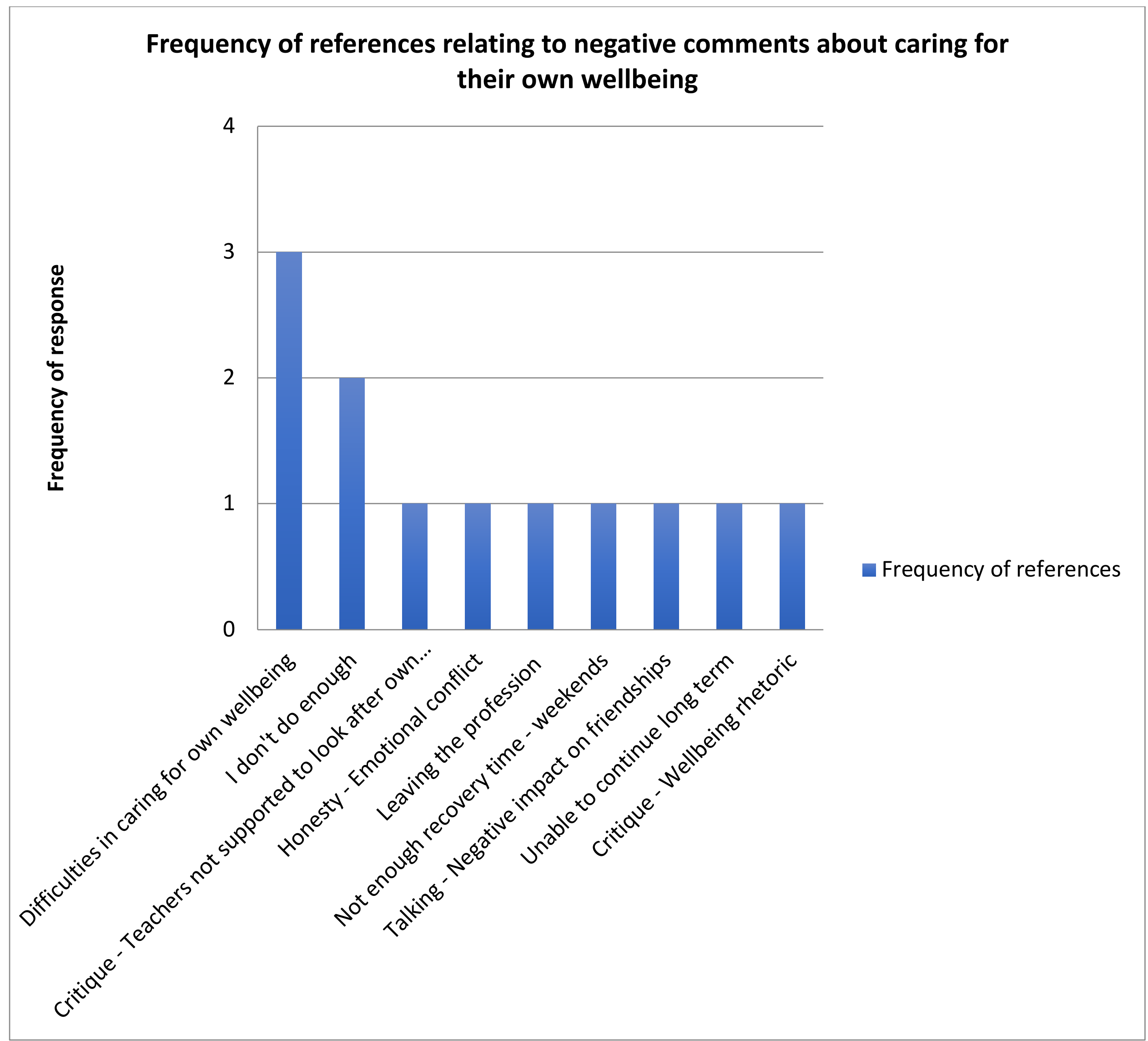
Appendix 53: Frequency of references relating to negative comments about supporting teacher wellbeing

Graph 35 Frequency of references relating to negative comments about supporting teacher wellbeing



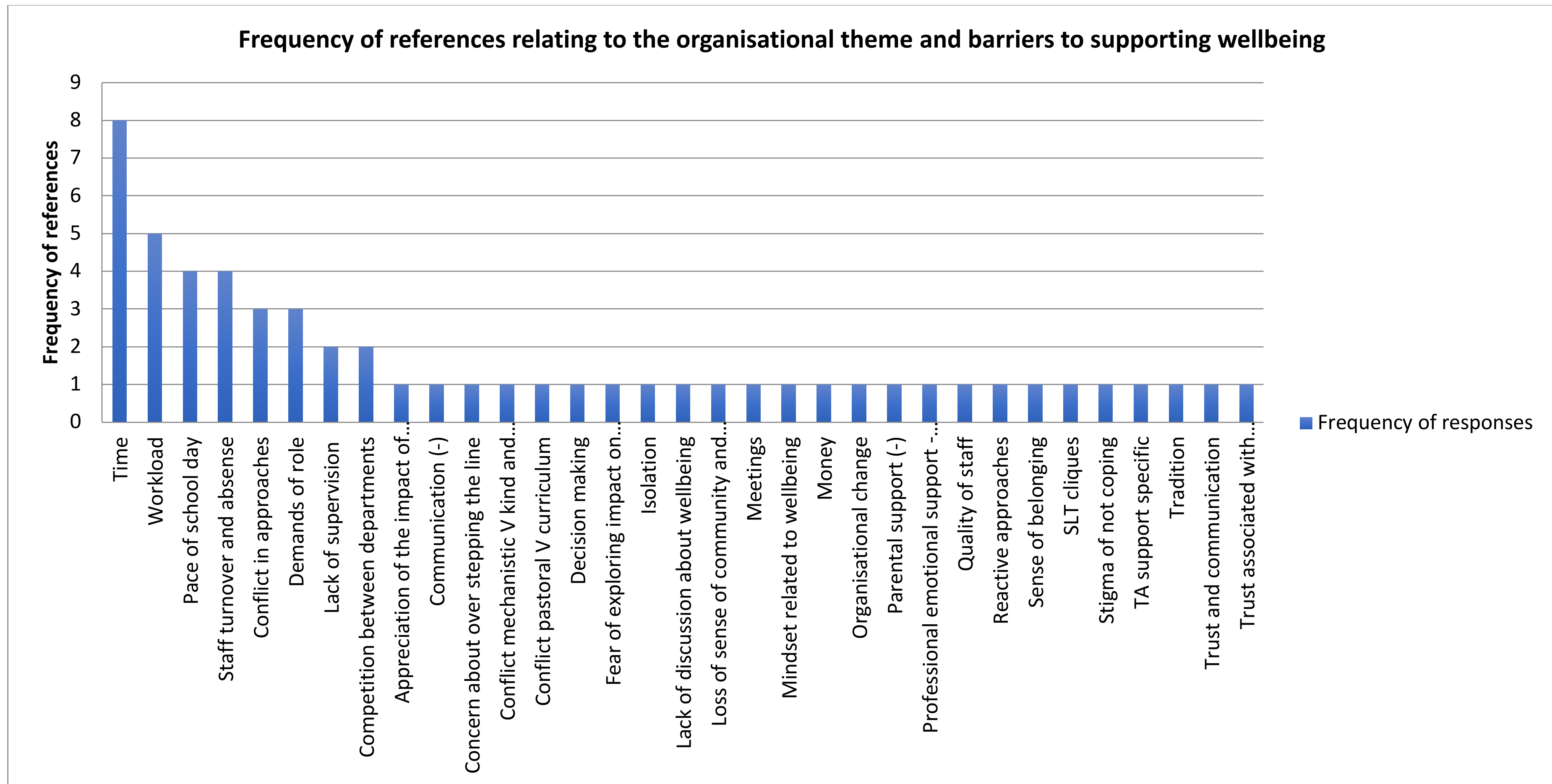
Appendix 54: Frequency of references relating to negative comments about support for own wellbeing.

Graph 36 Frequency of references relating to negative comments about support for own wellbeing



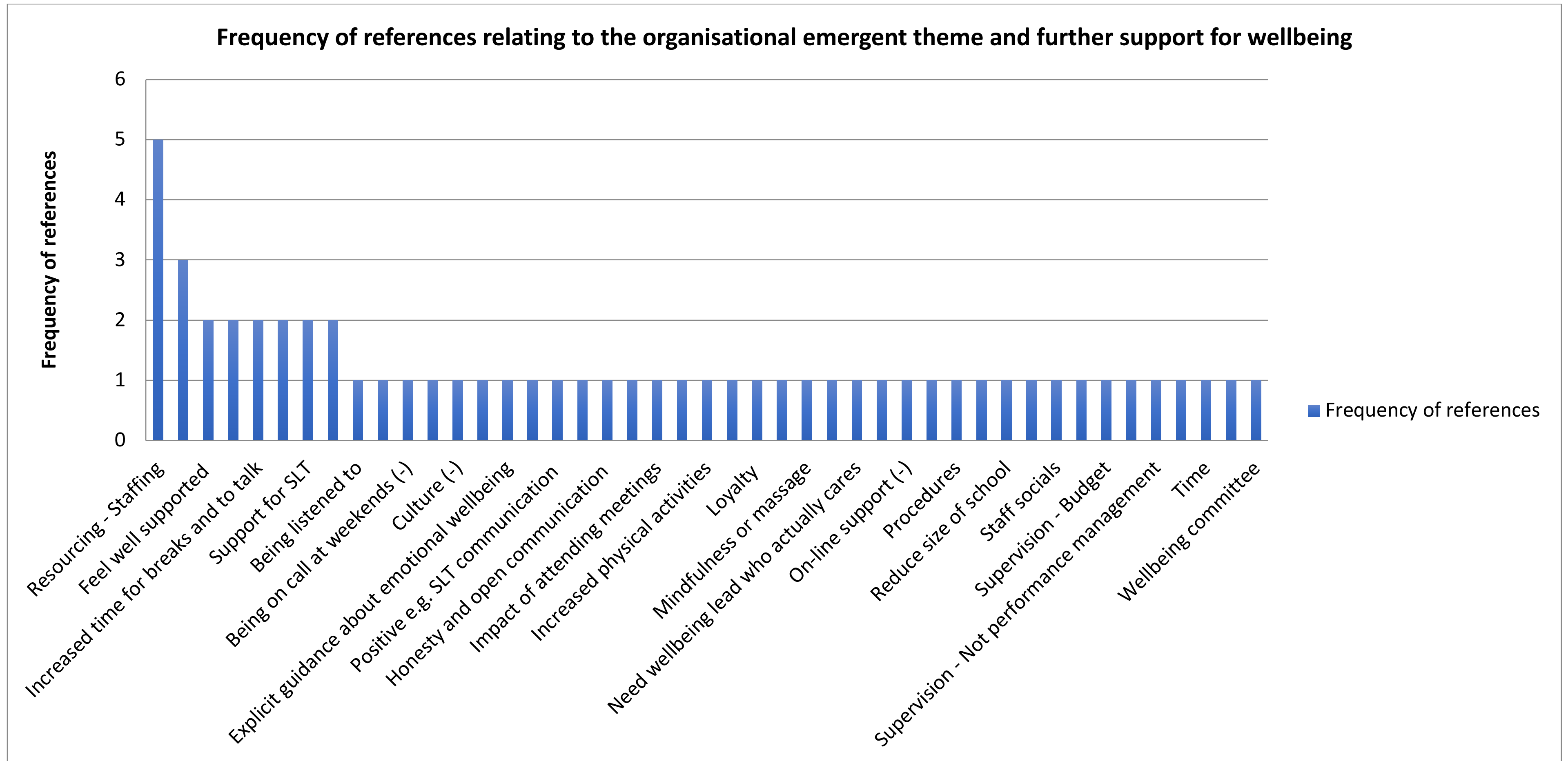
Appendix 55: Frequency of references in relation to the organisational emergent theme and barriers to supporting wellbeing

Graph 37 Frequency of references in relation to the organisational emergent theme and barriers to supporting wellbeing



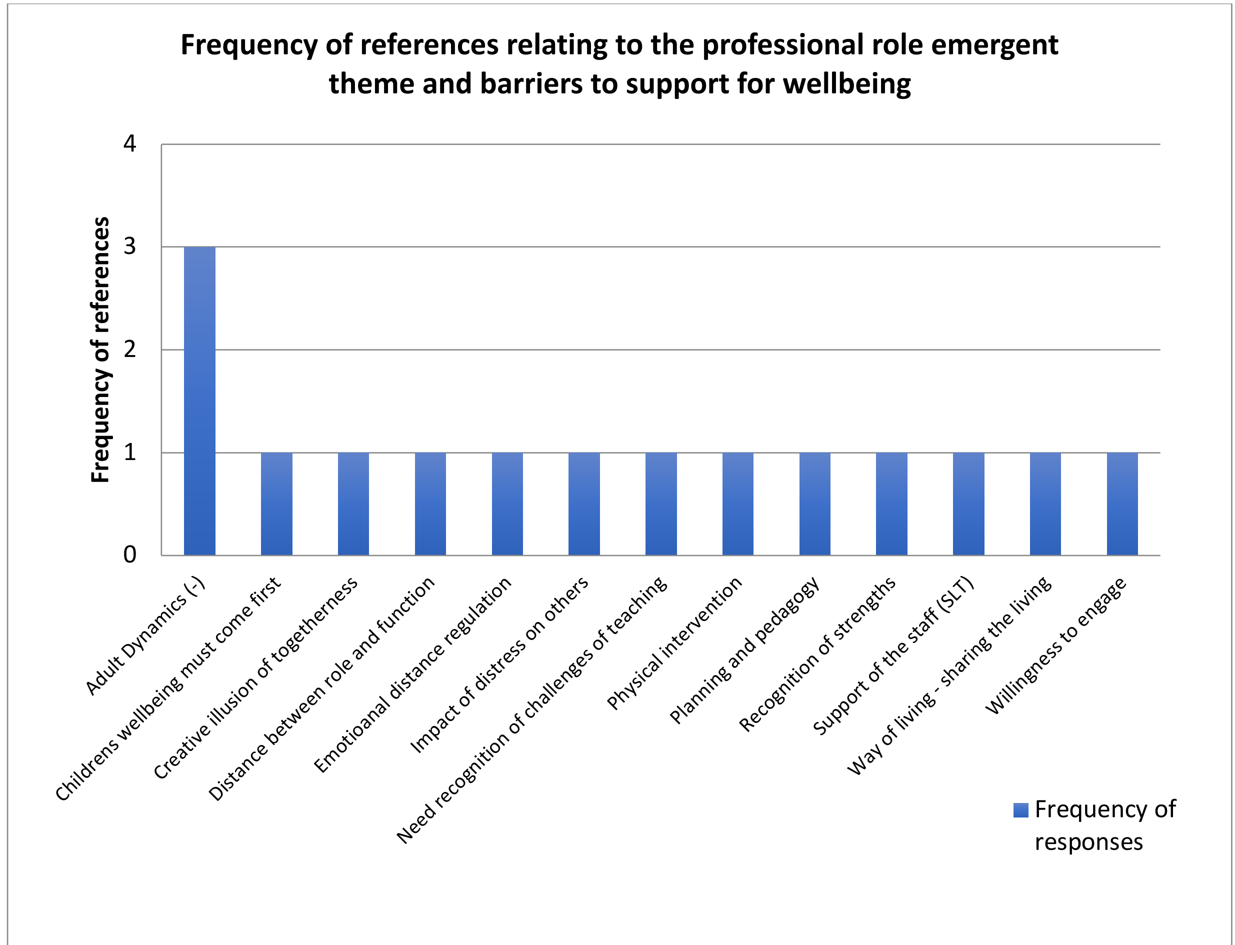
Appendix 56: Frequency of references in relation to the professional role theme and further support for wellbeing

Graph 38 Frequency of references in relation to the professional role theme and further support for wellbeing



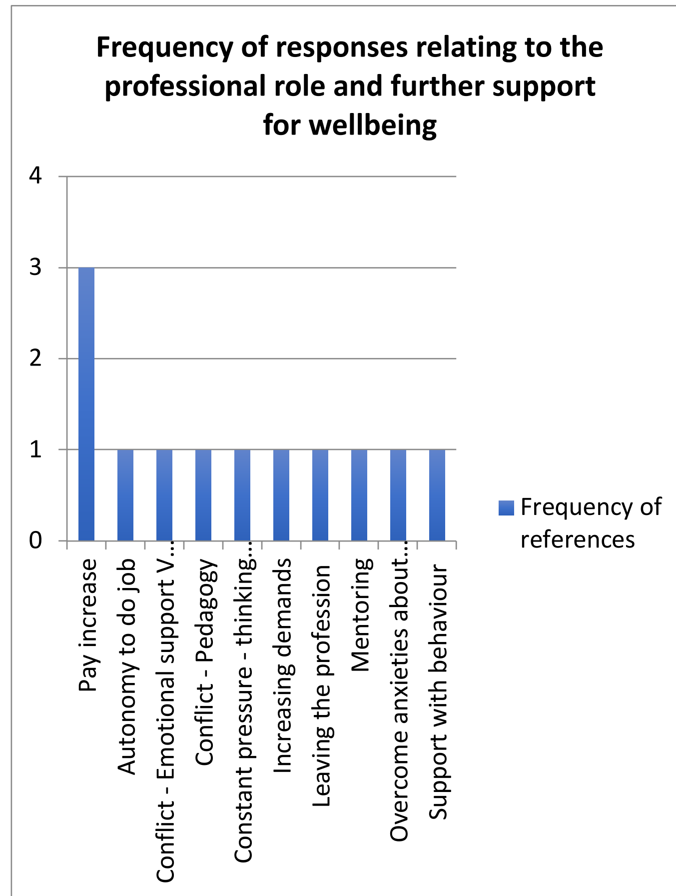
Appendix 57: Frequency of references in relation to the professional role emergent theme and barriers to support for wellbeing

Graph 39 Frequency of references in relation to the professional role emergent theme and barriers to support for wellbeing



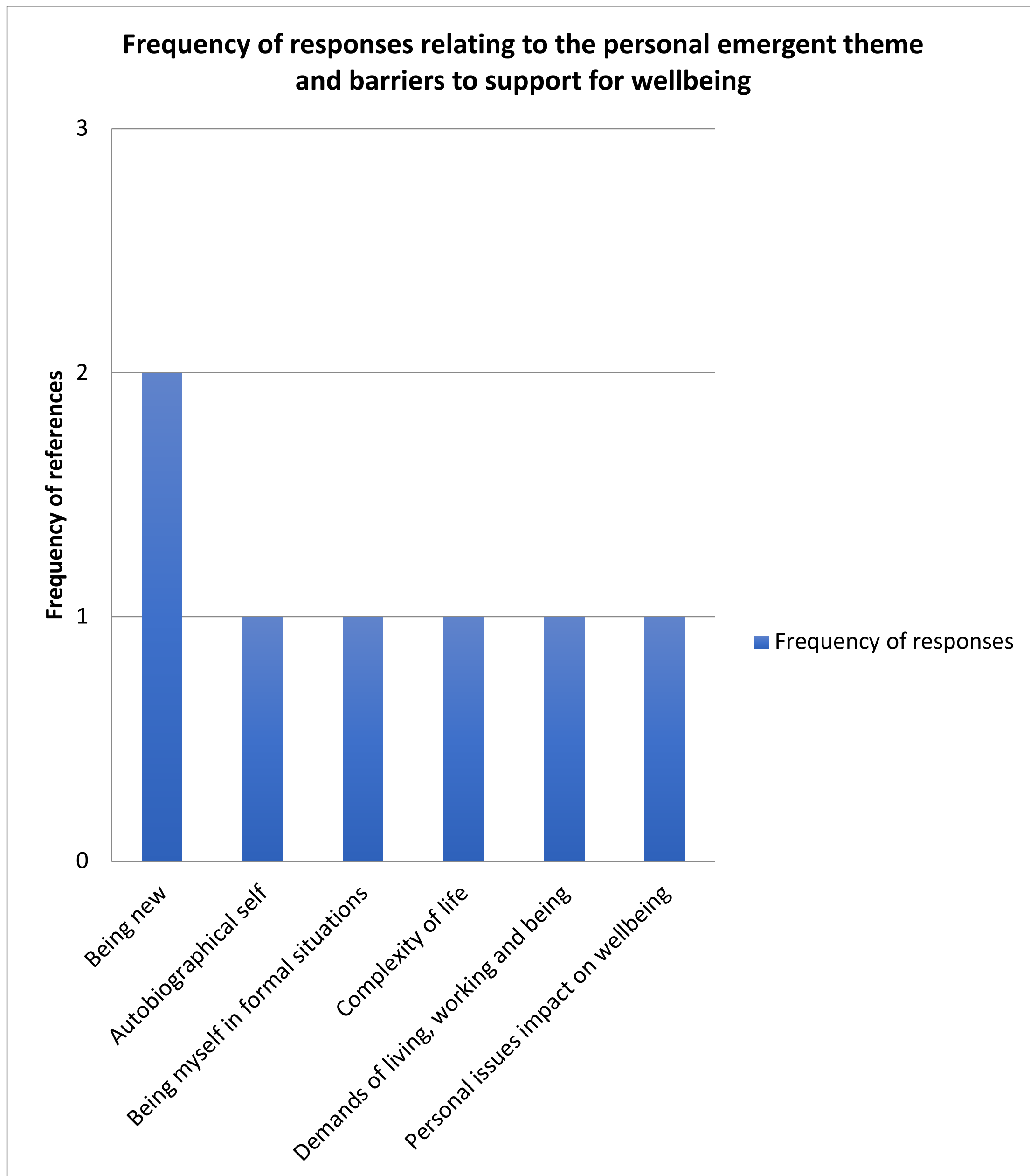
Appendix 58: Frequency of responses relating to the professional role and further support for wellbeing

Graph 40 Frequency of responses relating to the professional role and further support for wellbeing



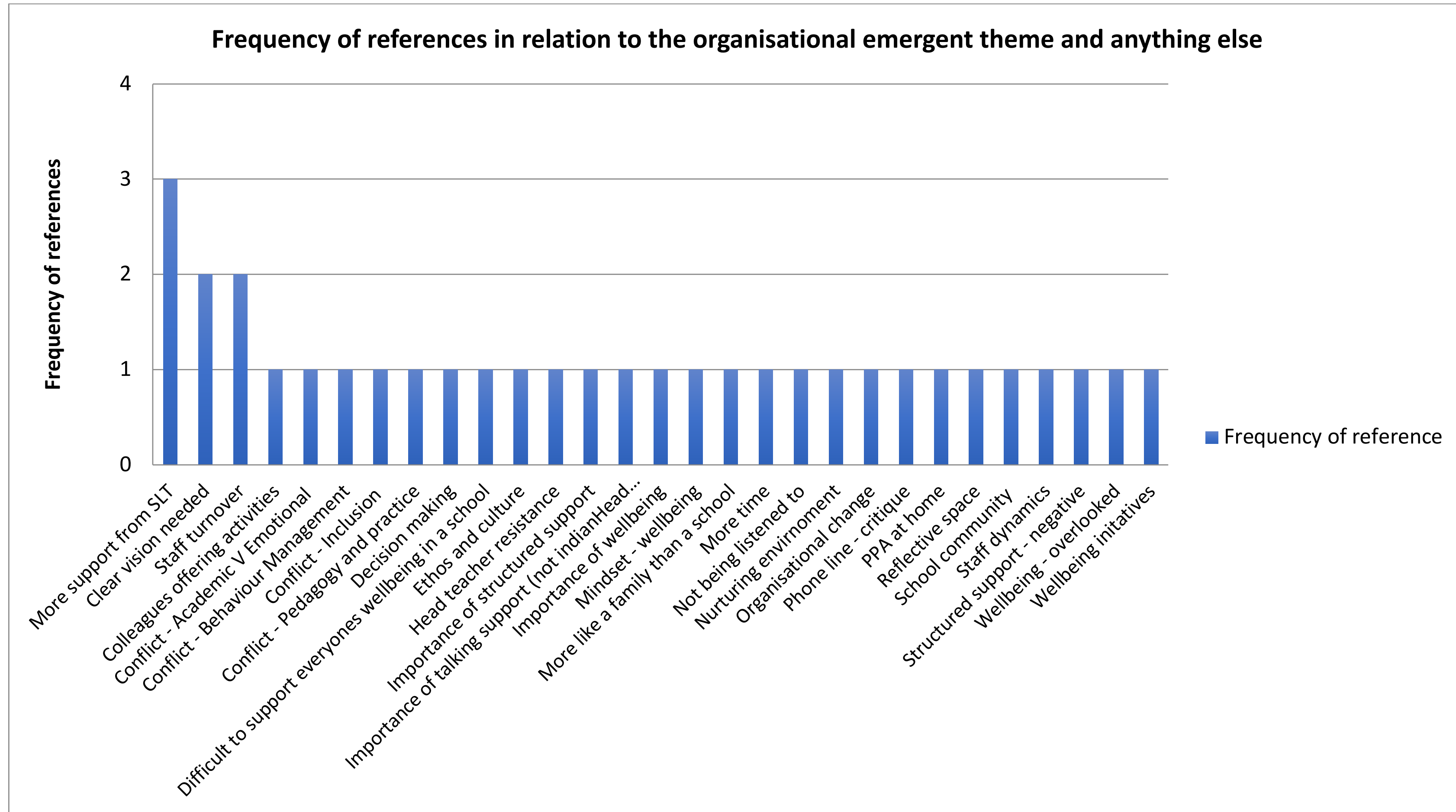
Appendix 59: Frequency of references in relation to the personal emergent theme and barriers to support for wellbeing

Graph 41 Frequency of references in relation to the personal emergent theme and barriers to support for wellbeing



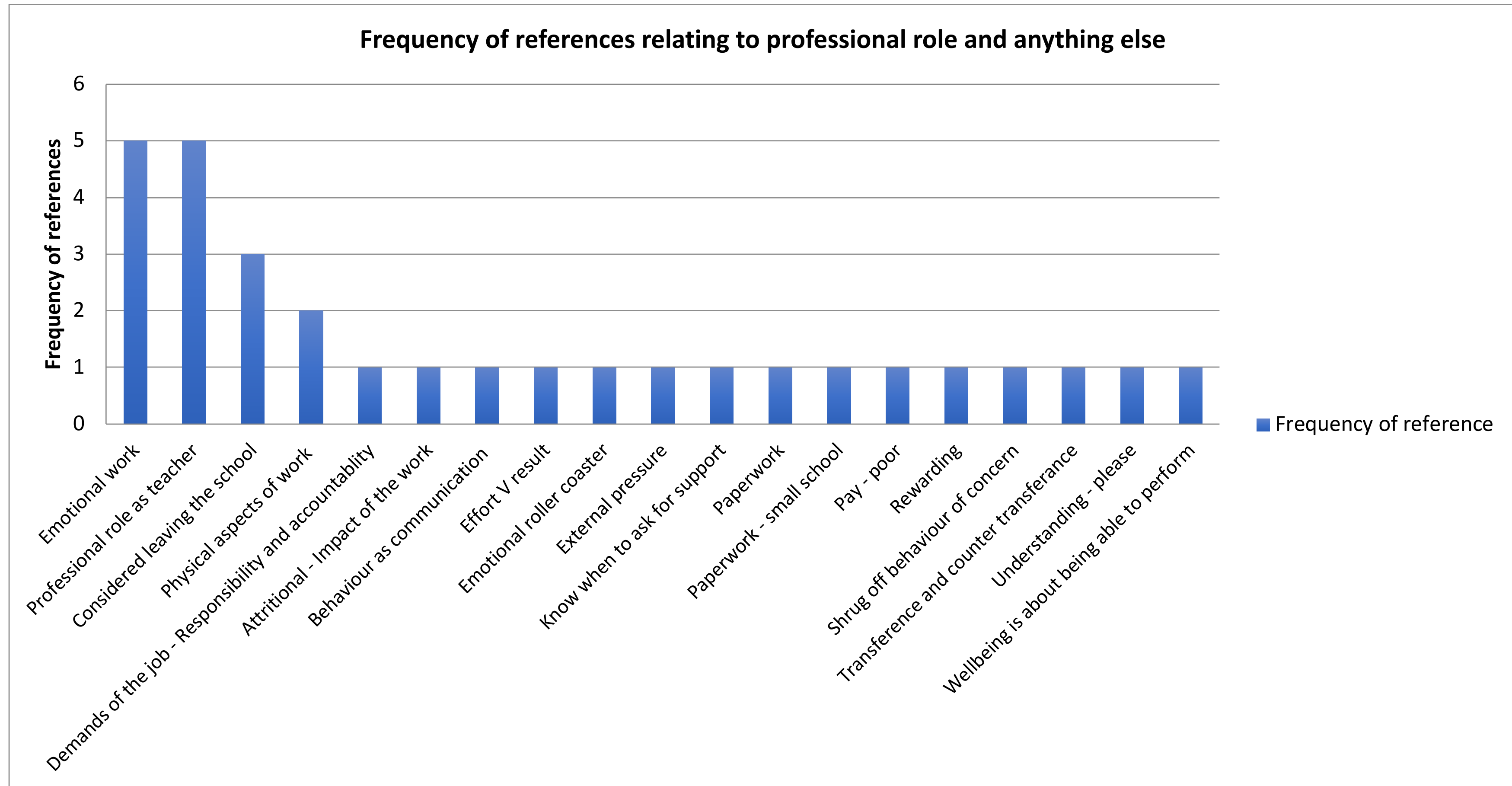
Appendix 60: Frequency of references in relation to the organisational emergent theme and anything else

Graph 42 Frequency of references in relation to the organisational emergent theme and anything else



Appendix 61: Frequency of references in relation to the professional role theme and anything else

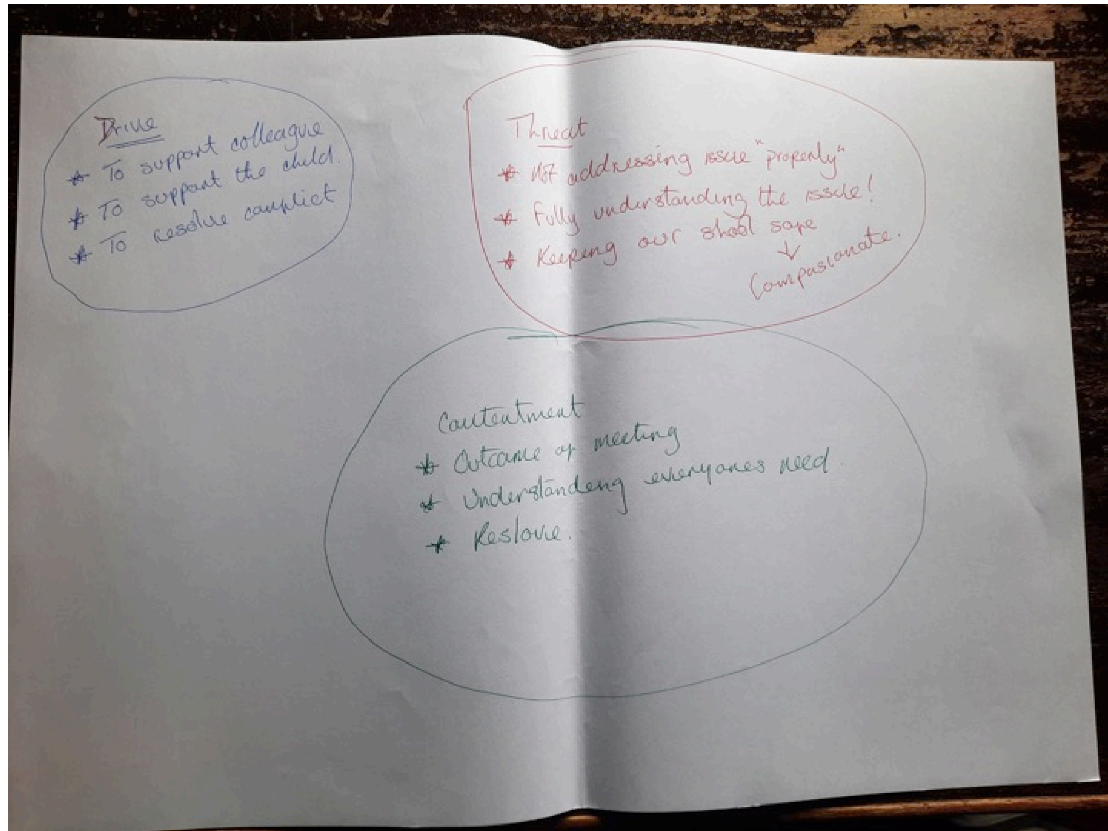
Graph 43 Frequency of references in relation to the professional role theme and anything else



Appendix 62: Participant Three Circles Model examples

Apple Wood School

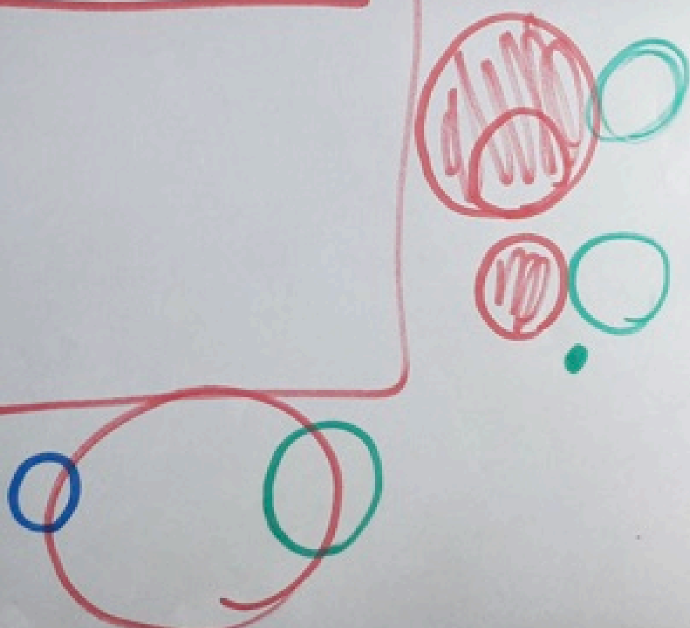
Mia



Mia

Professional experience	Racist incident
Drive	Support for colleague and support for child
Threat	Restorative conversation as a white woman Not addressing the issue properly Language to use with a seven year old Child was devastated Mum was devastated Colleague was devastated Balancing emotions
Contentment/ Affiliation	The outcome of the meeting I was able to understand everybody's needs Knowing that I did a good job Empathy: "I'm not a black woman but I understand the hurt and the pain that **** had felt through that and the same with mum and the same for the wee pal".

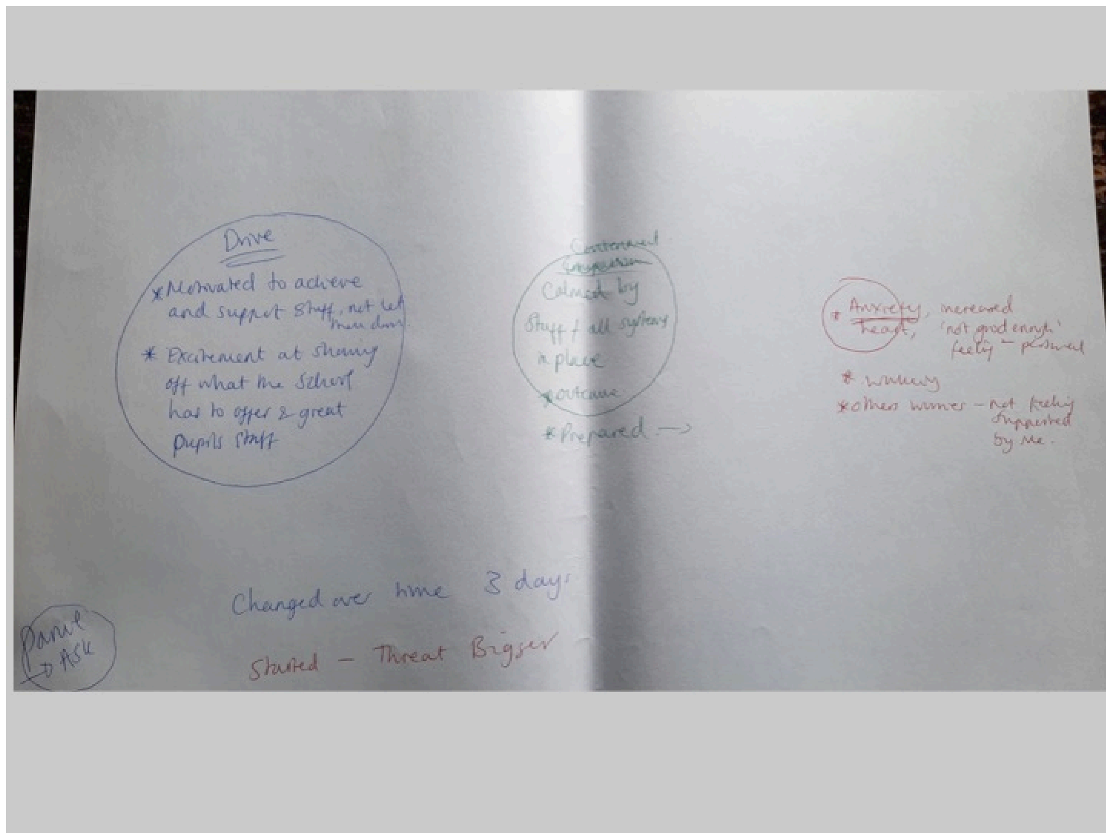
Chloe



Chloe

Professional experience	Physical aggression from pupils
Drive	Motivated to effectively and quickly resolve the issue Motivation to protect others
Threat	Unsafe situations Possibility of physical intervention Self-protection Anxiety In fight-flight mode in order to respond Increased heart-rate
Contentment/ Affiliation	Being calm Caring Affection “Not pure true contentment, that’s – or is it? But it’s almost like you are putting on the act, so this, well – the easiest way for me to explain it is, you are trying to look like a swan and it’s okay, be calm, and obviously behind that you are like (paddling actions)” “Proper contentment I suppose – waits until you know that everything is okay. Everything has been resolved and everyone’s moved on”.
Additional considerations	Rapid changes during physical intervention experiences: Drive underpinned by threat Incidents affect individuals differently Accumulative impact of threat experiences e.g. short staffed, OfSTED visit, physical aggression/ interventions So: “You haven’t got those stores to keep on going” (Oiliver) Reflection on incidents at home Experiences of injury

Olivia

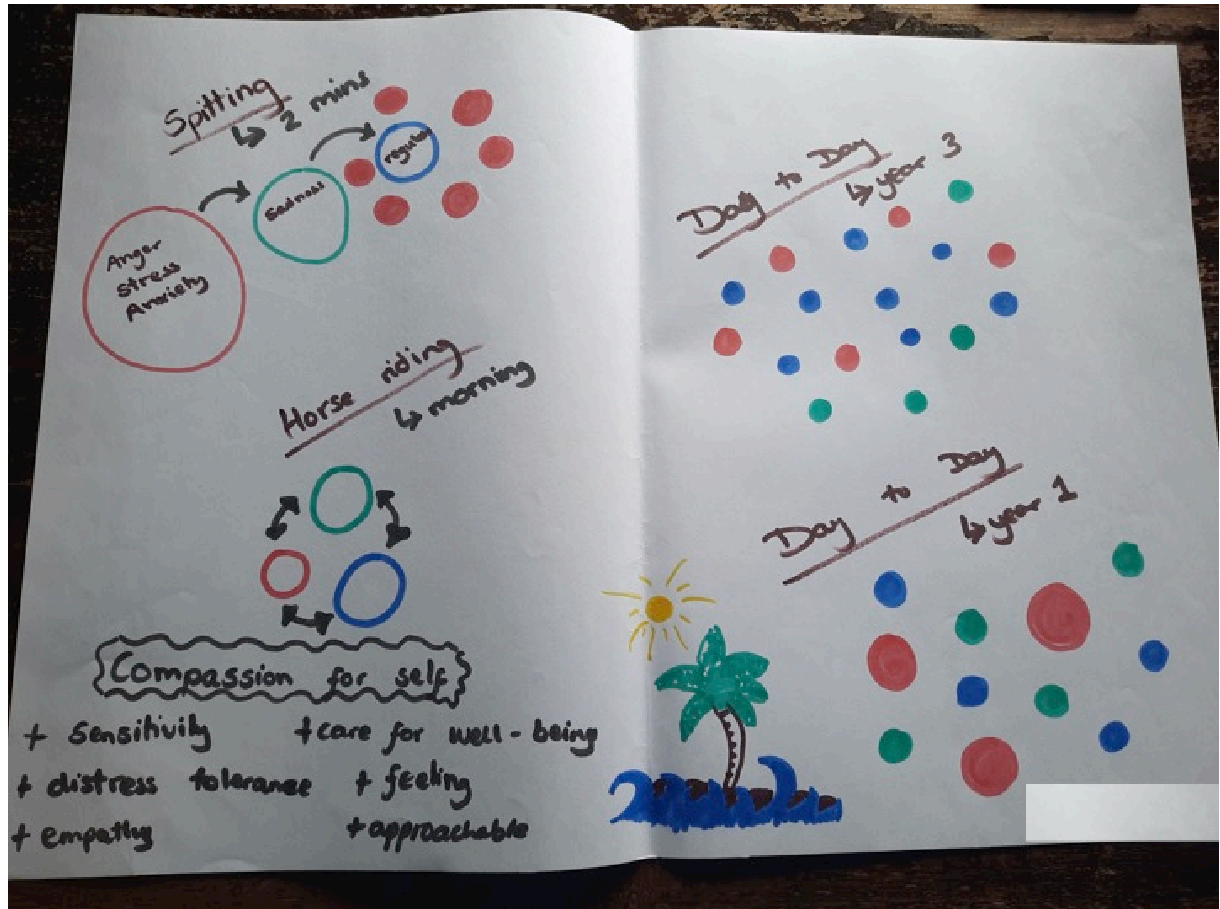


Olivia

Professional experience	OfSTED visit
Drive	"There was a kind of drive because of everybody being so good and supportive and come on, we can do this". "We felt really prepared and for myself to avoid that anxiety, I needed to have something in front of me like a little crib sheet, so we started doing that and that helped me and hopefully other people". Understanding that others were also experiencing threat provided increased motivation to support others
Threat	Feeling new Knowing what a great job everyone is doing making it a great school I don't want to be the person who is responsible for messing it up "Having had loads of people on our backs over the past however long, there is a big threat" "I had lots of little threats along the way of I'm avoiding things"
Contentment/ Affiliation	The school being judged as outstanding
Additional considerations	Feelings somewhere between drive and threat

Birch Tree School

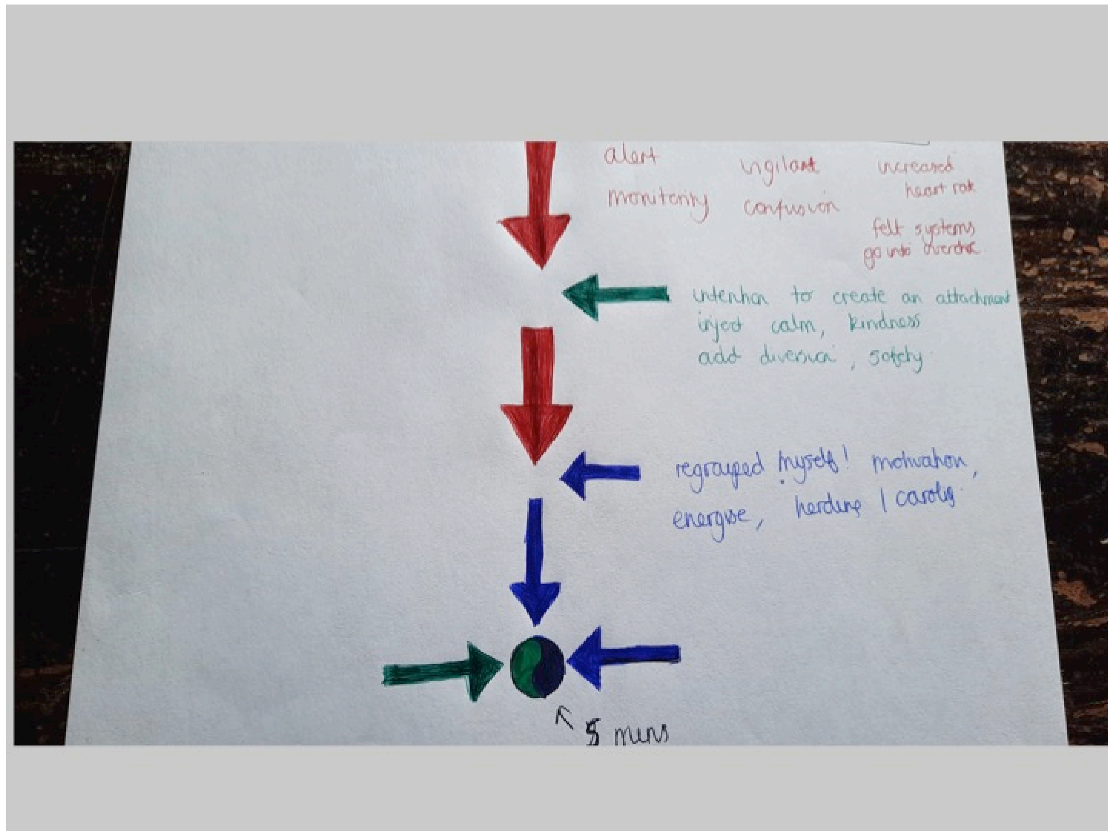
Grace



Grace

Professional experience	I've just done Friday: Being spat at.
Drive	"Actually this child just in complete breakdown right now and then the point of going back to them regulating and me just sort of walking away, cleaning my face".
Threat	Angry Annoyed Stressed Sad "Every other point today when that child has pissed me off, for hurting or doing something else, my tolerance levels has just been much quicker to go back into red".
Contentment/ Affiliation	"Then I did horse-riding because this same child that spat at me I had a really amazing time horse-riding with him on Friday and he was so sweet and he was showing me how to groom the horse and he grabbed my arm and said you are too close to the bottom, and walked me at a distance, he wanted me to walk round the back of the horse to keep - he wanted to keep me safe and he was really calm and quiet". "And so the blue and the red one is perhaps smaller, so I felt like I was far less anxious and we actually just had a nice time together, like a genuine niceness with him".
Additional considerations	

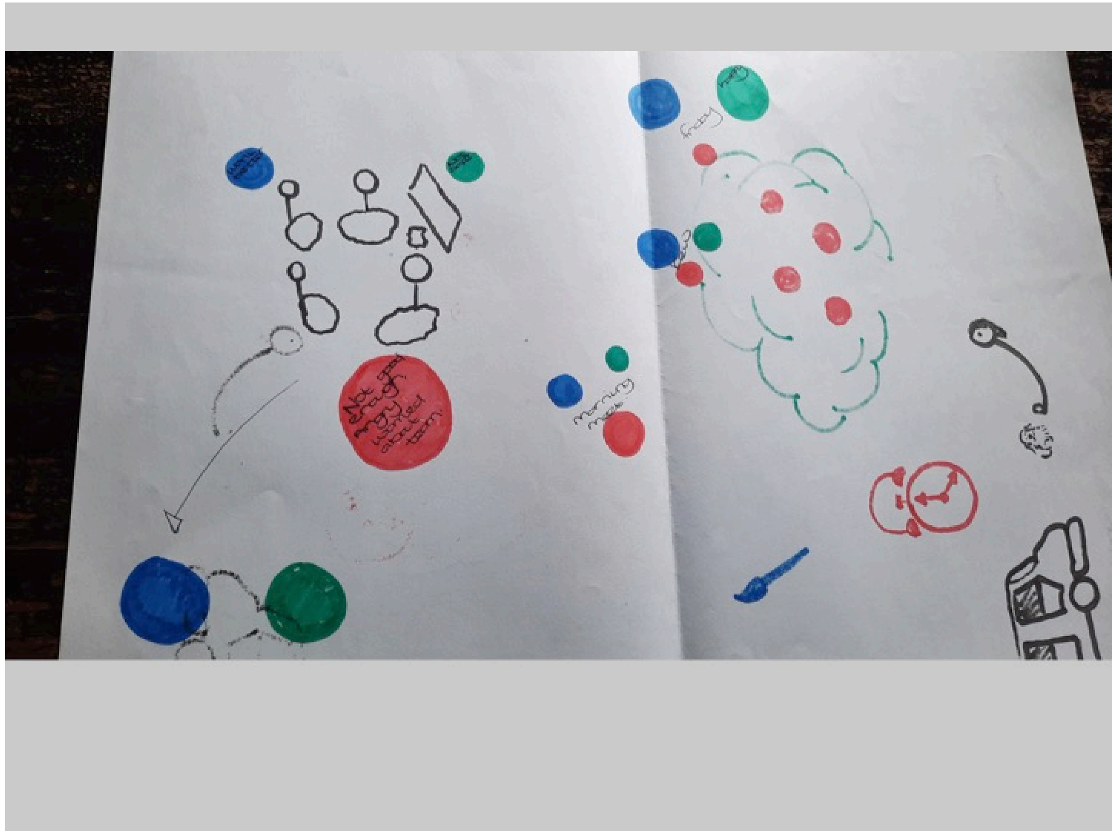
Zara



Zara

Professional experience	I’ve done twenty minutes of today: Children’s behaviour escalating.
Drive	Driven to calm and re-focus children
Threat	Children banging on classroom windows Children attempting to run out of the classroom “The red just kept bubbling throughout the afternoon, like waves of it, but waves with one child rather than big whole group”. “I found those bits really difficult, because also our children attention-seek a lot, and want adult preoccupation, so if you go and jump on every wave, then you end up with problems of children feeling left or been forgotten because you are up, all that negative attention cycle, but equally if you miss a wave, you can then end up with that quite easily”.
Contentment/ Affiliation	“The intention – my intention going in there was to create a connection, an attachment, to inject some calm and some kindness and to add a diversion into safety, which often works with ****, but his buddy – not buddy, but with the two of them I wasn’t sure, so I tried that and it was white noise, literally white noise”
Additional considerations	

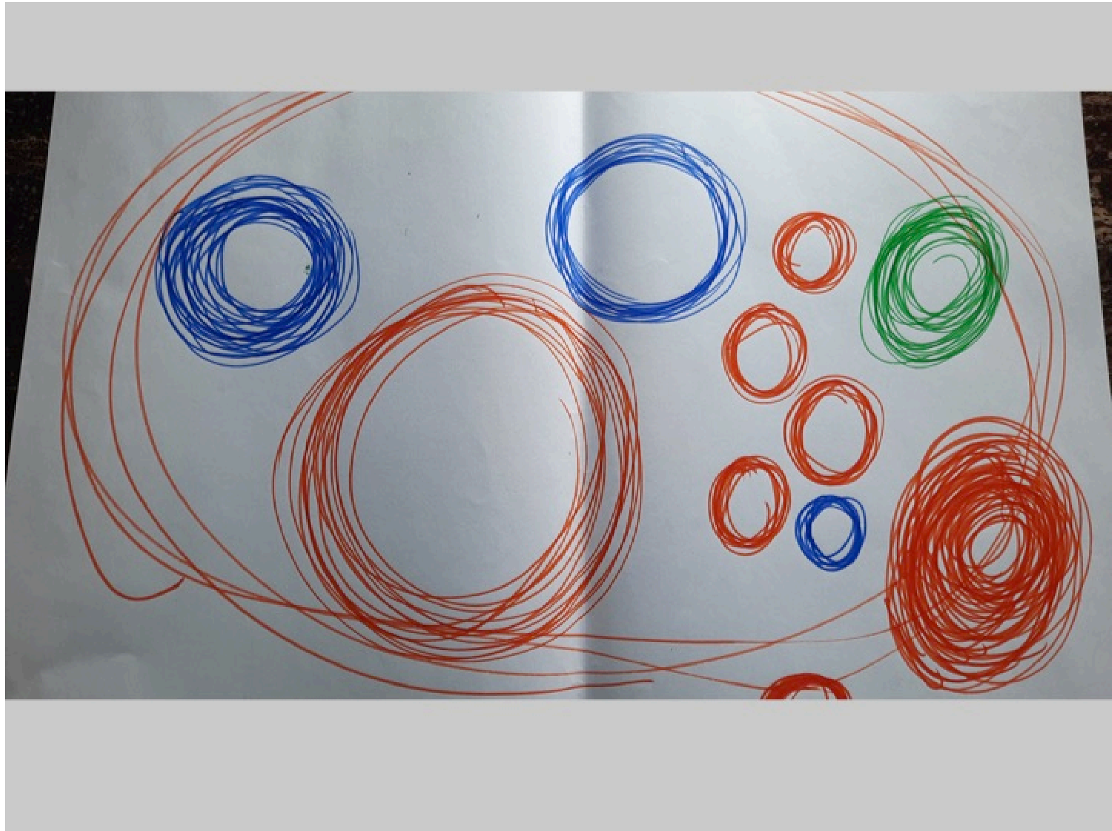
Phoebe



Phoebe

Professional experience	I think mine is about twenty minutes, it's like one interaction: A morning meeting
Drive	"Friday, feeling really organised and safe and happy and ready to go and I've got everything ready and it's going to be really exciting". After cushion throwing incident: "Then this moving into this one which is, well I need to get control, this is my drive, this is what we are going to, you just need to sit down and we're just going to do colouring until you can all be in the room and sit calmly".
Threat	Attending the morning meeting: "There is a huge sense of anxiety; there's all this going on, we've got this visitor, this is happening by Friday, this meeting is happening and it's like, oh my god, what?" "Worry about everything in that morning meeting". After meeting: "I have to rewind myself back here and go, actually you know what, I'm just going to focus on what is happening in the next hour, and then the next hour and then the next hour". "So this was from this afternoon actually, where one child came in who was sat here and started throwing a cushion in the air which was in front of the board, which irritated this child, this child then lamped this child. So it went from being very unsafe, I was very cross that at the first interaction something hadn't been done, and he continued to throw the cushion; not feeling good enough, not feeling like I had control over the class".
Contentment/ Affiliation	
Additional considerations	

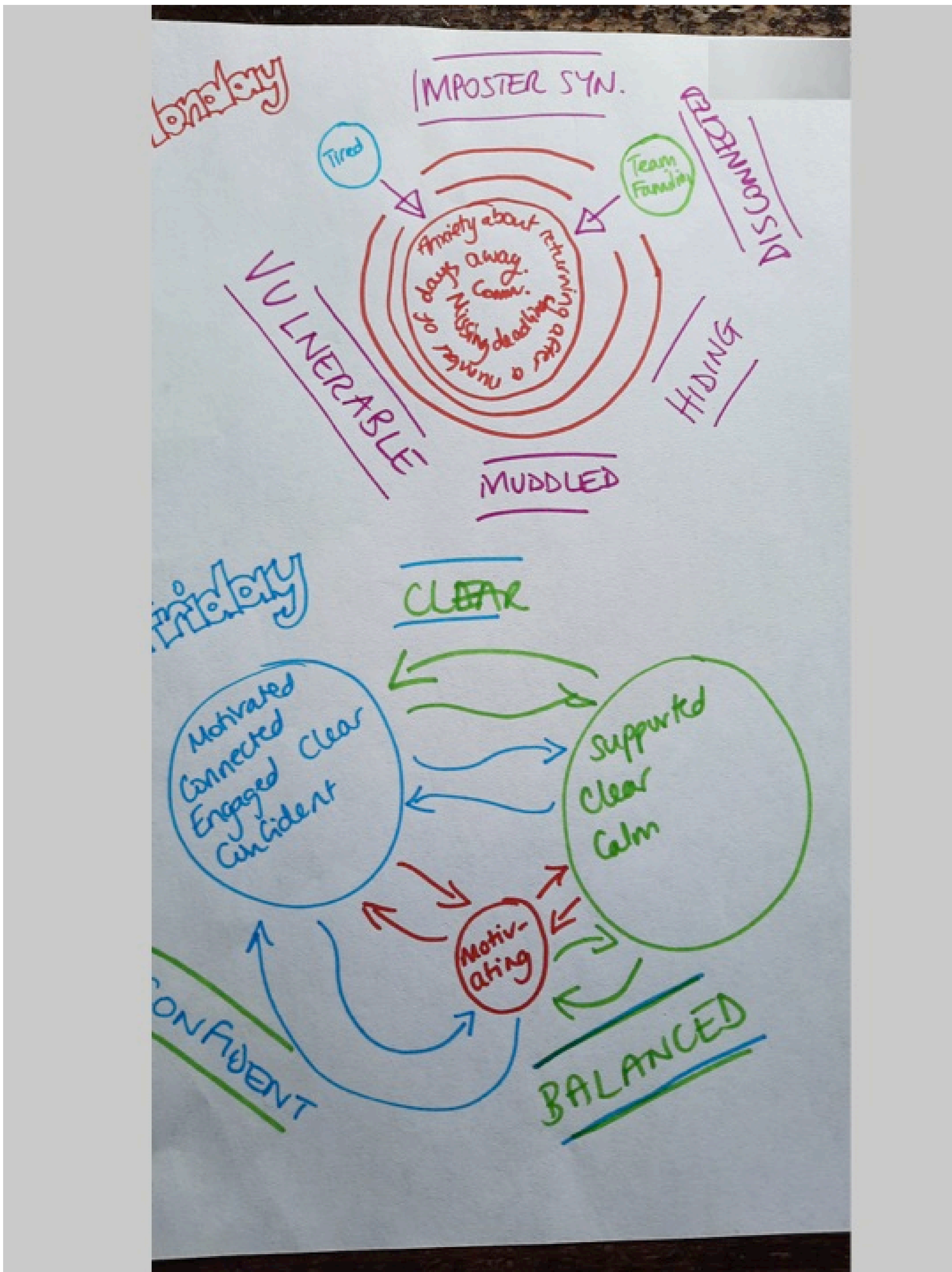
Finn



Finn

Professional experience	That was this morning. With this afternoon superimposed over the top: Children's behaviour escalating.
Drive	"I was ready for Monday morning, last Monday morning I didn't feel very good, this morning I felt good, I thought about it"
Threat	"Knew it was going to be difficult, and it turned to shit. Battled it for a while, got it back on track, we had a few pockets, we got there, survived and then – it was a sense of survival, and that is what it is at the minute, I've broken it down into sessions and if I can get to lunch time or the end of the day, it means I've survived". "And that was this afternoon. And then that just – that frustration, on-going frustration about that and thinking about it, afternoon was taken up with annoying bits related to that". "I was fucking pissed off, I was frustrated and I was annoyed. I had children punching, trying to have me hurt, trying to just – and so it was just frustration and I was really annoyed that my class were deciding to run around outside annoying other classes, and my inability to get them back more quickly, and there was the frustration of trying to be, and feeling the need to be in two places at once and not being able to manage it. And just the same things, you know, really, we're going through this again? And so once when we managed to get them back together, they were still firing off and just, it was a combination of frustration" "I think this week and potentially last week were more like this, whereas I think again there is a sense of frustration about that it's week seven, it's raining, it's cold and we are still going the children are shattered, the adults are shattered and we are still chundering through".
Contentment/ Affiliation	
Additional considerations	

Imogen



Imogen

Professional experience	Returning to school after enjoying a course
Drive	"I went from here on Friday which was lovely, the course was brilliant, I felt really clear and really confident about what I was doing, everything kind of balanced". "Feeling motivated and feeling that sort of a positive kind of anxiety, which fed into these other circles and it all felt balanced and good".
Threat	"Today, I just feel like I'm missing loads of deadlines, I haven't shared enough things, we've had teachers in today, nobody knew until we got in this morning that that was happening, I feel like I'm, you know, juggling a thousand things and I should have taken the time to ask for some help and I haven't, and therefore like, disgust and anger with myself really, and like anxiety today, which then I keep thinking makes me hide and then that makes it worse". "The more I'm thinking in here, the more I kind of hold onto it, and the more I feel like I can't ask for help, because if you've left something to the last minute, asking for help is putting the shit on someone else and so, yeah, and that makes me feel I've put, muddled, vulnerable, disconnected and then you end up with an imposter syndrome, and so that was a happy day". "I feel completely exhausted and I also then think, it's not really fair, compared to what all you've dealt with today, and I'm feeling tired, what have I done, sat in a load of meetings"
Contentment/ Affiliation	Staff team Walking to the shop with a pupil
Additional considerations	

Oscar

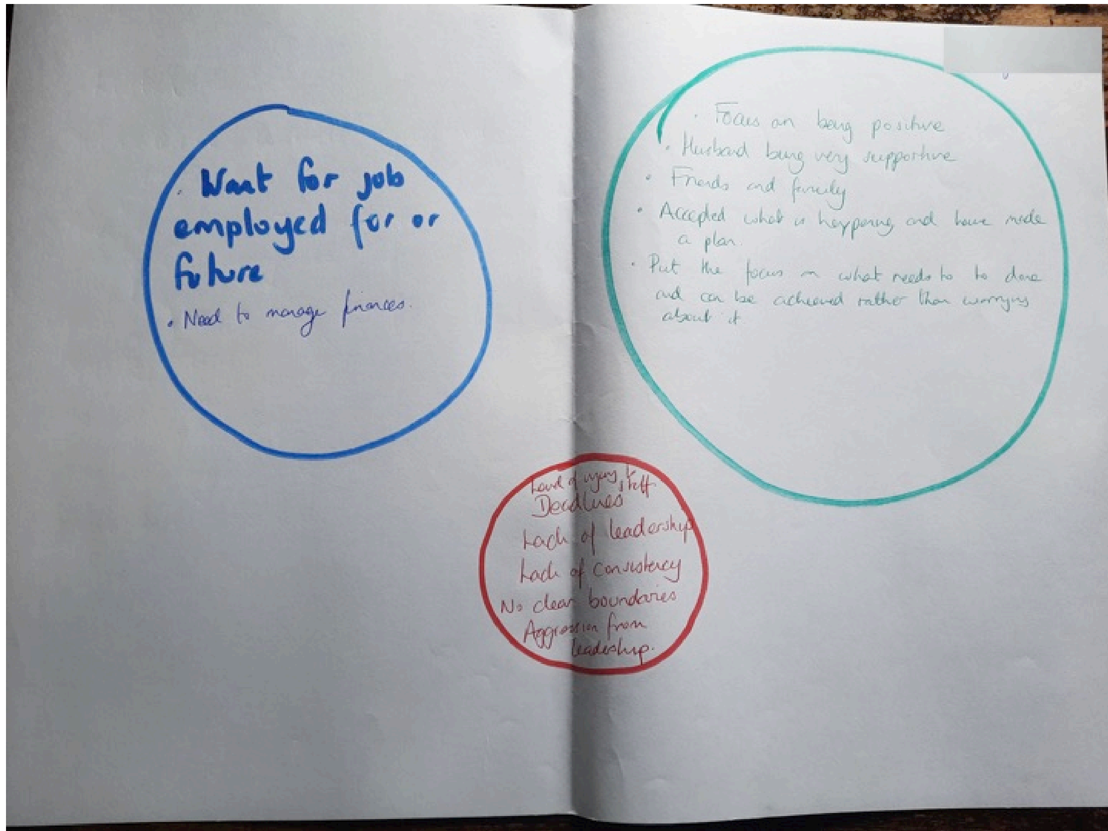
No image collected

Oscar

Professional experience	The Monday morning meeting
Drive	Spending time with a pupil.
Threat	Anxiety associated with not being able to attend all meetings. Having to catch up all the time. Then children arriving in the morning. Two teacher visitors. Spots of anxiety throughout the day.
Contentment/ Affiliation	"That breeze that actually took everything away"
Additional considerations	"I just felt very hot and uncomfortable and I just want to be cool and calm" Support offered from Phoebe: "Can I just say, you saying about – because you weren't here last week feeling really disconnected – I think if you speak to anybody and if you're off for a day that you've come back and things here move so fast and you just do feel like you've missed a million things, so…"

Cherry Blossom School

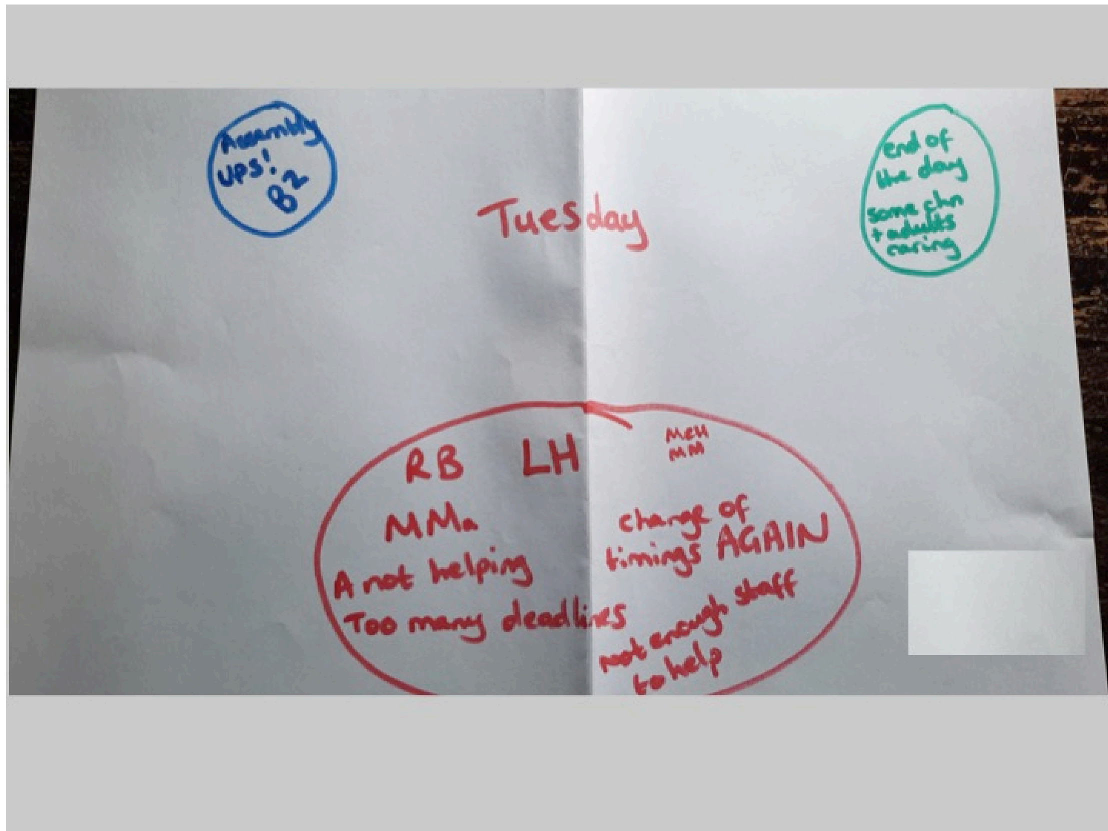
Clara



Clara

Professional experience	Uncertainty about professional role
Drive	"I do want to be recognised for the job, that I want to do and although I kind of put in green that I have accepted and I've got a plan in my head, there is still that drive that actually I work hard, I deserve, I've done lots of courses, I hope that I support and can be a good part of leadership but it's all out of my control and so it's where do you go forward with that and that drive to actually career wise because actually as I've got to manage finances".
Threat	"What's really affecting me here at the minute is the level of injury to staff because I do care– obviously when it is me, but yeah, I broke my fingers last week, you know, so it is me physically, but it's also my other colleagues, I don't like seeing the level of injury being sustained by staff at the minute". "Worst one was walking in and seeing **** pinned up against a wall with her hair being pulled, you know – that is just horrible, you know, a little child puling her hair out and they are pinned up against the wall, and you can't – it's the amount of energy it takes not to respond and lose your temper with those children". "They have no idea how hard it is to manage your emotions when you are being battered by a child, you know, and how exhausting that is. You know and particularly when you see people you care about more it happening too". "I think the lack of leadership at the minute, and I am part of that leadership ironically, but I don't know what is going on, so – and the lack of consistency, you know, with what we're told, what we're expected to do, how it's managed, all of those things make it really threatening for me, it makes it really insecure and really threatening". "So a lack of consistency – no clear boundaries and again that comes from leadership". "Aggression from leadership" Unpleasant, uncomfortable morning meetings "Feel really threatened because you think, well I can't say what I think". "Morning briefings, yes, so that sets the day up really well. So literally everyone comes out pissed off and then goes straight to dealing with the kids. Pissed off". Managing deadlines and workload. "We're in the red zone".
Contentment/ Affiliation	
Additional considerations	

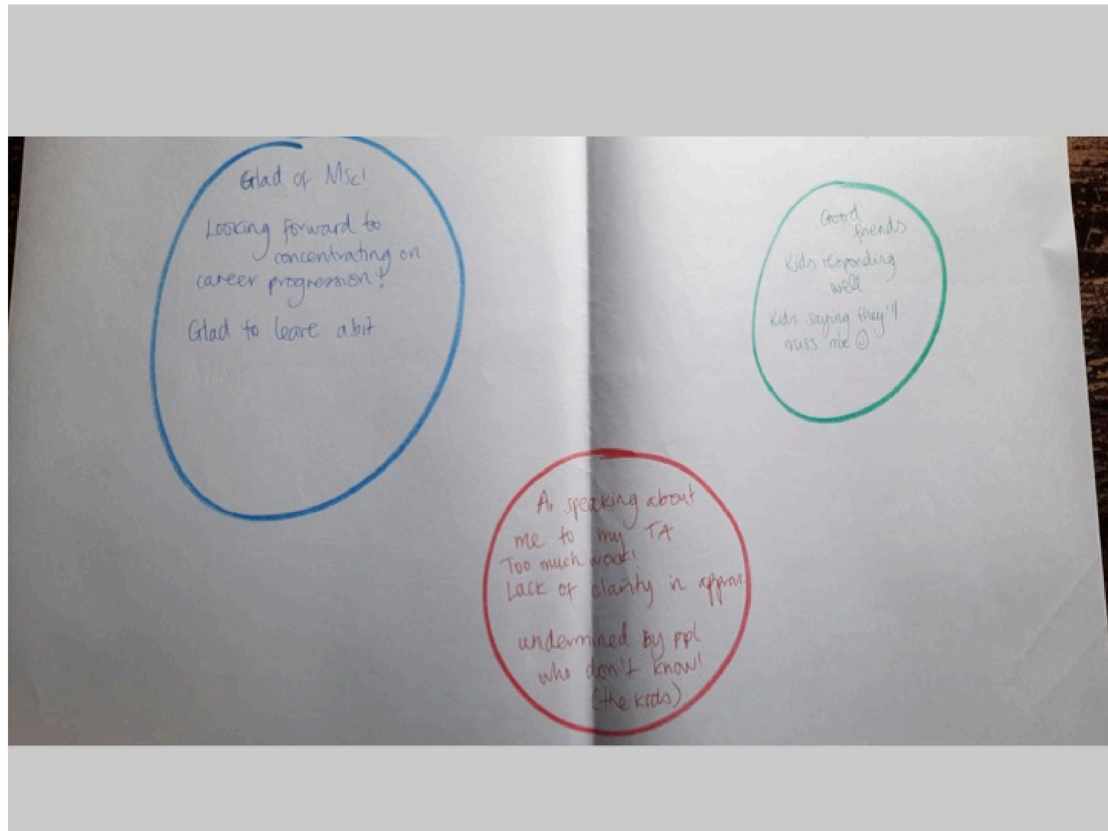
Lily



Lily

Professional experience	"Mine is very, very specific on today and I just don't have any room in my head for anything more"
Drive	"Assembly this morning was beautiful. Three of my children, and lots of children from the rest of the school played their ukuleles".
Threat	I spent the entire morning holding and being attacked by ****. I am told this was only his first or second ever hold, so – and he has been with us several years. I am feeing quite upset about it. "But he has been vile, just completely vile; I have no – I mean I was definitely – I should have been holding him, but it still wasn't very nice. And no sooner had I come away from that then **** slapped me in the face; that was a special moment as well. In between those two, **** came to help; and didn't. "**** has not been very helpful either. She's just never there. She's my TA. She is just too busy. That has caused a problem at lunchtime today, so **** has had a problem, ****s had a problem. "It's just not been a nice week. All of the timings got changed again, even though I have emailed and said please stop doing this on a Tuesday, it has a massive impact on the children, the sport coaches, **** the play therapist, **** the Lego therapist; everyone's timetable are screwed up. It happened again today. That then has a big impact on everything, all day". "So we get told at half-eight or let's face it, quarter to nine, and the children come in seconds later and we haven't had time to rearrange everything". Not enough staff and extra children in classes.
Contentment/ Affiliation	"So at the end of the day, some of my children were still in my room and I put a short film on, a really short film on, and we just sat back and chilled and then they had a bit of target time and they were really nice and some of them, like **** is – will come and give me a hug and say you know, I can see that you have had a bad day, I'm really sorry, are you okay and that was really lovely" "**** brought me some apology notes, and that made me feel a bit better"
Additional considerations	Clara on leadership: "I just feel that really strongly that actually it is important to still have a very good reality of what you are asking your staff to do. If you want to understand what the staff are going through you need to be realistic".

Poppy



Poppy

Professional experience	Children’s behaviour escalating
Drive	“In contrast to how stressful everything is here, I feel like thank god I’ve got my plan B, my masters working through, I’ve got like a different goal that I’m set on and am achieving it, so I am sort of looking forward”
Threat	“I’m really sad about the kids and a lot of the adults that I work with, but I am also just so tired of all of the same stress and all the same drama and the same worries and problems that people aren’t listening to and they are people who are paid a lot to listen and to care and to make – to look after us so we can look after the kids”. Child attempting to abscond Other child screaming because they were being followed Child threw a basket ball hoop over Poppy Poppy involved in a physical intervention Then feeling undermined by senior colleague
Contentment/ Affiliation	“Good friends and you know, nice people who are sweet and checking in and doing little – making me a coffee, or texting, or sending little emails”. “Kids responding well”.
Additional considerations	

Appendix 63: Difficult Emotions

Table 25 Difficult emotions experienced by participants from Apple Wood School

Chloe	Olivia	Charlotte	Mary	Levi
Aggression Anger Annoyance Confusion Fear Frustration Hopelessness Inadequacy Perfectionism Rejection Sadness Shame Vulnerability	Anxiety Fight/flight feeling Inadequacy Numb Stress	Anger Anxiety Demoralised Frustration Heartbreak Hopeless Self judgement	Anger Helplessness Frustration Overwhelmed Disappointment Not feeling good enough Not being patient enough Not organised enough Imposter syndrome	Anxiety Failure Fearful Feeling of loss Hopeless Irresponsible Inadequate Low mood Not being good enough Overwhelmed Sadness Selfish Unrecognised Uselessness

Table 26 Difficult emotions experienced by participants from Birch Tree School

Oscar	Phoebe	**Imogen**	Finn
Anxiety Guilt Impotence Sadness	Anxiety Guilt Judging self Responsibility Sadness Sorrow Worry	Anger Being under threat Disempowered Feeling of threat Incompetence Jealousy Loss Self-doubt	Confused Frustrated Baffled Not good enough Powerlessness Judged Getting it wrong Worried

Table 27 Difficult emotions experienced by participants from Cherry Blossom School

Lily	Phoenix	Clara
All of them Annoyed Anxiety Buried Confusion Depressed Disappointed Exhausted Frustration Overwhelmed Panic Sad Selfish Upset	Anxiety Confusion Depression Despair Extremities e.g. sadness to happiness and visa versa Fear Guilt Low self esteem Not knowing if you are coming or going Physical and emotional exhaustion Sadness Selfish	Anger Anxiety Buried Lost Overdrive Overwhelmed Pissed off Relieved – If I get through the day Scared Self-doubt Selfish Sleepless nights Worthless

Appendix 64: Ideal compassionate self

Table 28 Apple Wood School participant considerations in relation to their ideal compassionate self

Oliver	Chloe	Olivia
Action when you need to act	A soft calm voice	Being good at communicating
Being supportive of development and people bringing new ideas specifically in leadership roles	Being calm, slow and precise	Being positive
Calm tone	Being present	Calm
Effective listening	Non-accusing	Highlighting strengths
Empathetic	Open, non-threatening body language	Optimistic
Generous with time and presence	Patience	Praising others
Lots of care	Positive before a negatives	Promoting confidence
Praising	Sympathetic words	Smiling
Solution-focused	Taking your time to listen	Thoughtful
Supporting people who have no voice, to be able to have control over decision-making and future developments themselves	Tell yourself "no one is actually ****…it's because **** is going on"	
Supportive	That makes it much easier to be compassionate	
Try to see positives and strengths in everybody	There is another reason	

Table 29 Birch Tree School participant considerations in relation to their ideal compassionate self

Phoebe	Imogen	Zarah
Having time to be me, so making an apple pie, taking a dog for a walk. I feel a sense of, a change in my thinking or my body, where I just feel like me, and it might be that I put on a pair of boots and I'll go for a walk There is a feeling of like I can be the **** I want to be, not the **** that's the **** teacher.	Being forgiving of yourself Being there for other people Connecting with people Recognising anger and frustration Time without guilt You need a bit of rage at the world to want to change that and make it better	Getting enough sleep Having strong enough support networks to just to support through when things are tough Having time for family Organisational stuff - systems to remember things Time Travel time to work is time for me

Table 30 Cherry Blossom participant considerations in relation to their ideal compassionate self

Clara	Poppy	Lily
Able to accept I can't do everything and not worry about it Admire for people who can sit there and say fuck it Calm Considerate towards myself and others Healthy body Listen Relaxed Thoughtful Time for myself and others	Acceptance Empathetic Giving Hearing others Listening Meeting the needs of others Nurturing Perceptive of other people Self-critical thought: I just need to be more relaxed and easy-going about certain things in order to free myself up for actually showing compassion to people Taking time/making time for self-care in other to then show compassion for others Understanding of other people	Accept and ask nicely for help Be more smiley, not just first thing in the morning but all day Considerate Don't be irritated. It's really hard Forgiveness Forgiving Having time for others and I added for myself I do want to support other members of staff more but I don't have enough time so I need to find the time – have time More calmness and positivity especially when I am around the children More patience Offer support before it's asked for Understanding and accepting of things that are particularly not within my control but also of other peoples

Appendix 65: Images of the self-critic

Table 31 Apple Wood School Images of the self-critic

Mia	My mother
Rachel	It's the exact embodiment of a former boss, who actually had very little impact in my life.
Olivia	I had a sort of good cop bad cop image on my shoulders, I'm always doing a 'don't be silly' like talking to myself. Oh you can, no I can't, oh yes you can
Chloe	I don't have any image, literally just get it done, get it done, it's more like a set of rules, like you need to do it, you need to do better, you need to do it all, it all needs to be done right. It's all about working hard and having really high standards and just don't be so lazy, just get off your arse and get things done, if you don't get it done no one else is going to do it. And it's that highly competitive and the perfectionism that everything needs to be done right and needs to be the best.

Table 32 Birch Tree School Images of the self-critic

Oscar	Pain in the arse. Unreasonable. Grey-faced, hair like Maggie Thatcher. Iron like, unbending, unreasonable, venomous, sardonic, like guilt, contemptuous, cool quiet hissing voice, grey-faced, yeah, like Maggie Thatcher. There was a bit of venomous snake there.
Imogen	I'd be really interested in this and it sounds a bit fake, but I don't really do this and so I was trying to think about – I have times when I feel like really lacking in confidence, but it feels very internal and so I was first of all thinking there's an assumption in our conversation that we have a self-critic, and maybe that's not true, and then I was thinking what does it feel like because what I tend to do is withdraw and hide when I'm feeling like that and then I thought what it actually is, is a child – it's a child's voice for me, so it's not about being talked down to or being criticised, it's more like my own voice saying I can't do this or I'm feeling terrified, or you know, everyone is looking at me – it's that kind of voice. It's not a parent or a teacher or – you know, it not that sort of dominant. It's not bigger than me. It takes me smaller.
Grace	So, smaller than me, but no body, just like a floating head. Similar age, female, whiny, whingy voice. Who mentions the word weak at times, and tends to be there if I'm getting upset about things. And it can make me feel I suppose like belittled. If I feel belittled by someone, then it comes out. Changed by time – sometimes I can worry that I am going to run out of time for things and actually I don't need to worry about that, but – but then I don't know like, I feel this is quite negative – it feels like quite a negative vibe, but I don't think it's always necessarily a negative vibe.
Finn	I know what it looks like, but it's very hard to describe, so the best I can come up with is that it is a maladaption of myself. A bad version I guess. So its a – and it sort of sits above on my shoulder and its – the way I see it, it's myself sort of, but in a broken mirror type way and it's just seething with sarcasm, contemptibility just what sort of, you know, really goes to the core of – but then when I was thinking about it, the maladaptation continues whereas it almost becomes a negative self, so we were talking about all this reflective process about how good it is and how wonderful it is and all that, but actually when it's a negative, it is a reflection, but it's my own personal negative. So it's a lot of the stuff I would say if I was trying to talk to other people what I'm thinking about would come across supportive but when I then turn it on myself, it becomes dripping in self-doubt and it's – so what I would hope to be if I was trying to be supportive to somebody else, questioning, challenging, you know in a supportive manner, but when it's turned on myself it's very negative. The outcomes are all you know, just – so the narrative can become quite bleak quite quickly. I think – but I know we've used the word rumination in here often and it's often used negatively, but I think it can be really useful as well, so when we are doing well and I'm out doing my dog walking and thinking about – but then I can just as easily, a very simple process can just take me to a fork in the road, and it can became quite you know – and that's where that sits for me.

Appendix 66: Compassion from others

Table 33 Compassion from others: Suggestions from Apple Wood School

Oliver	Olivia	Chloe	Charlotte	Rachel	Mia
Appreciation of people's roles Colleagues saying say I know that was really hard for you Honesty and transparency and that makes difficult conversations easier Human connections Humour If someone gets hurt or injured they will be supported by colleagues Non-hierarchical Openness People know a lot about each other outside of work Support: Someone will be there for you if there is a radio call: someone will get to you Text messages from colleagues to check in	Sensing that if someone has been involved in an incident for a long time, they may need to come out of that situation through a change of face	Appreciation that everyone is busy, everyone is manic, but people are very accepting and compassionate People look out for you	Having a head that is willing to be open and honest with the staff team	People are very complimentary People will say oh that was really good when that happened We all understand that we are in it together - we're all struggling and we all have bad times	Sometimes it's hard to have that compassion for somebody else, because if you're in it and you are distressed and you are trying your hardest to keep your shit together and somebody comes along and goes, you alright? That's actually hard to embrace that at that time

Appendix 66: Self-compassion examples

Table 34 Compassion from others: Suggestions from Apple Wood School

Oliver	Olivia	Chloe	Charlotte
Accepting compliments	Alcohol	Cider	Cooking
Do things for others: Reaching out to help others, whether it is a charity or the things we do at work	Eating healthily	Taking a walk	Exercise
Exercise	Going away at weekends	Taking time for a bath	Lazy days
Giving my children opportunities	Going to the gym	Tell myself to be more reasonable and look on the bright side	Listening to music
Music	Having a good sleeping routine	Try not to get annoyed if I've not completed work	Long walks
New experiences	Journaling to write down how my day has gone	Trying not to feel guilty about having a couple of hours just to myself to do what I want to do	Meditation
Reminiscing with friends	Playing piano	Trying not to take work home	Positive affirmations
Talking about music	Positive affirmations		Reading
Time with family at home	Reading		Shopping
	Recognising things that I am looking forward to doing and things that I want to do		Spa days
	Regular exercise		Spending time with loved ones
	Spending time with friends and family		Travelling whenever possible
	Walking the dog		Wine
			Yoga

Levi	Rachel	Mia	Mary
Going to the cinema Listening to music Skateboarding Spending time with the children Walking in nature in all weathers Walking in the woods	Everything I like involves a social function I like being outside on my own I quite like sitting outside in my garden I want that social connection	Chilling at home Eating with husband at the table Gardening Knitting Playing with grandson Same routine, get in, run, bubble bath, jammies on, sit and eat the tea Shopping Sitting in motorhome with a glass or wine Talking with friends Writing poetry	I don't want to think about anything I just don't have any more space in my head to think about anything I like to be alone, that's what I do for myself, I don't want to be anyone, I don't want to be a teacher, I don't want to be a mum, I don't want to be a daughter, sister, you know, I just want to be, not even myself, you know just nothing I want to play on my mobile phone I want to stay in silence Time to do nothing Space

Table 35 Cherry Blossom School Self-compassion examples

Phoenix	Lilly
Learning to identify what our needs are and then try and live within those sort of constructs Learning to not beat myself up when I am saying I can't do that on Sunday, you know and almost hang the repercussions of that, whatever they may be, because you are trying to survive yourself I suppose I think what I am probably doing now, which I think is trying to engage in that whole sort of notion of compassion for one's self, but it's more about keeping me there as opposed to actively doing things which will actively promote me benefiting Compassion to one's self could be even admitting defeat and once admitting defeat like finding what would work better.	Take some time for myself every so often otherwise it is just all about what everyone needs from me and there is no kind of 'what about me?' I can't give any more I take two hours to do the supermarket shop because I go via Starbucks I go to bed early and read my book… just take a few minutes for myself

Appendix 67: Stage 2 Evaluation survey

Having participated in the six focus group sessions, participants were encouraged to complete the survey found in Appendix 6 previously.

12 participants completed the survey.

Most effective aspects of the focus group sessions.

Participants suggested that the most effective aspects of the group sessions involved open discussions and taking with colleagues. Being able to reflect individually and then share experiences with others was suggested to be powerful. Talking at length with colleagues, about professional experiences, with an impartial person, in a confidential space was suggested to be helpful in providing opportunities to understand different perspectives. Thought provoking questioning, listening to others, and sharing and discussing the impact of role-based experiences and interactions through professional discussions and reflective group conversations were identified as being effective. For some participants, practical aspects of the sessions, such as drawing pictures, diagrams and visualisation supported the process of sharing thoughts and discussion. Having the opportunity and time to engage in professional discussions about different theoretical ideas underpinning the activities supported learning. Such opportunities were suggested to be interesting and encouraged thinking about professional experiences. The comprehensive coverage of compassion and exploring the role of compassion in Education was described as thought provoking and encouraged self-reflection. It was stated that themes explored could be immediately applied personal experiences and 'new stresses and pressures', such as those associated with Covid.

Least effective aspects of the focus group sessions.

With regards to the least effective aspects of sessions, time was identified most frequently. Due to a variety of different circumstances, the length of time between some sessions was occasionally prolonged and consequently delays in participation were experienced. However, it was also mentioned the length of time between sessions could be extended to allow time for learning to be revisited. Because sessions took place after school, one participant suggested that it was difficult to focus and switch off after the 'drama' of a busy day.

It was also suggested that some sessions included too much information, which, despite being content rich, were cognitively challenging at the end of a day. Specific aspects of the sessions that were associated with being least effective included writing, diagrams, partner sessions and post session reading.

Engagement during the focus group sessions.

Overall, participant reflections in relation to their engagement during the focus group sessions were positive. 67% of participants (n=8), described their engagement from good to highly engaged. It was recognised that engagement depended on professional experiences during the day. So, if the day had been stressful, 'with lots of incidents', engagement was suggested to be harder. Engagement was described as variable by one participant due to other commitments, which had an impact on attendance. One participant suggested that their engagement varied from 'totally overwhelmed to fully engaged', while another participant described their engagement as limited.

Engagement with the audio recordings that were incorporated into some of the early sessions and that were also then recommended as post session follow up experiences were mixed. For some, engaging with the audio recordings was described as good, positive and enjoyable, while for others, it was suggested that engaging with audio recordings, in a work setting was difficult. This difficulty was associated with engaging with the audio recordings in classrooms, sitting at desks and occasionally being interrupted by children at the window. Some participants stated that they didn't engage, didn't listen to many, or felt disappointed that they didn't have time to engage with the audio recordings as post session experiences.

Engaging with post session additional readings or online activities was also mixed. Some participants described these post session recommendations as good, interesting, enjoyable, and helped to consolidate learning. However, a lack of time was identified as influencing engagement, as well as professional experiences during the day or week or what was happening at home. One participant would have liked to have engaged more with the post session recommendations prior to sessions to enhance group collaboration and reflection.

Some participants stated that they would have liked to have engaged more, were disappointed with their engagement or found it difficult to engage with content outside the sessions. Two participants stated that they did not engage with the post session recommendations.

Relevance of sessions to professional role.

100% of participants recognised the relevance of the focus group sessions to their professional roles with 67% of responses including the words 'really', 'very or 'highly'. Sessions were also described as helpful and important. However, despite recognising the relevance of the sessions, one participant suggested that 'so much of working in an academy is beyond our control now'. In addition to reflecting on and thinking about the relevance of compassion to their own professional practice, particularly given 'the nature of the schools', it was suggested that participation in the sessions had led to better understanding of others in their schools and the emotional impact of the work on their colleagues. Having had the opportunity to discuss theories and approaches relating to compassion, one participant suggested feeling better able to support staff and pupils. Reflecting on experiences during Covid, the role of compassion was stated to be 'even more important', with one assistant head recognising an increased need to understand and support people's anxieties and different feelings during this time.

Relevance of sessions to wellbeing

With regards to the relevance of sessions to wellbeing, Table 36 shows that all responses were positive.

Table 36 Relevance of sessions to wellbeing

Response	Frequency (n=12)
Highly relevant	2
Positive	2
Gradually became more helpful	1
Made me think	1
Really helpful	1
Relevant	1
Useful	1
Very important	1
Very much so	1
Very relevant	1

Three responses recognised that the sessions provided a helpful space to de-brief, where colleagues could offer support, which supported wellbeing. In the absence of supervision, the focus group sessions were described as offering opportunities to share, offload and explore reflections. The sessions were suggested to have helped expression and thinking, supported a better work life balance and a reduction in guilt. One participant recognised links with their personal practice of yoga and meditation. Participation in the sessions was suggested to have had a noticeably positive impact and to have supported wellbeing daily. One participant stated that themes of compassion were still referred to in their daily professional practice nearly one year after the sessions.

The relevance of compassion for self

As show in Table 37 compassion for self was recognised as being important with regards to participants professional roles.

Table 37 The relevance of compassion for self in relation to participants professional roles

Response	Frequency (n=11)
Very relevant	4
Important	2
Extremely relevant	1
Highly relevant	1
Improved	1
Relevant	1
Very relevant	1

Compassion for self was suggested to be important in relation to recognising own needs and developing strategies to support personal wellbeing. An awareness of 'true feelings', emotions and 'triggers' was suggested to be important when experiencing stressful situations. One participant stated that compassion for self was 'very relevant' because "if I don't have compassion for myself, I wouldn't be able to come to work each day". However, it was also suggested that "we are not always good at being compassionate to ourselves".

One participant developed increased insight into the importance of self-compassion stating;

"I have only just realised that this is something I should be mindful of! My compassion for self has improved on a personal level, now I am aware also to think of my self compassion for myself professionally, I will apply the concepts learned".

Reflecting on experiences during Covid, increased compassion for self was suggested to be more important during difficult times. When experiencing separation from others due to Covid restrictions, support networks were reduced, therefore, the need to be self-compassionate was recognised as being more important, to then be able to support others.

Relevance of compassion for others

As shown in Table 38 compassion for others was suggested to be both relevant and important with regards to participants professional roles.

Table 38 Relevance of compassion for others

Relevance	Frequency of response (n=10)
Very relevant	4
Extremely important	2
Extremely relevant	1
Highly relevant	1
Important	1
Relevant	1

Given participants professional roles, compassion for others was suggested to be essential, particularly in recognition of their support for children with SEMH needs. It was suggested that being compassionate to others was important when working in a difficult workplace which challenges all emotions. When being compassionate to others, recognising that others have different needs was suggested to be important. Understanding colleague's needs was associated with adjusting interactions to be more compassionate and supportive of their wellbeing.

Despite feeling part of a supportive team, one participant suggested that when tired or stressed colleagues can become self-centred. Consequently, compassion for others might involve thinking and talking about how to support each other more. While recognising that compassion for others is important, one participant suggested maintaining 'certain boundaries' in a leadership role.

Relevance of compassion from others

As shown in Table 39 compassion from others was suggested to be both relevant and important with regards to participants professional roles.

Table 39 Relevance of compassion for others to participants professional roles

Relevance	Frequency of response (n=6)
Relevant	2
Extremely important	1
Extremely relevant	1
Highly relevant	1
Very relevant	1

Compassion from others and being able to rely on others was suggested to be the most important features of participants professional roles, particularly given the challenging situations that they experienced at times. Organisational compassion and understanding was experienced as feeling supported and having time to manage the work and the feelings which arise from the work. Participants in leadership roles suggested that colleagues might sometimes forget that they also need compassion at times, and that it is OK to expect compassion from others, given that leadership roles can be stressful.

Experiencing compassion from others was suggested to consolidate relationships between SLT and the wider team. One participant suggested that, following regular participation in the focus group sessions, a colleague, who was also part of the sessions and who in the past "would not necessarily have been so compassionate", now offered them the most support.

Relevance of sessions to recent experiences

As shown in Table 40 all participants described the sessions as being relevant to their recent experiences.

Table 40 Relevance of sessions to recent experiences

Relevance	Frequency of response (n=12)
Relevant	2
Very relevant	2
A bit relevant	1
Constantly relevant	1
Fundamental	1
Highly relevant	1
More aware	1
Thought provoking	1
Very important	1
Very useful	1

With regards to the relevance of sessions to recent experiences, it was suggested that compassion was 'constantly relevant' to participants professional roles. Additionally, learning from the sessions was suggested to have been very important due to the nature of the pupils, particularly in recognition that working with children who have experienced early trauma can have an impact on others. Sessions were also suggested to be relevant to participants personal experiences.

One participant shared the example of bereavement, but suggested that the school organisation had been understanding and cared in a meaningful way. Other examples related to recent experiences during Covid. During such experiences and in recognition of it being harder to look after 'ourselves and each other', it was stated that colleagues were more aware of the need for compassion.

Compassion was recognised as being ‘crucial’ both in professional and personal contexts and was suggested to be;

“fundamental, not just important or a consideration, but fundamental to our functioning as humans and our interactions and relationships with others”.

How could the sessions be developed or improved?

When encouraged to think about how the sessions could be developed or improved, the most frequent responses related to time. The timing of the sessions was mentioned by some participants because sessions took place at the end of a busy day, when participants might be tired or preoccupied. Due to a variety of different circumstances, regular scheduling of sessions was not possible, so some participants suggested having sessions closer together. Some participants would have liked to have more time and space to think and discuss. Despite time being identified as an area for development, it was also recognised that there would be no ‘perfect time’ for sessions because school contexts are challenging, with on-going circumstances and time constraints. Covid was also identified as being problematic with regards to having regular sessions. Having more practical sessions was also mentioned by one participant and having sessions where practical exercises could be experienced was mentioned by another.

In addition to areas for development, it was also stated that the sessions were ‘great’, that course completed was ‘brilliant’ and that ‘we did well to meet as much as we did and have the quality that we did’.

Finally, it was stated that;

“I think our course in compassion should be developed for all teachers, adapted for children and even parents”.

In response to the question, would you be interested in engaging in future collaboration to explore the role of compassion focused approaches to support wellbeing in the wider school community? 33% of participants, interestingly all from the same school, responded no (n=3) while 77% of participants responded yes (n=9).