

Bullying in Schools: A complexity approach to sustainable restorative approaches?



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Luke Stephen Henry Roberts
Homerton College

Faculty of Education
University of Cambridge

This dissertation was submitted for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy

December 2019

Declaration.

This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text.

It is not substantially the same as any that I have submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for a degree or diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text. I further state that no substantial part of my dissertation has already been submitted, or, is being concurrently submitted for any such degree, diploma or other qualification at the University of Cambridge or any other University or similar institution except as declared in the Preface and specified in the text

It does not exceed the prescribed word limit of 80,000 words for the Degree Committee.

Abstract: Bullying in Schools: A complexity approach to sustainable restorative approaches?

Luke Stephen Henry Roberts

The issue of bullying is an international concern; specifically, the harmful influence that bullying has on young people in educational settings. Restorative approaches have been viewed as an appropriate intervention for addressing bullying. A review of the literature suggests that the Whole School Approach is the most common form of implementing restorative approaches in English schools. This research has sought to address a substantial gap in the existing literature, which has focused on implementation rather than the sustainability of restorative approaches.

This research has developed a qualitative inquiry using a constructionist epistemology to explore the phenomena of change from the perspective of secondary school educationalists in their local ecosystems. Prior to the research phase, a soft systems methodology was used to stimulate opportunities for internal creativity with staff developing restorative approaches in their school. This enabled staff to develop a range of self-generated activities to enhance restorative interventions in their setting. A phenomenological methodology was used to focus on staff perceptions of change happening over an academic year. Focus groups were conducted in each of the four inquiry schools using a semi-structured interview process. A complexity-informed thematic analysis was conducted to synthesize and critique the data collected during the focus groups.

The findings from this research suggest that staff perceptions construct a complex and nuanced understanding of restorative approaches, whilst exploring the tensions and accommodations of school change. Furthermore, this research reveals how systems can innovate or distort initiatives such as restorative approaches. Consequently, there then follows a discussion for implications of the findings from this research in response to the research questions. Furthermore, there is a wider discussion on the implications for the field of restorative approaches. This includes how a complexity theory-informed analysis provides insights into the phenomena of school change and the sustainability of restorative approaches. The thesis ends with reflections and possibilities on how those seeking to implement and sustain change in complex adaptive systems can act as system-synthesis leaders to engage with complex phenomena.

Acknowledgements.

I would like to thank Dr Hilary Cremin as my supervisor for her constant support and challenge throughout this journey, and especially for her intuitive sense that I might have dyslexia, which fundamentally altered the trajectory of my PhD experience. I would also like to thank the Cambridge Disability Centre for supporting my diagnosis of dyslexia and dyspraxia - they have been amazing. I would also like to thank Kitty Malone, my dyslexic supervisor, for her enthusiasm and encouragement. She probably knows more about restorative approaches and complexity theory than she ever wanted to.

I would also like to thank the Cambridge Peace Education Research Group for both their individual and collective support, especially Terence Bevington, who remains my Restorative Approaches touchstone, as well as Toshiyasu Tsurahara and Tim Archer for their kind challenges and nudges. Also, thanks go to Will McInerney, and Pyrouz Alinia for kindly reading through and giving their insight.

This research would not have been possible without the schools which agreed to participate and the wider networks which helped me find them. This research would not have been completed without their support, for which I am grateful. In a complex world there are many other moments and opportunities which have collectively contributed to this research. I am fortunate to be so interconnected with so many interesting people.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their constant support, my daughter who was born in the second year of this research, and demonstrates on a daily basis all the features of complex adaptive systems, and my wife, who gave me the confidence to return to education and also told me to hurry up and finish.

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Bullying, Restorative Approaches and Models of School Change.....	4
2.1. Bullying: An International Concern.....	4
2.2 Defining Bullying.	5
2.3. New Challenges in Defining Bullying: Cyberbullying.....	7
2.4 Terminology of Young People in a Bullying Dynamic: Target and Perpetrator.	8
2.5 Forms of Bullying.....	9
2.6 Characteristics Which Make Young People Vulnerable to Bullying.....	11
2.6.1 Race and Bullying.....	12
2.6.2 Gender and Bullying.	13
2.6.3 Homophobia and Bullying.	14
2.6.4 Bullying and The Equalities Act 2010.....	14
2.7 Government Guidance on Recording Incidents of Bullying.....	16
2.8 The Prevalence of Bullying in Schools: How and What to Measure.....	17
2.9 The Problem with Measurement Tools for Bullying.	20
2.9.1 The Validity and Reliability of Surveying Young People with Regard to Bullying.....	22
2.10 How are Schools Tackling Bullying?	22
3. Restorative Approaches: A Response to Bullying in Educational Settings.	27
3.1 Addressing the Paradigm Shift: from Punitive to Restorative.	27
3.2 Critique of the Social Discipline Window.	29
3.3 What is Meant by the Term ‘Restorative Approaches’?.....	30
3.4 The Benefits of Restorative Approaches: the Evidence.....	34
3.5 Restorative Approaches: Implementation in Schools.	36
3.6. Randomised Control Trials and Restorative Practice.	39
3.6.1 RCT 1: Restorative Approaches, Mental Health and Behaviour Problems.	40
3.6.2 RCT 2: Restorative Approaches, Behaviour and Educational Attainment.	43
3.6.3 RCT 3: Restorative Approaches, Bullying and Health Outcomes.	45
3.6.4 The RCTs and the Implications for this Research.	50
3.7 The Restorative Principles Framework.....	51
3.8 The Definition of Restorative Approaches for this Research.	52
3.9 The Problem with Implementation of Restorative Approaches in Schools.	53
4. School change: From Individuals to Systems.	55
4.1 The Myth of the Hero Innovator: Individual Change Agents.	56
4.2 Niches: Pockets of Practice and Heterotopias.....	59
4.3 System Change in Schools.....	62
4.4 The External Environment for a School: The English Educational System.	66

4.5 External Regulator: The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in School Improvement. .	67
4.6 School Improvement: The School as an Efficient Machine.....	68
4.7 Neoliberalism and Education.	69
4.8 Neoliberalism and bullying in schools.....	72
4.9 Complexity Theory – An Alternative Paradigm for Exploring School Change?	74
4.10 Defining Complexity Theory.....	75
4.11 Feedback: Amplification and Regulation in Complex Adaptive Systems.....	77
4.12 The Importance of Self-Organisation in a Complex Adaptive System.....	79
4.13 Self-Organisation: A Phenomenon in Schools?	80
4.14 Emergence: What is Emergence? Do Schools have Emergent Properties?	83
4.15 System Boundaries: What is the Importance of System Boundaries?	85
4.16 Time: A Measure of Change in a System.	87
4.17 Complexity Theory as a School Change Paradigm Shift.....	89
4.18 School Change and Complex Adaptive Systems.	90
4.18.1 The Solution to the Problem of Change in schools: Shifting Away from Implementation to Sustainability.....	90
4.18.2 The Opportunity to Explore Schools as Complex Adaptive Systems using Restorative Approaches in this Research.	91
5. Methodology Section: Complexity-Informed Thematic Research Methodology.....	93
5.1 Methodology Introduction.	93
5.2 Epistemological Stance: Finding a Complexity Theory Congruent Epistemology.	94
5.4 Research Methodology: Phenomenology.	98
5.5 Selection of Schools for Researching Systems Phenomena.	102
5.5.1 About Riverview School.....	103
5.5.2 About Laguna High.....	103
5.5.3 About Northside School.....	104
5.5.4 About Evergreen College.....	104
5.6 Research Design: The Plan of Engagement for the Four Schools.	104
5.7 Focus Groups: Staff Delivering Restorative Approaches Who Have Attended SSM Sessions.	108
5.8 Data Analysis: Understanding the Dynamics of Systems Phenomena in the Four Schools.	110
5.8.1 Complexity-Informed Thematic Analysis.....	110
5.9 Ethical Considerations in the Research Design.	112
5.10 Researcher Reflexivity: Engaging in Complex Adaptive Systems.....	113
5.11 Research Design to Address the Research Questions.	114
6. Findings on Restorative Approaches in the Four Inquiry Schools.....	115
6.1 Restorative Approaches in the Four Schools.	115
6.1.1 The Challenge of Defining Restorative Interventions in the Four Inquiry Schools.....	115

6.2 Exploring the Use of Restorative Principles in Each School.	118
6.3 Restorative and Punitive Interventions in the Four Schools.	124
6.3.1 Staff Perceptions of Punitive and Restorative Interventions at Riverview School.	124
6.4 The Purposeful Activities in the Inquiry Schools.	139
6.5. Challenges Perceived by Staff in the Inquiry Schools.	145
6.5.1 The Challenge of Time Experienced by Staff in the Inquiry Schools.....	145
6.5.2 Staff Seeking Change in Their Schools.	148
6.5.3 Focus Groups: As Heterotopias with emergent properties.....	150
6.6 Responding to the Research Questions	157
6.6.1 Secondary Question 1: In what ways do staff perceive the state of restorative approaches as a feature in their school?.....	157
6.6.2 Secondary Question 2: What do staff perceptions reveal regarding restorative approaches as a complex adaptive systems phenomenon in their schools?	158
6.6.3 Secondary Question 3: What is revealed regarding the sustainability of restorative approaches when schools are explored as complex adaptive systems?	159
6.6.4 Response to the Primary Research Question: <i>What can a complexity theory-informed thematic analysis reveal regarding the phenomenon of restorative approaches and its sustainability in four English secondary schools?</i>	160
7. Discussion of the Findings from the Four Inquiry Schools.	161
7.1 The Continuous Challenge of Defining Bullying.	161
7.2 Bullying in the Inquiry Schools.	162
7.3 If Not Addressing Bullying and Peer Conflict, What Are Restorative Approaches Restoring To?	163
7.4 When Viewed as a Complex Adaptive System What Do Restorative Approaches Become in Schools? An Illusion.	166
7.4.1 The Principle of Questioning.	169
7.4.2 The Principle of a Voluntary Encounter.	169
7.4.3 The Principle of the Articulation of Harm.	169
7.4.4 The Principle of Empathy.	170
7.4.5 The Principle of Mutual Agreement.	170
7.4.6 The Principle of Inclusiveness.	170
7.4.7 The Principle of Impartiality.....	170
7.4.8 The Principle of Empowerment.	170
7.5 The Influence of Schools on Restorative Approaches.	172
7.6 The Issue of Restorative Facilitation.	175
7.7 What does a Complexity Theory-Informed Analysis Reveal About Restorative Approaches in Schools?	178
7.8 AIM: Social Energy in Socially Complex Adaptive Systems.....	183
7.8.1 The Spectrum of Systems identified in the Four Schools.	186

7.9 The Four Schools as Complex Adaptive Systems.	187
7.9.1 Recognizing Feedback.	187
7.9.2 Self-Organisation: Identifying the Networks and Shapes of Networks.	189
7.9.3 Emergence in the Inquiry Schools.	192
7.9.4 Identifying System Boundaries.	195
7.9.5 Types of System Boundaries.....	199
7.9.6 Types of Time in Schools.	201
7.9.7 System-Time.	202
7.9.8 Social-Time.....	205
7.9.9 The Implications of System-Time and Social-Time on Heterotopias.....	207
7.9.10 The Implications of Heterotopic Time for Restorative Approaches.	208
7.10 Time and Complexity.	210
7.11 Restorative Approaches, Schools and their Ecosystems.....	211
7.11.1 The Influence of Neoliberalism on the Ecosystem.	213
7.11.2 Bullying Nested in a Neoliberal Educational System.	213
7.11.3 Neoliberalism and Restorative Approaches.	214
8. Conclusion	216
8.1 Scholarly contribution.....	216
8.2 Implications of this Research.....	217
8.3 Limitations and Further Research.	218
8.4 Implementing and Sustaining Change in Schools: Reflecting on Complexity.	221
Bibliography.	225
Appendices:	238

List of Tables.

Table 1: Randomised Control Trials in Restorative Practice.....	39
Table 2: A Strategy for Change: The Six Guidelines.....	58
Table 3: Quality Measures in Different Paradigms of Research	101
Table 4: Table of Stakeholder Interviews Prior to SSM Sessions.....	105
Table 5: Staff Groups Participating in the SSM Sessions and Subsequent Focus Groups.	106
Table 6: Root Definitions Created by Staff in their SSM Sessions.....	106
Table 7: Range of Purposeful Activities Identified in Each School.	107
Table 8: Attendance at the Focus Groups in the Four Schools.....	109
Table 9: Timeline of Activities in Each School.....	109
Table 10: Six Key Steps to a Thematic Analysis	110
Table 11: Complexity-Informed Thematic Analytical Framework.....	111
Table 12: Purposeful Activities Selected by Staff in Each Enquiry School.....	139
Table 13: School Descriptors of Restorative Approaches	166
Table 14: Principles of Restorative Approaches Framework: Principles Active in Each School.....	168
Table 15: Four Modes of Knowledge Conversion.....	180
Table 16: AIM Framework of Purposeful Activity in Each School.....	185
Table 17: Spectrum of Systems in the Inquiry Schools.....	186
Table 18: Forms of Self-Organisation in the Inquiry Schools During the Purposeful Activity.....	189
Table 19: Emergent Properties in the Four Schools.....	192
Table 20: School System Boundaries.....	195
Table 21: Time as Perceived by the Focus Groups.....	201
Table 22: Implementing school change from a systems perspective for Leaders.....	221
Table 23: Sustaining school change from a systems perspective for Leaders.....	222

List of Figures

Figure 1: Permanent Exclusions for Bullying 2014 to 2017.....	18
Figure 2: Secondary School Fixed-Term Exclusions for Bullying 2014 to 2017.....	19
Figure 3: Responses for Children and Young People who Reported Bullying.....	23

List of Diagrams.

Diagram 1: Social Discipline Window.....	28
Diagram 2: Restorative Practice Intervention Theoretical Model.....	41
Diagram 3: Four Types of School Change.....	55
Diagram 4: A Neoliberal Systems Map of the Educational Environment.....	71
Diagram 5: The Double Hermeneutic as a Feedback Loop.....	100
Diagram 6: A Complexity-Informed Thematic Analysis.....	179
Diagram 7: A Systems Model of Creativity.....	184
Diagram 8: Types of Network Shapes.....	189
Diagram 9: Nested Systems of Restorative Approaches in a School.....	212

List of Acronyms.

ABA	Anti-Bullying Alliance
AIM	Attention, Information and Money
BREXIT	Britain Exiting the European Union
CAS	Complex Adaptive System
DAP	Dynamic Process Adaptation.
DfE	Department for Education
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IIRP	International Institute of Restorative Practice
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Questioning, or Intersex
MAT	Multi-Academy Trust
NQT	Newly Qualified Teacher
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
POP	Pockets of Practice
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
PSHE	Personal, Social and Health Education
RA	Restorative Approaches
RAG	Red, Amber, Green
RCT	Randomised Control Trial
RJ	Restorative Justice
RP	Restorative Practice
RPF	Restorative Principles Framework
RPI	Restorative Practices Intervention
RWSA	Restorative Whole School Approach
SIMS	School Information Management System
SLT	Senior Leadership Team
SSM	Soft Systems Methodology
WHO	World Health Organisation
WSA	Whole School Approach
YJB	Youth Justice Board

1. Introduction.

My introduction to the world of restorative approaches came during my first job as part of the Youth Justice Board's evaluation of restorative justice in schools. Interviewing hundreds of young people as well as staff and parents about an alternative way to address conflict and bullying had a fundamental impact on me. Furthermore, listening to the relief of those who had been in a restorative intervention and, as a result, were now in a more peaceful place was incredibly powerful. One case in particular stayed in my mind: a boy had been bullied by another boy from Year 4 (between 8 and 9-years-old) right up to the end of primary school. At this point he had hoped the bullying would end. Instead, not only did the boy bullying him move to the same secondary school as him, they were also put in the same class. It would be two more years before the bullying would stop due to a restorative intervention.

As one of the first restorative approaches coordinators in educational settings I was employed by the Lambeth Local Authority to facilitate meetings with young people who were at risk of permanent exclusion. I worked across primary, secondary and special schools as well as pupil referral units to promote restorative approaches. I also co-founded a network of restorative approaches coordinators across London. In addition, I was invited by the Metropolitan Police to train over 150 police officers in restorative approaches. As time progressed I moved to Croydon Council to support schools in developing in-house training and awareness sessions to build the capacity of restorative practitioners. Additionally, I was also invited by London Councils to chair a project as part of their Back on Track programme. Back on Track was designed to build the evidence base for restorative approaches as an intervention in pupil referral units (PRUs) for four London local authorities. These were exciting times to be implementing restorative approaches.

Yet, something was wrong. The excitement and energy of implementing restorative approaches did not appear to sustain itself in the longer term. This suspicion was confirmed one day when I was contacted out of the blue by a Lambeth school which was asking for support even though, several years before, I had departed from a vibrant, collaborative, school network of which they were a part. In addition, the pan-London network which I had supported had also disbanded, and the training that had been delivered to Metropolitan Police officers showed no signs of being used when police officers returned to their local communities. Finally, the Back on Track programme, although recognised as good practice, was not making a difference to other London PRUs. Furthermore, the PRUs that were part of

the project appeared to be regressing once the funding stopped. As a consequence of all these factors I decided to do an MBA to better understand organisational change.

The professional concerns I had turned into a personal quest to understand why something that could be so powerful was failing to make a difference. I realised that this was not about individuals or teams but could instead be about the management theory which influenced social behaviours, norms and actions. During my MBA I attended a workshop called 'What Has Nietzsche Got To Do With System Dynamics?'. This was an experimental workshop in which I recognised for the first time how a group could, with the right stimulus, become a system. The next day all I could see was systems: myself, other classmates, the lecturer interacting with other students, the class, the wind in the trees outside the class window. This epiphany started to shape the way in which I thought about systems, which are ever-present yet often so hard to describe and see. The second epiphany happened during my M.Ed. in a conversation with Professor Tony Booth in which he deconstructed the whole school approach. He was also kind enough to recognise the discomfort and dissonance he had created in me and suggested thinking about restorative approaches as a subsystem contributing to the overall system of the school. Thus, aware of a growing dissatisfaction with present management theory, the conclusion my M.Ed. research suggested was that the whole school approach was not appropriate for sustaining restorative approaches.

I attended many conferences when I was still new to the field of restorative approaches, and one of the things that struck me was the disconnect between practice and research. One of the things I hope this PhD research will do is help to bridge that divide. Yet, the risk is that the benefits accrued from restorative approaches are never fully realised as restorative interventions lose their potency for changing lives. Nevertheless, without the evidence base to support integrity of practice organisations can be distracted by the next new initiative or programme which can address their current problem.

As a researcher in this field it is also increasingly frustrating to see how little innovation there is in the use of restorative approaches in educational settings. The reasons for this cannot be simplified and must be viewed through a new lens. Thus, the sense of urgency comes at a time when there is a growing range of concerns facing young people from youth violence, organised crime, online bullying, mental health and the disproportionate over-representation of black and Asian young men in the criminal justice system. Yet, this is not being addressed through education-based restorative practitioners or the research field. However, these

concerns could be addressed through innovative restorative practice if school-based practitioners had support at various system levels.

In summary, by understanding the difference between implementation and sustainability this research seeks to contribute to the paradigm shift between mechanistic management theory and a complexity theory-informed ecosystemic change theory. The latter recognises nonlinearity, uncertainty, resistance and co-evolution as features of change rather than aspects to be ignored or minimised. Thus, this research hopes to contribute to both school-based practitioners' and researchers' understanding of the paradigm shift from mechanistic to ecosystemic change. In doing so it may help to further collaboration in developing sustainable models situated in local ecosystems.

2. Bullying, Restorative Approaches and Models of School Change.

The literature review will begin with an exploration of the field of bullying as it relates to the issues of young people in schools. Based on that exploration the rationale behind seeing restorative approaches as a potential solution to bullying will be examined. This will include a review of the transition from criminal justice to educational settings. Furthermore, there will also be an analysis of how the research literature has sought to develop a model of school change based on the whole school approach for restorative approaches. The final section will explore the alternative models of school change and their implications for sustaining restorative approaches.

2.1. Bullying: An International Concern.

The issue of peer violence is an ongoing concern in education system across the world, and this chapter will focus on bullying as a social phenomenon affecting children and young people. The phenomenon of bullying in relation to children and young people in educational settings has received increasing attention due to the negative effects it has on individual children and young people, as well as their relationships with others. The earliest research was conducted by Dan Olweus in Sweden in the early 1970s (published in Swedish), focusing on ‘whipping boys’ and ‘mobbing’¹ (coined by Lorenz, Olweus, 1972:10) among 12-16-year-old boys. There is concern internationally about the phenomenon of bullying with researchers investigating across Asia, including Japan’s (Morita et al., 1998) *ijme* (bullying), where acts are often group-orientated, in Korea (Sim, as cited in Slee, Ma, Sim, Taki & Sullivan, 2003) and in China (Ma, as cited in Slee et al., 2003) and Australia (Rigby and Slee, 1991, 1993). This also extends to the Americas: Canada (Hymel, Rocke Henderson & Bonanno, 2005), in the United States (Swearer & Espelage, 2004) and in Mexico (Zatarain, 2009). Furthermore, in England research has continued to grow since the landmark publication *Don’t Suffer in Silence* was first published 1994 by the Department of Education and Employment. Key studies followed, including Peter Smith and Fran Thomas’ survey on the effectiveness of interventions to address bullying (2010), while David Farrington et al.’s (2012) research focused on the later outcomes of children and young people labelled bullies: *School Bullying, Depression and Offending Behaviour in Later Life*². From the range of

¹ Mobbing is defined as ‘all against one’.

² Full title: School Bullying, Depression and Offending Behaviour in Later Life: An Updated Systematic Review of Longitudinal Studies.

international and UK-based literature it is clear that research into bullying is seeking to address the phenomenon in terms of identifying, categorising, intervening and understanding the effects of bullying.

Although the evidence on bullying highlights an international concern there is no international consensus on how to define bullying in the academic literature. The United Nations does not provide clarity as there is no mention of the term ‘bullying’ in the United Nations Rights of the Child Act 1989. Yet, the World Health Organisation (WHO) does recognise bullying behaviour as having an impact on the health of young people. In 2014 the WHO conducted research on bullying with 11-, 13- and 15-year-olds in 42 countries (2016). The findings included that bullying of boys was marginally higher than girls but, overall, bullying reduced with age. The WHO research urged that countries ‘reflect on a violent-free childhood as an essential determinant of a healthy childhood’. The European Union also recognises the detrimental effects of bullying and states, ‘Bullying and violence in schools is an affront to common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination. Its effects can be serious and long-term’ (Dowes and Cafia, 2016:17). Yet, although international bodies recognise bullying to an extent, there is a lack of interdisciplinary clarity regarding what the term ‘bullying’ means. I will now explore to what extent bullying is defined within the research literature.

2.2 Defining Bullying.

A bully is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as ‘A person who habitually seeks to harm or intimidate those whom they perceive as vulnerable’. The understanding of the relationship dynamic called bullying has been a field of research literature since the early 1970s, starting with the work of Dan Owleus (Swedish version, 1973; English version, 1978), *Aggression in the Schools: Bullies and Whipping Boys*. This was the first research into bullying specifically focused on boys. The definition of bullying has been evolving since Owleus first defined it as ‘negative hurtful behaviour’ (1993). Elliott (2002) further clarified bullying beyond physical acts, saying ‘Physical, involving weapons or threats, and can be verbal or emotional, racial or sexual’, which encompasses a wider array of harmful experiences. The latest UK government guidance from the DfE gives the definition that:

Bullying is behaviour by an individual or group, repeated over time, that intentionally hurts another individual or group either physically or emotionally

This definition recognises that bullying can be perpetrated by a single pupil or a group of peers, which is useful in identifying perpetrators. However, the Anti-Bullying Alliance for England⁴ defines bullying as:

The repetitive, intentional hurting of one person or group by another person or group where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. It can happen face-to-face or online.

Thus, the Anti-Bullying Alliance in England, unlike the DfE, distinguishes ‘imbalance of power’ as a key feature of bullying dynamics. This draws on research by Rigby (2002) which specifically identifies imbalance of power. I would agree with both Rigby’s research and the Anti-Bullying Alliance’s policy position that imbalance of power is an essential feature in a definition of bullying. In addition, identifying imbalance of power distinguishes bullying from other forms of peer aggression.

There are several other forms of peer aggression or violence which are often linked to bullying but do not display all the characteristics of bullying. For example, an assault, although harmful and violent, is usually perceived as physical as well as one-sided attack which happens once. Hence an assault can be defined as a single harmful event. Yet, arguably, a single assault does not meet the requirements of the definition of bullying, regardless of the level of violence perpetrated whereas, for example, if a young person is assaulted multiple times in a week at school the cumulative effect of these violent incidents fits the ABA definition of bullying.

Another form of harmful behaviour that is mistaken for bullying is harassment, which is ‘when someone behaves in a way which offends, distresses or intimidates you’ and must cause ‘alarm and distress’⁵. Harassment can be in the form of abusive comments, jokes, insulting gestures or online behaviours. Thus, a single incident of harassment, like assault, is not enough for it to be categorised as bullying. However, if a young person experiences multiple forms of harassment, such as abusive comments because of their gender or race, and

³ <https://www.gov.uk/bullying-at-school/bullying-a-definition>

⁴ <http://www.anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/what-bullying/aba-definition-bullying>

⁵ Protection from Harassment Act 1997, section 2.

these are then put on social media, the repetition of the harassment meets the definition of bullying.

There is an important distinction to be made here as both assault and harassment are legally defined, whereas bullying is not an offence. Yet, bullying may be the accumulation of several offences actionable in law. There is also the relatively new offence of coercive control⁶, which can be defined as:

Controlling or coercive behaviour in an intimate or family relationship which causes some to fear that violence will be used against them on at least two or more occasions or, causes them serious alarm and distress which has a substantial adverse effect on the on their usual day-to-day activities.

(SCA 2015, S.7)

This definition meets all the criteria of the definitions of bullying as it implies a power imbalance in a relationship. In addition, the idea of coercive control recognises repetition of harmful behaviour in a relationship by clearly stating that there is reoccurrence on two or more occasions. What differentiates coercive control from bullying is the relationship between target and perpetrator. With coercive control a relationship happens in ‘intimate or family relationships’. Therefore, coercive control is a form of violence which focuses on family settings, whereas bullying, for the purposes of this research, is situated in schools where young people do not have familial relationships. Overall, in defining bullying it has been essential to describe the social phenomena being investigated in this research and to differentiate bullying from other phenomena which may be similar to bullying but are themselves distinct forms of violence (recognised in law) and peer aggression.

2.3. New Challenges in Defining Bullying: Cyberbullying.

The definition of bullying is not fixed but evolving with new forms and spaces of social interaction. This is in part due to the ways in which bullying behaviours manifest themselves, as well as new social dynamics, such as those found in online social spaces. The Anti-Bullying Alliance has extended their definition of bullying to include ‘online’, which implies that cyberbullying is part of the definition of bullying. However, the Government Equalities Office guidance, in conjunction with the charity Childnet⁷, states that, ‘Bullying is

⁶ Serious Crime Act 2015, Section 76 – Controlling or Coercive Behaviour in an Intimate or Family Relationship.

⁷ <https://www.childnet.com/resources/cyberbullying-guidance-for-schools>

purposeful, repeated behaviour designed to cause physical and emotional distress. Cyberbullying (or online bullying) is bullying using situated in social spaces created technologies, particularly over the internet or via mobile and gaming networks'. This definition demarcates cyberbullying as a sub-set of bullying; it also identifies different devices that enable access to the internet, the most ubiquitous being the smart phone. As with the DfE's guidance, imbalance of power is missing from this definition by Childnet and the Government Equalities Office, which suggests this is a government policy.

In the academic literature Gaffney et al (2019), who conducted a systematic meta-analysis review of cyberbullying effectiveness in 24 publications from 2000 onwards, describe cyberbullying as 'incorporating the three key elements of the definition of school-bullying: (1) intention to harm (2) repetitive in nature and (3) clear power imbalance' (2019:135). Further, they go on to state that:

Definitions of cyberbullying must refer to the occurrence of these aggressive behaviours using ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) for example, mobile phones (text messaging/phone calls) or the Internet (e.g., email, social networking sites/social media). Definitions of cyberbullying could also be tailored to include characteristics that are unique to online environments, for example anonymity and publicity.

(Gaffney et al, 2019:135)

This definition is useful for recognising how technology provides multiple channels and platforms for the occurrence of bullying in online spaces. The use of technology changes interactions, as in an example from Gaffney et al: 'A cyberbully may share or distribute embarrassing images of a victim on one occasion but, as the others 'like' or share the content further, the victimisation is repeated but the perpetration of the act is not' (2019:135). Types of technology may change the vulnerabilities of young people depending on the channels (types of ICT) used by perpetrators to reach their peers in a harmful way.

2.4 Terminology of Young People in a Bullying Dynamic: Target and Perpetrator.

An important linguistic aspect the use of the term 'victim', which I find an unhelpful label as it can disempower children and young people. Instead, I refer to Ybarra and Mitchell (2004), who use the term 'targets of aggression'. The emphasis on 'targets', rather the word 'victim', focuses attention on *who* is doing the 'targeting' and what forms it may take. I will be using

‘target’ throughout this research. In addition, I will use the term ‘perpetrators’ (Youth Justice Board, 2005, Gaffney et al, 2019) rather than ‘bully’ or ‘bullies’. Perpetrator is a more useful descriptor than the term ‘bully’, as labelling young people as bullies has a range of negative effects such increased risk of offending and depression in later life (Farrington et al., 2012). Furthermore, the use of the term ‘targets’ (Ybarra and Mitchell, 2004) arguably gives a more descriptive account of the action(s) taken by perpetrators in terms of their aggressive and harmful behaviour towards another young person or group.

The phenomenon of bullying requires clarity of definition but also a recognition that new forms of communication and online interactions are being created in social media settings, which in turn give rise to new channels of bullying. Furthermore, the inclusion of *real or online spaces* acknowledges where the phenomenon of bullying can be located in the real or digital world. It is important to recognise, however, that the underlying definition of the relational dynamic identified as bullying remains constant for the present research.

Therefore, the definition of bullying for the purposes of this research is:

Repetitive, intentionally aggressive and harmful behaviour by perpetrators which creates and maintains an imbalance of power between those targeted as individuals or groups in real or online spaces.

2.5 Forms of Bullying.

The discussion of defining bullying leads on to an exploration of how these bullying dynamics become apparent in schools, the forms which bullying can take as a psycho-social phenomenon. These forms can be categorised as follows: direct bullying, indirect bullying, social isolation, and cyber bullying.

Direct bullying, which is seen as the most obvious form of bullying, involves aggressively harmful behaviour, physical or verbal, in the same space and time between perpetrators and targets. This can take on a variety of forms from kicking and hitting (Elliott, 2002) to name-calling and put-downs through verbal aggression.

Indirect bullying includes elements such as rumours or graffiti, and its goal is to create a sense of discomfort within the space which a target or targets enter. The perpetrator(s) does not necessarily have to be in that space at the same time because they have left harmful messages visually or created harm within the peer network of the target. The harmful effect

occurs for the target because of the indirect methods used by perpetrators, often making it difficult to prove who is responsible.

Social isolation is the act of omission rather than active engagement by perpetrators. This can be caused by perpetrators not allowing targets to engage with the peer group and or with activities, e.g., team sports or birthday parties. This in effect causes social pain (Nordgren, MacDonald and Banas, 2011). In Nordgren, McDonald and Banas's research five studies were conducted involving men and women using a mixture of scenarios, observations and tasks. Study 5 used 67 Dutch middle school teachers, and participants were randomly assigned to a task where they felt either excluded or included. A control group did not participate in the task. They were then presented with a scenario:

Anna is one of the least popular girls in school. She has little contact with her classmates. When they do interact, they often tease her for being overweight and wearing unfashionable clothes. Roger teases her more than any other classmate. For example, when Anna walks to the front of the class, Roger will yell, "Earthquake!" in reference to her being overweight.

(2011:126)

In this study, teachers were asked series of questions, including:

Take a moment to consider the range of punishments you use at your school. We would like to know what level of punishment you think is appropriate for students who bully. In particular, what punishment should Roger receive for bullying Anna?

(2011:126)

They were then asked to rate the appropriate punishment from 1 (no punishment) to 7 (the school's maximum punishment). The research showed that where teachers felt excluded from the first activity they were more likely to be severe with the classmate who bullied, as well as opting for more compassionate treatment for Anna. In effect, the experience of being excluded framed the empathy teachers had for young people in the scenario. Nordgren et al argue that the empathy gap caused by social pain, i.e. the pain of being isolated, has two important features:

'This empathy gap for social pain occurred when participants evaluated both the pain of others (interpersonal empathy gap) as well as the pain participants themselves experienced in the past (intrapersonal empathy gap). The authors argue that beliefs

about social pain are important because they govern how people react to socially distressing events’

(2011:120)

The use of social isolation as a form of bullying is an under-researched area but it is important to recognise that social pain does have a consequence for bullying in schools. Nordgren et al conclude:

‘We found that actively experiencing social pain heightened the perceived pain of emotional bullying. The heightened perceptions of social pain, in turn, led teachers to advocate more comprehensive treatment for bullied students and recommend greater punishment for students who bully’

(2011:127)

The experience of social pain by teachers in the excluded group made them more attuned to the young person’s experience of bullying when targeted in the scenario. Nordgren et al, conclude their research with an important statement:

‘We believe that the tendency to underestimate the severity of social pain has numerous implications beyond school bullying. For example, the distorted judgments of social pain may interfere with the resolution of conflicts in interpersonal relationships. Our findings suggest that people may inadequately empathize with those who are coping with social pain’

(2011:217)

This suggests that bullying through social isolation creates a harmful effect (social pain) through the exclusion of targets by perpetrators in both real and online spaces.

2.6 Characteristics Which Make Young People Vulnerable to Bullying.

Bullying is a relationship dynamic where certain young people may have a higher risk of being targeted due to certain characteristics. The research on bullying has grown. In 1978 there was one article. From 1978 to 2000 there were 532 journal articles⁸, from 2000 to 2010 there were 3,394 journal articles, and from 2010 to 2019 there were 6,945 journal articles on bullying. The research in this area is growing rapidly but I will seek to limit this part of the

⁸ A search was conducted across the Faculty of Education’s literature databases using the term ‘Bullying in Schools’.

literature review to four key areas because they are well researched and provide insight into the other forms of vulnerability.

2.6.1 Race and Bullying.

The issue of race in schools changed dramatically with the rise of multi-culturalism starting with the arrival of the Windrush generation from the Caribbean in June 1948, which was the beginning of mass migration into England. Research from Mooney et al in 1991 (in Cowie and Jennifer, 2008:21) reported that, out of 175 black and white junior school children, 27 percent of black children reported being teased because of their skin colour compared to 9 percent of white children. However, rather than a binary distinction between black and white pupils multi-cultural schools may now have to deal with children and young people from hundreds of different nationalities. In this context schools not only have to address intergroup issues of racial bullying but also intra-group racial bullying called 'shadism' in the UK or 'colourism' in the US (Hunter, 2007) which suggests that those with lighter skin within the same ethnic group are superior. What can make children and young people particularly susceptible to racial bullying is if their own race is either stigmatised in some way (e.g. Afro-Caribbean children are inferior to white-English children) or if there is shadism within in the same ethnic group. Reece suggest that the genesis of colourism is rooted in the transatlantic slave trade: 'the idea of skin colour stratification was initiated at least in part by practices during the chattel slavery' (2018:3). Unfortunately, a search of the British Education Index database produced no results when colourism and shadism were entered in relation to bullying. The issue of shadism is currently an under-researched area with no returns from searches of educational databases but has been discussed within child psychology by Averhart and Bigler (1997), who explored an African American group of 56 children's interracial attitudes to skin tone (from kindergarten to first grade in Texas). The results showed that:

'These data provide evidence that children develop both positive attitudes toward the wide range of skin colors associated with their racial group, as well as stereotypes about the traits and roles associated with lighter- and darker-complexioned individuals'

(Averart and Bigler, 1997:383)

For Averant and Bigler, classifying a bullying incident as racially motivated required understanding both inter- and intra-group dynamics. Until 2010 English schools had a duty

to collect data on racist incidents including bullying but there is now no such policy from the government and therefore no data on the levels of racist bullying. However, schools reported an increase in racist bullying in 2016⁹ due to the BREXIT vote; this was particularly focused on children and young people from an Eastern European heritage. Cowie, Myers and Aziz (2017), suggest that ‘Children and young people are influenced by attitudes and actions of adults in their families and communities and that there is growing evidence that prejudicial behaviour takes place regularly in UK schools’ (2017:93). They are concerned with how schools can counteract xenophobia. Cowie, Myers and Aziz argue that there are parallels with anti-bullying initiatives in schools such as addressing bystanders and using ‘restorative practice in schools’ (2017:96) to address xenophobic, as well as racial, bullying.

2.6.2 Gender and Bullying.

The issue of gender bullying splits into three strands. Firstly, boys who bully boys: this is often physical and was the first area of research conducted by Olweus (1972), who found that boys are more likely to use physical strength and intimidation to bully weaker peers. Secondly, there are girls who bully girls. In this instance girls tend to use more indirect forms of bullying including gossip, rumour spreading, attacks on appearance and social isolation. Such indirect aggressive harmful behaviour has a detrimental impact on the targets’ mental and emotional health. There is also some evidence (Tokunaga, 2010) that girls are much more vulnerable to cyberbullying than boys, although this area of research is ‘fraught with inconsistent findings’ (p.280). The phenomenon of cyberbullying changes with different types of technology; research into cyberbullying has yet to consider bullying on WhatsApp or Snapchat, which may be less gender specific. The third and final strand is mixed gender bullying. Although this can of course be girls bullying boys the focus of the literature tends to be boys bullying girls. This form of bullying can have sexualised connotations. Research by Duncan (1998, in Cowie and Jennifer, 2008) undertook single-sex focus groups with students over five years. The results are disturbing:

‘Participants identified a continuum of bullying behaviours ranging from sexual name-calling by boys, to rumour spreading and destruction of sexual reputations by boys or girls, to sexual assaults perpetrated by gangs of boys, and beating up of girls by cliques of girls motivated by sexual jealousy’ (2018:16)

⁹ <https://www.tes.com/news/rise-post-brexite-racism-schools-we-must-make-point-celebrating-londons-diversity>

The sexual element of bullying is particularly distressing and could be attributed to the onset of puberty within the secondary school age group; however, there is no bullying research in this area. Research by Anagnostopoulos et al (2008) identified staff views of gender-based bullying and how moral interpretations of children and young people, and gender stereotypes of male and female identities and capabilities, determined their ability to intervene. The research found that staff were ‘ambivalent’ towards gay and lesbian targets of bullying. Gender-based bullying may also be the foundation for homophobic bullying due to strong conformity to gender norms among young people.

2.6.3 Homophobia and Bullying.

The presence of gender stereotypes in schools creates a context for homophobic bullying by attacking anything that seems to deviate from fixed gender identity norms. The vulnerability of children and young people who belong to the LGBTQi (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Questioning or Intersex) groups may make them a specific target of bullying. Addressing this form of bullying in educational settings has been a major challenge due to Section 28 of the Local Government Act (1988),¹⁰ which explicitly prohibited local authorities from ‘promoting homosexuality or gay family relationships’. This had the effect of undermining schools’ ability to (a) educate young people on homosexuality and (b) create inclusive environments to protect young people from homophobic bullying. However, the Government Equalities Office and The National Centre for Social Research (2016) have produced an evaluation of homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic (HB&T) bullying. This evaluated a range of interventions to address bullying based on those forms of vulnerability. Unfortunately, however, the evaluation report shed very little new light on what could be done to address these issues. The diversity of the LGBTQi community means that children and young people belonging to these communities are much more likely to be targeted because of their perceived differences from the dominant binary male-female classification in schools.

2.6.4 Bullying and The Equalities Act 2010.

The three categories of vulnerability mentioned above were included in the Equalities Act 2010 (EA). This was passed to incorporate various forms of anti-discriminatory legislation into one single act. The EA created nine protected characteristics, outlawing discrimination

¹⁰ This was repealed by section 122 (2A) of the Local Government Act 2003.

based on age, race, religion or belief, gender reassignment, sex, sexuality, disability, marriage or partnership, and pregnancy. Schools are subject to the act and there is additional guidance from the DfE (added in 2014) for clarification. In this guidance, on page 8, under point 1.7, there is a specific mention of bullying which states:

The Act deals with the way in which schools treat their children and young people and prospective pupils: the relationship between one pupil and another is not within its scope. It does not therefore bear directly on such issues as racist or homophobic bullying by pupils.

(DfE Guidance Schools and Equality Act, 2010:8)

In effect, children and young people involved in the bullying dynamic are not protected by the act in schools. Therefore, children and young people (or parents) cannot take their school to court for being bullied when they are targeted because of a protected characteristic. The Equalities Act goes on to state that:

However, if a school treats bullying which relates to a protected characteristic less seriously than other forms of bullying – for example dismissing complaints of homophobic bullying or failing to protect a transgender pupil against bullying by classmates – then it may be guilty of unlawful discrimination.

(DfE Guidance Schools and Equality Act, 2010:8)

The DfE does not describe how a young person would have the evidence or knowledge of other forms of discrimination to build a case for unlawful discrimination. What is clear is that the main legislative framework for ensuring levels of protection based on protected characteristics specifically opts out of protecting children and young people from bullying based on these characteristics. Furthermore, protected characteristics as mentioned in The Equalities Act may not cover all forms of vulnerable pupils. For example, children and young people with red hair still face high levels of prejudice within English schools. Likewise, children and young people who are overweight face bullying as this links with the perception of easy targets (Sims-Schouten and Cowie, 2016). Alternatively, young people who are highly educated or intelligent are often labelled ‘geeks’, and research suggests that they may experience heightened feelings of rejection and differentness (Davis, 2012). Similarly, children and young people who are suffering with mental health issues may be much more

susceptible or vulnerable to becoming targets of bullying due to their lack of coping mechanisms or ability to address power imbalances.

The final point to make before moving on to the next section is that not all vulnerabilities are equal. Children and young people with multiple vulnerable characteristics may have their risks of being bullied compounded, such as children and young people who are black, lesbian and disabled. This intersectionality of vulnerabilities adds to the complexity of the bullying dynamic when issues of identity are intertwined with harmful behaviour in schools.

2.7 Government Guidance on Recording Incidents of Bullying.

The prevalence of bullying in English schools is difficult to ascertain at present due to the lack of monitoring systems in place. Although the research continues to grow on bullying the peak of the interest in research influencing English government policy appears to have been between 1996 and 2009, when schools were supported by both national and local governments in addressing bullying. Present Department of Education guidance (2017) is more laissez-faire, as stated on page 15:

Q: Should I record incidents of bullying?

A: Staff should develop a consistent approach to monitoring bullying incidents in their school and evaluating whether their approach is effective. For some schools, that will mean recording incidents so that they can monitor incident numbers and identify where bullying is recurring between the same pupils. Others do not want to keep written records. We want schools to exercise their own judgment as to what will work best for their pupils.

This has the effect of leaving the recording of bullying incidents to the discretion of each school. This in turn makes it very difficult to assess the prevalence of bullying within a school and at the national level. It also seems to contradict the guidance from Ofsted which, in section 8 (where a school is a category of concern), states:

Inspectors should scrutinise the school's records of behaviour and the school's analysis of behaviour in order to evaluate how well leaders and managers analyse documentary evidence and then use it to improve the way in which behaviour is managed. Documents should include records and analysis of:

- bullying incidents
- children and young people being removed from lessons
- exclusion and ‘internal exclusion’
- rewards and sanctions, including how senior leaders check that rewards and sanctions are used consistently by all staff.

(School Inspection Handbook – Section 8, 2018: 61)

Ofsted inspectors are seeking records and analysis of bullying. Importantly, Ofsted are also clear on the range of bullying types they are expecting schools to monitor, including:

Records and analysis of bullying, discriminatory and prejudicial behaviour, either directly or indirectly, including racist, disability-related and homophobic bullying, and use of derogatory language.

(School Inspection Handbook – Section 8, 2018: 22)

This contradiction between policy implementers at the DfE and the Ofsted inspectorate in effect makes the task of recording bullying which is happening in English schools contingent on the importance placed on bullying by individual school leaders.

2.8 The Prevalence of Bullying in Schools: How and What to Measure.

A recent meta-analysis of 80 international studies by Modecki, Minchin, Harbaugh, Guerra and Runinons (2014) estimated bullying perpetration at 34.5 % and bullying victimisation at 36%. Within Europe the European Union defines bullying in line with the Olweus definition, and research conducted in 2016 suggests that for 11- to 15-year-olds:

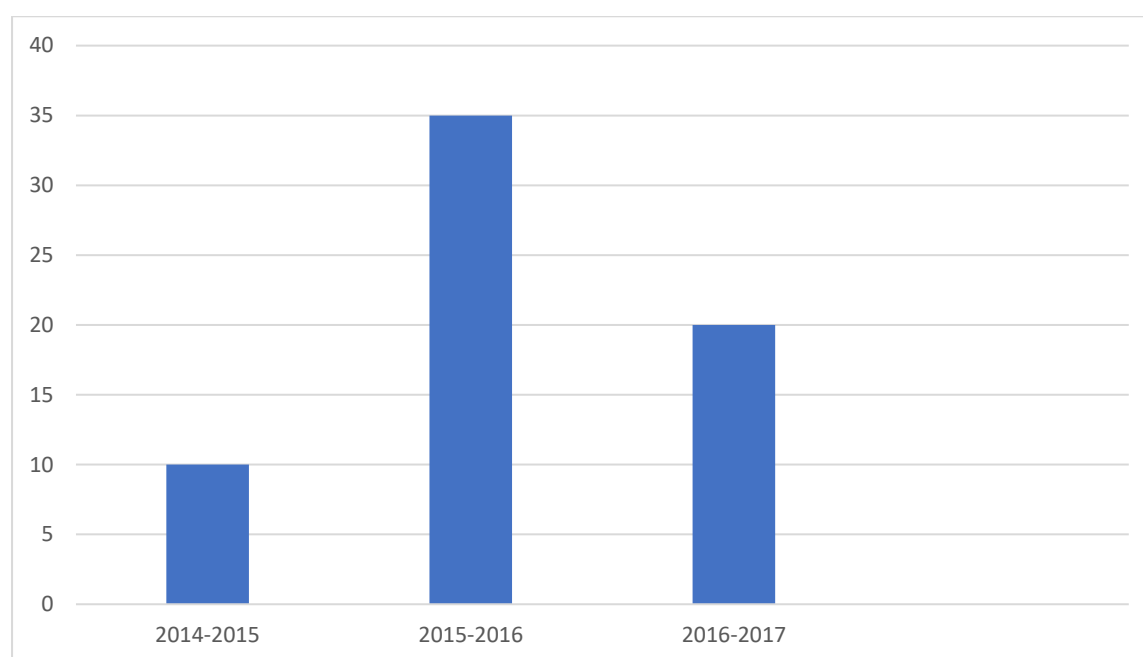
The prevalence of bullying varies considerably across Europe. Lithuania, Belgium, Estonia, Austria and Latvia are some of the countries with relatively high victimisation rates between 20% and 30%, compared to the lower rates of Denmark, Sweden, Czech Republic, Croatia, Italy and Spain below 10%.

(Downes and Cefai, 2016:6)

Downes and Cefai also observe that many member countries in Europe, including England, do not have a national strategy to address bullying in schools. In England one source of information on the prevalence of bullying in schools is annual data from the DfE on fixed and permanent exclusion. This includes the category of bullying as a reason for exclusion from

school. The latest figures for the year 2016-2017¹¹ show a decrease in children and young people being permanently excluded from secondary schools because of bullying. This, however, is twice the number of children and young people excluded in the academic year 2014-2015 (see Figure 1 below). Further, the figures for fixed-term exclusions over the same period show a constant rise in children and young people being excluded for bullying (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 1: Permanent Exclusions for Bullying 2014 to 2017.

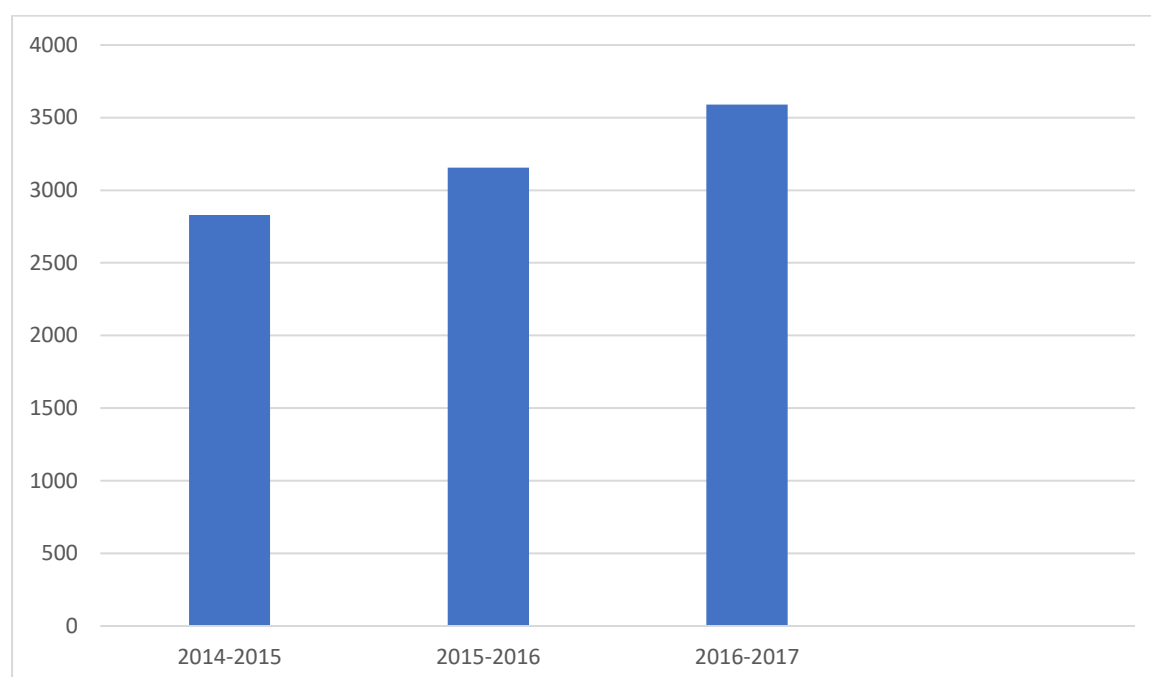


In the 2016-2017 year 3590 children and young people were excluded compared to 3155 the in previous year and 2830 in 2014-2015. These figures could show that exclusions for bullying are on the increase, as schools could be improving their detection of bullying and putting sanctions in place. Alternatively, it could be argued that schools are becoming less effective at resolving bullying incidents and resorting to fixed exclusions to address incidents.

Importantly, these figures suggest the prevalence of children and young people identified as perpetrating bullying behaviour. Yet, they do not give an insight into the number of children and young people who may have been targeted or the forms of bullying happening in secondary schools.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-exclusions>

Figure 2: Secondary School Fixed-Term Exclusions for Bullying



The Tellus4 Survey¹², which was conducted by the National Foundation for Educational Research in 2009, was the last Tellus national survey, involving 253,755 children and young people across England in years 6, 8 and 10 (ages 10-11, 12-13, 14-15, respectively). It found bullying to be widespread. This survey showed that 44 percent of children and young people had experienced bullying in the last year. The most prevalent form of bullying experience for both boys and girls aged between 13 and 15 was verbal bullying. The data from the Tellus4 Survey shows that bullying in schools is a common experience for almost half of children and young people during a school year. Unfortunately, the survey was stopped in 2010 and there has not been another national survey of this scale to give a current understanding of the prevalence of bullying in schools.

The most recent large-scale survey on bullying prevalence has been from the Anti-Bullying Alliance, which conducted research in 2016 with 13,000 children and young people in 44 primary and secondary schools. In this survey 1 in 4 children and young people reported that they were bullied ‘a lot’, or ‘always’. However, the timeframe for when this prevalence occurred is not identified in the research results. Generally, the prevalence of bullying is hard to quantify due to this lack of clarity about the duration of bullying dynamics but the results

¹² The previous TellUs 2 was conducted in 2007 and Tellus 3 survey was conducted in 2008 (linked to National Indicator 69), however bullying questions were changed in each survey so that there was no continuity in the data to be able to compare year on year.

seem to suggest that between a quarter and half of children and young people in schools will experience bullying at some point during their secondary education.

2.9 The Problem with Measurement Tools for Bullying.

The prevalence of bullying indicates an important question for the purposes of seeking to address bullying in secondary schools: how valid are the measurement tools used to collect data on the prevalence of bullying in school? Bullying measurement tools can be categorised based on the following types of groups:

1. Targets – self-reporting of being bullied, including types and frequencies
2. Perpetrators – self-reporting or reporting by peers
3. Pupil populations – Olweus' Bullying Victim Survey, Tellus4 Survey
4. Teachers – teacher nominations of perpetrators and targets and teacher observations
5. Parents – reporting child as target
6. Whole school proxy indicators – school climate, health and well-being, school ethos, school culture.

These groupings of stakeholders (excluding 6) give insight into how a school could measure the prevalence of bullying from various stakeholder perspectives. This then presents the challenge of how bullying is categorised in terms of type, severity, intensity and duration. The rates of occurrence of harmful incidents would be simple to measure if the perpetrators conducted the same forms of behaviour at the same time each day. Bovaird suggests that:

Just as there is a degree of variability in the operational definition of bullying, there is variability in the measurement modality, where the result of the measurement process may vary as a function of who is doing the measuring.

(Bovaird, 2010:277-278)

This is important as researchers, educational professionals, policy makers and charities will have different agendas for identifying increases or decreases in bullying in schools. Thus, they may select measurement tools that reflect a desired outcome they are seeking to prove.

Bovaird's concerns are not only with ensuring robustness in the selection of measurement tools but also with the reliability of the respondents. Relying on autobiographical memory as

measurement ‘though considered to be quite accurate...is still subject to distortions’ (ibid:280). Bovaird recognises the range of distortions that may affect children and young people, e.g., *blocking*, *suggestibility* and *misattribution*, with the consequence that:

Individuals do not always remember exactly what has happened to them. Rather, people tend to remember their construction or reconstruction of what has happened in the past...reports are based on a combination of direct personal involvement as the bully, victim, bystander, etc. or through second-hand reports and even gossip.

(ibid:280)

Recollection now includes bullying in the online space, further adding to such distortions in terms of both actual experiences of incidents and what peers discuss. These distortions affect surveys seeking to measure prevalence when asking children and young people to recall traumatic events with accuracy. Surveys de-contextualise behaviours, timings and locations as well as the emotional and psychological impacts which the experience of bullying has on targets. Additionally, children and young people who may have perpetrated bullying might not have perceived an incident as serious or traumatic, and, like targets, some perpetrators may not have an accurate recollection of bullying events. Also, with indirect forms of bullying the type and severity of the behaviour may change autobiographical memory as indirect bullying makes it more difficult for targets to accurately identify the perpetrators.

Furthermore, the issue of time, or more accurately the quantification of time, in questionnaires may be flawed for two important reasons. Firstly, it could create memory distortions, e.g., ‘have you been bullied in the last 30 days?’, ‘Have you been bullied this term?’, ‘Have you *ever* been bullied?’. The ability to recollect with accuracy the frequency of harmful offences may be very difficult for young people, as well as quantifying the different types of bullying they may have experienced at different time intervals. This impacts on their ability to contextualise bullying within a timeframe set out within a questionnaire. There is also an issue that the experience of a single, harmful event begins a pattern of intimidation. This is where an imbalance of power is maintained over time: each subsequent experience, from the perspective of the target, has an on-going feeling of dread, even though there may be no harmful action occurring in the initial encounter with the perpetrator(s). This makes the issue of frequency of bullying encounters difficult for children and young people to distinguish in a linear chain of events.

2.9.1 The Validity and Reliability of Surveying Young People with Regard to Bullying.

There are issues around self-reporting: distortion and cognitive biases. These two issues raise the question of validity and reliability in many bullying questionnaires.

The Olweus Bullying Questionnaire¹³ is widely used in terms of students' understanding of bullying, yet survey questions which seek to quantify behaviours rely on memories of events recollected by children and young people. Children and young people may have difficulty identifying their memories for questionnaires because those memories 'may be unpleasant to recall' (Cornell and Bandyopadhyay, 2010:267). Furthermore, Cornell and Bandyopadhyay recognise that 'bullying must be distinguished from ordinary conflict between peers of equal status. All peer conflict is not bullying...' (Ibid:265). Thus, bullying is a complex social construct and, as such, it can be difficult for children and young people to distinguish between different forms of peer aggression when using surveys. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that attempts to quantify the prevalence of bullying through questionnaires remain problematic. This is due to the validity and reliability of accounts by children and young people of the experiences being captured in surveys. Cornell and Bandyopadhyay conclude that 'ultimately, self- and peer reporting must be confirmed by interviewing the participants and witnesses to determine if bullying has actually occurred' (ibid:274).

2.10 How are Schools Tackling Bullying?

The most famous example of tackling bullying 'was developed and evaluated by Olweus (1993) in Norway and provided evidence of between 30% and 50% reductions in reported bullying in schools' (Rigby and Bauman, 2010:455). Importantly, Rigby and Bauman go on to state that 'however, outside Norway the programme's effectiveness has been minimal or unsubstantiated, for example in Belgium, Germany and South Carolina (Smith et al, 2004)' (ibid:455).

The response by Rigby and Bauman regarding how to address or tackle bullying is summed up as:

In appraising the evidence of the effectiveness of interventions, one should distinguish between (1) what schools do in applying anti-bullying programs that include

¹³

http://www.hazelden.org/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?section=10208&item=14432&sitex=10020:22372:US

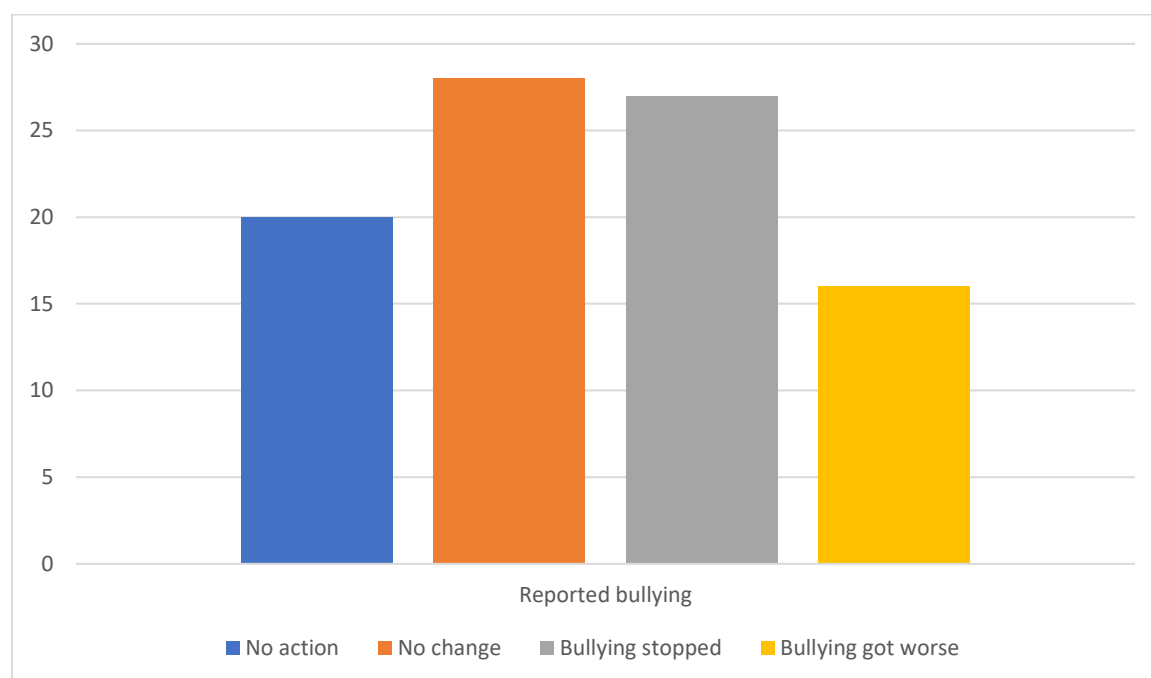
preventive strategies (for example, the use of the school curriculum to educate children about bullying) and (2) what schools do in resolving particular cases on bullying that come to the attention of school staff.

(Rigby and Bauman, 2010:455)

In terms of young people being able to tell staff about experiences of bullying, Rigby and Bauman cite Smith Shu, 2000, who conducted research with Australian school children which showed that ‘seventy percent of children who are bullied do not report it to teachers’ (Rigby and Bauman, 2010:456). Research by Smith and Shu (2000) of 2308 children and young people aged 10 to 14, in nineteen schools, showed that thirty percent told a teacher about being bullied (see Figure 3).

Of those children and young people who reported experiences of bullying, twenty percent reported that the teacher had taken no action. For a further twenty-eight percent there was no change after reporting the bullying to a teacher. In twenty-seven percent of cases the bullying did stop once a teacher was told. This research is a cause for concern in that for forty-eight percent of bullying incidents reported to a teacher there is no change (combining no action by the teacher when reporting and no change after telling a teacher).

Figure 3: Responses to Children and Young People who Reported Bullying.



Most concerning of all is the fact that, in sixteen percent of cases, reporting bullying actually exacerbated the harmful behaviour for children and young people who were already experiencing bullying.

Furthermore, Rigby's (1996) research on 13 to 18-years-olds showed that, in Australian schools, 'With increasing age, the likelihood of a positive outcome diminished' (p.457). Thus, the issue of reporting bullying is essential to anyone who seeks to address bullying dynamics within educational settings, as an intervention cannot work without children and young people feeling confident enough to report to staff.

A range of bullying prevention programmes has been researched by Farrington and Ttofi (2012) based on a meta-analysis conducted in 2009. They identified successful features of bullying programmes based on 44 evaluations:

Drawing on the results of recent meta-analyses examining the effectiveness of antibullying programs from around the world (Farrington and Ttofi 2009; Ttofi and Farrington 2011), two aspects of program implementation – duration and intensity – were found to be highly significant in decreasing both bullying and victimization, while parent training and teacher training were among the most effective program components.

(2012:273)

The most effective anti-bullying interventions are those that are age appropriate rather than universal, and a longer intensity and duration (20 hours or more) in an anti-bullying programme are 'significantly more effective' at reducing both bullying and victimisation for children and young people (ibid:278). This is also mirrored in the duration and intensity of teacher training programmes, with interventions of 20 hours being more effective (ibid:278). Interestingly, Farrington and Ttofi also offer components of a bullying intervention programme: 'including parent and teacher training as program components was found to be highly effective for bullying, while parent training (but not teacher training) was found to be a significant predictor of effectiveness for victimization' (ibid:280).

The effectiveness of cyberbullying interventions is also a cause for concern, as is addressed by Gaffney et al (2019). The researchers conducted a meta-analysis of twenty-four studies. Their research showed that cyberbullying interventions can reduce perpetration by ten to fifteen percent, and that cyberbullying victimisation can be reduced by fourteen percent.

They make an important statement in the conclusion: ‘Given the number of school bullying intervention programs and the apparent comorbidity of offline and online bullying amongst adolescents, future research should aim to investigate whether these types of behaviour should be targeted simultaneously’ (2019:148).

The effectiveness of any anti-bullying initiative needs to be contextualised into educational settings such as secondary schools in order to address bullying. At present the dominant model for introducing anti-bullying initiatives is the whole school approach (WSA), which is recognised by the Department of Education. Although the WSA is used for a variety of change initiatives it was strongly advocated for and implemented in the ‘Bullying – Charter for Action’ (2007)¹⁴ under New Labour, which all English schools were expected to endorse. At present the DfE continue to be in favour of the WSA as the implementation model for addressing bullying. The Government Equalities Office commissioned research called ‘The Evaluation of Homophobic, Bi-phobic and Transphobic Bullying’ by Mitchell et al (2014), which provides guidance to schools on key aspects of the WSA. The following aspects of the whole school approach make an effective change agent for schools (ibid:9):

1. Leadership and management of change
2. Policy development
3. Curriculum planning for teaching and learning
4. School ethos
5. Student voice
6. Provision of student support services
7. Partnership with parents and local communities.

The WSA is a generic approach to change focusing on the mechanisms needed to influence participation in an anti-bullying initiative in a school. However, only one of the elements of this framework overlaps with the findings of Farrington and Ttofi (2012): parent training. This section has sought to describe the combination of components for school change which create the WSA and which enable the implementation of anti-bullying initiatives in schools to prevent and tackle bullying. There will be further discussion of the WSA in the next chapter.

¹⁴ This was launched in 2007 by the minister for the Department of Education and Skills (DfES).

Thus, the evidence in the UK and internationally suggests that bullying is a problem for children and young people in schools. Yet, measurements of both prevalence and interventions remain problematic due to the complexity of the phenomenon. I have contended that bullying is not a binary target/perpetrator interaction but is rather a relational issue involving individuals, groups and school communities. How the bullying phenomenon is defined is crucial for distinguishing it from other forms of peer aggression if it is to be successfully addressed. In terms of reacting to bullying the dominant response in English schools is punitive. There is very little mention in the literature of the default punitive responses to bullying, and little evidence of how effective they are for children, young people or staff. Yet, punitive responses are a conspicuous part of the DfE exclusion figures and Ofsted framework.

Advocates of anti-bullying initiatives often omit the default punitive response in many schools when addressing bullying. Research by Bauman and Rigby (2007) in their international survey (United States, Canada, Australia and Norway) of staff showed that 94 percent of respondents felt that bullying should not be ignored: ‘Practically everyone (some 97%) believed that bullying behaviour would not be tolerated...71% believed that some form of punishment was justified’ (2010:458). They concluded:

The most common response to bullying is to apply strong disciplinary and punitive action. There are grounds for supposing that this approach often does not work. Alternative non-punitive methods would appear to have at least an equal chance of success. There are not well understood, and a major challenge facing educators is to make these better known.

(Rigby and Bauman, 2010:466)

The three examples of alternative methods they refer to are restorative justice, the support group approach and the method of shared concern. Of the three alternatives the use of restorative justice in education will now be explored in the next chapter, as both a response to the phenomenon of bullying and the best known alternative non-punitive response in the UK.

3. Restorative Approaches: A Response to Bullying in Educational Settings.

Schools in England and around the world are having to find ways to manage the challenges of conflict, bullying, violence and disruptive behaviour. Schools may address these challenges through three different forms of intervention: punitive (for example, detention or exclusion), therapeutic (for example, counselling) and relational (for example, peer mediation, peer mentoring). Restorative approaches fit within relational responses and their appropriateness for addressing bullying will now be explored.

I will therefore examine the various definitions of restorative approaches before reviewing the evidence on the benefits that are claimed by advocates for restorative approaches in schools. The chapter will conclude by exploring how restorative approaches have been implemented in schools and to what extent models of implementation have been successful.

3.1 Addressing the Paradigm Shift: from Punitive to Restorative.

Howard Zehr's *Changing Lens* (1990) is often credited as being the beginning of restorative justice as an alternative response to crime. For Zehr:

Retributive justice is deeply embedded in our political institutions and our psyche. Perhaps it is too much to hope it will change in fundamental ways. Yet we must recognise the importance of the paradigms we use and free ourselves to question these paradigms.

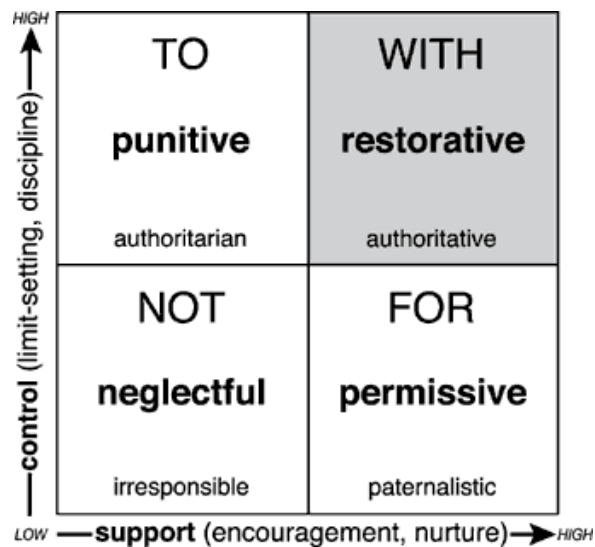
(1990:226-227)

Zehr has helped to develop as well as participate in the shaping of the restorative justice field, and the paradigm shift remains central to advocates of restorative justice. A key feature of the paradigm debate has been the work of McCold and Wachtel (2002), who use Black's (1990) legal definitions of 'control' and 'support'. They build on these to suggest that there can be high or low control. They use Black's definition of '*control*', which is the 'the act of exercising restraint or directing influence over others' (Black 1990:329). McCold and Wachtel go on to state that 'Clear limit setting and diligent enforcement of behavioural standards characterise high social control' (2002:110). Hence, McCold and Wachtel argue that the antithesis to strong social control is 'vague or weak behavioural standards' and that 'lax or non-existent efforts to regulate behaviour characterised low social control' (2002:110). They go on to explain an alternative to control using Black's definition of

‘support’ as ‘the provision of services intended to nurture the individual’ (Black, 1990:1070). Their social discipline window is thus made up of two axes, ‘Support’ and ‘Control’, which are then scaled as high or low, creating a two by two grid.

McCold and Wachtel then identify four quadrants which make up the ‘social discipline window’ (see Diagram 1): *punitive*, *permissive*, *neglectful* and *restorative*.

Diagram 1: Social Discipline Window (McCold and Wachtel; 2002)



In conjunction with these four quadrants McCold and Wachtel make the following statement which is essential to understanding the language of restorative practitioners:

Four keywords service a shorthand method to help distinguish the four key approaches contained in the social discipline window: NOT, FOR, TO, and WITH. If one were to be neglectful, one would NOT do anything in response to offending behaviour. If permissive, one would do everything FOR the offender and ask little in return, making excuses for the wrongdoing. If punitive, one would respond by doing things TO the offender, admonishing and poaching. Responding in a restorative manner requires that one work WITH the offender and engage a person directly in a process of accountability. A critical element of this restorative approach is that, whenever possible, WITH implies including all the stakeholders in the process - victims, family, friends and community - anyone who's been affected by the offender's behaviour.

(McCold and Wachtel, 2002:111-112)

Therefore, according to McCold and Wachtel the social discipline window provides different types of responses to harmful behaviour caused by an offender. For McCold and Wachtel 'Restorative Justice is a process involving the direct stakeholders in determining how best to repair the harm done by offending behaviour' (2002:111). The important feature of the social discipline window is that to be 'restorative' practitioners work 'WITH' stakeholders, offering both high control and high support. What is interesting is that no evidence is provided by McCold and Wachtel of the relevance or success of the social discipline window. Indeed, McCold refers to the wider restorative movement as a 'process of discovery rather than invention' (2000). I would argue that this puts the framework in a weak theoretical position as 'discovery' implies a natural resource rather than an evolving social construction used to support professionals in addressing crime and conflict in communities.

3.2 Critique of the Social Discipline Window.

In a response to invitations by McCold and Wachtel to critique their work by testing its 'validity for explaining and predicting the effects of restorative justice practices' (2003:1), Vaandering (2013) offers a critical reflection on the social discipline window in education. What is particularly useful is that as an educator she is able to examine the challenges of the social discipline window as a theoretical concept within the realities of school practice using a 2008 critical inquiry. The insight she provides is recognising the tension between theory and the experience of school change, A useful perspective is cited by Woolford (2009): 'the hopefulness of *rj*¹⁵ ethos often comes against the crass political realities of conflict and school life'. Vaandering then goes on to state that:

In the qualitative research I conducted in 2008, I found that upon returning to their schools and classrooms after training by IIRP¹⁶, facilitators that was grounded in the Social Discipline Window...are generally enthused to do what they can *with* students. However, many fall back on or continue to use punitive-permissive responses to student behaviour undermining *rj* principles they believe they are committed to implementing.

(Vaandering, 2013:314)

¹⁵ Vaandering intentionally uses lowercase letters in the abbreviation of restorative justice. Her view is that capitalising it turns it into a proper noun and risks it becoming a particular approach rather than a 'general way of being' (2013:311).

¹⁶ Institute of Restorative Practice website: <https://www.iirp.edu/>

This is an important statement from Vaandering as it identifies the use of restorative tropes such as ‘WITH’ which can enthuse educators whilst in training. Furthermore, it highlights the issue of knowledge retention once school staff return to school settings, resonating with Rigby’s concern about staff use of punitive responses to bullying. Importantly, the dissonance between what staff ‘fall-back on or continue to use’ and what they believe they are implementing is salient to understanding the distinction between actual practice and the restorative beliefs of educators. The importance of this work is that it presents a critique of RJ between theory and educational practice. It will therefore be useful to explore restorative approaches, which have familial ties to restorative justice but have been developed in the education sector.

3.3 What is Meant by the Term ‘Restorative Approaches’?

‘Restorative approaches’ is not a homogenous term. It is itself a term used to identify a spectrum of approaches. These include those identified by Hopkins (2004:32-37) as restorative inquiry, restorative discussions in challenging situations, mediation, victim/offender mediation, community conferences and problem-solving circles, restorative conferences, and family group conferences. Restorative approaches allow for the narratives of stakeholders to be explored within a particular approach to conflict and bullying through a series of questions asked by a trained facilitator in a particular sequence, often by an adult. For example, questions which are used in restorative approaches are as follows:

1. What’s happened?
2. What were your thoughts and feelings?
3. Who’s been affected?
4. What can make things better?

This questioning process (Youth Justice Board, 2003; Hopkins, 2004; Cremin, Sellman and McCluskey, 2012; Sellman et al, 2013; Evans and Vaandering, 2016) can be thought of in terms of themes of exploration. Different authors have slight variances in the underpinning themes of storytelling, emotional effects on the individual, wider effects on the community, and option generation. These questions have formed part of the basis of restorative approaches and represent the language process used by educational staff to begin a dialogue on the experiences of those involved in conflict and bullying situations. In addition to these there are several important definitions which seek to contextualise this approach to the field of education.

In order to define restorative approaches it is important to define and understand the parent concept of restorative justice (RJ) and the principles which underpin this concept. However, this is not straightforward. Criminologist George Pavlich states, 'Restorative Justice is notoriously difficult to define' (2002:1). This is in part due to the changing nature of the criminal justice system (CJS) in many countries, including the UK. Furthermore, restorative justice is also changing in response to researchers' and practitioners' exploration of its utility. Therefore, in defining restorative justice it is useful to identify three categories of definitions that have evolved to categorise RJ as a process, a means of producing outcomes and, finally, as nested in a network of values. I will now review each one in turn.

Firstly, restorative justice can be defined as a *process*:

Restorative Justice is a process whereby all the parties with a stake in a particular offence come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future.

(Marshall, 1999:5)

Marshall's definition is often cited such as in Sherman and Strang's (2007) extensive overview of the restorative justice literature and focuses on the collective involvement of 'all parties with a stake' (2007:13) coming together in face-to-face conferences. Defining restorative justice as a *process* signifies the importance of bringing parties together to interact and engage in changing the situation; this is called the 'encounter'¹⁷ (Zehr, 1990; Van Ness, 2002). However, this definition does not indicate what the outcomes of a restorative justice process are or could be, only that there is a future benefit to be gained through a restorative process. The second cluster of definitions places the emphasis of restorative justice on *outcomes*. For example, Braithwaite (1996:86) states: 'Restorative justice means restoring victims, a more victim-centred criminal justice system, as well as restoring offenders and restoring community'. Braithwaite's defining characteristic is the multiple outcomes potentially available to a range of stakeholders, thus defining restorative justice as outcome-based for all those involved. Braithwaite's definition asserts that any process could be restorative if it achieves these outcomes.

A final cluster of definitions seeks to place restorative justice within a wider framework of values. These values include:

¹⁷ Key elements of the encounter are meeting, narrative, emotion, understanding and agreement (2002:3)

...hospitable, non-alienating, victim-centred and community-orientated way to resolve conflict. Its processes are guided by values respectful to all parties to a dispute. It aims to empower victims, communities, offenders and families to repair the effects of a harmful event, using effective 'repentance rituals' to restore community life. Justice is thus understood as restoring harm and hurt, reflecting a commitment to such normative values as individual empowerment, responsibility, peace, community strength, respect, compassion, agreement and so on.

(Pavlich:2002)

Pavlich recognises that restorative justice operates as part of a *broader constellation of values*, such as peace and the normative values of society. Restorative justice began as a process that was an alternative to punitive and retributive justice in the criminal justice system but so far the quality and implementation of restorative justice has remained spasmodic in England. Despite this, restorative justice aims to achieve more locally relevant, directly engaging processes to address harm and produce more future-orientated outcomes than those achieved through the hegemonic doctrine of the criminal justice system.

The concept of restorative justice has been applied to education through its use in schools. Van Ness suggests that 'restorative approaches to schools must include all three conceptions of restorative justice: repair of harm, encounter of the affected parties and transformation of relationships and culture' (Sellman et al, 2013:38). This definition, whilst broadly useful, does not recognise that there are different system requirements and needs in the justice and education sectors. Van Ness is, in effect, simply transplanting the concept of restorative justice from the criminal justice system into the education system under the term 'restorative approaches'. Restorative justice has a clear victim-offender focus which is arguably not suitable for meeting educational requirements. However, Evans and Vaandering (2016) retain restorative justice in the education sector. Consequently, restorative justice in education (RJE) is defined as 'facilitating learning communities that nurture the capacity for people to engage with one another and their environment in a manner that supports and respects the inherent dignity and worth of all' (2016:8). This retains the label of restorative justice but the meaning attached by Vaandering and Evans has a greater leaning towards educational settings. Alternatively, restorative approaches have been defined by educationalists as 'A means of bringing young people in conflict together, to undertake a deeper inquiry of the incident, including who's been affected, and who is obliged to make

amends, before agreeing their own long-term solutions’ (Sellman, et al, 2013:1). Thus, whilst restorative approaches in education have retained some of the concepts of restorative justice as described by Van Ness, restorative justice is evolving into restorative approaches in the English educational system to address a range of conflicts (Sellman et al, 2013) in school settings.

The introduction of restorative approaches to address conflict and bullying in the British educational system has a range of definitions and meanings in the research literature as a body of theory and practice (Cremin et al, 2012). To add further challenge to conceptually defining restorative approaches, the educational literature uses restorative approaches interchangeably with the term *restorative practice*. Skinns et al suggest:

The practices are the most public face of restorative approaches and range from the formal (e.g. conferencing) to informal (e.g. an interaction that has the intention to build, nurture or repair relationships).

(Skinns et al, 2009:10)

‘Practice’ in this definition is not focused on the skills of the practitioner but rather on the range of approaches that can be used (see also Buckley and Maxwell 2007; Cowie, 2013). Skinns et al (2009) also cite Hopkins (2004), who describes restorative approaches as ‘a set of practices, a set of skills and a set of values or a distinctive ethos’ (Skinns et al, 2009:10). These definitions encompass a broad range of activities under the banner of restorative approaches when used in educational settings. For ease of use, therefore, I shall refer to restorative approaches as:

The encounter processes used by an impartial facilitator to engage and deliver a structured dialogue (including skills, questions, risk assessing, addressing unmet needs and negotiating to reach a peaceful agreement) for those involved in a conflict or bullying situation where harm is identified to potentially reach a peaceful resolution.

This definition encapsulates the processes and skills of restorative approaches (the what) with the delivery of practice (the how). Therefore, ‘restorative practice’ can be defined as the actions taken by facilitators between parties in conflict when using a restorative approach. An important theme that emerges in many of the definitions of restorative approaches is the need to engage stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement in the school community underpins the

distinctiveness of restorative approaches as a system of resolution which incorporates community members with a stake in the conflict. This resonates with the salient work of Christie (1977), coined the term ‘conflict as property’ and argued that conflict is stolen by professional and structural thieves in the criminal justice systems and what in doing so there is the loss of ‘opportunities for norm-clarification’ (1977:8) both by the individuals in conflict and society as a whole. Likewise, in education restorative approaches would ideally actively welcome participation by stakeholders to own their conflict. Primary contributors in restorative processes are asked to think about community implications in response to the central question of ‘who has been affected?’. Thus, restorative approaches elicit, through the facilitator, thoughts about the effects caused by harm to their community or other communities by those in the meeting. By exploring the effects of harm restorative approaches contest the individualistic perception that harm is only caused by the offender to the victim. Restorative approaches provide processes in which contributors in a conflict can co-exist in communities. Furthermore, it allows those directly involved to recognise collective responses and responsibilities in resolving the harm (for examples, see research from New Zealand by Wearmouth, McKinney and Glynn, 2007) to enable peaceful relationships with communities such as schools.

This discussion of restorative approaches has led to an exploration of their forerunner, restorative justice, and its sibling, restorative practice, to track the journey of their development. A central tenet of the definitions has been that restorative approaches bring participants together in an encounter¹⁸ to address harm and empower stakeholders to find solutions through facilitated dialogue. Beyond this, however, restorative approaches have struggled to evolve beyond their criminal justice antecedents and continue to do so as they convert into education. This helps to explain some of the contestation in the literature such as the challenge integrating restorative justice, as restorative approaches must integrate into an education system which is punitive. We will now turn to considering the potential benefits of using restorative approaches (RA) in schools.

3.4 The Benefits of Restorative Approaches: the Evidence.

The benefits of restorative approaches for schools were originally perceived as similar to the benefits of restorative justice when transplanted from the criminal justice system into the education system. The first restorative justice conferencing programme in schools has been

¹⁸ The encounter can be a single experience or several depending on the needs of the participants involved.

attributed to Cameron and Thorsborne (1999) in Australia in 1994. This programme showed promising results in addressing a broad range of behaviour issues. However, Eliaerts and Dumortier (2002) were the first to raise concerns about restorative justice and the need for procedural safeguards and standards when working with children. They rightly raise concerns regarding the large scales adoption of Restorative Justice, albeit in the criminal justice system. This could lead to 'non-RJ practices masquerading as RJ (Braithwaite, 2000:2)'(2002:204). In their final analysis they argue for 'codes of good practice' (ibid:220) alternatively, I would suggest a set of principles which would inform practitioners on how to protect young people from non-RJ or RA practices masquerading as a restorative intervention; whilst, not being so prescriptive as to stifle innovation. The development of a restorative principles will be developed further in this research, in response to educational settings.

In England the Youth Justice Board (YJB, 2005) has implemented and evaluated the restorative justice conference model in schools with a specific focus on reducing the victimisation of young people. The research was conducted in 26 schools (20 secondary and 6 primary) over 18 months; importantly, no judgement was made as to the quality of practice by staff in the schools. Among the 536 participants interviewed after a restorative conference (pupils, parents and staff) satisfaction with the process was 69 percent, and 'belief that the process was fair' was at 93 percent when restorative conferences were used to address conflict and bullying. However, in the findings of the YJB evaluation the evaluators recognised that criminal justice terminology 'does not sit well in educational settings' (2005:66) and recommended that restorative approaches might be a better term for promoting the benefits to schools.

In 2011 London Councils commissioned research into an under-researched area of education in London, namely the alternative provision known as pupil referral units. The 'Back on Track London: Restorative Approaches in Pupil Referral Units Project' reported on the findings from a two-year project on implementing restorative approaches. The project surveyed 133 staff and their willingness to participate in restorative meetings across four different pupil referral units. The research showed marked improvement in the perceptions of staff who had participated in restorative awareness or training sessions; the training had helped staff to understand the processes involved when schools use restorative approaches. This is an important point as the benefits of restorative approaches are not just valid for young person-to-young person forms of conflict and bullying. They are also applicable to

young person-to-staff conflict, staff-to-parent conflict and, potentially, forms of staff-to-staff conflict, (YJB, 2005; Kane et al, 2007; Skinns et al, 2009; McCluskey et al, 2008). However, Skinns et al (2009) suggest that teachers may have difficulty in participating in restorative approaches between children and young people and staff due to inherent power imbalances in the relationships.

The benefits of restorative approaches arguably go beyond the benefits originally identified in the use of restorative justice (Van Ness, in Sellman et al, 2013). The literature also suggests that children and young people involved in a restorative approach improve their emotional literacy (Morrison, 2006; McCluskey, 2008; Selman et al, 2014). Moreover, it can be argued that this resonates with the purpose of educational settings, as the process of restorative approaches improves personal learning as well as resolving issues such as bullying.

Restorative justice is beneficial to conflict defined as crime between different individuals who come together through a facilitated process with defined outcomes. The development of an educational paradigm has meant that restorative approaches addresses a broader range of conflict types within the school community. The benefits to participants do not lie just in focusing on the outcome of a particular approach but also the possibility of using conflict as a learning process, providing opportunities to develop emotional literacy. However, research has yet to successfully demonstrate the impact of restorative approaches on young person-to-staff conflict or parent-to-staff conflict. What the literature does provide is a rationale for why schools are willing to implement restorative approaches to benefit stakeholders within the school community and the community as a whole.

3.5 Restorative Approaches: Implementation in Schools.

Given the range of benefits identified by the use of restorative approaches there is a final question to be addressed: how have restorative approaches been implemented in educational settings? A starting point for implementation in educational settings is the typology proposed by Sherman and Strang (2007) who, in a review of the evidence on restorative justice, suggest four ways in which schools have used restorative approaches. These are firstly as part of conflict resolution; secondly, as a response to incidents; thirdly, via the restorative conference; and fourthly by using the whole school approach (ibid: 54-55). It is the fourth type - the whole school approach (WSA) – which will now be reviewed in terms of how successful this is at implementing restorative approaches. As with the anti-bullying literature, the WSA is seen as the prevailing model of change within the restorative approaches field.

In the United Kingdom there are three key evaluations of the implementation of restorative interventions in schools. The first was carried out by the Youth Justice Board (YJB, 2004) and involved 36 schools. In 2006 Kane et al carried out an evaluation involving 18 schools. Finally, in 2009 Skinns produced an evaluation involving four schools. The YJB (England and Wales) and Kane et al's (Scottish) evaluations were both conducted as part of government-funded programmes, whereas the Skinns et al evaluation was independently commissioned to evaluate an implementation programme in Bristol. The YJB (2004) evaluation suggested that schools using the WSA were more successful in producing the benefits of restorative approaches. The evaluation conducted by Kane et al (2006) also reiterated the importance of the WSA and concluded that restorative approaches were particularly effective at improving relationships in schools (Kane et al, 2006). Following on from the earlier four models proposed by Strang and Sherman (2007), Skinns et al (2009) identified two models of implementation: the WSA and 'pockets of practice' (ibid:3). In the latter a small group uses restorative approaches but this does not transfer into the wider school. The paradox of all three reports is that they each recommend maximising the benefits of restorative approaches to schools by implementing a WSA, yet analysis of all three evaluations suggests that the WSA is the exception rather than the norm.

Based on analysis of the implementation literature the three different evaluations of restorative approaches have produced three different starting points for implementation in schools. These top-down, outside-in, and bottom-up change models. In the YJB evaluation of 2004 it is head teachers who are the gatekeepers of initiatives. Thus, it is essential to bring them on board: the 'head teacher's full commitment is paramount' (ibid, 69:2004). This suggests a top-down model of change to be used in schools, which may reflect the wider political agenda at the time of the then Labour Government, which was seeking centralised, top-down delivery models. Conversely, the Scottish evaluation by Kane et al (2006) starts with a local authority wishing to implement restorative approaches across a county. The Local Authority (Fife) asked participating schools to create an action plan for the implementation and development of restorative approaches in their settings. This suggests an outside-in model of change for schools. Finally, by way of contrast, Skinns et al (2009) draw on Hopkins (2004) by suggesting that the initial starting point for change is the individual level, which by implication needs teachers and other school staff to be adequately trained. This suggests a bottom-up model of change in implementing restorative approaches.

Through reading all three evaluations it becomes clear that the WSA is shorthand for several components that need to be engaged for the school change process to happen. These components include staff, pupils, parents, behaviour (or restorative) policy, training, monitoring and evaluation, and wider community engagement. Yet, all three evaluations give minimal evidence as to how a school can implement restorative approaches across the whole school. The three evaluations also omit a definition of what the researchers mean by the WSA within their research; for example, Sherman and Strang (2007) observe of the YJB (2004) ‘that RJ is implemented “correctly”, yet do not specify exactly what this means’ (2007:55). Furthermore, the three evaluations are focused on the outcomes of implementing restorative approaches in their respective projects; they all make recommendations for further development without producing a satisfying change model to link their ascriptions of benefits with their recommendations.

At present, the only research that has explicitly addressed restorative approaches and the WSA is Wong, Cheng, Ngan and Ma (2010). These researchers use the term ‘restorative whole school approach’ (RWSA). The RWSA is defined as a:

Framework embrac[ing] intervention strategies and tactics for developing a shared ethos among all parties in schools in the concerted effort to develop an anti-bullying policy that becomes the school’s existing discipline policy, pastoral care policy, or code of conduct, building up quality relationships within the classroom, and providing support to students to strengthen their relationship with self and others. It aims at involving as many parties as possible to build up a peaceful learning environment for children and tackling risk factors conducive to bullying.

(Wong et al., 2010:848)

Research by Wong et al, demonstrates an explicit understanding of the multiple components of the WSA, and importantly what the totality of these components working together can achieve. Furthermore, the definition of the RWSA is congruent with the educational benefits of restorative approaches as Wong et al are *explicitly* and actively pursuing the objective to ‘build up a peaceful learning environment’. The implementation process used by Wong et al was to present the ‘restorative whole school approach’ to schools and then allow schools to participate according to their own capacity. This is similar to Kane et al (2006), using an outside-in model of change. Wong et al, reported that after fifteen months of implementation

‘only one school had successfully implemented a restorative Whole School Approach, two schools had partially implemented a restorative Whole School Approach and one school had failed to implement any restorative activities’ (850:2010). This reiterates that even when researchers explicitly deploy a whole school model it is difficult to achieve success. The research on implementing restorative approaches, e.g. Skinns et al (2009) and Wong et al (2010), suggests a 25 percent success rate in schools achieving a WSA. This raises a concern about why those seeking to implement restorative approaches pursue the WSA as a model of change. So far, the majority of schools in the research reviewed appear to have been unable to implement or develop a RWSA.

3.6. Randomised Control Trials and Restorative Practice.

An extensive review of the literature reveals three randomised control trials (RCTs) in the field of restorative approaches. In all three trials there is a claim to be improving the evidence in the field through this form of research. Table 1, below, gives an overview. The two American ones are due to publish their findings in 2020. The third, from England and by Bonell et al, has published initial findings. All three RCTs will be critiqued due to the claims being made by the researchers.

Table 1: Randomised Control Trials in Restorative Practice.

Research team	Country	Number of implementation schools	Length of trial	Types of intervention	Trainers	Age in years	Model of implementation
Acosta et al (2016), to be finished in 2020	USA	7	5 years	Continuum of RP interventions	IIRP	11-13	WSA with Project Leadership Groups
Green et al (2019), to be finished in 2020	USA	6	4 years	Two tier RP	University	11-13	WSA with Implementation Resource Team
Bonell et al (2018)	England	20	3 years	Policy and systems, RP and Social and Emotional lessons	External Training company	11-15	WSA with Actions groups

A key feature of all three RCTs is the age range they are seeking to engage with: all within secondary education. A second feature is that they all use cluster randomised control trials to

observe interventions at a group level, rather than the individual level, or actual participation in restorative interventions. Hemming et al (2017) is concerned that 'Cluster randomised trials have diminishing power and precision in returns as cluster size increases' (2017:1). Also, there is a concern that restorative approaches may be offered to all members of a school community but this does not mean that all young people have engaged in a restorative approach. Hemming et al, acknowledge that in the UK:

The CRT design is commonly used to evaluate non-drug interventions, such as policy and service delivery interventions. Its use is likely to grow as we move towards the learning healthcare system and large simple trials.

(ibid:1)

3.6.1 RCT 1: Restorative Approaches, Mental Health and Behaviour Problems.

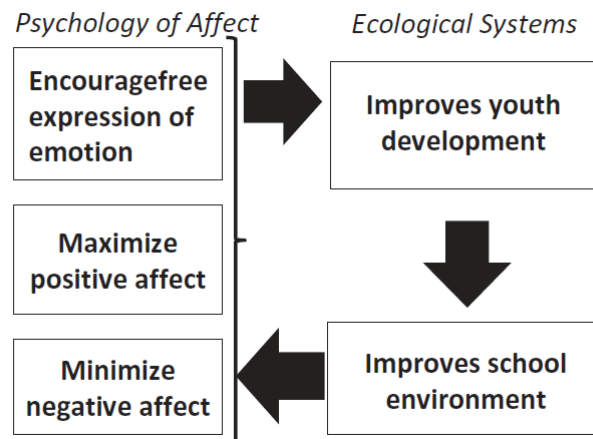
Research conducted by Acosta, Chinman, Ebener, Phillips, Xenakis and Malone (2016) implements a randomised controlled trial on the study of restorative practices in education in the USA. They have developed a five-year cluster randomised controlled trial of restorative practice interventions in 14 middle schools (seven have received the intervention, and seven are control schools) in Maine (USA). This is to test whether restorative practice interventions affect both positive mental health outcomes and problem behaviours. They also want to explore whether the effects of RP persist during the transition from middle school to high school. The trial will last five years, with the intervention having begun in the 2014-2015 academic year. The researchers state:

The literature on restorative practices is in need of rigorous evaluation studies. The purpose of this article is to provide an example of such a study by describing the first randomized trial evaluating the effect of RPI on middle school youth.

(Acosta et al., 2016:413)

They use the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) training as the restorative intervention, which adheres to 11 elements (see Appendix 1). The restorative practices intervention (RPI) seeks to train all staff in the use of the 11 elements of the theoretical perspective (see Diagram 2). This is further developed as an intervention by drawing on an ecological systems model (Bronfenbrenner, 2000) and psychological affects theory (Lerner and Steinberg, 2004; Ttofi and Farrington, 2008).

Diagram 2: Restorative Practices Intervention Theoretical Model.



The researchers explain how the RPI combines these theoretical perspectives with the 11 elements in the following way:

The psychology of affect explains how RPI achieves improved behavior and increased connectedness through three psychological mechanisms: (a) RPI maximizes positive affect through proactive practices such as “restorative circles” (appendix 1), which are aimed at developing closer bonds and relationships among youth; (b) RPI minimizes negative affect by training teachers to help students engage in practices that ensure offenders can take public responsibility for their behavior and reintegrate into normal community life; (c) RPI encourages staff and students to freely express emotions through training in such practices as affective statements and questions.

These improvements then feed into ecological systems theory...

(Acosta et al, 2016:418)

The use of proactive restorative circles is based on young people being in circles. There is extensive literature on the use of circles in both community and educational settings; however, reviewing communication circles in depth is beyond the scope of this chapter. Nonetheless, it is important to highlight that there is a distinction to be made between circles for discussion and ‘restorative circles’ where multiple stakeholders attend in response to harm caused to relationships. From Acosta et al’s research it is unclear what a proactive restorative circle would involve, and thus how this links to the benefits for positive mental health and addressing behaviour problems.

The psychological mechanism justified in Acosta’s research is of concern as it uses teacher training to implement RP but with the language of the criminal justice sector. The argument

against labelling a young person an ‘offender’ is that it is not appropriate for either education settings or young people. In addition to this language there is the framing of the offender taking ‘public responsibility for their behaviour and reintegrat[ing] into normal community life’. This has connotations with reintegrative shaming (Braithwaite, 1989), which is identified as community conferences. However, Braithwaite and Mugford (1994) place a high-level of importance on the skills of the co-ordinators of such meetings. These skills include identifying with all parties and everyone else who has been affected, e.g., ‘how did this episode affect the family?’ (1994:145). The model of restorative practice implemented in this research could create more psychological harm due to the use of labelling and the implicit criminal justice bias. The skilled facilitators are teaching staff, who have the responsibility of differentiating restorative practice from their professional role of teaching. This runs the risk of enabling teachers to embarrass or seek complicity with their view of ‘normal’ with regard to ensuring young people take public responsibility for their behaviour.

Acosta et al have matched the intervention and control schools based on academic, disciplinary and demographic data. During a 5-year research period the researchers aim to provide external support during the first two years, with the remaining three years (after 2016-2017 to 2019-2020) being used to test the sustainability of any gains from implementation in the school. The control schools receive the RPI from the start of the third year. The study size is approximately 3500 11- to 13-year olds. The ethnic make-up of the schools is 95% white, with pupils coming from rural and suburban backgrounds. The researchers recognise that the study does not reflect urban educational centres but state that ‘Maine youth experience relevant risk factors to the same extent as, or more than, youth across the United States’ (2016:420). However, this statement seems counter to the purpose of researching eco-systems. Different risks will be present in different ecosystems (i.e. communities), yet the issue of ‘relevant’ does not seem to be analysed in this research. However, Acosta et al do present nine risk factors, including drop-out rates, children in poverty, attempted suicide, being bullied on school property, and being threatened or injured with a weapon on school property one or more times. Furthermore, the researchers are seeking to ensure a level of comparison between schools to enable them to assess the success of the intervention schools.

Acosta et al’s research is delivered through IIRP, using trainers to deliver 2.5 days of training. Schools are prescribed a Project Leadership Group (PLG), and all staff are expected to join a cluster. Within the cluster all staff are expected to complete a monthly handbook

and related exercise to reinforce the 11 elements. In addition, the researchers note that ‘consistent with IIRP’s process to facilitate whole school change, participating schools received a series of supports for implementation’ (2016:421). These include leaders having monthly calls with Maine-based and IIRP staff, identification of champions, a Maine-based staff person to visit each school once a month to observe implementation, and two school visits by IIRP staff at the start and end of the first year. In the second-year schools receive additional support on elements 7 to 11. Importantly, ‘the training also addresses sustainability planning – i.e. training select school staff to provide ongoing training and professional development in RPI to other staff’ (ibid:422), in effect a ‘training for trainers’ model. Acosta et al, suggest testing the fidelity of the RPI using four assessments (Gregory et al., 2014, unpublished) and the RP-Observe Supplement (Chinman, Acosta, Ebener and Philips, 2014, unpublished) developed specifically for this RCT. Additional school environment outcomes are also evaluated via observation, and staff and student surveys. Unfortunately, Acosta et al do not present the results of their RCT but rather the methodology for conducting such research, as they expect to complete their research in 2020.

Acosta et al’s methodology raises several questions regarding the training company selected for such research. The quality of the training has not been evaluated, nor does there seem to be an evaluation of specific restorative conferences. Moreover, the use of IIRP tools as well as training appears to run the risk of IIRP self-validation of their own training. The analysis of Acosta et al’s RCT suggests that a primary concern is the tentative link between mental health and restorative practice. They have assumed improved mental health outcomes can be clearly linked in to the 11 elements of effective restorative practice. Yet, Acosta et al have not recognised that the restorative interventions chosen for their research are aligned with criminal justice restorative justice and may actively contribute to poor mental health in young people.

3.6.2 RCT 2: Restorative Approaches, Behaviour and Educational Attainment.

In a second RCT in America, Green, Williging, Zamarian, Dehaiman and Ruiloba (2019) use the Dynamic Adaptation Process (DAP), which is ‘a multifaceted implementation strategy, to tailor a two-tiered restorative practice intervention at a local school context (Aaron, Green et al, 2012)’ (2019:169). This is conducted in 12 (six – intervention and six – control) culturally diverse middle schools in the US to examine if restorative practice use ‘(a) reduces negative outcomes including expulsions, suspensions, truancy and bullying and (b) improves positive

outcomes related to grade-point-average, sense of safety and teacher support’ (Green et al, ibid:169). The research also seeks to assess the cost-benefit element by examining the return on investment from societal and governmental perspectives. The training is being delivered by the research team over four years from 2017 to 2020. The implementation strategy is based on the WSA and trains all staff. The project is also supported by a project co-ordinator for implementation in schools. Thus, their implementation strategy uses ‘affective language to foster emotional connection and reduce adverse feelings between students and authority figures’ (ibid:169).

The first tier involves restorative practice use in classrooms, and the practices include *Connection Circles* as well as *Restorative Conversations* ‘in which student and teacher have a short, informal one-on-one meeting and make a verbal agreement about how to improve an aspect of their relationship’ (ibid:169). The second tier practices are more formalised meetings between those aggrieved in cases, such as bullying, and include the following: *Problem-Solving Meetings*, *Restorative Agreement Meetings* (both of which appear to be facilitated by the teacher), *Restorative Mediation* (facilitated by the project co-ordinator) and a *Community Group Conference* (wider stakeholders are invited as well as supporters, e.g. parents, led by a trained facilitator). Additional implementation support is provided via a local expert who supports schools with training and coaching as well as assessing the fidelity of staff to practice.

The implementation model used by the researchers is the DAP, which involves ‘an interactive data-informed approach to support implementation of new interventions in organisational and system-level settings’ (Aarons, Green, et al, 2012) (ibid:170). This uses a four-stage process of exploration (e.g., considering new approaches to carrying out restorative practices); preparation (e.g., planning to apply practices), implementation (e.g., training in practices, coaching and use of practices) and sustainment (e.g., maintaining practices with fidelity over time). This process is known as the ESIP framework. The DAP uses implementation resource teams (IRTs) at each school receiving the intervention. Each team is made up of 4-6 stakeholders who ‘work together to build implementation capacity to ensure contextual and cultural relevance to restorative practise to overcome barriers impeding effective utilization of these practices at district, school, staff and student levels’ (ibid:170). It is for the project co-ordinator to recruit members of the IRT from a range of staff in the school but other possible members could include support staff, parents or community members. Interestingly, there is no mention by the research team of young people being involved in the IRT. The

IRTs are supported with data in the preparation phase to help the intervention school prepare for the implementation of restorative practices, including ‘(a) the extent to which the school possesses the requisite conditions for implementing restorative practices, (b) adaptations needed in the school context and its workforce and student body to ensure take-up and (c) how to accomplish such adaptations’ (ibid:170). An example of this given by the researchers is culturally based privacy concerns and taboos within Native American communities (ibid:170). Research by Green et al (2019) shows how local adaptations can be used to contextualise the use of restorative approaches within the diversity of school settings. However, this does raise concerns about the comparability of the intervention schools with each other, as well as with the control schools, which is the purpose of an RCT.

Green et al addressed several research questions, one of which is important to the present research: ‘What factors impact implementation and sustainment of restorative practices?’. Unfortunately, the research paper presented by Green et al (2019) only describes the RCT process and not the results. Importantly, the researchers are aware of how restorative practices may vary in culturally diverse and economically marginalised populations. The findings of this research will hopefully address these concerns when published.

3.6.3 RCT 3: Restorative Approaches, Bullying and Health Outcomes.

An English RCT trial was developed by a team of researchers lead by Bonell et al, (2018) called ‘Learning Together’. This combined a whole school approach to increase student engagement, restorative practice (defined as enabling ‘victims to communicate to perpetrators the effects of the harm, and for perpetrators to acknowledge and amend their behaviour to avoid further harm; (2018:2453), and 5 hours of social and emotional learning ‘to teach young people the skills needed to manage their emotions and relationships’ (ibid:2453). Research was conducted between 2014 and 2017, using a cluster randomised trial in forty secondary schools (20 intervention schools and 20 control schools). Schools were selected based on Ofsted ratings, thus schools were removed due to their rating ‘being inadequate or poor, because such schools are subject to special measures’ (2018:2453). Schools that participated appear to have been selected based on a convenient sample of geographical location (Greater London and the South East).

Several concerns can be raised about this study, firstly regarding the bullying phenomenon it sought to address. Bonell et al’s research framed bullying, violence and aggression as ‘consequential to public mental health problems’ (2018:2452). Importantly, Bonell et al’s

research uses the WHO's definition of bullying as 'intentional use of physical or psychological force against others'. This definition is far too broad as it casts a wide net over a range of harmful behaviours. It also misses key components of bullying already identified in this bullying literature review regarding power imbalance and repetition. Secondly, the WSA is difficult to ascertain as it is aimed at 'student engagement' to modify 'overall policies and systems' (ibid:2452). This is a different interpretation of the WSA from the literature thus far, and young people's voices appear to have been channelled via survey results into action group meetings, rather than having actual representation by young people. Thirdly, the definition of restorative practice resonates with restorative justice processes rather than an educational perspective. Paradoxically, Bonnell et al widened the phenomenon of bullying and at the same time narrowed the restorative intervention to address the phenomenon. Finally, there is no content description of the five hours of emotional and social education per year, so it is not clear if this promotes restorative approaches or is focused on secondary outcomes. Thus, there are key concerns regarding the content of the three approaches identified by Bonnell et al, of modifying policies and systems, restorative practice, and social and emotional lessons which create the school-based intervention called 'Learning Together'.

Restorative practice in Bonnell et al's study was split into:

Primary prevention, which uses circle time (students are brought together with their teacher to discuss their feelings and identify problems and maintain good relationships), and secondary prevention, which uses conferencing (bringing together parties to a conflict and, when necessary, external agencies, to reflect on more serious incidents and develop strategies to avoid future harms.

(ibid:2453)

This is similar to the two-tier model used in the RCT by Green et al (2019). Staff training was delivered by a training company registered with the Restorative Justice Council¹⁹. However, no reference was made by Bonnell et al to the quality of this training in terms of delivery or how school staff engaged with RP. In the intervention schools all staff were given awareness training on restorative practice. This was followed by selecting at least five staff to receive three days of training but it is not clear how they were selected, i.e., interest

¹⁹ The Restorative Justice Council (RJC) is an independent charity in England. The Register of Trainers is voluntary, although trainers can apply to be accredited via the RJC's own assessment process.

based on the awareness session or because it was part of their existing job roles, e.g., learning mentor or pastoral leader.

The delivery of the intervention was done via action groups which had 6 meetings (two per term) and reviewed policies and rules. In the first two years these groups had an external facilitator with school management experience, although it is not clear what effect this external facilitator had on the action groups from the results presented. Interestingly, ‘members assessed that action groups had a good or very good range of members; members assess that action groups were very well led’ (2018:2455). Concerns about confirmation bias or groupthink (Kahneman, 2012) were not considered by Bonell et al in the intervention delivery.

In terms of bullying, the intervention was viewed as effective in students with higher baseline bullying experiences who were targets and had psychological problems due to the bullying. The researchers found ‘no effect on perpetration of aggressive behaviours’, although they suggested that ‘bullying prevention interventions have stronger effects on victimisation’ (ibid:2462). The quality of practice or the experience of participating in a restorative meeting did not seem to be part of the evaluation process in the intervention schools.

From the perspective of school change, Bonell et al claimed: ‘we report on the first randomised controlled trial of restorative approaches to reduce bullying and promote student health, using a Whole School Approach’ (2018:2460). Furthermore, Bonell et al, suggested that their study added to the evidence that whole-school approaches can prevent bullying and aggression regardless of income (or income inequality). This last point does not seem to be validated by the theory of change which they drew upon (Markham and Aveyard, 2003).

Regarding school-based health promotion, Markham and Aveyard stated that: ‘A fundamental concept of this theory is that being autonomous and in a position to choose to function well and flourish is necessary to maximise health potential’ (2003:1210) Yet, there was no suggestion in Bonell et al’s research that young people could participate in any of the three approaches used in the school intervention. Hence, the theory of change suggested by Markham and Aveyard could plausibly affect the primary and secondary outcomes identified in Bonell et al. However, it is less credible to imagine that restorative approaches solely, or a combination of approaches, could significantly influence the broad array of measures that Bonell et al sought to measure. Indeed, no claims have been made since Bonell et al completed this research that any secondary outcomes were met. Thus, the substantiating the

claims about a WSA using restorative approaches to address bullying appears to have been overstated in Bonell et al's findings.

A cost-benefit evaluation was also conducted by Bonell et al on allocated financial remuneration to compensate for time-consuming activities such as training and curriculum delivery. Interestingly, it appears that schools used existing INSET days for the training rather than creating new slots, which may have reduced implementation costs. Bonell et al's research was the first to identify a cost-benefit through an economic analysis. It showed that the mean cost of addressing bullying was £232,670 in the intervention schools and £202,405 for the control schools. Importantly, the research team acknowledged that 'Overall, the intervention increased costs and reduced bullying, leading to incremental costs averted of £2352 at 36 months' (ibid:2460). Yet, according to Bonell et al, it did not decrease bullying in terms of those perpetrating bullying behaviour. Furthermore, the cost of such interventions to reduce victimisation would be a significant increased cost for schools in England.

The RCT also conducted an evaluation of the fidelity of the intervention. Bonell et al stated that 'the intervention varied between school's overtime, with a reduction in the fidelity of the formal intervention activities in the third year' (ibid:2460). This adds to the weight of evidence (YJB, 2005, Kane et al, 2006, Skinns et al 2009, Wong et al, 2010, Roberts, 2012) which suggests that schools using the WSA have difficulty sustaining the integrity of restorative interventions beyond three years. Interestingly, this was the point when the external facilitator was no longer present to act a reminder of quality of practice. Hence, the ability of schools to continue with fidelity to the process either dissipates or adapts. Bonell et al, do identify several reasons why fidelity starts to wane. These include:

In the third year, 15 schools sustained restorative practice. Interviews with action group members and focus groups with staff in case-study schools suggested that in the third year, schools commonly incorporated what they regard as the most useful action group functions in the mainstream school structures and processes.

(Bonell et al, 2018: 2460).

This further alludes to the adaptation of restorative approaches over time as they become embedded as a system feature of the school. Moreover, this research demonstrates that the longer the intervention lasts the less fidelity is likely to be maintained when using a WSA. Accordingly, this would imply that as fidelity decreases the cost-benefit will also be reduced

over subsequent years as the intervention becomes less effective due to drifting away from quality of delivery.

Bonell et al's research also provides insight into the extent to which the schools managed to achieve the delivery of the WSA from a staff perspective: 'Slightly over half of staff in intervention schools were aware that the school had been taking steps to reduce bullying and aggression, falling slightly between the second and third years' (ibid:2460). The whole school approach implied that all staff were aware of the intervention from the start; this surprising finding suggested that awareness reduced over the duration of an intervention. This is an indication that the WSA may not be an appropriate school change model for sustaining restorative approaches as the change processes reduced in potency over time.

The WSA seems not to have raised awareness among young people. Bonell et al, showed that 'about half reported that if there was trouble at school, staff responded by talking to those involved to help them get on better' (ibid:2460). This does not mean young people explicitly recognised that such conversations by staff were using restorative approaches. In addition, 'About a third of students reported being aware that the school had taken steps to reduce bullying' (ibid:2460). This suggests that an ability to draw attention to the issues of bullying for young people was a critical but missing part of Bonell et al's WSA and arguably the model of change itself, which was focused on staff activities such as policy and training.

What is difficult to discern from the research is to what extent teachers badged conversations as 'restorative' which were in fact behavioural meetings, and to what extent young people were part of genuine restorative meetings. Yet, Bonell et al concluded that 'our study adds to evidence that whole-school approaches to prevent bullying and aggression and promote student health are feasible' (ibid:2462). This appears to be the opposite of what their findings suggest. Despite this, the researchers went on to state:

We found positive effects of Learning Together despite variable fidelity to the intervention. For such organisational-change interventions, traditional fidelity of form (what intervention components were delivered) might be less important than overall fidelity of function (whether overall the intervention triggered the mechanisms in the ways theorised, albeit in locally appropriate ways).

(Bonell et al., 2018: 2462-63)

In effect, this states that fidelity of intervention (the components of the intervention) is less relevant than fidelity of function (the overall outcome). In making this statement they drew on the work of Hawe, Shiell and Riley (2004), who discussed complexity in their article ‘Complex Interventions: How “out of control” can a randomised control trial be?’ They suggested that ‘Reducing a complex system to its component parts amounts to “irretrievable loss of what makes it a system”’. The combined components of ‘Learning Together’ could form a complex intervention. Yet, Bonell et al acknowledged that ‘The poor fidelity for the curriculum elements suggest this was less likely to have contributed significantly to the benefit of Learning Together’ (2018:2463). This research, apart from social lessons, which was their third promising approach, appears not too dissimilar to Wong’s restorative whole school approach when assessing what Bonell et al achieved in the schools, i.e., policy change combined with staff training. This suggests that when Bonell et al made reference to their research bearing the hallmarks of a complex health intervention (2019:2454) they should have heeded the warning from Hawe et al when concluding on complex interventions that ‘Complex Systems rhetoric should not become an excuse for “anything goes”’ (2004:1563).

3.6.4 The RCTs and the Implications for this Research.

The development of RCTs shows a significant new area of research into the application of restorative approaches in schools to address issues such as bullying, as seen in Table 1. All three RCTs have a range of restorative approaches being used as interventions. In addition, they all seek models of fidelity in the use of restorative approaches, which presents a significant challenge when those being trained are not professional facilitators but are rather teaching staff with an already developed professional identity. Furthermore, all three RCTs seek to identify or recognise a form of sustainability beyond the life of the RCT. For Acosta et al this involves a training for trainers model (2016:422), whereas Green et al focus on sustainment as per their EPIS framework, which involved continuous fidelity (2019:170). For Bonell et al, ‘In the third year, 15 schools sustained restorative practice’ (2018:2460). This indicates that a quarter of intervention schools already stopped using RA in two years. Furthermore, action group member interviews suggested that schools were ‘incorporating the most useful action group functions into...structures and processes’ (2018:2460). This does not mean that restorative approaches were adopted or, if they were adopted, this was with high fidelity to the principles of restorative approaches.

In conclusion, for the purposes of the current research the RCTs are not an appropriate research design as they decontextualize the school from its ecosystem and history. Although Acosta et al draw on Brofenbrenner (2000), the lack of recognition of wider influences within the educational system or society is under-acknowledged in RCTs. Firstly, there is an issue of culture in schools: schools are not a homogeneous group; for example, the extent to which schools use punitive sanctions has no bearing on implementation in the RCTs. Staff are not decontextualized from personal and institutional responses to conflict and bullying. Secondly, although an RCT assumes that restorative approaches are delivered using a range of approaches there is no recognition of the challenges for staff in terms of the skill sets required as facilitators when facing different levels of harm due to conflict or bullying dynamics. Thirdly, all three RCTs use an outside-in model of change to deliver the WSA but, as already shown in the literature, restorative approaches begin to lose potency after three years. To conclude, the RCTs are at different stages but their overall methodology has not represented a major departure from the existing literature on RA. In the example of Bonell et al there is a risk that, by imposing a health paradigm which ignores the existing literature on bullying and restorative approaches, opportunities for meaningful change for young people are lost and schools fail to sustain restorative approaches.

3.7 The Restorative Principles Framework.

In response to the literature on restorative approaches as well as my experience in the field, I have been able to conduct a synthesis of key principles which are arguably essential for identifying restorative approaches The Restorative Principles Framework. The Restorative Principles Framework has eight features:

1. The questioning process, i.e., the use of restorative questions.
2. The encounter, i.e., when it is safe to bring participants together.
3. The articulation of harm, i.e., all those participating in the encounter expressing and acknowledging the harm caused.
4. Empathy, i.e., the process, encounter and empowerment of those involved allow for a safe sharing of the feelings and emotional impact of the harmful situation.
5. Mutual agreement, i.e., all parties involved have the ability to creatively explore options and negotiate an agreement without coercion.
6. Inclusiveness, i.e., allowing all those participating access and opportunity to understand the process and purpose of the encounter.

7. Empowerment, i.e., enabling young people (and adults) to learn skills and capacities to manage conflict and develop peace regardless of when the process ends.
8. Impartiality, i.e., meetings are facilitated without bias in places that both parties perceive as neutral.

Based on analysis of the restorative approaches literature, and drawing on my professional experience, I would like to propose a Restorative Principles Framework which will be beneficial to understanding the practice of school-based practitioners. A Restorative Principles Framework will inform the proposed research exploring how schools adhere to practice and identify areas of adaptation. Furthermore, the evidence on successful implementation of restorative approaches in schools is difficult to determine due to a lack of clarity on what constitutes restorative approaches in schools. Assessing the success of restorative approaches is limited by a lack of clarity regarding change models, which often seek to address the whole school rather than the specific principles of practice in schools. Based on my extensive literature review, and my own experience in the restorative community, there is concern that a formulaic model of the WSA has not supported the restorative principles identified above. It appears that very few schools in any of the key evaluations reach the status of having a whole school approach within the timeframe of the evaluations (YJB, 2005; Kane et al, 2006; Skinns et al, 2009; Wong et al, 2010; Bonell et al, 2018). There is also limited evidence of the viability of the whole school approach as no research has shown that the whole school community, even when narrowly defined as young people and staff, fully engages with the implementation model. However, this could be due to the limited timeframes of evaluation studies as the whole always takes longer to change than the various parts, e.g., staff. The absence of an articulated model of change to implement restorative approaches makes it difficult to gauge whether the benefits schools seek can be maximised through the present understanding of the whole school approach. What is clear, from Thompson and Smith (2010), is that schools are seeking to implement restorative approaches in a variety of ways which meet the needs of the school and its community. The challenges of change will be presented in the next section.

3.8 The Definition of Restorative Approaches for this Research.

Based on the literature challenges remain in defining restorative approaches but, for the purposes of this research, I have concluded that they can be defined as:

The range of approaches used to deliver a facilitated dialogue (including skills, questioning, risk assessing and negotiating to reach a peaceful agreement) for those involved in a conflict or bullying situations.

Restorative approaches have been argued to be beneficial in supporting young people as both perpetrators and targets in bullying and conflict situations.

3.9 The Problem with Implementation of Restorative Approaches in Schools.

The development of restorative approaches in schools has created a tension between punitive and restorative responses to conflict and bullying. This reflects a similar debate in the criminal justice system about moving away from an exclusively punitive response. The literature on bullying suggests that there are considerable concerns about children and young people who report bullying receiving adequate responses from staff (Rigby and Bauman, 2010). Furthermore, the punitive versus restorative paradigm continues to be a concern, as latest figures from the DfE (2016-2017)²⁰ suggest an increase in exclusions, both in general and for bullying as a specific issue. This may indicate that the pendulum has held fast within the punitive response model in schools.

A second issue raised within the literature is the implementation model advocated by researchers: ‘the whole school approach’. According to the literature on the implementation of restorative approaches in schools, the whole school approach has a significantly low success rate of one-in-four schools (YJB, 2005; Skinnis et al, 2008; Wong et al, 2012). Even when researchers such as Wong et al (2012) specifically looked at the ‘restorative whole school approach’ the results showed that only one school stood out for successful delivery. It may be that such low success rates are due to the timescale for phasing in a whole school model: the research projects reviewed in the literature lasted a maximum of three years. However, given the lack of success in the WSA to create long term change, it is frustrating that the DfE continues to recommend the whole school approach as a response to bullying (see Bi-phobic, transphobic bullying, NatCen, 2014) in government guidance.

The literature review shows that there is a recognition of the school as a ‘machine’. This metaphor makes explicit the management of school change by continuous improvement which is tacitly structurally and culturally violent (Cremin and Bevington, 2017). Thus, schools use punitive processes to ensure the machine is efficient, without equating efficiency

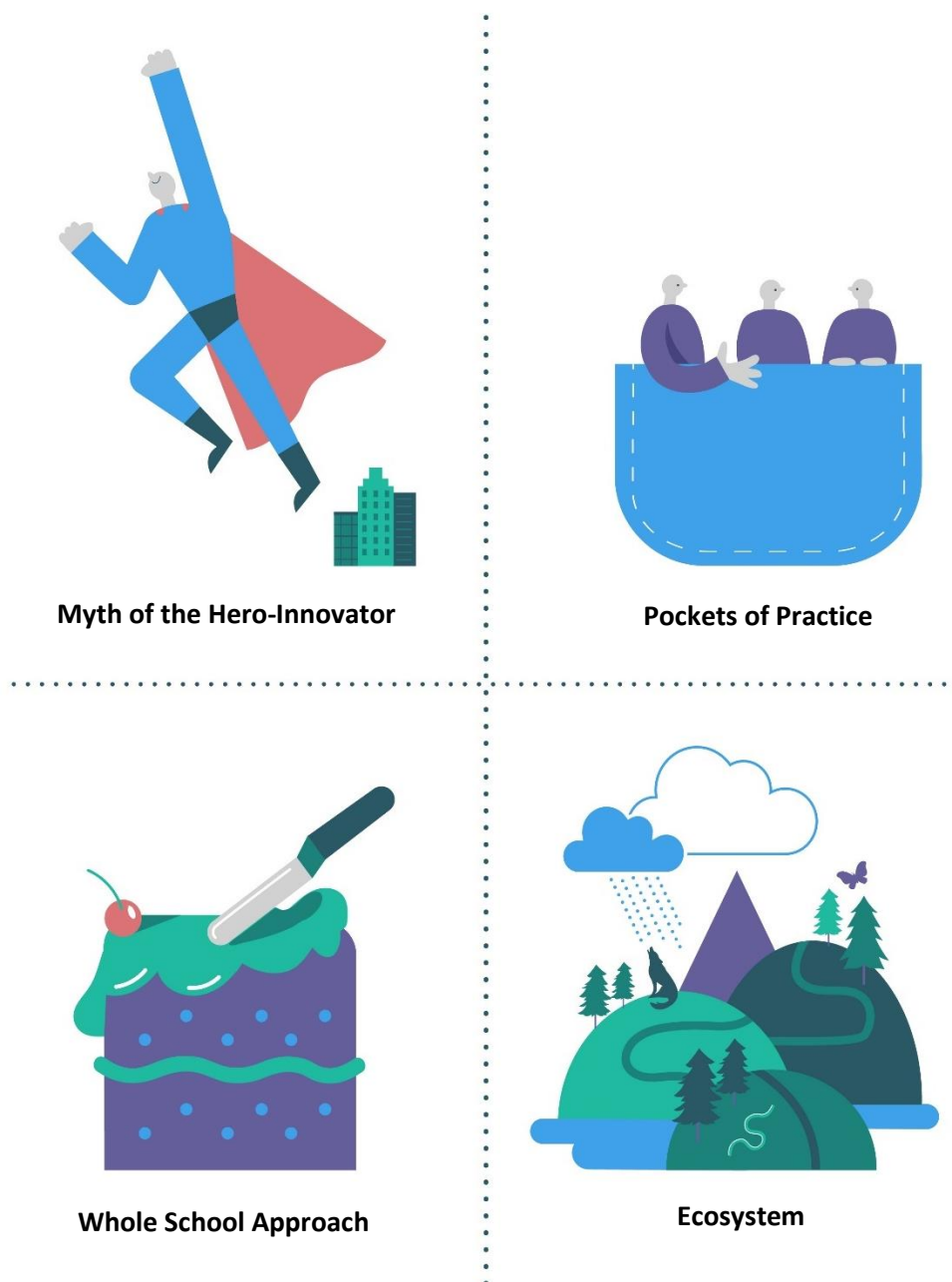
²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/statistics-exclusions>

with dehumanisation and violence. This equates to a machine metaphor where a school addresses defects in behaviour through seeking to rectify the product (young person). If this fails, the young person is rejected (excluded) as they lack value in terms of helping the school produce results. Arguably, the school 'machine' model is reinforced through the Ofsted inspection framework. Schools are situated in a neoliberal ecosystem; therefore, their survival rests on signs of successful production which are affirmed by Ofsted's 'Outstanding' or 'Good' grades. Importantly, Ball's critique (2013) of neoliberalism offers a way to understand the changes in the English education policy landscape, which influence the ecosystem. Furthermore, Ball also identifies the loss of issues of 'general significance' through education such as addressing inequality, I would argue this loss extends to include bullying. Thus, the marketplace defuses the ability of schools through prioritising them as efficient machine and prevents educationalists to act as a catalyst for social change.

4. School change: From Individuals to Systems.

The WSA has already been covered as a of model of school change in the bullying and restorative approaches literature. Therefore, this section will explore three alternatives which could be used to explain the process of change in schools: the Hero-Innovator, niches or Pockets of Practice (POP), and Ecosystems (see Diagram 2). The WSA has already been explored, as metaphor, restorative approaches is an icing but does not change the underlying structures of the cake (school), the three alternative models of change will now be explored.

Diagram 3: Four Types of School Change.



4.1 The Myth of the Hero Innovator: Individual Change Agents.

One of the first and most profound forms of school change was identified in the seminal work of Nicholas Georgiades and Lynda Phillimore in their 1975 paper, 'The Myth of the Hero-Innovator and Alternative Strategies for Organisational Change'. This paper looked at both health and education innovation, drawing from educational research. Their concerns arose from two key points. First, that change is slow:

Although it is true that the rate of change inside educational institutions has increased (for instance, in 1930 it was estimated that 15 years need to elapse before something like three per cent of schools adopted a particular change, while in 1960 it was estimated that 7 years need to elapse before eleven per cent of schools adapted an innovation).

(Georgiades and Phillimore, 1975:313-314)

Whilst recognising that the pace of change may seem faster due to technological and government policies, the issue of the pace of change remains a concern. When implemented in schools restorative approaches have tended to be focused on up to three years of implementation. Georgiades and Phillimore suggest that the time requirement may be at least twice as long as research (YJB, 2005; Skinns et al, 2008; Wong, 2012 and Bonell 2018) into restorative approaches has been conducted. The research from Green et al (2019) and Acosta et al (2016) may provide further insight post-three years. Georgiades and Phillimore's second issue concerning research was how little training impacted on teaching behaviour in schools and health care systems. Georgiades and Phillimore drew on the key point articulating the problem of training individuals made by Katz and Khan (1966), who stated:

The essential weakness of the individual approach to organisational change is the psychological fallacy of concentrating upon individuals without regard to the role relationships that constitute the social systems in which they are part. The assumption is being made that since organisations are made up of individuals, we can change the organisation by changing those individuals. This is not so much an illogical proposition as it is an oversimplification which neglects the interrelationships of people in an organisational structure and fails to point to aspects of individual behaviour which need to be changed.

(Katz and Kahn 1966, in Georgiades and Phillimore, 1975:314)

What Katz and Khan eloquently state is that, when decontextualized and disassociated from the systems they are embedded in on a daily basis, individuals (leaders or practitioners within the organisation) cannot be the vessels of change. The oversimplification is that training, especially training based on the banking model described by Freire (1970), comprises 'knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing' (1970:72). Therefore, restorative approaches training for staff will have no, or minimal, effect beyond the training rooms for interventions as such knowledge does not recognise context. Thus, a form of change management, the myth of the hero-innovator, could be articulated by Georgiades and Phillimore:

The idea that you can produce, by training, a knight in shining armour who, loins girded with new technology and beliefs, will assault his organisational fortress and institute changes both in himself and others at a stroke...

(1975: 315).

This is the central point of the hero-innovator as an agent of change. The creation and retention of knowledge, such as attending training on restorative approaches, has been ordained as residing in the individual. School leaders and practitioners may have the belief in becoming hero-innovators due to their position in the hierarchy of an organisation, yet in complex systems are destined to fail. Possibly, when schools or organisations were smaller the hero-innovator may have been more effective in influencing peers and policies.

However, for Georgiades and Phillimore the myth is in reference to the following lines:

'...Such a view is ingenuous. The fact of the matter is that organisations such as schools and hospitals will, like dragons, eat hero-innovators for breakfast' (ibid:315). In reference to the myth, the returning hero-innovator is faced with several challenges that are beyond the remit of any one individual's influence, apart from in the smallest organisations. Consequently, Georgiades and Phillimore identified the following issues. Firstly:

It will become increasingly necessary for managers of planned change to cease regarding the individual patient as the client and move to a more systems orientated view...The manager of change must concentrate her or his attention upon preparing the culture in which these experts (in reference to newly trained staff) are to work.

(ibid:315).

The systems perspective of change has been identified since the 1970s but has yet to become a feature in schools. In addition, the implementation of interventions such as restorative approaches need to ideally have a culture agreeable to and ready for its introduction. Moreover, use of the term ‘planned change’ implies both paying attention to the transformation to be instigated and intentional actions to bring about such transformation. This leads to Georgiades and Phillimore’s second concern: ‘Currently it is estimated that 3-5 years are needed for a fundamental organisational change’, hence ‘organisational change that is to be permanent is a lengthy business, and results cannot be achieved hastily’ (ibid:315). Understanding the amount of time required appears to be an underestimated feature of permanent or sustainable change. This may be compounded by the intentions of school managers seeking to implement restorative approaches in response to concerns such as increasing school exclusions. Furthermore, there is a risk of researchers colluding by applying shorter time scales due to research project requirements. To mitigate against the issues that hero-innovators face Georgiades and Phillimore suggested six guidelines, which are summarised below in Table 2.

Table 2: A Strategy for Change: The Six Guidelines.

1	The manager of the change should work with forces within the organisation which are supportive of the change and improvement rather than working against those which are defensive and resistant to change (ibid:316).
2	Try and develop a ‘critical mass’, first always work with teams (or groups), never allow individuals to be isolated and locate key people with whom the team will work and develop their interests (ibid:316).
3	Wherever possible the manager of change should work with the organisationally ‘healthy parts’ of the system. The team should avoid being seduced or pressured into working with other parts of the system which might be regarded as lost causes (ibid:317).
4	The manager of change should try and work with individuals and a group who have as much freedom and discretion in managing their own operations and resources as possible (ibid:317).
5	The manager should have received <i>permission</i> for the change to occur from those in top management position. Frequently, the unspoken qualifier in this situation is ‘It’s OK, as long as we don’t have to do anything differently’ (ibid:318).
6	Arrangements should be made for most of the team to work in small groups or pairs for mutual learning and support. People should not be expected to work alone in highly stressful situations until quite experienced. Frequent team group meetings should be held in order to allow the team to discuss anxieties about the kind of work they are doing (ibid:317).

Georgiades and Phillimore have had a profound impact on understandings of organisational change. Furthermore, their definition of the hero-innovator and guidelines to reduce the myth seem as relevant and as important today as they were over 40 years ago. Thus, they eviscerate the argument that the individual is the catalyst for sustainable change. The viable alternative then may be using teams or groups to sustain restorative approaches in schools.

4.2 Niches: Pockets of Practice and Heterotopias.

Skinns et al's (2009) key finding was their two different implementation approaches: the WSA and pockets of practice. For schools using 'pockets of practice' (POP) as their change model the rationale presented by Skinns et al was that, 'The intention was not to enshrine RA in school policies until it has been practised, tried and tested by staff and pupils in parts of the school' (2009:21). This type of incremental change is described by a participant in their research:

We've kind of learned stuff here over the last four years I've worked here, is that you can't chuck things at everybody all at the same time, you have to take really small steps, and I think that was kind of hard for RAI S to understand that because we've moved on so much as a secondary school, but only by taking baby steps, and I think that was something they had to learn alongside us as well, (RJ Champion, 4).

(ibid:22).

Developing a POP takes longer to implement than the WSA, as the POP cannot simply blitz staff with information to instigate system change. Importantly, Georgiades and Phillimore (1975:315) recognised this challenge, which is apt for schools:

Lack of attention by the manager of the change to the needs of others in the total system, and the understandable desire for haste in order to alleviate patient conditions, may produce a situation (both financially and emotionally) which is at best half-hearted and at worst grudging.

A POP may be a required change in a school but, as stated, lack of attention by management in a school prevents the development of restorative approaches moving beyond that pocket. A POP, as identified by Skinns et al, resonates with a particular feature of an ecosystem: the niche. Holland (2014), who has written extensively on the role of signals and boundaries in systems in nature, explains that a niche is created by 'the physical and virtual boundaries that

determine the limits of interaction' (2014:3). Pockets of practice or niches may not change a school; rather, they can sustain themselves for long periods of time as sub-systems. For Holland, looking at natural ecosystems, niches may exist inside niches; from a school perspective, restorative approaches may exist in the behaviour management of a school or alternatively as part of a mental health initiative. Both behaviour management and mental health are arguably niches in the larger systems of the school. Hence, the dependency of niches resides in the energy provided by other systems in the school. This may be useful in explaining why some teams can work effectively across organisational boundaries (i.e., beyond their niche) whereas others maintain minimal communication with other part of the system (within their niche).

For a social-system definition, Newman, Barabasi and Watts (2006) define a niche as 'a diverse array of agents that regularly exchange resources and depend on the exchange for continued existence'. The niche, unlike the hero-innovator, can survive if there is some form of exchange happening; in a social system, such as a school, this tends to be information communicated in the form of language. From the perspective of school change restorative approaches can survive as niche beyond their implementation by both school managers and researchers if there is a continued source of energy. These energy requirements can be defined in social systems as attention, information and money (e.g., financial support in kind, direct funding etc). Skinns et al, were concerned in their research that, 'There were examples of how staff, who may have been well-intentioned, had compromised the integrity of the programme in the three other schools that did not use a whole-school approach' (2009:22). Their research involved six schools over a three-year implementation period; consequently, it may be that the WSA is better for implementation but not for sustainability. This is because niches can be created within the social systems of schools to sustain restorative approaches. Alternatively, they can also be used as pockets of resistance against school change. Niches in social systems can create a place, space and time distinct from the norms of the dominant system. Social niches resonate with the idea of heterotopias for example, Cremin and Bevington suggest that heterotopias can be places:

Heterotopic spaces are bound by rules that give a particular identity. They serve either to highlight the illusionary character of normative or dominant spaces, and/or to create an alternative reality that can begin to offer some form of compensation'

(2017:51).

From this perspective a heterotopia can be a form of cultural niche within a social system such as a school. The French philosopher Foucault (1926-1984) stated that places are historical with meaning: ‘...the descriptions of phenomenologists have taught us that we do not live in homogeneous and empty spaces, but on the contrary in a space thoroughly imbued with qualities and fantasmic as well’ (1967:2). Importantly, Foucault identified six principles; for example, the first principle is that all cultures have heterotopias and that there is a variety of heterotopias across societies (sub-categorised as spaces of crisis and/or deviant). This also means that heterotopias are linked to time, ‘heterochronies’, described as a ‘short break with tradition time’ (ibid:6). For Foucault, heterotopias could accumulate time or be ‘flowing, transitory, precarious’ (ibid:7). The fifth principle stated by Foucault links to the spaces of restorative approaches when he states:

Heterotopias always presuppose a system of opening and closing that both isolates them and makes them penetrable. In general, the heterotopic site is not freely accessible like a public space. Either the entry is compulsory, as is the case of entering a barracks or a prison, or else the individual has to submit to rites and purifications. To get in one must have a certain permission and make certain gestures. (1967:7)

Hence, the spaces created by restorative approaches are dependent on the niches they occupy within the school as a system. Facilitators can close or open such spaces depending on the rituals that those engaging in the restorative intervention (ideally) voluntarily submit to upon entering. Furthermore, heterotopias, according to Zembylas and Ferreira (2009), are spaces that enable alternative understandings of identity and belonging:

The notion of heterotopic spaces marks territories of struggle, rather than fixed localities, that is, places that open up possibilities for individual and social transformation...they can be considered symbolic sites of alternative values, emotions and beliefs around which educators and students can redefine their identities and the way they are identified. Especially in conflict ridden areas, goals such as peace and coexistence may be better achieved if the emphasis on separate normative identities is somewhat relaxed. (2009:2).

This could explain why niches become culturally significant for change in schools as they are psycho-social spaces in the system which allow for fluidity in identity, beliefs and

behaviours. For Cremin and Bevington heterotopias show ‘the possibility of transgressive identities - those that create new identities and alliances across conflicting groups’ (2017:52). From the perspective of restorative approaches the restorative conference, for example, is not just a place to ask questions and hear answers; it becomes a space in which to change identities to bridge relationships between targets and perpetrators of bullying. In essence the restorative conference becomes a heterotopic space existing within the cultural niche created by staff using restorative approaches in their school. Whilst reading this literature, I coined the word ‘homodystopia’ to describe niches where spaces of psycho-social-punishment in schools happen. A homodystopia is the antithesis of a heterotopia in that it seeks to close the possibilities for new identities and norms; entry is through command and exit through rituals of submission. Homodystopias are spaces where time is colonised by the banality of the institution and consequently the very process of learning is subverted into a form of compliance.

Recognising the importance of niches as a change model for implementation within wider systems has not been articulated in the restorative approaches literature [but?] can be framed as the implementation model in the randomised control trials. For Acosta et al (2016) it is seen in project leadership groups, for Green et al (2019) it is evidenced in implementation resource teams, and for Bonell (2018) in the use of school action groups. The possible heterotopias are not just the actual spaces where restorative approaches happen in response to conflict and bullying using restorative approaches. They are also in the spaces where the teams meet to plan, develop and act to enable restorative approaches to continue in a school. Hence, niches as a form of change model are created by a project team which enables restorative approaches to exist in a school. The extent to which project team staff can reflect on their beliefs and behaviours within heterotopic spaces and created niches will be an interesting area to explore within the field research of this study.

4.3 System Change in Schools.

The term ‘system’ or ‘systems’ has arisen extensively throughout the literature review. For the purposes of the present research it is now important to address what is meant by this term when discussing systems in relation to school change. The literature on systems across multiple disciplines is extensive, and this chapter will limit the discussion to how the term ‘system’ is used in relation to bullying and restorative approaches. The Oxford Dictionary states that the word ‘system’ is a noun with three meanings:

1. A set of things working together as parts of a mechanism or an interconnecting network; a complex whole.
2. A set of principles or procedures according to which something is done; an organised scheme or method.
3. (The system) the prevailing political or social order, especially when regarded as oppressive and intransigent.

As such, 'system' can mean both the whole and the interrelated or interconnected aspects that function as a network within the whole. This raises the issue of whether the whole school approach is in fact a form of system change. Although the term WSA refers to the 'whole', the literature on both bullying and restorative approaches suggests that researchers are indicating that a feature of the whole needs to be transformed through change which then influences the rest of the whole (i.e., policy or the staff body). This leads to a categorisation of systems: simple, complicated and complex. A simple system, such as a bike, has a few working parts interconnected with a human to create a mode of transport. Alternatively, a complicated system such as an aeroplane has a multitude of component parts working together, e.g., engine, wing, cockpit, pilot, as well as supporting other systems such as radar and navigation. The important point with both simple and complicated systems is that the outcome is repeatable and predictable. The error may be the assumption that such systems, which operate in mechanistic ways, can be used as a metaphor and applied to schools.

The perception of the school as a simple system is most prominent in the YJB (2005) evaluation; this may be due to evaluation being focused on an input-output model. The report recommends a WSA (input), followed by a series of recommendations and a range of activities for schools to implement, e.g., for teachers, INSET²¹, notice boards and access to other training opportunities (2005:72). The activities are generic and the recommendations neither prioritise nor describe the interconnections between them. All of this suggests that the school is viewed as a simple system and that school implementations needs only to follow the prescription or implementation instructions for change to occur (output). The report concludes with the following: 'Exit Strategies - There needs to be a clear idea of how the initiative will develop, become integrated and sustain beyond the initial development on the intervention' (2005:74). The issue of sustainability is alluded to but left inchoate from this research. However, Bonell et al, in their RCT research, recommend the WSA as an

²¹ In-Service Education and Training (INSET) days.

appropriate change model and describe the school as a complicated system in which multiple components may come together to produce prescribed outcomes:

Interventions to promote student health modifying the whole school environment, such as learning together, are likely to be one of the most efficient ways of promoting mental health and well-being while also addressing other health harms in adolescence, because the potential to modify population level risk and their wide reach across health outcomes are likely sustainable.

(Bonell et al, 2018:2463)

This research, and the speculative work of Acosta et al (2016) and Green et al (2019), suggest that the metaphor of the school as complicated system is prevalent in the RCTs. They seek repeatable outcomes from schools implementing RP, do not define the intervention or school as a system, yet all refer to restorative system change. Fortunately, Van Ness (2002) explicitly focuses on changes to ‘the system’ in the criminal justice system and distinguishes between three types of system: a fully restorative system, a moderately restorative system, and a minimally restorative system (2002:11-13). A fully restorative system would be made up of the following components:

Meeting of the parties;

Communication between the parties;

Agreement by the parties;

Apology by the offender;

Restitution to the victim;

Change in the offender’s behaviour;

Respect shown to all parties;

Assistance provided to any party that needs it; and inclusion of the parties.

(Van Ness, 2002:6)

For Van Ness these are equally important components, and all need to be present in a fully restorative response. How restorative in character a system is depends on several features: aspiration, resources, and the level of access given, i.e., ‘is this approach offered to every person or a select few? The more people given access to the restorative approach, the more

restorative the system will be' (2002:10). Thus, a fully restorative system can offer all the features described in the component list. The distinction between fully, moderately and minimal restorative systems (2002:11-13) is, for Van Ness, not based on the programmes or initiatives used but rather resides at a system level: 'we could call a system "fully restorative" when these components are sufficiently predominant and competing values are sufficiently subordinate that the processes and outcomes are highly restorative. A system in which these values and components are less predominant will be less restorative' (2002:7). Van Ness recognises that a restorative system will have four options for change when dealing with the incumbent system (i.e., the present criminal justice system).

As a result of thinking at a systems level regarding restorative justice Van Ness provides four models of restorative systems (2002). Firstly, a *unified system*, which is fully restorative and has been 'brought about either by conversion... or replacement' of the existing system (ibid:16). Secondly, a *dual-track model*, in which criminal justice and restorative justice work side-by-side with occasional co-operation. Thirdly, a *safety net model*, which is a variation of the two where parts of the criminal justice model are needed when the restorative approach cannot work (for example, where guilt is an issue). Finally, a *hybrid model* 'where parts of the system exhibit strong restorative values... and other parts reflect criminal justice values' (ibid:16). The four models described by Van Ness are useful for identifying system states of restorative justice as contrasted with the criminal justice system. Furthermore, the use of the term 'system' by Van Ness suggests a metaphor of a complicated system but one in which, with various component changes, the degree of restorative(ness) can be modified. Thus, depending on the degree of the restorative system, be that full, moderate or minimal, a system can produce particular types of outcomes with regularity. The issues of systems in restorative approaches show that, as descriptions, simple systems and complicated systems appear at the forefront when the language of systems is used. However, a third type of system is used in education: the ecosystem.

Although the term 'ecosystem' is closely associated with the natural science the term has been utilised since the late 1970s. The biological ecosystem, later called the social-ecological system, is often associated with the work of Bronfenbrenner and his nested model of child development which shapes the individual. This model is a description of nested systems functioning within each other. Bronfenbrenner's ecological model is based on concentric circles with the child in the middle and circles of influence widening out to particular types of stakeholders who can influence the development of the child. Bronfenbrenner first introduced

the nested systems in 1979 with micro, meso, and macro system layers. Later, in 1994, Bronfenbrenner added the chronosystem (time).

Bronfenbrenner's ecosystem has been used as a theoretical tool for analysis in the field of bullying (Swearer and Doll, 2001; Hong and Espelage, 2012). As a form of data analysis ecosystem methodology was used in a quantitative multi-level analysis by Merrin, Espelage and Hong (2018). From their research using a social-ecological model they concluded that, 'prevention programmes that consider various dimensions of the social-ecological perspective, and more specifically the family and school factors have potential to reduce bullying' (2018:43). The idea of schools nested within systems is useful as a descriptor of a system but the limitation of the social-ecological model as a system is that it runs the risk of being a map of a complicated system, with variables able to be listed and tested similarly to features and landmarks. Knowing such features exist is useful; however, there is a significant risk that deconstruction of the system, as with Merrin, Espelage and Hong's analysis of bullying, fails to understand the interconnectedness of an ecosystem. What is important in the work of Bronfenbrenner's social-ecological system for school change is that it attempts to describe the system from a social-biological perspective. There is a recognition that change happens at multiple points within nested layers of the system and between the layers. For example, the macro level may have a significant impact on other parts of the system. The macro or external environment in which English schools operate has undergone significant changes, and three significant features will now be explored.

4.4 The External Environment for a School: The English Educational System.

An important aspect of understanding change in systems is their position and dynamics in their external environment. This section will provide a narrow overview of three significant factors that are shaping and changing the English educational sector to help analysis aspects of the external environment. It will be limited to the importance of Ofsted's influence on schools, the perception of schools as efficient machines, i.e., a complicated system, and reference to the wider neoliberal system. This overview is in part a critique of the RCTs' research on restorative approaches. Schools operate within an educational policy system and this is changing constantly in terms of underlying structural and educational factors. These three factors have a history and continue to shape the educational landscape, as well as many other factors that are implicit in educational research but were not mentioned in the restorative approaches research.

4.5 External Regulator: The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in School Improvement.

As part of the drive to ensure that schools are improving and maximising pupil qualifications the English educational system is regulated by Ofsted,²² which was established in 1992. This is an independent body that inspects schools. The inspection criteria allow Ofsted to make a judgement on a school with one of four grades: Inadequate (grade 4), Requires Improvement (grade 3), Good (grade 2), and Outstanding (grade 1). Evidence is collected from a range of sources within the school as well as interviews with young people. In theory, schools all seek to achieve an outstanding grade as this enables them to show how they are meeting the needs of their pupils but importantly the Ofsted grade also advertises to parents a school where the teaching and learning is outstanding. This then increases parental demand for places at that school.

An Ofsted inspection can happen once every three years for an outstanding school or, conversely, for a school where there is cause for concern, Ofsted may not give any notice and arrive on the day. Hence, the goal of an Ofsted inspection on arrival is to independently assess how schools are performing based on four key criteria which are then totalled to give an overall score. The four areas of inspection are: Leadership and Management, Quality of Teaching and Learning, Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare, and Outcomes for Pupils²³. These four key criteria also help inspection teams to make an overall assessment of the school. The overall score indicates how well the school is doing in supporting children and young people through their educational journeys, as well as the examination results the school is achieving.

The importance of Ofsted's role in grading schools is that it is a mark of quality assurance assessed through the national Education Inspection Framework²⁴ criteria. The new consultation framework makes the explicit statement that, 'Ofsted exists to be a force for improvement through intelligent, responsible and focused inspections and regulation...the primary purpose of inspection under the framework is to bring about improvement in education provision' (Jan 2019:4). The new framework makes two reference to bullying, the

²² <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>

²³ Ofsted Inspection Framework (September 2018).

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/730127/School_inspection_handbook_section_5_270718.pdf

²⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-inspection-handbook-from-september-2015> ; this will be changed in September 2019.

first in regard to staff, the second within the judgement on behaviour and attitudes, point 4 – ‘Relationships among learners and staff reflect a positive and respectful culture. Learners feel safe and do not experience bullying or discrimination’ (2019:11). This criterion for bullying can be very useful in supporting young people to feel safe once bullying has occurred. Nevertheless, how schools evidence that young people have ‘feelings of safety’, as well as evidencing that young people are ‘not experiencing bullying’ without clear additional guidance will be an issue when the new inspections happen in September 2019. Ofsted seeks to demonstrate school change in educational provision across schools by seeking to continuously improve schools in response to the inspection framework. They self-identify as a ‘force’ in the educational system, which means that their influence is always present when conducting educational research. This can apply to schools preparing for inspection, being inspected or undergoing a post-inspection review of an Ofsted rating. The metaphor most pertinent to this on-going cycle of improvement, from Ofsted’s perspective, is the school as an efficient machine. This metaphor will now be explored.

4.6 School Improvement: The School as an Efficient Machine.

The policy changes that are happening within the English educational system can be conceptualised using a machine metaphor. Drawing on organisational effectiveness in education, Scott (1997) gives the following description:

Since organisations are viewed as instruments for the attainment of goals, the criteria emphasised focus on the number and quality of outputs and the economies realised in transforming inputs into outputs. General criteria include measures of total output and of quality, productivity, and efficiency.

(1997: 96)

When viewed from the perspective of the machine metaphor schools are having to focus their attention on managerial processes which can demonstrate how they measure the ‘economies realised in transforming inputs into outputs’ through such things as the standards agenda to ensure ‘consistency’ in the quality of their outputs. Perryman et al suggest that, ‘In modern institutions such as schools, control of the institution is maintained through monitoring and supervision and the constant gathering of data about its “effectiveness”’ (2018:147). The pressure of the machine metaphor is compounded using data systems such as SIMS²⁵ which

²⁵ <https://www.capita-sims.co.uk/training/course/3874/management-of-behaviour-and-achievement>

RAG²⁶ rate pupils. In previous research into the implementation of RA using the WSA Roberts (2012) identified the dehumanising effect of SIMS:

This is the juxtaposition of RA (restorative approaches), and the SIMS system of behaviour monitoring which quantifies and qualifies incidents of behaviour through a R.A.G rating system (Red, Amber, Green). The former values human needs, whereas the latter dehumanises human needs. At no point did participants seem to see any contradiction between the use of RA as a way to build, foster and maintain relationships and the concurrent use of SIMS as a target driven, data monitoring system which abstracted the children and young people into three types of colour.

(2012:53)

Roberts is referring to the participants in the research, who were all teaching staff in a secondary school. SIMS is a source of evidence for the Ofsted inspection, and evidence of bullying contributes to the behaviour and attitude judgement. The concern for those wishing to engage in school change is that sustaining restorative approaches not only involves challenging the punitive paradigm but also raises the question of how to change the machine metaphor. The power of the machine metaphor is so embedded within the educational system as to be omitted from the discourse on school improvement. This tacit recognition of the school as a machine needs to be contextualised within the wider neoliberal capitalist society.

4.7 Neoliberalism and Education.

The machine metaphor is arguably a feature of a neoliberal educational system, which will now be explored. This is an extensive area of philosophical debate but a major shift comes from economic (and hence mechanistic thinking) theory:

While Hayek argued for the importance of markets of the regulation of private-business conduct, it was James Buchanan and his collaborators that argued for an extension of the market as a mechanism for the institutional regulation of public sector organisational contexts.

(Watts, 2017:193)

²⁶ Red, Amber, Green.

What this means, according to Gibbons, whose writing explores the spaces of pedagogy and the failure of neoliberal thinking when applied to education, is that ‘the difference between classical and neo-liberal forms of liberalism, is how much to intervene and hence also how much to trust in non-intervention’ (2018:921). There has been a shift in the English educational system, not just between private education and state education but within state education to a neoliberal marketplace. As already identified in this literature review, government guidance (both DfE and Ofsted) on issues such as bullying is minimalist, with schools expected to solve the problem themselves. The consequence of neoliberalism is that school competition in the education marketplace is based on the ability to attract parents, as funding is linked to pupils rather than educational provision. Schools unable to do this are partnered with MATs (Multi-Academy Trusts). For Ball, who is deeply concerned about the acceptance of neoliberalist narratives in education, ‘neoliberalism is made possible by a “new type of individual”, an individual formed within the logic of competition - a calculating, solipsistic, instrumentally driven, “enterprise man”’ (2013:132). Thus, staff in educational settings, such as secondary schools, are influenced by the mantras of competition in the education marketplace.

The competition for schools is twofold: to be an ‘Outstanding school’ through Ofsted inspections, which in turn attracts parents to ensure that the school roll does not fall (as schools are now funded based on pupil numbers). Ball highlights how the neoliberal agenda has subtly shifted so that ‘collective professional values are displaced by commercial bodies. Professionals are dispossessed of their expertise and judgement’ (2013:135). This resonates with the academies movement under the 1997 Labour government, which developed into a range of organisational models (including the use of commercial sponsors) so that schools became part of MATs, federations or other forms of organisational affiliation. This has created a market of multiple actors of different sizes and with different resources. The Conservative government has also introduced the ‘Free School’ movement, allowing for greater choice, as well as recent proposals for the extension of grammar schools (‘Schools That Work for Everyone’²⁷).

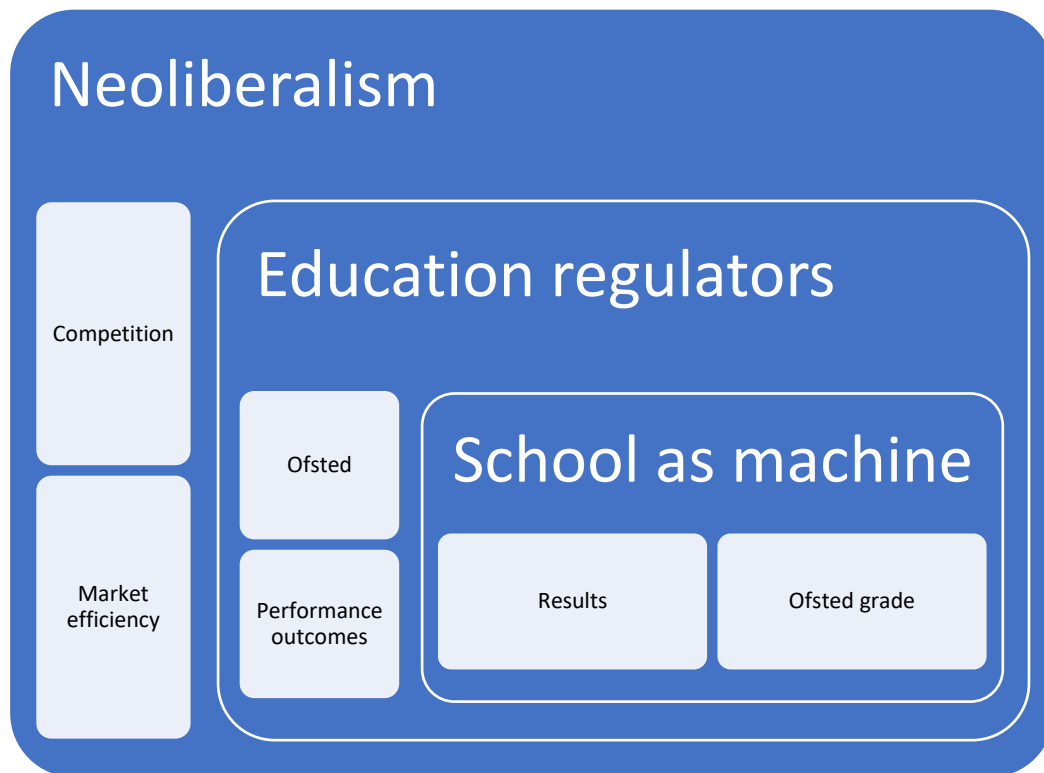
This leaves teachers in a precarious position, unable to show their value unless they are producing the outputs required by the school improvement agenda. Importantly, Ball states

²⁷ DfE May 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/706243/Schools_that_work_for_everyone-Government_consultation_response.pdf

that ‘collective interests are replaced by competitive relations and it becomes increasingly difficult to mobilise work around issues of general significance’ (2013:132). Issues of ‘general significance’, such as bullying, are accordingly lost in the neoliberal educational system (see Diagram 4, for illustrative purposes).

Diagram 4: A Neoliberal Systems Map of the Educational Environment.



Within this framework schools are constantly driven to ‘improve’ their results internally through teaching and monitoring data, in addition to managing external pressures to keep up with competitors in terms of reputation. The impact of this is that:

Neo-liberalism is realized in practical relations of competition and exploitation within business but also in very mundane and immediate ways in our institutions of everyday life, and thus it “does us” – speaks and acts through our language, purposes, decisions and social relations.

(Ball, 2013:131)

However, the neoliberalist perspective has advantages for those able to thrive:

‘Performativity is not in any sense a technology of oppression; it is also one of satisfactions and rewards; at least for some’ (ibid:140).

So, schools that can demonstrate their ability to be efficient are rewarded and there are new opportunities for prestige and financial gain for both schools and individuals. This can include the prestige of being asked to take over other schools which have not been run as efficiently, which is an endorsement of the sponsoring school's educational importance:

The languages and practice of neoliberalism managerialism are seductive. They lay the foundations for new kinds of success and recognition.

(Davies and Petersen, 2005:1)

Schools are then rewarded for being efficient with the coveted 'Outstanding' grade from Ofsted. The rewards in a neoliberal education system confer great benefits onto a small number of educational leaders. Those able to thrive in the marketplace of education can concentrate wealth and resources in their schools, as well as gain personal recognition and prestige for their management of their school or MAT.

4.8 Neoliberalism and bullying in schools.

The seductive forces of neoliberal education, as suggested by Ball's comment 'at least for some', create the constant need to improve, a machine in perpetual motion. This also implies that others will not gain satisfaction or rewards, as the nature of competition means that schools which do not perform ('Inadequate', according to Ofsted) are taken over or closed. The consequences of a neoliberal education system mean that an issue such as bullying slows down the operation of the machine. Therefore, the external pressures on schools mean that teaching staff spend minimal amounts of time addressing the issue of bullying; children and young people who are targets may be ignored by teaching staff or at worst this may make bullying more severe (Rigby and Bauman, 2010). Conversely, children and young people who perpetrate bullying behaviour may be viewed as defective and people who need to be corrected or removed as quickly as possible, as shown in the fixed and permanent exclusion data from the DfE (2014-2017). The machine metaphor is insidious in such decision making as school staff want to run efficient lessons. Furthermore, with the Ofsted criteria on bullying and DfE guidance offering little practical support schools can select interventions based limited knowledge of benefits or implementation in an anti-bullying marketplace or continue to use punitive responses.

The competition created by a neoliberal education system means that restorative approaches could be perceived as a badge for addressing bullying. Hence, restorative approaches could

be reduced from an intervention to merely a marketing feature in a school to distinguish its educational offer from others in the market. Bullying requires a greater understanding of relationships and the behaviour dynamics to be addressed but, as Ball has stated, ‘Professionals are dispossessed of their expertise and judgement’ (2013:135) whilst in search of the next efficiency to keep ahead of the competition. For Ball the neoliberal response is the ‘depoliticization’ (Ball 2013:134) of an issue such as bullying, turning ‘collective conditions of experience into personal problems, sometimes displacing political and economic decisions into individual failings and responsibilities (see also Hall, 1989; Apple, 2012)’ (ibid:134). Secondary school staff are dispossessed of the relevant expertise in relationship building and, although they may be sympathetic to pupils’ plights with regard to bullying, ‘commercial values’ centre their objectives on the majority of children and young people passing exams. The lack of political and economic decision making at a governmental level means that schools seek to return children and young people back to learning as quickly as possible with minimum spending on the solutions to bullying in a school.

This depoliticization of an issue such as bullying can be viewed as a form of violence. Indeed, Cremin and Bevington argue that school improvement is both structurally and culturally violent (2017). They argue that ‘high-stakes, test-based accountability regimes enacted from league tables and Ofsted inspections are not without consequence for young people’ (2017:30). They go on to state that ‘the narrow focus on test results leads to an impoverished curriculum; standardisation, uninspiring lessons; and more rigid relationships between staff and the students’ (ibid:30). The results are that:

School improvement has come to be understood and engaged with as a technological exercise, one that not only silences discussion of the fundamental purposes and aims of education and of schools, but actively excludes consideration of alternative, and perhaps more inclusive peaceful and humane ways of seeing and doing things in education.

(Cremin and Bevington, 2017:31)

This stance on school improvement as a form of cultural and structural violence highlights how inequality becomes a system feature which is produced and reproduced within a neoliberal education system. Inequalities that require collective action such as bullying no longer receive a government response but depend on individual schools. Ball describes a

process of competition which marginalises issues such as bullying, which are inconsequential to the running of a machine metaphor unless ‘commercial values’ are identified. Initiatives such as restorative approaches, whilst being beneficial to the actual situation of harm caused by bullying, must also justify their existence by providing value to a school within the education marketplace.

Forces in the external environment, such as Ofsted, support the constant need for improvement, which reinforces the machine metaphor of schooling in terms of change being driven by performativity and outcomes. The neoliberal macro-environment means that the system of education is always interplaying with schools nested within other systems. Acknowledging these three factors affects the illusion of stability. RCTs and other methodologies which seek to reduce this complexity by narrowing the number of variables risk presenting findings which are repeatable only through decontextualizing the school from its eco-system. The description of an ecosystem is important as well as the ability to map an eco-system. Most importantly for this research is understanding how a school as a complex system, behaves is essential to revealing insight into the sustainability of interventions such as restorative approaches.

4.9 Complexity Theory – An Alternative Paradigm for Exploring School Change?

The previous section reviewed how restorative approaches have been implemented in schools with four change models being discussed: the whole school approach, the hero-innovator, niches and, with neoliberalism being a key influence in education. Hence, researchers and implementers have attempted to implement restorative approaches as a whole school intervention. I will argue, however, that this currently lacks a broader awareness of the complexities of change which affect the school as a system. Moreover, the lack of awareness about the complexities of change in the literature reviewed so far suggests that the term *whole school approach* is an inaccurate description of the change process for schools wanting to develop restorative approaches. In contrast to this complexity theory offers an alternative perspective on how change occurs within the rich tapestry of daily interactions in schools. Hence, there are opportunities for schools to value both conflict and change through an understanding of complexity theory to inform the use of restorative approaches from a systems perspective.

This section will explore how complexity theory can offer an alternative understanding of change in schools. Firstly, the challenge of defining complexity theory will be addressed.

Secondly, the chapter will provide an exploration of the concepts used to identify a complex system. For the purposes of this literature review these are: *feedback, self-organisation, emergence, system boundaries, and time*. By establishing an understanding of these conceptual building blocks links will be made with the opportunities to use complexity theory as an alternative paradigm for understanding school change. The chapter will then review how complexity theory is being incorporated into the social sciences in general and, specifically, into education. Finally, the chapter will summarise, based on the literature, the potential of complexity theory to provide a holistic framework for schools using restorative approaches. To help illustrate the concepts of complexity theory in practice I will draw on my own previous research in this section (Roberts, 2013). This study was of a school analysed through the lens of complexity theory (a secondary school, anonymised as Red Bridge School) with the aim of illustrating how the concepts of complexity theory can be applied within a school setting when understood as systems phenomena.

4.10 Defining Complexity Theory.

Complexity theory has a variety of concepts which together describe *system phenomena*. Systems phenomena are the articulation of how a system behaves in its environment. Complexity theory, like restorative approaches, is an umbrella term which has a spectrum of interpretations within the literature. The term 'complexity theory' is defined by David Byrne in *Complexity, Configuration and Cases* (2005:97) as:

...the interdisciplinary understanding of reality as composed of open systems with emergent properties and transformational potential.

This definition gives a starting point from which it is possible to expand on our understanding of complexity theory. The interdisciplinary aspect is further explained by Fenwick et al (2011:18), who state, 'the complexity field embraces diverse developments that have informed one another. These include theories of general systems, cybernetics, chaos, deep ecology and autopoiesis'. The interdisciplinary nature of complexity theory, as we will explore, has been fundamental to its history. In defining complexity theory Fenwick et al (ibid:18) rightly acknowledge that 'to refer to... Complexity Theory as a single monolithic body of knowledge is a misrepresentation' as it draws on different disciplines to cultivate its own theoretical perspective.

In defining complexity theory Byrne and Callaghan (2014:39), who also cite Morin (2006:6. See Appendix 2), have differentiated complexity theory into two main strands: *restricted complexity* and *general complexity*. *Restricted complexity* belongs to scientists interested in modelling reality based on ‘hard science imperialism’ (2014:40). This uses rule-based approaches to create simulations of reality. Consequently, a restricted form of complexity limits the number of variables needed to simulate reality. The risk in modelling, and thus defining, complex systems in this way is that scientists are ‘privileging the abstract as the real’ (Hayles 1999:12-13). For Byrnes and Callaghan:

This does not mean that we regard all modelling procedures as useless even as they stand at the moment or in terms of their potential. We agree absolutely with Hedstrom’s (2005:3) dismissal of the ‘fictionalised temptation’ of abstract theory-based models with no empirical connection with social reality. However, like Hedstrom we can see the potential in models which deploy real data – he would say quantitatively but we would say of whatever form – which describe the social world as the foundation of investigation.

(2014:40)

In attempts to define complexity theory the limitations of *restricted complexity* have led to a disconnection from social reality as a complex system. In effect, defining complexity theory through the lens of *restricted complexity* paradoxically creates a tendency towards fictionalised computer simulations which reduce the social world to models of simplistic systems.

In contrast, Byrne and Callaghan argue that *general complexity* ‘has to allow for structures with causal powers and it has to address human agency capable of transcending narrow rules of behaviour’ (ibid:56). Thus, in defining complexity theory from a social science perspective *general complexity* incorporates the structures (institutions, norms and cultures) and interactions of human agency (decisions, values and politics). Consequently, for the purposes of this literature review, I will paraphrase and expand on Byrne’s (2005) earlier definition and define complexity theory as:

The interdisciplinary understanding of systems phenomena as composed of open systems with emergent properties (feedback, self-organisation, emergence, system boundaries, and the relativity of system time) and transformational potential through the interplay between human agency and the systems they are immersed within.

4.11 Feedback: Amplification and Regulation in Complex Adaptive Systems.

An essential feature of a complex system is feedback. Feedback has been discussed in the literature on complexity theory in educational research (Byrne and Callaghan, 2014; Davis and Samara, 2006; Davies, 2004; Fenwick et al, 2011; Mason, 2008). The Oxford English Dictionary²⁸ offers three definitions of feedback which will be important for the following discussion:

1. Information about reactions to a product, a person's performance of a task, etc. which is used as a basis for improvement.
2. The modification or control of a process or system through its results or effects, for example in a biochemical pathway or behavioural response.
3. The return of a fraction of the output signal from an amplifier or microphone or other device to the input of the same device; sound distortion produced by this.

The first definition of feedback as 'a reaction...as the basis for improvement' is also useful with regard to the social dynamics of complex adaptive systems. This is a useful starting point when exploring how information is received by a system. Expanding on feedback as a response, Fenwick, Edwards and Sawchuk suggest that complexity theory draws on 'cybernetics'. Cybernetics describes feedback as 'the way in which a system assimilated external information to adapt itself' (2011:20). Thus, from a complexity theory perspective feedback requires a system to absorb information then respond to that information through the system's ability to adapt. It is through the fundamental processes of feedback (positive and negative) that social systems display the features of a complex adaptive system (CAS) by absorbing, responding and adapting.

Definition point two is salient to the present discussion as feedback is the way in which a system communicates with itself and the environment. Positive and negative feedback play important roles in complex adaptive systems. Positive feedback refers to the way in which a system receives energy. Positive feedback amplifies (increases) a response in the system. Likewise, negative feedback has a regulatory (or dampening) effect which maintains a system in a particular state. It is important to recognise that complex systems can display both positive and negative feedback within the same system. Feedback features will be dependent on the configuration of the requirements of a particular system and its interaction with the

²⁸ <http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/feedback>

environment. For the purpose of this research ‘amplification’ will be used to refer to positive feedback and ‘regulation’ for references to negative conflict.

In social systems it is through communication that feedback provides the central tenet for adaptation. As Byrne and Callaghan state:

Adaptive means that they change as a result of experience. That necessarily implies an exchange of information with their environment... Human systems with the absolute dependence on communication are information exchanges par excellence.

(2014:26)

Additionally, it is through feedback that a complex adaptive system can create responses. This response allows the system, and particularly a social system, to adapt. My previous master’s research explored the sustainability of the whole school approach through one-to-one semi-structured interviews with four staff members. This was conducted in a school which had been developing restorative approaches for eight years. Analysis of these interviews using a complexity-informed thematic framework indicated that feedback was present in various ways in Red Bridge School²⁹. For example, regulatory system phenomena occurred when teachers reminded young people of the behaviour policy when breaches occurred due to behaviour outside of the acceptable range. Thus, any behaviour outside of the expectations was regulated and adjusted until the behaviour met the system requirements, i.e., it was behaviour deemed acceptable within stated cultural norms. Likewise, an example of amplification in Red Bridge School was when teachers did not remind pupils of, and challenge them on, poor behaviour. Consequently, poor behaviour increased (e.g., pupils using mobile phones) as more young people perceived this to be an accepted norm: a change in the system phenomena. As more young people operated outside the acceptable norm (amplifying the young people’s behaviour) a second amplification happened as more teachers needed to use restorative approaches to address the behaviour policy (teacher amplification). Therefore, systems behaviour was dependent on both amplification and regulatory feedback. In Red Bridge School both amplification and regulation influenced how staff and young people adapted the ways they communicated with each other with respect to behaviour.

In summary, feedback is the quintessential feature for complex adaptive systems to adapt, organise and survive. Although there are many ways in which the term ‘feedback’ is used in

²⁹ School name changed to anonymise the school.

educational settings complexity theory differentiates feedback from the lay understanding of giving information to individual components (e.g., teachers giving and receiving assessment feedback). For the purposes of this research ‘feedback’ focuses on how schools as complex adaptive systems understand different types of feedback influencing and adapting features of system phenomena.

4.12 The Importance of Self-Organisation in a Complex Adaptive System.

Self-organisation is influenced by feedback. It requires individual elements of a system to begin to self-assemble. Self-organisation manifests itself when feedback (either amplification or regulation) begins to influence individual elements of a complex adaptive system (CAS). As the feedback influences the system’s behaviour, self-organisation brings elements of the system together so that they become interconnected and interdependent. Fenwick, Edwards and Sawchuk (26:2011) state that, ‘complexity theorists describe such systems as autopoietic (Maturana and Varela, 1987) or *self-organising*’.

The ability of a system to self-organise is a fundamental feature of a complex adaptive system in response to feedback. In the natural sciences Alan Turing identified the concept of self-organisation in the pioneering work his 1952 paper ‘The Chemical Basis for Morphogenesis’. Turing’s paper theorised that the ability of animals to develop stripes (zebras) or dots (leopards) was not random or consciously controlled by the animal but occurred through self-organising chemical pigmentation in the animal’s skin. This self-organising feature of animals gave rise to the high levels of diversity in the patterns of stripes or dots within an animal population. Turing’s work laid the foundations for complexity theory’s understanding of how self-organisation influences a CAS. In the natural sciences self-organisation can happen at various levels from bacteria to collective groups such as beehives. This leads to the question of identifying self-organisation in social spheres and, for the purposes of this research, self-organisation in schools.

One form of self-organisation setting is rules; rules about what is and what is not appropriate for the system to do. The rules of a system are designed to help with its survival and possible evolution. In complexity theory many simulations use rule-based modelling as a way of understanding a complex adaptive system (Byrne and Callaghan 2014, Cillier, 1996). These forms of modelling presume the system will always follow explicit rules in order to enhance the opportunities for survival within its environment. However, a CAS can learn; hence, it

can break previous rules which may have bounded it within the ecosystem. This distinction is what separates complex systems from chaotic systems.

4.13 Self-Organisation: A Phenomenon in Schools?

Although the breadth and depth of leadership literature is beyond the scope of this literature review the relevance of leadership literature to complexity theory is pertinent in understanding how schools can be organised. Traditionally, in England, organisational responsibility is in the remit of the senior leadership team (SLT) and, in particular, the head teacher. This organisational control is often based on instructional leadership. For Lynch, 'Instructional leadership is based on the traditional top-down principle' (Lynch 2012: x). The classic example of the instructional leadership model would be organisation based on hierarchy. For example, in a large school learning is cascaded from the head teacher down to the senior leadership team, and then shared with department heads, and so on through the school.

The challenge for educational leadership theories is to what extent are they relevant to self-organisation in complex systems? Georgiades and Phillimore (1975, see Table 2), have proposed guidelines for leadership in Health and Educational systems. Two contemporary theories of Educational Leadership that are alternatives to instructional leadership are Distributed Leadership and Professional Capital. Starting with Distributed Leadership, Spillane suggests that 'Rather than viewing leadership practice as a product of a leader's knowledge and skill, the distributed perspective defines it as the interactions between people and their situation (2005:144) This aligns with CT as interaction is a feature of feedback which generates self-organisation. In addition, Spillane is adamant that, Distributed Leadership is: 'first and foremost leadership in practice' (2005:ibid), this focuses leadership as present orientated within the system. Importantly, Distributed Leadership resides in leaders forming a group, which is then seeking to influence followers i.e. teachers outside the group. However, what is not explicit is how the group is assembled to create distributed leadership. Once a leadership group come into being its influence is through utilizing situations involving structures, routines and tools. These three features resonate with complexity in terms of using both features and interactions to foster change. For Spillane, 'Distributed leadership often is cast as some sort of monolithic construct when, in fact, it is merely an emerging set of ideas that frequently diverge from one another. (2005:149). This

final point overlaps with the ideas of self-organisation producing new properties in the system.

An alternative form of leadership comes from Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) who are seeking:

Whole systems change, we have learnt, is not a kind of magic. It involves an absolutely requires individual and collective acts of investment in an inspirational vision and a coherent set of actions that build everyone's capability and keep everyone learning as they continue to move forward.

(2012:xvii)

They suggest that this can be done through 'Professional Capital' which is the combination of: Human Capital, Social Capital, and Decisional Capital. By which 'Effective teaching for the whole profession is a product of these three kinds of capital amplifying each other' (2012:88). In brief, they view Human Capital as based on individual capabilities, and Social Capital on connections to collectives; Decisional Capital emphasises time to learn from peers. These three ideas can be viewed through the lens of CT, as the qualities of the nodes (teachers), the relationships on nodes in networks, and the decision-making ability in the network over time. For Professional Capital, what is less clear is where the sources of energy will come from allow the Educational System to self-organise in the way that Hargreaves and Fullan seek.

From this limited exploration of Educational Leadership theories, Distributed Leadership and Professional Capital both have overlapping features with the language of CT. However, there are several issues which discount them from being used in the present study. Firstly, they both omit the power in social systems. For Distributed Leadership, power is resident in groups rather than individuals, but the notion of leaders and followers implies a language and status hierarchy which negates collaboration through self-organisation. Whereas, for Professional Capital, the lack of recognition that Social Capital can produce in groups and out groups. As well as, Decisional Capital as developed in their argument overlooks biases and peer re-enforcement of poor practice which can lead to professional, group and system conflict. Secondly, both forms of educational leadership fail to recognise the interplay of the school with its local environment e.g. regulatory or market forces. This may be because both seek change from within the system. Professional Capital is arguably implicitly aligned to the machine metaphor as it seeks to improve the cogs (teachers), albeit all cogs, in the machine through three conceptual tools which interact only with themselves. I would suggest

that this runs the risk of being a closed system of teacher development, and thus seeking to reduce complexity. Whereas, for Distributed Leadership Spillane states 'Leaders act in situations that are defined by others' actions. (2005:145) I would go further, and state systems create the situations by which leaders are seeking to act.

A search of the Faculty of Education's research database using the term complexity leadership produces 1298 articles with both terms in the title. However, when the word 'schools' is added there is only one article which references both School Leadership and Complexity Theory. This article by Morrison (2010) draws on this previous work (2002) and discusses the theoretical issues of complexity and that 'school leaders and managers may generate the conditions' (2010:373), for complexity. For Morrison, school can self-organise into distributed networks, it is the role of the leader to take leadership decision on the 'tightness of coupling of the elements of the school' (2002:54). This is important, omits a key issue for leaders which is the shape of network, which help to achieve new system properties.

Schools can arguably be viewed as self-organising social networks which form certain shapes: centralised (hub and spoke), decentralised, scale-free (loose networks) and distributed (meshed) networks (Davis and Sumara, 2006:52), as well as fragmented networks (Davis, Sumara and D'Amour, 2012) (see Appendix 3). Consequently, the shape of the network becomes important for sustainability. My earlier research (Roberts, 2013) suggested strong hub and spoke network features in Red Bridge School, with interaction primarily through the trainer (hub) to individual school members (spokes). However, as I was researching the sustainability of restorative approaches at Red Bridge School there was concern that if the hub member of staff left restorative approaches would wane³⁰. An alternative and potentially more sustainable network shape would have been a meshed network, as knowledge could be created and retained through practice groups or mentoring of staff.

The discussion of self-organisation presents challenges to the traditional roles of leadership and organisational responsibility. Moreover, there is a gap in the literature regarding how leadership and schools, when viewed as CAS, can draw on complexity theory's concept of self-organisation to adapt. Consequently, self-organisation is the precursor to one of the most important features of complex adaptive systems: *emergence*.

³⁰ This happened as the hub member of staff left, and the school now has one of the highest rates of exclusion in the local authority.

4.14 Emergence: What is Emergence? Do Schools have Emergent Properties?

Emergence is the central feature of a complex adaptive system. Byrne and Callaghan (2014) and Newman (1996) draw on Sperry's (1980) explanation which Newman summarises as:

Causal theories of emergence suggest that emergent properties are properties of structured wholes which have a causal influence over the constituents of the whole... suggesting that one of the emergent properties that a system can have is the power to exert causal influence on the components of the system in a way that is consistent with, but different from, the causal influences that these components exert upon each other.

(Newman 1996:248)

Newman identifies that feedback in the whole system influences the constituent parts, and vice versa. Newman's causal influence comes from the self-organising components orchestrating themselves. This allows emergent properties to manifest. Thus, Byrne and Callaghan identify emergence as 'the interaction among components both with each other and the whole of which they are a part' (2014:22). Emergence is concurrently a process and an outcome of complex adaptive systems.

Fenwick, Edwards and Sawchuk state that, 'in (complex adaptive) systems, phenomena, event and actors are mutually dependent, mutually constitutive, and actually merge together in dynamic structures' (2014:21). Hence, emergence provides a system indicator through which to view educational change. Davis and Samara, however, are concerned that the educational research literature is focusing heavily on using the concept of emergence as a descriptor. They state, 'very few of these writings have taken on the actual phenomena of emergence, opting most often to examine already-emerging understandings, classrooms, schools, and other systems' (2006:82). Whereas, they note, in business and sociology:

A prominent theme is the range of triggers that might prompt emergence of social connectivity. To this end, in the case of human systems it seems, there tends to be need for a shared identification - an artefact, a belief, a consolidating event, or, most often, the appearance of a common enemy.

(ibid:83)

Thus, what Davis and Sumara identify is a gap in the research primarily concerning the conditions and triggers for emergence in educational settings, as opposed to evidencing emergence in social system behaviour. Their critique of educational research is based on their view that researchers are tending to use emergence as an explanation for existing system phenomena rather than identifying the antecedents of the occurrence of emergence in a system. Emergence is a unique behavioural property of a complex adaptive system. It creates uncertainty as cause and effect are not linear. Therefore, Davis and Saumra suggest that identifying triggers of change may help with understanding the emergent properties of a system as it responds to these triggers.

For complex adaptive systems to survive they need to maintain a relationship with their environment; most often this happens through positive feedback and self-organisation, which accumulate in emergent opportunities in the system. This process can be summed up in the word 'evolution'. Emergent properties in the system can be viewed as 'tweaking' by the system through causal influences identified by Newman (1996) to allow for system sustainability in the environment. Alternatively, a system's emergent properties may occur in response to a dramatic internal (critical mass, as identified by Georgiades and Phillimore in 1975) or external change, which can radically tip its behaviour or features (Gladwell, 2000). In summary, emergence is the prerequisite for adaptation. Emergence can happen either incrementally (evolution) or radically (tipping point into total system change) as it provides the ability of the system to change in its environment.

Emergence can be seen as a response to the choices a system makes. In complexity language this is known as a bifurcation point, which is where 'a non-linear system is at a point at which future trajectories of the system diverge dependent on shifts in the values of the input parameters' (Byrne and Callaghan, 2014:19). In effect, bifurcation points are two choices at a moment when the system has had to make a decision about its future. Bifurcation is evident in the natural sciences, whereas in the social sciences bifurcation 'is easiest to explain [in terms of] the splitting of possibilities into two alternative paths, this simplified meaning will be used with the proviso that multiple solutions are also possible' (Mitleton-Kelly, 2003:34). The emergence of new system properties allows the system to generate options for its survival.

By way of illustration, restorative approaches were an emergent property in response to the behaviour challenges in Red Bridge School (Roberts, 2013). As an interviewee explained

prior to the introduction of restorative approaches: ‘Back then it was much easier for poor behaviour to happen in lessons, and to say “send them home” or isolate them’ (Roberts, 2013:44). In response to challenging behaviour the Red Bridge School began to introduce training on restorative approaches for staff. The adaptation to a restorative model of behaviour management was a tipping point in the school away from excluding young people. Hence, changes in the interplay between the external environment and internal processes had caused the school to develop new emergent capabilities in response. The school had been using restorative approaches for 8 years at the time the research was conducted, and the term restorative approaches was no longer being used; rather, they used ‘resolution’ (Roberts, 2013:52). It was difficult for staff to identify when this change in terminology originated, showing how ‘tweaks’ can happen subtly over time in social systems.

Arguably, then, emergence in social systems demonstrates that a system has learning properties. Complex adaptive systems have the ability to change their structures, behaviours and agency in response to their environment. Thus, the capability of emergence is a bounded phenomenon within a system. The next section will explore how the issues of system boundaries are crucial to recognising a CAS and its capacity for emergence.

4.15 System Boundaries: What is the Importance of System Boundaries?

System boundaries are essential to identifying a system, what constitutes a system and what is excluded, hence the challenge of identifying the boundary. This is particularly important when identifying schools as complex, socially adaptive systems. Byrne and Callaghan (2014) use The Oxford English Dictionary definition of the system:

1. An organised connected group of objects.
 - a. A set or assemblage of things connected, associative, or interdependent, so as to form a complex unity; a whole composed of parts in orderly arrangement according to some scheme or plan; rarely applied to a simple or small percentage of things (nearly equals ‘group’ or ‘set’).

In defining a system there has to be a commonality in the assemblage of things. Therefore, a system can be made of single objects (each performing one function) or a system of systems (performing multiple functions at once). How this assemblage of things takes place has been identified through the previous discussion of features of a complex adaptive system: feedback, self-organisation, and emergence. The field of systems theory identifies two types

of system: *closed* and *open*. Biologist and creator of general systems theory (GST), (Karl) Ludwick von Bertalanffy (1901-1972), made the distinction between open systems and closed systems in his 1955 paper *General Systems Theory*. He critiqued modern science:

Thus, science is split into innumerable disciplines continually generating new sub-disciplines. In consequence, the physicist, the biologist, the psychologist and the social scientist are, so to speak, encapsulated in their private universes, and it is difficult to get word from one cocoon to the other.

Von Bertalanffy (1955:75)

Drawing on this critique of modern science in 1955, von Bertalanffy highlighted the underlying principle of closed systems. Closed systems retain energy as well as information within themselves. Alternatively, open systems were defined by von Bertalanffy as ‘systems exchanging matter with their environment’ (1955:76). Thus, open systems have feedback mechanisms which allow for a system to engage with its environment. Within the social sciences system boundary identification becomes more problematic as identifying ‘exchanging matter’ could include a range of information sources such as language, norms and behaviours. The distinctions between a social system, its boundaries and the environment are not clearly demarcated by the allocation of resources.

The challenge of identifying system boundaries is dependent on the type of environment in which a (complex adaptive) system functions. Complexity theorists identify different types of interaction between a system and its environment. These environmental states are known as (1) orderly environments, (2) chaotic environments, and (3) the ‘*edge of chaos*’ (Pascale, 2004, Harjunen, 2012). The edge of chaos is an environment where a system operates on the border of becoming chaotic but does not transcend into a chaotic state (a chaotic state being total randomness). On the other hand, an environment that is totally ordered is likely to create equilibria between a complex adaptive system and its environment. This produces entropy, which is a precursor to the demise of a complex adaptive system as there is not enough substance or energy to maintain the system.

The boundary of the system must be distinguished from its environment. As Cilliers states:

Boundaries are simultaneously a function of the activity of the system itself, and a product of the strategy of description involved. In other words, we frame the system by describing it in a certain way (for a certain reason) but we are constrained where

the frame can be drawn. The boundary of the system is therefore neither purely a function of our description, nor is it purely a natural thing.

(Cilliers 2001:141)

Byrne and Callaghan agree with Cilliers' description both ontologically and epistemologically, and cite Zeleny in understanding boundaries from a social perspective:

All social systems, and thus all living systems, create, maintain and are degrading their own boundaries. These boundaries do not separate but intimately connect the system with its environment. They do not have to just be physical or topological, but are primarily functional, behavioural and communicational. They are not parameters but functional constituencies with components of a given system.

(Zeleny 1996:133).

Therefore, in complex adaptive systems, and from a social perspective, system boundaries are created, maintained and degraded (Zeleny) by social interactions. An example from Red Bridge School is the geographical boundary of the school fence. However, the social boundary is more fluid as there is interaction within social groups such as young people, staff and parents. There is also interaction between staff and wider social actors, such as the local authority and charities offering services in the school. Thus, the social boundary of the school is both perceived and fluid dependent on the strength of identity that different stakeholders have within groups and between groups. Boundary creation is a function of the system (Cilliers, 2001), and boundaries may take many forms in a complex adaptive system, such as geographical, physical, social (norms and perceptions) and temporal.

4.16 Time: A Measure of Change in a System.

The final concept which plays an important, yet often understated, role in complexity theory is *time*. The scope of the literature on the subject is immense. Therefore, this section will explore time as various concepts that help us to understand complexity theory and system phenomena. There are many definitions of time, even within the Oxford English Dictionary. Most pertinent for the present topic is this definition:

- 3.a The period during which a person or thing lives, occupies a particular position, is active in a particular sphere, exercises influence or dominance, etc.; (sometimes)

Spec. Lifetime of a personal animal. Also: one's lifetime up to the present (esp. in one's time).

This definition is useful as it recognises that time is a period in which activity occurs. In prehistory there was seasonal time, based on changes in nature, where time was viewed as *cyclical* and repeating a pattern such as spring, summer, autumn and winter.

Then, with the Enlightenment, came Newtonian physics which provided a mechanistic model of time. In this conceptualisation time moved in one direction (linear) and was the same for everyone: it was *absolute time* where 'one could unambiguously measure the interval between two events, and that this would be the same whoever measured it' (Hawking, 1988:20). However, this idea of absolute time with its certainty and predictability was unsettled by Einstein's *theory of relativity*, 'thus time became a more personal concept, relative to the observer who measured it' (Hawking, 1988:159). Hawking also introduced the concept of 'imaginary time' in 'A Brief History of Time', in which time is indistinguishable from 'directions in space' as used in quantum mechanics; in this concept time can flow backwards.

Byrne and Callaghan (2014) discuss the dominance of a particular framing of time: 'historically, the Newtonian concept of time framed research in an unreflective way because its operationalisation as clock time became so dominant in Western industrial societies that it excluded other forms' (ibid:139). An alternative frame for time is *social time*. This social aspect of time is further developed by Elias in the following definition of time as:

... A symbol of a relationship that a human group... biologically endowed with the capacity for memory and synthesis, establishes between two or more continua of changes, one which is used by it as a frame of reference standard of measurement to the other or others.

(Elias, 1992:46)

Byrne and Callaghan (2014) recognise Elias' emphasis on the temporal dimension 'of reflexivity in the creation and use of symbols...in relation to social norms' (ibid:142). This helps explain how social groupings with communal memory use symbols that reinforce norms within social structures such as schools. However, it is also important to recognise that different groups and stakeholders will develop and operate within their own temporal norms.

The importance of time to complex adaptive systems in complexity theory is encapsulated in the following statement from Byrne and Callaghan (ibid:147):

We identified the importance of space and time in complex social systems... to emphasise the irreversibility of open systems... The exclusion of time...provided a clear illustration of the consequences of working in closed equilibria systems. Thinking about time undermines such attractions because patterns and regularities can only be detected over time (Giddens, 1981).

Thus, change is irreversible in an open system. Change through emergence cannot be undone once initiated. Nor can the system be re-set with the expectation of the same outcome over time. Time is a feature of a complex adaptive system. It is the tacit process by which change occurs. Importantly, *system time*, as I will call it, is relative to what parts of the system are being observed. The system as a whole may operate in one temporal state whereas parts of the system may be operating faster or slower relative to the needs of the system as a whole. To exemplify this state, in Red Bridge School there is the cyclical time of academic years split into repeating terms. There is the linear time of the school year from start to end. There is the controlled time of the school day (*clock time*). *Social time* can be when staff and young people interact, such as during conversations, class teaching and restorative meetings. Similarly, there is *system time*, which is the relative interactions between networks and agents which can be experienced through the speed of feedback in the activities happening in organisations such as schools.

Based on this discussion there is a risk that by excluding time explicitly from a complex adaptive system analysis this research could inherently appear static and thus simplistic. This would be part of a restrictive complexity model. Thus, the example of Red Bridge School illustrates different types of time but not how they interact or clash. However, explicitly conceptualising ‘*system time*’ provides an opportunity presently missing in the literature to develop a process by which to understand emergence and how a social system adapts over time.

4.17 Complexity Theory as a School Change Paradigm Shift.

From the literature review on complexity theory it is evident that there are benefits to the use of complexity theory as a paradigm for understanding the range of interactions within schools as a form of school change. Byrne and Callaghan have usefully distinguished *restrictive*

complexity from *general complexity*. Thus, the utility of (general) complexity will potentially reveal insights into the sustainability of restorative approaches when viewed through a complexity informed thematic lens.

By engaging with general complexity educational research can address the gaps identified in the literature on complexity theory and restorative approaches. The exploration of complexity theory's different concepts has informed the theoretical stance taken here: feedback, self-organisation (autopoiesis), emergence, system boundaries, and time. These concepts, when combined, provide themes for the analysis of a school as a complex adaptive system experiencing systems phenomena. The literature has constantly highlighted the importance of interdependence and interconnectedness when attempting to understand a CAS. Nevertheless, to date system time has not been explicitly recognised as an essential feature in socially complex adaptive systems. By articulating how time is experienced in system phenomena an important contribution is made to both complexity theory and restorative approaches which is lacking in the present research literature.

What also emerges from this literature review on complexity theory is that uncertainty is a prevalent theme when engaging with and analysing social complex adaptive systems such as schools. Although counterintuitive, complexity theory may allow researchers to champion uncertainty but an informed uncertainty. Complexity theory offers a theoretical tool for understanding the educational setting as a system phenomenon when conducting an analysis of occurring change. Based on exploration of the literature on complexity theory, I argue that it provides a breadth and depth to understanding change in a way that present research into restorative approaches and the whole school approach has so far failed to achieve.

4.18 School Change and Complex Adaptive Systems.

To conclude, the literature review shows that there are important areas to develop based on key gaps which have been identified in the existing literature. These will now be summarised.

4.18.1 The Solution to the Problem of Change in schools: Shifting Away from Implementation to Sustainability.

The literature review has suggested that using complexity theory would provide an alternative paradigm for understanding organisational change as distinct from the machine metaphor. The recognition of complexity theory in order to reveal aspects of sustainability will need to be aligned with a methodology that distinguishes an alternative to the machine metaphor. For

this reason complexity theory appears suitable for such a research endeavour. An appropriate research design would provide an opportunity, currently missing in the literature, to focus on what schools are presently doing to sustain restorative approaches. In addition, it will provide an understanding of the system dynamics that staff face when embedding and innovating within their school.

4.18.2 The Opportunity to Explore Schools as Complex Adaptive Systems using Restorative Approaches in this Research.

Based on the literature review conducted the use of restorative approaches for an issue such as bullying appears congruent with the research. This research will address two areas that are absent in the present literature. The first is understanding restorative approaches as a system feature when viewing schools as complex adaptive systems. The second is whether, when viewing restorative approaches as a complex adaptive system, greater insight is provided into the sustainability of restorative approaches in schools. Thus, the primary question that this researcher will seek to address is:

What can a complexity theory-informed thematic analysis reveal regarding the phenomenon of restorative approaches and its sustainability in four English secondary schools?

This question seeks to extend the present literature on school change within restorative approaches research by developing a greater understanding of sustainability rather than implementation. This may also contribute to understanding how the machine metaphor's influence on restorative approaches hinders or enhances the latter's use in schools. In response to the literature three secondary research questions become interesting to explore. Firstly:

1. In what ways do staff perceive restorative approaches as a feature in their schools?

This will address any potential interconnections between the ways in which restorative approaches are influenced by other systems in the school. This leads to a second question:

2. What do staff perceptions reveal regarding restorative approaches as a complex adaptive system phenomenon in their schools?

This question will reflect on how to describe, map and understand the behaviour of a CAS by engaging with staff to discuss how they could change restorative approaches in their school. From the researcher's perspective addressing this question could reveal potential systems and

how features such as neoliberalism, the machine metaphor and school change influence staff members as restorative practitioners. This leads to a third question:

3. What is revealed regarding the sustainability of restorative approaches when schools are explored as complex adaptive systems?

This question responds to how looking at school change from the perspective of staff can explore the sustainability of restorative approaches in a complex adaptive system. These three secondary questions also extend the present literature on restorative approaches, which has favoured implementation over sustainability, as well as providing aspects of understanding that help to address the primary research question.

5. Methodology Section: Complexity-Informed Thematic Research Methodology.

The methodology chapter will start with an outline of the epistemological stance of this research. Following this a complexity theory-informed theoretical perspective will be explained. Next, there will be a discussion of the methodology used, which for the purposes of this research was a qualitative inquiry. This will then be followed by identifying an appropriate research method for data collection in the field. The research method was used to collect data, drawing on qualitative methods to provide an understanding of systems phenomena present in each school. There will then be a discussion of how the data was analysed to understand restorative approaches in each school as a complex adaptive system. The ethics section will provide information on how the safety requirements and standards of ethical research as set out by the British National Research Association's ethical guidelines were met. Finally, there will be a section on the reflexivity of the researcher, followed by a summary of the conclusions on using complexity theory to address the sustainability of restorative approaches in the four schools.

5.1 Methodology Introduction.

This chapter provides an explanation of the research design used to explore the research questions. The literature review highlighted how complexity theory has the potential to provide a different framework for understanding change which occurs when schools are developing restorative approaches. In addition, the literature review also emphasised how restorative approaches adopting the whole school approach for implementation may not be suitable for sustainability. Hence, the whole school approach is not a satisfactory model for sustaining the benefits of restorative approaches. In the previous section using complexity theory was suggested as a way of providing a lens through which to frame a school as a complex adaptive system (CAS). This section will lay out the research methodology for developing a complexity-informed analysis of restorative approaches in secondary schools.

The development of complexity theory in educational research has leading advocates such as Byrne and Callaghan (2014), Fenwick et al (2011), Mason (2002), and Samara and Davis (2006), suggesting its suitability for educational research. Furthermore, the work of Byrne and Callaghan, examined in the literature review, has helped make a distinction between *restricted complexity* and *general complexity*. Drawing on the description of general

complexity by Byrne and Callaghan, for the purposes of this research complexity research is defined as:

The interdisciplinary understanding of systems phenomena as composed of open systems with emergent properties (feedback, self-organisation, emergence, system boundaries, and change over time) and transformational potential through the interplay between actors and the systems they are immersed within.

Therefore, this methodology for understanding a complexity informed research project shows how restorative approaches presently exist in each school. By using a complexity-informed analysis for this research the methodology sought to address the primary question and the three secondary questions identified at the end of Chapter 4.

5.2 Epistemological Stance: Finding a Complexity Theory Congruent Epistemology.

For Crotty the term epistemology can be defined as ‘a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know’ (2011:3). In other words, an epistemological stance is a way to frame the knowledge that is created through the process of a research inquiry. Hence, Crotty’s view is that an epistemological stance can be categorised into three general forms: objectivism, constructionism, and subjectivism. Crotty acknowledges that these three forms also have their variants. For the purposes of this research objectivism and constructionism will be further explored as epistemological stances.

An objectivist epistemology would assume that the research enquiry is seeking to identify meaning through objects, ‘that things exist as meaningful entities independently of consciousness and experience that they have truth and meaning reading them as objects’ (Crotty, 2011:5). Objectivism, as an epistemological stance, sits well with complexity theorists in natural sciences. It provides an objective view of system phenomena, often through the creation of simulations and models, which results in the researcher being able to produce knowledge that objectifies a system. A system is treated as an object. When systems are objectified there is a risk of the researcher not taking into account any influences which may occur in the wider ecosystem. This is expressed by Sawyer: ‘...in the 1990s...computer power advanced to the point where societies could be simulated using a distinct computational agent for every individual in society through a computational technique known as multi-agent systems’ (2005:2). Therefore, Cillers warns, the problem with representations

of complexity is that ‘Models of complex systems will have to be as complex as the systems themselves’ (1998:58). Furthermore, Byrne and Callaghan summarise the issues succinctly as, ‘Scientism always seeks to render its abstractions, its metaphors as real’ (2014:43). From this perspective the perceived objectification of a complex system through computational models, or other forms of objectivism, are still metaphors of reality and not simulations of reality.

Importantly, then, when exploring complex social systems they are contextualised within both history and learning. Mitleton-Kelly’s (2003) work on the application of complexity theory to organisations draws on Introna (2003), who argues that social systems cannot be objectified ontologically. Furthermore, Introna suggests that:

Social systems are *socially constructed and historically emerging* phenomena. To understand what we mean by this, we need to take a close look at two notions central to our understanding of social phenomena - namely *historicity* and *reflexivity*.

(ibid:209).

These two notions differentiate socially complex adaptive systems from the objectivity applied to a natural complex adaptive system. Introna states:

Social systems are historical. They are what they are in the “now”. They have no zero state or original position they cannot simply go back to. Once they come into existence, there can never be a clean slate again.

(ibid:209).

This notion challenges objective epistemology as the conditions in which positivist research is conducted will not be the state in which a CAS will have remained after the research. The second notion of ‘reflexivity’, referred to by Introna, means that a social system is conscious: ‘In as much as they are observers of themselves, they tend to take a stand on aspects of their history. In taking a stand they intervene in their histories’ (Introna, 2003:210). The issue of decision making is problematic from an objectivist epistemological stance when researching system phenomena. This is an important point as researching social systems requires an awareness of the influence of the researcher in terms of both positive and negative feedback in the system under investigation. A complexity theory-informed researcher cannot ignore the history of the system in reaching its present state. Reflexivity, in a social system context, provides for alternative choices rather than passive acceptance. There is a dynamic interplay

which the researcher engages with when entering a social system such as a school. Therefore, Cillers states: 'Approaching a complex system playfully allows for different avenues to advance different viewpoints, and, perhaps, a better understanding of its characteristics' (1998:23). Reflexivity in complexity requires acknowledging that social systems make choices in response to the researcher, such as accommodation, validation or defensiveness. Therefore, it is important to recognise how research participants construct and explain their histories and decisions. Then, new opportunities emerge for both participants and researchers to understand bullying and restorative phenomena in a school's eco-system. The points (*historicity* and *reflexivity*) made by Introna with regard to social systems mean that a positivist epistemology was not congruent with the use of complexity theory for the purposes of this research.

An alternative epistemology identified by Crotty (2011) is constructionism. An epistemology based on constructionism seeks to identify how knowledge is constructed in social relationships. According to Crotty, 'meaning is discovered or constructed' (2011:42). This form of research is most closely identified with qualitative research and is interested in the way in which social interaction produces knowledge at either the individual or group level. There is a flexibility in this epistemology as the researcher can be separate from the research created or may participate in the construction of knowledge to gain further understanding of how participants construct their knowledge.

The challenge with the constructionist epistemological stance, however, is that the focus is primarily on the social. An alternative would be to include other forms of non-human system interaction, the socio-material (Fenwick et al, 2011). This would also include how artefacts produced through system phenomena linked to each other, e.g. a school behaviour policy is created by one group (senior leadership team) as a product (artefact) for use by another group (e.g. pastoral staff) who have no input into its production, and are not mentioned in its processes. However, whilst recognising the limits of a constructionist epistemology, a salient issue is that it aligns with the characteristics of a CAS. The co-construction of meaning is comparable to the emergence created by the self-organisation of participant interactions. The discovery and construction of meaning by staff participating in this research is useful in understanding what features of restorative approaches emerge as sustainable within educational settings.

The breadth and depth of the debate on postmodernism is beyond the scope of this research. This research therefore limits this discussion to the recognition that complexity theory is not a grand narrative seeking to explain a philosophical position. The writings of Lyotard in 'The Postmodern Condition' (1984) were the first to articulate postmodernism, which can be defined as 'incredulity towards metanarratives; (xxiv)'. Furthermore, drawing on the work of Cillers (1998) and his approach to postmodernism as it relates to complexity theory. Both Lyotard and Cillers emphasis diversity, and the local nature of narratives. This presents challenges to the prevailing neoliberal narrative in English education as, according to that narrative, (1) competition in education creates improvement to the overall education system, (2) school improvement programmes are causal to the improvement of a school, and finally (3) change is always for the better. Cillers, who explicitly makes a link between complexity and postmodernism, argues that 'the proliferation of discourses and meaning described in postmodern theory is not created by wilful and disruptive theorists, but it is an inescapable effect of the complexities of our linguistic and social spaces' (1998:113). Thus, postmodernism reflects an alternative to several themes in the literature review such as the whole school approach, which is arguably a replication of hegemonic grand narrative in school communities. For Cillers he summaries Lyotards' position that:

'Different groups (institutions, disciplines, communities) tell different stories about what they know and what they do. Their knowledge does not take the form of a logical structured and complete whole, but rather takes the form of narratives that are instrumental in allowing them to achieve their goals and make sense of what they are doing. Since these narratives are all local, they cannot be linked together to form a grand narrative which unifies all knowledge'

(1998:114).

From this theoretical perspective features of postmodernism support the analysis of by staff in the focus groups as the construction of local narratives is dynamic and localised. The temptation to generalise is a risk for this research which postmodernism suggests must be resisted. Hence a postmodernist lens is seeking to explore a system and its interactions from a different perspective rather than believing in an ever-progressive neoliberal educational sector. The importance of postmodernism to this research is summarised by Cillers:

The world we live in is complex. This complexity is diverse but organised not chaotic...If we model complexity in terms of a network, any given narrative will form a path, or a trajectory, through the network. There is great diversity in such paths. The network is not only complex but dynamic. As we trace various paths through it, it changes.

(1998:13).

The narrative of restorative approaches in educational settings adapts as research is conducted in schools. In recognising the influence of both the researcher and staff participants in research there is a risk of disrupting the existing narrative. The challenge of this research is to ensure that, as much as possible, the sustainability of restorative approaches is due to the local capabilities of the school. Thus, recognising key features identified by Cilliers postmodernism this has also aided contextualisation when conducting data analysis in the field. In drawing on Cilliers point of not being overwhelmed by postmodernist narratives by being ‘agnostics of the network’ (1998:119) i.e. whilst recognising multiple connections being ‘less rigid in our interactions with each other and our environments’ (1998:119) this research has selected an appropriate methodology with which to understand such complexity: Phenomenology.

5.4 Research Methodology: Phenomenology.

This research recognises that ‘A key feature of constructivist research is “explore”’ (Denicolo, Long and Bradley Cole, 2016:5). Therefore, this research used phenomenological methodology to explore and engage with the construction of knowledge by staff participating in group interviews. In previous research I adopted case study methodology in one secondary school. However, in this research, due to the higher levels of interaction with four secondary schools, a Phenomenological methodology provides a less bounded understanding of the living experience of participating staff members. In effect, this research required a recognition that ‘Constructionists do not believe in a single reality, we believe in multiple realities’ (Denicolo et al., 2016:26). Systems, and complex adaptive systems in particular, are difficult to contain, and finding their boundaries is arguably a subjective decision in social science which requires the ‘playfulness’ identified by Cilliers. Therefore, both the epistemology and the theoretical perspective appeal to the congruency offered by a phenomenological methodology. Crotty suggests that, as researchers ‘Lay aside, as best we can, the prevailing understanding of those phenomena and revisit our immediate experience

of them, possibilities for new meaning emerge for us or we witness at least an authentication and enhancement of former meaning' (Crotty, 1996 a). Hence, the researcher had an opportunity to enter the schools with a sense of uncertainty and curiosity regarding how restorative interventions came about, what they were doing and how they could be.

In seeking to identify phenomena there were opportunities to recognise the messiness of systems when seeking change. In doing so, a phenomenology methodology made it possible to explore how staff members in each school constructed or reconstructed meaning regarding the sustainability of restorative approaches. From the phenomenological perspective, 'these meanings are taught, and we learn in a complex and subtle process of enculturation. They establish a tight grip upon us and, by and large, shape our thinking behaviour throughout our lives' (Ibid: 79). To what extent staff members in each school were aware of the tight grip of the meanings they had inherited and reconstructed was of interest to the researcher.

Phenomenological methodology required the researcher to 'set aside all previous habits of thought, see through and breakdown the mental barriers which these habits have set along the horizon of our thinking' (Husserl, 1931:43). Furthermore, phenomenologists suggest 'a pristine acquaintance with phenomena unadulterated by preconceptions: it encourages the inquirer to sustain an intuitive grasp of what is there' (Heron, 1992:164). Finally, phenomenology as stated by Sadler is an 'attempt to cover a fresh perception of existence, one unprejudiced by acculturation' (1969: 377). The essence of phenomenology according to these thinkers is to explore phenomena by taking off the cultural lenses that are implicit in the everyday descriptions of such social activities. These guiding statements were important for preventing the researcher from accepting the participants' worldviews, opinions and beliefs as the norm within their educational settings without critique.

In this research phenomenological methodology thus offered a perspective which acknowledged both the pre-existing cultures and present meaning-making in the four schools. In addition, it provided the researcher with opportunities to see systems phenomena with possibilities for new meaning, which could resonate with understanding the complexity of change. For Crotty a major feature is that phenomenologists are able to reflect on and critique the world: 'It calls into question what we take for granted' (2011:83).

Phenomenological methodology added to constructivist exploration not only by exploring the phenomena but also by actively engaging with critique of the phenomena under investigation. Hence, critical reflection is an essential element of phenomenological methodology, as stated by Crotty: 'When the critical spirit is lost, there is the failure to capture new or fuller

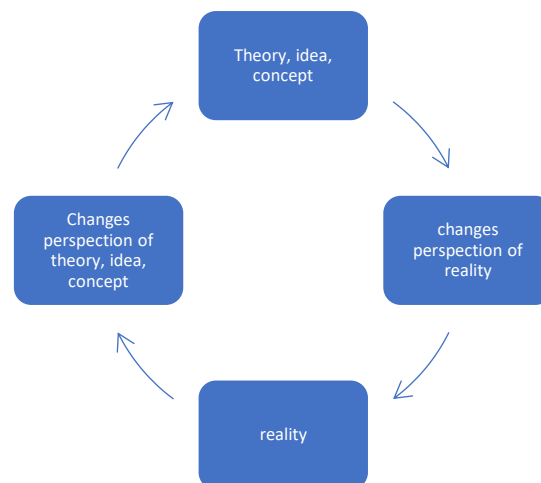
meanings or a loss of opportunities to renew the understanding we already possess’ (2011:85).

An important aspect of phenomenological research is the double hermeneutic, which is where ‘theories, concepts and ideas developed by the researchers not only describe the social world, but also have the potential to change it’ (Scott and Morrison, 2007:124). In schools the single hermeneutic is the presentation of an idea, concept or theory to staff through training. Yet staff themselves are not able to provide feedback to trainers or the wider field regarding how a concept nests within their settings. The single hermeneutic resonates with the Freirean ‘banking model’. The double hermeneutic, however, can be viewed as a feedback loop (see Diagram 5). Hence, Giddens states:

The Social Sciences operate a double hermeneutic involving two-way ties within the actions of the institutions and those they study. Sociological observers depend on lay concepts to generate accurate descriptions of social processes; agents regularly appropriate themes and concepts of social science within their behaviour, thus potentially changing its character.

(Giddens, 1984:31).

Diagram 5: The Double Hermeneutic as a Feedback Loop.



The idea of the double hermeneutic is arguably a recognition of the possibility of feedback, self-organisation and emergence over time. Further issues regarding whether the double hermeneutic acts as a regulating or amplifying process are identified in this research. Scott and Morrison suggest that the double hermeneutic should be ‘understood as an activity that involves interpretations by researchers of interpretations made by individuals in society’

(2007:124). This research extends this logic and suggests that interpretations can also be made by groups in society. Moreover, the shared lived experiences of those in a system provide a richer understanding of the complexity of that system and the meaning-making which comes from its interplay.

The interplay of phenomenological methodology and the double hermeneutic requires a different frame of reference for recognising the quality of research. Denicolo et al helpfully provide a table juxtaposing positivist and constructivist research (see Table 3 below).

Denicolo et al make the important point that:

‘...sound and authoritative constructivist research is demonstrated by showing that its design is robustly appropriate for the phenomena and research purpose and that the techniques used to facilitate access to the meaning provided by participants, that is, it is credible to the data providers and those who view it, rather than valid’

(2016:37).

Table 3: Quality Measures in Different Paradigms of Research (Denicolo et al, 2016:37).

Positivist Research		Interpretivist Research	
Validity	<i>Measuring what is purported</i>	Credibility	<i>Appropriateness of research design</i>
Objectivity	<i>‘Factual’ data</i>	Confirmability	<i>Supported by other researchers</i>
Reliability	<i>Consistency and accuracy of measurement</i>	Dependability	<i>Trustworthiness</i>
Generalisability	<i>Reproducibility across settings</i>	Transferability	<i>Application to other settings</i>

Good quality phenomenological methodology must provide a credible research design which, ‘recognises influences of contextual and temporal dynamics’ (Denicolo et al, 2016:37) when exploring complex adaptive systems. Consequently, using a complexity-informed theoretical analysis allowed for explicitly recognising the situatedness of staff members participating in their ecosystem, as well as how different forms of temporal dynamics influenced both participants and the researcher. Furthermore, in terms of credibility, this involved the

participants, as well as other researchers, recognising and confirming the authenticity of this research. This led to the research characteristic of dependability, based on trustworthiness. Denicolo et al suggest that, ‘this is demonstrated through employing a trustworthy approach, that is, a methodology, delivered with integrity and transparency’ (2016:37). Hence, being explicit regarding the use of phenomenological methodology in seeking to understand the lived experiences of school staff in their systems allowed for greater dependability of the findings, discussions and conclusions generated from this research. The final aspect identified as a criterion for quality research is transferability, which could have been problematic as the phenomena of complex adaptive systems and the perceptions of them were localised and situated. However, Denicolo et al state:

‘the degree to which the research design, methodology, tools and techniques may be transferred to other settings is an indication of the quality of the research, as are the clues or insights that the findings may provide to help others explore and understand similar situations’

(2016:38).

Thus, from a phenomenological methodology perspective transferability of research finding is not focused on the specific outcomes of a specific phenomenon. Rather, quality research is indicated by the processes developed in a qualitative inquiry into a phenomena which can then be used in other settings and systems to further enhance understanding of those phenomena.

5.5 Selection of Schools for Researching Systems Phenomena.

The field research was conducted over one academic year, 2017-2018. Identification of suitable schools was conducted using a range of networks, both professional and academic. Following initial discussions with each school (Riverview School, Laguna High, Northside School and Evergeen College) to explain the ethics and activities of the research the schools were originally selected based on their ability to meet identified criteria informed by the literature review.

The four schools were identified based on three criteria:

1. *They had been using restorative approaches for over three years.* During the field research it became apparent that both Laguna High and Northside School had been developing restorative approaches for under two years.

2. *The school was exploring how to innovate or rejuvenate use of restorative approaches.* Originally, this criterion was envisaged as supporting schools with a new form of creative response to further sustain restorative approaches. However, it became clear that across the four schools, restorative approaches were fatigued or had not been started. The SSM sessions allowed a different perspective to be taken and therefore all four schools were included to ascertain how understanding systems could support further change.
3. *School willingness to participate in all aspects of the research enquiry.* The final criterion was essential: that the schools were able to invest time and support. This included participating in the soft systems methodology sessions (including stakeholder workshops with parents, staff and young people), as well as the three focus groups. All four schools agreed to the activities proposed in the research design.
4. *Able to engage with the researcher over the time period of the field research.*

This research originally sought to work with schools which met the above criteria; however, I later made the decision to broaden the first criterion to include two schools (Laguna High and Northside School) which had both been developing restorative approaches for under three years, as they were willing to participate within the time period. Importantly, although none of the four schools participating in this research were rated as being in ‘Special Measures’ Ofsted rating was not part of the selection criteria, unlike for Bonell et al (2018), who excluded special measure schools from their RCT.

5.5.1 About Riverview School.

Riverview School is situated in the north of England’s Yorkshire and Humber Region. Although the school is located within a suburban setting many of its pupils are from deprived areas, and the school also has a highly multi-ethnic pupil population. The school student population is mixed gender, with ages ranging from 4 to 19 years. This makes the school an all-through school as it has both primary and secondary schools on site. The school’s student population is over 1200. The last Ofsted inspection rated the school as ‘Good’.

5.5.2 About Laguna High.

Laguna High is located in the north of England’s Yorkshire and Humber Region. The secondary school is situated within a market town and is undersubscribed by 40 percent. The school student population is mixed gender, with ages ranging from 11 to 18 years. The

school also has a sixth form college on site. The total capacity of pupil numbers is just over a thousand. The 2016 Ofsted inspection rated the school as ‘Requires Improvement’³¹.

5.5.3 About Northside School.

Northside School is located in Inner London. The secondary school is situated in a highly built up area with one of the highest levels of deprivation in the capital. The school student population is mixed gender, with ages ranging from 11 to 19 years. The school also has a sixth form college on site. The total capacity of pupil numbers is over just over a thousand. An Ofsted inspection rated the School as ‘Good’ in 2016.³² The school was also inspected by the Diocese of Westminster and graded ‘Outstanding’ in 2016. The inspectors made specific note of the school’s restorative justice programme, describing it as ‘visionary’ and as having ‘contributed to the atmosphere as a place of learning with a real focus on the quality of relationships between students and with staff’ (2016:2)³³. Northside School was supported by the Local Authority in developing restorative practice after being the highest excluding school in the borough in the previous year.

5.5.4 About Evergreen College.

Evergreen College is a secondary school in Greater London. It is situated in a suburban area with academy status. The school student population is mixed gender, with ages ranging from 11 to 19 years. The school also has a sixth form college on site. The total capacity of pupil numbers is almost two thousand. An Ofsted inspection rated the school as ‘Outstanding’ in 2016. The school uses a small school system (or houses) and each small school accommodates 400 pupils. There is also a separate college offering pastoral support to the four small schools.

5.6 Research Design: The Plan of Engagement for the Four Schools.

The four inquiry schools, once selected, then identified staff willing to participate in a Soft Systems Methodology session prior to the research phase. Each school was supported with a soft systems methodology session (see Appendix 4). Soft systems methodology (SSM) was developed by Checkland and Scholes in 1969 (1999: A12) to explore messy problematic situations and self-identify system changes. Before each SSM session with staff seeking to

³¹ The most recent Ofsted report shows that the school has moved to ‘Good’ in 2019.

³² The most recent Ofsted report shows that the school has moved to ‘Good’ in 2019.

³³ The reference to the report have not been included in this thesis to retain the anonymity of Northside School.

develop restorative approaches in their settings a range of stakeholder interviews in each school were conducted with parents, staff (not participating in the SSM session) and young people. Table 4, below, shows the stakeholder engagement conducted prior to each SSM session; these views are then included with the SSM sessions with staff developing restorative approaches.

The purpose of each SSM session was to allow staff interested in developing restorative approaches to engage in the messiness of their system and develop features to further sustain restorative approaches in their school. Following the SSM session in each school three focus groups were anticipated as happening facilitated by the researcher to track staff activities and perceptions of change.

The compositions of the self-selected staff interested in developing restorative approaches and participating in an SSM session, and subsequent focus groups can be seen in Table 5. Participants in the focus groups had a range of school roles including pastoral care, teaching, attendance and management.

Table 4: Table of Stakeholder Interviews prior to SSM Sessions.

School	Young People	Staff	Parents
Riverview School	Workshop (n=12) mixed gender.	10 staff - 5 male/5 female (including two from Laguna High)	11 parents all female
Laguna High	Workshop Year 8 (n=8) mixed gender.	See above	N/A
Northside School	Workshop 1 (KS4) – (n=7) Boys group, all Afro-Caribbean. Workshop 2: KS3 and KS4. (n=9) mixed gender group. Mixed ethnicity of Afro-Caribbean, African and South American	9 staff – 5 male/4 female.	N/A
Evergreen College	All years represented (n=40 plus). All genders and ethnicity included.	6 staff – 5 female/1 male.	3 parents – separate interviews, all female.

Table 5: Staff Groups Participating in the SSM Sessions and Subsequent Focus Groups.

School	Riverview School	Laguna High	Northside School	Evergreen College
Staff profile of those in SSM sessions and group interviews	12 staff – 8 female, 4 male, all white. Three staff from Laguna High, with additional Riverview School cross sites.		8 – four female, 4 male, diverse ethnic group	12 staff – 3 male, 9 female, all white.

In the SSM sessions staff created system maps using rich pictures (see appendices 5-9). They then identified thematic issues and created a root definition (a paragraph which expressed the ideal system state they wished to achieve). (See Table 6, below.)

Table 6: Root Definitions Created by Staff in their SSM Sessions.

School	Root Definition
Riverview School	The use of restorative practice in our schools is to enable young people to lead successful and independent lives by responding to challenging behaviour and change by using coping mechanisms that increase their recovery rate after conflict so that they can confidently lead in their families and communities.
Laguna High	
Northside School	At Northside School we use restorative practice to rebuild relationships in a way that respects both individuals in order to develop a working relationship which addresses harm and supports individuals with future resolutions (problem-solving).
Evergreen College	In Evergreen College restorative justice (RJ) is used to support the success and personal development of the Evergreen College's wider community. At Evergreen College we use restorative justice to explore harm, needs and solution(s) in order to resolve conflict and instil values in the members of the Evergreen College community. The scale of support is delivered through different levels of leadership, from peer mentors to senior leadership. Restorative approaches consist of preparing and reflecting on broken relationships to ensure a positive change, and greater self-awareness of an individual's actions and their effects on others. Although this process may not always be easy or quick it is vital to sustain a cohesive, diverse and harmonious society.

Staff in each of the SSM sessions then created a range of purposeful activities that they would undertake to help move their present restorative approaches system towards their root definition (ideal system state). The purposeful activities identified by each school are shown Table 7, below.

SSM uses S.M.A.R.T.³⁴ criteria for evaluating purposeful activities. However, for the purposes of this research I decided that this evaluation model would re-engage the machine metaphor of schooling and therefore developed alternatives called the R.E.A.L. evaluation criteria, which were more congruent with an eco-systemic paradigm. Hence, the purposeful activities were evaluated in terms of being, first, ‘realistic’, i.e., were the staff capable of doing the activities? Second was ‘empowering’, for whom? Third was ‘achievable’ - could they be done? Finally, there was ‘learning’ - did they promote learning across the staff group and wider stakeholders?

Table 7: Range of Purposeful Activities Identified in Each School.

	Riverview School	Laguna High	Northside School	Evergreen College
Purposeful Activity	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Parents’ session on restorative approaches.</i> <i>2. Mixed training for staff, pupils and parents.</i> <i>3. Parent drop-in sessions.</i> <i>4. Year 7 transition – parent session.</i> <i>5. Self-evaluation of RP confidence.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Increasing young people’s awareness of restorative approaches</i> <i>2. Case studies on the impact of restorative practice.</i> <i>3. Looking at pupils and social media.</i> <i>4. Drama piece during Year 7 induction.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Increasing young people’s awareness of restorative approaches through videos, PSHE and assemblies.</i> <i>2. Student training as mediators.</i> <i>3.. Awareness training for all pupils in the school.</i> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. What is RA?</i> <i>2. Behaviour policy - explicit mention of RA.</i> <i>3. Voluntary training - whole staff level.</i> <i>4. NQT development programme.</i> <i>5. Written guidance: one-page overview including flowchart.</i>

³⁴ Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timebound.

The research phase began at the start of the academic year (September 2017) and ended at the Easter break (March 2018).

5.7 Focus Groups: Staff Delivering Restorative Approaches Who Have Attended SSM Sessions.

The selection of focus groups as a research method was congruent with phenomenological methodology and provided a way of tracking the changes experienced and perceived by staff as they enacted their purposeful activity. Thomas (2011) states that in focus groups:

‘The researcher is a *facilitator* or moderator. The researcher’s aim is to facilitate or moderate discussion *between participants*. In a Focus Group, the researcher takes the lead and is in control of the discussion’

(2011:164).

Hence, the reality of moderation in this research often meant finding a balance between allowing staff to discuss issues important to them and keeping them on topics covered in the semi-structured interview schedule. The selection of focus group participants was based on attendance at an SSM session (reflecting the concepts of feedback and self-organisation). The focus group session length was 1 hour to 90 minutes; this was negotiated with staff in each inquiry school but also based on their energy for engaging on the day. Furthermore, a semi-structured interview schedule was used in the focus group interviews. This allowed flexibility for the researcher and the focus group in exploring areas of discussion regarding the sustaining of restorative approaches in their local settings. The ideal number of participants for the focus group interviews was between eight and twelve members of staff of mixed genders and ethnicity who were developing restorative approaches. As Table 8 shows, attendance at each focus group was lower than the original number of attendees at the SSM sessions. Focus groups also had a core group of five who showed up for each meeting whereas others attended sporadically depending on other duties in Riverview School and Laguna High.

Although it was hoped that all SSM sessions would be completed prior to the research phase, Table 9 shows the timeline of activities which actually happened in this research (Appendix 11 shows the ideal timeline of the field research). The original intention was to conduct three focus group interviews per school; however, this was not possible in three of the schools. Laguna High staff merged with Riverview School, so were treated as a combined focus group

interview. Also, a lack of response after SSM sessions from both Northside School and Evergreen College meant that only one focus group could be conducted in total before the end of the field research.

Table 8: Attendance at the Focus Groups in the Four Schools.

School	Focus Groups1	Focus Groups2	Focus Groups3
Riverview School	Staff attending, n=9	Staff attending, n=7	Staff attending, n=9
Laguna High			
Northside School	Staff attending, n=5		
Evergreen College	Staff attending, n=9		

Table 9: Timeline of Activities in Each School (SSM – Soft Systems Methodology Session, FG – Focus Group).

School	June 2017	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 2019	Feb	March
Riverview School	SSM		Summer Holidays			20 th FG 1	Christmas Holidays	18 th FG 2		19 th FG 3
Laguna High										
Northside School				SSM						14 th FG 1
Evergreen College		SSM								13 th FG 1

Key areas for questioning were identified by researcher prior to the focus groups to act as stimuli based on the SSM sessions and new themes from previous focus groups. Using a semi-structured process meant that staff in the focus groups had opportunities to provide feedback and self-organise knowledge on their perceptions of change in the school as they progressed their purposeful activities. This contributed to discussions on the purpose of using restorative interventions and sustaining restorative approaches. The semi-structured interview schedule allowed for flexibility in identifying emerging issues in each school as staff developed activities to achieve their root definition. The focus groups were recorded (audio recorder), with informed consent, over the three sessions to allow data to be

transcribed for later analysis. The focus group interviews were transcribed with the support of the Cambridge Disability Resource Centre.

5.8 Data Analysis: Understanding the Dynamics of Systems Phenomena in the Four Schools.

The purpose of the data analysis was to interpret the responses from the focus groups, as this research drew on a thematic analysis of the focus group data.

5.8.1 Complexity-Informed Thematic Analysis.

The thematic analysis of the focus group data identified emergent issues around restorative approaches, school change and sustainability. The themes that emerged through the discussions showed moments of convergent and divergent responses to topics. Grbich (2013:61) suggests that thematic analysis is an ‘idiosyncratic’ process, which therefore requires a thematic framework to understanding system phenomena as a CAS. Table 2 identifies how these features of a CAS were identified thematically. The coding of the data followed the six key steps set out by Braun and Clarke 2006 (in Denicolo et al, 2016:149). (See Table 10, below.)

Table 10: Six Key Steps to a Thematic Analysis.

Thematic approach	Application to this research
1. Familiarisation and engagement.	Transcripts read and re-read to identify initial patterns in the data within and across focus groups.
2. Initial coding.	At this stage primarily focused on restorative approaches themes.
3. Searching for themes.	Applying a complexity-informed thematic analysis to the initial coding.
4. Reviewing themes.	Themes reviewed and refined in response to data; new frameworks developed to reframe themes.
5. Defining and naming themes.	Distilling themes to their essences and ensuring they were coherent and dependable.
6. Writing findings (a convincing narrative that demonstrates the merits and validity of the researcher’s interpretation).	Findings themes presented as well as focus group discussions showing the construction of meaning-making.

The complexity theory literature informed the themes for data analysis are shown in Table 11. A phenomenological critique was developed through the complexity-informed analytical framework by reviewing the data generated from the focus group discussions. In this way the lived experience of staff in their schools was viewed and critiqued through the lens of a complex adaptive system.

Table 11: Complexity-Informed Thematic Analytical Framework.

Complexity Feature	Restorative approaches	Staff participating in the research	Purposeful activities
<i>Feedback</i>	Regulatory feedback helps to regulate existing practice.	Regulatory feedback helps staff to reflect on the limits and perceived boundaries of restorative approaches in the school.	Regulatory feedback regulates the quality of purposeful activities to achieve their outcomes.
	Amplification feedback helps to further spread restorative approaches in the school or ecosystem.	Amplification feedback helps staff to further share their knowledge and skill with and across stakeholder networks.	Amplification feedback amplifies purposeful activities, creating greater influence in the CAS and ecosystem.
<i>Self-organisation</i>	Clearly identifiable restorative interventions are used in the school.	The network shape of the staff may alter to create emergent properties based on their reflections.	Purposeful activities are supported by the fluidity of the network shape, which adjusts in response to feedback.
<i>Emergence</i>	Restorative interventions are influenced by purposeful activities to demonstrate new capabilities.	Staff are creative in reflecting on their purposeful activity and links to purposeful activities to enhance restorative approaches in the school.	Purposeful activities demonstrate how staff can influence other school systems and help new emergent features come to fruition.
<i>System Boundaries</i>	The use of restorative approaches is perceived as boundaries in use by staff.	Staff are able to identify real and perceived boundaries in school systems which they can influence and change.	Purposeful activities allow system boundaries to be identified and addressed to further move the system towards the root definition.
<i>Time</i>	Restorative approaches are a system feature where the perceived time is relative to the conflict or bullying situation.	Staff are able to recognise and describe how time influences their use of restorative approaches and purposeful activities.	The relativity of time in the system is identified as different parts of the school respond to purposeful activities.

For the purposes of this research both key words and meanings which resonated with features of a complexity theory-informed thematic analysis were categorised. Importantly, the exchanges in the focus group interactions were examined to identify where emergence was taking place in real time. Although five themes were identified the thematic analysis sought to retain other features of complexity such as non-linearity and uncertainty. Hence, resisting the inclination to impose causal attributes was a challenge in the thematic analysis. Retaining

context was supported through the development of frameworks whilst conducting the analysis to ensure that the five themes interconnected and did not deconstruct the complexity of knowledge in the focus groups.

The interactions in the focus groups became opportunities to reveal aspects of the complex construction of knowledge. Retaining exchanges during the analysis revealed issues of feedback, self-organisation and emergence. Hence, where applicable, such participant exchanges have been reproduced in Chapter 6, to illustrate how discussion topics produced emergent phenomena. This reiterates Cillers' observation that 'Approaching a complex system playfully' (1998:23) was central to the analysis and presentation of the data generated in focus groups. During the focus groups opportunities to capture emergence came from their exchanges as they provided feedback and self-organisation. Thus, the extended length of quotations in the findings section reflects the dialogue which happened to generate emergence.

5.9 Ethical Considerations in the Research Design.

This research complied with the standards set out by the British Educational Research Association's Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research (2018), as well as the standards set by the University of Cambridge for students conducting educational research.

This process involved the inquiry schools being sent a briefing paper prior to confirmation of participation to inform them of the purpose of the research (see Appendix 4). In addition, it was communicated to the selected inquiry school that, regardless of the outcome of the research, the school would be anonymised.

Explicit confirmation for school that wished to participate was sent to the head teacher. In addition, a briefing was sent to individual participants with a checklist of ethical considerations which they personally agreed to, signed and returned before they participated in this research (Appendix 5). The checklist for participants included informed voluntary consent, notification of the ability to opt out of the research at any time (without giving explanation), and confirmation of the research participant's agreement to being recorded for the purposes of note-taking and later transcription.

Each school was anonymised using a random name generator³⁵ which produced 10 random school names. All research participants have been anonymised in this research, with each

³⁵ <https://www.fantasynamgenerators.com/school-names.php>

one being assigned a number and an abbreviation of the anonymised school name. This was to ensure that they felt able to be honest in their responses when discussing issues within the school but also to assure participants that if the research was published they would not be identifiable.

The ethics of researching systems meant that as well seeking to avoid harm the researcher was in a position to assist the sustainability of restorative approaches after the research where possible. The double hermeneutic implied a correlative feedback system between participants and the ideas within this qualitative inquiry. Therefore, the researcher made an offer to all four schools to present the research findings to school stakeholders and offer additional support in the form of workshops or training. This was to ensure that participants and the schools could further explore their own creative development of restorative approaches. Three of the schools (Riverview School, Laguna High and Evergreen College) engaged with the researcher after the field research, providing further feedback regarding restorative approaches.

5.10 Researcher Reflexivity: Engaging in Complex Adaptive Systems.

The literature on complexity theory is lacking in ethical guidance on how to engage in real socially complex adaptive systems. Therefore, the reflexivity of the researcher is an important aspect of social systems research, as the system will respond to stimuli. Hence, it was necessary to endeavour to prevent undue influence by the researcher which might cause staff to seek to anticipate or mitigate against perceived judgements by the researcher. In addition, it was important to avoid any staff perceptions that the focus groups were a judgment on their development and part of 'the exercise of continuing surveillance through the process of monitoring and evaluation which means that those concerned also come to anticipate the response...to their actions past, present and future and therefore come to discipline themselves' (Harland, 1996:101). In engaging with phenomenological methodology it was crucial that staff participating in the research did not anticipate the reactions or intentions of the researcher. Therefore, the researcher attempted to remain impartial and curious. Importantly, during exchanges the researcher avoided giving their views on topics to the staff participating as such exchanges would influence their willingness to share their lived experiences of the phenomena. To paraphrase Christie's 'conflict as property', reflective researchers ensure that they mitigate against 'research as theft' within the system. Thus, as far as possible, it was up to the researcher to minimise their influence so that staff could self-

generate and self-identify their own creativity and narratives to change their school using restorative approaches.

5.11 Research Design to Address the Research Questions.

In conclusion, this research sought to undertake a qualitative inquiry in four schools. The epistemological stance was identified as constructivist, since the research interest was in how staff in the studied schools constructed meaning from various phenomena such as bullying, conflict, restorative approaches, and systems thinking. Recognizing the theoretical perspective of postmodernism, which values the diverse ways in which reality can be conceived without imposing a grand narrative, resonated with complexity theory. The research methodology of phenomenology influenced by a postmodernist perspective as this methodology recognised the voices and lived experiences of those in the schools and allowed the researcher to critically reflect on the phenomena being explored. Soft systems methodology provided a stimulus for staff in understanding systems change for the use of restorative approaches in their schools. A focus group research method was also used with staff to capture their lived experiences of the changes they had identified in their schools. A complexity-informed analytical framework was then used to ascertain a range of thematic features in the schools, and the findings will be presented in the next section.

6. Findings on Restorative Approaches in the Four Inquiry Schools.

The focus group interviews revealed how the staff in the focus groups constructed knowledge through the exchanging of stories, problems and experiences. A range of topics were expressed in the groups in part as a response to the semi-structured nature of facilitation as well as when staff were engaging with a topic of interest to them. Importantly, sections of dialogue have been retained to reveal aspects of complexity such as feedback, self-organisation and emergence in the focus groups.

6.1 Restorative Approaches in the Four Schools.

This section will explore how restorative approaches were a system feature in each of the inquiry schools.

6.1.1 The Challenge of Defining Restorative Interventions in the Four Inquiry Schools.

In Riverview School the term ‘restorative practice’ (RP) was used as the dominant label to describe their restorative interventions. The majority of staff in the focus group defined RP in broad terms as a form of communication, whereas a minority of staff had a specific view on repairing relationships:

- RV1 It started off as resolving conflict isn’t it, but it’s a lot bigger than that, it is... the whole thing is all about how you speak to each other; how you communicate.
- RV2 Yeah language, relationships, communication, empathy... communication I would say, the main thing.
- RV3 I think it is all of those things; I would probably add the repairing as well; the repairing of relationships that have broken.

These definitions by the participants in Riverview School sought to describe ‘restorative practice’ (RP). Hence, the focus group emphasised RP as a form of communication which facilitated relationships in the school. These broad definitions were in line with descriptions in the literature, yet they could equally be applied to general teaching practice when assessing the majority view of RP. Importantly, a member of staff also recognised harm by using the word ‘broken’. This final comment resonated with the principle of the articulation of harm. In Riverview School there was also further discussion of whether the term ‘restorative practice’ was an accurate and useful description of what was happening in the school, as illustrated in the following exchange between staff:

- RV3 I think perhaps it makes more sense if you change what we do... as a school, I'm not sure that restorative practice is the best way of describing it; if you call it relational practice...
- RV2 ...then when we're talking about relational practice we're saying all the time we're trying to think of building and maintaining relationships because of the way we're interacting, and there are circumstances when there is a specific conflict which then needs a specific restorative conversation because that's about repairing but because we're always looking at building the relationships we're looking at opportunities to develop relationships through all of our interactions, but then there will be circumstances where actually it's specifically restorative.
- RV4 So I think we've talked about that in one of the other sessions that we've had, whether it was the right terminology didn't we for... it's not necessarily what we're doing but actually some of the terminology used at specific times, actually the right language...

RV3 Can be misleading.

This discussion by staff at Riverview School indicated that they recognised that the label 'restorative' was used for specific conflict situations. However, they also acknowledged that aspects of their practice were not restorative but focused on relationship building and relationship development while falling under the RP definition. These aspects of communication and relationship development practice did not require either conflict or harm to be present; hence the term 'relational practice'.

A secondary topic emerged regarding when restorative approaches were used in Riverview School and when staff were preventing conflict. These two different forms of practice (relational and restorative) were further explained:

- RV4 I think it's a lot about, and this is probably coming from a primary phase, but a lot about the prevention and about the... about investment rather than the reaction to, you know, having the RP conversations is a reaction to something that's happened, and it's doing more around the pre- rather than the post-.

This statement shows how a member of staff sought to bridge the two forms of practice, where 'relational practice' prevented relationships deteriorating into conflict, whereas 'restorative practice' was post-conflict reparation. The Riverview School focus group member recognised the reactive aspect of restorative practice but stressed that investing in communication with pupils would be more beneficial. Therefore, the defining of 'restorative

practice’ provided a wider recognition of the proactive aspects in Riverview School, leading to it being categorised as ‘relational practice’ to emphasise the proactive and preventative features of communication in the school. This indicates that the vocabulary of restorative approaches evolved at local level to address inquiry-specific contexts.

The staff at Laguna High staff attending the focus groups were starting to set up RP as a system feature with support from Riverview School. Staff in the first focus group readily accepted the terminology of RP without critique or concern. Also, several members of Riverview staff worked in Laguna High to support school improvement; hence, having a single definition for both schools was useful for consistency of language.

Northside School were beginning their second year of developing restorative practice. The discussions on defining RP indicated that staff were using an alternative term to identify their use of restorative interventions in the school, as shown below:

NS2 Restorative approaches.

NS1 Just restorative.

NS5 Just restorative, yeah.

NS1 Just restorative. It’s a buzz word.

In this extract although the term ‘restorative approaches’ is mentioned the term ‘restorative’ was used as a shorthand description of practice and a common descriptor of their restorative interventions. However, it was difficult to ascertain how this shortening of the term came to be used in the school. ‘Restorative’ was used as an umbrella term but two further labels were identified which were again new to the lexicon of restorative approaches. These terms were ‘hard restorative’ and ‘soft restorative’, as one participant explained while defining RP:

NS4 I try and use restorative in different situations. Because one... not one situation’s going to be the same; I mean in some situations I will use obviously maybe softer... a softer side of restorative justice; other times I use the hard side, it just depends on the situation for me.

Researcher Oh, you’ve got to break that one down for me; what’s the difference between soft and hard restorative justice?

NS4 You have a conversation outside the classroom, for example, you know, a private conversation because I don’t like the whole shouting in front of the class... I just don’t like

that, you lose respect anyway, it's... umm... on the other hand, the hard approach would be for example if students are just messing... other people; you've said to them on more than one occasion, 'Look you need to stop messing up their learning' then you just need to leave the classroom; sometimes having that bit of breathing space helps you as a teacher and helps them as well to sort of re-evaluate and find out what exactly are you both... both yourself... myself as a teacher and the student are fighting for.

The definitions of hard and soft restorative justice, according to this member of staff, depended on the audience, i.e., the classroom of pupils. 'Soft restorative' was associated with quiet, private conversations when young people were causing low-level disruption within the classroom. Whereas 'hard restorative' appeared to be for continuous disruption when a pupil had already been sent out of class, in effect removal of the audience with a pause before the young person was able to return to learning. In Northside School the distinction between 'hard' restorative and 'soft' restorative was new terminology and suggested localised adaptation language in the school.

In Evergreen College multiple terms were used to describe a restorative intervention at various points during the focus group; these included both 'restorative approaches' and 'restorative justice' in reference to the same intervention. However, the focus group members did not reflect on or critique their definition in the school³⁶. A member of staff in the school also made two further distinctions:

EC6 And so, there's almost levels of it; there's the deep restorative and then there's just the kind of quick conversation which actually is still I think quite effective.

For this participant the distinction seemed to focus on time as the differentiator of the process. Hence, a quick conversation was for events which might be deemed low-level forms of conflict, whereas deep restorative required a longer amount of time to explore the conflict from different participants' perspectives.

6.2 Exploring the Use of Restorative Principles in Each School.

A topic that emerged regarding the use of restorative approaches involved issues of practice. Practice was critically reflected on by the researcher to compare it with the restorative principles framework. The expectation was not to specifically identify the principles but

³⁶ Restorative justice was defined during the SSM session (see Appendix 9).

rather to identify characteristics which could be associated with the restorative principles framework,

In Riverview School the link between the questioning process and an encounter was tentative at best; this was due in part to the issue of training as well as how knowledge was created and retained in the school. It was evident in Riverview School that there had been training for school staff in the use of restorative questions. The questioning process as identified in the literature is typically a scripted series of questions for staff to use when dealing with young people. This issue of scripted restorative practice questions was raised in the following exchange:

RV3 I was reflecting on the questions I have on my lanyard and how many times since I've been at Riverview School have I actually deliberately worked through all 5 questions³⁷ in a setting with a pupil or a member of staff. I don't think I ever have, and I don't know whether that's just me because I'm not doing it properly, or whether actually that... I mean do people do that?

RV4 None of us have those in the primary.

RV1 Yeah, occasionally we'd use them.

RV3 How... how regularly.

RV1 Not very often; well I don't... I don't come across children... I mean it's usually when there's been some sort of conflict isn't it... that you would have to ask those sorts of questions.

In the first statement above there is reference to a structured questioning process – 'five questions' - which gives staff trained in restorative approaches a specific process to use. The lanyard referred to holds information on the script for staff to use when dealing with a conflict situation. Nevertheless, what was just as important was the recognition that their own questioning process was not being adhered to. Indeed, the second statement went further and acknowledged that there was no restorative process in the primary phase of the school.

-
- ³⁷ What did you think when you realised what had happened?
 - What have your thoughts been since?
 - How has this affected you and others?
 - What has been the hardest thing for you?
 - What do you think needs to happen to make things right?
- Questions taken from the school website.

The RP process was accurately described as being used when there was conflict. Yet, there was a perception that conflict did not appear to be happening very often in the school.

However, it is important to acknowledge that not all conflict causes harm to relationships; thus, opportunities to use RP specifically to address harm may not be frequent in the school.

A statement encapsulating the decision making in engaging young people with a restorative process was made by another member of staff:

RV4 I think sometimes like – you must find this at the primary phase, that the younger ones, that they fall out with each other all the time; if I did a proper RP conversation between every small little, ‘She was giving me a funny look’, you... so I think you do weigh up the situations and what is... what does require proper RP conversation and what just requires a, ‘You need to stop; this is what you need to do’, which isn’t very RP but I think especially with the younger ones, well I noticed it, just from being at the primary phase...

Based on this statement by RV4 it appeared that the key principle of questioning process was not being adhered to in Riverview School. As RV4 continued a decision-making threshold became apparent based on situations when RP was suitable and when directive statements needed to be used. This triggered a member of staff to give a short vignette of a situation in Riverview School which happened on the day of the focus group:

RV5 We had a meeting this morning with a young man and then there was probably about three or four members of staff in the room; we’re all trying to get a conversation out of him because we want him back in school but he’s not willing to have that conversation; he’s not willing to be remorseful or work with us, so actually if you’re not going to do that, I’m going to send you back home again; you could say I wasn’t restorative because I sent him home but actually if you’re not going to work with us, then you are going to come home and we’re going to try again, so then all that will happen is, we’ll probably try it every day this week until we get somewhere but we’re resilient; we work with them; we’ll keep going.

This vignette shows that the member of staff had badged the meeting as restorative, as the focus is clearly on the encounter between those in conflict. There was no recognition of the questioning process or who was leading it. The number of staff in the room appeared to undermine several principles including the inclusiveness of the process, the articulation of harm, empowerment, and empathetic spaces. Furthermore, mutual agreement was disregarded in the statement ‘he’s not willing to be remorseful’. This indicated that staff

were seeking a particular outcome rather than a mutual agreement on how to move forward and achieve peace.

The desired outcome for staff was ‘we want him back in school’ without recognizing the experience of being back in school for the young person. In addition, the vignette by RV5 demonstrates how staff failed to recognise the paradox of wanting the young person in school but having the outcome of keeping them away from the school. Thus, it is arguable that the member of staff failed to recognise that the use of coercion was undermining the young person’s willingness to engage in the restorative intervention, rather than it being that the young people was unwilling to return to the school.

Restorative principles were never expressly stated as being undermined in response to the vignette; however, another member of staff sought to address this with the use of the term ‘improvisation’. Improvisation was preferred, implying a tacit level of skill dormant in the staff in the focus group. A member of staff highlighted the lack of adherence to principles without criticising colleagues:

RV3 And it’s... and that’s in no way a judgment in terms of whether we are or aren’t, it’s just an observation that actually we... we have... we are aware, even on a limited basis of training, we’re aware of what if you like good practice looks like but because we in lots of ways successfully improvise RP because it’s a way of being, it’s just uncovered for me that maybe there are places or ways that perhaps we could be more... would it be helpful for us to have times when we actually are... aren’t just improvising out of RP but are actually using more formal things.

This statement was arguably a contradiction at a process level. If staff do not know how to use restorative questions to address specific conflicts where harm has occurred to relationships, then a lack of process cannot be the foundation for successful improvisation. If, on the other hand, good practice is built on explicit RP principles then ‘good practice’ might not be so heavily weighted towards process but rather to the outcomes achieved through adhering to a framework of principles to guide practice. Furthermore, this would presume training or learning from the literature (or other information sources) to develop this understanding. From this perspective, staff would be aware of good practice because RP would be role modelled with explicit adherence to the values of RP.

This issue of staff lacking restorative principles was emphasised by another contributor, who makes the comment:

RV6 I'd say I'd always worked restoratively but it gave it a label and a title, I'd say naturally, particularly with my work, you have to work restoratively, there's no other way of working.

This statement could be viewed as indicative of practice coming before the labelling and conceptualisation of restorative approaches within education settings. Without a coherent framework of principles for the use of RP staff could attribute a range of behaviours which they deemed beneficial to RP without evidence to contradict their assumptions about the purpose of RP.

In Laguna High the language of restorative practice was being transferred from Riverview School. The knowledge exchange between the two schools focused on the social discipline window, and the issues of (lack of) quality of process in Riverview School for restorative practice appeared to be replicated in Laguna High.

There was no discussion in the Northside School focus group about the restorative principles, questions or language used in the process of restorative practice there.

The use of restorative approaches in Evergreen College was discussed in the context of a wider debate regarding school policy. This school used the terms 'restorative justice' and 'restorative approaches' interchangeably. Furthermore, there was evidence that not only were the labels used this way but so were their underlying processes. An example of this can be seen in the following quote from a member of staff:

EC7 But that is in our policy and it is something... so for instance if... if we have students that, you know, deliberately cause damage or litter, that sort of thing, then they will spend time working with the site staff and in the same way that I had a student – or two students actually – last... last year that were actually, they were rude to one of the cleaning staff so they then had to spend a number of hours shadowing and working with the cleaner, as well as apologising for their rudeness, and actually that was a very, incredibly good piece of restorative work.

What became apparent from this quote was that the member of staff was discussing reparation and not restoration. Reparation is a criminal justice aspect of restorative justice, often involving an apology and a form of community payback. What could not be determined was how the member of staff and their colleagues in the focus group could qualify what was meant by the phrase 'a very, incredibly good piece of restorative work'. Clearly, in the example above, there was a repairing of the relationship between the young person and cleaning staff as a result of this encounter but this appears to have been non-voluntary as they

‘had to’. This example illustrates the omission of several restorative principles - there was clearly no questioning process, voluntary encounter or mutual agreement. Yet other aspects were present, such as articulation of the harm, inclusiveness, and empathy. This suggests the presence of a hybrid model in Evergreen College. Nevertheless, the lack of an impartial facilitator and a structured dialogue made this instance described by the member of staff recognisable as a restorative approach. The fact that the by-product of the reparation may have been restoration was arguably serendipitous rather than the result of effective use of restorative approaches.

The lack of restorative principles and consequentially restorative approaches as an initiative in Evergreen College gave insight into a second issue of awareness in the school. An example of this is given below by a member of staff:

EC6 I’ve always approached the senior tutor role, and kind of even my pastoral role before, I kind of... I think obviously we kind of get involved more when there’s an extreme issue and kind of try and do the restorative approaches but the message, even when there’s a minor falling out, I often get involved and do a very small version of it just with the conversations I have I guess, but it’s not necessarily a formal meeting with strategies.

What was being described here were more serious levels of harm falling into the ‘extreme issues’ category. These types of issues might require a formal meeting but there was also a less formal ‘quick version’. Based on this example of difference in practice it was not clear how staff were deciding which issues were extreme and which issues were a ‘small version’. Furthermore, there was an additional issue of how much staff were changing their processes and skills when doing a short RA version. This issue of process adaptation appeared later in the conversation at Evergreen College when a member of staff suggested a specific adaptation to the process:

EC5 If there was a reflective piece of paper, if there’s no time for someone to have a conversation, a reflective piece of paper where they could actually, you know, ‘Why am I here’.

EC1 It’s what happens in the supervision room isn’t it?

The first member of staff identified the possibility of using a reflective sheet for young people to complete which would help inform them of the restorative questions. This reflective sheet with RA questions would be an adaptation of the process not previously mentioned in the literature but useful for adhering to the inclusion principle by offering

young people a framework within which to write down their experience of conflict. In the second comment above a member of staff questioned whether this process already existed in the school supervision room. However, it was not clear if the school supervision room was a punitive space; if so, this would undermine the principles of both impartiality and empowerment. So, what emerged here was that there was a potential problem as to the correct space in which young people are able to reflect, on harm and potential solutions when in a conflict or bullying dynamic with the school.

6.3 Restorative and Punitive Interventions in the Four Schools.

A phenomenon which emerged during the staff focus groups was the coexistence of both restorative approaches and punitive interventions. As a topic of conversation the coexistence of both approaches to school behaviour appeared to be congruent for staff. Importantly, both forms of intervention (restorative and punitive) can come under the umbrella concept of behaviour management in schools. Hence, as a topic of exploration the flow of conversation during the focus groups has been retained to provide insight into the co-construction of meaning and understanding of how these concepts accommodated or conflicted with each other for staff.

6.3.1 Staff Perceptions of Punitive and Restorative Interventions at Riverview School.

Within Riverview School the issue of punitive approaches was explicitly discussed:

Researcher Hmm, OK, so where does punishment fit in with your school?

RV4 It doesn't, does it?

RV9 No, yeah.

RV1 Sanctions, do you mean?

Researcher Punishment...

All [laughs]

RV1 Don't use that word, do we?

RV4 Well no, no.

RV1 We definitely don't use the word 'punishment'.

RV3 No.

RV4 Well challenging expectations, challenging behaviours, challenging...

RV7 He's really upset everybody now; everyone's just gone...

All [laughs]

Researcher Body language has changed.

All [laughs]

The conversation above raised the power of the label 'punishment' in Riverview School, and how staff seek to distance themselves from this term. The term was rejected by the staff, and there was also a physical reaction and change of mood among the participants when using this word. As one participant stated, 'we definitely don't use the word punishment', although forms of punishment do exist in the school. A second member of staff sought to reframe the question in terms of 'challenging expectations' or 'challenging behaviours', moving the focus of the language away from the inflicting of pain to testing or justifying the behaviour of the young people. For staff using restorative practice the language of punishment is the antithesis of building and maintaining relationships. However, when questioned on the punitive features of their school a more personalised response was revealed:

Researcher OK, so what I was thinking about was detentions, is it social isolation where kids are put in rooms to face a wall and do stuff...

RV3 Face a wall?

RV9 I don't face a wall.

RV4 I had to face a wall at school for talking too much can you believe [laughs].

All [laughs]

RV1 And it's not an isolation room; it's an inclusion room.

RV5 Yeah, we don't call it isolation. Because we don't call it isolation. So, the terminology is different.

RV4 But is it the same thing?

RV7 No.

RV9 When you're in your inclusion room... we never understood this did we because...

LH1 Yeah.

RV9 ...we went to the same high school so our high school used to have an isolation room, so when we...

LH1 Which was boxes.

RV9 Yeah, it was like telephone boxes.

RV1 Looking at a wall!

RV4 Yeah mine was like that.

RV9 But when we came here we were very confused as to why it's called inclusion...

LH1 When you are excluded.

This exchange illustrated the staff members' personal experiences of punishment along with the existing process in the inquiry school. The change in language, from isolation room to inclusion room, could be seen as the sanitisation of language to make actions morally and professionally acceptable. Importantly, there was a recognition by the participants that 'the terminology is different' but that the underlying process being described in isolation/inclusion rooms is not. The terminology created confusion within the focus group over whether the label (inclusion) was representative of the punitive process, which is a form of exclusion. The issue of terminology was negated with a rationale for why this form of punishment is necessary. The staff continued this conversation, seeking a way to reconcile the dissonance (between punishment and restorative interventions) and to justify how punishment could be inclusive:

RV5 They just take you out of circulation because it's not good for you to be in circulation at that time because your relationships aren't right with people and something needs to be done to restore...

RV9 But why is it called...?

RV1 They're not willing to change. You're not willing to have a conversation.

RV4 It's almost like a reset, some of our children, they just need reset.

RV3 Yeah.

RV4 They just need that time...

RV2 To think about it.

RV4 ...to gather themselves and then they can go back but actually if you try to persevere and persevere and persevere you're setting them up for a fail almost, if they're coming out, have 10 minutes reset time and then they go back in and then they're absolutely fine again.

RV6 Maybe it's to then become included.

RV2 Yeah, yeah, it's just the terminology.

RV9 But like you are... so you are technically isolated because you're taken out...

RV2 You're in a room.

RV9 But it's too...

RV2 Yeah but you're included in the school environment... you're not excluded out of school...

RV4 Yeah, and it's to be included in...

Here, the participants justified the purpose of the isolation room by explaining it as an attempt to reset some young people. There is an assumption that young people in isolation rooms just need that time to think but it is not clear what the focus of this thinking should be. In the exchange the staff reconciled the label 'inclusion room' with the process of isolation as young people are ultimately remaining in the school, i.e., still included in the school as an institution (but not as a community). In the view of the staff this is better than being removed from both the institution and the community. It prevents young people from being removed from the school community in the form of a fixed or permanent exclusion. Consequently, based on this discussion, accommodation is seen of a punitive intervention for the participants by justifying the internal use of isolation within a wider ethos of inclusive education. What was absent, however, was any mention of evidence to justify the outcomes of using isolation rooms. The accommodation of an isolation room in a school which is working to develop restorative interventions was not seen as contradictory in the discussion.

There was also arguably a form of benevolence in the way participants justified the isolation of young people. Riverview School staff perceive isolation as a means of giving young people time to reset from the behaviour challenge that have presented. Yet, the cause of the

behaviour is not a concern. When this was discussed further the issue of isolation rooms became acknowledged as a historical feature of the school:

RV2 It's a legacy thing isn't it, there's always been an inclusion room, hasn't there?

RV1 But it did used to be little cubicles where you were sat looking at a wall as well, you were sat looking at the...

RV7 Don't have the space for that anymore.

RV2 And we used to... it was busy today but...

RV1 We did do it at first when we came here.

RV2 ...it generally isn't that busy anymore.

Based on this short, reflective discussion the statement 'there's always been an inclusion room' indicates that this facet of the punitive system pre-dates the use of restorative practice in Riverview School. The description given of an isolation room by the participants was of a tiny space devoid of stimulation. The staff members' institutional blindness to the contradiction of isolation rooms and RP in terms of their psycho-spatial use as a form of punishment still appeared to go unnoticed in their discussion. Furthermore, there was an acknowledgement that although space is at a premium in the school space is still given to the isolation room. This is an important point: place and space (niches) define which interventions are given priority in a school as a system. This also presents another paradox in terms of the level of use of the isolation rooms. The school has a designated space to isolate young people and treat them all the same in what I would suggest is a homodystopia. Among staff this space was perceived as 'generally' not busy. Yet on the day of the focus group discussion the space was 'busy', i.e., a lot of young people were being isolated within the school. The reason for this could be that the space for isolation is a fixed place in the school. Therefore, it is easier to identify referrals to and from the isolation room. In addition, it is easy to quantify on a daily basis how many young people are presently sitting in silence, whereas the diffusion of restorative practice in multiple spaces (e.g., classrooms or pastoral offices) across the school system makes quantifying practice on a daily basis difficult for school staff.

As previously mentioned, the issue of isolation rooms (homodystopia) is the antithesis of restorative practice (heterotopia) in Riverview School. To reconcile this dichotomy between

punitive and restorative interventions the staff discussed their interpretation of the social discipline window (SDW):

RV4 But sometimes you've got to go TO³⁸ to then get back to WITH...

RV7 Remove them from the situation that is causing the problem or the issue, so I'm going to remove X because he's not getting on with Y; I'm going to do it TO³⁹ you; I'm going to remove you from Y because you're arguing like mad with him; I'm going to do it to you, remove him to this particular situation to then allow the next process to be working with him again.

RV4 But I think that's the challenge and the support again though.

RV4 You wouldn't just put him back in there straight away; be like, 'Right, OK, you've had an hour sat in isolation, go back and sit in your chair'.

RV9 Inclusion.

RV1 There'd be a conversation.

RV4 That's what I mean; for me that's challenge and support. You're challenging the behaviour but then you're supporting them to enable them to go back to...

RV7 You're supporting them to figure out why; they need to realise why they were doing something wrong.

This conversation highlighted how interpretation of SDW language could normalise staff being punitive (doing TO, in their language). The social discipline window⁴⁰ has given staff in this school a trope allowing a language that obscures both punitive processes and punitive outcomes by stating that they are working *With*. The combined process of isolation and a 'challenging conversation' produces a sequence of coercion in which the young people must answer correctly to demonstrate that they have realised 'why they were doing something wrong'. The language of working *With* holds the risk of an inherent power imbalance if the staff are both partakers and facilitators in the conflict situation of a restorative meeting. This perspective is confirmed in the subsequent exchange:

³⁸ In reference to the TO quadrant in the social discipline window.

³⁹ In reference to the TO quadrant in the social discipline window.

⁴⁰ As on page 28.

RV7 And so you're helping them figure out why they were doing something wrong.

RV4 You're having that restorative conversation.

RV3 It's a recognition that sometimes you do things TO people so that you can then do it WITH them.

In this exchange staff failed to recognise that a restorative conversation is focused on helping those involved to acknowledge harm and recognise needs rather than admit that they were 'doing something wrong'. The RP label is being used to camouflage the coercion of young people to accept blame rather than recognise harm. Furthermore, this suggests that a punitive approach is tacitly influencing the use of restorative approaches in school. One member of the Riverview focus group appeared to recognise the increasing dissonance between the punitive and restorative interventions:

RV3 I think there are some inconsistencies and some questions about what we do at the moment; however, I think there's also ways in which it's not as negative as it could be in that the way that it works at the moment is it is about inclusion in their learning, so whenever they're in the inclusion room, they're working... So there is a sense in which it's about removing them from an environment where they are either unable to work or unable to allow others to work to an environment where they are able to work and they are able to not be a distraction to others. But it's a space which they can then occupy so that we can then continue to work with them, and that's a recognition that particularly for some of our pupils, they can – for a whole range of reasons – they can find themselves in a situation where it is just not realistic to... the challenge would be too high for them to be able to maintain the expectations within the classroom.

It is clear from this statement that this member of staff was attempting to reconcile the tension between restorative interventions and punitive interventions expressed by others in the group. From this perspective the dichotomy is reconcilable if both restorative and punitive processes support young people with their learning, i.e., if both achieve the goals of Riverview School as an institution. Learning in this sense is working on material in the curriculum: even when young people are removed from the 'environment' (classroom) they are able to continue working. What was not discussed was the quality of the work from the young person under these conditions.

This statement also indicated that the dominant system in the school is the formal curriculum, which influences the behaviour management system. Thus, behaviour management (including punitive and restorative interventions) is a subsystem which seeks to meet the needs of young people learning curriculum materials. Therefore, the function of both punitive interventions and restorative interventions is to ensure that the dominant system maintains its objectives (or survives), and so either intervention is permissible if the institutional system achieves its end.

6.3.2 Staff Perceptions of Punitive and Restorative Interventions at Laguna High.

The issue of punitive and restorative interventions in Laguna High helps to identify a struggle over which intervention is the dominant system of behaviour management in the school. The aim of the support from Riverview School is to help transition Laguna High into using more restorative interventions. At present, the punitive system is the incumbent system in Laguna High:

LG1 Yeah, like as a teacher I think I feel probably a couple – a few – members of staff would probably go towards, ‘I want that person to be in a detention’... ‘No, you need to have that conversation with them’ and it’s very much still the inclusion team, saying, ‘Yes I appreciate that you’ve had a breakdown but you need to try and repair it yourself, I can’t just go to them and say... “Go say sorry”’, so it’s still educating them yes, so maybe yeah that’s... because we’re not as far on.

This contribution by LG1 recognised that in Laguna High restorative practice is at an earlier stage, with the default behaviour management approach still being punitive. This could partly explain why staff would demand that a young person be put in detention as, at present, there is negligible energy (in terms of attention, information or money) to compete against the established punitive system. Furthermore, it is arguable that the inclusion team are working with the young people to take ownership in repairing harm. This is an interesting reversal of the facilitator-participant role, with the young person acting as both participant and facilitator. This role reversal implies that with the support of the ‘inclusion team’ the young person acts as facilitator and participant through the contrition of an apology to enable them to return to learning. Although staff acknowledge that the project is newer, it seems that there is a risk of co-option by a punitive system using the label of restorative practice to maintain punitive interventions within Laguna High.

6.3.3 Staff Perceptions of Punitive and Restorative Interventions at Northside School.

In Northside School the issue of pupils being removed from class and the challenge this presents for teachers was expressed:

NS4 I mean I can go on record and say that [sighs] if I'm honest, I know restorative works but I'm still in the mind-set of not every offence... not every, you know, offence needs to be sent to the restorative room; that's how I honestly feel, I think some things can be dealt with that aren't necessarily the student being kicked out of the classroom.

In this statement the issue of the threshold between punitive and restorative interventions is a significant tension. This indicates that the staff member believes there are scenarios which require a range of responses that do not need to be addressed through either a restorative or punitive intervention. Furthermore, the use of the term 'restorative room' is an indicator that the process is punitive in the context of young people having 'offended', which is clearly criminal justice language. Moreover, it is not clear to what extent the language, processes and skills that accompany a restorative intervention are used in the restorative room. The language of the criminal justice system shows a more punitive understanding which is closer to restorative justice. In addition, it is not clear if the 'restorative room' is in fact an isolation room; however, this does demonstrate a commitment by the school to embed a designated place for restorative interventions to happen. There then followed an interesting conversation about two closely intertwined topics - firstly, staff as receivers of referrals to the 'restorative room' and, secondly, staff as determiners of when a conflict needs a restorative interventions:

NS1 And that's where I come in now and I've started filtering those so if you've come to my room for an... for let's say lack of homework or lack of equipment, I'll give them a detention as opposed to put them on a restorative list because it's not... it's not restorative.

NS2 [laughs] It's just ridiculous, 'How do you feel about forgetting your ruler', it's like...

NS1 Yeah, that's... if I believe that a conversation can't be had then...

NS4 I think it's PE that's... I think it's PE that's been doing that primarily.

NS3 What, restoratives for not bringing their kit? Sending them to restorative room... it's a removal practice because they don't bring their PE kit

NS1 It's not just PE.

NS4 It's mainly, though, isn't it?

NS1 No.

This exchange is useful for understanding how the two aspects of behaviour management in the school – the restorative system and the punitive system - interact. Young people are being sent out of lessons for not having the correct equipment and being referred to a restorative intervention. However, the punitive intervention of removal is also being adhered to by the class teacher. The member of staff in the restorative room is then acting as a filter for whether the pupil goes on the 'restorative list' or is given a detention. The issue of conflict tolerance is further explored in the following exchange:

NS1 If it's something that's identified on the behaviour policy as something that is separate to restorative; restorative is a breakdown of... of a relationship isn't it, we said it addresses harm; if the student's been removed because they've not brought in something or the student has been late to lesson and then they're not allowed into lesson; at that point then, it won't be a restorative.

NS2 Although we do have on our behaviour policy rudeness to staff...

NS3 That's... that's a big grey area, isn't it...?

NS1 ...and that... that is one where it's a huge grey area.

These reflections by staff indicate that there is a tension in deciding between punitive and restorative interventions at Northside School. Furthermore, there was an absence in the discussion regarding rudeness by staff to young people. This omission by staff in the focus group suggests an inherent power imbalance in the valuing of staff over young people. Staff have a choice in their response to harm in a way young people do not. This is confirmed in the next exchange in the focus group:

NS1 ...there's a line between what you can say to a member of staff and it being abuse and not abuse; if it's abuse then the child goes into the SLT inclusion room which is definitely a punishment, and if it's something that's... it depends... it depends on the teacher I guess but it depends how...

NS2 What your line is.

NS1 ...it depends how thick their skin is, you know, if someone called me a bitch I'd probably send them to the restorative room; if they called somebody else a bitch, they might be put in the SLT inclusion room.

NS5 What, actually use that word?

NS1 Yeah, like it depends I guess on the level of harm that's happened.

This conversation highlights the decision making required by staff to determine between punitive and restorative (and hard and soft restorative). A determining factor is the sensitivity of staff to the harm caused in the situation. Yet, there is no mention of the young person's sensitivity to the harm caused to them. This suggests that harm is not a static state but a dynamic situation which has to be assessed prior to the encounter. There is also a moment of choice where a young person could go the 'restorative room' or the 'SLT inclusion room' (this school's term for 'isolation room'). The issue of appropriateness of restorative interventions did not appear to be as vague as the participants perceived once actual scenarios were provided. However, there was a recognition that the participant in charge of the restorative room needs to intervene, as evidenced in the following discussion:

NS1 They've both... well that one is definitely a conversation but I try to have those conversations mediated... just because...

NS5 But those will be restoratives though.

NS1 They are restoratives but...

NS5 The rudeness to staff ones will be restoratives.

NS1 Rudeness... will be restoratives but... I do try to have those mediated... just because I want to protect both parties.

During the discussion above there is an acknowledgement that restorative practice requires an impartial facilitator to 'mediate' the harm that has occurred in the young person-teacher conflict. The process requires a facilitator to protect both parties, although it is not clear in Northside School what the process of protection is in practice. The equality of engagement by teachers in contributing to a restorative intervention was discussed next in the focus group:

NS2 ...whether we've been professional in getting the things that we need to have done on time, whereas I don't know that teachers have, if they don't turn up to a restorative, for example, if

they don't engage in a restorative in the way that we want them to, are held to account in the same way.

NS3 I think... I think you are but it's not... officially? I think unofficially that student's going to feel grieved.

NS2 Unofficially... unofficially they'll be held to account perhaps?

NS1 I send the list off to the... to Mr X [head of pastoral care] with the teachers that don't show up, so my list isn't just of the students that haven't arrived, it's also teachers that haven't arrived, it's... I've... this year I have extended my data to hold teachers accountable because last year they weren't...

NS4 Consistently the same people?

NS1 Consistently, yes definitely.

NS2 And what happens...

NS1 Mr X gets on to them and then I get on to them.

This is an important discussion which shows how the principles of restorative approaches are undermined by a lack of understanding within the governance of the school. The voluntary encounter is based on those involved being given enough support and empowerment to want to participate in the encounter. The punitive aspects of the school share the same administrative functions as the restorative elements. The monitoring routine means that both staff and young people attend a restorative meeting and thus participation levels are recorded. However, it is curious that even though this process is ultimately monitored by the head of pastoral care (Mr X) it is acknowledged that there is a group of staff who constantly do not attend. Thus, the imbalance in restorative practice between staff and young people becomes evident from who can refuse to participate. If young people are not able to voluntarily participate then there is coercion, which undermines the principle of voluntary participation. When the focus group was questioned about what accountability there is for non-attendance by staff the following response was given:

NS1 I kind of just have a kind of private word and just... 'How would you feel if somebody sat and waited for you and you didn't show up and you had no inkling of showing up; you wouldn't like it, so...'.

Interestingly, this statement signifies hoping to elicit a sympathetic response towards the situation of the young person. This is not the same as an empathetic response and not part of the questioning used in restorative approaches. In fact, this approach is arguably a punitive question eliciting a shame response. The statement shows the challenge raised for a member of staff seeking to work restoratively in inviting staff to participate in a voluntary process. If the process of staff participation relies on voluntary consent there could be three reasons for consistent non-attendance: firstly, they do not understand the difference between detention and a restorative meeting; secondly, these staff may not prioritise restorative meetings; or finally, they do not have empathy for the young people waiting to see them. In any case it is arguable that for the young person the end result is that engaging with a member of staff in the restorative room is a coercive experience as they do not have any choice about attending the encounter.

In summary, the interplay between restorative and punitive interventions in behaviour management at the school appears to have prompted alternative responses from staff in Northside School. According to the focus group members staff engagement is dependent on how much staff agree with each intervention or have time to participate. Nevertheless, the staff discussion articulated demonstrate that restorative interventions are not always voluntary for the young people involved. The discussion about referrals (i.e., when an issue is sent to the restorative room), as well as the types of incident, are determinates of what type of intervention young people will receive in the school.

6.3.4 Staff Perceptions of Punitive and Restorative Interventions at Evergreen College.

The issue of punitive and restorative interventions was discussed in Evergreen College. The first response to the issue was:

EC6 Umm well my colleagues round here will know better than me because I've only been here 5 minutes as it were but some students' backgrounds are so tough that it seems to me that punishment is almost water off a duck's back for... for them, and it's difficult because they can't be given carte blanche, they can't have... not have a sanction but, you know, I'm sure EC3 and I are thinking of one boy in particular, you know, he's had endless detentions, it doesn't make any difference, you know, he's an SEN boy but punishment is a difficult one because there have to be sanctions but they have to work as well and sometimes I feel that they're a bit counterproductive.

This statement raises several issues regarding the use of punitive interventions or sanctions. First is the concern that, for young people who already have challenging home lives, there is a perceived de-sensitisation to the sanctions used in the school. Secondly, there is the issue of giving sanctions (i.e., endless detentions) to a young person with special educational needs. There is an admission that the punitive intervention is making no difference and is 'counterproductive'. Nevertheless, the member of staff still states that 'there have to be sanctions', even though they have just argued against punitive interventions. The theme of punitive interventions was continued by another member of the focus group:

EC3 For some kids I think it's necessary to move forward, they feel wronged, once they know the other kid's had what they kind of feel they deserve or feel like they've... it's been recognised that someone's hurt them or upset them and they've been given a detention[?] or that... it's not even if it's necessarily that effective for that individual student; for the student who was wronged as such it might be quite good for them in terms of closure and moving forward because they feel like it was dealt with.

This statement offers a unique perspective, one not seen in the literature review. It suggests that punitive interventions offer a remedy for young people in conflict. More specifically, the young person who is targeted can get 'closure' and 'move forward' after the incident once the other young person has 'got what they deserve'. Importantly, there is also an acknowledgement from this participant's perspective that punitive interventions demonstrate that the incident has been 'dealt with' as opposed to ignored. Yet, it is in the second statement that the overlap between punitive and restorative approaches as a form of synergy is captured, with the suggestion that the need for a punitive response can come from a restorative approach. This statement was further developed by the participant:

EC5 When I first started doing some of the training here, people were so anti even before they walked in the room because they didn't want to get rid of any, you know, 'But they need consequences', but I think they... and after having the training they were like, 'Oh OK, there can be a consequence within the restorative... because the participants are saying, 'Well what do you need?'; well I need him to be punished', or 'I need him to have a consequence', and as long as they... they decide on that together as an outcome of the restorative meeting... They can move things forward, but they actually... I have found the ones that I have done, they've started off saying, 'I need him to have a punishment' or whatever and they've actually ended it with actually, 'Do you know what I just need you to say sorry and I need you to stop doing

it...’...that’s all they need, and they’ve dropped the idea of punishment altogether, but I’ve had both.

The above statement from the member of staff shows the challenges of restorative approaches nested within a wider punitive system. Based on this member of staff’s comments young people may want punitive or restorative outcomes yet there is a lack of recognition that ‘I need him to have a punishment’ is not a mutual agreement. This could indicate the subtle influence of the punitive system as young people regurgitate the responses of punitive adults. From the perspective of staff being trained by this member of staff the ‘consequence’ aspect creates an association between restorative and punitive interventions, i.e., the term ‘consequence’ can be associated with the institution and not the harm to a relationship. This may be due to the default punitive interventions being ever present, i.e., both of the young people involved know there is going to be a ‘consequence’. Furthermore, we have the observation from this member of staff regarding why young people agree to be involved in a restorative intervention, that their motivation may actually be to pacify the punitive aspects of the school. Alternatively, young people could be there to perform the ritual of punishment before moving to a restorative intervention in the school. Thus, the closing part of the statement suggests that the restorative approach may shift away from the ritual of punitive tokenism towards a recognition of genuine need and restoration of the relationship.

Aspects of reparation could be part of the process of empowering those participating in restorative interventions through a mutual agreement reached between participants in the restorative intervention. Alternatively, they can be ritualised acts which are disconnected from the conflict and those involved. The following short exchange illustrates a punitive-restorative dynamic in terms of a young person who ‘had to clean off the graffiti’ but within the process of reparation:

EC5 I saw them with Pupil B cleaning the paint and I saw caretaker having the most wonderful restorative conversation about how he felt, you know, he’s a grown man telling this kid how he felt when he... just when he keeps finding the graffiti and how much time it took him, and I saw Pupil B come back going, ‘Yeah, I know, it must have been awful’, you know, they were having this lovely conversation; this is our caretaker...

The fact that that there was a ‘lovely conversation’ where it seems empathy was being expressed does not in itself mean that both parties are part of a restorative approach. This

vignette illustrates relationship reparation; however, this is not the same as restorative approaches.

6.4 The Purposeful Activities in the Inquiry Schools.

Based on their root definitions (appendices 6-9) created during the SSM sessions each staff group selected a purposeful activity which would help them move towards their ideal system state (see Table 12, below).

Table 12: Purposeful Activities Selected by Staff in Each Inquiry School.

	Riverview School	Laguna High	Northside School	Evergreen College
Purposeful Activity	<i>1. Parents' session on restorative approaches</i>	<i>1. Increasing young people's awareness of restorative approaches</i>	<i>1. Increasing young people's awareness of restorative approaches 2. PSHE lessons on restorative approaches 3. School assembly on restorative approaches</i>	<i>1. What is RA? 2. Behaviour policy - explicit mention of RA. 3. Voluntary training - whole staff level. 4. NQT development programme. 5. Written guidance: one-page overview including flowchart.</i>

The topic of developing the purposeful activities was discussed in each focus group, and Riverview School's discussion of their purposeful activity shows that they did achieve their stated goal. In response to the question of progress staff members had all felt pressured and indicated that, since the SSM session, they had been busy. As a consequence the purposeful activity of engaging with parents had not received as much attention as they would have liked. Nevertheless, one participant was clear on the progress in Riverview School:

RV5 I'm not answering the too busy issue; It did get a considerable amount of parents we wouldn't have got normally.

RV3 It did, yeah, I mean we had 22 families represented, I think it was.

RV6 I also think that maybe we were a bit ambitious though, when we sat on this... that day and we were like, 'Oh we can get 120 families [laughs] to come!'...

RV5 'We could do this; we could do that...'

RV6 ...and actually the reality of it is we don't get that many, so we did get those 22 and that was brilliant that we got those but I think maybe we thought we'd get more and realistically we don't.

There is an acknowledgement here that they might have been overly ambitious in the SSM session by setting a target of 120 families in the parents' session. Yet, there is also a clear sense of achievement that they had managed to engage with the 22 families who had attended. However, it is not clear if this session was after a parents' evening in the school, which would have helped generate more engagement. What is of interest is that this one-off event has not been repeated and is therefore unlikely to continue the flow of social energy to reach the aims of the root definition (see Appendix 6). Therefore, new information about the use and experience of restorative practice in the school will not be generated. In addition, the session appears to have been somewhat one-way, with the staff at Riverview School explaining restorative practice but not allowing parents to alter or respond to restorative practice in the school. The reflections by staff were that they were being over-ambitious rather than learning from the experience. Thus, without developing further social energy to potentially reach 120 parents the purposeful activity remains a one off having little effect on staff or the sustainability of restorative practice in the school.

The AIM framework reveals a different perspective on the flows of social energy for staff at Laguna High. The lack of AIM explains the absence of development of their purposeful activity. One member of staff from Laguna High was present at this focus group and commented on the progress of the chosen activity:

Researcher OK. From Laguna High's perspective?

LH1 Umm pass? [laughs]

All [laughs]

LH1 I'm not too sure. It's pretty much what we described it as then is what it is for us now as... we've carried on doing what we were doing, and we still see it as the same.

There is, firstly, a humorous attempt at avoiding the question, followed by an opaque response. This opaque response suggests a paradoxical answer in terms of both implying that action is being taken over time whilst maintaining what appears to be the status quo. The net result is a lack of progress in developing their purposeful activity in line with the root definition (see Appendix 7). However, at another point in this discussion the issue of why Laguna High did not undertake the purposeful activity they had decided upon during the SSM session became clear:

LH1 We're too busy.

Researcher Yeah, so let's take that point, you're too busy. What does that mean?

LH1 My job role changed... And the other person that came went off sick, and Mr F was doing Mr F things, so we just didn't... I didn't action plan; I didn't do anything with it.

Researcher OK so it sounds like... too busy is too vague for me.

LH1 Not too busy, as in like other things came up as a school that were a priority for Mr F to do for other people so we were still doing RP but not moving forward with it like we thought we would.

Researcher So, this is about resources and the capacity to actually do things that came out of the day?

LH1 Yes.

Several issues become apparent from this exchange regarding the lack of progress in developing the purposeful activity in Laguna High. The diffusion of attention resulting from a member of staff changing to a new role, as well as illness and other priorities, stopped the flow of energy between the staff. This reduced the capacity of remaining staff to give the purposeful activity the social energy necessary to achieve awareness of restorative approaches for young people. Hence, the action plan became a symbolic activity of intention rather than engaging social energy with meaningful progress to achieve their purposeful activity. The support from the partnership with Riverview School has not created additional energy to help Laguna High engage with their purposeful activity. All of this suggests that the lack of social energy is symptomatic of a wider issue - a lack of capacity for developing restorative approaches. Recognising that social energy is diverted away from developing the purposeful activity in Laguna High reveals that, regardless of the intentions of the school staff, restorative practice is not a priority in the school.

In Northside School staff discussed their progress in developing their purposeful activity since the SSM session in September:

NS1 I've done my part. Because I'm the face of restorative it's like I said with the children, reminding them what it's for, why do we do it, and I have got that point across to many of the students.

The member of staff was discussing their role and how they were promoting restorative practice, yet did not recognise the wider collective goal of achieving the purposeful activity which the group had created and agreed upon. This indicates a somewhat individualised approach to the delivery of RP in the school rather than a collective group working towards their root definition. The individualised approach was further acknowledged:

NS2 I think it's been reasonably localised though, the impact... as in I think the impact has been localised on your regulars. I suppose, to going across the rest of the school, because one of our goals was to speak to the school.

This statement highlights the localised activity of the member of staff, which again demonstrates a lack of collective action to achieve the agreed purposeful activity. The flow of social energy is confined to individual staff members, which suggests that no network has been developed so that the staff in Northside School become a team. Importantly, the member of staff recognised that the goal of the purposeful activity that the group had decided to undertake was to widen the audience of young people who are aware of restorative practice. The conversation continued with the group seeking to recollect what purposeful activity they were going to develop:

NS3 ...to have assemblies, to make them understand it, and also to maybe even start pushing it out to student-to-student...

NS1 Because it was going to be delivered to the Year 8s wasn't it?

NS3 There was going to be student-to-student restoratives that could take place and have people trained in restorative approaches within the year group... the planning for that took place and it was going to happen a little while ago, but since Mrs M's been off it was cancelled and then... it will take place when she gets back but it's had to go on the back burner, so the training of the students in restorative is going to happen but hasn't yet happened... the assemblies that we were going to have hasn't happened and isn't in the offing any time soon.

What emerges from this exchange is that the focus group staff are aware of the activities that they created in the SSM session to begin to achieve their root definition. The flow of social energy went into a plan had been developed by the group but then two factors appear to have stalled progress. Firstly, the member of staff (Mrs M) designated for training the pupils was off for an unknown reason. This prevented young people from being trained as ‘mediators’. Secondly, while the participants all wanted the training for young people to happen they lacked social energy, so it lost priority as, ‘it’s had to go on the back burner’. Therefore, even if or when the relevant member of staff returns peer mediation may still not happen due to other priorities preventing social energy in the group from achieving this goal. There was a more candid response to the development of assemblies to inform young people of the use of restorative practice in the school which indicated that the group does not have the capacity to do this. As a result of the above discussion a need for clarity on what progress has actually happened in Northside School emerges. The staff acknowledged in the focus group that there has been no progress since the SSM session.

The lack of social energy has prevented the developing of the purposeful activity in the school. The symbolic activity of the action planning expresses intention rather than meaningful progress to support young people with restorative approaches. The staff members recognised their lack of action but not the responsibility for engaging with the plan:

NS5 We did meet up didn’t we, yeah.

NS1 I know there’s a full plan, it just needs to be delivered.

NS4 Yeah, we’ve got a plan, I just don’t think it... I don’t think steps...

NS1 ...have been taken to execute the plan, yeah.

The symbolism of planning allows the group to demonstrate their intention to act through the creation of a managerial artefact. However, the fact that this is not turned into meaningful action to enable their purposeful activity shows that social energy has dissipated because of a lack of attention and money to cover staff time. This was highlighted in the following conversation:

NS2 I don’t know what you guys have been doing... but Mrs M and I have been chatting about getting the Year 8s trained and that’s been... but because I’m head of Year 8 that’s like my specific... so I’m quite focused on that and I want that to happen...

Researcher That's your localised point?

NS2 In a sense my selfish goal that I, you know, I care about it happening in my year group potentially more than the whole school. I do care about it happening in the whole school but the area that I can impact is Year 8 so that's the area that I can definitely do.

NS3 That's fair enough; I don't think it's selfish.

NS4 Were Year 12s trained?

NS1 Year 12s... no because we was going to do the Year 8s first.

NS2 So, we were going to do Year 8s first and then it was going to be Year 12s but the... the assemblies, no, that's not happened.

What emerges above is that individual staff hoped to impact their own areas of influence within their year groups rather than the whole school. The justification was that these two year groups could then influence the remaining year groups in the school. The rationale for the Year 8 training was explained as a pilot by the following statement:

NS4 Erm, yeah I'd sort of agree with NS2 really, I think the plan was really to run it through the... run it by Year 8 first, see how they got on and then sort of... they're the example and then you sort of roll it out to the rest of the school because you've got like a model in place. I mean as a form tutor and part of NS2's team I do try and speak to my form group about restorative so that it is not a detention, it's not, you know, for some of you it might just be an opportunity to get your thoughts together.

NS5 That's a good point, yeah.

NS1 ...maybe you might just need a couple... you know, maybe you might need a lesson out of that lesson and...

NS2 PSHE? Would that be good idea?

This exchange built on the previous discussion about focusing on Year 8s, and the potential to pilot peer mediation training, explaining the knowledge for young people. NS4 alluded to the need to ensure that all young people receive the benefits of having a reflective space which is different from the detention space. The focus group discussion concluded with the possible, emergent, solution of developing a young person-focused restorative activity within PSHE. This was put forward as a new idea. However, this was explicitly part of their focus

in the purposeful activity they chose to help develop; thus, the lack of social energy highlights a loss of information retention due to lack of attention. In effect, the group has lost a collective memory since the SSM session. To summarise, no action was undertaken by staff to support the purposeful activity developed in their SSM session, although a plan was developed to take action.

In Evergreen College there was also a lack of progress with their purposeful activity. Here, there was an array of activities which the group had sought to undertake after their SSM session. In the follow-up focus group the participants reflected on their progress during the ten months since the session:

EC7 We needed a prompt.

This response from a member of staff shows how their attention needed to be galvanised to engage with their purposeful activity. Further issues regarding the lack of progress in Evergreen College will be discussed in the analysis of the features of a complex adaptive system. The lack of attention, information and money as indicators of social energy suggests that when these forms of energy do not flow there is little opportunity for purposeful activity (i.e., change) to occur, as evidenced by Evergreen College.

6.5. Challenges Perceived by Staff in the Inquiry Schools.

From the focus group interviews it can be seen that the challenges of gaining momentum to engage with purposeful activities were perceived as hindered in several ways. These included perceptions of time and how to overcome boundaries. Importantly, the focus groups became heterotopias in which new solutions emerged and new meanings were constructed. These challenges will each be explored in turn.

6.5.1 The Challenge of Time Experienced by Staff in the Inquiry Schools.

The issue of time was present in all schools during the focus groups. For the staff at Riverview School time manifested itself as a feeling during the second focus group:

RV9 I'm feeling tired from a long week.

RV1 I'm feeling a bit washed out this week actually [laughs].

RV3 I'm feeling unsettled.

RV2 I've had a long week with some very late nights so I'm feeling slightly jaded.

RV8 I'm feeling busy and rushed.

The school staff perceived time in the past tense and yet this past was disruptive. As a group the Riverview staff's attention was historical in the sense that they were reflecting on time already experienced as they entered the focus group.

In contrast, the member of staff attending from Laguna High was future-orientated:

LH1 I'm feeling ready for tomorrow.

In both cases Riverview School and Laguna High staff were not present (in the moment) in the focus group. The perceptions of participants indicate a multi-directional nature of time and may be symptomatic of where staff are situated within the school year and how they embody the passing of time.

The issue of time manifested in a different way in Northside School. In terms of the recognition of time, it was perceived as being counted through data on the use of RP:

NS1 Unofficially words are said if a student... because I send the list off to the... to deputy head with the teachers that don't show up, so my list isn't just of the students that haven't arrived, it's also teachers that haven't arrived, it's... I've... this year I have extended my data to hold teachers accountable because last year they weren't... I didn't... if they didn't...

NS4 Consistently the same people?

NS1 Consistently, yes definitely.

The data collection process discussed by the participants focused on attendance levels and identified that there is a group of staff within the school who do not engage with RP. Time within the system is measured by the choice to attend restorative interventions, i.e., being present to engage in restorative meetings. This does raise issues regarding the voluntary nature of RP as well as the motivations of staff opting out of a restorative intervention. The underlying issue is, arguably, that the choice to invest time in data collection could be used to support staff to better understand RP in the school. Yet, focus group participants' perceptions as seen through their discussions suggested a seeming contradiction between staff wanting to attend restorative interventions and recognising other aspects of the school which may also be requiring staff time. Arguably, this also implies that a young person's time is the least

valued, as this can be wasted without concern by members of staff invited to a restorative meeting.

At Evergreen College the issue of time was relative to a range of other functions happening in the school. Time, from this perspective, was future-planned; this caused change in the present to be perceived as incredibly difficult:

EC5 I looked at the training for both and I was told the calendar was full for the next year, and I looked at the training for NQTs and was told their agenda is full up for the year. 'I can do it on a different day, but they won't be made to go'.

Thus, due to the school's training calendar, opportunities to develop restorative approaches for NQTs would need to be delivered in two years' time. This was explained further by the participants' further exchanges:

EC1 I think it's... the fact is that the calendar's put into... into play quite far into advance, so things are diarised and calendarized quite some time in advance...

EC3 ...so, in order to be able to do something like that, we'd have to have quite an amount of notice. And I don't think there was enough...

EC5 Yeah, I don't... it's impossible to get something in the calendar for the next year; you have to be thinking the year after.

EC1 And because obviously in the teaching profession you... teachers are allocated to do a certain amount of hours per year, there isn't... as EC5 quite rightly said, there isn't, you know, the... the possibility that they can then make staff... it can't be timed as allocated... as directed time; they can't be directed to go, it can only put forward then as an option.

This exchange emphasises the intricacies of having to diarise whole staff training a year or more in advance. The use of time through the training calendar slows the pace and opportunity for emergence. The relativity between emerging ideas (happening in response to change in the school) and the school training calendar (mechanised and planned in advance) means that social energy will often be dissipated before being given whole school support.

The importance of having the training on the school calendar is that it means all staff are compelled to attend. When the issue of compulsory attendance was questioned by the researcher a participant responded:

EC7 Because people are so busy they won't attend if it's optional, or very, very few will.

Researcher OK, and that's the reality [laughs].

EC7 It is reality [laughs].

Yet, there is an interesting juxtaposition between functional time (fulfilling present system requirements) and innovative time (finding spontaneity to explore and reflect as members of staff). Hence, staff training which is voluntary is negated by the fact that staff are 'so busy' with functional time that, unless compelled to attend with advance notice, staff training in restorative approaches will not happen. Functional time explains why the previous purposeful activity was not successful and their proposed new purposeful activity, which seeks to weave innovative time into functional time, may be more effective in amplifying restorative approaches in this school.

6.5.2 Staff Seeking Change in Their Schools.

In Riverview School there was a driving force behind the purposeful activity being delivered for the parents' session:

RV5 RV3 was the driving force behind it and you set up the session after the... me and RV2 were involved with setting up the evening for the Year 7s and you initiated the session afterwards.

This statement captures the issue of RV3 providing the social energy for other members of staff, RV5 and RV2, to support the delivery of a parents' session. However, after this one-off event it is evident that the opportunity for further change from the purposeful activity stopped. Thus, the network for delivering the purposeful activity dissolved after the event. There also appears to have been no feedback from the parents involved in the purposeful activity, which influenced the group's ability to organise. The staff had agreed to use the REAL (Realistic, Engaging, Achievable and Learning) criteria to reflect on their own learning but this was never mentioned in any of the three follow-up focus groups conducted with Riverview School.

The topic of seeking change in Laguna High was met with the challenges of staff absence and a lack of network structure for restorative approaches in the school:

LH1 ...And the other person that came went off sick, and Mr F was doing Mr F things, so we just didn't...

Thus, staff have yet to self-organise due to a lack of social energy to bond together and enact their purposeful activity.

In Northside School the lack of change can also be explained by staff absence, which was alluded to:

NS2 but since Mrs M's been off it was cancelled and then... it will take place when she gets back but it's had to go on the back burner

The absence of a key member of staff is also perceived as a loss of prioritisation. In both Laguna High and Northside School this evidence from staff absence suggests that there is a diffusion of responsibility that they are not able to challenge. This challenge is recognising how they could collectively create alternatives. However, the following exchange demonstrates how potential niches among the staff group have been created to further purposeful activities for a smaller audience of young people:

NS2 ... because I'm head of Year 8 that's like my specific... so I'm quite focused on that and I want that to happen...

Researcher That's your localised point?

NS2 ...that's my... well yeah, I suppose so, that's my sort of... in a sense my selfish goal that I, you know, I care about it happening in my year group potentially more than the whole school. I do... I do care about it happening in the whole school but the area that I can impact is Year 8 so that's the area that I can definitely do.

NS1 That's fair enough; I don't think it's selfish.

What becomes evident is that, in the absence of a hub and spoke network, a localised (niche) area emerges that is loose and based on the ability to focus attention on a specific cohort of young people. The staff member is concerned that this form of localisation may appear 'selfish' in comparison to the rest of the school. Yet, in the absence of a developed network of practitioners localisation of restorative practice into a niche would appear to be the best option for implementing the purposeful activity.

In the fourth inquiry school, Evergreen College, there was evidence of bounded agents seeking to find a weight of connection with other agents, as is illustrated:

EC5 I looked at the training for both and I was told the calendar was full for the next year, and I looked at the training for NQTs and was told their agenda is full up for the year. 'I can do it on a different day, but they won't be made to go'. That's as much as I got to on that list.

The other agents may be bounded by the purposeful activity to develop restorative approaches in the school, yet it is presently the responsibility of a single agent to implement action. There is no communication between group members, so no opportunity for a network to exist or for weight of interaction to form a group. The development of the purposeful activity is not lacking in ambition but rather the interconnected network is inhibited by other perceived school systems.

6.5.3 Focus Groups: As Heterotopias with emergent properties.

All four staff sessions showed incremental innovation during the soft systems methodology sessions⁴¹. They all produced divergent opportunities by developing a range of purposeful activities to achieve their root definitions. These lists could arguably be forms of potential emergence. The ability of staff in each school to create new activities to achieve their root definitions shows an ability to imagine alternative trajectories to achieve a new system state. Part of this process involved changing the spaces and places in which these discussions happened, i.e., the creation of heterotopias for staff participating in this research.

In the third and final focus group session (19th March 2018) in Riverview School staff reflected on their purposeful activity statement for a second time, ten months after they had created it on the 15th June 2017. Firstly, they were asked whether they still agreed with their root definition statement. There was affirmation in the room from the participants, until:

RV6 I don't know whether I understood it but I do agree with it.

Researcher You created it.

RV6 No I do, yeah, I do agree.

Researcher OK.

RV1 I think we've heard it before.

This conversation demonstrates deterioration in the individual staff member's ability to recollect the root definition. The lack of feedback and a self-organising network has led to an

⁴¹ See Appendix 4 for the structure of the SSM sessions and appendices 7 to 10 for what was produced by each school.

absence of collective memory. This places greater onus on individuals to retain information. Secondly, in the final statement, 'I think we've heard it before', 'I think' shows signs of deterioration, even though this member of staff was at the SSM session and the three focus groups in the school where this was discussed. This is symptomatic of the fact that, with few opportunities to come together outside of the focus group sessions, the staff members' ability to recall the root definition has been depleted over time – both individual and group memory has faded.

In Laguna High, the implementation of restorative approaches resonates with the non-linearity of complex adaptive system. The school has embarked on a new form of staff training as the structures of the school have changed. The following exchange demonstrates this:

LH1 I think at Laguna High the..., it was tried and failed [reference to RP], and then there was a different type of structure that was in school and then it went back to restorative working and from now, you meet with Mr F and, you know, learn about restorative practice.

RV9 So new staff are...

LH1 ...are educated on it. So... and I think also, we mentioned as well like... I feel like when you're interviewed, they look for it, if you are possibly that type of person...

It appears from this conversation that previous attempts at RP knowledge creation were not been successful in Laguna High. Interestingly, the school has begun recruiting staff who demonstrate restorative values during the selection process; the selected new staff are then inducted in RP when joining the staffing body in the school. This is a different model of school change: rather than staff being selected for their technical abilities to teach and manage behaviour, new staff are selected because they resonate with restorative values and are then educated in RP. Over time this has the potential to create a cultural tipping point for RP as new staff amplify the norms and values of the school. An additional benefit over time will be the attrition of non-restorative staff, which will tip the old system into a new system state.

The challenge of developing the purposeful activity in Northside School was of interest as the staff continued to discuss their existing localised purposeful activity. The rationale for the Year 8 training was explained as a pilot by the following exchange:

NS4 Erm, yeah I'd sort of agree with NS2 really, I think the plan was really to run it through the... run it by Year 8 first, see how they got on and then sort of... they're the example and then you sort of roll it out to the rest of the school because you've got like a model in place. I mean as a form tutor and part of NS2's team I do try and speak to my form group about restorative so that it is not a detention, it's not, you know, for some of you it might just be an opportunity to get your thoughts together.

NS3 That's a good point, yeah.

NS1 ...maybe you might just need a couple... you know, maybe you might need a lesson out of that lesson and...

NS2 PSHE? Would that be good idea?

This exchange builds on the previous discussion about focusing on Year 8s but NS4 also alludes to the need to ensure that all young people receive the benefits of having a reflective space. The participants' discussion concluded with the possible solution of developing an activity within PSHE. This was put forward as a new idea; however, this was explicitly part of their focus in the activity they chose to help develop. This again reflects the lack of attention being paid to the activities undertaken since the SSM session, which has resulted in loss of group memory.

The recognition of an absence of action raises the question for the staff about to what extent they are able to influence Northside School to further change the system to support the development of RP, as highlighted by the following discussion:

NS5 I don't know how much power we have to change systems...

NS3 ...in terms of when it's done and how... like I think in terms of how it's done, and doing training but...

NS2 I suppose if we fed back...

NS3 To deputy head.

NS5 ...I suppose it'll be deputy head that will be in charge of behaviour, so if we... if we fed back directly to deputy head to...

NS3 These are the conclusions.

NS5 ...about these are the things that we want to do and we have some of deputy head's clout to umm push those things through... if we have one assembly, what we were talking about, one of the big things was having those assemblies, those assemblies are run on a liturgical⁴² basis...

This discussion shows the staff seeking to find a leverage point in the school to address their challenge of inactivity. This raises an immediate response from the staff. They do not immediately perceive that, as individual agents, they are able to influence change. Nevertheless, a solution emerges as they then identify a leverage point that can be influenced by them collectively - the deputy head. This shows a new form of self-organisation happening within the focus group, into a loose network communicating a common message. In their discussion the emergence of a series of ideas shows how they wish to amplify their decision making so that they can use the social energy of the deputy head. The staff in the focus group perceived that, through gaining the permission of the deputy Head, there existed an opportunity for RP by accessing attention and information in the space created by assemblies in the school. This would create a trajectory for their root definition by raising young people's awareness of restorative practice in Northside School. This idea raised a further opportunity within the focus group, which returned to the emerging issue of PSHE and discussed it at length:

NS4 I think... is it something that we could do in PSHE? I'm just thinking about the students and sort of... [inaudible couple of words] a PSHE lesson? Rather than...

NS3 I think that's a great idea.

NS1 It is.

NS2 But the PHSE...

NS3 It's a really good idea.

NS4 I'm just putting an idea there; I'm not saying we have to do it but I'm just putting an idea...

NS2 You've got some people who would do that very well.

NS1 And some wouldn't.

⁴² Northside School is a faith school – liturgical relates to public worship.

NS3 It... the time slot could, but you can't include that, like PSHE's quite heavily kind of curriculum-led, as much as people might think it's...

NS2 And also with... with the teaching the kids about it, Ms C [member of staff⁴³] would do an amazing job, whereas you've got student... teachers who look at PSHE and they look at... teachers look at the PSHE lesson 5 minutes before...

NS1 It's true.

NS4 ...I know I've... I know I've definitely done it, so 5 minutes before you teach it, so...

NS1 Your best bet's the assembly...

What this discussion shows is the focus group staff reaching a bifurcation point in the emergence of change in the school. A choice relating to overcoming their challenge of inaction is presented: 'Does the purposeful activity go with PSHE or assemblies?'. Through exploring their own personal experiences a collective narrative helps to inform the prospect of the opportunity working in the school. There is an admission that staff do not have time to prepare, which would affect the quality of the delivery of such a session. They therefore decide to remain with their first suggestion of using an assembly to deliver awareness of RP. Paradoxically, the staff had previously ruled this out as not happening soon; they have now found a means to work around the boundary of inaction.

In Evergreen College the challenge of inaction also presented an emergent opportunity within the focus group. Staff in the focus group perceived that there was a wider network of staff using RA in the school. However, the perception was that restorative approaches are implicit as staff embody practice, as shown by the following statement:

EC5 I still think... I do think it lives in the individuals... and because of the... the roles that we have here, we're all a part of the pastoral team in some... some way, shape or form. It still lives in us as individuals, and we've chosen or been successful in obtaining pastoral roles because [laughs] it is within us. There are still many members of staff, even some in pastoral roles, that don't like the approach, don't want to use it, don't think that it works, takes up too much time, 'I'm just going to take a statement and then put... and then figure out who's to blame and put that kid in detention' without anything around it... there is skills within people, within this school that have had no formal training in that area because it's within that person,

⁴³ This is the same member of staff who was supposed to develop the Year 8 session but was ill at the time.

but as a sustainable whole-school approach, it's not in the policy, it's not in regular practice, it's not done in every college, it's not done by every senior tutor, it's not done in the detentions, so it's not sustainable.

This statement implies that the school has a group of bounded agents (a pre-network group of practitioners who have yet to form a group purpose). They are bounded by their commitment to developing RA but have not yet formed the connections and interdependencies necessary to be a networked team. What this conversation also indicates is that, in Evergreen College, RA practice is conducted by a minority of staff in niches. As the extract closes the member of staff provides a perspective that, although the values of RA are present in the school, the more formal structures associated with school change (or the WSA) are not. Thus, this member of staff does not believe that the use of RA in Evergreen College is currently sustainable.

Following on from this statement other members of the focus group then began to respond by seeking a way to increase the use of RA in their colleges⁴⁴ rather than across the whole school. The process of creative emergence happened during the following exchange:

EC6 ...but I wasn't aware that this was a whole-school training kind of thing. I kind of thought we just referred to you (EC5), could we kind of put together – I know again this takes time; it's a bit more difficult, but maybe just a very short sample of questions that teachers could use... when they send a student out of lesson... like, you know, 'In order to formulate your discussion, try asking this rather than this', and not to patronise... and I don't know whether people find it patronising... that's the only thing, whether they would be a bit... but kind of maybe, you know, 'If you're really struggling with a student, what...' because I often share strategies as a senior tutor. I'll often say, 'Rather than asking x to "Why are you not getting on with your work", why don't you say, "How far have you got"' and kind of turn it on so you're then starting a conversation rather than telling her off and making her feel uncomfortable and so it's kind of... I don't know whether I'm being patronising doing it but I'm trying to kind of work on a more positive note with those students.

EC5 Yeah.

EC6 And so, it's almost... some people haven't maybe seen it modelled or...

⁴⁴ The school uses a small school model where each college is made up of approximately 400 pupils.

- EC5 There's a nice... there's a meme and it's got lots of swearing in it, but there's a meme and it says, 'When you're at work, instead of saying... this' and then something will turn it [inaudible couple of words]... so we can almost sort of put out a grid that incorporates not only restorative approach as a standard four questions, but actually all of the things you're talking about. 'Instead of saying this why don't you try this', umm...
- EC6 And people will take or leave it and it just might be there's some people who are willing to try it that have never had the tools to do it, they've never been shown how to do it, and then like you say there's people who are never going to do it, so they'll just go, 'Oh I don't want to do that' and they'll just ignore it but it might be something that might resonate with quite a few people that maybe have never been given that opportunity.

In this exchange the two members of staff are amplifying each other's ideas, self-organising to create an emergent idea which had not been developed in the SSM session. Yet, the emergence of modelling RA would be a trajectory which would help the school reach its root definition. The use of scenarios gives a nuanced understanding in which to apply restorative phrases to use in conflict situations to potentially inform different responses by staff.

Interestingly, the participants are aware their colleagues may interpret this emergent idea of scenario-based restorative language as patronising and are careful to ensure their newly developed 'questions grid' resonates with them. The staff participants want to resonate with their colleagues, so are developing a means of promoting RA which is not rejected. This resonates with Freire's solution to the banking model: 'Dialogue with people is neither a concession nor a gift much less a tactic of domination. Dialogue as the encounter among men to "name" the world, is a fundamental precondition for their true humanization' (1970:137).

By having a voluntary dialogue with colleagues as a means of promoting RA the two focus group members recognise that, although some staff members will not use the three-phase grid, voluntary engagement will influence the take-up of RA among other colleagues. Furthermore, their objective as a team is to influence the use of language in the school. The development of the 'three-phase grid' is an interesting way to support other members of staff in the adoption of restorative language in the school. The three-phase grid also requires collective knowledge from the participants in the focus group for it to be developed. This shared knowledge creation is an important aspect of systems change emerging as the potential for focus group members to self-organise from bounded agents into a networked

team. The emergence of a new trajectory for RA appears to have been re-invigorated by their proposed activities in terms of both co-creating and allowing self-selection in the development of RA in Evergreen College. The opportunity to overcome the previous lack of a purposeful activity was recognised, with the participants discussing the time needed to achieve this new activity:

EC5 So, could each of us, after today, give a short task with a deadline...

All [laughs].

EC5 ...can you come up with at least 3 phrases, 'Instead of this, try this'; send them all to me, I'll collate them in a grid and then I'll share them back out again.

EC4 Do they have to be our own? [laughs].

EC8 'From now on I'm not going to say that; I'm going to say this'.

EC5 Just things you've heard that work, things that you've used yourself, at least 3 each from each of us, will give a nice list then we'll be the same[?] and I'll send it back out again to all of us and the others that aren't here today to say, 'This is what we're using' by... by... err... what are we, Tuesday, by end of tomorrow.

This creation of a purposeful activity shows that the participants were able to create a new activity and a way to achieve their root definition. The opportunity to develop this emergent form of RA in the school will depend on the galvanisation of attention and information within the existing bounded agents. The potential network shape appears to be coalescing around a hub and spoke model with the spokes feeding into the hub (EC5 as the hub acting as the coordinator).

6.6 Responding to the Research Questions

This research has sought to address three secondary research questions and one primary research question. These will now be addressed in turn.

6.6.1 Secondary Question 1: In what ways do staff perceive the state of restorative approaches as a feature in their school?

What has become apparent from using a complexity-informed analysis of each of the inquiry schools for this research is the fragility of restorative approaches. This fragility is indicated in the language staff use to construct the state of restorative approaches in their settings.

Hence the fragility is implicit in the diversity of labels used by staff, which indicates how other priorities influence language and process. For example, the term ‘quick restorative’ indicates facilitator priority within a wider perception of system-time happening at speed. The fragility of restorative approaches in each inquiry school suggests that the strength of connection between the restorative approaches field, the domain and restorative practitioners is tentative, if it exists at all. Therefore, school-based practitioners are not connected to the wider field or domain, with the consequence that they lack a range of cultural artefacts to reinforce and support their restorative practice in their setting. The lack of adherence to or acknowledgement of the Restorative Principles Framework, or an alternative, by staff across the schools indicates that practitioners need greater support to resist cultural and system influences when: ‘the fact of the matter is that organisations, such as schools and hospitals will, like dragons, eat hero-innovators for breakfast’ (Georgiades and Phillimore, 1975:315). The relevance of the hero-innovator is of great testament to the conceptual deliberations of Georgiades and Phillimore, showing that their work is as relevant now as when it was first written. By drawing on their work a complexity-informed analysis of restorative approaches has shown that the myth of whole school approach fails to recognise cultural systems’ influence. Furthermore, this research identifies that the ‘pockets of practice’ identified by Skynns et al (2009), which can be more accurately described as a niche feature in a CAS, are capable of resisting wider cultural influences. Yet, staff perceive the state of restorative approaches as a niche feature as having to operate as a subsystem seeking to survive within a wider array of interdependent and interconnect systems.

6.6.2 Secondary Question 2: What do staff perceptions reveal regarding restorative approaches as a complex adaptive systems phenomenon in their schools?

The implications of staff perceptions for restorative systems in schools, based on this research, reveal a dynamic tension between sources of energy and sources of exhaustion in a school. Hence, the restorative system acts as a niche with few opportunities to amplify its relevance to staff or young people. The evidence from the focus group discussions in all schools suggests that staff perceive feedback amplification through the use of restorative language and labelling. The adoption of restorative labels (without meaning) by staff is arguably the cheapest form of change in terms of both money and attention. Yet, their perceptions reveal conflicts and synergies that co-exist in their restorative systems. When viewing their perceptions through the lens of a complex adaptive system, the restorative approaches literature has not discussed ways in which restorative systems need to defend or

respond to the threats of punitive systems in schools. That said, the work of Green et al (2019) and Astra et al (2019) may give further indications of how schools are both sustaining restorative approaches and maintaining the integrity of restorative approaches when their results are published in 2020.

The adaptation of restorative approaches meant that staff did not perceive that institution-centric goals were distorting restorative approaches as a system of engagement for addressing issues such as conflict or bullying. The work of Garrett et al (2019) suggests that by including young people participation may be one way to address power imbalance through staff and young people discussing wider issues of inequality. However, without a clear link to restorative practice by staff this runs the risk of being contained within its own heterotopic niche. In summary, restorative approaches in the four inquiry schools do not display aspects of the whole school approach but are rather revealed to be a niche system feature within a complex adaptive system. The sustainability of the niche is dependent on balancing sources of social energy with sources of exhaustion, mitigating threats and synergising with more dominant subsystems.

6.6.3 Secondary Question 3: What is revealed regarding the sustainability of restorative approaches when schools are explored as complex adaptive systems?

When schools are explored as complex adaptive systems the opportunities to sustain restorative approaches depend on the range of nested systems at play. The ecosystem which sustains restorative approaches in the inquiry schools relies on an interplay between social energy, the restorative system and practitioners. The fact that restorative approaches can sustain enthusiasm among staff in the four schools in spite of a lack of government support and a competitive neoliberal educational system suggests that the idea remains both powerful and attractive to educationalists.

Yet, the ability of restorative approaches to sustain themselves beyond rhetoric within educational settings is fragile. Presently, the lack of support from either the field or the domain means that practitioners are not able to thrive within the complex adaptive systems they occupy. Consequentially, staff belief in the potential good of ‘doing RA’ as a facilitator may address individual conflict situations to some extent but this is not supported with system features to mitigate against institution-centric goals and retain a focus on young people or community-centric goals. Hence, sustainability vis-à-vis the survival of restorative approaches in each school is possible in each of the four current systems. However, the

entropy of AIM, an ever-present feature in social systems, suggests that the current system states are at risk in the four inquiry schools without further sources of energy to replenish practitioners. Furthermore, when viewed as a CAS, restorative approaches as a sustainable system feature are sensitive to changes in attention, information and money.

6.6.4 Response to the Primary Research Question: *What can a complexity theory-informed thematic analysis reveal regarding the phenomenon of restorative approaches and its sustainability in four English secondary schools?*

In each of the four schools a complexity-informed analysis has indicated that staff participating in this research were not adhering to restorative approaches as defined in the literature. This research suggests that the restorative interventions in each school are in a dynamic interplay between the system state and the actions of staff. The Restorative Principles Framework, the AIM criteria and the complexity theory-informed thematic analysis gave an understanding of how the traces, and present restorative system, exist in each school. The analytical generalisations have provided insight into the sustainability of each restorative system nested within the complex adaptive system. This fragility may be inherent in all complex adaptive systems, and the ecosystems they inhabit, which require a dynamic interplay, a state at the edge of chaos. In restorative systems the interplay between practitioners, the domain and the field could provide a wider ecosystem to enhance sustainability in individual schools. In effect, this has the potential to create a network of networks which require social energy. Thus, such a network could provide a weight of interactions to sustain schools through feedback to amplify creativity and regulate the restorative principles.

In conclusion, a complexity-informed thematic analysis of the four inquiry schools has revealed that, as a system feature, restorative (sub)systems reside within niches. The analysis indicates that social ecosystems are dynamic, with conflicts and accommodations between sources of energy and sources of exhaustion contending for social energy. Consequentially, there is a tension between sustainability and fragility. Furthermore, when restorative approaches become a rested system state surviving on minimal attention, information and money to exist, the entropy of restorative approaches will mean their demise over time. Yet, a latent potential for new emergent properties is always present in complex adaptive systems. Thus, at present, this research concludes that the sustainability of restorative approaches within the present educational ecosystem will remain a niche feature: localised and institution-centric.

7. Discussion of the Findings from the Four Inquiry Schools.

Following on from the exploration of the previous chapter it is now possible to review how this research contributes to extending the knowledge base on restorative approaches and school change. Importantly, it explores how these findings link with the existing literature and where the key concerns are for the sustainability of restorative approaches in educational settings.

7.1 The Continuous Challenge of Defining Bullying.

The literature on bullying has developed in response to changes in the dynamic phenomena of bullying, such as cyberbullying. This has led to my definition of bullying:

The repetitive, intentionally aggressive and harmful behaviour by perpetrators which creates an imbalance of power between those targeted as individuals or groups in real or online spaces

(Chapter2 page9).

Having a clear definition of bullying synthesised from the literature has allowed for a critique of the utility of the term separate from government guidance and the self-generated definitions in the inquiry schools. Moreover, the dynamic phenomena of cyberbullying were presented as a fluid experience, hence the term blended bullying, to describe the present state of the phenomenon. Importantly, this suggests a recognition of bullying as blended between online and real harmful phenomena, rather than two distinct realms of interaction, as they are presented in the literature. However, the lack of UK government (DfE and Ofsted) clarity on the definition of bullying means that staff, parents and young people describe aspects of bullying rather than a precise definition.

The consequence is that stakeholders in school communities recognise the term ‘bullying’ but not the phenomenon as experienced, to the detriment of young people. Unfortunately, this lack of clarity is further compounded by the medicalisation of bullying by the World Health Organisation (WHO) and their broad definition: ‘the intentional use of physical or psychological force against others’ (Bonell et al, 2018:2452). This lack of definitional rigour from health disciplines, without recognition from the bullying field, may help to perpetuate a definitional ambiguity in how to best define and consequentially evidence effective ways to address bullying.

7.2 Bullying in the Inquiry Schools.

The findings from this research suggests that the issue of bullying is not addressed by restorative approaches in the four inquiry schools. At no point during the focus groups with staff across the four inquiry schools was there any mention of how restorative approaches were used to address issues of bullying. In addition, bullying and the vulnerability of young people were not commented on by staff in the focus groups. Similarly, the substantial evidence of harm to both targets and perpetrators was not linked by staff to restorative approaches as a means of alleviating the harm caused by bullying.

This is of great importance as the types of harm caused by bullying, particularly social harm as identified by Nordgren, MacDonald and Banas (2011), have a significant impact on young people. Furthermore, research from neuroscience has shown that psychological pain is felt similarly to physical pain. Neuro-scans by Novembre, Zanon and Silani (2015) indicated that brain patterns lit-up when a volunteer experienced social exclusion, as well as when witnessing social exclusion, i.e., there were empathetic responses. Moreover, the implications of recognising psychological pain due to causes such as bullying need to be recognised by school-based restorative practitioners.

Research by Waasdorp and Bradshaw (2015) suggests a significant overlap between online and offline bullying as young people reported being targeted by both. Bullying was considered in pre-SSM discussions with young people and parents, and both groups of stakeholders shared their concerns about cyberbullying unprompted. This resonates with Gaffney et al's (2019) conclusions regarding the simultaneous nature of bullying and cyberbullying, i.e., blended bullying. Parents' and young people's views were then shared by the researcher in the SSM sessions with staff in all the inquiry schools. Yet, none of the staff in inquiry schools specifically sought to address cyber or 'blended' bullying in their development of their purposeful activities, despite this being a key concern among parents and young people.

Overall, the findings from this research suggest that the interaction between bullying and restorative approaches is tentative at best, although previous research has sought to address bullying as part of large-scale implementation projects, such as that of Bonell et al (2018), and YJB, (2005). This research offers an alternative perspective which suggests that, when part of the school ecosystem, the phenomenon of bullying is not addressed in schools which claim to use restorative approaches when viewed through the lens of complexity. Thus, the

advantages for young people of engaging in restorative interventions to address the harm of bullying were not being achieved in the four inquiry schools.

Beyond the remit of bullying other forms of conflict also did not seem to be addressed when harm occurred to relationships between peers. There appeared to be little or no recognition of restorative approaches as an intervention to address peer-on-peer conflict in the four schools. This was a surprising finding given the restorative literature (YJB, 2005; Hopkins, 2004; Bonell et al, 2018) on school-based restorative approaches indicates that young people respond positively in a variety of peer-on-peer conflicts. However, when reviewing the literature on the whole school approach no acknowledgement was found that young people need to be co-creators of restorative approaches in schools. Consequently, there is no evidence within the restorative approaches literature about how to successfully engage young people in restorative interventions in schools. Without social energy (attention, information and money) being directed towards awareness of restorative approaches the prospects for informed engagement by young people were limited in each school. Young people were not able to make an informed decision about how and when to engage in a restorative intervention.

7.3 If Not Addressing Bullying and Peer Conflict, What Are Restorative Approaches Restoring To?

A fundamental question for restorative approaches in education is: what are the restorative interventions restoring? At first glance it appears that the literature on restorative approaches uses restorative interventions as a way to address pain and harm caused through conflict. This research suggests that this may be a secondary benefit within educational settings. For Morrison, ‘the practice of restorative justice is both process and product of institutional culture’ (2014:123). This research extends this statement to both process and artefacts being nested in schools as complex adaptive systems. For Morrison the understanding of systems refers to Zimbardo’s work, in which ‘three systems of analysis are important...dispositional (bad apple); situational (bad barrel) and systemic institutional power (the bad barrel makers)’ (ibid:124). Hence, Morrison applies Zimbardo’s assertion ‘to better understand the alienating effects of contemporary educational institutional culture’ (ibid:125), and suggests addressing the school as a system at these three levels:

Together, the challenge is to create socially and emotionally healthy individuals, and peer-cultures within institutional conditions that acknowledge, develop and nurture self-regulatory behaviour, and respond to harmful behaviour, such as bullying in a manner that address the underlying issues, while affirming the moral values of the institution.

(ibid:129)

Importantly, systemic institutional power is demonstrated in the root definitions of the four schools and their aspirations for wider change. This research has shown that the influence of barrel-makers, i.e., policy makers, is less influential in ecosystems. Hence, it is arguable that there is a tension between emergent policy positions in ecosystems and intentional policy positions in hierarchical rigid structures. Morrison suggests that: ‘the study of bullying and restorative justice make a good conceptual fit’ (ibid:125). Yet her definition is too broad, and ‘systematic abuse of power’ may be more relevant to command and control structures (as in Zimbardo’s famous Stanford Prison Experiment), where intentional policy can be transmitted through a hierarchy with minimal distortion or adaptation to the ‘values of the institution’ (ibid:129). This research suggests that these institutional values are often contradictory and pragmatic. Arguments such as Morrison’s for ‘a shift from reliance on external sanctioning systems, or rewards and punishment’ (2013:128-129) overlook how complex systems can accommodate both punitive and restorative interventions at an institutional level, as the values of the institution are shaped by a wider ecosystem.

Thus, for Morrison the goal of change is both addressing bullying and changing the institution. Yet, this research suggests that the challenge of school change is not a linear shift from punitive to restorative, and that schools can label themselves restorative and not address bullying. Institutions such as schools can use their systemic power to induce restorative approaches into being institution-centric whilst staff genuinely perceive they are benefiting young people. The issue remains then: what are restorative approaches trying to restore?

Due to their criminal justice parentage the obvious answer would be the relationship between the harmed and the harmer. This focus on reparation confines restorative approaches to a narrow form of practice at the dispositional and at best situational levels. Importantly, with the introduction of peace as a system state, restorative approaches can be linked to a different system change for those participating in restorative interventions. Peace links with Morrison’s recognition of the dispositional, situational and systemic aspects of a system. For

the purposes of this research I have adapted Galtung's distinctions between types of peace (Cremin and Bevington, 2017:3) to:

Peace is an umbrella term which captures the dynamic interplay between **negative peace**, the absence of violence, and **positive peace**, which enables the bridging of identities, needs, emotions, and relationships to allow both or all parties to coexist in the same community.

The purpose of restorative approaches from this perspective is not only to repair harm caused to relationships but also to engage in the creation of peace between those parties involved. As a result, this definition is less aspirational than the positive peace advocated by Cremin and Bevington, as their positive peace also includes structural change. This is distinct from the idea of 'justice' as an outcome e.g. compensation or reparation but rather 'justice' as a process based on fair participation and equal voice of those affected. Peace also suggests that harm may not be repaired but that the participants involved may still agree to an absence of violence in the future. Thus, consistent adherence to the Restorative Approaches Principles Framework, would create a consistency of process but a diversity of outcome based on what is experienced and agreed by those participating to resolve their conflict. Accordingly, this research suggests focusing on restorative approaches in systems at a community level rather than at an institutional level.

This conceptualisation of peace addresses several issues in the findings of this research regarding the facilitator-participant identity crisis that staff face in schools. Engaging with peace as a process rather than an outcome supports young people in learning about conflict and its potential outcomes. This has the potential to extend Christie's (1977) argument that conflict is 'property', as the potential for peace is also 'stolen' in the inquiry schools. As a consequence, the facilitator-participant role of staff members undermines those involved learning how to achieve peace as the goal is institutionally focused rather than community focused. By shifting the paradigm from harm to peace restorative approaches can reconcile the tension for staff facilitating meetings through them recognising when they are peace-making (Bickmore 2011a). The opportunities to achieve peace, and specifically positive peace, need a process which enables the emergence of such opportunities. As a result, the distortions which may happen from an institutional focus would then be safeguarded against, for example through the Restorative Principles Framework. Peace allows for a paradigm shift in restorative approaches at the dispositional, situational and systematic institutional levels, as

peace-making can only happen when the system invests social energy. Thus, in response to the question of what is being restored, the answer appears to be that restorative approaches have the potential to restore peace in school communities.

7.4 When Viewed as a Complex Adaptive System What Do Restorative Approaches Become in Schools? An Illusion.

Table 13: School Descriptors of Restorative Approaches.

School	Riverview School	Laguna High	Northside School	Evergreen College
Main noun	Restorative practice	Restorative practice	Restorative approaches, and (just) restorative	Restorative approaches or restorative justice
Sub-categories	(Relational practice)	-	Hard restorative	Deep restorative
	Restorative conversation	-	Soft restorative	Quick restorative

The adaptation of language in each inquiry school shown in Table 13 (above) suggests that localisation of restorative approaches descriptors has happened in each school (except for Laguna High due to its early stage of implementation). It is important to recognise that in the four inquiry schools (excluding Laguna High) the use of language was adapted by staff and might not necessarily be shared with young people or parents.

A theme which has emerged from these focus groups is how the terminology of restorative approaches has become localised through the change in language in each school. The core label of ‘restorative’ remains present in each school as this label is the reference point for staff in the focus groups, even when shortened to ‘restorative’ in Northside School. The core label is also present in the sub-categorisation (apart from in Riverview School), and the adjective may give greater insight into the school’s culture and what is influencing the adaptation of the term. Likewise, in Evergreen College the distinction between ‘quick’ and ‘deep’ restorative approaches is new terminology which similarly may reflect wider school influences.

Yet, the co-evolution of the term ‘restorative approaches’ within the literature has risked convoluting the wider phenomena of relationship building, e.g. Evens and Vaandering (2016), leading to greater description of a range of practices that do not all necessarily adhere to the definition of restorative approaches. The definition of restorative approaches in this research is:

The processes used by an impartial facilitator to engage and deliver a structured dialogue (including skills, questions, risk assessing, addressing unmet needs, and negotiating to reach a peaceful agreement) for those involved in a conflict or bullying situation where harm is identified to potentially reach a peaceful resolution.

(Chapter 3, page 33).

The work of Eliaerts and Dunmortier (2002) highlighted concerns for young people with their title: *Restorative Justice for Children: in need of procedural safeguards and standards*. A major thrust of their argument was that RJ could become a local custom ‘where every district knew its own RJ rules, principles and organisation and as a consequence lead to disparity and uncertainty’ (2002: 205). This research supports that assertion. Hence, the definition of restorative approaches used in this research was based on a synthesis of the literature and was further developed by the researcher through critical reflection, resulting in Table 14(below). In addition, the analyse of restorative interventions in each school showed divergence from the literature when staff discussed their restorative practice during the focus groups. Thus, the eight principles of restorative approaches have provided a useful analytical framework for assessing the integrity of a restorative intervention when vignettes have been shared by staff. Each principle will now be discussed.

When the Restorative Principles Framework is applied to the themes emerging from the focus groups in the four schools it becomes clear that no school is fully adhering to the principles of restorative approaches (see Table 14 below). None of the four schools appears to be using a restorative questioning process. In addition, the principle of impartiality has been lost across all the inquiry schools. The educator-facilitator identity clash may explain the challenge of being impartial. Furthermore, the principle of voluntary encounters appears to be subtly avoided by staff in each school. It could be argued that there is presumed consent when parents send their child to the school but there does not appear to an informed consent to participate. The Restorative Principles Framework suggests that, although each inquiry

school will call a meeting restorative (dependent on their localism), there is a lack of adherence to the majority of the principles of restorative approaches.

Table 14: Principles of the Restorative Approaches Framework: Principles Active in Each School.

	Riverview School	Laguna High	Northside School	Evergreen College
1. Questioning process	No	No	No	No
2. Voluntary encounter	No	No	No	No
3. Articulation of harm by those involved	Yes	No	No	Yes
4. Mutual agreement	Yes	No	No	No
5. Inclusive	Yes	No	No	No
6. Empowering in process	No	No	No	No
7. Impartiality	No	No	No	No
8. Empathy	No	No	No	Yes

7.4.1 The Principle of Questioning.

The findings from the four inquiry schools show that no school is adhering to the questioning process endorsed across the literature on restorative approaches (Hopkins, 2004; Skinns et al, 2009; Cremin, Sellman and McCluskey, 2012; Selman et al, 2015; Cremin and Bevington, 2017). Even when staff are wearing questions on lanyards around their necks they fail to adhere to a sequenced questioning process. Without an acknowledged principle of questioning it is difficult to ascertain when school-based practitioners are using a restorative intervention.

7.4.2 The Principle of a Voluntary Encounter.

There appears to be a greater focus on the encounter, specifically between the young person and member of staff. This is present in all four inquiry schools. Unfortunately, however, this research shows that staff give little or no preparation, thought or time to the encounter. Furthermore, the restorative approaches literature has failed to recognise that young people may be held in punitive spaces, such as isolation rooms, prior to engagement in the encounter. The transition from punitive to restorative intervention has consequences for the encounter, and the way in which this is perceived by young people experiencing this transition is an evidence gap which needs to be addressed with further research. Having an encounter without a coherent questioning process means there is an inability to identify and articulate the harm caused to the relationship between participants.

7.4.3 The Principle of the Articulation of Harm.

The absence of this principle re-enforces Christie's 'conflict as property' idea in two specific ways. Firstly, young people's voices are marginalized from the process, leaving them with an inability to articulate their lived experience of the conflict or bullying dynamic. At worst, they are silenced from their own narrative when engaged in teacher-young person conflict. Thus, they have no possession of the narrative in which they are involved or a means to articulate this. Secondly, when staff-young person conflict occurs the harm which is articulated is institutional harm. This is framed in terms of disruption to learning, i.e., the slowing down of institutional systems. Thus, the objectives of the institution supersede articulation of the harm caused to the relationships, so ownership of the conflict is stolen away from those most affected.

7.4.4 The Principle of Empathy.

In this research the principle of empathy is inevitably devalued because of the absence of articulation of harm in the inquiry schools. The emotions generated in conflict are peripheral unless school-based practitioners are explicit in acknowledging the emotional context.

7.4.5 The Principle of Mutual Agreement.

The above leads to the undermining of mutual agreement where restorative systems have an inherent power balance in favour of staff. Therefore, spaces and process are both couched in institution-centric goals rather than those of the community. Thus, those involved cannot reach a *mutual* agreement as there is a lack of equality of participation due to the deficiencies in adhering to the restorative principles framework.

7.4.6 The Principle of Inclusiveness.

The inclusivity of restorative approaches also assumes that schools will value diversity and equality. Yet, this principle has remained absent from practice in the focus groups across the four inquiry schools.

7.4.7 The Principle of Impartiality.

The absence of impartiality means that bias is a significant risk to the integrity of the process, as well as giving rise to the subtle risk of institutional narrative dominance. The dual role of facilitator-participant means that staff are not aware of how they reiterate the punitive narrative which focuses on returning to learning; this was evident in all four schools. Moreover, where there is a recognition that both parties need to be protected, as in Northside School, without the other principles acting in concert, the punitive narrative may become reinforced by both teacher-participant and teacher-facilitator. This leads to a failure to empower young people in the process of restorative approaches.

7.4.8 The Principle of Empowerment.

The restorative approaches literature makes constant reference to the benefits of using restorative interventions; hence the need for the principle of empowerment. Restorative justice has recognised this:

Restorative justice fails in cases where one or more primary stakeholders is silenced, marginalised and disempowered in the process intended to be restorative.

Conversely, restorative justice succeeds in cases where the primary stakeholders can

speaking their minds without intimidation or fear and are empowered to take an active role in negotiating a resolution that is acceptable and right for them.

(Braithwaite, 1996:24)

In the four schools the principle of empowerment has been debilitated by the lack of adherence to the other principles in the framework. The principle of empowerment is the central tenet which orientates restorative approaches as a young person-focused paradigm. This principle mitigates against institutionalisation by practitioners as it ensures that those most closely affected are empowered to participate, engage and learn from their conflict regarding how to achieve peace. Mixed methodology research by Garnett et al (2019), in its early stages, combines youth participatory research with restorative practice in two American school districts:

As scholars tasked with evaluating the implementation and outcomes of RP within our partner district, we believed that youth participation in both the formative and summative components of the evaluation strategy were integral cornerstones for authentic youth engagement.

(Garnett et al 2019:309)

This indicates that researchers using critical methodologies can help to build the principle of empowerment into the research design and delivery of restorative approaches.

The framework in this research identifies a lack of adherence to the majority of restorative principles. Over time it appears that the institutional systems will accommodate and adapt restorative interventions towards punitive interventions, so that restorative approaches become an institution-centric process rather than young person-centric process for achieving peace. The Restorative Principles Framework has provided a tool for recognising where principles are being adhered to and how these principles may unintentionally be undermined by staff attempting to facilitate restorative interventions. However, the framework is not a linear tool for tick-boxing interventions; instead, it shows how and when certain principles are not being adhered to, causing others to also lose their potency in resolving conflict and bullying situations. The Restorative Principles Framework suggests that each principle is interconnected with the other seven, and that they are also interdependent in assuring fidelity to process. The consequence of this is that the omission of any principle distorts or

undermines restorative approaches' ability to achieve peace, despite giving a meeting the restorative label.

7.5 The Influence of Schools on Restorative Approaches.

This research shows that without a clear definition of restorative approaches and a principles framework the protection of young people in the process of a restorative intervention can be damaged. The issue of language in restorative approaches has tended to focus on the distinction between criminal justice language and educational language. MacAlistair (2014) observes: 'Instead of the terms 'victim', 'crime' and 'offender' schools seemed to prefer to speak of 'students who have been harmed or caused harm' Morrison (2007)' (ibid:101). MacAlistair also cites McCluskey et al (2008) and the concern that 'borrowing legalistic phrases such as "victim" and "perpetrator" may reinforce a discourse that demonises and criminalises young people and should be avoided' (ibid:101). This research extends this debate on restorative language and suggests that the concerns are more insidious. Without a strong connection between (1) the label, (2) the definition, (3) the principles, and (4) the processes of restorative approaches in schools, three distinct risks can be evidenced in the inquiry schools.

Firstly, punitive practices are sanitised by the language of restorative approaches. In this instance language transforms the interpretation of the violent act by the institution: as was noted in Riverview School, isolation becomes inclusion, punishment becomes sanction, and restorative practice becomes communication. This is reminiscent of George Orwell's 'doublethink' in the novel *1984*: 'To know and not know, to be conscious of complete truthfulness while telling carefully constructed lies' (1949:44). For Kehl and Livingston doublethink - and by extension doubletalk - 'is the insidious practice whereby the powerful abuse language to deceive and manipulate for the purpose of controlling public behaviour' (1999:77). Kehl and Livingston share their concerns, which are focused on how English teachers can act to defend young people from doubletalk. They suggest 'an Orwellian Oath to commit to (1) use language clearly and reasonably ourselves; (2) combat doublespeak wherever we find it; (3) seek effective pedagogical ways of making students sensitive to language and linguistic vulnerability' (ibid:77). The research in Riverview School in particular, where staff had direct experience of isolation rooms, and the three other inquiry schools more generally, suggests that staff need to be able to identify doublespeak before they can challenge its use in their setting. In the context of the inquiry schools sanitisation of

punitive language allows staff moral distance from the punitive harm they do to young people. Doublespeak allows the language of self-deception whilst actively acknowledging that contradictions are present in the school. Sanitised punitive language also enables staff to justify the importance of being restorative as distinct from the processes that enable them to use restorative principles during a restorative intervention. Thus, Kehl and Livingston's 'Orwellian Oath' is not just significant for English teachers but for all staff in guarding against doublespeak.

Secondly, the use of the social discipline window as a theoretical framework has demonstrated the risk of transplanting criminal justice concepts into educational systems such as schools. Arguably, the complexity of harm caused by conflict situations such as bullying cannot be reduced to four words (TO, NOT, FOR, and WITH). This form of reductionist conceptualisation means that schools, as in the case of Riverview School and Laguna High, use the label 'WITH' to cover their range of responses to conflict. Thus, WITH hides an inherent power imbalance which, even when challenged, requires staff to mitigate and distance harmful behaviour by with the justification that they are power-neutral and adhering to restorative principles when in fact they are anything but. Vaandering cites Wachtel: 'human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, more likely to make positive changes in their behaviour when **those in a position of authority**⁴⁵ do things with them' (Vaandering, citing Wachtel, 2013:3 in 2013:320). She is rightly concerned that 'it is highly problematic when such a theory is presented in contexts such as education that have entirely different purposes and goals from the traditional judicial system' (2013:320). This research agrees with this position but not Vaandering's conclusion, which is a reconstituting of the social discipline window into a social relationship window (2013:331). This research suggests that the social discipline window (and by extension the social relationship window) in two of the inquiry schools (Riverview School and Laguna High) does the exact opposite of what its creators had hoped when applied to educational settings. The social discipline window provides simplified language with which school staff do not have to reflect on their practice. Thus, the hegemony of WITH in a two-by-two matrix distorts the complexity of decision making and power relationships in educational settings. The use of the social discipline window in the absence of a clearly articulated Restorative Principles Framework

⁴⁵ Bold emphasis by Vaandering.

appears to further the use of restorative approaches as a local custom within the inquiry schools.

Thirdly, the concerns of Eliaerts and Dunmortier (2002) regarding the appropriateness of restorative approaches for young people appeared to have been well-founded. The use of restorative approaches in schools has raised significant concerns regarding the coercion of young people by staff. The restorative approaches field has assumed that staff are young person-focused. Whilst this may have been the case at a different time, this research suggests otherwise, in that staff are outcome-focused, specifically with regard to institutional requirements, and so risk pressuring young people to conform to institutional goals.

A corollary issue is that coercion is a tacit feature in the dual nature of teacher-facilitator restorative interventions. The assumption within the restorative field has been that restorative practitioners are impartial in their decision making. This neutrality may be more overt in the criminal justice system, as judges or investigating police officers do not also facilitate restorative conference in the English legal system. However, staff in schools such as the inquiry schools need to be perceived as neutral from the perspective of all those involved in a conflict situation. Importantly, this research suggests that staff may be able to be neutral when acting in peer-to-peer conflict. Furthermore, restorative approaches were not described in the inquiry schools as being used for this purpose. Consequentially, for staff acting in the facilitator-participant role there is no accountability in terms of their practice or adherence to principles. As was suggested in Riverview School, multiple members of staff may be present in a restorative meeting and yet in the vignette descriptions none of the staff adhered to restorative principles when engaging with a young person. Thus, the issue of punitive coercion under the guise of restorative labels and language is raised as a significant risk based on the vignettes described by the staff in the focus groups. The concerns of Eliaerts and Dunmortier (2002) regarding minimum standards are clearly relevant to both educational and criminal justice settings in terms of protecting young people.

To summarise, it has become clear from the literature review that there are some substantial gaps in recognising the importance of young person-focused forms of restorative approaches as compared to institutional forms of restorative approaches. This research does not suggest that individual staff are deliberately being coercive. Indeed, it is clear from the discussion in Northside School that staff who disagree with restorative approaches will simply opt out of any engagement with the intervention. What is more concerning is the staff who truly believe

in and want to deliver restorative approaches but are not engaged in a young person-centric system to support their practice. Hence, unintentional consequences in adaptation will distort restorative approaches in subtle ways that do not reflect the aspirations of the field or those staff interacting daily with conflict.

7.6 The Issue of Restorative Facilitation.

The findings from this research suggest that the role of the facilitator in restorative approaches has been adapted in several distinct ways. Based on the descriptions of practice given during the focus group discussion there is an issue surrounding the facilitator-participant role in the four schools. Research by McCluskey et al (2008), as well as Bevington (2015), discusses the issues of teacher identity and the challenge of being impartial. This research further indicates that staff in the role of a facilitator-participant distort the role of facilitator through partisan views as well as coercion of young people towards the institutional goal of returning them to class.

Hence, the facilitator-participant role undermines the restorative principles by which the restorative intervention is delivered. This research argues that it is impossible to both be in conflict and facilitate conflict without biases occurring. Furthermore, such a dual role undermines the perception of impartiality by other side participating in a restorative intervention. As an outcome the appropriation of restorative labels and restorative language enables staff in the schools to manipulate young people in a more insidious way than explicit punitive interventions. In addition, young people engaging in restorative interventions run the risk of having their emotions and potential agency covertly influenced under the guise of collaboration by staff claiming to be working in their best interests. The only potential option that they have is passive resistance when engaged in a restorative intervention. Acts of passive resistance will be perceived by staff as needing to repeat encounters until an institutional outcome is met, rather than recognising that young people are not feeling valued enough through inclusive or empowering principles to participate in restorative approaches. Where young people do passively resist staff are also able to convince themselves that the young person does not share the school's values. From this perspective staff are at risk of *othering* young people, a condition described by Bauman as occurring, 'in the world where few if any people continue to believe that changing the life of others is of any relevance to their own life' (2007:24). From a complex adaptive systems perspective staff are drawing perceived boundaries regarding the systems that they are in as opposed to the system young

people are situated within. This is the anthesis of what a restorative facilitator would want to achieve in adhering to the principle of inclusiveness.

The issue of facilitation in Laguna High, however, showed an alternative model. Here, in the absence of any form of knowledge connected to the domain, field or informed practitioners, there was a punitive system masquerading as restorative through the adaptation of language. The most distorted version of this was young people being co-opted into acting as facilitator-participants. The discussion shared in the focus group showed that the pastoral team was preparing young people to engage with a member of staff. Thus, the young people were responsible for both the process and outcome of a conflict with a member of staff. When viewed from the perspective of school partnerships this highlights the danger of peer-to-peer implementation of restorative approaches across schools. This form of collaboration is inept as the supporter school (Riverview School) does not have adequate domain, field or practitioner knowledge to be able to transfer knowledge to the supported school (Laguna High).

The issue of relational practice as identified in Riverview School resonates with the work of McAllister and the theoretical argument between restoration and transformation. For MacAllister this distinction can be described as follows: '[an] educational encounter specifically designed to restore relationships and/or repair harm caused by conflict may be properly described as restorative. When educational ends become more proactive however, the term restoration appears to be less apt' (2013:101). The confusion for staff in Laguna High was between when they were being restorative and when they were using relational practice. However, Riverview School staff were clear about the distinction in the focus group. Thus, all staff are proactive in building and mainlining relationships with children and young people. This is distinct from the repairing of relationships, which needs a skilled facilitator for a restorative intervention.

The undermining of restorative approaches is an issue in Northside School as the use of facilitator-participants for their 'soft restorative' practice is not linked to any restorative principles. Similarly, the 'quick restorative' as evidenced in Evergreen College also shows an undermining of restorative principles. In both instances a shorter process has been articulated to address conflict between teachers and young people. The literature on restorative approaches omits the issue of time in conflict situations. There is no guidance on a set amount of time in which a restorative meeting can be arranged or how long a meeting is to

take. Due to the uniqueness of conflicts and intensities of harms the facilitator's understanding of time requires different responses at different times to those in conflict. However, in the absence of a Restorative Principles Framework staff responses to time focus on a result that returns young people to class as quickly as possible. Yet, the use of quicker forms of restorative approaches is not necessarily damaging to the quality of a restorative intervention. Extensive research on time-pressured decision making with high levels of uncertainty by Klein (1999) suggests that highly experienced professionals can make successful decisions quickly in highly complex and urgent situations. Understanding how time is used in the decision making of restorative facilitators during restorative interventions across a range of settings would be a welcome enhancement to the present field. Nevertheless, within this research the lack of a Restorative Principles Framework or equivalent means that staff do not have an explicit process to follow. Furthermore, in the absence of structured decision making based on the principle of questioning it is difficult to ascertain the experience and familiarity with the process of facilitators. As staff in Riverview School acknowledged, 'we improvise'. Thus, as Rigby has suggested, 'staff in educational settings' default position is punitive', and thus such improvisation is embedded in a punitive decision-making structure.

The issue of immediacy appears to be a response to lower forms of harm caused to relationships which could be addressed through restorative approaches. The existing research in the field of restorative approaches has assumed that quality of practice among staff as facilitators is consistent, with the notable exceptions of McCluskey et al (2008), Vaandering (2013) and Bevington (2015). This presumption of consistency is particularly the case with the randomised controlled trial research of Bonell et al (2018). The Restorative Principles Framework indicates that, without a set of principles specifically centred on young people in conflict situations, staff in the inquiry schools will unintentionally undermine restorative approaches. The concerns raised by Eliaerts and Dunmortier appear to be as relevant now as they were at the time, if not more so, within educational settings. As they state, 'to prevent RJ practices from being implemented in a bad or non-restorative way, there seems to be no other solution than creating standards' (2002:218). This argument equally applies to restorative approaches in schools. Furthermore, distortion in practice over time after training does not protect young people from coercion.

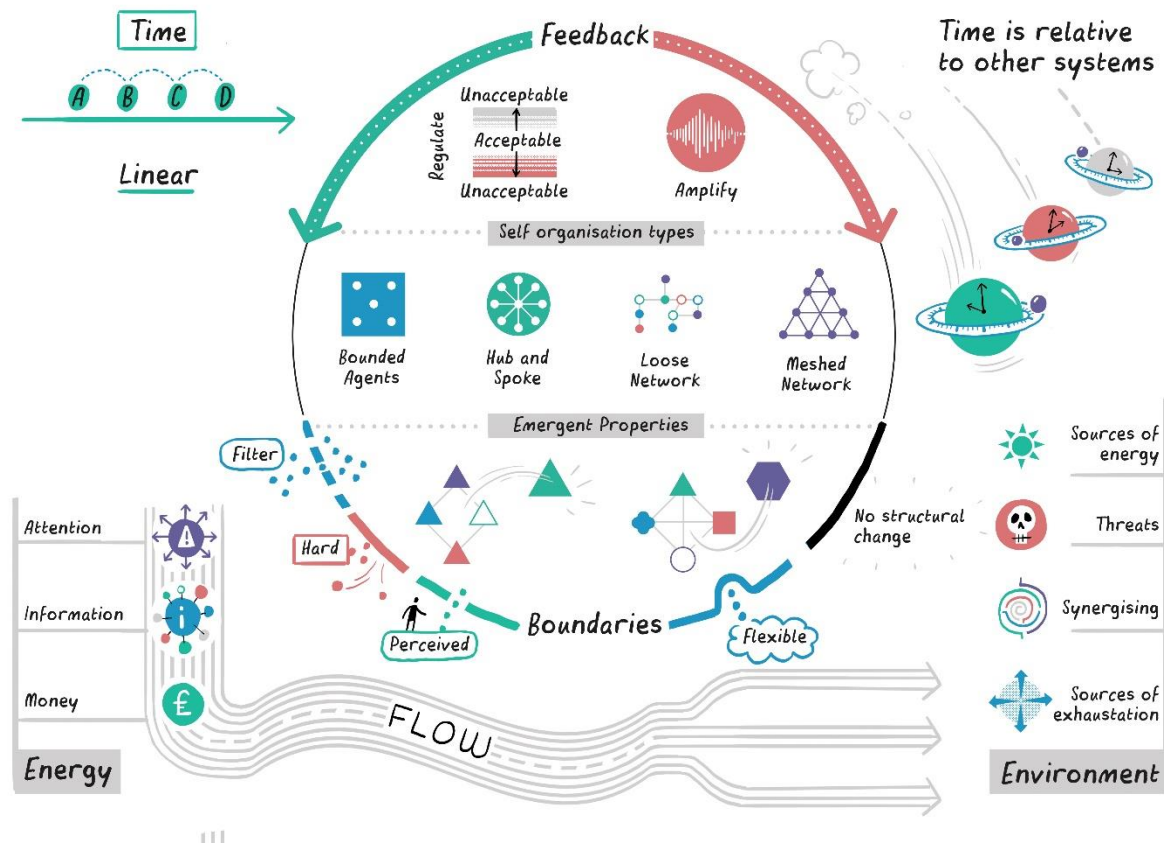
The work of Csikszentmihalyi (2006) shows how domains, fields and practitioners interact. The use of restorative approaches in the four inquiry schools shows a lack of interplay

between the three areas. For Csikszentmihalyi, ‘Instead of focusing exclusively on individuals, it makes more sense to focus on communities that may or may not nurture genius. In the last analysis, it is the community and not the individual who makes creativity manifest’ (2006:16). From this perspective a community of restorative practitioners in educational settings would be able to reflect on and develop restorative approaches within their schools. Unfortunately, this research shows that no such community exists within the four schools. There is no opportunity for staff to develop their practice or to address the quality of intervention. This could be due to the field; as Csikszentmihalyi explains, ‘field refers only to the social organisation of the domain – to the teachers, critics, journal editors, museum curators, agency directors and foundation officers who decide what belongs in the domain and what does not’ (2006:4). In recent times, the field of restorative approaches has itself had little influence on educational policy in supporting educational staff learning and development. This then influences the domain (practice, tools and knowledge) used by practitioners. This can mean that practitioners draw upon domain features, such as lanyards with questions on them, as symbols of identification rather than domain assets which enable them to achieve peace with young people. Hence, the exchange which Csikszentmihalyi suggests between fields, domains and practitioners is weak at best within the four inquiry schools. This research suggests that minimum standards of practice would be a suitable way to link practitioners with the domain and the wider field to achieve young person-centric restorative approaches.

7.7 What does a Complexity Theory-Informed Analysis Reveal About Restorative Approaches in Schools?

The development of a complexity-informed analytical framework has meant the inclusion of social energy in the form of AIM. Diagram 6, below, brings together the features of a CAS in terms of feedback (regulatory and amplification), forms of self-organisation of networks (including pre-network bounded agents), emergence (as both incremental and radical), forms of boundaries in social systems (including: no change, hard, filtering, and perceived), and as the distinction that time is relative rather than linear. AIM involves forms of flow in the social CAS. Finally, for the external environment I have conceptualised aspects such as sources of energy which the system draws AIM from, threats to such sources, ways in energy sources can synergise, i.e., the promotion of restorative approaches in a school, and sources which exhaust energy in the system.

Diagram 6: A Complexity-Informed Thematic Analysis.



The attention, information and money (AIM) analysis of social energy has developed in response to the lack of evidence in each inquiry school regarding the amplification and emergence of the purposeful activity. This research perceived that school change would be identifiable and active due to the use of soft systems methodology (SSM). However, in the absence of taking action on the purposeful activity by staff groups in each school it was not possible to discuss the five features of a complex adaptive system⁴⁶ without understanding where social energy was in the wider school system. By tracking social energy, or the lack of it, it became possible to understand how different systems interacted to help or hinder the development of restorative approaches in schools. The absence of AIM was important for understanding how complex adaptive systems can divert or dissipate social energy. By developing an analytical framework based on AIM, this revealed how the intentions of staff as well as the emersion in various systems did not match their actions in each of the inquiry schools. Importantly, AIM was not focused on individuals' beliefs and behaviours but rather focused on the interactions between staff within the focus groups. Hence, AIM was able to

⁴⁶ Feedback, self-organisation, emergence, system boundaries, and time.

give insight into both opportunities for emergence within social systems and what occurs within a social system such as a school when there is a lack of AIM.

The importance of ‘attention’ for social energy is that it was a finite resource for staff in the focus groups. The existing literature on restorative approaches when instigating changes in schools has not focused on where staff put their attention. Rather, the literature seems to assume that by stating a school will commit to restorative approaches staff will have an attention span capable of engaging with training and practice. This research suggests that in all four schools that was not the case. Furthermore, ways to measure the attention of staff making decisions in conflict would be an important aspect of studying the sustainability of restorative approaches in future research.

The importance of ‘information’ in AIM analysis is stated by Cilliers: ‘Complex systems have special relationships with their environment as far as the manner of processing information, and the developing and changing of internal structure is concerned’ (1996:24). The findings from the inquiry schools show that information exchanges between the field, the domain and the practitioner did not have enough weight for feedback to be effective (see discussion below, p.186, on Hebb’s Rule). This has implications for how information is acquired by a complex adaptive system such as a school. External training in the form of sending staff on training courses (the hero-innovator change model), as well as bringing external trainers in to INSET days (the WSA change model), do not provide enough information to change internal structures in a sustainable way. To explain how information can move through a social network the work of Nonaka and Takeuchi (2006:66) draws on Polanyi’s (1966) distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge. In this distinction there is ‘tacit knowledge’, which is personal, context-specific and therefore hard to formalise and communicate, and ‘explicit’ or ‘codified’ knowledge, which refers to knowledge transmittable in systematic language. Furthermore, Nonaka and Takeuchi go on to develop a knowledge conversion matrix using these two types of knowledge (see Table 15).

Table 15: Four Modes of Knowledge Conversion.

	Tacit Knowledge	Explicit Knowledge
Tacit Knowledge	<i>Socialisation</i>	<i>Externalisation</i>
Explicit Knowledge	<i>Internalization</i>	<i>Combination</i>

For Nonaka and Takeuchi *socialisation* is ‘acquired directly from others without using language. Apprentices work with their masters and learn craftsmanship not through language but through observation, imitation and practice’ (2006:68). *Externalisation* is ‘articulating tacit knowledge into explicit concepts... taking the shapes of metaphors, analogies, concepts, hypotheses or models’ (ibid:69). *Combination* is ‘the process of systemizing concepts into knowledge systems... individuals exchange and combine knowledge through such media as documents, meetings, telephone conversations, or computerised communication networks’ (ibid:72). The process of *Internalisation* is described as follows:

For the explicit knowledge to become tacit, it helps if the knowledge is verbalised or diagrammed into documents, manuals, or oral stories. Documentation helps individuals internalise what they experienced, thus enriching their tacit knowledge. In addition, documents or manuals facilitate the transfer of explicit knowledge to other people, thereby helping them experience the experience of others indirectly (i.e.-re-‘experiencing’ them).

(ibid:74)

The work of Nonaka and Takeuchi helps to explain the issues of information flows in the inquiry schools. The starting point for three of the schools appears to have been external restorative approaches trainers entering the school and sharing knowledge with staff, thus fitting with the internalisation category. Furthermore, Riverview School displayed three of the forms of knowledge conversion. Firstly, internalisation happened when the focus was on the telling of restorative oral stories in the school. Secondly, aspects of socialisation occurred as staff who had not been trained believed they were being restorative ‘through imitation, and practice’. However, there is no evidence from the focus groups to suggest that staff intentionally observed and reflected on restorative practice. Indeed, part of this socialisation may be inviting staff to participate in meetings that are labelled restorative but have no obvious features to justify such a label. Thirdly, externalisation occurred in the form of the social discipline window and questions on lanyards

In Northside School internalisation existed only in the form of a shared label - ‘restorative’. Here, restorative practice was nested within more explicit punitive knowledge. The lack of any explicit knowledge on restorative approaches helps to explain why their restorative practice was nested in a slanted system, i.e., there was an implicit power imbalance towards staff. In the absence of any connection to the field there were no restorative artefacts, i.e.,

manuals, documents or lanyards. Neither was there evidence of meetings or conversations regarding their practice. There was a member of staff who was viewed as the in-house trainer yet in their absence the hub and spoke was affected, which reduced the ability of other staff to externalise restorative knowledge. Conversely, in Evergreen College there was an in-house trainer to continue externalisation. Nevertheless, this role seemed to externalise the behaviour management field, which emphasises punitive responses rather than implicitly or explicitly developing knowledge of the restorative approaches field.

Laguna High had a different method of implementing restorative approaches; here, it started with socialisation. This appears to have begun with staff from Riverview School sharing internalising knowledge with staff in Laguna High. Hence, verbalised knowledge of the 'restorative practice' label was combined with the social discipline window. Yet, such internalisations appear to have become socialisation from this perspective; the staff at Laguna High were not provided with explicit knowledge with which to engage with young people in restorative interventions. Instead, Laguna High staff sought to imitate their partner school without explicit frameworks and processes on restorative approaches. This led to a distortion of restorative practice not presently identified in the literature, as young people were asked to facilitate meetings in which they had to apologise to staff. The transfer of implicit knowledge as the only source of information indicates why Laguna High is a masquerading system. Unlike the other three schools, which appear to have started with internalisation, Laguna High was in the unique position of having staff become socialised in restorative approaches. Unfortunately, this form of information is susceptible to alteration when attention is focused on other issues, as was evident in discussions with staff at Laguna High.

Money can be viewed as explicit when discussed as an object, yet when described as a cost, such as staff time, for example, it then becomes an implicit form of knowledge. None of the schools had an allocated budget for their purposeful activity. Money as part of the social energy in schools is transformative in that it becomes other resources in a complex adaptive system. The flow of money also incentivises the placing of attention and information by agents in a network. For example, it is more expensive for staff to attend a compulsory INSET day than for them to attend voluntary twilight sessions. This was the case with Evergreen College, where money incentivised staff attendance in a way that information on its own did not. Instead, they chose activities which had minimal financial cost. Purposeful activities were initiated by staff to voluntarily accomplish a task either individually or as a group.

Thus, the cost of staff is discretionary, i.e., in terms of how much time is allocated to a task. The flow of money (or lack of it) in a school gives an indication of what level of priority a purposeful activity such as restorative approaches has in the system. An example of this was the parents' session at Riverview School, which required little additional cost and was grafted onto the back of an existing activity, i.e., a parents' evening. Bonell et al (2018), suggest that the cost of restorative interventions is low: 'The cost of trainers, facilitators, and school staff were an additional £47-58 per pupil in the intervention group compared with the control schools over three years' (2018:2462). At the lowest end this equates to over £15,000 per year in a secondary school of 1000 young people. When viewed through a public health prevention lens this is arguably acceptable; however, further research on the cost-benefits of punitive vis-à-vis restorative interventions is an area for future exploration.

7.8 AIM: Social Energy in Socially Complex Adaptive Systems.

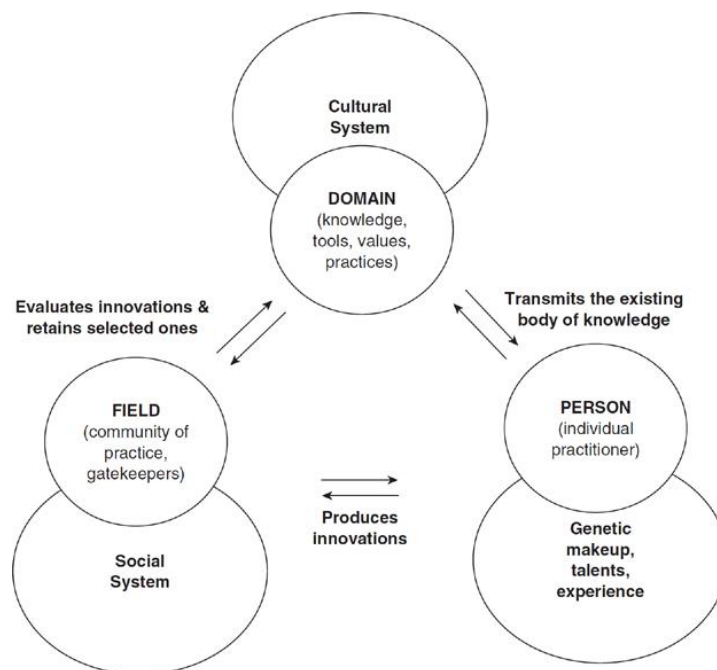
The energy in social systems is different from the energy in natural or technological systems. To understand how restorative approaches gain and use energy in social systems a thematic framework was developed using the criteria of attention, information, and money. This framework was developed in response to a challenge during supervision to explain the manifestation of social energy in a socially complex adaptive system. Furthermore, during the thematic analysis a concern arose over explaining the absence of system change. As Dr Cremin stated, 'no feedback is a form of feedback', and this combines with the concerns of Tableb (2008) about failure to recognise high risk events, with the latter using the term 'silent evidence' (2008:102) to explain why a CAS is apparently not engaged in activity. The five themes of complexity theory arguably assume that system energy is always present, yet a second framework was needed in this research to identify social system energy. I reflected critically on the phenomena described in the focus groups but also on the absence of energy to enact their purposeful activities. The three themes that would make up AIM became apparent across the four schools through an iterative process of thematic analysis and reflections.

Attention can be defined as, 'focused mental engagement on a particular item of information. Items come into our awareness, we attend to a particular item and then decide whether to act' (Davenport and Beck, 2001: 20). Attention provides an understanding of how staff in the schools are able to stay engaged with their purposeful activity. Attention is a finite resource.

Therefore, we need to recognise when attention is being used by staff to achieve their aims or when they have been distracted by other systems.

Information is finite in terms of the existing field (community of practice), the domain (knowledge, practices, etc) and the individual (practitioner), according to Csikszentmihalyi (1999). For the purposes of this indicator information is a dynamic interplay between the field, domain and practitioner, as in Diagram 7 below.

Diagram 7: A Systems Model of Creativity (Csikszentmihalyi 1999:4)



Finally, money is a form of social energy as this is used to pay for staffing costs, as already identified by Bonell et al., (2018), to develop events or for developing new resources. This concept was developed in response to Taleb (2008) as it became clear that conventional economists focus attention and information on conventional models rather than recognising the uncertainty inherent in the financial system. The ‘Black Swan’, according to Taleb, ‘is an outlier, as it lies outside the realm of regular expectations... Second, it carries extreme impact... Third, in spite of its outlier status, human nature makes us concoct explanations for its occurrence *after* the fact, making it explainable and predictable’ (2008:192). Taleb is explaining the 2008 financial crash, which disrupted the neoliberal economic flows of money, as well as failure to recognise, through attention and information, such events, which are coined ‘Black Swans’. Reading Taleb as along with Ball (2013) and others on neoliberalism allowed for a recognition that money does not always mean the exchange of cash but rather the costs and expenditure needed to develop an intervention such as restorative approaches.

Importantly, in a neoliberal economy money is a form of system energy. The AIM (attention, information and money) indicator framework thus becomes a useful analytical process for understanding the flow of social energy which is being directed in each inquiry school as they seek to develop their purposeful activities (see Table 16, below).

When analysing issues through the lens of the AIM framework, this provided insight into the flows of social energy by staff seeking to deliver their purposeful activities and achieve their ideal system state. What became apparent in Table 16 was how different staff members explained their progress (or lack of) in developing their purposeful activities without explicitly identifying the social energy flows. What is evident is that such flows were either absent or one directional, which explains the low weight of interaction between the purposeful activity and staff seeking to enact change in their schools.

Table 16: AIM Framework of Purposeful Activity in each School.

	Riverview School	Laguna High	Northside School	Evergreen College
Purposeful activity	<i>1. Parents' session on restorative approaches</i>	<i>1. Increasing young people's awareness of restorative approaches</i>	<i>1. Increasing young people's awareness of restorative approaches 2. PSHE lessons on restorative approaches 3. School assembly on restorative approaches</i>	<i>1. What is RA? 2. Behaviour policy - explicit mention of RA. 3. Voluntary training - whole staff level. 4. NQT development programme. 5. Written guidance: one-page overview including flowchart.</i>
Attention	Surged then dissipated	Symbolic (school plan)	Symbolic (school plan)	Not present in system
Information	One-directional to parents	Not present in system	One-directional to young people	Not present in system
Money	In-house costs in terms of staff and venue (school)	Not directed toward purposeful activity	Not directed toward purposeful activity	Not directed toward purposeful activity

7.8.1 The Spectrum of Systems identified in the Four Schools.

Table 17: Spectrum of Systems in the Inquiry Schools.

	Riverview School	Laguna High	Northside School	Evergreen College
Fully punitive System				
Dual track				
Slanted system			X	
Masquerading system: punitive using restorative language		X		
Hybrid				X
Trihybrid	X			
Fully restorative system				

The focus groups' discussions of punitive and restorative interventions has shown a complex web of relationships and interactions which the four schools use to address conflict and behaviour management in their settings. The AIM framework has helped to identify the competing uses of social energy in the inquiry schools between punitive and restorative interventions. Furthermore, the AIM framework reveals a greater level of diversity than envisaged by Van Ness (2002), as seen in Table 17 (above). This includes fully punitive and fully restorative systems at either end of the spectrum. Neither of these were evidenced in the schools; nor was the dual track system. Riverview School shows a trihybrid system composed of relational approaches, restorative approaches and punitive approaches all coexisting in the school. However, Laguna High, which is in partnership with Riverview School, displays aspects of a masquerading system (coined by Cremin, 2019⁴⁷), whereby staff adopt the labels of restorative practice but not the processes or understanding of the principles

⁴⁷ This system label was identified during supervision on 1st May 2018.

of restorative approaches. In other words, the labels of restorative practice mask a punitive system.

In Northside School there is a slanted system whereby staff are able to excise their agency in deciding whether young people will go through a restorative intervention or punitive intervention. This is based on their subjective decisions and preferences rather than a clearly defined process incorporated into school policy. Evergreen College displays aspects of a hybrid system as the school has developed an interplay between restorative and punitive elements in each intervention. This means that elements of each are found across a spectrum of responses to conflict and behaviour management.

7.9 The Four Schools as Complex Adaptive Systems.

This section will explore how the five themes of feedback, self-organisation, emergence, systems boundaries and time can help provide insight into the complexity of schools in sustaining restorative approaches. Importantly, this section makes links between the findings and the literature regarding the potential of a complexity-informed analytical framework for understanding school change. In response to the findings chapters a model incorporating both the themes and AIM has been developed, as shown in Diagram 6.

7.9.1 Recognizing Feedback.

The literature on complexity theory has prioritised feedback in terms of amplification and regulation as essential to recognising a complex adaptive system. Complexity theory has tended to assume that natural systems and social systems can display similar features. For natural systems the energy exchange which prompts feedback is that between the system and its environment. For social systems the initiation of feedback requires identifying sources of social energy. What this research has shown is that features of complex adaptive systems need a source of energy to be able to function. Hence, the AIM criteria for social energy have become important for enabling recognition of how and when feedback exists within a complex adaptive system (CAS). In the absence of social energy there is also an absence of feedback. However, being able to track the flows of social energy within a CAS makes apparent where other systems are taking priority by diverting social energy away from restorative interventions in a school. In addition, having this criterion also makes it possible to see how each school seeks to amplify various purposeful activities to achieve an ideal state for restorative approaches to exist within the school.

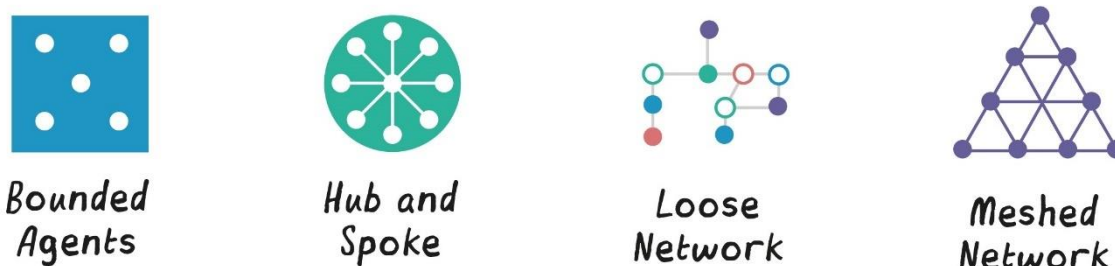
Moreover, the findings from this research show that even when staff are present they may not have the attention span to be able to engage with the process of change. Similarly, an absence of information, i.e., knowledge of the restorative field, means that they do not know how to inform their process of change. In addition, without financial investment it becomes difficult for staff to develop resources and cultural artefacts that symbolise change. In each school there was a desire to amplify knowledge of restorative approaches for a particular audience. In Laguna High and Northside School the staff teams geared their purposeful activities towards young people. For the staff in Laguna High the purposeful activity got no further than the planning stage as a symbolic gesture of progress. This meant that AIM was being diverted and other sources within the CAS were being prioritised. Similarly, Northside School followed the same pattern of planning without action. This suggests that AIM was being diverted to other parts of the school. Similarly, the staff at Evergreen College had planned a range of purposeful activities to achieve their ideal state. However, in the absence of AIM Evergreen College were unable to move beyond the symbolic gesture of looking at the calendar for training. In these three schools willingness was evidenced in the soft systems methodology sessions to innovate through the amplification of a particular purposeful activity. Yet without being able to draw on the social energy of the school, in part due to higher regulatory systems that were in place, i.e., ensuring young people were in class, the opportunities for these groups of staff to amplify their purposeful activities did not come to fruition.

In contrast, Riverview school did achieve an aspect of its purposeful activity, which was to host a parents' awareness session. Elements of AIM came together to ensure this happened. Nevertheless, taking the opportunity to further enhance their purposeful activity was not considered. This suggests that amplification was a short burst which, once it had happened, did not alter the stated system but instead social energy returned to a regulatory feedback loop.

The importance of feedback to a CAS is essential for the prospects of change. Importantly, feedback is non-linear. This research does not imply that because of the lack of progress with each inquiry school and their purposeful activities during the field research (7 months) change did not occur. Such change may take much longer to reverberate through a network as it self-organises in response. Alternatively, change may have occurred which was outside the limitations of this research.

7.9.2 Self-Organisation: Identifying the Networks and Shapes of Networks.

Diagram 8: Types of network shapes.



The self-organisation of each school showed a slightly different network shape. What is more, these network shapes were adaptable, changing in response to the flows of energy and the weight of connections. This research supports the shapes identified by Davis and Sumara (2008) and additionally suggests a pre-network stage: bounded agents. Bounded agents may belong to a particular group via designation or self-identification. Yet, they do not have the flow of social energy or weight of interaction to enable a network shape to solidify into a structure. The types of network shapes are shown in Diagram 8 (above). Furthermore, this research suggests that without social energy emergent network structures will return to a bounded agent state of being, rather than fragmenting as identified by Davis, Sumara and D'Amour (2012).

Table 18: Forms of self-Organisation in the Inquiry Schools During the Purposeful Activity.

	Riverview School	Laguna High	Northside School	Evergreen College
When amplified	Hub and spoke	-	-	-
When regulating	Loose network	-	Loose network	Bounded agents

The ways in which complex adaptive systems self-organise are described by Davis and Sumara (2006), and their work is important for understanding three types of network structure: hub and spoke, loose network and meshed network (see Table 18, above). In addition, one of the inquiry schools showed an additional form of self-organisation, that of a single agent (which reflects the hero-innovator approach).

Riverview School had a loose network shape. This network was able to amplify its purposeful activity through a few key members of staff being involved without the need to involve all members of the soft systems methodology staff group. Furthermore, this network shape allowed staff to support each other with wider issues than restorative approaches. However, a weakness of this loose network was a lack of ability to sustain energy and amplification for their purposeful activity. More specifically, by the second and third focus groups with staff there was a sense of tiredness and fatigue, and levels of support across the network were not there to energise further amplification. The network shape was deteriorating towards a bounded agents state.

In Laguna High the agents of change, i.e., the staff, failed to materialise into a self-organised network able to achieve their purposeful activity. This suggests that self-organisation and feedback within the school were co-dependent on social energy being present. Without a catalyst within the organisation or an attractor, i.e., a force outside the organisation to provide social energy, staff in Laguna High did not develop beyond bounded agents to achieve their purposeful activity.

The staff at Northside School after the soft systems methodology session appeared to be moving towards a hub and spoke model. Unfortunately, the key person who was the hub for coordinating change between other members of this network was unwell and unable to carry on her duties. This in effect meant that the spokes became isolated from each other and no network effect was present to enable them to continue the purposeful activity. Interestingly, rather than realign into a new network shape to further their purposeful activity staff in this group sought to find a new hub. This was in the form of the deputy head, thereby allowing the spokes to continue with their purposeful activity. The hub and spoke model of self-organisation presupposes that the hub has three distinct network features. Firstly, it is the catalyst for providing energy to the spokes. Secondly, it is the coordinating function between the spokes within the network. Thirdly, it acts as a converter of social energy received by the spokes into knowledge to further inform the spokes. The hub and spoke model can be a powerful force of change in a school, particularly when this network shape is legitimised with sources of AIM which it can draw upon from the wider system. Unfortunately, this network shape also has an inherent weakness which is the fragility of the hub and, when this is not functioning or dissolves, this network shape collapses into the bounded agent state.

The final school, Evergreen College, showed no signs of self-organisation after the soft systems methodology session. This implies an absence of AIM to initiate feedback and self-organisation. Subsequently, the opportunity to develop a hub and spokes model happened during the focus group with staff. When they developed an alternative purposeful activity, the three-phase grid, one member of staff requested that all questions be sent to her for collation. This suggests that spokes, when capable of providing feedback, can also create a hub which coordinates and converts their knowledge. The difference is that the hub is not the catalyst (producing social energy but not being influenced by the system) but rather the member of staff acts as a conduit linking the spokes together. Despite this potential network formation into a hub and spokes model the fragility of this network shape still means that if this member of staff were to leave the spokes would also fail to coordinate and therefore also fail to retain the sustainability of the knowledge that they are seeking to develop.

The complexity field has suggested that individual agents do not matter: as Cillers suggests, ‘the higher-order complexities which we hope to get an understanding of, reside not in any of the individual agents but in the rich pattern of interactions between’ (1998:7). This research agrees with Cillers’ point, and also suggests that in the absence of feedback and self-organisation absence of social energy is also in need of recognition for understanding a lack of interactions. Hence, lack of feedback is a form of feedback. Thus, lack of feedback suggests that either the system is self-organised and interacting in a way that is already suited to its purpose or that the subsystem, i.e., restorative approaches, has not yet got the means to divert social energy for its own purposes. For this reason, the work of Donald Hebb (1949) is usefully cited by Cillers: ‘Hebb suggested that the connection strength between two neurons should increase proportionately to how often it is used’ (1998:17). This is known as Hebb’s Rule. It suggests that the more interaction there is between two agents connected by a pathway the stronger the weight of the connection becomes and, where they are not active, there will be a decay in this connection.

Hebb’s Rule may also extend beyond the staff involved in the SSM sessions and explain the lack of knowledge of restorative approaches in the schools. Where staff do not interact with the field or the domain there is no weight; so, their practice is labelled restorative but, over time, learning decays without interaction. Hence, their decaying restorative practice leads to aberrations when faced with conflict and bullying situations. Alternatively, it could be argued that the weight of restorative approaches is lighter than the weight of interaction with punitive approaches in the four schools. If this is the case, then staff in each school have

greater opportunity to interact in a punitive way, which increases the weight in favour of punitive interventions. In Northside School, for example, the legacy of punitive approaches had already weighted staff towards this form of interaction, which created a slanted system. Hence, greater sources of social energy would need to be channelled into restorative approaches for the slant to be rebalanced. In contrast, for Laguna High the levels of interaction were so low that the only exchange with any weight appeared to be that under the label ‘restorative practice’. Evergreen College, however, had an interplay of punitive-restorative interventions which meant that staff interactions combined the weight of both types of intervention to form a hybrid. Furthermore, in Riverview School three forms of interaction occurred between relational, punitive and restorative approaches. What this research did not look at in all four inquiry schools was the level of weight given by staff to each type of approach. This would have been interesting in order to see which subsystem was the most dominant in the school, i.e., what the level of interaction was between young people and staff for each type of approach.

In summary, when viewing schools as a CAS feedback and self-organisation have a symbiotic relationship. This research indicates that the interplay between feedback and self-organisation in social systems, specifically the shape of the network (Davies and Sumara, 2008), is important to sustainability. In addition, schools are complex adaptive systems existing within their ecosystems, and social energy for restorative approaches, or a lack of it, is dependent on the weight of interaction for those involved. Importantly, self-organisation in schools may also determine feedback based on the weight of connection. Future research would do well to explore how to design and measure staff interactions in different network shapes, as well as identifying ways to increase the weight of connections for an initiative such as restorative approaches.

7.9.3 Emergence in the Inquiry Schools.

Table 19: Emergent Properties in the Four Schools

School	Explicit Emergence	Latent Emergence
Riverview School	Parents’ session	
Laguna High	X	X
Northside School		School Assemblies
Evergreen College		Restorative three-phase-grid

Emergence is the core feature of a complex adaptive system. Davies and Samara (2008) set a very specific challenge for those wishing to explore complexity in educational settings: how to explain emergence in schools. Hence, they are critical of research retrospectively labelling change as emergent rather than recognising emergence in systems. This research connects with Davies and Sumara's concern and has shown how the feature of emergence depends on the way in which self-organisation and feedback flow with social energy in schools (see Table 10, above).

The opportunities for emergence in each of the inquiry schools to develop an emergent property are shown in Table 19 (above), based on their latent and actual emergent capabilities. Explicit capability refers to the activities realised in other parts of the CAS or external environment, whereas latent capability is situated within the focus groups (as heterotopias). The extent to which latent emergence becomes an explicit emergent property will depend on other features of the CAS. In addition, in order to become sustainable emergent properties will also require a flow of social energy (AIM).

In the case of Riverview School, where the purposeful activity came to fruition without on-going social energy, this new emergent feature was short lived. Moreover, the focus groups in this research themselves became heterotopic spaces in two important ways. Firstly, they allowed staff to reflect and explore ideas. An example of this was a discussion in the focus group with Riverview School and Laguna High on the labelling of isolation rooms as inclusion rooms. Although there was no definitive answer within this staff discussion the focus group space raised an opportunity for curiosity about the use of labels and language that was not available within the normal functioning of the school. Secondly, the focus groups themselves showed emergence. This was particularly the case in Northside School where, in recognition of limits of their chosen purposeful activity, a new emergent purposeful activity as chosen to further their ideal system. Interestingly, the new purposeful activity had not been identified in the soft systems methodology session. A recognition of inaction, combined with a desire by those in the group to still achieve their ideal, allowed emergence to happen. Staff in Evergreen College responded to their lack of activity by self-organising existing knowledge into 'a three-phrase-grid' to support staff in adopting the use of restorative language. Again, a lack of action combined with a desire to move towards their ideal system state created an opportunity for emergence. In both examples, emergence and innovation of knowledge within the group happened simultaneously. The present restorative

literature does not mention collating restorative questions, and neither has there been a specific focus on educating young people on restorative approaches through assemblies.

These forms of ‘tweaking’ (Newman, 1996) in Northside School and Evergreen College show how adaptation through emergence happens in an incremental yet non-linear way. The staff at Northside School wanted to develop a way to inform young people in the school, and their first idea was to train young people. When this was not an option they generated two more possibilities: developing PSHE sessions, and year group assemblies. The PSHE sessions were discarded due to trace (previous experience) memories of delivering PSHE, and a lack of capacity to provide quality sessions. The feasible option, therefore, was to develop year group assemblies. This shows another important feature of a CAS: bifurcation in decision making in social systems. Byrne and Callaghan have suggested that this is based on ‘shifts in values of the input parameters’ (2014). In addition to value shifts emergence shows signs of happening when the system state has the heterotopic space to explore such values. The tweaks in Northside School were similar to the bifurcation evidenced in Evergreen College, where the decision was made to create a three-phase-grid. This would enable staff to role model restorative approaches as they self-organised knowledge to the point where the emergence of the new idea reached fruition. The focus group ‘space’ allowed the staff to amplify and self-organise into agreeing a new trajectory. Importantly, in both schools the bifurcation points also show how adaptation happened through the system learning from lack of progress.

The opportunities for learning from emergence were negligible in Riverview School as staff were focused on outcomes rather than progress towards the root definition which they had defined as their ideal system state. Hence, although the staff were able self-organise and achieve the parents’ workshop, after the initial burst of social energy the system regulated itself back to a state in which there were no signs of learning from the session. Furthermore, the opportunity to learn and develop to increase parent engagement in restorative approaches was drowned out by the school’s main functions. Thus, the lack of learning meant that a new emergent feature of the school became a symbolic gesture rather than a new system capability.

The prospects of emergence at Laguna High are not perceivable from the present findings. Hence, the absence of emergence in this inquiry school illustrates that without the antecedents of social energy, feedback and self-organising networks, there is no opportunity

for adaptation. An argument could be made that the school was regulating existing social energy and, therefore, other systems or ‘priorities’ required the limited amounts of energy in the system for its survival. Thus, the partnership with Riverview School may support the development of restorative approaches in the school but this would require a higher flow of AIM to tip Laguna High from a masquerading system into a new system state.

What this research suggests is that place and space are contributing factors within schools. Research into complex adaptive systems and health by Castellani et al (2015) suggests that ‘place’ is itself a complex adaptive system. Heterotopias are spaces in which staff can reflect, explore and develop innovative ways to amplify restorative approaches. This can also be in terms of the actual restorative approaches used to create opportunities for peace where conflict and bullying occur. In addition, there is a system change aspect to consider whereby heterotopias create opportunities for restorative approaches to permeate further into and through the system. It is this latter point which the four case study schools have sought to achieve by engaging with their purposeful activities. Moreover, there appears to be a substantial gap in the restorative approaches literature on the importance of psycho-social spaces which facilitate emergence in social systems such as schools.

7.9.4 Identifying System Boundaries.

Table 20: School System Boundaries

School	Boundary Type
Riverview School	Flexible boundary
Laguna High	Filter boundary
Northside School	Perceived (hierarchical) boundary
Evergreen College	Perceived (hierarchical) boundary

An important aspect of complexity theory is understanding system boundaries, which is a perplexing challenge in social settings such as schools. The boundaries of the four inquiry schools are summarised in Table 20 (above). Boundaries make a distinction between what is ‘in’ and what is ‘out’ of a system, i.e., what is in the CAS and what is outside and attributable to the environment. In social CASs boundaries can be particularly challenging to identify, as shown by the term ‘edge of chaos’, which is used to describe where the order within the system meets the disorder of the external environment. This high level of exchange between a CAS and its environment means that CASs are identified as open systems (Byrne and

Callaghan, 2014; Cilliers, 1996; Fenwick et al, 2011). In socially complex adaptive systems there are both real boundaries and perceived boundaries. Perceived boundaries are limitations placed on agents within a CAS by those agents themselves and the culture of norms and rituals. A perceived boundary can have just as important an influence on what is 'in' and what is 'out' of a social system as a real boundary.

By learning to adapt a CAS can change the internal rules by which it internally coordinates and externally engage with its environment. In Riverview School there was a focus on achieving more parents' session. In this case the school sought to expand its existing boundary between parents' session and school staff when promoting restorative approaches. By taking this action the school was changing its perceived boundary in terms of parents' sessions by increasing awareness and understanding of restorative approaches through its purposeful activity. The school was also changing its real boundary by welcoming and engaging with more parents' session within the space of the school. However, because this was only tried once by the school staff and the school then began to return to its default system state it could be argued that the school had a flexible boundary. This is because energy was applied to the purposeful activity to achieve the result. Therefore, the boundary of the school staff routines absorbed the energy and stretched in response to the purposeful activity. However, as the energy dissipated the staff routine boundary then snapped back into place and retained its original shape. Hence, the staff felt they had overcome a perceived boundary because they had achieved a one-off event. This may be evident but, without sustained social energy to promote feedback, their acknowledgement of boundary shifts did not coincide with a sustained system shift to continuously engage with parents' sessions on restorative approaches.

There was a partnership between Laguna High and Riverview School. This shift in real boundaries was between members of staff and therefore could be perceived as a symbiotic relationship. This is because Riverview School was sharing resources in terms of staff time, experience and knowledge to support Laguna High. However, this symbiotic relationship did not translate into a working relationship in the development of restorative approaches. This is evidenced by the lack of development among school staff in focusing on their purposeful activity. The real boundary for restorative approaches was the lack of engagement with instigating change, specifically within the young people population of the school. The boundary issue therefore became the system's inability to draw on social energy to effect meaningful change. This also coincided with the partnership between Laguna High and

Riverview School not being specifically focused on restorative approaches. As such, no specific energy was designated to further the purposeful activity. Hence, lack of social energy became a boundary issue regarding action and inaction in the school. Due to the lack of attention, information and money in the school there was no opportunity for feedback, self-organisation or emergence which would allow staff to seek to explore ways to overcome the inertia of their purposeful activity. Consequently, both the real and perceived boundaries within the school acted in concert to prevent the development of the ideal state by means of the purposeful activity.

Boundary issues at Northside School were multi-layered and appeared to work at different levels across the system. One layer of systems boundaries was participation in restorative interventions, and who was allowed to opt in and opt out. In this instance teaching staff were specifically known to opt out of restorative approaches. As a member of staff clearly stated, the same staff members opted out repeatedly. Thus, non-participation by these staff members weakened the weight of interaction for restorative approaches by which they could provide opportunities for peace between staff and young people. The second layer of boundary awareness in this school was the staff's ability to reconfigure their network shape in response to the absence of the hub, i.e., staff member Mrs M. Although this key person was not present after the SSM session staff did not seek to take on a leadership role and act as the hub in the interim. This suggests that staff were role-bound; staff member Mrs M was the lead, even though there was no significant movement with their purposeful activity. Again, without attention, information and money to influence the system boundary staff maintained a boundary perspective that no further action could be taken without their coordinating hub. Another aspect of the boundary awareness of the staff was the issue of prioritisation; school staff were not able to meet on a regular basis even though they had spent time creating an action plan. As a result, there was not enough social energy to bring the activities to fruition. Interestingly, during the focus groups with staff they did overcome the perceived boundary of relying on the hub member of the group and the concerns about prioritisation. This was done by identifying a new communication channel (whole school assemblies) as well as recognising that they could actively engage with the deputy head. This shift in the organisation of the group members allowed them to overcome the perceived boundary of inaction. Intriguingly, this alludes to the possibility that, as boundaries are reconfigured, emergent properties of the system can come to fruition within new spaces.

The fourth inquiry school, Evergreen College, had several boundary issues. Firstly, there was the real boundary of geography, as there were four colleges which had both real and perceived boundaries in the ways in which they interacted. The school within a school model meant that there was greater challenge in working across the four colleges for initiatives such as restorative approaches. In addition, the issue of time in Evergreen College was perceived as a boundary in terms of instigating and implementing their purposeful activity. Without access to the school's management of time staff were unable to place restorative approaches onto the training calendar. This presented a boundary of two years before any form of whole staff training in restorative approaches could be achieved. Additionally, several of the purposeful activities were not achieved in response to the perception that time was passing too quickly. However, the lack of social energy to achieve a purposeful activity was recognised within the Evergreen College focus group. Thus, staff came up with a new purposeful activity, which was a three-question matrix. This allowed staff to discuss the perceived boundary of other colleagues rejecting their new purposeful activity. Hence, the use of restorative approaches was augmented by the focus group staff for their colleagues through internal creation of three-phrase grid questions. Furthermore, staff addressed the issue of the perception boundary, i.e., restorative approaches being rejected because staff might feel patronised. The staff in the focus group had recognised a perceived boundary in that they could be seen to be belittling or undermining their colleagues. As a result, they were very careful in the way that they intended to manage the introduction of the three-question matrix. It was done so as to give the best opportunity for staff colleagues to see restorative approaches as a useful intervention within their practice. To what extent the staff in Evergreen College will be able to co-ordinate and organise this process with the AIM generated to achieve this purposeful activity is beyond the scope of this research.

From the perspective of the literature the issue of boundaries in systems is fundamental. For Cilliers:

... a system which merely mimics [the?] environment directly will not be capable of acting in the environment since it will be fully at its mercy. To be able to interpret in the environment, the system must have at least the following two attributes: some form of resistance to change, and some mechanism for comparing different conditions in order to determine whether there's been enough change towards some response.

(1998:99)

The issue of systems boundaries in social complex adaptive systems is important in determining both what is in the system and out of the system. None of the four schools showed a hard boundary, i.e., a fixed and impenetrable one, between restorative approaches and punitive approaches (closed systems). Furthermore, all four schools demonstrated some form of filtering within their boundaries which allowed for partial aspects of restorative approaches to enter the school system. For example, restorative labelling was permeating from the outside into the lexicon of staff when discussing their perceptions of restorative systems in their school. However, restorative interventions require restorative labels to be imbued with meaning to describe processes which had not filtered into the schools' restorative systems. Boundary filtering prevented their purposeful activities from flowing and amplifying the use of restorative approaches in each school. Thus, it would be useful to explore the types of boundary identified in each of the schools.

7.9.5 Types of System Boundaries.

The purposeful activity created by each school met several forms of system boundaries. These included flexible boundaries, filtering boundaries and perceived boundaries (see Table 20). The flexible boundary found in Riverview School shows how the purposeful activity applied a certain amount of pressure to the existing school activities to create the potential for change. Yet, the flexible boundary did not allow the knowledge gained through the purposeful activity to enter into the collective knowledge of the staff implementing the soft systems methodology. Likewise, in Laguna High the flexible boundary enabled space for restorative language to be present. Yet, the flexible boundary prevented restorative interventions or any opportunity for the purposeful activity to cross that boundary and become included within the school. A flexible boundary can give the impression that something is now inside the system but this is a form of resistance to change. Thus, Laguna High gave the impression of accepting and progressing restorative approaches within the school system yet there was no perception from the staff in the focus group that purposeful activities or restorative approaches had moved on to become an internal system feature in the school.

The hierarchy in Northside School meant that the perceived boundary was working within an assigned status. For example, the staff were unable to achieve their purposeful activity but when a new purposeful activity emerged permission for this was needed from the deputy

head. Unlike in natural systems a perceived boundary is created by the meaning given by the social norms and rituals of those in the system. This is eloquently put by Cilliers:

... meaning is the result of a process, and this process is dialectical - involvement elements from inside and outside - as well as historical, in the sense that previous states of the system of vitally important. The process takes place in an active, open and complex system.

(1998:11)

Hence, previous experience (both in the school and within the wider educational setting) of the process of hierarchical decision making meant that staff at Northside School were less willing to explore emergence. Therefore, they would not enact emergent possibilities without appealing to a higher status member in the organisation. The perceived boundary was one of permission and authority. Hierarchies by their nature replicate power structures and, in this reproduction, create a historical context for how action is approved. Consequently, a second tier of filtering boundaries emerges in the sense of how ideas circulate through permission filters to be endorsed by the highest figure in the hierarchy. The need for vertical permission for members of the focus group meant that restorative approaches not only had to be filtered from the outside in but also from the bottom up for the purposeful activity to take place.

In Evergreen College the issue of a hierarchical school structure was also present as an internal boundary. However, rather than seeking to ask permission, as in the Northside School response, Evergreen College staff sought to expand their horizontal influence with their peers. The three-phrase grid had to overcome the perceived boundary of an informal hierarchy among other members of staff. The concern about this perceived boundary meant that the staff were keen to draw on existing practice. This alludes to Cilliers' observation on the importance of history. The previous system state had meant restorative approaches had not been widely used by staff in the school. Consequently, as a response to this historical system state, the emergence of a new purposeful activity within the focus group appeared to potentially address the amplification of restorative approaches.

This research identifies several forms of system boundaries, yet the central point made in the literature regarding system boundaries is:

All social systems, and thus all living systems, create, maintain and are degrading their own boundaries. These boundaries do not separate but intimately connect the

system with its environment. They do not have to just be physical or topological, but are primarily functional, behavioural and communicational. They are not parameters but functional constituencies with components of a given system.

(Zeleny 1996:133)

The types of boundaries identified in the four inquiry schools affirm Zeleny's statement that boundaries in social systems are part of the dynamics of adaptation. The importance of understanding boundaries in complex adaptive systems is that the social perception of those boundaries is influenced by the dialectical process of deciding what is 'in' and what is 'out'. This is influenced by the field-domain-practitioner system as well as the local norms and customs of each school's ecosystem. Establishing the importance of social boundaries as a feature of the restorative system in each school helps to explain the distinctiveness of each the complex adaptive systems in each school.

7.9.6 Types of Time in Schools.

Table 21: Time as Perceived by the Focus Groups.

School	Time Perception
Riverview School	Past-orientated
Laguna High	Future-orientated
Northside School	Choice-orientated
Evergreen College	Function-orientated

The diversity of time present in the inquiry schools will require further discussion, to explore its underlying features. Table 21 (above) offers a summary of types of time perceived through analysis of how staff felt time was happening in focus group dialogues through their use of tenses.

From the perspective of a CAS disruption to time is also a disruption to feedback, self-organisation and boundaries. These are interdependent features of complexity. Time disruption is particularly important when the system (restorative or educational) is regulating to achieve norms or specific goals. From this perspective the disruption to time caused by participating in the research was also a disruption in social energy which could have been used elsewhere in the school. Thus, from a research perspective it is important to recognise how research influences time when it intervenes in a CAS such as a school. The time needed

to research will always be a sub-system compared to the time experienced by those participating in the research as they experience time in a diverse array of ways (see Table 21).

In recognition of the positions of the temporal states of the researcher and staff participating in the focus groups the influence of the researcher on staff was mitigated by seeking to find a moment in time which was most convenient for staff. Focus groups were not pre-planned by the researcher but rather negotiated with the inquiry schools. Importantly, in reaching this accommodation the exploration of time indicated that absolute time was not as dominant as would have been expected. Instead, two important temporal states were evidenced: system-time and social-time.

7.9.7 System-Time.

System-time recognises the diversity of temporal states due to the relativity of different interconnected parts of the system and a CAS's ability to send and receive information. This is different from Bronfenbrenner's chronosystem (1979), which suggests that time is an aspect of the environment, i.e., the ecosystem. Instead, in a CAS time is an integral aspect of internal interconnectedness as well as an external feature. In this research the opportunities for each school to create space and time for restorative approaches to happen indicate the challenge of complexity. Interestingly, system-time as an aspect of change management has hitherto been unmentioned in the restorative literature on school change. For each of the schools in this study seeking to develop their purposeful activity system-time was an implicit factor in the change they were seeking in order to achieve their ideal state.

The use of AIM in Riverview school to achieve their purposeful activity indicates that time was given both to organising and to bringing forth the parents' session. Subsequently, the social energy required to achieve the purposeful activity was nested within time allocated by staff and shared with parents. This indicates that the two temporal states of (1) parents and (2) staff were able to converge and coexist in the space and time created through the purposeful activity. However, as the time given to the purposeful activity was an anomaly the opportunities for feedback to other staff members and other parents were not realised. Thus, time for staff to plan and prepare further parent awareness sessions did not become part of the weight of interaction to further achieve their purposeful activity. This indicates that the social energy to either regulate or amplify purposeful activities is time dependent and relative to the interactions and interconnectedness of the agents in a network. When social energy is not present inertia can be measured by the stasis of interaction between features of a complex

adaptive system. For example, staff spoke about the parents' session as an achievement in the past tense. The lack of attention, information and money to achieve their ideal state was indicated by the absence of progress in developing their purposeful activity. Thus, the history of the purposeful activity was present during the focus group in Riverview but not the present or future perspectives which could influence further achievements. As a consequence, it was traces of their purposeful activity which were remembered rather than the potential trajectories of such activity.

The traces of activity were remembered in Laguna High and Northside School in terms of the action plan for implementing their purposeful activity. Time was allocated to the planning of events to bring about the purposeful activity, yet inertia meant that the intended action did not happen within the course of the field research. Consequently, in Laguna High time was allocated to and prioritised for other system aspects which required staff to be present and active. In contrast, in Northside School the loss of the hub member of staff who was the action coordinator meant that staff returned to their individual temporal states within the school. For both schools higher-order systems functions required time to be prioritised, thereby demonstrating the slowness of time between action plan to (in)action. The traces of cultural artefacts where AIM was present, such as the action plans, became remnants of acts of omission. Over time, in both schools, the social energy dissipated or was diverted away from their purposeful activity, so they did not progress in achieving their ideal system state.

In Evergreen College the relativity of time was most apparent in their attempts to enact their purposeful activity. The process of finding time was challenging due to the fixed nature of time in the school. The clock time, or more specifically calendar time, of the school meant a two-year waiting period before all staff could be made aware of restorative approaches, which was one of their purposeful activities. More precisely, the purposeful activities generated by the staff could not gain influence despite the burst of social energy within the SSM session. The relativity of time in the school, as discussed in the focus group, indicated that new ideas had to hibernate. This hibernation meant waiting until a moment in time was available in the school training calendar. Alternatively, staff in the focus group had to seek different ways of bringing their purposeful activity to fruition. The dominance of a particular form of time in the calendar acted to regulate emergent activities. For staff in the focus group scheduling an activity in the school calendar was important for linking staff knowledge and practice with training as the calendar represented a fixed point of attendance. Thus, it became clear in their focus group discussion that relying on staff to volunteer their time

meant ‘no attendance’, as time was required for other priority staff activities. From a researcher perspective this observation was also true of the focus group staff. The staff did not have moments to connect with and explore their range of purposeful activities due to other system requirements on their time.

The importance of system-time indicates the relativity of time between the intended purposeful activity in the system and change that occurred in this research. System-time also shows how time flows in a symbiotic relationship with social energy. Where there is no social energy in an activity there is also no passing of time. Unlike in natural systems the flow of time is not one-directional. Staff in Riverview School could repeat the parents’ activity, and replication of this activity would show that a historical event could be repeated. Yet, replication of the same activity without modification would indicate a lack of learning from experience. In contrast, Laguna High has yet to organise in a complex adaptive way to bring about the emergence of restorative approaches and their purposeful activity. This indicates that time and emergence are also intimately linked. Without a moment for things to self-organise, remember and explore, i.e., a different temporal state, the system will remain regulated within its present temporal state, which prevents emergence. For Laguna High the lack of time to learn from its own history indicates why things have yet to develop in the school. As Cilliers states:

Complex systems have to grapple with changing environments...To cope with these demands the system must have two capabilities: it must be able to store information concerning the environment for future use; and it must be able to adapt its structure when necessary.

(1996:10)

Importantly, this indicates that retention of knowledge through the system is about the creation and storage of memory. Without memory Laguna High cannot make decisions about the present or future of restorative approaches. Conversely, in both Northside School and Evergreen College the focus group sessions created moments in time to reflect on the absence of time and create a new purposeful activity. In both focus groups staff altered the purposeful activity to align with the school’s time. For example, Northside School utilised time that existed in school assemblies to inform pupils about restorative approaches, while Evergreen College created a three-question matrix drawing on existing memory from the group to save time for staff when using restorative questions. In both schools the staff in the focus groups

recognised their inactivity and sought to adapt their internal structures. In this way they met the two criteria set out by Cilliers. This research also suggests that the sustainability of restorative approaches is dependent on the storage of memory in staff networks, which enables adaptation over time. Hence, the articulation of system-time creates a relativity of interaction with other temporal states in the school.

7.9.8 Social-Time.

The second aspect of time presented in this research is social-time. Byrne and Callaghan cite Durkheim's research, which defined social-time as 'a construct that changed across cultures and over history, pointing to its non-essential nature' (2014:139). Social-time depends on space and place interaction to happen. Social-time is also an important feature of complexity in a social CAS such as a school, as Elias states:

'Temporal Norms would seem to play the eminently social role of guaranteeing the organization of work, the systematic satisfaction or reciprocal expectations in people's behaviour towards each other, at the time same as they express evaluations and moral positions in the face of the fundamental experience of change...'

(Elias, 1992:2).

Consequently, the focus group sessions in all schools were also opportunities for staff (e.g., a head of year, teacher, and pastoral lead) to come out of functional time and socialise with their colleagues. Hence, the focus group became a heterotopic moment in time for staff participating in the research. Furthermore, the attention of staff in the focus groups was temporally fluid, with staff discussing past, present and future interactions rather than only giving direct responses to the focus group questions. In Riverview School during the first focus group one member of staff described how on the day of the focus group she had not been restorative; her attention was past-orientated. Yet, other group participants reframed her vignette as restorative to make her present within the norms of the group. By way of contrast, in Evergreen College the focus group became an opportunity to celebrate a moment of engagement between a caretaker and young person. So, the interplay between past and present could be shared within a social-time that was not present in the functional time of the school.

The second aspect of social-time was the ability of staff to be reflective. This was evident in Riverview School during their discussion on the difference in language between inclusion

rooms and isolation rooms. Two things occurred simultaneously. Firstly, there was a search for meaning in the group; to some extent, a questioning process occurred as to the use of language and what was meant when particular words were used. Secondly, there was a sharing of a historical perspective on the experience of being in isolation when members of staff were in school themselves. Social-time, therefore, can allow safe reflective practice to occur. In this respect this research extends the restorative approaches literature on the use of social-time for staff to discuss restorative approaches. There is an opportunity for further research to encompass how staff develop the ability to reflect on their practice and accommodate ideas emanating from the field or their own ecosystem. Future research would be well-advised to build in reflective sessions for staff as well as training by ensuring that time is allocated for this activity.

A further aspect of social-time was the support that staff were able to give each other. During the focus groups with Riverview School and Laguna High one member of staff in Laguna High who attended all three focus groups felt that she was able to draw on the experience and discussion had by staff from Riverview school to feel less isolated as a restorative practitioner. This socialisation aspect of the focus groups was not a primary function of the research but was of value for those participating. Social-time enabled connection to re-affirm belonging to the school as a community. A member of staff from Riverview School also discussed the fact that the focus group presented an opportunity to hear different perspectives on the same topic. Having the time to hear the diversity of thinking that was present in the focus groups caused surprise for some members of staff from Riverview School and Laguna High as they had assumed there was consensus on restorative practice in the schools. From this perspective social-time provides both a sense of belonging and a moment to see what group norms are present or debatable.

The staff at Northside School did not share the same level of social engagement with each other as the staff in Riverview School and Laguna High. Their initial responses in the focus group were individualised at first; for example, when asked about their purposeful activity they responded: 'I did my bit' or 'I only care about my year group'. These responses indicated that they anticipated the focus group as a reconstruction of functional time in that they felt they were being held to account. Over the course of the focus group, however, socialisation and recognition of team effort started to emerge. This was particularly the case with the discussion on developing awareness-raising for young people in terms of assemblies or PSHE lessons. Hence, participation in the focus group offered a moment outside

functional time to reflect and explore by experiencing social-time. Having a moment of social-time allowed staff to connect and support each other in thinking of an alternative way in which to promote restorative approaches across the school. Consequently, Northside School also displayed the two capabilities that Cilliers would endorse as being fundamental to a complex adaptive system. The challenge to social-time in Northside School may have come from having a hierarchical structure. A hierarchy produces functional time, which also influences the accountability of staff in a school as they are always answerable to someone in a higher position who enters their time. Thus, the focus group itself became an opportunity for a power-neutral, reflective space rather than the power-driven and defensive spaces in the hierarchy. As such, it allowed learning and innovation to occur to further the purposeful activity.

In Evergreen College the experience of time reflected similar issues to Northside School. Opportunities to socialise were minimal so the focus group became a moment when staff could share and discuss their practice and reaffirm their values. Although there was not the same deference to the hierarchy within the focus group there was frustration at the dominance of calendar time and functional time preventing the development of restorative approaches in the school. The focus group provided an opportunity for staff to share and reaffirm their restorative values and commitment to restorative approaches in school. Social-time in this sense, therefore, became a revitalising moment to connect with their social energy to further instigate change. At the end of this focus group, when a new purposeful activity had been established, one member of staff sought to organise the activity. At this point time became functional again, with participants negotiating when they could contribute. In the end a time limit was set, and the member of staff suggested she would collate the questions at 'the weekend'. This last statement crossed the boundary between professional time and personal time. For this member of staff the opportunity to progress the purposeful activity in the school was evidently worth impinging on her own time.

7.9.9 The Implications of System-Time and Social-Time on Heterotopias.

The existence of both social- and system-time being discussed and implied in the focus groups suggests that the focus groups could be viewed as heterotopic spaces and moments in time. The meaning of 'heterotopia', according to Cremin and Bevington, draws on the work of Michel Foucault to refer to 'the transgressive spaces that exist in dominant power relationships' (2017:51). This research paraphrases Foucault and suggests that, with the lens

of complexity theory, niches in both time and space exist in a wider complex adaptive system. For a niche to become heterotopic it must allow for a different kind of 'identity and belonging' (Zembylas and Ferreira, 2009) for those present. The ability of identities, ideas and intentions to sustain themselves beyond the relativity of time within the focus groups is dependent on the social energy harnessed. However, without opportunities to reaffirm and ultimately re-enter or extend heterochronies other forms of time such as functional time will shape identity and belonging. As was stated in one of the focus groups, 'little and often, may be more effective than one-off events' with regard to parents' awareness sessions. However, the point has a wider application because re-experiencing a heterotopia provides greater weight (Hebb's Rule) for the interconnection and interaction of being 'inside' heterotopia time as compared to the experience of time 'outside' the niche. This insight also provides an understanding of why it was challenging to progress purposeful activities outside of the soft systems methodology sessions. Staff seeking to achieve their purposeful activity had to find a way to amplify a temporal state in a wider system. The experience of time in the heterotopia was relative to the time experienced in other parts of the system, e.g., restorative meetings or school INSET days. One member of staff described the time in the focus group as 'bubbles' in terms of being both fragile and fleeting. This appears to be an elegant metaphor for the description of heterotopic time. It also resonates with Cremin and Bevington's concluding remarks:

...it is possible to create transformative moments in schools without the need to transform schools as institutions. While the latter may be desirable, it is not going to happen anytime soon.

(2017:168)

Whilst, the transformation of schools may be desirable, there are greater opportunities to create transformative moments in time that change the identities of staff and young people. How long such changes last depend on the conflicts and accommodations in the system for further feedback on transformative moments.

7.9.10 The Implications of Heterotopic Time for Restorative Approaches.

The identification of heterotopic time within a niche has implications for restorative approaches in terms of the actual space and time of restorative interventions. A restorative encounter in terms of facilitator and participant (pre-parties in a conflict) and participant-participant (an encounter between those in conflict or bullying situations) can be a

heterotopic space for the sharing of narratives, identities and opportunities for belonging. For the purposes of this research the process of restorative approaches becomes a bifurcation moment to enable:

Peace as a system state which captures the dynamic interplay between **negative peace**, the absence of violence, and **positive peace**, which enables the (re)connecting of identities, needs, emotions and relationships to allow both or all parties to coexist in the same community.

This draws on Galtung's definition of negative and positive peace (1996) but limits the prospects of positive peace to the opportunities for connection in a specific moment. Galtung views peace as a wider movement concerned with harmony and social justice, whereas this research limits positive peace to opportunities for connection at one time for those involved in a restorative intervention. Peace then becomes the bifurcation moment for those in conflict and bullying to exit or remain in the social-time of conflict. However, this research has already indicated that none of the four inquiry schools were following the processes of restorative approaches. The implication of this is that functional time dominates the opportunities for social-time for both facilitators and participants. Although aspects of the Restorative Principles Framework were identifiable from the focus group discussions the greater potential of restorative approaches to create time and space for peace was not present. Functional time, that is staff wanting to return young people to lessons, was instead used through 'quick restorative' or 'hard restorative' methods. In this way the duality of role between teacher and facilitator created a dissonance in time, as restorative approaches lost their social-time and became biased towards functional time.

This research has implications for both the bullying field and the restorative approaches field as there is a major gap in knowledge regarding how time is perceived by perpetrators and targets, peers and facilitators. Firstly, this is crucial for bullying research as bullying has traces of harm occurring at specific points in time due to its repetitive aspect. Bullying can itself be viewed as a niche in schools where young people create harmful heterotopias at the cost of those being targeted. How bullying-time is perceived as a lived experience is a substantive gap in the literature. Secondly, time is also salient to the restorative approaches literature as the perception of time for those in conflict (as well as bullying) situations is a concern for advocates in the field. For example, the simplification of narratives to a single question - what has happened - underestimates the history of a bullying dynamic, the present

state of those involved and their anticipations or anxieties regarding future confrontations. Hence, the lens of complexity theory necessitates school-based practitioners recognising the occurrence of a convergence of different forms of social-time, e.g., conflict-time, encounter-time and peace-time.

The Restorative Principles Framework developed in the findings sections needs to intertwine time from the perspective of empathy, i.e., recognising the temporal states and emotions created for those participating in a restorative intervention. It is also crucial to recognise impartiality in resisting the pressure to impose time (specifically functional time) on the participants in a restorative intervention. Thus, recognition of time in heterotopias would create greater opportunities for participants to connect in achieving peace.

7.10 Time and Complexity.

This discussion of time has highlighted the concerns raised by Byrne and Callaghan regarding the exclusion of time from the complexity literature. This research supports their assertion that time is an essential element for understanding complexity. For the purpose of this research time has proven to be diverse, with functional-time, system-time and social-time being present as different temporal states, sometimes simultaneously. Time is part of the interconnected and interdependent process by which complex adaptive systems continue their adaptation in response to their environment. Davis and Sumara (2006) were concerned that educational research into emergence was post-mortem rather than understanding how this occurs at the time. This research suggests that time in heterotopias may be essential for emergence to occur. Furthermore, the experience of heterotopic time in schools allows social-time to create not just ‘identity and belonging’ but also memory in the form of shared narratives. In addition, social-time provides an alternative temporal state for reflection and learning about shared meaning, and opportunities for change. Time remains intangible, yet as a system feature it can be detected in the ebb and flow of social energy happening in the discussions with staff in the inquiry schools. The diversity of time identified in this research contributes to the complexity theory literature when investigating a social CAS. These diverse forms of time help to explain both the opportunities for progress and the lack of activity that can happen in schools.

7.11 Restorative Approaches, Schools and their Ecosystems.

The work of Bronfenbrenner is important for understanding the interplay between a child's development and the ecosystem in which they are nested. This research substitutes the term 'complex adaptive system' for 'child development'. Bronfenbrenner's work was concerned with mapping the systems of influence within an ecosystem. This research has sought to understand the complex adaptive processes that happen when school change is occurring. An important aspect of understanding school change is how the external environment influences the school.

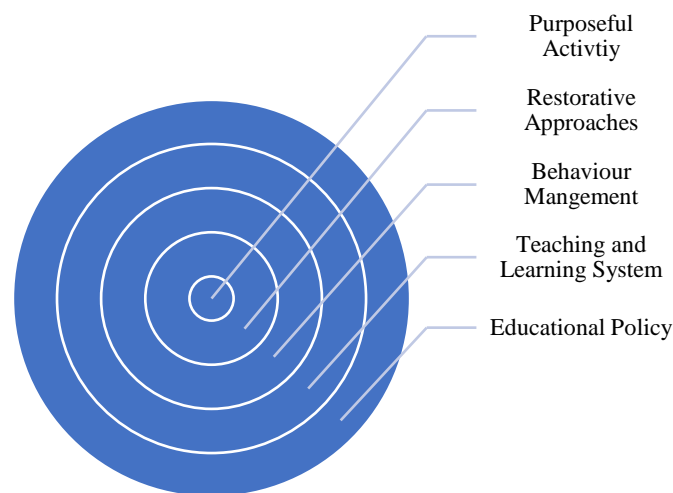
Research in the restorative approaches literature has tended to exclude wider environmental factors, e.g., Ofsted inspections or the academisation agenda of education in English schools. For example, Northside School not only underwent an Ofsted inspection but also had a religious inspection from their diocese. Factors in the external environment act as attractors exerting forces on the school. At educational policy level these attractors can have major impacts on the ability of a school to manage its social energy. For example, during the field research a new curriculum was introduced by the Department of Education. The changes to the curriculum were substantive, including a new grading system and a new focus on final examinations rather than coursework. This meant that the core function of schools at secondary level in terms of preparing young people for their GCSEs required substantive adaptations by teaching staff to enable them to deliver this policy shift. The capacity of staff to achieve their purposeful activity became a sub-system of restorative approaches, which was itself a sub-system of behaviour management policy in the inquiry schools. The behaviour management policy was in turn a sub-system of the school's teaching and learning system. From this perspective Bronfenbrenner's framework can be applied in a similar way to the educational ecosystem of a school (see Diagram 9, below).

An alternative way of looking at each of the school's ecosystems is to look at the views of the community in which the school is nested and the level of need these bring. One indicator of the ecosystem from the government website⁴⁸ is the latest figures for free school meals. In the academic year 2017/2018 (the time in which the field research was conducted) the figures show that for Northside School, which is situated in a borough which had the second-highest levels of child poverty in the country, 63.1 percent of young people were accessing free school meals. For Riverview School this was 45 percent, for Laguna High 23.9 percent and

⁴⁸ Gov.uk

for Evergreen College 19 percent. The national average is 28.6 percent. Free school meals can be used as an indicator of poverty. Thus, the implication is that the schools with higher numbers of free school meals are also having to diversify their resources to meet a greater range of needs among their young people and families, as well as interacting with partner agencies. Thus, the range of resources, or lack of, in the ecosystem affect the decision making and capabilities of schools when viewed as a CAS.

Diagram 9: Nested Systems of Restorative Approaches in a School.



To their credit, Green et al (2019) have recognised school characteristics such as free school meals and ethnicity as important features for the implementation and sustainability of restorative approaches in a randomised control trial. Conversely, Bonell et al (2018) collected a range of data, including on free school meals, yet did not produce a finding on the implications of deprivation for schools implementing restorative practice. The community attractors which influence schools have implications for the interplay between a system, its boundaries and the external environment. In Evergreen College, which had the lowest percentage of free school meals, the environment could arguably be perceived as more stable. Hence, with less change occurring in the community, school training calendar planning could be formalised as the school does not need to respond at speed to changes in the community. In Northside School the high demand from their external environment suggests that they are constantly adjusting to find a fit with their environment, having moved from a highly punitive system to a restorative system in the space of one year.

7.11.1 The Influence of Neoliberalism on the Ecosystem.

A feature of the ecosystem is the political system in which the education system is nested (see Diagram 4, p.70). The neoliberalist political system acts as an underlying force shaping the educational system in which the four inquiry schools are situated. Watts identified the neoliberal agenda in the literature as the ‘extension of the market as a mechanism for the institutional regulation of public sector organisations’ (2017). As education in England has become marketized schools have had to find a fit with these environmental changes. Among the four schools involved in this research only one was an academy linked to a multi-academy trust - Evergreen College. Two of the schools, Riverview College and Laguna High, had entered into a partnership as Laguna High was facing a falling number of young people attending the school. Northside School was attached to a religious organisation for additional support and the welfare of the young people. The structures of these schools at the time of the field research were being placed under pressure by a new government curriculum as well as changes to the financial maintenance the schools received from the DfE. The consequence of this played out in terms of where social energy was spent by each school. The creation of the attention, information, money (AIM) analytical tool was a response to understanding how change was occurring. In the inquiry schools the term money may be obvious but it provided a crucial part of the analytical tool. It enabled recognition of where financial resources were flowing during the staff discussions in terms of staff time, cover costs, artefact generation or the buying-in of expertise. Thus, money also allowed for recognition by the researcher of when and where financial resources were not being invested in either a purposeful activity or restorative approaches in the school.

7.11.2 Bullying Nested in a Neoliberal Educational System.

The influence of neoliberal on bullying is, as suggested in the literature, preventing staff from addressing the peer-to-peer dynamic. This research confirms the concerns of Ball (2013) as the purpose of restorative approaches in each of the four inquiry schools was the returning of young people to lessons as quickly as possible. Furthermore, opportunities to address bullying were not mentioned in any of the focus groups, with staff discussing the issues of teachers having their lessons disrupted and needing to find ways to engage young people. In turn, staff in three of the four schools differentiated between short and long restorative interventions. Short interventions focused on addressing behaviour immediately, e.g. in the class, whereas longer restorative interventions were necessary when the relationship between

a young person and a member of staff was breaking down. However, at no point was there a recognition that these processes could be applied to bullying. The absence of decision making on bullying is manifest in the schools but is influenced by the neoliberal government stance of not intervening in the educational market by providing research or guidance. Thus, Ball's analysis that 'collective conditions of experience' such as bullying are turned into 'personal problems' remains salient.

7.11.3 Neoliberalism and Restorative Approaches.

It was suggested in the literature review that the implications for restorative approaches nested in a neoliberal ecosystem could be viewed as a badge and marketing feature for parents selecting a school. By developing a Restorative Principles Framework this research suggests that the integrity and ultimately the potential of restorative approaches was not present in the four inquiry schools during the field research. Part of the reason for this was that the restorative system nested in the schools had an interplay between punitive and restorative interventions. The punitive system is the default in schools as it has a cost benefit. Punitive systems are the cheapest option as the ratio of staff to young people is low compared to restorative approaches, e.g. a full inclusion room can be operated by one member of staff. Neoliberal influence heightens schools' needs to engage; as previously stated by Cremin and Bevington: 'high-stakes, test-based accountability regimes enacted from league tables and Ofsted inspections are not without consequence for young people' (2017:30). In the case of restorative approaches these consequences include a lack of restorative approaches to address peer concerns such as bullying.

This research suggests that young people are now faced with coercive forms of language and process which increase compliance that enables a return to learning. As a result, resisting coercion under the badge of restorative approaches becomes more difficult for young people. Staff are armed with the language of collaboration, such as working 'WITH', which implies that blame for non-collaboration must reside with the young person. The work of McCold and Watchel (2002) and its augmentation by Vanndering (2013) into a social relationship window reduces the complexity of conflict and bullying to the use of tropes and marketing straplines. This is most personified in the masquerading system of Laguna High, where language is replicated without meaning. Young people who resist are not seen as having a legitimate reason for dissatisfaction with the restorative intervention but rather as needing to have the dosage increased until they comply. The illusion of choice and empowerment under

the badge of restorative approaches actually affirms ‘more rigid relationships between staff and students’ (Cremin and Bevington, 2017:30).

A further issue is how staff are unable to detect the influence of the neoliberal system on their practice. Ball’s statement that ‘professionals are dispossessed of their expertise and judgement’ (2013) resonates with the lack of skills needed to engage in restorative interventions. Staff are coaxed with restorative artefacts such as the social discipline window and lanyards with questions on as symbols of explicit knowledge. The fact that both implicit and explicit knowledge do not align with the field is mitigated by ‘improvisation’ and ‘knowing the child’. Staff disconnected from the field and looking for ways to remember the integrity of restorative interventions rely on belief and validation from colleagues. Thus, the concerns of Eliaerts and Dunmortier about developing procedural safeguards and standards (2002) in relation to the restorative justice system are a protection against market forces. The need to badge and marketize restorative approaches will remain a tacit and insidious influence on schools if restorative interventions are market-centric rather than young person-centric.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Scholarly contribution.

This research has sought to extend the field of restorative approaches by exploring the issues of sustainability as opposed to implementation. In doing so it has hopefully made several significant contributions to the field. Firstly, by drawing on the literature a Restorative Principles Framework has been developed which specifically focuses on a child-centric version of restorative approaches. The analysis in Chapter Two has shown that the restorative literature has often failed to recognise the differences between children, young people and adults. The concerns of Eliaerts and Dunmortier (2002) were well-founded in seeking to protect young people from adult processes. This research has articulated a framework which could be applicable to ensuring greater safety from facilitators in the process for young people.

Secondly, the development of the AIM analytical framework has provided a unique way to understand socially complex adaptive systems. By understanding the flows and absence of social energy the AIM framework has elucidated the ways in which relationships and inequalities of energy may be present in schools. The AIM framework resonates with the work of Castellani et al (2015), which also explicitly identifies CASs as power-based conflicted negotiations in spaces. Access to and control of social energy is an important feature in the sustainability of restorative approaches.

Thirdly, in terms of recognising alternatives to clock-time this research has developed models of time influenced by complexity theorists such as Byrne and Callaghan (2014), Castellani et al (2015) and Elias (1992) to conceptualise system-time and social-time. Hence, both forms of time can contribute to an understanding of how time is perceived and experienced in social phenomena. For example, the experience of bullying as a form of social-time. The experience of time in a bullying episode has been under-researched as well as the experience of time between bullying episodes. The same can be said for the temporal states of different parts of a school as a system, including well a restorative facilitator perceives time when compared to (a) their other roles, e.g. teacher or pastoral lead, (b) time in a restorative intervention and (c) support from other parts of the system or ecosystem, e.g. head teachers or family members. The recognition of time in socially complex adaptive systems places greater emphasis on relativity in systems as compared to a positivist absolutist perspective, something which is central to complexity theory.

Finally, this research hopes to make a contribution to understanding the phenomenon of school change. The present focus in the restorative literature on implementation and the whole school approach has been critiqued as inadequate for understanding the complexity of sustainability. In seeking an alternative to mechanistic management theory this research has shown that the simplistic notions of cause and effect, outcome and impact, targets and measurables which build the vocabulary of school effectiveness are of little value when viewed through the lens of complexity. By viewing school change through the thematic lens of complexity theory this research has revealed that the process of social energy and adaptation can distort the potential of an intervention such as restorative approaches. Furthermore, recognising the ecosystem in which such interventions will have to nest increases the likelihood that school change can be more beneficial by recognising that distortion and adaptation are likely during the interplay of systems.

8.2 Implications of this Research.

The issue of bullying remains a feature of schooling and was a concern to both parents and young people in the pre-SSM workshops. Yet, the social energy to address this was not present in staff discourses during the focus groups. The research findings suggest that the issue of bullying in the four schools was not perceived by staff as significant to restorative approaches. Furthermore, restorative approaches were applied to teacher-young person conflict, which minimised opportunities to use them for peer-to-peer conflict and bullying. Hence, previous research has identified issues of quality of practice at an individual level, whereas this research reveals the implications for institutional use of restorative approaches. Thus, bullying, when viewed from a neoliberal educational perspective, is a peripheral issue to the institution-centric functioning of schools.

The use of the Restorative Principles Framework could, with further development, make a significant contribution to young people in a bullying dynamic. Potentially, if trainers and staff were willing to adopt a young people-centric framework, young people could be more confident in making a referral about bullying. Moreover, having an explicit framework could help the restorative approaches field to mitigate against the attractors in schools which can cause drifting towards institution-centric practices. For both the bullying literature and the restorative approaches literature this research contributes to awareness of the postmodernist, neoliberal educational system and its implications for restorative interventions, and potentially wider anti-bullying interventions. Importantly, in the face of such system change

educationalists continue to champion such initiatives in the belief that they are making a difference to the lives of young people. Therefore, it is imperative that there is greater weight for the interconnections identified Csikszentmihalyi's (1999) systems model of creativity in research from the field, so as to enter the domain and enable practitioners to be informed by the evidence on young person-centric restorative approaches.

The issues of sustainability raised by this research indicate that an alternative lens is essential for understanding the ecosystems of schools and the phenomena which occur. Research from Acosta et al (2016) and Green et al (2019) both speculate on sustainability. Yet, the challenge for the research community and those wishing to implement restorative approaches beyond three years in school settings will be to recognise the value of a systems perspective. In a similar way to Zehr's (1990) epochal *Changing Lens* a new epoch is now necessary if the benefits of restorative approaches are to be delivered within educational settings. A complexity-informed thematic analysis has revealed different system states which can be constructed through the complexity of change as perceived by staff. Each system state represents a form of sustainable niche; however, none has truly conferred the benefits of restorative approaches anticipated in the literature.

8.3 Limitations and Further Research.

In developing the school selection criteria for this research requests were made to networks within the Faculty of Education, the Anti-Bullying Alliance⁴⁹, the Restorative Justice Council⁵⁰, local authorities and training organisations. In addition, the researcher hoped to avoid using schools previously worked with in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest. Yet, finding schools able to meet the criteria was not achievable within the timeframe of the field research. Therefore, Evergreen College was included which the researcher had supported 10 years earlier. A convenience sampling criterion was used for the four schools as they were able to meet the second⁵¹ and third⁵² criteria. Two of the four schools (Laguna High and Northside School) had been using restorative approaches for less than three years. This may indicate why both masquerading and slanted systems were identified. At Laguna High staff have moved into a second cycle of implementation, whereas at Northside School

⁴⁹ The Anti-Bullying Alliance has network of 400 schools.

⁵⁰ The RJC has developed a Restorative Service Quality Mark: <https://restorativejustice.org.uk/restorative-service-quality-mark>; this is a generic audit and not focused on education or children and young people.

⁵¹ Case-study school is exploring how to innovate or rejuvenate use of restorative approaches in the school.

⁵² School willingness to participate in all aspects of the research enquiry.

staff perceived 'restorative' as embedded (but as a niche). Furthermore, in the two schools that did meet the first criteria (Riverview School and Evergreen College) both displayed hybridisation and restorative approaches adapting to a subsystem in the school. Importantly, in all schools the practice of restorative approaches was not as robust as anticipated.

Although limited to a convenience sample, this research suggests that there is a concern that if different schools had been selected the quality of restorative approaches would still be troubling. This is due to the lack of schools which were identifiable through the networks utilised as pioneering restorative approaches.

A corollary issue was the limitations of the focus groups. Only two of the schools managed to commit staff to three focus group meetings over the period of the field research. The challenges of organising and attending the focus groups were not perceived as limitations of the study in this research but rather as signs of each school self-organising. Three focus group meetings were chosen to track changes in enacting the purposeful activities. However, it was for the schools to determine when these would take place. Yet, with two schools requiring constant reminders to organise a single focus group during the field research, the researcher had to hold to 'no feedback as a form of feedback' from the school as a system.

A second limitation of the present study is the selection of secondary schools, due to the larger numbers of young people and staff; alternative schools such as primary schools, special schools or pupil referral units might yield models closer to the whole school approach. Speculatively, this might be due to higher levels of interaction due to the proximity of space. However, the sizes and structures of secondary schools combined with them having the highest rates of bullying during education for young people made them the ideal focus of this research. The quality measures (see table 3, p.99) of a phenomenological methodology identify that the Restorative Principles Framework, AIM analysis and complexity theory thematic analysis, as identified by Denicolo et al (2016) would need to be applied for transferability in other educational settings if they are to become dependable. To what extent size of population affects school change would be an interesting area of future research to test the quality measures developed in this research.

A final limitation of the study is the complexity of the education system. Arguments are made in the literature that in studying complex systems there is also a need to reduce reality for the purposes of research. Whilst this may seem axiomatic, alternative thematic features could have been used for analysis, yet this research has sought to adhere to the articulation of

general complexity. Therefore, there has been no attempt to simulate or replicate the nature of the phenomena under investigation. Instead, this study has required playful engagement with schools as viewed through the lens of complexity theory. Such a lens is used to reveal new insights from the various ebbs and flows of socially complex adaptive systems.

Finally, this research has made a substantial contribution to the field of complexity theory by indicating that applying general complexity can help to reveal the challenges of change through the use of qualitative inquiry. The challenge of researching complex adaptive systems has meant recognising non-linearity, uncertainty and possibilities. The positionality of the researcher was shared in Chapter 3, and in the field the pressure from staff to seek approval or guidance from the researcher was present in all schools. Resisting the ability to influence through concern, support or opportunities was of paramount importance to understanding what staff in the schools could achieve themselves. Hence, recognising researcher influence and positionality has been an important of researching real systems. In addition, even though this research has specifically identified non-linear responses from the system, yet it was difficult for the researcher to resist the simplicity of causation.

Furthermore, an important point was that ‘absence of evidence does not mean evidence of absence’ (Douglas and Martin, 1995). As a systems researcher, a way was found to address the absence of change by considering ‘no feedback as a form of feedback’ and hence recognising that absence of activity in one system may be a response to other systems.

Future research could further explore how social systems resist change both actively and passively.

8.4 Implementing and Sustaining Change in Schools: Reflecting on Complexity.

The distinction between implementing and sustaining change in systems requires a mindset shift for leaders in organisations such as schools. This shift can be supported by the reflective questioning, suggested in Table 22, which focuses on implementing change. Whereas, Table 23 provides leaders with reflective questions on how to sustain change in complex adaptive systems.

Table 22: Implementing school change from a systems perspective for Leaders.

1	The leaders of change need to define what system they are seeking to change. Are they able to describe and map the existing system? What are the metaphors and narratives used in the description of the existing system? Where is the social energy in the existing system?
2	What change leaders seeking in the system? Can they describe this? Is there an agreed terminology (definitions and meanings) to provide clarity: local? Field? or academic? Will the agreed terminology require localisation or adherence to wider recognised language?
3	How is the change intervention envisaged by leaders connecting and interacting with existing organisational systems? Will it be a niche or integrated into multiple systems? Does it complement, conflict or dominate existing systems?
4	What is the network shape that will implement the change? How will linkages be created? What is the weight of interaction expected of those in the network?
5	How will the network amplify the change? What are the regulatory features the network will need? What are the levels of social energy needed to engage the network?
6	What are the types of time needed in the system to implement change? E.g. System-Time for other parts of the system to respond. When will there be Social-Time for moments of interaction for those implementing change?
7	When will change be recognised in the system? Who recognises no change in the system? If change does occur, what are the emergent properties in the local system? Are local changes to be kept or killed?

This research raises issues for school leaders when thinking of schools through the lens of a complex adaptive system. For the purposes of this section, leadership will be defined broadly, as those self-organising networks in the school community seeking intentional change⁵³. The understanding of implementation for school leaders seeking change is based in the language of change, for Laguna High this manifested in labels without meaning which

⁵³ This can be staff, children and young people, parents and carers, or external partners.

gave the illusion of change, hence the masquerading system. Furthermore, for Northside School, the use of language without changes in behaviour can create a power slanted system. In both cases, leaders need to beware of how the language of change, can be a substitute for meaningful change that they are seeking. Whereas the heterotopias created in River School and Evergreen College were emergent and laden with possibilities that require both energy and nurture across boundaries. Table 23 gives a range of questions to support leaders in probing the change they are implementing in the school. This list is not exhaustive but rather allows for a reflective analysis beyond the operationalisation of change to explore possibilities and potential co-option by the existing systems in schools which may produce unintended consequences.

Table 23: Sustaining school change from a systems perspective for Leaders.

1	The leaders of change need to define what the present state of the system is post-implementation Where is the social energy in the existing system? If the change is to become a feature of the system, what are the future states of the system?
2	Is the change implemented niche or is this integrating across multiple systems? Where will social energy come from post-implementation? How will this energy flow into the new feature of the system?
3	In recognising the sustainment of the system feature, who will be conscious of how the system is adapting in the organisation? E.g. masquerading, slanted, hybrid or trihybrid?
4	Has the network shape that was needed to implement been changed into a network shape able to sustain the change?
5	What boundaries will need to be maintained and what will need to be altered? How can the system connect to the environment, including the domain and field?
6	When emergence occurs, are other parts of the system ready? How will they/it be nurtured or killed?
7	Who will compare the present state of the system with the imagined future state of the system?
8	As the system adapts and new interventions arrive, where is the organisational memory of the sustained change stored? How is this memory shared across networks?

For leaders there is the considerable challenge of sustaining change in schools, this is expressed by Hargreaves and Fink succinctly as: ‘Sustainability is concerned with developing and preserving what matters, spreads, and lasts in ways that create positive connections and development among people and do no harm to others in the present or in the future’ (Hargreaves and Fink 2006: 17). I would agree with this definition and suggest that the ‘ways’ to do this draw on aspects of this research. Leading in a CAS requires a recognition

that one source of knowledge is restrictive, whereas recognising diversity of epistemologies allows for the self-discovery that all forms of knowledge lead to self-knowledge of the system. Table Y suggest ways those leading in complex systems are able to become system-synthesis leaders. By recognising multiple forms of knowledge as valid expressions of the system, leaders can create positive connections and envisage future states. System-synthesis leaders will have three attributes: Systems Awareness, System Empathy, and System Acumen. Firstly, they must show Systems Awareness i.e. that they are able to recognise some or all of the aspects in Diagram 6 (page 179). This is not just about being able to see the big picture but also understanding the interconnectedness of the school and reaching across boundaries to stimulate the system. Secondly, Systems Empathy is recognising other perspectives (cognitively and emotionally) as the system is seeking to achieve survival or thrive in its ecosystem. Thirdly, there is System Acumen, focused on the decision making in systems. Leaders will be able to recognise the bifurcation points in the system and the potential of unintended consequences as the systems responds to such decisions. Thus, recognising what networks need to be dismantled as well as what networks need to be maintained in the system to prevent system exhaustion or system demise. These three attributes of system-synthesis leaders are a future trajectory that will need to be explored further.

This research has sought to understand the sustainability of restorative approaches in schools. The learning that has come from this experience has indicated that a new paradigm is needed for leaders to describe, map, and understand the interplay of systems, as well as sustain beneficial system behaviour within their ecosystem. The challenge of sustaining change in complexity which benefits schools is one of possibilities. These possibilities may be intentional or spontaneous. By recognising and understanding schools as complex systems, system-synthesis leaders can recognise flows and blocks to purposeful change and by doing so sustain positive connections through time.

Bibliography.

Aarons, G. A., Green, A. E., Palinkas, L. A., Self-Brown, S., Whitaker, D. J., Lutzker, J. R., and Chaffin, M. J. (2012). Dynamic adaptation process to implement an evidence-based child maltreatment intervention. *Implementation Science*, 7, 32.

Acosta, J. D., Chinma, M., Ebnener, P., Phillips, A., Xenakis, X., Malone, P, S. (2016). A Cluster-Randomized Trial of Restorative Practice: An Illustration to Spur High Quality Research and Evaluation. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation* Vol 26, No.4, pp. 413-430.

Altman, D. G., and Bland, J. M., (1995). Statistical notes: Absence of evidence is not evidence on absence. *British Medical Journal*, Vol 311 pp. 311-485.

Anagnostopoulos, D., Buchanan N. T., Pereira. C., and Lichty. L. F., (2008). School Staff Responses to Gender-Based Bullying and Moral Interpretation: An Exploratory Study. *Educational Policy*. Vol 23 (4), pp. 519-553.

Apple, M. (2012) *Can Education change society?* New York. Routledge.

Averhart, C. J., and Bigler, R. S., (1997), Shades of Meaning: Skin Tone, Racial Attitudes, and Constructive Memory in African American Children. *Journal of Experimental Child Psychology* Vol 67(3), pp. 363-388.

Ball, S. J. (2013). *Foucault, Power and Education*. Routledge. Barton, K. B. (2003). *Restorative Justice: The Empowerment Model*. Hawkins Press.

Bassey, M. (1999). *Case Study Research in Educational Settings*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Bauman, S., and Rigby, K. (2007). *The handling bullying questionnaire: Insight into U.S. teachers and school counsellors' bullying interventions*. Manuscript submitted for publication.

Bauman, Z. (2007). *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty*. Polity Press.

Bazemore, G., and O'Brien, S. (2002). Request for a restorative model of rehabilitation: theory-for-practice and practice-for-theory. In Walgrave Lode (Eds) *Restorative Justice and the Law*. William Publishing, pp. 31-67.

Bennett, J. (2010). *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.

Bevington, T. (2014). *What just happened? A Restorative Approach to Conflict in Schools*. University of Cambridge, Festival of Ideas, 28th October.

Bickmore, K. (2011). Keeping, Making and Building Peace in Schools. *Social Education*, 75, Vol 1, pp. 40-44.

Black, H. (1990). *Black's Law Dictionary* (6th Ed.) St Paul, MN: West Publishing.

Bonell, C., Allen, E., Warren, E., McGowan J., Bevilacqua, L., Jamal, F., Legood, R., Wiggins, M., Opondo, C., Mathiot, A., Sturgess, J., Fletcher, A., Sadique, Z., Elbourne, D., Christie, D., Bond, L., Scott, S., and Viner, R.M. (2018). Effects of the Learning Together intervention on bullying and aggression in English secondary schools (INCLUSIVE): a cluster randomised controlled trial. *Lancet* Vol: 392, Pps 2452-64.

Boviard, J. A. (2010), Scales and Surveys: Some Problems with Measuring Bullying Behavior. In Jimerson, S. R., Swearer, S. S., and Espelage, D. L. (Eds) *Handbook of Bullying in Schools: An International Perspective*. Routledge.

Braithwaite, J. (1989). *Crime, Shame and Reintegration*. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Braithwaite, J. (1996). *Restorative Justice and a Better Future*. Dorothy, J. Two Memorial Lecture, Dalhousie University, 17th of October.

Braithwaite, J. (2002). *Restorative justice and Responsive Regulation*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Braithwaite, J., & Mugford, S. (1994). Conditions of successful reintegration ceremonies: Dealing with juvenile offenders. *British Journal of Criminology*, Vol, 34 Issue 2, pp. 139-171.

British Educational Research Association. (2018). *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research*. Fourth Edition. <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2018-online>

- Braun, V., and Clarke, V., (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*. Vol 3, Issue 2, pp. 77-101.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *Ecology of human development: Experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1994). Ecological models of human development. In T. Husen, & T. N. Postlethwaite (Eds.), *The international encyclopedia of education*.(pp. 1643–1647. (2nd ed.). New York: Elsevier Sciences.
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (2000). Ecological systems theory. In A.E. Kazdin (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Psychology*, Vol. 3, pp. 129–133. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Buckley, S. and Maxwell, G. (2007). *Respectful Schools: Restorative Practice in Education – A Summary Report*. Office of the Children’s Commissioner and The Institute of Policy Studies, School of Government, Victoria University, Wellington.
- Byrne, D. (1998). *Complexity Theory and the Social Sciences*. London: Routledge.
- Byrne, D.S. (2005) ‘Complexity, Configuration and Cases’, *Theory, Culture and Society* 22(5):95-111.
- Byrne, D., and Callaghan, G. (2014). *Complexity Theory and The Social Sciences: The state of the art*. Routledge.
- Camron, L., and Thorsborne, M. (1999). Restorative Justice and School Discipline: Mutually Exclusive? A Practitioners view of Community Conferencing in Queensland Schools. In,
- Castellani, B., Rajaram, R., Buckwalter, J. G., Ball. M., and Hafferty, F.W. (2015). *Place and health as complex systems: A inquiry and empirical test*. Springerbriefs.
- Checkland, P., and Scholes, J. (1999). *Soft Systems Methodology in Action: A 30-year retrospection*. Wiley.
- Chinman, M., Acosta, J., Ebener, P., and Phillips, A. (2014). *RP-Observe Supplement*. Unpublished manual, RAND Corporation, Pittsburgh, PA.
- Christie, D., Bond, L., Scott, S., Viner, R. M., (2018). Effects of the Learning Together intervention on bullying and aggression in English secondary schools (INCLUSIVE): A Cluster randomised control trial. *Lancet* 2018, Vol 392, pp. 2452-2464
- Christie, N. (1977). Conflicts as Property, *The Journal of Criminology*. Vol 17, pp. 1-55.
- Cillers, P. (1998). *Complexity and Postmodernism: Understanding complex systems*. Routledge.
- Cillers, P. (2001). Boundaries, Hierarchies and Networks in Complex Systems. *International Journal of Innovation Management* 5(2), pp. 135-47.

Cornell, D. G., and Bandyopadhyay, S. (2010). The Assessment of Bullying. In Jimerson. S. R., Swearer. S. S., and Espelage. D.L (Eds) *Handbook of Bullying in Schools: An International Perspective*, pp. 265-277. Routledge.

Cowie, H. (2013). Restorative Practice in School: A Psychological Perspective. In, Sellman, E., Cremin, H., and McCluskey, G (Eds). *Restorative Approaches to Conflict in Schools: International Perspectives on Managing Relationships in the Classroom.*, London: Routledge.

Cowie H., Myers., C. A., and Azizi, R. (2017). Does the diversity in society lead to a rise in xenophobia among children and young people? *International Journal of Emotional Education*. Special Issue Vol 9, November, pp. 90-99.

Cremin, H., Sellman, E., and McCluskey, G. (2012). Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Restorative Justice: Developing Insights for Education. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, 60(4), pp. 421-437, DOI:10.1080/00071005.2012.738290.

Cremin, H., and Bevington, T. (2017). *Positive Peace in Schools. Tackling Conflict and Creating a Culture of Peace in the Classroom.* Routledge.

Cremin, H. (2019). *Masquerading System*. Personal Correspondence 9th May 2019.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Sage.

Crotty, M. (1998). *The Foundations of Social Research: Meaning and Perspective in the Research Process*. Sage Publications.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (2008). A System Perspective on Creativity. In Henry, J. *Creative Management and Development*. (Third Ed) Open University, pp. 3-17.

Davies, L (2003). *Education and Conflict: Complexity and Chaos*. Routledge.

Davis, S. (2012). Preventing Gifted/Talented Children from Being Harmed by Bullying. *Understanding Our Gifted*, Spring, Vol. 24 (3), pp. 4 -10.

Davis, B. and Sumara, D. (2006). *Complexity and Education: Inquiries into Learning, Teaching, and Research*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates. Taylor & Francis Group.

Davis, B., Sumara, D., and D'Amour, L. J. (2012). Understanding school districts as learning systems: Some lessons from the three cases of complex transformation. *Journal of Educational Change*. Vol13 (3), pp. 373-399.

Denicolo, P., Long, T., and Bradley-Cole, M. (2016). *Constructivist Approaches and Research Methods: A Practical Guide to exploring Personal Meaning*. Sage.

Department of Education (2017). *Preventing and tackling bullying: Advice for headteachers, staff and governing bodies*. July. Department of Education.

Downes, P., and Cefai, C. (2016). *How to Prevent and Tackle Bullying and School Violence: Evidence and Practices for Strategies for Inclusive and Safe Schools*. EU Publications.

Duncan, N. (1998). Sexual bullying in secondary schools. *Pastoral Care in Education*. June, pp. 27-31.

Eliaerts, C., and Dumortier, E. (2002). Restorative justice for children: in need of procedural safeguards and standards. In Weitekamp E, G, M., and Kerner, HJ., (Eds) *Restorative Justice: Theoretical Foundations*, pp. 110-142. Willan Publishing.

Elias, N. (1992). *Time: An Essay*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Elliott, M. (2002). *A Whole School Approach to Bullying. A practical guide to coping in schools*. (3rd ed.). Pearson Education Limited.

Evan, K., and Vaandering, D. (2016). *The Little Book of Restorative Justice in Education: Fostering Responsibility, Healing and Hope in Schools*. New York: Good Books.

Farrington, D. P., Losel, F., Ttofi, M., and Theodorakis, N. (2012). *School Bullying, Depression and Offending Behaviour Later in Life: An Updated Systematic Review of Longitudinal Studies*. BRA, National Council for Crime Prevention.

Fenwick, T., Edwards E., and Sawchuk, P. (2011). *Emerging Approaches to Educational Research: Tracing the sociomaterial*. Routledge.

Foucault, M., (1967). Of Outer Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias. *Architecture/Movement/Continuite*, October 1984, ("Des Espace Autres". March 1967, Translated from the French by Jay Miskowiec).

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 30th Anniversary Edition. New York: Continuum.

Gaffney, H., Farrington, P. D., Espelage, D. L., and Ttofi, M. M., (2019). Are cyberbullying interventions and prevention programmes effective? A systematic and meta-analytical review. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour* Vol 45, pp. 134-153. Elsevier.

Garnett, B. R., Smith, L. C., Kervick, C. T., Ballysingh, T. A., Moore, M., and Gonell, E. (2019). The emancipatory potential of transformative mixed methods designs: informing youth participatory action research and restorative practices within a district-wide school transformation project. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, Vol. 42 (3), pp. 305-316.

Georgiades, N., and Phillimore, L., (1975). The Myth of the Hero-Innovator and alternative strategies for Organisational Change. In, Kiernan, C. C., and Woodford, P. F. (Eds) *Behaviour Modification with Severely Retarded: Study Group 8 of the Institute for Research into Mental and Multiple Handicap*. Elsevier, Associated Scientific Publishers.

Gibbons, A. (2018). Neoliberalism, education policy and the life of the academic: A poetics of pedagogical resistance. *Policy Futures in Education*. Special Issue: The Spaces of Pedagogy. Vol 16 (7), pp. 918-930.

Giddens, A. (1981). *A Contemporary Critique of Historical Materialism*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Giddens, A. (1984). *The Constitution Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Gladwell, M. (2000). *The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make A Big Difference*. Brown, Little and Company.

Green, A. E., Willinging, C. E., Zamarin, K., Dehaiman, L. M., and Ruiloba, P. (2019). Cultivating healing by implementing restorative practices for youth: Protocol for a cluster randomised trial. *International Journal of Educational Research* Vol 93, pp. 168-176.

Gobo, G. (2008). *Doing Ethnography*. Sage.

Gomm, R., Hammersley, M., and Foster, P. (2000). *Inquiry Method*. London: Sage.

Grbich, C. (2013). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Introduction*. Sage.

Gregory, A., Korth, J., Clawson, K., Davis, A., Gerewitz, J., and Schotland, M. (2014). *RPObserve Manual*. Unpublished manual, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University.

Galtung, J. (1996). *Peace by Peaceful Means. Peace and conflict, Development and civilisation*. Sage Publications Limited

Hall, S. (1989). Ethnicity, identity and difference. *Radical America* 23(4), pp. 9-20.

Harjunen, E. (2012). Patterns of Control over the Teaching-Studying-Learning Process and Classrooms as Complex Dynamic Environments: A Theoretical Framework. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol 35 (2), pp. 139-161.

Hargreaves, A., and Fink, D. (2006). *Sustainable Leadership*. Jossey-Bass. A Wiley-Imprint.

Harland, J. (1996). Evaluation as Realpolitik. In D. Scott and R. Usher (Eds) *Understanding Educational Research*. London: Routledge.

Hawe, P., Shiell, A., and Riley, T. (2004) Complex interventions: how “out of control” can a randomised controlled trial be? *British Medical Journal*, Vol 328, pp. 1561-1563.

Hawking, S. (1988). *A Brief of History of Time*. Banton Books.

Hayles, N. K. (1999). *How We Became Post-Human*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hedstrom, P. (2005). *Dissecting the Social*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Hemming, K., Eldridge, S., Forbes, G., Weijer, C., and Taljaard, M (2017). How to Design efficient cluster randomised trials. Research and Methods Reporting. *British Medical Journal*. 2017; 358:j3064.
- Heron, J. (1992). *Feeling and Personhood: Psychology in Another Key*, London: Sage.
- Holland, J. H. (2014). *Signals and Boundaries: Building Blocks of Complex Adaptive Systems*. MIT Press.
- Hong, J. S., and Espelage, D. L. (2012). A review of research on bullying and peer victimization in school: An ecological system analysis. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, Vol 17 (4), pp. 311-322.
- Hopkins, B. (2004). *Just schools: A Whole School Approach to Restorative Justice*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Husserl, E. (1931). *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*. London: George Allan & Unwin.
- Hymel, S., Rocke-Henderson, N. and Bonanno, R. A., (2005). Moral Disengagement: A Framework for Understanding Bullying Among Adolescents. *Journal of Social Sciences*, Special Issues No 8, pp. 1-11.
- Introna, L. D. (2003). *Complexity Theory and Organisational Intervention? Dealing with (in) commensurability*. In Mittleton-Kelly, E. (Ed) *Complex Systems and Evolutionary Perspectives of Organisations: The Application of Complexity Theory to Organisations*. Emerald, pp. 205-219.
- Jenifer, D., and Cowie, H. (2008). *New Perspectives on Bullying*. Open University Press.
- Kahneman, D., (2012). *Thinking Fast and Slow*. Penguin.
- Kane, J., Lloyd, G., McCluskey, G., Riddell, S., Stead, J., Weedon, E., Maguire, R., and Hendry, R. (2007). *Restorative Practices in Three Scottish Councils: Final Report of the Evaluation of the First Two Years of the pilot projects 2004-2006*. The Scottish Government. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/08/24093135/0>
- Katz, D. and Kahn, R. L. (1966). *The Social Psychology of Organisations*. New York: Wiley.
- Kehl, D. G. and Livingston, H. (1999). Double Speak Detection in the Classroom. *The English Journal*. Vol 88 (6), pp. 77-82.
- Klein, G. (1999). *Sources of Power: How People Make Decisions*. 20th Anniversary Edition. MIT Press.
- Lerner, R., & Steinberg, L. (2004). *Handbook of adolescent psychology* (2nd ed.). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Lynch, M. (2012). *An Effective Guide to School Leadership Theories*. Routledge.

MacAllister, J. (2013). Restoration, transformation or education? A philosophical critique of restorative approaches in schools. In Sellman, E., Cremin, H., and McCluskey, G. (2013) (Eds) *Restorative Approaches to Conflict in Schools: International Perspectives on Managing Relationships in the Classroom*, London: Routledge.

Markham, W. A. and Aveyard, P. (2003). A new theory of health promoting schools based on human functioning, school organisation and pedagogic practice. *Social Science*, 56, pp. 1209-20.

Marshall, T. (1995). Restorative Justice on Trial in Britain. *Mediation Quarterly* Vol 12 (3), pp. 217-231.

Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative Researching*. Newbury Park: Sage.

Mason, M. (Eds) (2008). *Complexity Theory and Educational Philosophy*. Wiley-Blackwell. A John Wiley and Sons Publication.

Maturana, H. and Varela, F. (1987). *The Tree of Knowledge: The biological Roots of Human Understanding*. Boston, MA: Shambhala.

McCluskey, G., Lloyd, G., Kane, J., Riddell, S., Stead, J., and Weedon, E. (2008). Can restorative practices in schools make a difference. *Educational review*, Vol 60 (4), pp. 405-417.

McCold, P., and Wachtel, T. (2002). Restorative Justice theory validation. In Weitekamp E, G. M., and Kerner, H. J. (Eds) *Restorative Justice: Theoretical Foundations*. Willan Publishing, pp. 110-142.

Merrin, G. J., Espelage, D. L., and Hong, J. S. (2018). Applying the social-ecological framework to understand the associations of bullying perpetration among high school students: A multilevel analysis. *Psychology of Violence*, Vol 8 (1), pp. 43-56.

Mittleton-Kelly, E. (2003). Introduction. In Mittleton-Kelly, E. (Ed) *Complex Systems and Evolutionary Perspectives of Organisations: The Application of Complexity Theory to Organisations*, pp. 1-23. Emerald.

Mitchell, M., Gray, M., Green, K., and Beninger, K. (2014). *What works in tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HBT) bullying among school-age children and young people?* NatCen, prepared for Government Equalities Office.

Mitchell, M., Grey, M., and Beninger, K. (2014). *Tackling homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying among school-age children and young people*. The National Centre for Social Research.

Mitchell, M., Kotecha, M., Davies, D., and Turley, C. (2016). *Evaluation of an anti-homophobic, biphobic and transphobic (HB&T) bullying programme*. The National Centre for Social Research.

Modecki, K. L., Minchin, J., Harbaugh, A. G., Guerra, N. G., and Runinons K, C. (2014). Bullying Prevalence Across Contexts: A Meta-Analysis Measuring Cyber and traditional Bullying. *Journal of Adolescent Health*. Vol 55 (55), pp. 602-611.

Mooney, A., Creeser, R., and Blatchford, P. (1991). Children's views on teasing and fighting in junior schools. *Educational research*. Vol 33 (2), pp. 103-112.

Morin, E. (2006). *Restricted Complexity, General Complexity*.
<http://cogprints.org/5217/1/Morin.pdf>

Morita, Y., and Soeda, H. (1998). *Cross-cultural study of bully/victim problems in schools: Final report for the Netherlands to Japanese Ministry of Education*. Tokyo: Japanese Ministry of Education

Morrison, B. E. (2006). School Bullying and Restorative Justice: Towards a Theoretical Understanding of the Role of Respect, Pride and Shame. *Journal of Social Issues*, Vol 62 (2), pp. 371-392.

Morrison, B. E. (2013). Beyond the bad apple: Analytical and theoretical perspectives on the development of restorative approaches in schools. In Sellman, E., Cremin, H., and McCluskey, G. (2013) (Eds) *Restorative Approaches to Conflict in Schools: International Perspectives on Managing Relationships in the Classroom*. London, Routledge.

Morrison, B. and Vaandering, D. (2012). Restorative Justice: Pedagogy, Praxis and Discipline. *Journal of School Violence*. Vol. 11 (2), pp. 138-155.

Morrison, K. (2010). Complexity Theory, School Leadership and Management. *Educational Management Administration Leadership* Vol.30 (3), pp. 374-393.

Morrison, K. (2002) *School Leadership and Complexity Theory*. Routledge, London and New York.

Newman, D. (1996). Emergence and Strange Attractors. *Philosophy of Science* Vol 63 (2), pp. 245-261.

Newman, M., Barabasi, A.-L., and Watts, D. J. (2006). *The Structure and Dynamics of Networks*. Princeton, University Press.

Nonaka, I. and Takeuchi, H. (2006). Organisational Knowledge Creation. In Henry, J. *Creative Management and Development*. (3rd ed.) Open University, pp. 64-81.

Nordgren, L. F., MacDonald, G., and Banas, K. (2011). Empathy gaps for social pain: why people underestimate the pain of social suffering. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Jan, Vol 100 (1), pp. 120-128.

Novembre, G., Zanon, M., & Silani, G. (2015). Empathy for social exclusion involves the sensory-discriminative component of pain: a within-subject fMRI study. *Social cognitive and affective neuroscience*, 10 (2), pp. 153–164.

Olweus, D. (1972). Personality and Aggression. In J. K Cole and D.D. Jensen (eds) *Nebraska Symposium on Motivation*. University of Nebraska 1973(a).

Olweus, D. (1993). *Aggression in Schools: Bullies and Whipping boys*. Hemisphere Publishing Corporation.

Oxford English Dictionary: <http://www.oed.com/>

Orwell, G. (1949). *1984*. Secker.

Pascale, R.T. (2004). Surfing the Edge of Chaos. In *The Strategy Reader*. Segal-Horn, S. (ed). (2nd ed.), pp. 477-490. Blackwell Publishing.

Pavlich, P. (2002). Towards an ethics of restorative justice. In Walgrave Lode (Eds) *Restorative Justice and the Law*, pp. 1-18. William Publishing

Perryman, J., Maguire, M., Braun, A., and Ball, S. (2018). Surveillance, Governmentality and moving the goalposts: The influence of Ofsted on the work of schools in a post-panoptic era. *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol 66 (2), pp. 145-163.

Pole, C., and Lampard, R. (2002). *Practical Research Investigation: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods on Social Research*. Harlow: Preston Education for Prentice Hall.

Reece, R. L. (2018). Genesis of U.S. Colorism and Skin Tone Stratification: Slavery, Freedom and Mulatto-Black Occupational Inequality in Late 19th Century. *The Review of the Black Political Economy*. Vol 4 5(1), pp. 3-21. National Economic Association. Sage.

Rigby, K., and Slee, P. T. (1991). Bullying among Australian school Children: Reported Behaviour and attitudes towards victims. *Journal of Social Psychology*, Vol 131, pp. 615-627.

Rigby, K., and Slee, P.T. (1993). Children's attitudes towards victims. In D.P. Tattum (Ed.) *Understanding and managing bullying*, pp. 119-133. London: Heinemann Books.

Rigby, K. (1996). *Bullying in schools and what to do about it*. Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Rigby, K. (2002). *New Perspectives on Bullying*. London: Jessica Kingsley.

Rigby, K., and Barnes, A., (2002). *Bullying A complete guide to the support group method*. Bristol, UK: Lucky Duck Publishing.

Rigby, K., and Bauman, S. (2010). How Schools Personnel Tackle Cases of Bullying: A Critical Examination. In Jimerson, S. R., Swearer, S. S., and Espelage, D. L. (Eds) *Handbook of Bullying in Schools: An International Perspective*. Routledge.

Roberts, L. (2013). *Restorative Approaches: A Sustainable Whole School Approach?* Masters in Educational Research. University of Cambridge.

Sadler Jr, W. A. (1969). *Existence and Love: A New Approach in Existential Phenomenology*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

- Scott, D., and Morrison, M. (2007). *Key ideas in Educational Research*. Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Sellman, E., Cremin, H., and McCluskey, G. (2013) (Eds). *Restorative Approaches to Conflict in Schools: International Perspectives on Managing Relationships in the Classroom*. London: Routledge.
- Sims-Schouten, W., and Cowie, H. (2016). Ideologies and Narratives in Relation to ‘Fat’ Children as Bullies, ‘Easy Targets’ and Victims. *Children and Society* Vol 30, pp. 445-454.
- Slee, P. T., Ma, L., Sim, H., Taki, M., Sullivan, K. (2003). School bullying in five countries in the Asian Pacific Region. In J. Keeves, and R. Watanbe (Eds), *The Handbook in Educational Research in the Asian Pacific Region*, pp. 425-439. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic.
- Skinns, L., Du Rose, N., and Hough, M. (2009). *An evaluation of Bristol RAI*. King’s College London.
- Scott, D. and Morrison, M. (2007). *Key ideas in Educational Research*. Continuum International Publishing Group.
- Scott, R. W. (1997). Organisational effectiveness. In Harris A., Bennett, N., and Preddy M., *Organizational effectiveness and improvement education*. The Open University.
- Sherman, L. W., and Strang, H. (2007). *Restorative Justice: The Evidence*. The Smith Institute.
- Simons, H. (2009). *Inquiry Research in Practice*. London: Sage.
- Smith, P., and Thomas, F. (2010). *The Use and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies in Schools*. Department for Education.
- Smith P. K., Pepler, D., and Rigby, K., (2004). *Bullying in schools: How successful can interventions be?* Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, P. K., and Shu. S., (2000). What good schools can do about bullying. *Childhood, &*, 193-212.
- Smith, P. K., Mahdavi, J., Carvalho, M., Fisher, S., Russell, S., and Tippett, N. (2008). Cyberbullying: Its nature and impact in secondary schools. *Journal of Child Psychology*, April, Vol 49 (4), pp. 376-85.
- Sperry, R. W. (1980). Mind-Brain Interaction: Mentalism, Yes; Dualism, No. *Neuroscience* Vol 5 pp. 195-206
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The Art of Inquiry Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Strang, H and Braitwaite, J. (Eds, 2001) *Restorative justice and Civil Society*. Cambridge University Press.

Swearer, S. M., and Doll, B. (2001). Bullying in school: An ecological framework. *Journal of Emotional Abuse*, Vol 2, pp. 7–23.

Swearer, S. M., and Esspleage, D. L. (2004). A social Ecological Framework for bullying among youth. In D. L. Espelage and S. M. Swearer (Eds). *Bullying in American Schools. A Social-ecological perspective on prevention and intervention*, pp. 1-12. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Thomas, G. (2011). *How to do your Case Study: A Guide for Students and Researchers*. Sage Publications.

Thompson, P. (2010). *Whole School Change: A Literature Review*. (2nd Ed). Newcastle: Creativity, Culture and Education.

Tokunaga, R. S. (2010). Following you home from school: A critical review and synthesis of research on cyberbullying victimization. *Computers in Human Behavior*, Vol 26 (3), pp. 277-287.

Turing, A. M. (1951). The Chemical Basis for Morphogenesis. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London. Series B, Biological Sciences*, Vol 237 (641) (Aug. 14, 1952), pp. 37-72.

Van Ness, D. W. (2002). The shape of things to come: a framework for thinking about a restorative justice system. In Weitekamp E. G. M., and Kerner, H. J. (Eds) *Restorative Justice: Theoretical Foundations*, pp. 1-20. Willan Publishing.

Vaandering, D. (2013). A window on relationships: reflecting critically on a current restorative justice theory. *Restorative Justice* Vol 1 (3), pp. 311-333.

von Bertalaffy, L. (1955). General systems theory. *Main currents in Modern Thought*, Vol 11, pp. 73-85.

Wachtel, T. (2013). *Defining restorative justice*, www.iirp.edu/pdf/DefiningRestorative.pdf.

Watts, R. (2017). *Public Universities, managerialism and the value of Higher Education*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Wearmouth, J., Mckinney, R., and Glynn, T. (2007). Restorative Justice in schools: A New Zealand example. *Educational Research*, Vol 49 (1), pp. 37-49.

Wong, D. S. W., Cheng, C. H. K., Ngan, R., M. H., and Ma, S. K. (2010). Program Effectiveness of a Restorative Whole-School Approach to Tackling Bullying in Hong Kong. *International Journal of therapy and Comparative Criminology*. 2011, Vol 55 (6), pp. 846-862. DOI: 10.1177/0306624X10374638

Woolford, A. (2009). *The politics of restorative justice: a critical introduction*. Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

World Health Organisation: Regional Office for Europe (2016). *Bullying and Physical Fights among Adolescents*. Fact Sheet 15th March.

Ybarra, M. L., and Mitchell, K. J., (2004). Youth Engagement in online harassment: Associations with caregivers-child relationships, Internet use, and personal characteristics. *Journal of Adolescence*, June, Vol 27 (3) pp. 319-36.

Youth Justice Board (2003). *Professional Certificate in Effective Practice (Youth Justice): Restorative Justice*. Youth Justice Board.

Youth Justice Board (2005). *Restorative Justice in Schools*. Youth Justice Board.

Zatarain, F. D. (2009). *Against Bullying, How to stand up against it*. Peacemakers Editores.

Zehr, H. (1990). *A new focus for crime and Justice: Changing Lenses*. Herald Press.

Zembylas, M. and Ferreira, A. (2009). Identity Formation and affective spaces in conflict ridden societies: inventing heterotopic possibilities. *Journal of Peace Education* Vol 6 (1), pp. 34-47.

Zeleny, M. (1996). On the Social Nature of Autopoietic Systems in Khalil and Boulding (eds) op. cit. 12-45.

Appendices:

Appendix 1: IIRP Eleven Elements of Practice.

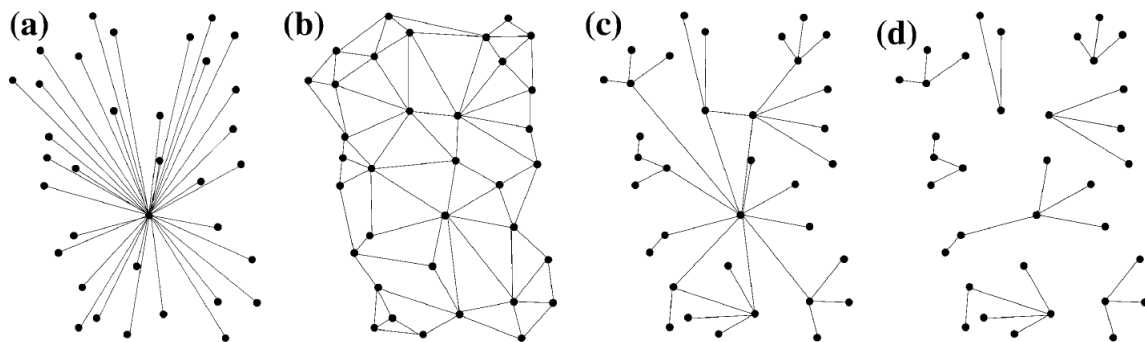
Essential practices	Sample indicators of proficiency in practice
1. Affective statements	Use “I” statements; make students aware of positive or negative impact of their behavior; focus on behavior; encourage students to express their feelings
2. Restorative questions	Reflect standard restorative questions (What was the harm? How has it impacted you? What needs to happen to make things right?); require a response
3. Small impromptu conferences	Use to resolve low-level incidents between 2 people; take place as soon as the incident has occurred; use standard restorative questions; use affective statements; ask students to conduct a specific activity to repair harm from the incident
4. Proactive circles	Comprise at least 80% of circles conducted; use to set behavioral expectations (e.g., for academic goal setting or planning, to establish ground rules for student projects, to monitor or build understanding of academic content); use standard restorative questions; use affective statements; run by students, after being facilitated 5 times
5. Responsive circles	Comprise no more than 20% of circles at the school; use in response to behavior or tensions affecting a group of students or entire class; require all people involved to play a role; use standard set of restorative questions; use affective statements
6. Restorative conferences	Use in response to serious incidents or a pattern of repeated less serious incidents; use standard restorative questions, affective statements, and a trained facilitator
7. Fair process	Allow students to provide input into decisions; explain the reasoning behind decisions to the students affected; clarify expectations so students understand implications of decision, specific expectations for carrying out the decision, and consequences for not meeting the expectations
8. Reintegrative management of shame	Avoid stigmatizing wrongdoers; discourage dwelling on shame; acknowledge worth of person while rejecting unacceptable behavior (i.e., separate deed from the doer)
9. Restorative staff community	Use restorative practices to resolve conflicts and proactive circles to build sense of community
10. Restorative approach with families	Use restorative practices during interactions with family members, including proactive circles that focus on intentional communication of positive student behavior and academic achievement
11. Fundamental hypothesis	Have high expectations for behavior; do not ignore inappropriate behavior; use the appropriate mix of control/pressure and support; minimize use of staff facilitators

Appendix 2: Morin's Distinction Between Restricted and General Complexity.

'Restricted complexity made possible important advances in formalization, in the possibilities of modelling, which themselves favour inter-disciplinarity. But one still remains within the epistemology of classical science. When one searches for the 'laws of complexity', one still attaches complexity as kind of wagon behind the truth locomotive, that which produces laws. A hybrid was formed between the principles of traditional science and the advances towards is hereafter. Actually, one avoids the fundamental problem of complexity which is epistemological, cognitive, paradigmatic. To some extent, one recognizes complexity, but by decomplexifying it...In opposition to reduction, [Generalized]complexity requires that one tries to comprehend the relations between the whole and the parts. The knowledge of the parts is not enough, the knowledge of the whole as a whole is not enough, if one ignores parts; one is thus brought to make a come and go loop gathering the knowledge of the whole and the parts. Thus, the principle of reduction is substituted by a principle that conceives the relation of the whole-part mutual implication'

(Morin 2006:6).

Appendix 3: Types of Networks (Davis and Sumara, 2006).



A) Centralized Network.

B) Distributed Network.

C) Decentralised Network.

D) Fragmented Network.

Appendix 4: Soft Systems Methodology – Inquiry School Session Agenda.

Sustaining Restorative Approaches – Soft Systems Methodology.

Riverview School - Restorative Working Group Session 23rd June 2017.

Venue:

Time	Activity	Participants	Trainer
8:30am	Arrivals		Luke Roberts
9:00am	Introductions What we need to work at our best? Zones and Bank	All	
9:15am	Purpose of the day – researcher position – problematic situation	All	
9:30am	Where are we? 1. As a school(s) – how did you get here? 2. Defining restorative approaches 3. In terms of developing restoratives approaches	Small groups	
10:30am	Break		
10:45am	Left hand drawing exercise (not about the picture, develop icons?) look for connections. Mapping our school. Metaphor of the school = Rich picture – analysis 1 Analysis 2 – roles (formal, informal), values, norms. How do we know, why does this matter? Analysis 3 – sharing rich pictures – reactions to pictures.	Small groups Post-its Flip-chart	
12:00pm	Lunch		
12:40pm	Reflections so far?	All	
1:00pm	Future scoping and option generation – a new (ideal) model. What would RA look in the school. Option generation?	Flip-chart paper	
2:00pm	Break		
2:15pm	Making it ours: user, actor, transformation, worldview, owner, environment	Small Groups	
3:00pm	Making it REAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourced • Engaging • Achievable • Learning 	All	
3:30pm	Next steps and closing remarks	All	
4:00pm	Finish		

Worldviews from stakeholder focus groups:

Staff	Young people	Parents
Concern about creativity and routine	Life skills	Selecting school because of RA
Staff support, e.g. new staff, promotions	Link to bullying	Fear of child being labelled
Social media	Social media	Social media
Laguna High (embed in culture)	Support pupils with the teacher	More RP in the community but recognition that other schools are punitive

**Faculty of Education – Doctoral Educational Research:
Restorative Approaches: Systems Thinking for Sustainability?
School Consent Form**

Title of Project: **Restorative Approaches: Systems Thinking for Sustainability?**

Name of Researcher: **Luke Roberts – PHD Candidate**

Name of School:

I confirm that I have read and understood the research briefing for the above study and that the school is willing to contribute to the research.

Yes/No

A working group of staff will participate in the one-day training on system thinking.

Yes/No

Staff and pupils have been given the opportunity to ask questions (face to face, via telephone or e-mail) about this research.

Yes/No

Staff and pupils agree to take part in focus groups and interviews during the research.

Yes/No

The school understand that the research collected will be confidential (anonymised) and will not uses the school name to identify the school in this research. (Unless agreed by school head and researcher.)

Yes/No

The school understand that participation is voluntary and that an individual or the school can withdraw from the study at any time **without giving any reason.**

Yes/No

The school agrees to take part in the above study.

Yes/No

Name of School Representative
authorised to sign

.....

Signature

.....

Date

.....

Name of researcher taking consent: Luke Roberts

Researchers e-mail address:

Should the school have any concerns or complaints with the Researcher please contact the research supervisor Dr Hilary Cremin

Appendix 6: Staff Consent Form

**Faculty of Education – PhD in Educational Research:
Restorative Approaches: Systems Thinking for Sustainability?
Research Participant Consent Form**

Title of Research Questions: *How does the Soft systems method support the sustainability of restorative approaches in schools?*

Name of Researcher: Luke Roberts – PhD Candidate

I confirm that I have read or had an explanation regarding the research for the above study and what my contribution will be.

Yes/No

I agree to participate in the soft systems method session.

Yes/No

I have been/or will be given the opportunity to ask questions (face to face, via telephone or e-mail) about this research at any point.

Yes/No

I agree to take part in three focus groups and/or interviews where necessary.

Yes/No

I agree to the interview being digitally recorded and filmed for the purpose of the research.

Yes/No

I understand that the research collected will be confidential and my name will not be used to identify me (anonymised) in this research.

Yes/No

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time **without giving any reason.**

Yes/No

I agree to take part in the above study.

Yes/No

Name of participant

.....

Signature

.....

Date

.....

Name of researcher taking consent: Luke Roberts

Researchers e-mail address:

Should a research participant have any concerns or complaints with the Researcher please contact the research supervisor Dr Hilary Cremin

Appendix 7: Riverview School - Soft Systems Session.

The start of the session focused on the journey of restorative practice in the school. The staff at Riverview created metaphors based on organisms to explain their rich pictures of how they currently viewed the school when viewed as a system. The staff perceived their school as a human system which had various organs interacting together to support pupils on their journey. The different organs served as functions to support Riverview School's sense of community and relationships. As pupils travelled further down into the body of the school there were more specific and targeted interventions to concentrate the support needed for young people. The metaphor proved to be extremely useful to the staff in understanding how different aspects of the school were working together.

Root Definition:

The use of restorative practice in our schools is to enable young people to lead successful and independent lives by responding to challenging behaviour and change by using coping mechanisms that increase their recovery rate after conflict so that they can confidently lead in their families and communities.

The staff at Riverview School were then invited to develop initiatives which they thought would help the school as a system to achieve an ideal state as captured in the Root Definition. The staff decided that they would raise the awareness of restorative practice among parents at the school and set a target of working with one hundred families. The final aspect of the SSM session was the introduction by the facilitator (researcher) of the REAL (resourced, engaging, achievable, learning [for participants and system]) criteria through which the staff would be able to reflect on their learning:

Resource: (time)

- planning group for parent workshop

Engaging:

- events at parents evening

Achievable:

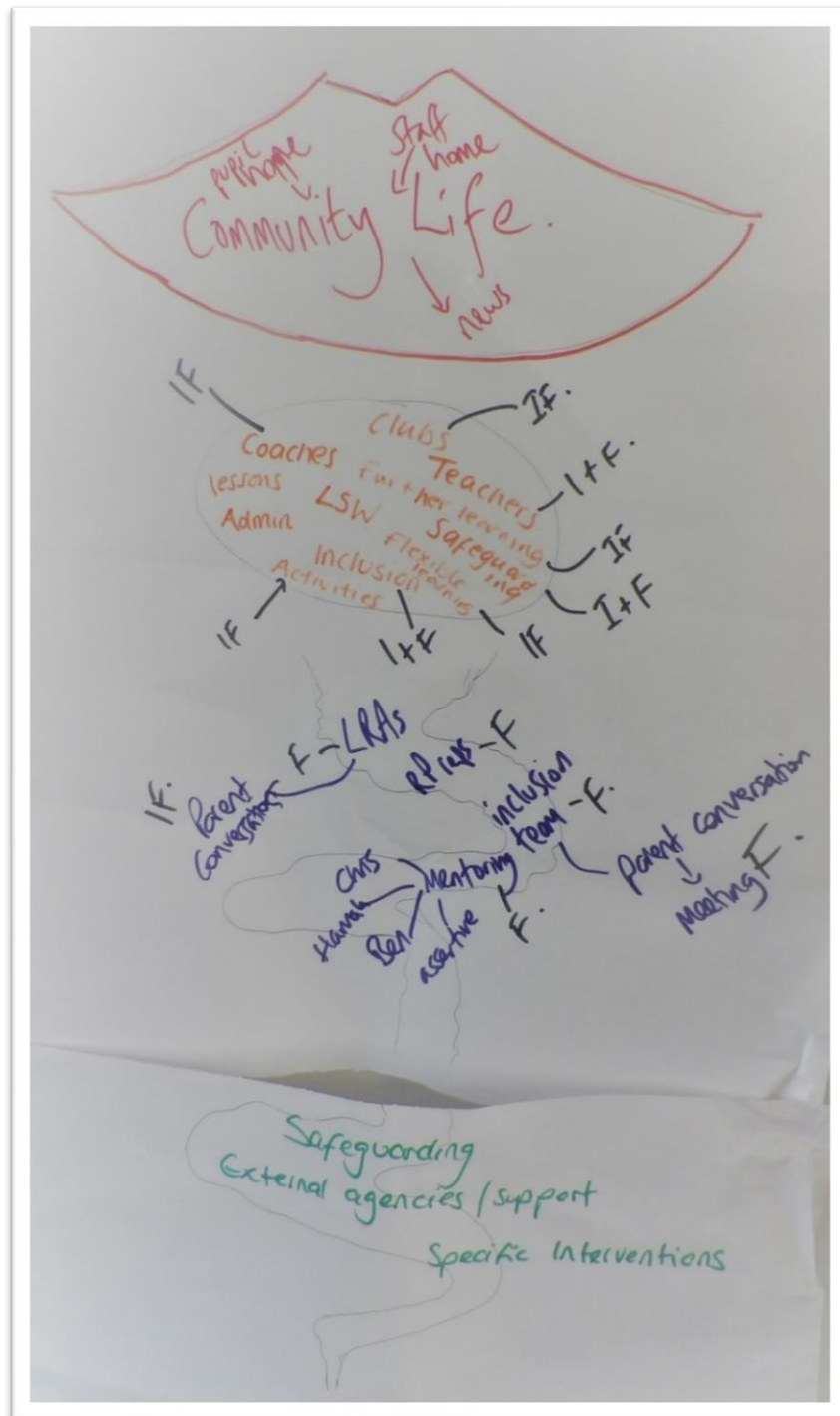
- one hundred families.

Learning:

- being restorative
- better behaviour in community and school
- better attendance at school.

This final activity closed the day. The SSM session was completed before the summer holiday and the research focus groups were to commence in the following academic year.

Rich Picture 1: Riverview School.



Appendix 8: Laguna High – Soft Systems Session.

The start of the session focused on the journey of restorative practice in the School. The staff at Laguna High created metaphors to explain their rich pictures of how they currently viewed the school as a system. The staff viewed their school as a fish in the ocean which had to deal with several issues in its environment. They described having to deal with stormy seas, which could be compared to the wider changes happening in the education system. There was also a feeling that Ofsted was represented by a hammerhead shark and was going to return at some point. Staff also had mixed views regarding the new partnership arrangement with Riverview School, which was seen as doing better and leading the way. To what extent the partnership was voluntary, and to what extent they felt they were going along with it, is summarised in the image of the two fish in the current. There was also a discussion by staff acknowledging that the school was having to compete with other schools and, due to its Ofsted rating, not keeping up with the rest.

Root Definition:

In the SSM process, staff were invited to create a root definition of what they sought to achieve through interacting with a messy problem. The staff at Laguna High and Riverview School defined the purpose of restorative practice as a system feature as follows:

The use of restorative practice in our schools is to enable young people to lead successful and independent lives by responding to challenging behaviour and change by using coping mechanisms that increase their recovery rate after conflict so that they can confidently lead in their families and communities.

Resource: (time)

- drama piece at Year 7 induction evening
- training- mixed people in sessions, e.g. pupils/parents/colleagues. All receive initial training on arrival. Internal or external input need for training. Training needs to be regular, focused consistent and progressive
- develop restorative language to be used in social media contexts

Engaging:

- restorative practice representatives from young people to capture attention.
Differentiate those who want to be RP trained
- Year 7 induction evening

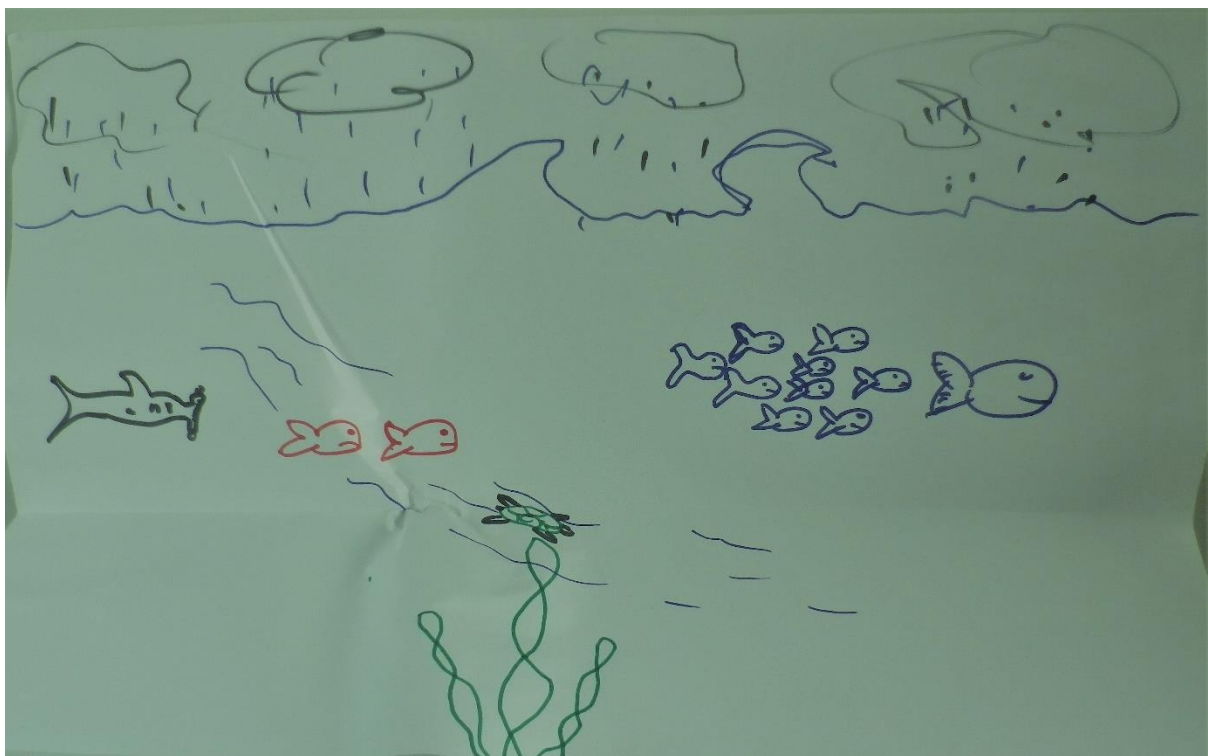
Achievable:

- Demonstrate impacts of young people using RP in the school

Learning:

- Young people questionnaires
- Better attendance at school
- Better relationships with parents, staff and pupils.

Rich Picture 2: Laguna High.



Appendix 9: Northside School – Soft Systems Session.

The staff at Northside School attended a half-day soft systems methodology session on 6th September 2017. A focus group was then organised for 14th March 2018.

The start of the session focused on the journey of restorative practice in the school. The staff at Northside School created metaphors to explain their rich pictures of how they currently viewed the school as a system. The staff saw their school as a loving place which protected pupils from the challenges they faced in their local community. The community architecture surrounding the school is a highly dense series of council estates and busy roads. The participants recognised that change happened on a daily basis, so used the weather as a/the descriptor to symbolise the unexpected happening every day. They described having to be aware of issues at home and not knowing the moods of the young people. All staff saw faith as an important aspect of the school community. Interestingly, the staff did not recognise that their symbolising of protection (bars on a window) could also be viewed as representing a prison cell.

Root Definition:

In the SSM process staff were invited to create a root definition of what they sought to achieve through the interacting with a messy problem. Northside School defined the purpose of restorative practice as a system feature as follows:

At Northside School we use restorative practice to rebuild relationships in a way that respects both individuals in order to develop a working relationship which addresses harm and supports individuals with future resolutions (problem-solving).

Realistic:

- training students as mediators with information-sharing through videos/assemblies and PSHE

Achievable:

- content generation and information distribution

Engaging:

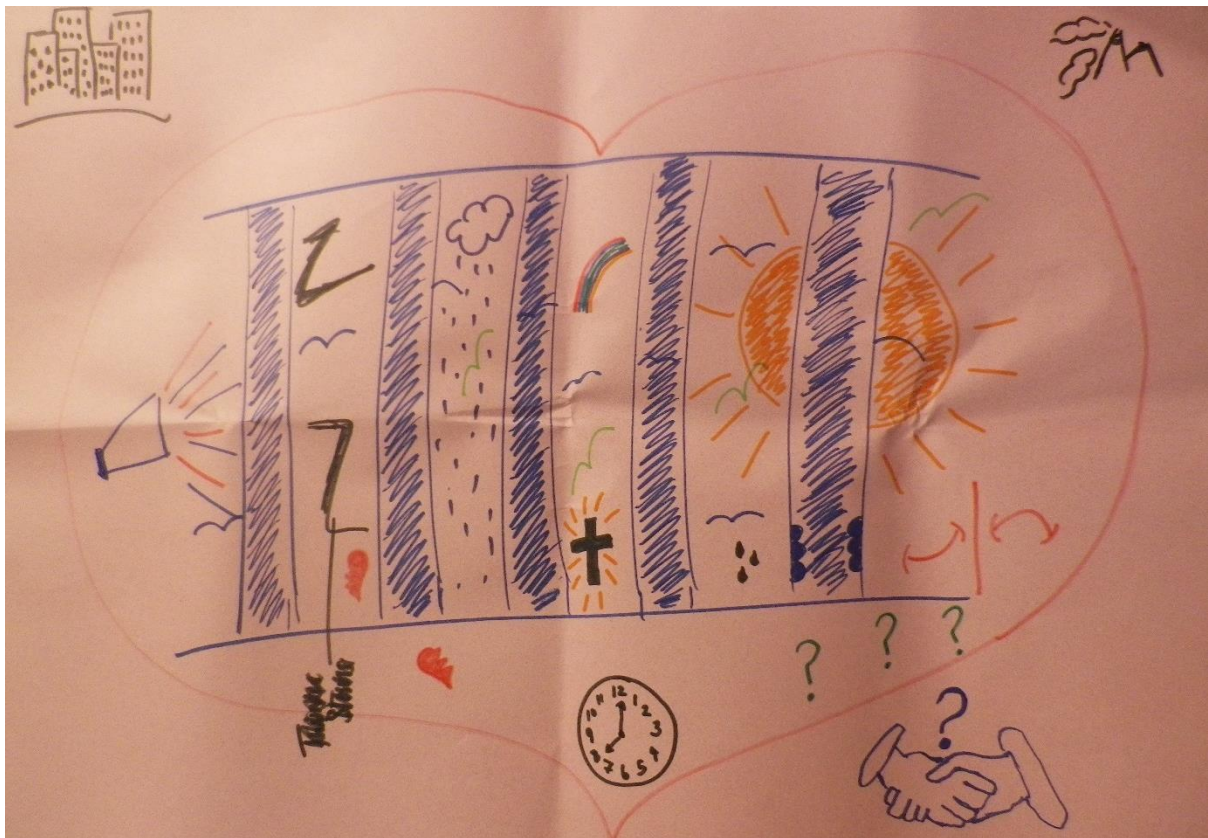
- share pupil comments

- speakers
- scenarios
- what is it? Focus on Year 7s
- developed with rest of the pupils
- share stories of success

Learning: (what the Cardinal Pole working group will learn from this process)

- change practice
- how our approach works
- critical eye
- challenge other members of staff
- questioning process
- reflective practice
- group agreement.

Rich Picture 3: Northside School.



Appendix 10: Evergreen College – Soft Systems Session.

The staff at Evergreen College attended a half-day soft systems methodology session on 12th July 2017, in the last week of school before the summer holiday. A focus group was then organised for 13th March 2018.

The start of the session focused on the journey of restorative approaches in the school. The staff at Evergreen College created metaphors to explain their rich picture of how they currently viewed the school as a system. The staff viewed their school as a protective place (a shield) where pupils could learn and enjoy a rich curriculum of activities. The four quadrants were symbolic of the four schools on one site. There was a strong sense of activity happening in each small school based on their areas of specialism, such as music and theatre. The bumble bee was representative of the pastoral team moving around the schools to offer support and help. The people walking around the earth were representative of the school as a whole seeing itself as preparing young people to be global citizens.

Root Definition:

In Evergreen College school restorative justice (RJ) is used to support the success and personal development of the Evergreen family's wider community. At riddles and in the collegiate specifically we use restorative justice to explore harm, needs and solutions in order to resolve conflict and instil values in the members of the Evergreen College community. The scale of support is delivered through different levels of leadership, from peer mentors to senior leadership. Restorative approaches consist of repairing and reflecting on broken relationships to ensure a positive change and greater self-awareness of an individual's actions and their effects on others. Although this process may not always be easy or quick it is vital to sustain a cohesive, diverse and harmonious society.

The staff participants were then invited to develop initiatives which they thought would help the school as a system to achieve an ideal state as captured in the root definition. The staff decided to do several activities:

1. Define what RA are
2. Behaviour policy - make RA explicit
3. Voluntary training - whole staff
4. NQT development programme in RA
5. Written guidance - one-page overview including flowchart.

They decided that they would do all of these activities to raise awareness of restorative practice among staff and young people. The group decided to work on these purposeful activities simultaneously to help achieve their ideal system state. The final aspect of the SSM session was to consider the REAL (Resourced, Engaging, Achievable, Learning [for participants and system]) criteria with which the staff would be able to reflect on their learning:

Resources:

- Experienced staff
- Existing behaviour policy
- Time in the diary/directed
- Tailored training - NQT in the staff, existing staff, LSA
- Guidance - checklist/email college

Engaging:

- What is the greatest need?
- Snappy/short/practical
- Include RA in the school's prospectus
- Student planners
- Year 7 induction
- Delivering training with supporting case studies

Achievable:

- Policy review - training linked to guidance notes and evidence of success

Learning (for ourselves):

- Recognition of RA
- Recognising skills
- Sharing expertise
- New perspectives
- Hearing success
- Sustaining the knowledge.

This final activity closed the day. The SSM session was completed at the end of the 2017-2018 school year. Staff agreed to start their activities at the start of the new academic year, and focus groups would commence when the group was willing and able to meet.

Rich Picture 4: Evergreen College.



Appendix 11: Ideal Timeline of Field Research.

School	June 2017	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan 2019	Feb	March
Riverview School	SSM		Summer Holidays		FG1		Christmas Holidays	FG 2		FG 3
Laguna High										
Northside School				SSM		FG1		FG2		FG3
Evergreen College		SSM			FG1			FG2		FG3