My Ideal School:
A Personal Construct Psychology approach
to understanding the school constructs of
children described as anxious

KEITH IAN PIROTTA

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ABSTRACT

This research explores the school constructs of children described as anxious. Little research exists that looks at understanding children's school-related anxiety through the lens of Personal Construct Psychology (PCP). This qualitative research design includes semi-structured interviews that followed a PCP theoretical framework. The interviews were carried out with five children aged between 7 and 11, who attended state schools in Malta, and who were experiencing school-related anxiety. Participants were asked to comment and produce drawings about the kind of school they would like to attend (their ideal school), and the kind of school they would not like to attend. The children's constructs were organised according to whether they related to adults in school, their peers, the school and classroom environment, and the participants themselves in each of these two imaginary schools. Participants were also asked to think of how the school they currently attend can become more like their ideal school. Findings indicate the importance of relationships between teachers and pupils, relationships amongst pupils themselves, a positive learning environment within the classroom and the belongingness to a common value system and school ethos to which anxious children can relate. This research aims to shed light on the responsibility of professionals working with children with school-related anxiety to look beyond within-child factors and understand possible stressors in the child's environment as potentially contributing to heightening their anxiety.

Key words: Personal Construct Psychology, anxiety, school constructs, ideal school.

Dedicated to my wife Sarah, and son Jack.

You have been my inspiration.

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This work has not previously been accepted for any degree and it is not being concurrently submitted for any degree.

This research is being submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology.

This thesis is the result of my own work and investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by explicit references in the text. A full list is appended.

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Keith Ian Pirotta

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

TABLE OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Term
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CBT	Cognitive Behaviour Therapy
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DSM	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
EP	Educational Psychologist
LSA	Learning Support Assistant
PCP	Personal Construct Psychology
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
SEBD	Social, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SPS	School Psychological Service
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist

"If you want to know what's wrong with someone,

ask them – they may tell you."

George Kelly

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

This thesis presents research on the constructs that children experiencing school-related anxiety have about school. Children who refuse to go to school or who avoid engaging in the learning environment, can be a concern to whoever values education. Thus one would imagine that there may be something wrong with school that causes children to act in this way. The child's voice can be a rich source of information, especially if questions are being asked about children themselves. Children's constructs of the type of school they would like to attend, and what makes this school ideal to them are central to this research. A Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) approach was adopted to elicit information from the participants, and that included discussion and drawings about opposing ends of a school construct. This method was selected to try and understand what contributes to children's anxiety at school.

Since this research was carried out in Malta, an outline of the educational system, with particular reference to this research area, will be presented. Intervention pathways adopted in the Maltese context, those that are targeted for children who are experiencing anxiety, will be presented. This will be followed by the presentation of the researcher's position about the topic and a justification of the need for such research to contribute to understanding and intervening with children with school-related anxiety through PCP.

1.2 The educational system in Malta

This study was carried out in Malta between 2014 and 2016. Compulsory education in Malta is between the ages of 5 and 16. Parents can also send their 3-year-old children to kindergarten for 2 years before entering primary school at age 5. Children spend 6 years in primary school before moving on to middle schooling for 2 years followed by 3 further years in secondary school until the year they turn 16.

The educational system is predominantly catered for by state schools, which have been grouped into a network of ten colleges (Ministry of Education, Youth and Employment, 2005). This new framework was brought about to facilitate networking between schools (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2014). Each college is headed by a College Principal and comprises a number of primary schools, a middle school and secondary schools. A co-education system, which already exists in primary years, is being gradually introduced across the middle and secondary schools. There is also a network of resource centres catering for children with various needs who do not attend mainstream education. Apart from state schools, there are a number of Church and Independent schools, which also cater for this age range.

Due to the few natural resources in Malta, the growth of the country's economy depends on public expenditure on education (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2014). Children are prepared to become lifelong learners (Ministry of Education and Employment, 2012), and after the age of 16, they are encouraged to further their education through post-secondary and tertiary education. With a fall in birth rates in some areas and a growth in others (and a large number of new learners enrolled in the education system due to the effects of migration) Malta is undergoing a number of

changes affecting inclusion at a national level (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2014). This same European report reflects a preoccupation with whether the education system is meeting the needs of all learners or the individual learning needs of a minority. Even though there is a commitment to the promotion of inclusion, there is a lack of common vision around what is understood by inclusion and how it fits the Maltese context (European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education, 2014). Furthermore, as the latter report states, the Maltese educational system is characterised by competition and driven by tests and examinations. This is leading to a potential mismatch between teaching and learning following the introduction of mixed-ability teaching in all schools, and the over-use of psychologists to secure examination access arrangements. This creates an unhealthy approach to learning by children and potentially creates a frustrating and anxiety-provoking learning environment, especially for the most vulnerable children. Anxiety stemming from school or school-related circumstances can have negative implications for children's well-being, and their general outlook on learning, since schooling takes up a significant amount of childhood. It is therefore in the children's best interest to identify the negative implications that school-related anxiety could potentially have on their perception of education. This research will make it viable to explore how anxiety features in children's school constructs in the Maltese educational system.

1.3 Anxiety

Anxiety occurs naturally in individuals and can be conceptualised as a continuum, with anxiety disorders on the severe end. One of the cognitive components of anxiety is that of worry (Stallard, 2009), and research indicates that 70% of children aged between 8 and 13 worry every now and then about school performance, dying, health and social contacts

(Muris et al., 1998). Silverman, La Greca and Wasserstein (1995) note similar findings with school, health and personal harm being the three most common areas of worry, while Weems, Silverman and La Greca (2000) reported that children tend to worry more frequently about friendships, classmates, school, health and performance. These studies provide evidence that anxiety related to school circumstances is one of the major issues for children.

The fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) incorporates childhood anxiety under *Anxiety Disorders* and states that:

> *"Anxiety disorders include disorders that share features of excessive fear and anxiety and related behavioural disturbances. Fear is the emotional response to real or perceived imminent threat, whereas anxiety is anticipation of future threat."*
> (American Psychiatric Association, 2013)

Children whose anxiety is generated as a result of school-related circumstances may not always fit a diagnosis of anxiety, but might nonetheless fit a number of diagnostic criteria. Moreover, their everyday functioning can be negatively impacted. These children may refuse to attend school, being afraid of leaving the secure home environment, and the presence of their caregivers. Although this behaviour could appear similar to a child suffering from separation anxiety or social phobia, the anxiety symptoms are specific to the school environment and it is not always clear what might be causing this distress. Some professionals call this school refusal or school avoidance (Csóti, 2003).

This research is investigating the factors behind these children's school-related anxiety. It aims to explore school factors or situations within the school, as evident in the interview questions (Appendix 8), that might be contributing to their anxiety at school. Due to individuals having different experiences of anxiety, it could be possible that the anxiety present in participants could also link to other factors than those within school, but

nonetheless manifesting itself at school. This suggests that even if the anxiety is not completely related to school, factors within a school setting might be heightening the anxiety symptoms at school and having a negative effect on these children's educational experience.

The intention of this study is not to persue or facilitate a diagnosis but to understand the anxiety-provoking situations at school. The terms 'anxiety' or 'anxious children' in this thesis will be used to encompass all those children who experience anxiety, irrelevant of whether they carry a diagnosis or not. Anxiety disorders differ from states of anxiety occurring at various developmental stages in their intensity and persistence beyond appropriate periods. It is unfair, however, to downplay anyone who is anxious but is not diagnosed with an anxiety disorder, since this individual might be having a tough time at school anyway. When working with vulnerable children, it would be wrong to assume that only children with a diagnosis require support. Any child who is feeling challenged to engage in the learning environment requires support to some degree. Children may feel anxious about school, exams, being with individuals or adults at school but not meet the criteria to carry a diagnosis of anxiety. This would nonetheless indicate a challenge in their learning environment, even though they might not have an anxiety disorder as recognised by the DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Stallard (2009) explains that when assessing anxiety in young children, third-party assessments may vary, depending on the way children present themselves across settings and with different people. This highlights the importance of obtaining multiple sources of information when assessing anxiety levels in children. Obtaining first hand data from the child should also form part of the assessment process, but there is less use of self-report questionnaires with young children. This calls for better mechanisms for obtaining the child's views, i.e. ones that are child-friendly and suited to children's communication skills.

Parents and professionals within schools are probably the first to notice a child becoming anxious. This can happen before coming to school in the morning or whilst doing homework the night before, during school assessments, or even during a normal school day. This first step of spotting these anxiety markers is crucial in the initial stages of identifying these children. In the eventuality that a child refuses to attend school, parents are usually encouraged by the senior management team in Maltese state schools to seek advice from a medical practitioner following suspicions of anxiety. Educational Psychologists (EPs) are involved in guiding the school on intervention measures to support the child, possibly including recommendations for a statement of needs. The latter involves a process of psychological assessment to determine the needs of the child and issue recommendations accordingly. This includes the potential support of a Learning Support Assistant (LSA) who could be in a position to support the child's individual needs while at school. Intervention work normally involves consultation meetings with parents and teaching staff to plan and implement alternative programmes. These might include strategies such as reduced school hours and a restricted curriculum for a period of time until the child begins to overcome their anxiety. The EP may also have individual sessions with the child to assess and support their emotional needs. Depending on the extent of anxiety, other professionals including child psychiatrists, clinical psychologists, counsellors or psychotherapists might also contribute medically or therapeutically to helping the child feel comfortable attending school and having their learning needs met.

Children are active seekers of knowledge, whose development and learning is primarily concerned with social interactions and the environment in which these interactions occur (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's theory, that the social context is what enables children to learn, leads one to question the source of anxiety and lack of motivation in children who

choose not to attend school and thus lose out on learning. Are the contributing factors always within the child or could it also mean that the environment surrounding the child, including school, is causing the child to feel anxious? We tend to search for problems within the child, which at times is plausible, but fail to equally consider external sources that could be exacerbating or causing children's anxiety (Muris et al., 1998; Silverman, La Greca, & Wasserstein, 1995; Weems, Silverman, & La Greca, 2000). One option does not eliminate the other, however, and professionals need to consider both within-child factors as well as those in the child's immediate environment as potential precursors to the child's experience of anxiety.

1.4 The researcher's position

Development can be seen as the changes that occur as a result of an individual's perception of and interaction with their environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). At the innermost level of 'nested structures' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979), is the home and classroom environment, those environments that are familiar to an individual. The importance of the relations and interconnections between these settings can be decisive for development to take place within a given setting. This highlights the care that must be attributed to the transition from home to school, which could potentially be a rather stressful one for all children who need to adapt to fitting into the school structure with adults and peers they are unlikely to have met before.

During my employment as a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) at the School Psychological Service in Malta, I came across a number of children, especially at primary school level, who appeared uneasy in the school environment. I questioned myself as to whether they are being allowed to interact in a natural child-friendly environment. But

what is an optimal environment for children to learn, and how can it be adapted for children with different needs? Most importantly, what do children do best?

Play is considered to be a practice initiated by children, and is a crucial component in their varied aspects of development (Singer, Golinkoff, & Hirsh-Pasek, 2006). It is an opportunity for children to interact with their environment, and engage with people and objects, which in turn provide them with strategies to adapt to future behaviours (Piaget, 1962). Therefore, I find it hard to understand any educational system that puts a significant amount of pressure on directed instruction and control over children's behaviour during early years or even primary, at the expense of exploratory methods such as inquiry-based learning. Is education inviting children to learn or is it imposing learning materials onto our children? Is the learning environment suited to children's different realities and learning needs or is it perceived by children as a restraining place to be? These questions guided me to try and understand children who are feeling anxious at school, and to move beyond research about treating anxiety within the child. There is valuable evidence-based research that treats children with anxiety (to be presented in the next chapter). However, equal importance must be given to the environment around the child and how that child, who is feeling anxious at school, interprets their reality. Sometimes children interpret situations in different ways, and while one child might not be affected at all, another child might perceive that same situation as being an anxiety-provoking one.

1.5 Personal Construct Psychology

The thoughts mentioned above motivated me to listen to the child's voice and present it as evidence for what children suffering from school-related anxiety need at school, and

what they think their ideal school should look like. Kelly (1991) postulated that 'If you don't know what's wrong with a client, ask him; he may tell you!' (p. 140). A person's response to events is determined by their personal construct system, a means by which that person anticipates events (Kelly, 1991). This has its roots in Personal Construct theory which is an 'act of construing' and which attempts to redefine psychology as a 'psychology of persons' (Bannister & Fransella, 1986, p. 4). Kelly (1991) refers to people as scientists who try to understand and who impose their meaning on events that confront them. Each individual constructs their own reality through interpretations of the world.

Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) proposes that a person's functioning can be perceived as a means of understanding the world (Butler & Green, 2007), something that is open for questioning and reconsideration. This philosophical assumption is known as constructive alternativism (Kelly, 1991). Individuals try to make sense of events by detecting constructs and applying them to anticipate what is likely to happen to them in future. Kelly (1991) refers to a construct as being a representation that is similar to, or different from, something else. This contributes to the person's theory of self and the world. This method of anticipation differs between individuals, not only because of the differences in the events that they anticipate, but also because of the different personal approaches to anticipation of those events. This does not mean that two or more children might not end up anticipating events at school in a similar manner, however anticipation of events is based upon their experiences of their subjective worlds. Based on this theoretical viewpoint, a child would interpret their schooling experience from the lens of their own reality and certain situations or individuals may be anxiety-provoking for some but not for others. Exploring the ways children interpret their own events in school was fundamental in this thesis, as was the PCP approach used. PCP was used in order to facilitate the emergence of children's constructs about what is an ideal school as opposed

9

to a non-ideal school, as devised by Williams and Hanke's (2007) *Drawing the Ideal School* technique. Therefore, apart from the interest in understanding children's school-related anxiety, the method of exploration was another fundamental aspect of this thesis. Assuming that constructs are based upon dichotomous thinking, allows for the understanding of how an individual interprets a situation (Kelly, 1991). The understanding of an aspect of reality is contrasted with the opposite view of that same individual (an ideal school as compared to a non-ideal school).

Ronen (1996) suggested that children act on their environment rather than reacting to it. They struggle to understand the world as a reality for all, but see it as a representation of their own unique experience of it (Butler & Green, 2007). Therefore, this makes children architects of their own reality. Applying a PCP technique to elicit an anxious child's voice is a valuable tool for EPs to apply since it allows space for a child to express needs, and to revisit their own constructs of how an environment can be best suited for that child's optimal functioning.

1.6 Research rationale

My interest in listening to anxious children's voices through PCP was what motivated me to carry out this research. The rationale behind this motivation is based on the possibility that the school environment might be a cause of children's anxiety. Therefore, this study will aim to explore these children's constructs about school.

Children experiencing anxiety at school can be supported in a number of different ways. The most common form of evidence-based support is Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT), which can be used in group settings to reduce children's anxiety (Chiu, et al.,

2013; Riley, 2012; Wood, 2006). CBT is a form of psychotherapy that emphasizes the role that cognitions have on feelings and behaviour (Stallard, 2009). Being part of a group intervention also seems to have its positive effects (DeLucia-Waack & Gellman, 2007). However, there seems to be a gap in research in how anxious children anticipate events through their own personal constructs.

PCP has been widely used in schools with children experiencing various difficulties in order to help them tell their stories (Cullen & Monroe, 2010; Hardman, 2001; Truneckova & Viney, 2012). This approach has been used with a number of students exhibiting a wide range of difficulties (e.g. those at risk of exclusion, disengaged pupils, children with SEN or SEBD, those having interpersonal difficuties), as will be presented in the next chapter, but there is little evidence of PCP being used with children who display anxiety. From a PCP theoretical perspective, anxiety refers to instances when an individual becomes aware that a situation they face lies outside that person's construct system (Kelly, 1991) and therefore they are likely to experience failure in trying to predict events. This anxiety may arise from a perceived inadequacy of that individual's personal construct system (Hall & Lindzey, 1985). This calls for a better understanding of a child's constructs about school. Different children respond to similar situations in a different manner, based on their interpretation of their own reality.

Williams & Hanke's (2007) research explores the ideal school perceptions of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder. This was based on Moran's (2001) *Drawing the Ideal Self* and explores the value of asking children themselves about their school experiences and what is ideal for them at school. The current study has adapted this research model to children experiencing anxiety at school, looking for outside factors that might be causing the child to feel anxious. Furthermore, this method of inquiry is thought to be

suited to the participants in this study since it includes drawings, something that Ravenette (1980) argues is a useful tool to help portray children's possible meanings.

This approach can guide professionals who work with anxious children to move beyond 'within child' factors, and listen for any indication of how the environment might be causing anxious moments for the child and how it can be better suited for that child's needs. It will explore the constructs that these children hold about school. Furthermore, it will bring to light the child's voice and should alert educational staff, who are in contact with children daily at school, to the factors within the children's educational experience that can be of benefit in reducing or preventing anxiety within children. Although the intention is not to attempt to generalize the findings to the entire school population, it is still pertinent to note that fostering the readiness to value the child's voice is key to supporting children experiencing difficulties at school, including anxiety.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A systematic review of relevant literature relating to the use of Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) with children in schools and school interventions that target anxiety in children has been carried out. This served to provide an overview of what is already known in these areas and to justify this research as important in exploring school constructs of children described an anxious. A thorough review of current literature found no direct research about understanding anxious children in schools through PCP. This led the researcher to look into more than one area, as indicated above, in order to shed light on the gap that seems to exist in this area. A section of this literature review will also consider drawings in PCP, particularly the Ideal Self (Moran, 2001) and other similar literature based on this approach. This is significant for this research since data was gathered through this approach.

The databases used to search for articles were: Child Development & Adolescent Studies; Education Research Complete; ERIC; PsycARTICLES; and PsycINFO. An initial search was carried out on 31st October 2014, and the search terms were: 'personal construct psychology' or 'PCP'; and 'school'; and 'children' or 'child' or 'student' or 'young person'. A set of inclusion criteria was selected in order to generate articles that would be relevant to this research. These limiters included recent articles published between the years 2000 and 2014, scholarly (peer reviewed) journals, and those pertaining to the subject age group (6-12 years). This generated 142 articles, 23 of which were duplicates. The remaining 119 articles were screened, and after excluding articles that did not involve PCP interventions carried out with children aged approximately 6-12 in schools, 5 articles

were selected for critical analysis. One other article that came to light through the references of one of the 5 selected articles was hand-searched and included in the analysis. Another search was carried out on 1st November 2014 on the databases already mentioned. The search terms used were 'anxiety' and 'school' and 'intervention'. The limiters were the same as the initial search, with the addition of the following subject categories: anxiety, schools, cognitive behaviour therapy, school based intervention, programme evaluation, early intervention, separation anxiety, irrational beliefs, generalised anxiety disorder. 97 articles were generated, 10 of which were duplicates. The remaining 87 articles were screened, and only articles that included interventions for anxiety carried out with children aged around 6-12 in schools were selected. This process resulted in 4 articles being selected and critically analysed. A search for 'ideal self' or 'ideal school' was carried out on 20th October 2014 with the following limiters: scholarly (peer reviewed) journals, and pertaining to the subject age group 6-12 years. This search generated 179 articles, but only 1 was deemed eligible for inclusion since the other articles did not include studies relating to the ideal self or ideal school as presented in this research study. The technique of the ideal self was central to this research, and a number of other articles had to be hand-searched in order to add to the quality of the literature review and make it relevant to this research. 4 articles that related directly to the ideal self were selected. This resulted in a total of 15 articles to be critically reviewed in this study. An illustration of this process of literature selection is presented in figure 2.1, whilst table 2.1 illustrates specifically the inclusion and exclusion criteria. A summary of the selected articles and the criteria used for critique is presented in tables 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4.

Search (1) carried out using the terms: 'personal construct psychology' OR 'PCP'; AND 'school'; AND 'children' OR 'child' OR 'student' OR 'young person'

n = 142

Search (2) carried out using the terms: 'anxiety' AND 'school' AND 'intervention'

n = 97

Search (3) carried out using the terms: 'ideal self' OR 'ideal school'

n = 179

No. of articles left following removal of duplicates

n = 119

No. of articles left following removal of duplicates

n = 87

Eligible articles

n = 1

Articles that do not meet inclusion criteria

n = 178

Eligible articles

n = 5

Articles that do not meet inclusion criteria

n = 114

Eligible articles

n = 4

Articles that do not meet inclusion criteria

n = 83

Additional publications that were hand-searched

n = 5

Total number of literature studies included for review

n = 15

Figure 2.1 Overview of the systematic literature review

15

	Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Search (1)	• Year of publication (2000-2014) • Scholarly (peer reviewed) journals • Subject age group (6-12 years)	• Articles that did not involve a PCP intervention carried out with children
Search (2)	• Year of publication (2000-2014) • Scholarly (peer reviewed) journals • Subject age group (6-12 years) • Subject categories ('anxiety', 'schools', 'cognitive behaviour therapy', 'school based intervention', 'programme evaluation', 'early intervention', 'separation anxiety', 'irrational beliefs', 'generalised anxiety disorder')	• Articles that did not involve interventions for anxiety carried out with children
Search (3)	• Scholarly (peer reviewed) journals • Subject age group (6-12 years)	• Articles not relating to the ideal self or ideal school

Table 2.1 Inclusion and exclusion criteria for article selection

2.2 School interventions for children with anxiety

This section will critically analyze four articles that were selected from Search '2' according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria presented in table 2.1. These articles cover interventions that were used in school with children who were experiencing anxiety. A summary of the critical analysis of these articles is presented in table 2.2 below.

Author	Research implementation	Critique
School interventions for children with anxiety		
Wood (2006)	CBT interventions resulting in a decrease in anxiety, influencing scholastic performance and social functioning.	Based on parental ratings only, without teacher involvement. Unclear if anxiety is school-related. No exploration of children's views about school.
DeLucia-Waack & Gellman (2007)	Music used as an intervention for children of a divorce group.	Focus on irrational beliefs rather than children's experiences of divorce.
Riley (2012)	Peer support group for children and young people who had experienced loss.	Self-rating of anxiety & reality of participants explored through individual interviews. Normalising behaviours at the expense of exploring constructs of anxiety?
Chiu, et al. (2013)	CBT modular intervention in real world setting.	Excluded children who might suffer from anxiety but do not have a clinical diagnosis of anxiety.

Table 2.2 Summary of the critical analysis of 4 articles relating to 'School interventions for children with anxiety'

2.2.1 CBT intervention

A cognitive-behavioural (CBT) intervention was used by Wood (2006) to investigate the effects of anxiety reduction over time on improvements in school performance and social adjustment. 40 children, between the ages of 6 and 13, who were experiencing high levels of anxiety were randomly assigned to family-focused CBT or child-focused CBT, and were taught skills training and application. This study has claimed to be the first to look at the effect of anxiety reduction over time on academic outcomes. Results indicated that children's scholastic performance and social functioning are influenced by changes in anxiety levels. These results however were based on ratings gathered from parents and children, and although parents may be familiar with their children's social functioning,

they are not necessarily more suitable than teachers to comment about school performance. Although Wood (2006, p. 349) argued in favour of a convergence between parent and teacher ratings based on just one study, including teachers in these ratings could have potentially made the results better reflect the reality of the participants. School refusals returned to school full time after the intervention, however this accounted for only 20% of the sample population, and it is not clear whether any of the remaining children suffered from any school-related anxiety. Wood (2006) also argued that a reduction in anxiety related to school performance resulted in greater engagement with scholastic stimuli. Children participated in a CBT intervention to reduce their anxiety levels, but since one of the variables of this study was school performance, not exploring the children's views of school could be a significant limitation. It seems to assume that anxiety is child-centred, without exploring the possibility that the school might be a cause of their anxiety.

2.2.2 Effects of music on anxiety

Music, thought to have a significant impact on children's levels of anxiety, depression, and irrational beliefs about divorce, was used as an intervention for children of a divorce group (DeLucia-Waack & Gellman, 2007). The study consisted of 134 elementary schoolchildren, equally divided by gender, with a mean age of 8.6 years. The intervention was carried out over an 8-week period during which children met for 45 minute sessions guided by counsellors. The authors used the *Children's Beliefs About Parental Divorce Scale* (CBPDS) (Kurdek & Berk, 1987) to measure children's dysfunctional beliefs about divorce before the group commenced, exactly after the last session, and 3 months after the group ended. Correlations between irrational beliefs and anxiety were low and not significant. This could potentially indicate that in this study irrational beliefs are

irrelevant when exploring what made a child anxious. In fact, the study stated that children's dysfunctional beliefs may increase or decrease depressive symptoms. Results indicate that although music did not have a significant impact on anxiety reduction, participants experienced a decrease in their anxiety levels as a result of participating in the group intervention. But rather than focusing on irrational beliefs, one could instead adopt a PCP viewpoint and explore how anxious children were making sense of their parents' divorce and how are they construing an anxious view of their world. Children construct their reality based on their experiences, which are potentially unique to that child, and for this reason PCP could be more meaningful for a child.

2.2.3 Loss and grief

Positive effects resulting from peer group support were also noted by Riley (2012), who evaluated the *Seasons for Growth (SFG) programme for pupils experiencing loss and change* (Graham, 1996). This programme was originally intended for youngsters aged between 6 and 18 years who had experienced significant loss. It promoted resilience and self-esteem, with the intention to normalise grief and encourage positive coping strategies. Riley asked a sample of pupils from year 7 and year 8 within a mainstream school and who had taken part in the SFG programme to rate their anxiety levels along with other emotional states. These self-ratings were carried out at pre-intervention, post-intervention, and two months after the programme had ended. Furthermore, qualitative data about their experience of the programme was gathered through individual interviews. This method of data gathering seems to have ensured a way for the reality of the participants to be explored and thus contributed to results based on the pupils' view of their own world. This programme had a positive effect on the emotional health and coping behaviours of the sample population. Statistically significant reductions in anxiety levels

were noted across the three times of measurement. Apart from the positive effects of being part of this peer group, the researcher also argued that art and creative activities facilitated the non-verbal communication of intense feelings and emotions during a period where verbal communication might have been more challenging for the participants. Although results from this study (Riley, 2012) and the previous one (DeLucia-Waack & Gellman, 2007) both indicate an advantage of group intervention to be psychologically empowering, one needs to evaluate whether helping pupils feel part of a group and normalising their behaviours is being done at the expense of exploring more deeply the children's constructs of anxious situations.

2.2.4 Modular CBT programme

A modular CBT programme for children experiencing anxiety was implemented in schools in order to verify the effectiveness of this intervention in real world settings (Chiu, et al., 2013). The researchers argued that schools have direct access to anxious children and the impact this has on their functioning, and therefore schools would be an ideal setting for CBT interventions for anxious children to be implemented. This took place in two elementary schools, and included forty children between the ages of 5 and 12 years, who were randomly assigned to a modular CBT programme or a three-month wait-list. Inclusion criteria meant that participants needed to have a DSM-IV diagnosis of separation anxiety disorder, social phobia, or generalized anxiety disorder; have not been on psychiatric medication for the past month; and if on medication to retain the same dosage throughout the study. This selection would eliminate those children that do not meet a clinical diagnosis of anxiety, but who still feel anxious due to school-related difficulties. Results indicate that modular CBT implemented within school can be

effective in treating child anxiety. This important aspect suggests that carrying out CBT within a child's familiar environment can be as successful as in laboratory settings.

2.2.5 The roots of anxiety

Evidence from these studies indicates that interventions based on CBT have a positive effect on participants and reduces their anxiety (Chiu, et al., 2013; Riley, 2012; Wood, 2006). It appears to be common practice to assume that anxiety difficulties are a result of child-centred factors and thus interventions are targeted towards a child's irrational beliefs (DeLucia-Waack & Gellman, 2007), without exploring the possibility that a school could be causing distress to the child. This assumption could be reinforced when studies use a diagnosis of anxiety as part of their inclusion criteria (Chiu, et al., 2013). This method could disregard those children who are feeling anxious at school but do not fit an anxiety diagnosis. It is therefore important that, when working with children who have school-related anxiety, one must also consider exploring the constructs that children have about schools. Kelly (1991) argued that the reality of the world is seen through patterns that each one of us construes based on individual experiences. The constructs a child has of school could at times conflict with the reality of their experience at school. Therefore, although school-related anxiety could be linked to within-child factors, one cannot omit the possibility that the school or factors within it could be the root to children's school-related anxiety.

Being part of a group intervention had positive impacts on participants (DeLucia-Waack & Gellman, 2007; Riley, 2012) and it was suggested that their anxiety levels had improved partly due to simply being part of a group. Group interventions might be practical and time-efficient to carry out in schools, however care must be taken not to

eliminate the individuality of participants through a group intervention. Although it might be beneficial for participants to talk about common anxiety-provoking factors, one must allow the exploration of each child's reality and how that child has shaped his/her school constructs. This exploration of constructs may necessitate more individual work, due to the nature of eliciting and elaborating personal constructs.

Finally, it was interesting to note that Riley (2012) highlighted art and creative activities as means of communication that could potentially facilitate children's self-expression. Children may tend to play and draw most of the time, and would have experienced less societal influence than adults on their creativity. Therefore, using art and creative activities to communicate with young children could facilitate the relationship and in turn the quality of information gathered. Furthermore, verbal communication might be more challenging for children who might not find it easy to talk about their feelings.

2.3 Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) with children in schools

This section will present and critically analyse five articles that involved PCP interventions with children in schools, and that were selected from Search '1' according to the criteria in table 2.1, and one other article that was hand-searched. A summary of the critical analysis of these articles is presented in table 2.3 below.

Author	Research implementation	Critique
Personal Construct Psychology with children in schools		
Hardman (2001)	Intervention, using PCP techniques, for a pupil at risk of exclusion.	Work carried out with both pupil and staff. Approach enabled pupil to tell his story.
Wearmouth (2004)	"Talking Stones" technique with pupils having high levels of school absence and disruptive behaviour.	Pupils presented their views through PCP interviews. Encouraging self-advocacy.
Maxwell (2006)	Eliciting views of children on SEN register.	Drawings and interviews used as a medium.
Cullen & Monroe (2010)	Interviews with boys attending a PRU setting.	Solution-focused interviews & observations at the PRU. High level of pro-social behaviour. Importance of relationships between students and coaching staff.
Truneckova & Viney (2008)	PCP group work with children with interpersonal difficulties.	Intervention not compared to other psychological approaches; difficult to gauge the power of results. Basing on PCP made it possible to meet some psychological needs of students.
Truneckova & Viney (2012)	Counselling model based on PCP for school-based mental health difficulties.	Allowing young person to explore their reality. Unclear how this model can accommodate children of different ages. Positive approach by building on children's strengths.

Table 2.3 Summary of the critical analysis of 6 articles relating to 'Personal Construct Psychology with children in schools'

2.3.1 Risk of exclusion

Emotional and behavioural difficulties are a common concern in schools, and at times may also lead to a period of suspension or exclusion of the young people concerned.

Hardman (2001) provides an account of personal construct psychology techniques used over an 8-week intervention with a Year 10 pupil who was considered to be at risk of permanent exclusion. Work was carried out with the youngster as well as with school staff. Rapport with the school staff is an essential part of a psychologist's ability to bring about change (Beaver, 1996). The approach used enabled the pupil to tell his story and enabled the school staff to include the pupil's views in problem-solving. Personal construct psychology techniques used with the pupil included: 'tree people' activity, drawing his ideal and non-ideal self, summarising three quotes from people around him, writing a characterisation of himself in a film, using a Salmon line, laddering exercise, and anger management work. These techniques were used to help the pupil be aware of his behaviours and motivations for maintaining them. A questionnaire that focused on the boy's positive qualities was sent out to teachers. This resulted in the pupil having a more positive self-image, thus leading to inclusion in the school. The PCP approaches Hardman (2001) used influenced the boy positively, and he enjoyed the 'portrait of self' activity since it involved drawing and was not intimidating to him. PCP enables children to tell their story (Hardman, 2001), and illustrates the meaning of a particular behaviour to the child or his/her perception of that behaviour in their view of the world.

2.3.2 Attendance and behavioural difficulties

Through a technique called 'Talking Stones' a group of ten disaffected students in year 10, who had high levels of school absence and reports of disruptive behaviour in class, were offered the opportunity to present their views about difficult situations at school in an interview that was based on Personal Construct Theory (Wearmouth, 2004). A pile of stones of different shapes, sizes, colours, and textures were given to students during an interview. These were used as a medium by students to talk about their thoughts and

feelings about school. This method of interviewing ties in with the importance of reflexivity and interpersonal understanding mentioned by Kelly (1991). The case study presented by Wearmouth (2004) suggests that this technique enables young persons to understand their own perspective better than they did prior to using this technique. The author argues that as a tool in teaching, it can be very useful in creating dialogue between students and members of staff and between students themselves, since it presents the student's experience from the student's own perspective. Furthermore, Wearmouth presents the contribution this tool can make to student self-advocacy as it views learners as active agents in their own learning, and a matter of human rights. (Department for Education and Skills (DfES), 2001). The use of a medium, such as stones can, apart from being useful for students to reflect and elicit certain feelings in the student that need to be managed professionally. This can create ethical concern over the use of this technique, and should ideally be used by professionals knowledgeable in PCP.

2.3.3 Special needs and the use of drawings

The views of 13 junior aged children on the special needs register were elicited through PCP in a research carried out by Maxwell (2006). Maxwell used drawings that were created by children to portray themselves in school. Four drawings were completed by each student, and they also engaged in two interviews using PCP. Ravenette (1980) considers children's drawings to shed light on aspects of knowledge that could potentially exist at a lower level of awareness that would not be accessed verbally. Furthermore, Maxwell also used semi-structured interviews to gather information and complement the drawings. Research findings indicate a positive school experience overall, with social activities proving more important than learning ones. Peer relationships were important, accounting for positive or negative perception of school experiences by the students. This

research showed that students were a rich source of information about their school and the way the school met their needs. Maxwell's research has a degree of similarity with this research in that drawings will be used to explore children's constructs about school.

2.3.4 Pupil Referral Units

Cullen and Monroe (2010) identified Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) as places within which conflict occurs, often denying the possibility for constructive relationships to be created. This is potentially due to the emotional, social and behavioural difficulties experienced by these students. 10 boys of different ethnicities, who were excluded or at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools and had been attending the PRU for some time, were interviewed through a solution-focused approach individually and in groups, and observed within the PRU setting. This ensured a social constructivist approach, as different perspectives were acknowledged. The students engaged in sports activities, namely football, together with professional coaching input in order to be more engaged in their education and to support their social and emotional development and learning in general. Football was an activity during which students demonstrated a high level of pro-social behaviour. Results of this study indicate an increase in constructive social interaction and reduced levels of conflict due to being engaged in sports activities together. This development occurred following the students' difficulties being highlighted by the regular educational psychologist, through humanistic psychology, personal construct psychology, solution-focused brief therapy, and systemic theory. This led the researchers to identify the importance of the relationships between the students and coaching staff. The individual experiences of the students were relevant to the researcher in evaluating the intervention. The theoretical orientation adopted in this study,

social constructivism, links very well to the roots of PCP and will guide the methodology of this doctoral thesis.

2.3.5 Interpersonal difficulties

Truneckova and Viney (2008) used personal construct psychology with young children aged between 6 and 12 years, with interpersonal difficulties. The researchers created a model of group work aimed to change behaviour constructs and the effectiveness of which was later evaluated through measures of social skills and self-esteem. Both verbal and non-verbal tasks were used, thus allowing for the expression of different group members' abilities. This intervention had an overall positive impact on students within primary schools. Teachers reported an increase in positive social skills with fewer problematic behaviours noted. It is interesting to note however, that participants only noticed in themselves a slight increase in positive social skills, but they felt more positive and less negative about themselves after the group intervention. Although this intervention had positive results on the participants, it was not compared to other psychological approaches, making it difficult to gauge the power of the results. However, this model of group work carried out in schools based on PCP did meet some of the psychological needs of students, proving beneficial for them whilst improving their psychological functioning.

2.3.6 Model of Counselling

Some years later, PCP once again guided Truneckova and Viney (2012) to present a model of counselling delivery within school. This coherent theoretical model aimed to understand the difficulties of students from their own life perspectives and therefore make counselling more meaningful for them. The model was intended to cater for school-based

mental health difficulties and be applicable for an entire school population between 4 and 18 years of age. It was based on four propositions: (1) there are alternative ways of looking at any event; (2) experiences are tested out through behaviour, which is the principle instrument of inquiry; (3) psychological disorder occurs when there is consistent invalidation along with the exclusive use of particular construing approaches; and (4) the use of professional constructs to understand the personal constructs of the young person (Truneckova & Viney, 2012, p. 433). The researchers place emphasis on client-centred therapy (Rogers, 1951) and the relationship between the counsellor and the young person. In addition to Rogers' attributes, four strategies are presented for delivering this model: the adoption of a credulous approach; the role of enquirer rather than expert that promotes hypothetical and provisional ways of thinking; treatment implications that are generated from a transitive diagnosis; and the guidance offered to the young person to change constructs while validating their self (Truneckova & Viney, 2012, p. 437). This counselling model uses propositions and strategies derived from PCP, and is therefore designed to allow the young person to explore their own reality. It is unclear how this model can accommodate all children and young people, of different ages since the material presented is based on casework with students aged 9-18 years. On the other hand, the skills and capacities of the young person is placed at the centre of this counselling approach rather than trying to correct problematic behaviours, a methodology that could allow for personalisation of the client's therapeutic experience.

2.3.7 Relationship with school staff

The importance of the relationship between students and school staff emerges from these studies (Cullen & Monroe, 2010; Hardman, 2001; Wearmouth, 2004). PCP contributed to enhancing the relationship between the two, whilst helping staff understand the

children's experiences and contributing towards healthier inclusion (Hardman, 2001). This relationship between staff and students is very relevant to this thesis and will be explored since the adults within a school could be one of the factors that are causing children to be anxious in school.

2.3.8 The uniqueness of one's story

From the studies presented in this section, one must note the variety of pupils' needs that PCP adapted for, and the positive outcomes recorded. The needs include a pupil at risk of exclusion (Hardman, 2001), disengaged students (Wearmouth, 2004), children on the special needs register (Maxwell, 2006), children with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) attending pupil referral units (Cullen & Monroe, 2010), children with interpersonal difficulties (Truneckova & Viney, 2008), and within group counselling for primary children (Truneckova & Viney, 2012). PCP has proved to be a useful tool with children experiencing different needs. This research adopted PCP with children experiencing anxiety at school in order to provide evidence in this area that this literature review indicates is currently under-researched.

Kelly (1991) identified an individual as experiencing anxiety when he/she is aware that a situation lies outside their construct system, and therefore would probably be unable to predict events. Researching anxiety might pose certain challenges with grasping individuals' accounts of reality. This requires the ability of EPs to understand and engage with participants through tools that facilitate a channel of communication that is not anxiety-provoking. This means that EPs as researchers in this area can add value to the research by applying one's professional skills while gathering data.

PCP techniques have helped children and young people to tell their stories (Cullen & Monroe, 2010; Hardman, 2001; Truneckova & Viney, 2012). Listening to children share their own stories is necessary in PCP since individuals see the realities of the world through their own perspective (Kelly, 1991), and therefore children must be perceived as a rich source of information about their own school (Maxwell, 2006). This approach should aim to communicate and reach out to understand children who are experiencing anxiety at school, and at the same time encourage self-advocacy within children (Wearmouth, 2004) whilst giving importance to the young person's skills (Truneckova & Viney, 2012).

Different abilities within children were taken into account by Truneckova and Viney (2008) when they used verbal and non-verbal tasks as part of their PCP intervention with children experiencing interpersonal difficulties, resulting in positive outcomes for their self-esteem. This is an important factor for this thesis, since participants will be young children who are experiencing anxiety, and therefore care needs to be taken during interviews with these children to ensure a safe environment for drawings and discussion to take place. This supports the use of drawings that will be used as a PCP tool to explore the children's views of school.

2.4 Thinking about the ideal

In this last section of literature critical analysis, the researcher will outline the article that was chosen from Search '3' and the four other articles that were hand-searched. These all relate to the notion of what is 'ideal' for the individual. A summary of the critical analysis of these articles is presented in table 2.4 below.

Author	Research implementation	Critique
Thinking about the ideal		
Lee, Statuto, & Kedar-Voivodas (1983)	Exploration of children's perceived realities of school.	Verbal ability only way of communication; was this the best approach for young children suffering from anxiety?
Moran (2001)	PCP technique based on drawing about the ideal self.	Meaningful process for the child and promotes collaboration.
Moran (2006a)	Drawing the ideal self with a girl with ASD.	Meaningful process and no judgement on the perceived reality of the world.
Moran (2006b)	Drawing the ideal self with a boy with ASD and anger issues.	Goals set by children themselves.
Williams & Hanke (2007)	Drawing the ideal school with children with ASD.	Children's voice. Asking children in what they would like to be different.

Table 2.4 Summary of the critical analysis of 5 articles relating to 'Thinking about the ideal'

2.4.1 Children's school realities

Elementary school children's perceived realities of school were explored through semi-structured interviews (Lee, Statuto, & Kedar-Voivodas, 1983). 154 children, who were in grades 2, 4, and 6, were asked about their perceptions of how things at school actually are, and about their perceptions of how things would ideally be like. Two domains were looked into: that of action, which included experiences around privacy, territoriality, and decision making; and that of value, which consisted of the children's evaluations of school as safe, just, responsive, important and a liked environment. The researchers argued that prior to this study, there hadn't been any attempt to explore what the children thought about life in school and how school could relate more to their perceived needs. In view of this, the study aimed to explore the school realities of children in their second, fourth, and sixth grades. Discrepancy resulted between the children's ideal and actual

status. Furthermore, children did not see the school as supporting the expression of their emerging social competence and/or aspirations. However, children saw their school as one that shares their values, but contrasts their actions. Although the researchers of this study selected participants who, according to their teachers, were comfortable talking with strangers, they relied on their participants' verbal ability to share experiences. This could be a valid option for certain students, but others, possibly the younger ones, could have been able to express themselves better through other non-verbal mechanisms, for example drawings. Moreover, drawings can be less intimidating than just talking in an interview, for children who suffer from anxiety. This is something that this thesis will be taking into account, as the construction of school experiences based on the children's individual life story should be at the centre of the data collection process.

2.4.2 Drawing the Ideal Self

Drawing the Ideal Self (Moran, 2001) is a technique devised to encourage children to become more involved in the therapeutic process and in understanding themselves. It follows Kelly's (1991) personal construct psychology theory and his proposition of collaboration between the therapist and the child and can be used with children and adolescents who have difficulties in any environment. This technique uses drawing as medium, making it accessible to most children as it does not depend entirely on verbal ability or literacy skills. The process invites clients to think about the type of person they do not want to be, followed by the type of person they want to be like. These two drawings can be used to rate oneself over time and explore the child's views of others' perceptions about them. Moran (2001) highlights the importance of writing down exactly what the child says about their drawings, to make sure that the constructs of the child are used. Although this technique was not used in research during the publishing of Moran's (2001)

article, the author notes that it had been used successfully with people with learning difficulties and, as presented by Moran (2001), with a 12-year-old boy who had dyslexia, difficulties with relationships with peers, and had fears and anxieties about various things. This PCP approach makes the therapeutic process meaningful for a child and promotes collaboration, something that is not always easily achievable with children.

2.4.3 The Ideal Self and ASD

Moran (2006a) used Drawing the Ideal Self with a 12-year-old girl with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), who had had a very difficult life, to explore her views about herself. This enabled the child to understand how bad experiences in the past could affect the future through her own experiences. Moran said that 'making sense is vitally important in working with a child with ASD because he is unlikely to co-operate for the sake of others' social needs' (Moran, 2006a, p. 84). The notion of the person as a scientist (Kelly, 1991), appeals to children with ASD who might have more scientific and logical thinking processes (Moran, 2006a). Moran argued that this applies since PCP explores the person's unique perspective of the world, no judgement is placed on individual's construing of events and the way one construes oneself is central to daily life. The reasons presented in this article might also apply to children with anxiety – if anxiety is considered to be children's subjective view of their world.

Moran (2006b) also used this technique with a 12-year-old boy who had ASD and struggled with social relationships. For the purpose of the case, the drawings comprised of the kind of person who always gets angry, and who never gets angry. The rating scale helped the youngster measure the progress between the two poles. The approach used

helped the boy discover the problem causing his behaviour, rather than him looking at his behaviour as causing the problem (Ravenette, 1988).

Moran (2006a) noticed that she never encountered a child with or without ASD that presented a drawing of the ideal self that was socially unacceptable, although socially unacceptable drawings of the kind of person they would not want to be like were often presented. It is not clear what was meant by 'socially unacceptable', however the point seems to be that realistic goals are created by children themselves, goals that children desire to achieve. Using techniques that help children express themselves is very important in a therapeutic relationship, like for example when talking is supported by drawing (Moran, 2006b).

2.4.4 The Ideal School

Williams and Hanke (2007) sought to understand pupils' views without pre-determining them, and therefore adapted Moran's (2001) Drawing the Ideal Self technique to explore the most important features of school provision for fifteen mainstream pupils, aged between 6 and 15, with ASD. It was named Drawing the Ideal School technique, and was used to generate what children thought would be optimum school provision. Aspects included school environment, staff qualities, other pupils and school activities.

Two main themes emerged from this research, and these related to environmental factors within the school, and staff qualities and characteristics. The environmental features referred to the building design and school ethos and policies. The ideal building design would have access to natural light, is of an appropriate size, including a classroom that is not crammed, and appropriate furniture. Furthermore, the school needed to have a 'fun'

ethos, rewarding of good behaviour, and be maintained well. The school staff in the ideal school had to show responsibility in their roles by knowing the subject and being prepared for lessons, being smartly dressed and knowing each pupil. Moreover, the adults need to be friendly, enjoy being with pupils and willing to play games with them.

A set of questions were included in the interview with children. They were asked about the kind of school they would not like to attend, and the kind of school they would like to attend. The process indicates the importance placed on the children's voice and shows the 'value of asking the pupils themselves how they experience school and what they might like to be different' (Williams & Hanke, 2007, p. 124). This PCP technique will be used for the purpose of this thesis to elicit anxious children's constructs of school (Appendix 8).

2.4.5 Exploring children's constructs through drawings

This section highlights two important factors that are pertinent for gathering data for the identification of school constructs of anxious children. Firstly, the inclination to listen to children's realities and constructs as presented through their own experiences. This ties to what was said in the previous section, but uses constructive alternativism (Kelly, 1991) through the construct and its opposite (Moran, 2001; Moran, 2006a; Moran, 2006b; Williams & Hanke, 2007). In this way, children are guided to think about their ideal self (Moran, 2001) or their ideal school (Williams & Hanke, 2007) by first defining the negative construct; the self or school they would not like. This should clarify and help them move towards their end goal. This research used this process to explore the discrepancy between the children's ideal school realities and their actual ones (Lee, Statuto, & Kedar-Voivodas, 1983).

The second factor relates to the medium of drawing, something that children generally enjoy. Constructive alternativism was incorporated into the drawings of this research, by asking children to present their constructs through drawings of non-ideal and ideal states. This potentially made room for a high level of accuracy in their representations of reality. Furthermore, drawings in this thesis were used with children aged between 7 and 11 years, an age bracket which might be able to communicate better through drawings and supplementary verbal connotations.

2.5 Summary

Anxiety in schools can often lead to school refusal. In the past, pupils' school non-attendance was not thought to relate to school-related factors (Elliott & Place, 1998), but was instead explained as being a result of excessive child-parent dependency (King, Ollendick, & Tonge, 1995). However, as evident in the literature discussed, a number of different interventions can be used, thus highlighting the importance of understanding the functions of a child's behaviour who refuses to attend school. Kearney and Silverman (1990) presented four reasons suggesting pupils' non-attendance: to avoid experiencing anxiety related to attending to school; to avoid situations at school that cause anxiety; to reduce the feeling of separation anxiety; and to enjoy rewarding experiences as a result of not attending school. The implications of these reasons affects the nature of interventions, depending on whether a child needs help to overcome one's anxiety or whether the environment around the child needs modification.

Ollendick and King (1998) highlight the importance of exploring the effects of teachers' perceptions and teacher-pupil interactions; the latter also highlighted by Reynolds et al.

(1980); on supporting children with school-refusing behaviour to attend school. This is what Lauchlan (2003) referred to as a move away from viewing the source of the problem of chronic non-attendance as lying solely within the child. Lauchlan concludes the importance of intervening according to a pupil's particular needs through a multi-systems approach after understanding their specific reasons for not going to school. Listening to the individual needs of pupils through their own representation of reality is central to this research, and is reflected in the philosophical position adopted.

The studies selected in the sections above present an overview of research relating to professional involvement with anxious children in schools, the use of PCP with children in schools, and the 'ideal' for children. The review suggests that the link between PCP and anxiety hasn't yet been established and this thesis attempts to explore this by bringing to light an understanding of anxious children's school realities, using PCP as a tool. Emphasis is placed on children's perceived realities of life in school, thus highlighting the individuality of pupils in their own school context. This context could be causing the children's school-related anxiety, an alternative to seeing anxiety as being caused by within-child factors.

A key positive aspect of the review was the fundamental importance of using drawing as part of the information gathering. Drawings were used to help children explore their constructs through the concept of constructive alternativism. As presented by Williams and Hanke (2007), through the drawings, the children were able to draw and talk about their opposing constructs of a school. The drawings were thought to be an aid to children with anxiety who might have gotten even more anxious when talking about school, and helped them safely explore what really causes their anxiety in school. The drawings were used not only to illustrate the non-ideal and the ideal school, but also to encourage

children to think on how they could move from a negative construct to a more positive one.

Approaching this research through the lens of the child was significant in establishing clear and meaningful school constructs of children described as anxious. The participants' realities provided a glimpse into what really made them anxious at school, possibly reflecting past experiences. But do children with anxiety feel they can influence change in schools?

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

3.1 A scientific attitude in qualitative research

Carrying out research requires a clarification of the view of the world that the researcher holds, and the approach that will be adopted in finding out what one wants to discover. The scientific attitude adopted underpins the whole process and the claims made in a study. Being labelled as *scientific* is not always welcomed well by social researchers who view this term as a reflection of research that involves 'hard data' like numbers, and analysed using statistical methods. Robson (2011) explained that for real world research, having a scientific attitude is valuable in offering clarity to what and why one is doing it. The process must also be explicit, allowing your study to be scrutinised, and keeping in mind the best interest of participants by following a code of conduct. Robson refers to this scientific way of carrying out research as systematic, sceptical and ethical; a 'standard view' of science (Robson, 2011) that derives from a philosophical approach known as positivism.

Positivism, as Robson summarises, includes objective knowledge obtained through experience or observations. It is value-free and based on facts. Furthermore, hypotheses are tested against these facts. This view of the world can be useful when exploring quantitative data that relates to the relationship between events or variables, like for example a correlational study. However social phenomena exist in people's minds and are seen through their interpretations. Although this view might be straightforward when conducting research in the natural world, this strict relationship between variables in data may be difficult to observe when exploring perspectives or relationships of people.

Creswell (2009) refers to positivism and post-positivism as the *scientific method* or doing *science research*. Post-positivism challenges positivism as it recognizes that we cannot have an absolute truth of knowledge when studying the behaviour and actions of humans (Phillips & Burbules, 2000), but is also based on observations and measurement of the objective reality that exists. Post-positivism seeks to develop statements aimed at explaining situations or describing causal relationships. Positivist qualitative research tends to assume that only one version of reality exists (Braun & Clarke, 2013), something that would defeat the purpose of this research which looked at the subjective views of participants' reality.

Therefore, Robson's (2011) 'standard' view is not ideal to employ with social science research, particularly this study; and other philosophical approaches were explored before identifying what was thought to be the best approach for this research, whilst still keeping in mind Robson's (2011) 'scientific way' of carrying out research.

3.2 The ontological and epistemological position

A *worldview* is a 'general orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher holds' (Creswell, 2009, p. 6). Mertens (2010) uses the term *paradigm* when referring to philosophical assumptions about the world; that guide the thinking process of the planning stage of research. The approach and hypothesis applied to research is shaped by the professional background, experiences, and training of the researcher (Creswell, 2009; Fox, Martin, & Green, 2007). A paradigm is defined by clarifying the ontological and epistemological positions of the researcher and how the relationship between them impacts on the research study (Mertens, 2010).

Smith (2004) defined ontology as 'the science of what is, of the kinds and structures of objects, properties, events, processes, and relations in every area of reality' (p. 155). Therefore, an ontological position reflects the researcher's view of the nature of the world, or as noted by Miller and Crabtree (1992), a 'set of assumptions concerning reality' (p. 8).

Based on this ontological position, epistemology, which deals with theory of knowledge, reflects what we can know about the world, whilst methodology reflects ways of knowing about it (Guba, 1990). Adopting an epistemological position ensures clear research objectives and identifying what is possible to find out (Willig, 2013). As Willig explains, the researcher's epistemological approach determines the general approach to studying the research topic. The epistemology of a study seeks to answer the way in which the researcher can obtain the required knowledge and understandings (Mertens, 2010).

3.2.1 The real world

Bhaskar (2008) argued that science is a 'social activity whose aim is the production of the knowledge of the kinds and ways of acting of independently existing and active things' (p. 14). Realism addresses *how* and *why* questions directly, explanations that are commonly sought by researchers. Furthermore, Robson (2011) argues that real world research is carried out in the field rather than in a laboratory setting, and realism controls such open and uncontrolled situations. This view was also expressed by Pawson and Tilley (1997) who explained that the relationship between causal mechanisms depends on the context within which the mechanism operates. Sayer (2000) combines ontological realism with epistemological constructivism. Through realism, one cannot obtain a single, correct understanding of the world, since all theories are grounded in different

perspectives, and all knowledge is partially true. Constructivism enables the researcher to explore people's different perspectives of the common world we live in.

Critical realism is a 'new' realism (Robson, 2011) incorporating the perspectives of participants and seeking to promote social justice. Maxwell (2004) relates this position to post-positivism, which assumes that a reality exists, but can only be known imperfectly due to the researcher's human limitations. Besides, this new form of realism is mostly concerned about the underlying mechanisms that cause events to happen (Matthews, 2003; Pawson & Tilley, 1997).

The philosophical approaches described above seem to miss one important aspect that is key to this research. The research is not centred on objective facts, and neither is it concerned about the mechanisms underlying children's perspectives; rather it is the experiences of children as presented by children themselves. This research emphasizes the children's constructs of school, based on their own life experiences.

3.2.2 Researching individual experiences

From a social constructionist perspective, which is used almost exclusively by psychologists (Burr, 2003), individual experiences have their meaning embedded in interactions between people within a social context. It is argued that an objective reality cannot be known and there is no access to the underlying nature of reality (Robson, 2011). It is the task of the researcher to understand the multiple realities of participants and view a problem as being separate to the individual.

The ontological position adopted in this research is that of relativism, which argues that there are multiple constructed realities rather than one common reality, that differ across time and context (Cromby & Nightingale, 1999). It would be unfair to assume that children experiencing anxiety at school have a common truth and use the same lens to look at their anxiety. Their realities at school differ for these children according to their lived experiences and how they interpret situations at school that cause anxiety. The relativist ontology that underpinned this qualitative research allowed for the different realities of participants to emerge.

A social constructionist epistemology questions the idea that knowledge is an objective reflection of reality (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The central aim in research guided by social constructionism is to understand, and this is what guided the research questions of this thesis. Since individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences (Creswell, 2009), the researcher needed to understand the multiple realities of anxious children in relation to school; the realities that were socially constructed through daily interactions. These interactions created individuals' understanding of the world and continued to nurture the social processes in which they are constantly engaged. Since understandings differ and therefore give rise to a number of different possible social constructions of the world, each construction brings with it a different action from each individual. Constructions, therefore, sustain certain processes by individuals based on their own individual experiences.

Research based on this philosophical view relies mostly on the participants' views of the situation being explored (Creswell, 2009) and the meaning attributed from their interpretations of reality (Crotty, 1998). Creswell mentions the importance of open-ended questioning to favour this approach and to allow the researcher to listen carefully to what

the participants have to say. In this research, particular attention was paid to listening to participants and allowing them to reflect freely about their constructs. In order to adopt a social constructionism philosophical view, data gathering was carried out through a personal construct psychology approach (Appendix 8).

3.2.3 Language

Language is an important aspect in social constructionism, since the way experiences are described may result in different ways of perceiving and understanding them (Willig, 2013). This is based on the assumption that individuals' experiences are constructed by language (Burr, 2003); and it is the way that these experiences are shared that sheds light on participants' realities. The world is constructed through people's conversations, and although the construction of language in the interviews wasn't studied, participants were invited to comment on their drawings, thus encouraging them to share their constructs through a medium comfortable for them. Furthermore, drawings helped the researcher remain within and understand the child's reality and avoid understanding the drawings from the researcher's perspectives.

3.3 Research Questions

Inquirers of qualitative research state research questions that take the form of a central question and further sub-questions (Creswell, 2009). The central research question, being a broad one, seeks to explore the following phenomenon:

"What are the school constructs of children whom adults describe as anxious?"

Furthermore, three flexible sub-questions were designed to narrow down the main question and allow the emergence of the constructs. These were:

i. *What are these children's constructs of their ideal school?*

ii. *What are the differences, if any, between the school they would not like to attend, and the school they would like to attend (their ideal school)?*

iii. *Do the children think they have any influence in making their own school more like their ideal school?*

3.4 Purpose of the research

This research adopted an exploratory design, one that asks questions and attempts to find out what is happening in situations that are not easily understood (Robson, 2011). The researcher was interested in understanding the school constructs of children who had experienced some form of anxiety related to school. The way that certain anxiety-provoking situations at school could have had a potential negative effect on these children's perceptions of school was the main purpose of this study. The children who were interviewed, were between 7 and 11 years old and attended state schools in Malta.

As discussed in the previous chapter, little research seems to be available on approaching school anxiety through the lens of Personal Construct Psychology. By taking into account the way that children see the world, and including elements of what is most important to them, it was hoped that the scene could be set for better student engagement with the learning process at schools. The tool used in this study (Appendix 8) to gather children's constructs was originally developed in Williams and Hanke's (2007) research as a practical instrument that would obtain the views of children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) regarding potential school provision without pre-determining them.

Williams and Hanke's tool was developed from *Drawing the Ideal Self* (Moran, 2001), a technique that is able to gather students' core beliefs in an engaging way. This led to the development of the *Drawing the Ideal School* (Williams & Hanke, 2007) that allowed for children to share their experience of current school provisions and future aspirations. This was intended to help children think about what would be optimum educational provisions at school.

This research explored the phenomenon of school anxiety from a new perspective and sought new insight into the extent that PCP can highlight children's understanding of the suffering caused by school-related anxiety. Using drawings allowed the participants to think and present their ideal school, by thinking of the opposing construct first and then moving on to the more positive construct of what would constitute an ideal school for them. Elaborating on the two constructs of the type of school that they would not like to attend, and their ideal school, enabled the researcher to answer the main question and to explore the school constructs of anxious children.

3.5 Research design

The design of a study involves a degree of planning regarding the study and its progress, including ways of obtaining data. Deciding on a research design that would fulfil the purpose of this research was key to answering the research questions. According to Robson (2011), the methods or techniques employed in a study must be appropriate for the questions that need to be answered. Since this research is interested in listening to the child's voice and anxious children's constructs about school, data gathering techniques needed to allow the participants to share their reality, with the researcher acknowledging that each participant's reality is their own, based on their life experiences.

Creswell (2009) presents three types of designs: qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. Qualitative and quantitative approaches represent different ends on a continuum (Newman & Benz, 1998); qualitative designs use words and open-ended questions, whereas quantitative measures use numbers and closed-ended questions (Creswell, 2009).

Kelly (1991) reiterated that PCP accepts the subjective views of individuals as wholly legitimate. A qualitative design was deemed to be suitable for the purpose of this research since it allows for the exploration and understanding of individuals' meaning of a situation (Creswell, 2009) through an interpretative and naturalistic approach (Mertens, 2010). Furthermore, qualitative data collection methods minimize data reduction at the data collection stage (Willig, 2013), thus obtaining more naturalistic data. Using a qualitative approach whilst having a social constructionist epistemological position supports the assumption that multiple realities exist (Mertens, 2010), and therefore supported my exploration of these realities with some degree of flexibility, by valuing individual responses.

3.5.1 Data gathering

Willig (2013) believed that qualitative data must be naturalistic and kept intact at point of collection. In this study a phenomenological design was employed that sought the individuals' perceptions and experiences (Mertens, 2010). Semi-structured interviews were used (Appendix 8) that guided the young participants through the drawings while presenting their constructs. The technique used to gather data could have potentially directed the participants in a pre-determined manner, but a flexible approach was adopted in order to allow the participants to present their own experiences, thus ensuring that the

multiple realities of the children were acknowledged by focusing on their views and recording exactly what they said in their own words.

It was important to choose a data collection method that generates data that is appropriate to the method of data analysis (Willig, 2013), after establishing a link between the method of data analysis and the research questions. Willig emphasized that a researcher must never collect data without having decided how to analyse it. A semi-structured interview, through its non-directive approach, enabled the researcher to find the right balance between guiding the interview while allowing the participants to share their constructs. It was necessary to obtain data that would address the research questions, while allowing children the opportunity to talk about their school constructs. This semi-structured interview (Appendix 8) consisted of a series of short open-ended questions that were prepared in advance and were the same for all participants. Emphasis was placed on the meaning of what participants said rather than how they said it. The open-ended approach adopted during the interview coupled with an invite for participants to illustrate their constructs encouraged them to elaborate further.

Interviewing young children, who had experienced anxiety related to school, about their school constructs could trigger off negative emotions. Since one of the cognitive components of anxiety is that of worry (Stallard, 2009), the type of technique used was carefully selected to avoid contributing further to this state of worry. Therefore, drawings were embedded within the interview through the *Drawing the Ideal School* (Williams & Hanke, 2007) (Appendix 8) adapted from *Drawing the Ideal Self* (Moran, 2001). Including drawings within the interviews helped the participants feel at ease since they were allowed the space to draw and not rely solely on the verbal modality. Being a practitioner who works with pupils experiencing learning, emotional and behavioural

difficulties reduced the burden that a researcher might experience when researching anxiety. This technique made it easier for me to carry out research with these children and elicit their views, since the use of drawings is part of a repertoire of tools that, as a practitioner, I make use of with children. The familiarity with PCP tools and drawings as a practitioner helped transfer this confidence to my role as a researcher.

The use of constructs embedded in children's drawings can be a useful tool in portraying the child's possible meanings (Ravenette, 1980). The individuality of the speaker emerges when constructs are personal rather than logical (Ravenette, 1980). Using a PCP approach with anxious children allows for expression of the child's individual experiences of anxiety at school. Ravenette elaborates on the emergence of interests and concerns from a description provided by a child; the concerns shedding light on anxieties, difficulties or conflicts. Through one of the two case studies with young teenagers presented in Ravenette's article, it is argued that the material provided in the drawings was over and above what was given verbally. Drawings with a thirteen year-old included the 'elaboration of a line' and its opposite and a third picture that was completely the subject's own. In fact, Ravenette assumes that children's drawings 'point to aspects of knowledge that exist at lower levels of awareness than that of verbal articulation' (Ravenette, 1980, p. 127). Furthermore, the possibility of change had been seen in the interview itself, a short process that was also explored with children in this research.

Stein (2007) used nonverbal tasks, predominantly visual, in two clinical case studies with adults, and argued that these types of techniques can greatly enhance the precision and experiential impact of the verbal relationship between the client and therapist. It was argued that the expression of experiences can be enabled and is less threating when connecting between core and peripheral constructs.

The *Drawing the Ideal School* (Williams & Hanke, 2007) technique formed part of a semi-structured interview (Appendix 8) that was carried out over a one-hour session, either at the child's school or at the School Psychological Service, depending on where it was most feasible for the parents, and where the child felt most comfortable. In both cases, a quiet room that was free from any distractions was used. Comfortable seating, a table, 2 blank sheets of A3 paper and 1 A4 sheet (for each participant) and writing material was available. Participants were initially asked to draw and comment on the kind of school they would not like. Drawings helped the anxious children feel at ease during the interview, whilst supporting information given verbally. Then they were encouraged to include other drawings and comments related to the classroom, the children, the adults, and themselves within this kind of school. The children were also asked to present a second drawing about the kind of school they would like to attend, this being their ideal school. This also included drawings and comments about the classroom, the children, the adults, and themselves within this kind of school. Finally, the participants were asked to rate where their current school lies between the school they would not like, and their ideal school (the two extremes of the construct), and what could be done for it to be more like their ideal school. After obtaining consent from the parents (Appendix 3) and children (Appendix 5), the whole interview was audio recorded for transcription. The interview questions have been presented in Appendix 8.

3.5.2 Pilot study

Pilot work provides the researcher with the opportunity of testing out the feasibility of what has been proposed (Robson, 2011). Two pilot study interviews were carried out, one with a 10-year-old and another with a 9-year-old. Both happened to be of the same gender.

Neither of the two boys had any symptoms that indicated that they were suffering from anxiety. This helped me familiarise myself with the content of the interview questions (Appendix 8) as well as the structure that should be adopted that would make the participants feel at ease during the interview.

Furthermore, attempting the process helped me identify certain logistical technicalities that needed to be considered. For example, one of the boys enjoyed the interview and took the drawings quite seriously; it was necessary to set up a maximum time for each interview to avoid exhaustion from the participant's end. Since each interview was planned to take up to around an hour, in the eventuality that a participant approached 90 minutes of interview time, it was decided that the interview would be continued on another date. This would also safeguard participants' potentially elevated anxiety levels due to the length of the interview.

One of the interviews brought to light the difficulty of imagining and drawing a school that is not real. One of the boys struggled hard with this and kept on referring to two schools that he attended rather than imaginary ones. This happened, even though the interview questions were designed specifically to encourage participants to think about a school that is not real. This informed the introduction to the interview in order to encourage thinking more creatively about two imaginary schools, rather than schools they would have had attended.

3.5.3 Participants

Selecting people to take part in a study, or sampling as referred to by Mertens (2010), can be a complex and problematic task. The strategy for selecting participants can influence

quality of the data and the inferences that can be made. Since social constructionism is the underpinning epistemology of this research, cases rich in information, not necessarily extreme information such as a serious degree of anxiety, were important for my research. Intensity sampling (Mertens, 2010, p. 321) was used to gather the sample of participants. This involved recruiting participants in which the phenomenon of school-related anxiety was strongly represented.

Children aged 7 to 11 years who professionals would describe as experiencing anxiety at school were selected to participate in this research. This thesis did not make use of a diagnosis of anxiety as one of the selection criteria. Apart from the difficulty in establishing uniformity in arriving to a diagnosis of anxiety, the approach adopted in this thesis allowed for the incorporation of those children who were feeling anxious but had not been diagnosed. Children of either gender were selected from state schools in Malta, by asking the Psychologists working within the School Psychological Service (SPS) in Malta to inform the researcher of any potential participants that would fit the aforementioned criteria. These participants were selected by Psychologists at SPS from the referrals that would have been passed on to the service from schools. The researcher then discussed with referring psychologists the suitability of potential participants to take part in this study. Referring professionals assured the researcher that the participants were fit to take part in this research. The goal was not to generalize the findings; therefore, the sample of participants wasn't representative of the population. It was important to recruit individuals who were able to provide the research with a rich picture of their reality that can translate into meaningful themes for the participants.

Five participants were selected in the manner described above; three boys aged 7, 8, and 9, and two girls who were 9 and 11 years old. All five children had experienced in the

past or were currently experiencing some form of school-related anxiety. The table below illustrates this information.

Participant	Gender	Age	Primary concern
1.	male	7	Concerns expressed at referral stage were related to refusal to attend school, anxiety caused by the class teacher, and anxiety caused by school-related work.
2.	male	8	
3.	male	9	
4.	female	9	
5.	female	11	

Table 3.1 Summary of participants' details

Since I work within SPS, and therefore had direct access to the children's contact details, I contacted the parents and asked for consent for their children to participate in this research. Information sheets (Appendix 1) and parental (Appendix 3) and child consent forms (Appendix 5) were sent by postal mail for the parents and children to familiarise themselves with, prior to the session. Upon meeting the parents and child for the interview, I explained what the involvement would entail and reassured confidentiality and anonymity. I gave them a brief outline of my studies and an overview of my research. The process of participant selection was highlighted including the reason why their child was invited to participate in the study. The parents were already familiar with the term 'anxiety', whilst children were reminded about any feelings that made them feel uncomfortable at school for some reason. It was explained to them that as a researcher I was interested in both their positive and negative thoughts about school. Interviews were mostly held at the psychology service, but when parents preferred that the research interview be carried out at school, this was done with the consent of the Head of the relevant school (Appendix 7).

3.5.4 Transcriptions

The audio of the interviews was transcribed for analysis using an orthographic style. Orthographic transcription records the spoken words in recorded data (Braun & Clarke, 2013), and the main aim was to produce a comprehensive record of the words spoken. The spoken language used during interviews was Maltese, the language that the children felt most comfortable using since it was their native language. Transcripts were therefore in Maltese (Appendix 11) and represented the informal spoken language. Extracts of the transcript selected as quotes to be used in other sections of this research, mainly in the findings section, were interpreted and presented in English. Since I had carried out the interviews and was familiar with the interview context, I carried out the interpretation in order to avoid any crucial information being misinterpreted or omitted. Carrying out this task myself ensured that the children's voice was presented accurately in the English language. Living in a bilingual community in which Maltese and English languages are taught and practised since the early years, enhanced the efficacy of the researcher's role in understanding and translating between the two languages. In order to present the transcriptions in a format that helped with analysis, the speaker was clearly indicated on the left hand margin with a letter that represented either the researcher or the child. Each new speaker was presented on a separate line (Appendix 11). Although care was taken not to mention names of individuals or schools, there were inevitable instances during the interviews where the name of the child or the name of the school being mentioned. This necessitated anonymising this data, to safeguard confidentiality, an important ethical principle that was offered as reassurance to the children and their parents.

3.6 Data analysis

The transcription phase served to familiarise-me with the data and generate some preliminary analytic ideas before delving deeper into data analysis. The research design included a method of data analysis complimentary to the whole idea behind carrying out this research. The purpose of the study was to explore anxious children's constructs of school, by listening to their accounts of their reality. While adults may use their expertise to debate the cause of this anxiety, this study aimed to listen to children themselves and give importance to the child's voice. A descriptive form of analysis was the ideal fit, as according to Braun and Clarke (2013) it aims to 'give voice to a topic or a group of people' (p. 174).

The purpose of this study wasn't to delve into the social processes behind the constructs, or to look at patterns of language, and neither was it going to challenge the sample of children to make sense of their own experiences. This research is interested in identifying themes and patterns within the children's constructs of school. The method of data analysis needed to be a flexible one that allowed for the emergence of themes after data would have been organised (Appendices 14, 15) through the PCP interviewing method *Drawing the Ideal School* (Williams & Hanke, 2007), whilst allowing new data to emerge. It was used to develop a detailed account of the phenomenon experienced by these children.

3.6.1 Thematic analysis

The technique selected to enable me to analyse the participants' interviews provided me with a platform to organise data in a meaningful way. Thematic analysis recognises and

organises patterns in content and meaning in qualitative data (Mertens, 2010), and can be used to encode qualitative information (Boyatzis, 1998) through a process of creating a list of codes that make up a theme. Themes were related to the research questions (Robson, 2011), and were representative of both the kind of school the participants would not like to attend, as well as the kind of school they would like to attend (Appendix 17). 'A theme is a pattern found in the information that at minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon' (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 4). Themes within the data of this research were generated mostly deductively as they reflected the main research question, that was supported by the first 2 research sub-questions (Appendix 16). The data obtained from these questions was organised according to the structure of the interview as adapted from Williams and Hanke's (2007) *Drawing the Ideal School*. Braun and Clarke (2006) referred to this approach as a semantic one; an approach that provides a more detailed account of particular themes within the data that related to the main research question. These themes were identified explicitly from the data without analysing beyond what the participant has said. Other themes that emerged from the data that were not based on Williams and Hanke's (2007) interviewing technique, were generated from the raw data elicited from the third research sub-question, through an inductive approach. This allowed the children's constructs to emerge further. Therefore, while analysis was mostly analyst-driven, and provided a more detailed analysis of some aspects of the data, the PCP underpinning the theoretical framework allowed the research to shift onto a more inductive approach when certain new themes relating to the third sub-question appeared in the data. Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) argued that this hybrid approach, involving a balance between deductive coding and inductive coding can demonstrate rigor with a qualitative research study.

3.6.2 Seeing themes in data

Boyatzis (1998) highlights a number of 'underlying abilities, or competencies' (p. 7) involved when a researcher uses thematic analysis to encode information. Firstly, it was important to acquire the knowledge relevant to the area being studied, which in this case related to children experiencing school-related anxiety as seen through the lens of Personal Construct Psychology. This knowledge involved a continuous and gradual process of exploring the literature available whilst continuing to build on this acquired knowledge. The theoretical framework was kept in mind and served as a platform for my research. Furthermore, I had to keep a flexible approach to recognise patterns in the data. Transferring these observations and patterns into a usable data system was the next step; and this required planning and systems thinking competencies. This ability was very useful, not only to make sense of the data gathered, but also to cluster the themes into higher levels of abstraction (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Identifying themes that say something important that relates to the research question (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was the method adopted to decide on what counts as a theme (Appendix 16). Braun and Clarke argue that a theme is not solely decided on the basis of the number of occurrences in a script. Although this quantifiable measure would be a good indication of the strength of a theme, this is where thematic analysis calls on flexibility. One could also look for information that was found across a number of participants, even with few occurrences in each script. Ultimately making sense of the data and coming up with meaningful constructs based on evidence is what drove my data analysis.

3.6.3 Using thematic analysis

Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases of thematic analysis served as a guide when it came to the stage of analysing the data generated through the interviews. Prior to presenting a detailed account of how this framework was adapted to my research, a visual summary of this is illustrated in Figure 3.1 below.
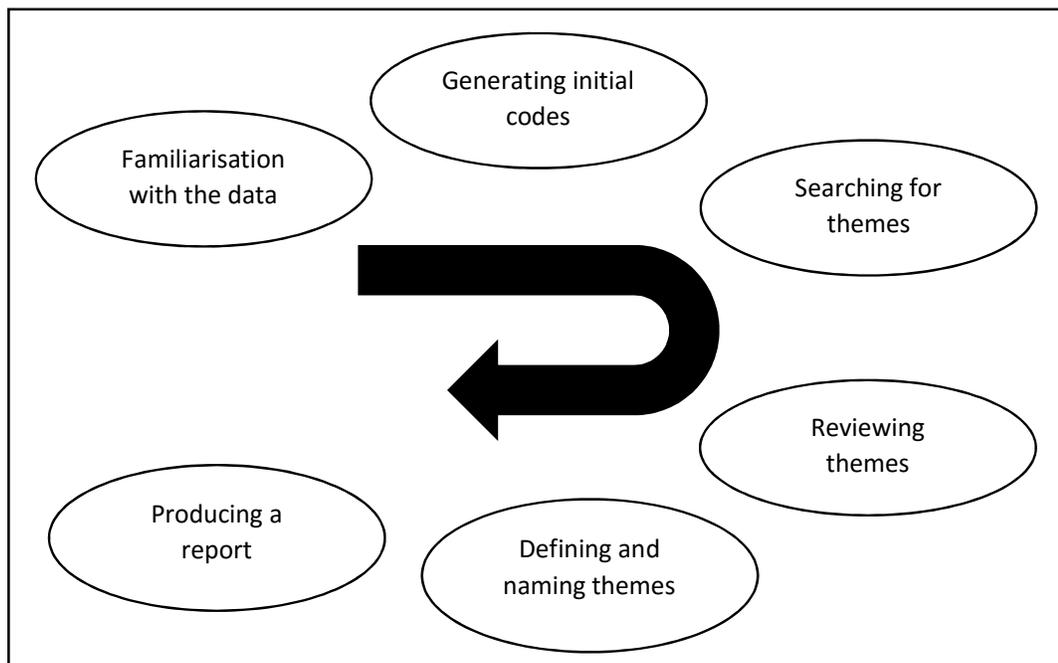
Figure 3.1 Phases of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Some prior knowledge of the data was obtained during the interviews themselves and before the actual process of analysis. However, *familiarisation with the data* was carried out in more detail by reading the transcriptions at least once before starting to code and then several times during the actual analysis. Ideas for coding were marked and returned to in subsequent phases (Appendix 12).

This led me to start identifying what was interesting in my data and *generating initial codes*. During this second phase, I started to organize data into something meaningful that would be elaborated upon when developing themes (Appendix 13). As previously mentioned, coding was mostly prior research-driven, and was therefore organized according to the interview method which attempted to answer the main research question through the first 2 sub-questions. The third sub-question relied on data-driven analysis with no pre-determined coding in mind. This refers to part 3 of the interview that involved rating on how the school they currently attend can become more like their ideal school (Appendix 8).

Once all the data had been coded, it needed to be organised into *themes* (Appendix 16). Mind maps were used as an initial phase of clustering these codes into themes (Appendix 17). This third phase involved the creation of a thematic map (Figure 4.1), including themes and sub-themes depending on the various levels of codes available.

When all the codes and themes had been organised into thematic maps, the *themes needed to be reviewed* and scrutinized to link similar themes or eliminate themes that did not have enough evidence. This fourth stage was more of a refinement process that ensured themes had a coherent pattern, representative of the entire data set, and presented a real picture of the children's realities.

When I was satisfied with the themes and thematic map of the data, *themes were defined* and presented as a clear picture of the underlying data. Each theme was analysed in terms of what it meant and the evidence it was portraying.

Once the thematic analysis was concluded, the *results were presented* in an accessible way for others to read. Thus, the thematic analysis was presented in the 'findings' section (Chapter 4), while providing extracts from the interviews to substantiate the themes.

3.6.4 Developing a meaningful thematic code

Researchers' ultimate goal of developing codes and themes is usually to develop a theory. Boyatzis (1998, p. 29) highlights three different ways of developing a thematic code: (a) theory driven, (b) prior data / research driven, and (c) inductive / data driven. While these approaches vary along a continuum from theory-driven to data-driven approaches, each poses benefits and challenges for the researcher. The ideal-fit approach for my research was a hybrid approach that includes a balance between deductive coding and inductive coding; one that has its roots in PCP (Kelly, 1991). This means that thematic analysis started mostly with organising information driven by Williams and Hanke's (2007) interviewing method, followed by a data-driven stage later on. Applying insight from the *Drawing the Ideal School* (Williams & Hanke, 2007) and *Drawing the Ideal Self* (Moran, 2001) models in order to develop an organised pattern of the phenomenon being studied was key to making the data understandable to stakeholders. Allowing the children's constructs to fall into a meaningful code that is representative of their reality was thought to be a very promising way of understanding the anxiety of these children and to serve as a platform for change.

The interviews (Appendix 8) were structured in a manner that explored the possibility that 'central elements' in a school environment could be contributing and maintaining anxiety in these children. These elements were the school building, the classroom, adults and children. This determined the composition of the code based on the interviewing

framework of *Drawing the Ideal School* (Williams & Hanke, 2007) to analyse the information. Data generated from the third phase of the interview was analysed inductively and served to link the children's constructs to their current school reality.

The goal of research is to create frameworks that allow us to understand the world around us (Boyatzis, 1998), and further develop these frameworks into theories. Therefore, if a theory is the final aim of a research, it is only natural that a researcher starts off research with theories to guide one's research process. This gives rise to a particular difficulty within the approach adopted within this research; the inevitability of the beliefs and assumptions of the researcher serving as a basis for the code. The reflexivity aspect of the pre-analysis theories will be explored further in the 'reflexivity' section below. Remaining neutral while exploring data was a challenge, however the drawings utilised within the interviews served to enable the children to express themselves whilst allowing for data at a lower level of awareness to emerge (Ravenette, 1980).

3.6.5 Units of analysis and coding

Using thematic analysis for this research necessitated clarification of the unit of analysis and the unit of coding, since this can be quite confusing. 'The unit of analysis is the entity on which the interpretation of the study will focus' (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 62). The children's representations of their constructs, through words and drawings will be the unit of analysis.

'The unit of coding is the most basic segment, or element, of the raw data or information that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon' (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63). This research is exploring how school-related anxiety is affecting children's

constructs of school. The interest lies in the children's constructs, which are based on the raw data which in itself is determined by the structure of the interview. The interview makes reference to the various elements that could affect children's anxiety, namely the school building, classroom, adults in school, and children in school. Therefore, the unit of coding was determined by the interview structures and it is through these elements that the codable moment was identified (Appendix 12).

3.6.6 Organising themes into clusters

As described earlier on, thematic analysis enables the researcher to create meaning from the data gathered. The data needs to be organised to enable the researcher to understand the phenomenon being studied, as well as serve as a platform to create a clear base for presenting evidence. Themes were organized on the basis of a conceptual framework (Appendices 14, 15), that was derived from past research by Williams and Hanke (2007). The underlying school constructs were extracted from participants' account of their reality and formed into sub-themes under each section (Appendix 13). Boyatzis (1998) refers to this approach as clustering, and is a way to link the data gathered from this study to other theories and past research, since it is 'organised in the way that researchers think about their phenomenon' (p. 140).

3.7 Ethical considerations

Research participants should be protected from any harm or loss, as well as having their psychological well-being and dignity safeguarded at all times (Willig, 2013), while working in their best interests (Health and Care Professions Council, 2012). Ethics underpinned both the design and execution of this research. In order to carry out this

research, approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee at University of East London (Apendix 18) as well as from the Research Department within the Ministry for Education and Employment in Malta (Appendix 19) as it was to be carried out with participants in state schools in Malta. An information letter about what the research involved was sent out to the parents of potential participants (Appendix 1). This was accompanied by a letter of consent that had to be signed by the parents should they wish their children to participate in the research (Appendix 3). Although the parents were likely to explain to their children what would be expected of them during the interview, the children were briefed by the researcher about their involvement before carrying out the interview and invited to sign a children's consent form to participate (Appendix 5). Although authorisation was already given by the Ministry for Education and Employment, the Heads of the schools within which interviews were held were informed about the research through an information letter (Appendix 7). Parents and children were debriefed following the interviews, and were also advised that they will be invited for an information meeting to present the results upon termination of the research.

Participants were informed that participation is not obligatory and can be terminated at any point before or during the interview without giving any explanations. Due to anxiety being a common factor amongst participants, it was ensured that none of the children were undergoing any form of therapy or psychological intervention during the data collection phase that might cause the child to feel unsafe or insecure during the interview. Suitability of the children to take part in this research was discussed with the referring psychologist. Furthermore, care was taken to notice any heightened distress that the participants might have had as direct result of the interview questions. Although the children appeared comfortable during the interviews, the referring psychologist was informed once the interview had taken place.

Participants were informed that confidentiality will be maintained unless there is evidence to raise concern regarding the safety of the child or other persons (British Psychological Society, 2009). They were also informed that data will be discussed with the researcher's research supervisor, without the need to refer to the children by name. Furthermore, participants were also made aware that transcripts and drawings will be anonymous, and might be used as part of the thesis. Permission to audio-record the interview was sought by the client and parent through the consent form, and verbally at the commencement of each interview.

3.8 Trustworthiness

Presenting research that is worth acknowledging and believable is the aspiration of any researcher. Thus one must ensure that a study is valid and measures what it intends to measure. Validity is one of the strengths in qualitative research (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Incorporating certain strategies into research would ensure that the researcher assesses the accuracy of the findings (Creswell, 2009) whilst making their study trustworthy. Describing, measuring or explaining what the research aims to describe, measure or explain is what Willig (2013) defines as research validity. The flexible and open-ended nature of qualitative research allows validity issues to be tackled during the research itself. In order to ensure validity in the research's findings, and in order to provide evidence of how this was conducted and data analysed, a number of strategies were adopted.

Testimonial validity was ensured by encouraging the participants to comment on their drawings and by frequent summarising. This approach avoided any inaccurate interpretations made by the researcher about the drawings, and instead relied on the

participants' account of their experiences. Furthermore, paraphrasing was frequently used during the interviews to avoid any misinterpretation.

Since this research placed particular attention on anxiety, which itself could potentially elicit negative emotions in participants, it was necessary to offer children the opportunity to think constructively about how they could experience their ideal school. This served as a way of empowering the participants, and increase the likelihood of a catalytically valid research. After drawing the type of school that they would not like to attend and their ideal school, the participants were invited to think about the school they were attending at the time of the interview, and in what ways could it become more like their ideal school.

An audit trail of the research process was maintained by keeping a record of the activities while carrying out the study. Evidence of the process is discussed in section 3.6, while a 'step-by-step' process of the audit trail can be found in Appendix 10. Furthermore, details of coding and data analysis (section 3.6) were also kept and presented in Appendices 13-16.

One issue to be considered was that of representativeness. In order to generalise findings to the general population, participants need to be representative of the population (Willig, 2013). Although five interviews are too small a number to generalise to the whole of the population, one needs to keep in mind the philosophical position adopted in this research, that of social constructionism. Even though the aim of this research wasn't to generalise results to the whole population but to analyse in depth the participants' constructs, one can assume that the reality of the participants is socially constructed, and according to Kippax et al. (1988) this can be potentially generalizable among that same population.

3.9 Reflexivity

Finally, reflexivity was a crucial strategy to adopt during this research and acknowledge personal biases (Willig, 2013). This identifies the extent to which the researcher could have potentially affected the research through personal attitude and influence placed on participants, interview questions, and the process of data analysis and interpretation (Berger, 2015). It was vital to engage in an internal dialogue and self-evaluate my actions and decisions along the research process. During interviews, it was important to be self-reflective and avoid asking questions indicative of my own reactions to thoughts, emotions or triggers. This enhanced the quality of the research by allowing me to reflect on ways in which I could have assisted or hindered the process of co-construction of meanings (Lietz, Langer, & Furman, 2006).

Starting off from a philosophical position that is complementary to acknowledging the voice of the child was crucial, since this inadvertently had an effect on my relationship with the participants and data. I was aware of my belief that the external environment has a more influencing effect, than internal predispositions, on children's anxiety. This could have influenced the process of interviewing and data analysis, but it was the position taken throughout the whole of the thesis, as a theoretical standpoint from which to argue. This position was likely to contribute to a positive relationship with the participants since I could have given the impression that I was blaming the environment around the child for their anxiety. This relationship affected the information that the participants were willing to share (Berger, 2015) and had the potential to yield more accurate results.

Qualitative research is subjective (Boyatzis, 1998) and therefore scrutinization of data must maintain the quality of the information collected. It was important to be aware of

my limitations during analysis caused by fatigue, sensory overload and frustration with the raw data. This could have easily impacted on the process of sensing themes and applying the code consistently. Apart from carrying out analysis during times of the day when I noticed myself to be attentive and could maintain adequate levels of concentration, having a clear code also facilitated the data analysis.

While coding and analysing data, I was aware of pre-analysis theories, and it was important to employ certain measures to counteract the challenges that this could have posed to data analysis. A research log was kept to for 'self-supervision' and to guide me to keep a systematic attitude throughout the research. This was necessary to safeguard against contamination of data. Regular supervision ensured objectivity in my analysis and provided a space for noticing and avoiding personal beliefs to have an impact on the data. Being prepared for the interviews by analysing the pilot interviews, familiarising myself with the interview questions and having clarity about the research questions ensured an objective interviewer attitude throughout the sessions with participants.

CHAPTER 4 – FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

This chapter will incorporate the results of the data gathered following the interviews with anxious children. These findings will be presented in the form of seven themes and further sub-themes that link to the different areas explored throughout the interviews (Figure 4.1). These findings will be representative of the deductive and inductive approaches used when analysing raw data. Data was elicited through semi-structured interviews, accompanied by drawings to help children feel more at ease when communicating their thoughts and the meanings of their reality (Ravenette, 1980).

The participants, whom professionals described as experiencing anxiety at school, and whose ages ranged from 7 until 11 years, were first asked to draw and comment on the kind of school they would not like to attend. Reference was also made to the classroom, the children, the adults, and themselves within this kind of school. This was followed by exploration of the opposite construct and participants were asked to draw and comment on their ideal school, including drawings and comments about the classroom, children, and the adults. Participants were also asked to rate where their current school lies between the type of school they would not like, and their ideal school. Furthermore, they were asked what can be done for their current school to be more like their ideal school.

Although transcripts are in Maltese, which is the native language spoken in Malta and the language that participants felt most comfortable using, the quotes used in this chapter have been interpreted and presented in English. The quotes have been cited according to the number assigned to each participant (P) and the relevant line/s in the Maltese

transcript from which the quote had been extracted. Any names used in this section are

fictitious and are not the real names of participants.

Figure 4.1 Thematic map

School / Classroom

Classroom management & layout

Violent behaviour

School ethos

Physical activity & break time

School building

Adults

Teacher values

Teaching style

Child-centred thinking

Children

Shared values & qualities

Respect

Inclusive approach

VALUES / ETHOS - (THEME 1)

CURRICULUM - (THEME 2)

SCHOOL FEATURES - (THEME 3)

ADULTS' PROFESSIONAL ROLE - (THEME 4)

INCLUSION - (THEME 5)

Worried

School refusal

Excluded

LIMITED LEARNING READINESS - (THEME 6)

POSITIVE SENSE OF BEING - (THEME 7)

Challenged

Agitated / Impulsive

Sad

Friendship

Carefree

Happy

4.2 Values / Ethos (Theme 1)

The first theme identified centres around values that could potentially be reflected in the way adults and children interact in their educational environment. The nature of interactions between people who hold certain values could be the basis for behaviours relating to anxiety that occur in the school environment and for defining a general school ethos. These values will be elicited through a number of sub-themes presented below, namely: teacher values, children's shared values and qualities, respect by children, violent behaviour and language and school ethos.

Teacher values

Participants felt that the relationship between themselves and adults in school was quite significant and appeared to be an important aspect of their experience at school. Teachers with altruistic values were the type of professionals that children wanted to be taught by. For children it was important that teachers are mindful of children's limitations and help out whenever they can.

One participant spoke about teachers in her ideal school who present themselves as loving towards their students: *"...the teachers will be ones who love children."* (P4/160). Another referred to teachers as *"They used to pamper me."* (P2/280). This shows the need of these children to experience the humanity of teachers through the actions of a loving professional.

A teacher needs to do his/her job well in an ideal school. *"Teachers will be teaching."* (P4/214). Comments about the type of school they would not like to attend include: *"...it could be that there are teachers who instead of explaining a task, they ask children to get*

on with their work quickly." (P3/106-107), or *"Teachers who are only interested in getting paid and don't care, they just deliver the lesson and leave."* (P5/134-135). These children have passed on the message that they are not engaged well in learning when the adult who is teaching them, is not dedicated to carrying out their role professionally.

Moreover, children talked about how important it is to them that teachers understand their needs and help them out in an ideal school. Two comments made by one of the participants about adults in her ideal school were: *"…and they also help out"* (P4/216) and *"They will be kind."* (P4/218). Another participant referred to adults in her ideal school in this manner: *"They are attentive."* (P5/262) and *"They help us rather than allowing us to strive on our own."* (P5/272). Data about the adults in the type of school they would not like to attend included: *"…I don't like it if she doesn't help me."* (P4/107) or *"…he wouldn't help me, he wouldn't bother, he used to shout as soon as I entered* [school] *late, he would leave me there crying…"* (P5/130-131). Participants, having had experiences of anxious situations at school, noted the need to be helped out and that their learning needs were understood to be unique to the individual in their own way. They might necessitate a different approach than that offered to other children who may not be experiencing a similar reality.

Children's shared values and qualities

A common set of values among children was another sub-theme that emerged from the interviews. These participants want to go to a school in which children have similar values and qualities.

The children want to go to a school in which children are kind and helpful towards each other. *"If at times I fell, they come and help me."* (P2/252) was what one participant

expressed. He also recounted when *"For example, once she* [his mother] *forgot to buy me flour for cooking. They* [children] *had two bags and we shared them."* (P2/254-255). This participant appreciated the help of others when in need. Kindness was also mentioned by other participants: *"There will be kind children."* (P4/158) and *"Kind, and always showing respect…"* (P3/171). Participants feel comfortable in the type of school in which children look out for each other and are kind towards others.

The issue of trustworthiness emerged with some participants. They did not talk about wanting children in their ideal school to trust each other, but mentioned the lack of trust in children who attend the type of school they would not like to go to. One participant is not comfortable when children share a lot of secrets; *"They share a lot of secrets."* (P4/71) or when rumours are spread about best friends; *"…they say things about best friends."* (P4/80). Another child would not want to be in a school where trust between teachers and students is not reciprocal: *"…*[children] *abuse of the trust of teachers who allow children an element of freedom."* (P5/110).

One of the participants prefers to hang around with others who possess similar qualities, probably due to similar abilities and learning needs. He would like to be in a school which intelligent children attend. This would decrease the likelihood of children chatting during lessons: *"…there are children who keep chatting during lessons.... I enjoy being with intelligent people."* (P3/34-37).

Respect by children

Although respect could be closely linked to the previous sub-theme, a separate category has been created due to particular importance given to it by the participants. An ideal school would include children who respect their teachers and allowed them to do their

job: *"...they would not interrupt the teacher whilst explaining, they would allow her to finish the explanation."* (P3/168-169). This leads to a situation in which the students need to overcome the distractions in class in order to be in a position to understand the teacher. Furthermore, one needs to respect the teacher both as a professional as well as an individual: *"When they hand out a consent form for an outing for example, they mustn't throw it on the floor immediately."* (P5/233). This episode indicates lack of respect towards the teacher who is doing their job.

When thinking of the kind of school they would not like to attend, one participant referred to lack of respect in the form of aggression towards the teacher. She mentioned: *"The other day there was an arrogant girl who pushed the teacher."* (P5/40). Teachers' authority in school must be respected.

One child would not want to experience a lot of shouting in class. *"These children shout a lot in class"* (P1/73). Shouting in class may indicate lack of respect towards the teacher who is trying to deliver the lesson, as well as lack of respect to other children who would like to follow what the teacher is saying. This situation might exacerbate further anxiety for this child in a non-ideal school.

Blaming innocent children and potentially getting them into trouble is what children would be doing in the kind of school that one of the participants would not want to attend. *"They went out from a window. And afterwards they claim someone else made them do it.... Everyone: It wasn't me who did it, she made me."* (P5/85-88). These actions are disrespectful towards other students and are clearly unacceptable to an anxious child, as they can also lead to bullying or treating others in an unjust way. Moreover, being worried that others will not understand, especially when someone is in need, feels to them as if

other children are making fun of them and not treating them with respect. *"They are laughing at him. He is crying."* (P1/89).

Finally, in an ideal school, children need to carry out their duties. *"They attend class, rather than skiving."* (P5/219). This is what children in an ideal school would be like. They will show respect to other students and teachers by contributing to a healthy learning environment with their presence and commitment to learn.

Violent behaviour and language

Another sub-theme that falls under this section of values and ethos is about the violent behaviour and violent language that exists in the kind of school that these children with anxiety would not want to go to.

One participant wouldn't want to go to a school in which there is bullying amongst students. *"For example this individual's pencil is taken, and he wants to take it back, and they stay throwing it around, and the others stay playing with his pencil."* (P3/53-54). He relates bullying in school to negative emotions that he might experience:

> *"They started to fight and punch each other. I didn't even look at them, they really scared me, not scared me, I had a fright, but they did scare me so I say: 'This school has a lot of bullying'."* (P3/142-144).

Figure 4.2 Bullying and violent behaviour at school

For children experiencing anxiety in school, being faced with situations that create further negative thinking does not augur well for their emotional well-being. Anxious children report more negative cognitions, even though clinical significance is unclear (Stallard, 2009). Bullying also happens between genders: *"What bothers me is this idea that boys and girls are together* [at school] *.... You can't go to the restroom for the whole day. They won't let you enter, there will be two boys."* (P5/20-23). This female participant would not want to attend a school in which both genders attend due to bullying from the opposite gender.

When children play rough between themselves, they would be encouraging violent behaviour. When talking about children attending his ideal school, one participant expressed: *"During break, for example, they would not be fighting, they would be talking not about family-related things, they would be talking about nice things."* (P3/169-170). This behaviour would be preferred rather than that going on in the type of school he would

not like to attend: *"...during breaks they fight, they play rough, very rough."* (P3/25-26) or *"...others hurt each other."* (P3/44).

Students use offensive language towards their teachers in the kind of school that this participant would not want to attend: *"... there will be pupils exhibiting vulgar behaviour... they insult the teachers."* (P5/32, 34). This vulgar language that students use in this kind of school reflects the way students relate to their teachers, thus creating a very unhealthy teaching-learning relationship.

School Ethos

Participants made reference to shared characteristics and common attitudes adopted within their ideal school. A shared understanding of the values that a school and its population should foster was seen as forming part of their ideal place to receive education.

Opportunities to help other children is something that one child associated with his ideal school: *"... I really used to enjoy helping out a boy who uses a wheelchair, play with him, in year 2. Then, in year 3, we had another teacher, we had an LSA, she had a girl."* (P2/213-214). These actions promote altruism at school, whilst offering this child the opportunity to use his potential in an acceptable and useful way. Helping out with material things and feeling useful with adults at school contributes to the value of the learning environment for this person:

> *"Sometimes to take down the money, for example for an outing in year 1, she would tell me Gary[1] go and give these to Ms. J. And I would go and give them to her... I really used to enjoy it."* (P2/207-209).

This participant also referred to situations when he is asked by his teacher to help out other children: *"... go and help him... him... and him..."* (P2/212); or to act as a class

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[1] Fictitious name

prefect: *"And sometimes I would be that person who would write down on the whiteboard the name of whoever distracts others…"* (P2/216).

One of the children felt strongly about an ideal school that fosters kindness, forgiveness, and love:

> *"That it is good not bad. What I like about it, something that is important to me, is that one forgives. Because if everyone forgives, we wouldn't have all this fighting… not just forgiveness, love, that we love each other not for example I would love just my friend. We need to love everyone, including teachers and adults, we have to show respect too. Then kindness, that we are kind with everyone, not for example if we see a person we get irritated; for example, he would have fought, he would be experiencing problems with his family, we still need to be kind. At school too. Kindness, love, forgiving… those should be everywhere, not just at school."* (P3/150-158).

He imagines an ideal school as a place where there will be a positive atmosphere amongst the staff and children. Relationships will be based on positive values and acceptance of each other. However, he acknowledged the difficulty in having a school like this: *"A school of love. That is hard to find."* (P3/160).
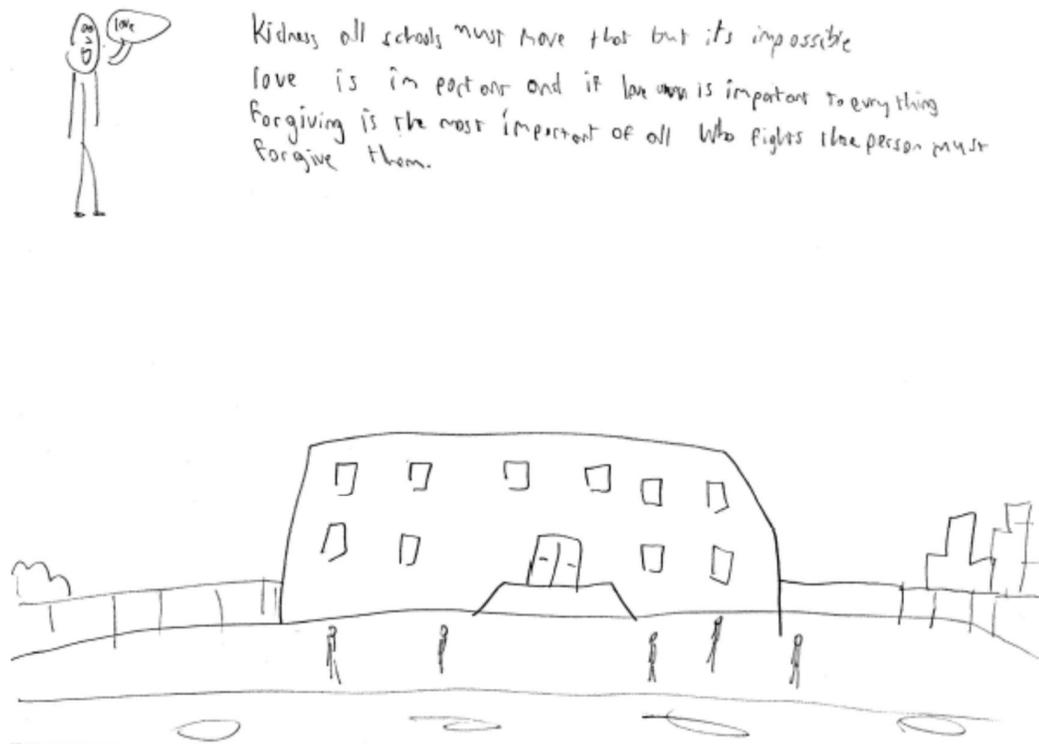
Figure 4.3 An ideal school ethos

4.3 Curriculum (Theme 2)

The second theme incorporates aspects of the curriculum that relate mostly to physical activity and time spent outside of class, including during breaks and other activities.

The length of time spent during breaks at school, was an issue for one of the participants:

> *"I would like the break to be longer, just like school. Because it's not fair, because the break doesn't take long and school does. At least the break will take a little bit longer."* (P1/36-37).

This child felt that he needed to make an effort to be in class for long stretches of time at the type of school that he did not want to attend. Having longer breaks would balance out the time spent learning in class.

Another participant thought that in the type of school he would not like to attend, there is not much thought into how certain timeslots are structured: *"Because sometimes, once, we play football, and then the teacher that is there only allows us to remain seated and staring without doing anything. I would feel like staying outside* [of school].*"* (P2/41-42). It seems as if time is wasted, when it can be used more productively. Thus it is not motivating to be at school early in the morning, but remain outside of school and play. In an ideal school, there is the desire to experience more activities, especially during festive seasons: *"...during parties, we would have an Easter party, and when we do, we would have an Easter egg hunt at school."* (P1/147-148).

Spending more time during physical education lessons is what one participant imagined in his ideal school. *"...there will be P.E. on Monday and Friday."* (P1/137). This child's happiness when imagining what it would be like during PE was evident when explaining his drawing: *"This is when we have P.E. And there's written 'I'm happy'..."*. (P1/178)

and *"These children and myself enjoy going for P.E. because it's our favourite day of the year when we have P.E.".* (P1/187).

Figure 4.4 Happiness during Physical Education

This theme indicates these children's need to engage in other activities outside of class and raises awareness that school can be fun as much as it can be tough and anxiety-provoking.

4.4 School features (Theme 3)

Other aspects that participants expressed were related to the school building and the experience within the classroom. These have been captured under this third theme and will be presented below.

Classroom management and layout

Participants mentioned the difficulties encountered to concentrate in class in the type of school that they would not like to attend. One child felt that the shouting that goes on in class hinders his ability to follow what the teacher would be delivering:

> *"In this class there will be a lot of shouting, and I'm the only one being quiet. I try very hard to concentrate but I don't understand, it's as if in my head when I go to school I try for example in my head, I try to picture everything the same but I don't know how to concentrate like that, I think I concentrate and the teacher shows us, and I'm trying to concentrate, that's why I have a book."* (P1/53-56).

Figure 4.5 Difficulty to concentrate in a class with a lot of shouting

This boy wouldn't want to be in a class in which he is not able to understand the teacher's explanations due to factors that appear to be external to him, including disruptions by other children, especially shouting: *"Shouting and this is not helping me, they are confusing me."* (P1/58). Another participant mentioned the inappropriate chatting that goes on in class: *"...the teacher is explaining while others are chatting, and because of this I can't listen well."* (P3/31-32); and *"Then there are those who chat during lessons too."* (P3/34-35).

Figure 4.6 Difficulty to concentrate due to disruptions in class

The work given by the teachers in the ideal school was another important aspect for these participants. Not having much homework in order to be able to engage in extra-curricular activities was important for one participant:

> *"That we do not have much homework because sometimes for example I end up doing it on Saturday; Friday I would have liked to do something but I wouldn't be able to because I would have had a lot of homework."* (P4/39-40).

Similarly, another participant imagined an ideal school in which he would not have to spend Saturday doing his homework: *"And Saturday, you should be able not to have homework…"* (P1/160); and have limited writing tasks: *"There will be little writing…"* (P1/162).

One participant felt that there is a large amount of copybooks in the classroom in the type of school she would not like to attend: *"…there will be a lot of copybooks."* (P4/57). This could be that the sight of a lot of copybooks represents the large amounts of work that needs to be done at school and thus creates anxiety for this girl. But it can also be due to a difficulty in keeping herself organised with the right copybooks daily.

In the type of school that children would not want to attend, they experience unfair punishment or get blamed for other students' misbehaviour. Children feel that as a consequence to others' wrongdoings, they are collectively punished: *"...innocents are blamed for others' wrongdoings."* (P3/25); *"Then others who are not playing with them still get the blame…"* (P3/28). Further comments about children who are not engaging in unacceptable school behaviours, but still get the blame with all the rest include: *"...she* [teacher] *wouldn't know what would have happened. Then everybody gets the blame, and that is not right."* (P3/56); *"...at times the quiet pupil gets blamed."* (P5/45); *"...just because the quiet pupil enters class late once, she gets the blame."* (P5/75). Teachers are not always aware of every situation that arises at school and may draw certain conclusions to the best of their knowledge in order to calm down situations or maintain discipline in school. However, children explained that these are not always benefitting the children who do not engage in misconducts.

One child showed enthusiasm in being able to design the classroom of his ideal school: *"And here there will be, the floor will be of superheroes, and here they will fix a statue of Jesus on the cross."* (P1/168-169). This boy wanted to feel part of his classroom through his likes and beliefs. Similarly, another participant spoke about having one's own space in their classroom in the ideal school:

> *"There will be something on which we can keep our bags because on the floor sometimes they drop water and it may not have dried and you dirty it* [bag]. *And sometimes even when you leave, there will be a locker for bags, because when you go to the restroom, sometimes they stay searching in your bag."* (P5/204-207).

This participant would imagine having her own space to keep her belongings clean and organised, whilst safe from other students with whom she does not feel comfortable being around.

School building

The ideal school must be welcoming and attractive for the children. These are important to make children feel comfortable being at school, as evident in their explanations of their drawings:

> *"Here I made a pathway so that one can walk, and here there's written 'Welcome we're glad you're here'...And there will be two doors, there will be flowers by the windows, a fenced roof and a sort of cage and there will be the garden there."* (P1/131-134).

Children mentioned some features that may add to the school's aesthetic look while keeping it safe: *"I would like there to be a painting rather than some kind of sign."* (P1/330-331); *"It will be very nice for example, to my liking."* (P4/156); *"This is a slide and this a swing."* (P4/162); *"There will be a garden…"* (P4/272); *"...there will be a pool..."* (P4/276).
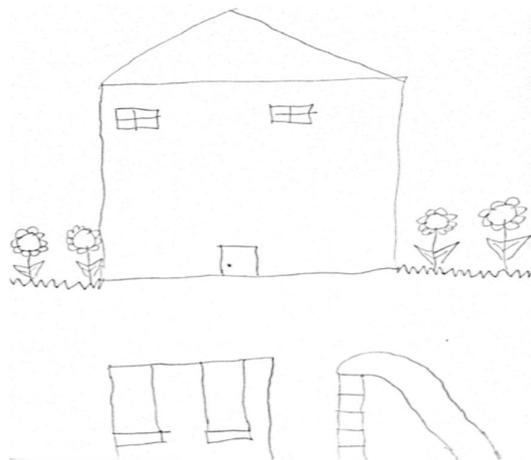
Figure 4.7 An attractive school

Another participant was also cautious about the level of safety in the ideal school:

> *"They mustn't fix half the school; they fix all the schools. I meant all the classrooms, not half the classroom.... there are certain chairs that as soon as you sit down on them, they fall apart. At least they remove those.... safety."* (P5/176, 183-184, 187).

Ideally, furniture and the surroundings must be kept safe for the benefit of whoever is making use of them.

In her ideal school, one participant wouldn't want to feel as if she's locked up: *"Without gates.... All there will be is a normal school but without gates. Because with gates, it feels as if you're in prison."* (P5/166, 168). She wants to feel comfortable being in the school and not feel restricted and confined within it.

Two other ideal school features mentioned by participants were the stairs in the school and windows. There mustn't be too many stairs or the need to use stairs: *"...that you do not walk up the stairs."* (P1/324); and *"There will not be too many stairs for example."* (P4/31). Furthermore, the amount of windows need to be limited so as not to allow too much sunlight in that could negatively impact one's vision: *"...I do not want too many windows because I would not be able to see well. Only two… you hurt your eyes with the sunlight."* (P1/325-327).

4.5 Adults' professional role (Theme 4)

The fourth theme centres around the views participants have about their teachers and what they think about the latter's professional role. Two sub-themes have been created as detailed below.

Teaching style

Participants shared their views on adults who shout with students in class or during break: *"...the teachers wouldn't shout…"* (P1/136-137); and *"I used to really enjoy it because the teachers didn't shout at me. They only used to shout a little bit."* (P2/206-207). Therefore, in these children's ideal school, teachers would not shout. On the other hand, in the kind of school that participants would not want to attend, teachers would be shouting: *"The teacher is shouting with this one who is crying."* (P1/85); *"The teachers*

shout.” (P1/91); *“People shout in children’s faces.”* (P1/93). This boy seemed to be very sensitive to adults’ shouting who do not try to understand the child, but further intimidate him/her. In the type of school participants would not want to attend, shouting is directed towards everyone: *“He shouts. In the morning sometimes he shouts at us, at everyone while we are saying the prayers.”* (P2/47-48). This boy was referring to the head of school who would shout at the children during the morning assembly. Another participant referred to adults shouting even at the minimal wrongdoing: *“They’ll shout even if you’re a quiet student and do something wrong once.”* (P5/71-72); and *“…I would enter* [school] *late, he’d shout…”* (P5/131). The adults would not be valuing the children’s differences and needs who therefore feel as if they are being misunderstood and kept constantly on edge.

The type of consequences used by teachers with students for not carrying out their work in the type of school they would not want to attend might not always be part of a positive learning experience: *“…she says she would report us to the head of school. Then if we do not manage to finish the homework, we will not take our break.”* (P1/100-101); and *“During break, whoever would not have finished the homework will stay outside during break writing his homework… and if he finishes he will remain there anyway.”* (P1/103,105). This indicates the pressure that children feel that the teachers place on them to complete the homework. Probably the children would feel anxious due to missing work, while at the same time worried of not being allowed to take their break.

The issue around the amount of writing children feel comfortable with was already hinted at in the third theme, under the classroom sub-theme. Nevertheless, it was felt opportune to include another similar comment but which makes specific reference to the teacher’s role in this issue in the type of school that one would not want to attend: *“I do not like*

attending this school because the teacher makes us write a lot... I wouldn't like to write long tasks." (P1/33-34). The amount of writing that children feel that teachers would expect of them during learning tasks may be unrealistic to children at times.

The way teachers and adult professionals in schools make use of their authority may have a negative or positive impact on children's experience and views of learning as well as subject content. In the type of school that they would not like to attend, participants think that this type of teacher would be present: *"The teacher gets on my nerves..."* (P2/133); and:

> *"I don't like her... She says that I'm a liar, she shouts at me. She says that I always bring notes. As for the homework for example, I wouldn't know how to do it, she tells me that I shouldn't just leave them out but need to do them. And sometimes I wouldn't know them, and she just puts a question mark and during break she tells me to go against the wall. If I don't finish them off today I'll stay tomorrow, and if I don't finish them off tomorrow, I'll stay the following day, against the wall."* (P2/137-142).

This teacher's approach could possibly be interpreted by children as a rigid disciplinarian (authoritarian) approach, where the student is clearly more worried about the teacher's attitude in the confrontation rather than completing his homework. He feels that he is not being listened to. Another strict measure, including a harsh consequence, was noted by another participant: *"...the girls have to write as otherwise they will get a detention."* (P5/92-93). The children might feel threatened if this would be the underlying message that they get from their teacher, leading to a further state of worry, which is one of the cognitive components of anxiety (Stallard, 2009).

In their ideal school, teachers would adopt an authoritative approach:

> *"They will be strict with them* [pupils] *so that they will not remain as they are. I'm not saying that they should shout at them... Because they seem to think that with those who misbehave, you need to be more tolerant for them not to misbehave."* (P5/320-323).

Establishing discipline and confidence in authority in a respectful way is what children expect out of teachers. This participant would expect the teachers in her ideal school to manage unpleasant situations caused by students in the class. But the method needs to be a respectful one, unlike what could be found in the type of school she would not want to attend:

> *"Because discipline is good but we're no longer in those days where you need to do everything that is being requested from you. For them I don't think they agree yet… they still want to hit you with a ruler on your hand or place that thing against your back. It seems as if they are angry that they removed these methods and are taking it out on the children."* (P5/344-347).

This is a very harsh statement and reflects the view that this child has about teachers who might have lost control over students' disposition in class. In this type of school, teachers are viewed as having lost the students' respect resulting in overreacting.

Child-centred thinking

A professional working in a school, for example a teacher, must work for the best interest of children. For this to take place, one needs to listen to children and understand their reality. This is the nature of this sub-theme and involves keeping the child at the centre of one's thinking.

In the type of school that one would not want to attend, adults would not listen to children:

> *"For example if someone pushes me and I hit the one in front of me, who then hits the teacher, both the one in front of me and the one behind me blame me. And I get a 'break in'."* (P2/144-145).

The teacher would not listen to what this child has to say and possibly rushes to a conclusion which may not always be beneficial to the child. Furthermore, in this school certain comments draw attention to a child's difficulty: *"She tells me that I'm the only one with* [justification] *notes here. She says that I always bring notes. Then on another day there will be two children who give her a note and she doesn't tell them anything."*

(P2/181-182). This situation might indicate a difficulty being experienced by the child, which is not being addressed in their best interest, which in turn could create further worry for the child.

One participant wouldn't want to be in a school in which teachers do not cater for different abilities:

> *"…for example they don't give them a lot of homework and no past papers on the day before an exam. They give them around two books, a little, too little is not enough to study from for the exam. And for example they don't give them the book of the exam. How are they going to study then?"* (P3/109-112).

This boy feels that teachers in this school are not meeting the individual needs of those children who make an effort to do well or need more challenging tasks.

In the ideal school, children's strengths are nurtured and successes celebrated:

> *"They will have a meeting so that teachers talk about children. The art teacher talks about how good they are at art, the music teacher talks about their knowledge about music, and the PE teacher sees how much they know about football."* (P1/207-209).

Teachers would be sharing positive aspects about children and what they're good at: *"What they are successful in…"* (P1/211). This participant wants his strengths to be acknowledged and get rewarded for success: *"…also those who did well should receive a medal. And they say 1 out of 10 how good they were."* (P1/219-220); and *"These adults will tell children 'You did very well' and give them a token…"* (P1/230).

4.6 Inclusion (Theme 5)

This fifth theme captures the participants' thoughts about inclusion and their relationships with other children both in the school they would not like to go to as well as in their ideal school.

Interaction through play is a concern for participants at the type of school they do not want to attend: *"... these children are fed up; they're crying because he doesn't let them play."* (P1/70-71); and *"... during break they do not let children play."* (P1/73). Children are left out of activities while others play, upsetting the excluded children: *"...nobody plays with me"* (P4/133). Other participants shared similar thoughts: *"... there's a boy. He doesn't let me play. But now he lets me play. Before he didn't used to."* (P2/48-49). Children end up feeling excluded from play. One participant would try to come up with a solitary type of game:

> *"...my friends play with individuals who play rough. They are fascinated by wrong things and engage in that type of play. And I get upset, and sometimes they leave me, they leave me alone during break... then I do my best to create a game I can play on my own. For example, jogging, I try to do something healthy"* (P3/134-136,138).

Apart from feeling excluded, in this type of school, one may also feel let down as a result, also impacting negatively one's self-esteem: *"...during PE, they think that I am weak and they leave out whoever they think is weak."* (P3/79-80). In the ideal school, the opposite happens and inclusion is fostered: *"They let me play"* (P2/245); and *"They play with me."* (P4/199). Children feel accepted, wanted and can spend time with other children. This attracts the children to enjoy the inclusive atmosphere at school as well as activities in which they would engage in during play: *"And these children, I like this class, and I like P.E. mostly because we play football and we play cops and robbers."* (P1/184-185).

In their ideal school, children would be inclusive and celebrate diversity. *"These enjoyed my presence, the fact that I'm a new student."* (P4/195). This girl feels included in a school she has just started attending. Another participant referred to the importance of making outsiders feel welcome through small gestures like keeping them up to date with anything they would've missed out on: *"...when a guest comes, I already mentioned this, we 'shake hands' actually there's no need to do that, also make new friends and try to*

explain for example if he would be sick, you could explain the homework..." (P3/178-180). This participant also imagined an ideal school in which there would be harmony with other children who might be prone to discrimination because of their race or their physical features:

> *"And even for example those with a different skin complexion, black, white, slightly dark, you still need to show respect, you still need to respect and love them, you still need to make friends, not for example they ignore the person, it can be a girl or a boy."* (P3/182-184).

> *"And another thing. People that are fat or slender… Respect and still love them. You still need to respect them because they're not different, they're still human, still friends."* (P3/186-188).

In this boy's ideal school, children would be considered equal while differences are accepted. Reference again is made to respect among each other in view of understanding different realities.
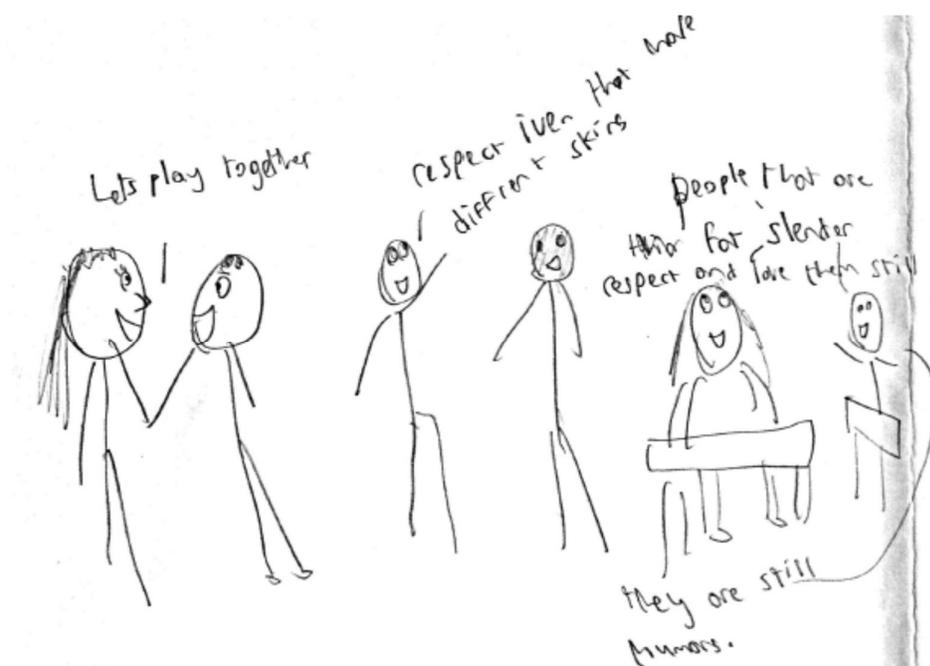
Figure 4.8 Fostering inclusion amongst children

In a school that promotes inclusion, there will be no bullying contrary to what happens in the kind of school participants would not want to go to: *"…they push me…"* (P2/109); or *"During break for example they run and so on, then if someone falls, it doesn't always*

happen, only sometimes, they would laugh at him." (P3/50-51); and *"…they hurt a boy."* (P3/71). Participants are referring to episodes that involve physical bullying by pushing and hurting others, as well as emotional bullying, like laughing when others hurt or are in need. Another boy said: *"…children trip others by mistake when they play."* (P1/74). Although this does not seem to be on purpose, this participant made this statement in the context of the kind of school he would not like to attend, so clearly this episode is not something he would like to encounter, irrelevant of the intention of those who may have caused harm to others. Another participant expressed that some children can do whatever they like at this school: *"They act as if the school is theirs."* (P5/42). Insulting family members is another aspect that occurs in this sub-theme of the type of school they would not want to attend: *"…they say insulting comments about* [others'] *families…"* (P3/66). On the other hand, in the ideal school, children will stick up for each other: *"And sometimes there were these twins who would come and hit us, they would run after me and once made me trip. So then we ran after them and made them trip…"* (P2/257-258). Due to possibly feeling tormented and the perceived inability to stand up for his rights, this participant envisions a situation in which he would be able to stand up against those who would be intimidating him.

4.7 Limited learning readiness (Theme 6)

Participants were asked to think about what they would be doing and how they would be feeling at the type of school that they would not like to attend. This section will highlight a number of sub-themes indicating the difficulties and the lack of learning readiness that these participants felt they would encounter in this type of school.

Most of these children would find learning within this type of school challenging. They find it difficult to learn or to have an active role in their learning experience at school. Understanding educational material and the teacher's explanation is crucial for learning, but these children do not always manage to grasp the task: *"I'm reading a book and am not understanding well. That's why I'm saying 'this is hard'."* (P1/113-114); and *"Because sometimes, I don't understand the homework, that's why they* [disruptive students] *bother me… because for example the teacher explains to us and then I don't understand."* (P4/45-47). At times these children find it hard to make the teacher aware that they would not have understood the task: *"I stare… I tell her 'yes' but in reality I would not have understood."* (P2/171). One participant expressed her lack of motivation to do anything in this school: *"I would sit on the sofa and do nothing."* (P4/119).

Figure 4.9 Finding it hard to understand in class

Another boy felt that his thoughts and feelings at this school would be very much influenced by others' actions:

> *"Sometimes I feel good and sometimes I feel bad. It depends on their* [children's] *mood. This means it's how they feel, always fighting during break but I can't tell them 'Stop'. They wouldn't listen to me, I'm not for example the 'king' of the school, I'm not."* (P3/128-130).

He feels that he has little control over the way external factors affect him, especially if he can't influence other children's behaviour.

Participants feel that in this type of school, they would find it difficult to remain serene: *"I feel nervous."* (P1/116), and find it difficult to think about one's actions:

> *"I try very hard not to get the blame and not to commit wrongdoings. For example, they make me and sometimes I lose it and sometimes I start shouting at them, and when sometimes I shout at them, the teacher notices me and I get the blame. For example, wrongdoings go unnoticed..."* (P3/121-123)

The latter would feel pressured by other children and feels that he can't control his reaction when he shouts back probably due to his frustration. As a result, he gets into trouble with his class teacher. Similarly, another participant would warn others before losing her temper:

> *"...not because they want to hurt me but two said it and I warned them 'who refers to me as the one with special needs... I'm going to lose it' And at that moment I lost it because of him."* (P5/296-297).

But although she tried warning them, an individual still insisted in labelling her in a certain manner, and she wasn't able to hold back her frustration.

Figure 4.10 The struggle to do well and avoid trouble in a non-ideal school

This type of school environment would make children feel sad and of low morale: *"I feel bad."* (P1/116); *"Sad"* (P2/175); and *"sad… I cry because I wouldn't have any friends."* (P4/137,139). This last quote shows the sadness resulting from the fact that she wouldn't have any friends, and therefore the need to cry to express this sadness.

One participant mentioned his state of worry at this school: *"…I feel sort of worried… I worry that I would not finish something at school, I would not have time to finish it and I stay worrying."* (P1/116,120). He worries that something at school might go wrong, like for example not completing assigned tasks.

Participants would feel uneasy in this school and refuse to attend: *"I wouldn't want to go."* (P2/177); or would prefer to attend another school: *"…I get angry; I would want to go to another school."* (P4/130). Another girl would simply leave: *"I wouldn't stay there, I would leave."* (P5/141). This shows the challenge that these children would have when they would be required to attend a school they do not feel comfortable spending time in.

4.8 Positive sense of being (Theme 7)

The children who took part in this study were asked to think about themselves in their ideal school. They were encouraged to think about what they would be doing and how they would be feeling in the kind of school they would like to attend. This shed light on a positive sense of being in their ideal school and how they would imagine a school experience that would make them feel comfortable.

All participants said that they would feel happy and content about their school experience. They acknowledged that they would be lucky to be in their ideal school where everyone would be happy and they would find help when needed.

> *"I feel lucky, I feel good and helped."* (P1/248)

> *"Good. I would really have fun."* (P2/302)

> *"I feel really good, if I were to be there. I would feel comfortable."* (P3/218)

> *"I feel happy, and wish to remain in this school forever.... I would be excited to be here."* (P4/231,235)

> *"Everybody would be happy."* (P5/283)

> *"They wouldn't say that you have special needs because you would have an LSA… I think that if they had to stop telling me that I would be happy. I would be happy and would attend every day."* (P5/290,292)

These statements were indicative of their need to enjoy school and the stress-free experience that would allow them to look forward to being at school with others.

Worrying stresses out these children at school. In their ideal school they would not need to worry about what might happen: *"There wouldn't be any fighting... when I pass my exam... I wouldn't have to stay thinking, for example about why my friend left me… Everything is fine."* (P3/217-220). In this ideal scenario they would feel that they could experience school as other children would: *"You would go to school as the normal kids."* (P5/288).

Having friends and positive relationships ensures a positive experience. The need for nurturing friendships was evident especially with one of the participants: *"...For example they are throwing the ball* [to each other]*."* (P4/227); or *"I would have many more friends."* (P4/278); and *"For example I enjoy making new friends."* (P4/294).
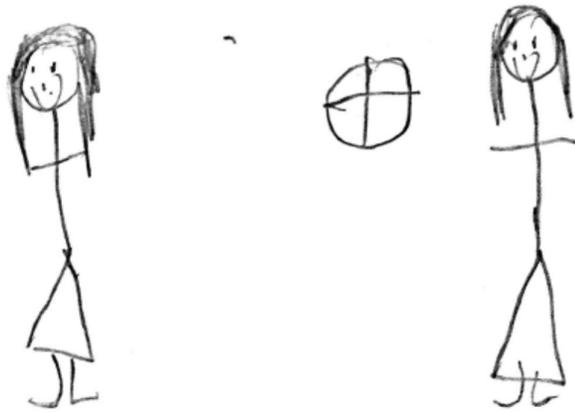
Figure 4.11 Happy and enjoying time with friends

4.9 Creating an ideal school

Data was also gathered regarding children's perception of whether they have any influence in making the school they currently attend more like their ideal school (Figure 4.12). This was gathered from the last part of the interview when participants were asked to rate how far in between, the school they currently attend, is from their non-ideal and ideal school, which are the two extremes of the construct. Responses from participants varied from a sense of inability to make any worthwhile change to a gradual process of starting to bring about change, and to some interesting ideas but which are not within the children's remit.
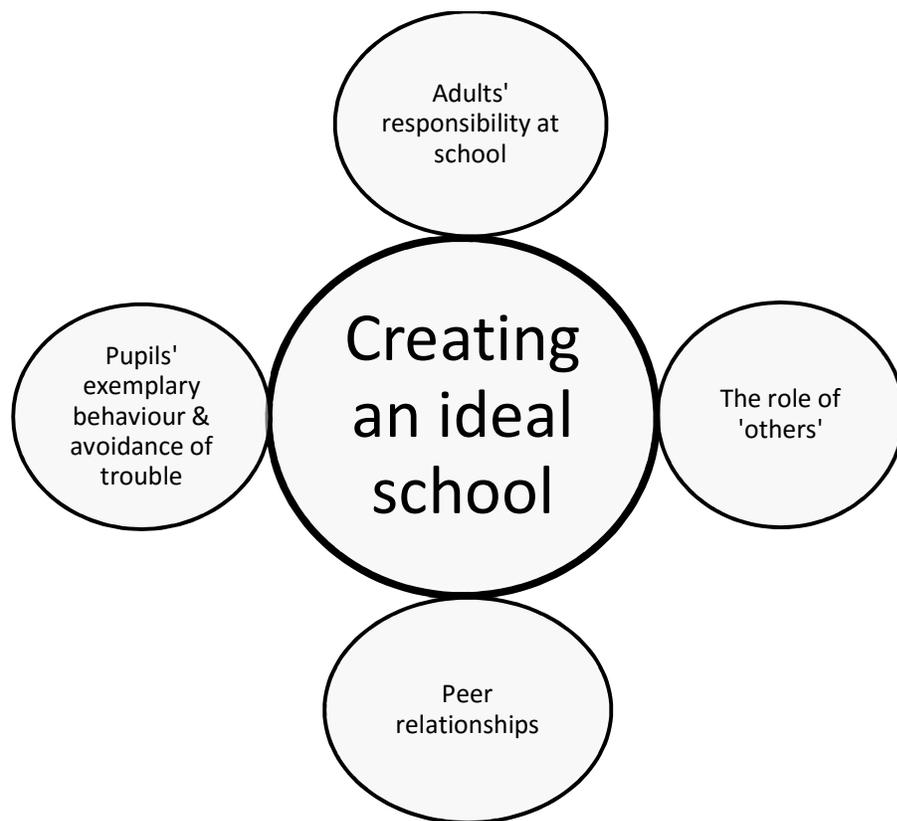
Figure 4.12 Creating an ideal school

4.9.1 Adults' responsibility at school

Children seemed restricted in their thinking that the head of school is the only stakeholder within their school who can bring about change. This was not tied down to one particular head of school, so it is not related to a particular school, but seems to be a common understanding amongst the participants. One boy said: *"Everything depends upon the teacher, the head of school."* (P2/329). He feels that the adults in the school, namely the teacher or head of school, are responsible for the functioning of the school. Another participant had some ideas about making the school look nicer: *"I will tell the head of school to, for example, make a garden, there will be some empty space and he creates a garden."* (P4/286-287). However, she still felt that it is not up to her to take these decisions: *"I don't know. Because for example that's me, not the head of school."*

(P4/289); since that suggestion was only hers and not of the head of school. Putting himself in the head of school's shoes, another participant would make sure that children respect each other and if necessary use disciplinary measures to ensure order: *"If I were the head of school, I would have separated them, whoever gets involved in fights would get a warning…"* (P3/245-246). Another boy acknowledged that the head of school is the person responsible to make change happen in school, but was more persistent and would keep on insisting for change:

> *"I would have told the head of school 'I want to change'. If he says no, I would imagine it at home and then would write it down somewhere and would write all that needs to be changed and would show it to the head of school again. He would say yes and I would tell him how to do it…. I would bring him a list, write down all that needs to be changed, show him, and tell him how I want it."* (P1/337-339, 344-345).

Highlighting adults' responsibility of contributing towards a better school experience for students, this participant further noted that adults must look back at their childhood and learn from their experiences:

> *"When they grew up into adults and became teachers, they remembered when they were laughing at this girl, and then became friends and did not laugh at them anymore… First you start as students and then become adults and realise what you have done."* (P1/283-284, 286).

With past experience and knowledge, teachers hold the key to guide students to learn from their mistakes, thus empowering them with the necessary skills to take better decisions.

4.9.2 Pupils' exemplary behaviour and avoidance of trouble

Setting a good example through one's behaviour could be an initiative taken up by children that might influence others to behave more like the children in the ideal school. One participant valued the importance of taking responsibility for one's actions at school and encouraging his peers to act in a positive manner: *"I have to try to tell them to do*

good things rather than bad ones. I would try telling them, without scaring them, just warn them that if they do not behave, we'll all end up in trouble. " (P3/241-242). By doing so in a gentle way, this boy hopes to help other children understand the consequences of their behaviour, since the approach used by authority figures in school does not always work: *"...even though the master of discipline, or the head of school came, they still remained acting in the same manner."* (P3/244).

Leaving school would not solve problems: *"...because if you leave school, that's not a nice thing to do, you will not solve everything."* (P3/286-287). One could instead try to avoid trouble by taking a step back when issues could potentially escalate: *"...I must try not to move. I must not fight and not lose it."* (P2/363). Similarly: *"...if the leader shouts at me, zip so that I do not cause problems."* (P3/287-288). This should only serve to avoid trouble and not to withdraw from a groupwork task: *"...I would not say anything, but still participate with the group, I would not take notice of what the leader is saying..."* (P3/289-290). Through this approach, there is the possibility of moving a step further and setting a good example for children who might be causing trouble at school: *"...I would tell the leader what could happen in the future and convince him. I could also show him good things, not bad ones, for example to laugh at positive things not negative ones."* (P3/291-293). This participant felt that there is a limit to how much one can influence others at school, and the best thing that a student can do is to take initiative in making the school look more like the ideal school: *"Mostly I'm aware of how I can be good at school, but still I'm not that good, I'm not really there, imagine if I really was there."* (P3/293-295).

4.9.3 Peer relationships

The relationships that children form between themselves is another crucial aspect that participants felt could help make their school more like their ideal school. This is not always up to each child to control, but involves the idea that all children should be inclusive. Being with others, learning together, making friends and maintaining friendships are main aspects of improving peer relationships to be more like the ideal school. The importance of learning and playing with others was mentioned by one participant: *"…friends who don't let you play; I will change it here because during P.E. everybody can play."* (P1/267-268); and *"Over here* [non-ideal school] *you are learning on your own… now not on your own, you learn with others."* (P1/276,278).

Another girl thinks that she has a degree of control over influencing the school and would try to include other children during play: *"I play with them"* (P4/292); and make new friends: *"I enjoy for example making new friends."* (P4/294).

4.9.4 The role of 'others'

Participants were also able to think imaginatively in some instances and gave further ideas of how the school they currently attend could become more like their ideal school. However, the ideas that will be presented in this sub-section depend on others, mostly on individuals in authoritative positions who take decisions.

One participant imagined that a complete overhaul is needed to replace the school with a 'good' one: *"They would replace this building with something that will be similar, instead of it being like this and have bad things, we'll change it… everything different, it becomes*

like this, brand new." (P1/300-302). This could potentially signify a desire for a complete change in the learning experience. It is difficult for this participant to imagine a change in his current school unless all negative influence is cleared in order to allow for a positive learning environment. He also mentions building another school rather than changing this one: *"Instead of changing this school, I would build another one, another nicer one."* (P1/348). It seems that it would be easier to build a new one rather than change his current school.

Another participant mentioned some changes to the school building and layout that would make her school appear more attractive: *"There will be a garden here."* (P4/272); and *"...there will be a pool..."* (P4/276).

Participants mentioned the behaviour of other individuals at school. This continues to emphasize the limited influence participants feel they have in changing their current school. One participant mentioned having more friends: *"...I will have more friends."* (P4/278). Although, as evident in the previous sub-section, this participant said that she would like to make new friends, this last quote further indicated that having friends also depends on others maintaining the friendship. Another child is not comfortable with his teachers and friends in the current school: *"I wish that these friends that I had here* [ideal school] *will be in my class, the teachers that I had there* [ideal school] *come here."* (P2/346-347). One boy talked about the attitude of children in his school that would need to change: *"Others must stop fighting...that they forgive each other...we show respect..."* (P3/265-266); similarly, another participant said: *"...those children shout for no reason, sometimes they shout, sometimes they speak to you..."* (P5/313-314). They are referring to an approach across the whole school and a change in children's attitude that cannot be achieved by a sole individual.

4.10 Summary

Data gathered through the interviews elicited participants' views about the school, adults and children by moving between the non-ideal and ideal constructs. Interpretation of this data served to understand what is causing these children to feel anxious about school. Furthermore, participants were also invited to imagine themselves at both ends of the constructs, while allowing them to think about how the schools they attend can be modified to help reduce their anxiety.

Reference was made to the school features and curriculum, for which two themes were dedicated. When analysing the children's transcripts however, these factors featured to a limited extent when compared to the material gathered within other themes. Participants sought good classroom management with the teacher using an authoritative approach with learners, and an environment that is motivating for children to spend a school day in.

What seemed most meaningful for the participants were the adults and children in school, especially highlighted in the theme related to values and ethos. The relationship with teachers and children had to be a positive one for the children to feel comfortable at school. Participants felt that they needed to be treated as individual learners, and their needs be acknowledged through a child-centred approach to teaching. Respect also commonly featured in the children's accounts, both towards adults as well as towards children, with a lot of discussion centred around inclusion, the teacher's professional responsibility, and the values that individuals bring with them to school. Children also presented their constructs relating to challenges that affect their learning readiness at school, whilst exploring their own positive sense of being at school.

The participants felt that whether their school can become an ideal one does not always depend on them. In fact, they perceived the adults in the school to be responsible for bringing about positive change in school. In order for children to experience their ideal school, adult responsibility must be accompanied by healthy peer relationships.

CHAPTER 5 – DISCUSSION

5.1 Overview

This chapter discusses the implications of the data gathered through the interviews with children that took part in this study. These children were identified as displaying anxiety relating to attending school but did not have a formal anxiety diagnosis. There is no attempt to extrapolate the findings to every child who might experience school-related anxiety, but simply to try and understand what the school constructs of an anxious child might be through these participants' realities. These findings relate to the central research question posed. They will be considered in light of previous research in related areas. In view of the gap in research that exists in this area, as outlined in the Literature Review, this study will demonstrate a link to a wider research base, as presented in the second chapter. These findings will be linked to previous research that look at both managing anxiety in schools and the use of PCP with children in schools, and the 'ideal' educational measures for children. The study will be evaluated through reflections on the research process and ethical considerations, followed by commentary on trustworthiness. Reflexivity and the impact and role of the researcher in this research will also be discussed. Finally, the implications that this study has for EP practice and the wider educational system will be presented. This will also include guidelines for future research as identified by the researcher.

5.2 Discussion of the findings

In the previous chapter, the school constructs of the participants were presented and related to adults, children, the school building and classroom, and their imagined self

within each of their non-ideal and ideal schools. Furthermore, accounts of how they felt that the school they currently attend could become more like their ideal school were illustrated, including their views on their own and others' contribution to this process of idealising their school. These constructs will be discussed below in light of the study's research questions.

Central research question:

"What are the school constructs of children whom adults describe as anxious?"

Sub-questions:

i.   *What are these children's constructs of their ideal school?*

ii.   *What are the differences, if any, between the school they would not like to attend, and the school they would like to attend (their ideal school)?*

iii.   *Do the children think they have any influence in making their own school more like their ideal school?*

5.2.1 What are anxious children's constructs of their ideal school?

This section will discuss the first sub-question and will look into the constructs that are representative of anxious children's ideal school, as outlined in the previous chapter.

One of the most important themes that emerged from this study relates to the values expressed by children. These anxious children tend to feel comfortable in situations in which they have an element of control, situations in which they know how to react. Kelly's (1991) fundamental postulate of PCP is based on the person as a scientist and how one is able to anticipate events. This means that an individual's personality enables that person's approach of making sense of the world (Bannister & Fransella, 1986).

Participants in this study expressed their need for a caring environment at school and the presence of teachers who show a loving attitude towards them. The teacher-student relationship is therefore at the forefront of an anxious child's model of their school. This valuable relationship between a student and teaching professional in school is also in line with the findings presented by Cullen and Monroe (2010); Hardman (2001); Wearmouth (2004); and Williams and Hanke (2007). This positive relationship also emerged from the children's construct of how a teacher does their job. They appeared to respond very well to teachers who appeared to be dedicated to their work and who manage to engage children in the learning environment.

Anxious children might find it difficult to express their needs due to worrying about the adults' response. Furthermore, they encounter difficulties in social skills and self-esteem, areas that Truneckova and Viney (2008) addressed in their group intervention with primary-aged children. Even though interpersonal skills can be an issue with anxious children in schools, as a result of their anxiety, having teachers who are ready to support their individual needs and understand them is an asset. These children appreciated when teachers were kind, reached out and showed interest in their work by supporting them when they felt they could not work unaided. The benefit of teachers assisting children in voicing their concerns is in line with Wearmouth's (2004) findings regarding the importance of promoting students' self-advocacy in their own learning.

Anxious children tend to feel more comfortable around children who share similar values and qualities. This is another finding that emerged from this study and indicates the positive results that altruism amongst children can generate in view of the positive relationships created. DeLucia-Waack and Gellman (2007) and Riley (2012) found that children's anxiety levels improved partly due to peer group support. Similarly, Maxwell's

(2006) findings report a positive or negative perception of school experience by students as being affected by peer relationships. When children are allowed space to talk about their anxieties a reduction in their anxiety levels was noted, suggesting that these children were comfortable with others in their peer group. The findings here indicate similar tendencies towards lower anxiety levels in children when they feel they belong within a wider circle of friends. Kindness, respect and similar learning abilities are characteristics that, according to the children's accounts, foster such relationships.

Participants felt that respect must also be shown towards adults in school, as well as children. Children have a duty to allow teachers to do their job and deliver lessons without being hindered by students. Empathising with the teacher as a professional as well as a person was evident in the data gathered, thus highlighting the need to respect and view the teacher as a person too. It is a student's duty to attend class, as opposed to skiving lessons, and thus living up to the respect towards adults and other children, while contributing to the learning relationship in class. Similarly, Williams and Hanke (2007) presented findings on the ideal school which would involve pupils who respond well, join in a range of activities, and hand in their work.

Lee, Statuto and Kedar-Voivodas (1983) reported that in their study children perceived their school to share their values. As presented in the previous chapter of this thesis, this was also referred to when participants talked about their ideal school. The participants would feel comfortable attending a school that shares common values of altruism while accepting persons with different individual needs. Anxious children would be able to engage in a positive learning environment that is more tolerant of their needs, and therefore helping them to belong to the school.

The curriculum is one of the environmental factors likely to cause anxiety in children. Anxious children perceive the curriculum structure as being too rigidly fixed within the classroom and not allowing adequate time for activities outside of class. Research findings by Maxwell (2006) indicate that social activities at school were perceived by children to be more important than learning ones. Activities outside of class, including more time spent during P.E. lessons, and during break time, as mentioned by participants of this thesis, can contribute to lessen the stressors that anxious children encounter at school. With a school environment that is less anxious as a result of creating more time for what children enjoy doing, they might be better prepared to engage in learning at school. This assumption is based on Maxwell's (2006) research that showed that students are a rich source of information about their school and the way the school met their needs.

Children who feel anxious at school could also be experiencing negative emotions that relate to the physical building and environment around them. Certain features like pathways, playground facilities, a garden, attractive signage, limited stairs and controlled incoming sunlight were also mentioned. Having a welcoming school environment is in line with a number of Williams and Hanke's (2007) features of an optimum school (e.g. access to natural light, access to playground facilities). This is also true with children's perceptions of their classroom. Findings also indicate the need to have nicely-designed classrooms that are not cramped and moreover, match their likings and values. Again, these are similar to Williams and Hanke's (2007) findings of classroom features.

The level of security of a school must be balanced out with the feeling of restriction and confinement within it, especially with children who are already anxious about being in school. Restricted entry must be ensured for the children's own safety, but not at the expense of creating further anxiety for the children. Having a safe environment is in

conformity with health and safety regulations, however with the ongoing repairs and refurbishing required in schools from time to time, the attractiveness of a school might be compromised. This is not helpful for anxious children who tend to worry, even irrationally. This indicates the need for less stringent security measures, while ensuring a safe learning environment for these pupils.

The amount of work given by teachers to students to complete at home can create a negative impression of learning for students, if it limits children's engagement in extra-curricular activities. This is again in line with Maxwell's (2006) findings. This is also related to work carried out in class, and the demands that are placed on children to engage in learning at school.

What do children see as the professional role of adults in their ideal school? Teachers may adopt an authoritative approach, while establishing discipline and earning respect from their students. Anxious children feel comfortable with teachers who live up to this expectation, as opposed to those teachers who practice a rigid disciplinarian teaching approach. This causes anxious children to worry excessively about how the teacher is going to react to any mistakes they might make. In their ideal school, participants in this study imagine teachers who would not shout at students, either in class or during breaks. Anxious children can be very sensitive especially when a teacher shouts, even if the shouting is not directed at the child. This is similar to Williams and Hanke's (2007) finding of children attributing optimum behaviours of adults as not shouting or being angry. Williams and Hanke (2007) found that children wanted to be rewarded for appropriate behaviour, something which was also highlighted in the children's ideal school constructs in this study. Teachers in the ideal school would be encouraging children, sharing positive comments about them and rewarding their strengths.

Belonging to a group has been found to be beneficial to children and reduces their anxiety levels (DeLucia-Waack & Gellman, 2007; Riley, 2012). Similarly, participants in this research wanted to share time and play with other children in their ideal school. They feel that children should enjoy themselves when playing together, and accept diversity. Celebrating an inclusive schooling environment would make children interact better, including making others feel welcome, or supporting children who find it difficult to engage in learning. By accepting that all children have something to offer and experience different realities, children will experience a more inclusive approach at school. Hardman (2001) found that by focusing on children's positive qualities, they tend to experience a better self-image, therefore contributing to more inclusivity at school.

Children were asked to think about what they would be doing and how they would be feeling in their ideal school. This process ultimately allowed the children to imagine what it would be like to be at school without facing anxiety-provoking situations. This generated numerous positive emotions that can be associated with a positive self-image at school. They reported that they would be happy and enjoying school without having to worry about anything that might go wrong, since the environment and individuals around them would not cause them any distress. This is in line with Willaims and Hanke's (2007) findings of the children's constructs of their ideal school. Furthermore, the children's relationships with adults and children will be such as to promote positive well-being at school. This agrees with Cullen and Monroe's (2010) and Maxwell's (2006) findings on the importance of relationships with peers and adults respectively.

5.2.2 What are the differences, if any, between the school they would not like to attend, and the school they would like to attend (their ideal school)?

This section will explore the opposite ends of the children's school constructs. The discussion will be about the type of school that they would not like to attend.

Not knowing the pupils

Participants referred to teachers in the school they would not like to attend as not being interested in whether children are engaged in learning or whether they are understanding the teacher's explanation. Children want to be engaged in the learning process, but find it difficult if they feel that the teacher is detached from the children's learning abilities and simply focused on delivering a lesson. Anxious children feel constrained and challenged when they perceive teachers in their non-ideal school as unhelpful, confrontational and failing to meet their learning needs. This is highlighted in Williams and Hanke's (2007) findings about children's view of ideal teachers as ones who would know them.

Emphasis of negative episodes

Getting punished or blamed for other students' misbehaviour is something that anxious children would experience in the type of school they would not want to attend. Many times, teachers might not be aware of every episode that occurs in class and therefore are not able to make informed decisions, resulting sometimes in unfairness towards some students. Anxious children worry that they will get the blame or get shouted at for something they would not have done. Furthermore, consequences used when students do not carry out their work, even when this involved too much writing, makes them feel under pressure and anxious to complete their work in order to avoid negative consequences rather than to learn from their work. This is indeed unhelpful for an anxious

child since it might reinforce anxiety in avoiding negative consequences rather than completing a task for the sake of learning. Wearmouth (2004) makes reference to the importance of dialogue between students and members of staff as this allows the child's perspective to emerge and contribute to a better understanding of the child's needs.

Participants feel that wrongdoings come to light and are acted upon by adults with more frequency than appropriate and desirable behaviours are. This implies that teachers would not always act in the best interest of children and do not keep the child at the centre of their work. Children have different needs, and anxious children need to be understood and provided with a safe space. However, their construct of a school they would not want to attend involves teachers who would not try to listen to children and maybe rush to inappropriate conclusions that may not reflect the latter's needs. This would create further anxiety as the child would feel misunderstood. This is also the case for those children who make an effort to do well and do not feel stimulated by the teaching material provided in class.

Lack of respect

The opposite end of the construct to children sharing similar values and qualities, are children who cannot be trusted and who spread rumours about other children. It is not only children who cannot trust them, but also teachers who end up having their authority challenged at times. Lack of respect through aggressive acts towards the teacher does not foster a healthy relationship with adults in school. This does not help the anxious child feel comfortable in school, and neither does this behaviour help the teacher to display the professional role that anxious children desire. Amongst these distractions, data indicates that when children shout in class, this creates further anxiety for those children prone to this emotional difficulty. This is in line with Williams and Hanke's (2007) finding of

pupils wanting a quiet environment in an ideal school. Children would find it difficult to follow the teacher's explanations and the lessons in general. Furthermore, when children chat in class, apart from creating a challenging situation for the teacher to deliver the lesson, they are also hindering other children's learning due to distractions and noises that make listening to the lesson a challenge. The lack of respect amongst children themselves is an issue too, since they blame each other or engage in bullying behaviour, creating further concern amongst anxious children who feel that they are disrespected and not understood by their peers.

Being left out

Anxious children wouldn't want to be excluded from activities, experience bullying or get involved in violent behaviour at school. Since children with anxiety are more prone to viewing situations negatively (Stallard, 2009), they might be more predisposed than children who are not anxious to seeing themselves as victims of bullying. Moreover, they would want to avoid situations involving violent behaviour or rough play amongst their peers. In this kind of school, anxious children are troubled by others who verbally offend their teachers. They feel as if some children can get away with this type of behaviour, and as a result feel inadequate to cope with these situations. Feeling inadequate and having a low self-esteem might make situations at school more challenging for an anxious child who is trying to build positive relationships at school. This is the opposite end of the construct of inclusion as presented in the previous section, since as Hardman (2001) pointed out, a positive self-image is needed to foster inclusion.

Limited motivation

Children were asked to imagine what they would be feeling and doing in the kind of school that they would not like to attend. Findings had a lot in common with how children

114

felt in Williams and Hanke's (2007) imaginary non-ideal school. Participants felt challenged in this type of school and would find it difficult to learn or be actively involved in school. Lack of motivation to participate and learn as well as having a low morale were other feelings that were brought up. One would struggle to learn and would not feel comfortable drawing the teacher's attention to his/her needs. By the fact that children would feel challenged and uneasy in this type of educational setting, they are giving the message that it is not their natural environment. They are not able to fit into this reality, since it does not complement their needs and abilities. This is in line with Lee, Statuto, and Kedar-Voivodas' (1983) findings in which children did not feel that the school was supporting the emergence of their social competence and aspirations.

The type of school that these anxious children would not want to go to instils frustration in them, and difficult-to-control emotions when faced with anxiety-provoking situations like being bullied into engaging in unacceptable behaviours at school. This also gets them into trouble with their teacher. One participant talked about times when he tried to stand up for himself and got blamed for his inappropriate reactions.

Feeling anxious makes these children more prone to worry (Stallard, 2009), one of the negative feelings mentioned by participants in this study and in line with Williams and Hanke's (2007) findings. This state of 'worry' is related to completion of work at school, indicating further that the anxiety is being caused or intensified by factors that are external to the child, and in this case school-related.

These children's constructs call for a wider evaluation of child anxiety than looking solely at children's irrational beliefs (DeLucia-Waack & Gellman, 2007), and assumes for a moment that there can be something rational about a child's anxiety that might be related

115

to the environment, as can be noted from the constructs presented by the participants of this study. Participants presented their perceptions of school-stressors, for instance those related to their relationships with adults and their peers, the process of learning at school and teachers' role in it, the shared value-system and school ethos. Even if it is difficult to draw a line between anxiety caused by irrational beliefs or that caused by one's environment, these findings indicate that it may be less anxiety provoking for a child to attend a school in which they face fewer stressors.

5.2.3 Do the children think they have any influence in making their own school more like their ideal school?

This third sub-question will discuss the data gathered from participants' perceptions of whether they have enough influence in making the school that they currently attend more like their ideal school. After drawing and talking about their non-ideal and ideal schools, they were asked to rate where their current school is in comparison to their ideal and their non-ideal schools. They were also asked what they or others can do to make their school become more like their ideal school.

Participants felt that they have limited opportunity to contribute to making the school they currently attend more like their ideal school. Much of the responsibility lies with other individuals, including the head of school, and other children who attend the school. The head of school is perceived to be a prominent person in school and has the highest authority to bring about change. Children felt that the head of school, together with the teachers are responsible for change in the running of the school. This reasoning seemed to indicate that the participants do not feel able to bring about change unless through the adults in the school. However, one participant noted that he could keep persisting in

voicing his opinion to the head of school regarding what is best for the school. Interestingly, Maxwell (2006) pointed out that students are a rich source of information about how the school can meet their needs. Further data revealed the need for other individuals representing the school's authority to support structural changes to the school building or a completely new school and make it look more welcoming to children.

Children's responsibility comes into play by setting exemplary behaviour and influencing other children to be more like children in their ideal school. Taking ownership of bringing about change by creating good communication channels with peers can foster a respectful community amongst the children. This could reduce the need for involving adults in settling behavioural issues. Even though trouble cannot be eliminated completely at school, determination to avoid this trouble also came across. The more inclusive the children's community is, the better would the peer relationships be, making way for more positive and less anxious situations between students themselves (Maxwell, 2006) and between students and staff (Cullen & Monroe, 2010).

5.2.4 The school constructs of anxious children

The previous sub-sections illustrated the school constructs of children described as anxious. The children in this research study valued the importance of the teacher-pupil relationship and the mutual respect between them. Relationships amongst peers themselves featured amongst the participants as part of a positive school environment and also to serve to maintain a common value system and inclusive approach at school. Moreover, participants perceived the authoritative and professional role of teachers, who allowed for the individuality of pupils to emerge, as another factor in these children's school construct system. Whether teachers respond mostly to children's achievements or

rather to negative episodes can also serve as an enhancing or diminishing factor in these children's anxiety. Finally, having a positive self-image is what contributes to these children's reassurance and ideal experiences when being at school.

5.3 Critical evaluation of the research

This study explored children's constructs of school. It gave a voice to anxious children by basing the findings on their own school constructs. The children involved were described by adults as experiencing school-related anxiety. The focus was primarily on looking at children's perceptions of the school environment and relationships with adults and peers, from a Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) theoretical viewpoint. This approach assumes that children make sense of their own world based on their personality (Kelly, 1991). This research acknowledged these constructs as the participants' realities, with anxiety-provoking situations falling outside their construct system. What might seem irrational for some, might have a deeper meaning for others. Therefore, the fact that this research is based entirely on children's constructs, making it truthful and meaningful for the children themselves, recognises that it might be different for another set of individuals based on their own life experiences.

This alternative way of looking at school-related anxiety in children is central to this research and highlights its uniqueness in the local context. As research further below suggests, the Maltese educational system can be potentially anxiety-provoking and links closely to some of this research's findings, such as the important role that teachers have in supporting children with school-related anxiety and the limitations in the curriculum. It is a call for professionals working with children to respect and explore a child's construct system. This allowed the researcher to listen to the participants and to accept

what was presented as the children's understanding of how they can function best at school.

Anxiety and depression are the most common mental health difficulties found in Malta (Callus, 2012). Due to the lack of natural resources, a lot of pressure is placed on children to achieve and do well at school. This pressure adds up when examinations approach as parents want their children to be the best. Portelli (2011) concluded that students in their final year of schooling are stressed due to high amount of academic work during the year. Teachers recognise this stress caused by academic activities (Gauci, 2008) and feel they are restricted by the national education system from being more proactive in the prevention and management of pupil stress. This reinforces the need for a more diverse curriculum that recognizes children's strengths and a positive teacher-pupil relationship to reduce the experience of anxiety at school.

Giving prominence to the child's voice in this study adds to the quality of the data since it is coming from children themselves. However, a number of limitations could also be identified. A diagnosis of anxiety did not carry weight in this study since this would have probably indicated a general form of anxiety and not school-specific. Selecting children with a diagnosis had the potential of excluding children who are feeling anxious about school but do not carry a diagnosis. Furthermore, a number of professionals are likely to be working with children who are diagnosed with anxiety and an intervention may already be underway. It acknowledged that children may feel anxious at school for a variety of reasons (e.g. relationship with adults or peers, value system at school, limited inclusion) without carrying a formal diagnosis. Using PCP to understand the participants' realities also meant that being an anxious child at school might not necessarily mean that there is

something abnormal with that child, but the problem could also lie within the environment.

As a researcher, I do recognise the value of the research had it also looked beyond the children's constructs. It might have been useful to have also collected the views of their parents, teachers and other professionals on how school could have been more adapted to the children's emotional needs. This could have generated larger amount of data that might have been useful in the wider educational context, but it would not have embraced Kelly's (1991) theory, and therefore was not deemed necessary in this research. In fact, PCP's philosophical assumptions are based on constructive alternativism (Bannister & Fransella, 1986) which even though it does not argue against the collection of information, affirms that truth is not measured by the size of the collection.

An assumption in this study is that an ideal school for a child with anxiety is less anxiety-provoking, while a non-ideal school can be quite an anxious environment for the child. The participants weren't asked specifically about what causes them to feel anxious at school. However, even if such a direct question was asked, the researcher would be relying on adequate verbal abilities of these young participants to conceptualize anxiety in school.

One could argue that a limitation of this research is its sample size. Even though, initially I had planned to interview 8 children, only 5 interviews were held. Since I was searching for children who were described as anxious by professionals, this might have created some ambiguity over which children would fit my recruitment brief. Although it seemed to me that schools have a number of children who experience anxiety, especially those who refuse to go to school, this perception did not materialize into my initially planned

sample size. Apart from the possible ambiguity mentioned above, this could also be due to professionals, like psychologists, being asked to get involved at a point when it is emotionally challenging for the child. This meant that not all anxious children who might have been known to psychologists working at SPS were emotionally ready to participate in this research. This was the case for one of the potential participants, who was having a difficult time and, in discussion with the psychologist involved, the interview kept being postponed until it was not possible to involve this boy due to research timeframes. Moreover, I had to discontinue another interview due to what I perceived to be heightened levels of anxiety from the boy during the initial parts of the interview, deciding it would not have been in the best interest of the boy to continue. I also encountered two parents who refused their permission for their children to take part in the study for personal reasons. Thus from a potential 9 interviews, it was only possible to carry out interviews with five of the participants. However, the data gathered from these participants was very rich and conclusions about the aims of the research could be drawn.

Extending the request for identifying participants for this study beyond the psychologists working at the school psychological service and include schools' senior management teams might have generated a larger sample size. This approach would have also included children feeling anxious at school and for some reason would not have been referred to SPS at the time of the data gathering phase of this research.

The use of a qualitative measure of data gathering served to ensure the exploration and understanding of children's school constructs within their own reality (Bradley, Curry, & Devers, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Miller & Crabtree, 1992). Another limitation of this study is the lack of generalizability of the findings which is one of the disadvantages of qualitative research (Atieno, 2009). This is due to the sample size

and the nature of the emotional difficulty explored, meaning that the conclusions made based on the data gathered is meaningful for the participants of this study and cannot be generalised to other children experiencing school-related anxiety.

As with any other method of data analysis, the process of thematic analysis posed certain challenges which needed to be carefully resolved to avoid data contamination by the researcher. One of the major obstacles I found was the temptation to project one's own values or ideology onto the participants. Adhering strictly to the theory underpinning this research, which is based on PCP was a continuous reminder to allow for the emergence of each participant's reality. Furthermore, data was continuously checked with participants during the interviews through paraphrasing. Since data was gathered in the Maltese language, and had to be translated into English for the purpose of this thesis, interpretation was inevitable. To avoid researcher bias while interpreting, a teacher fluent in both Maltese and English, was asked to check for any data inaccuracies in the interpretation process by interpreting the interview raw data into English and comparing to the researcher's interpretation.

The children might not have felt comfortable sharing certain thoughts about their teachers or peers with myself, being somebody whom they hadn't met before. Since they were prone to being anxious, they could have worried too much on how their constructs could be interpreted by the researcher. Furthermore, finding it difficult to use verbal expression or drawings to share their constructs could have limited the type of data presented. Children were aware that they were being audio-recorded, and even though they were assured of anonymity, they might have decided to omit certain comments about individuals.

5.4 Ethical implications

Throughout the research, care was taken to protect the young participants' psychological well-being. A number of steps were taken to protect the vulnerability of the children, as explained in the Methodology chapter of this report (e.g. their well-being, informed consent, confidentiality) and in line with the ethical approval from the University of East London (Appendix 18) and the Ministry for Education and Employment in Malta (Appendix 19). Furthermore, regular supervision with the researcher's professional tutor was sought to ensure that any emerging concerns were discussed and managed.

Consent was obtained from parents and children themselves after they were given an overview of the research process. The first contact with parents was made through a telephone call, during which an explanation of how their child was selected and what participation in this research would entail. Information letters (Appendix 1) and consent forms (Appendix 3) were then sent to parents, and these included the researcher's contact details for ease of communication in light of any clarification issues. In view of the small size of the Maltese community, parents and children were reassured that interview data and drawings will be kept anonymous and the researcher will ensure that they will not be identifiable. This was the main concern raised upon meeting the participants and their parents, but their anonymity was constantly reassured. No other concerns were raised. Those parents who did not give permission for their children to participate were thanked and assured that this would have no negative implications for the child.

The professionals who had referred the participants for this research were kept updated about the process without divulging unnecessary information about the data. The suitability of the interview for the anxious child was discussed and they were also

informed when data gathering was completed and if the researcher had any concerns about the child's emotional state that might require follow-up by the professional concerned. Interviews were also carried out in settings where immediate support was easily available if the need arose (as outlined in the research risk assessment), for example at schools or at the School Psychological Service.

5.5 Ensuring a trustworthy research

Standards employed in studying a phenomenon are required as proof that the research reaches a certain level of quality (Mertens, 2010). The validity of this study is what Creswell (2009) refers to as the accuracy of the findings being checked by the researcher by employing certain procedures, while reliability refers to a consistent researcher's approach across different researchers and projects (Creswell, 2009). A number of validity procedures employed in this research are discussed in the Methodology chapter of this thesis. Ensuring testimonial validity through paraphrasing and encouraging the participants to comment on their drawings helped the researcher to maintain objectivity and allow the children's reality to emerge.

Trustworthiness of qualitative research is put under scrutiny by positivists since issues of reliability and validity cannot be addressed in the same way that they are in quantitative research (Shenton, 2004). A number of writers of research methods, for example Silverman (2001) and Silverman and Marvasti (2008) have demonstrated how these issues can be dealt with in qualitative research. Guba (1981) used different terminology to address the quality in qualitative research, and presented a set of criteria that compare to reliability and validity in quantitative research: 'credibility', 'transferability',

'dependability', and 'confirmability'. Guba and Lincoln (1989) added 'authenticity' for qualitative research.

Credibility refers to the internal validity of the findings and that the study is measuring what is actually intended. Merriam (1998) stipulates the importance of having findings that are congruent with reality. It was important for the researcher to check data constantly with the participant by summarizing and paraphrasing. Furthermore, participants were asked to explain their drawings to avoid any misinterpretation by the researcher. In order to ensure honesty (Shenton, 2004), participants were reminded that participation was optional, therefore ensuring that the study involved only those who were genuinely willing to take part. Peer scrutiny was ensured through feedback offered from the researcher's supervisor as well as from a teacher who was engaged for this purpose.

Transferability, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) refers to the criteria that researchers use to compare the research to their own. Due to the small number of participants in qualitative research, as is in this research, it is impossible to demonstrate that the findings are applicable to other situations and populations. Bassey (1981) argues that if the practitioner believes their situation to be similar to that described in the study, then they may relate the findings to their own position. Guba (1981) suggests a description of the context of inquiry, while Mertens (2010) argues that transferability is achieved through a 'thick description' of the researcher's field experience. Evidence about this is provided in section 3.5.1, which provides an account of the data gathering process.

Dependability and confirmability are related to the evidence around the conclusions made. Lincoln and Guba (1985) link credibility and dependability since the former also ensures the latter. Confirmability is ensured through the researcher's objectivity in the

study. Miles and Huberman (1994) postulate that acknowledging the researcher's position is a key to ensure confirmability. This will be discussed in the next section, 5.6. Furthermore, in order to address dependability and confirmability more directly, an audit trail was devised (Appendix 10) that is testimony of a transparent process of the stages involved in this research.

Authenticity, or transformative criteria as referred to by Mertens (2009), addresses issues of social justice and human rights. Lincoln and Guba (2000) described authenticity as a platform for providing a balanced and fair view of all perspectives in the research. This research is highlighting the child's voice by the way the data was gathered. Through a Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) theoretical standpoint, the children's constructs are the data behind the findings of this research. This also contributed to ontological authenticity, which according to Mertens (2010) is the degree to which the individual's conscious experience of the world becomes more informed. The interview process helped the participants become more aware of their school constructs. Furthermore, catalytic authenticity was ensured through the process engaged in to answer the third research sub-question.

5.6 Reflexivity

When engaging in qualitative research, there is the inevitable subjectivity of the researcher. Sword (1999) postulates that: 'no research is free from biases, assumptions, and personality of the researcher and we cannot remove the self from those activities in which we are intimately involved' (p. 277). It has therefore been necessary to employ certain strategies and be reflexive throughout my research to attend to my characteristics as a researcher and allow the conclusions of this research to emerge as objectively as

possible. Reflexivity enabled me to be critically reflective on the knowledge produced, and my role in producing that knowledge (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Berger (2015) pointed out the importance of:

> *'...turning the researcher lens back onto oneself to recognize and take responsibility for one's own situatedness within the research and the effect that it may have on the setting and people being studied, questions being asked, data being collected and its interpretation.'* (p. 220).

I was not familiar with the children's experiences and therefore was 'a stranger in a strange land' (Berger, 2015). The children were empowered throughout the interviews and were treated as the experts in their own lives and experiences. Even though this lack of experience as a researcher presents its own challenges (Fawcett & Hearn, 2004), I was not totally new to the situations presented to me, in view of my employment as a TEP within the School Psychology Service in Malta. This helped me comprehend the children's experiences from similar past professional encounters.

During my work experience, I have noticed that a change in environment-related stressors (e.g. a change in teacher, classroom, school, or time spent at school) always had an effect on the amount of anxiety experienced by a pupil. I can recall a child whose anxiety at school improved when he went up a year group and had a different teacher; and another pupil who refused to attend school, asking to start attending a different school. Thus my work experience has probably taught me to look at situations holistically and consider querying the relationship between the environment and the individual before looking at within-child factors. I was aware of my position vis-à-vis anxiety caused by the school environment and tried to avoid letting it contaminate my data by being objective throughout the interviews. I made it a point to stick to the interview scripts whilst focusing on the children's experiences and avoid prompting by asking questions using their own language or directly about their drawings.

My role as a TEP also presented the potential challenge of dual role conflict with the participants. Upon meeting the participants and their parents, with whom I had not been professionally involved previously, I clarified my sole role as a researcher to explore the children's constructs for the purpose of my research. This was necessary to eliminate any misconceptions that the parents might have expected out of my involvement.

A reflexive attitude was also maintained by keeping a log of my research process. Details about the research process can be found in the Methodology chapter. Frequent supervision sessions with my academic and professional tutor at the University of East London were crucial for me to review and discuss my position as a researcher. Finally, peer consultation, involving discussions about the coding and interpretation of themes, was carried out with my University colleagues through professional support groups.

5.7 Opportunities for further research

The findings of this study contributed to understanding the realities of anxious children and the challenges they are facing at school. The research was carried out with children who are attending state schools in the Maltese educational system. The findings presented are not absolute truths, and one must recognize them in light of the local educational culture. Exploring the children's constructs of school through Personal Construct Psychology was a useful way to portray the child's voice. Professionals in the educational system must allow themselves to listen to how children would like to be helped. The constructs elicited from the participants shed light on what matters most to children feeling anxious at school. Even though one cannot assume that these constructs are common to other anxious children, the exploration carried out in this study was pertinent

to bring to light that children are experiencing the same educational context through their own individual realities.

As discussed earlier, recruitment of participants wasn't an easy task and posed a limitation on this study. Gathering a larger sample size, would generate more data, and probably raise further issues that may be a problem for anxious children. Furthermore, employing a mixed-methods approach could serve to make the data more generalizable to the wider population. This approach will probably distance itself from the construct-based eliciting method employed in this research, since individual constructs cannot be generalizable.

Anxious children's views about school can be contrasted with the perceptions that professionals at school or the children's parents have about the cause of their anxiety. It would be interesting to compare the awareness that professionals have about their students or that parents have about their children.

Longitudinal studies could be used to investigate the likelihood of a reduction in anxiety levels following identification and removal of anxiety-provoking factors at school that would have been explored with the child.

Exploring the children's constructs of how a school would be ideal for them can be applied with other vulnerable groups of children or even with children who do not encounter any special educational needs. This will encourage a promotion of the child's voice in presenting the best way that children can learn.

5.8 Implications for EP practice and the wider educational context

This study has implications for Educational Psychology as well as for the educational context in Malta. It calls for a cautious outlook on children who are feeling anxious at school, even if they do not carry an anxiety diagnosis. It is vital to understand how elements in the educational system can be anxiety-provoking to a child and work towards a child-centred educational system by designing education around children's needs rather than vice versa. An Educational Psychologist (EP) can work with stakeholders involved to keep the child motivated to learn in a nurturing environment. Giving space to the child's voice and advocate for their needs is one of the roles of an EP in this regard.

These anxious children seem to relate in a very positive way to peers who foster similar values of an inclusive nature. Children's actions and behaviour are a reflection of society, and therefore the education system reflects the country's constant challenges. The multidisciplinary and systemic work that EPs carry out with caregivers and professionals outside of the educational system must continue to be part of the role an EP adopts in casework.

The relationships between school professional staff and children, and between children themselves is another key factor to a meaningful educational experience. Certain comments made by the participants raise questions of whether there exists a healthy relationship between children and staff in schools. Children experience anxiety stemming from the teachers' role in their educational experience. This raises a number of questions related to the teacher's role. Is it because the teachers feel pressured to complete the curriculum that their relationship with the children is perceived by children to be less important? Do teachers feel they receive adequate input during their professional training

on working with children with varying educational needs, including anxiety? Is the educational system truly allowing teachers to work in a child-centred manner? Gauci (2008) noted that teachers do feel restricted by the system to support students' emotional well-being. Furthermore, teachers feel that they do not receive enough training and awareness to support students under stress at school (Gauci, 2008).

Furthermore, one may also question whether children are showing respect towards teachers and towards their peers. The need for EP involvement seems to be needed to offer supportive sessions to teachers directly to support children at school. But, due to the limited number of EPs in the local educational context, this might not always be possible, especially in the immediate future. The involvement of EPs during teacher's professional training is important as well as the link that EPs can maintain with teachers through consultation. The local context constrains the EP to work in an assessment-driven approach, which could be beneficial to each child assessed but not so much to the wider educational system. The educational system needs the EPs to employ a consultation model of working in order to empower the professional staff in schools to work with children with a variety of educational needs, including those with anxiety. Working more closely with staff in schools will potentially enhance efficiency in the EPs' work and reach out to a larger number of children, whilst having longer term benefits in the whole educational context.

The reality that a child experiences at school can impinge on their perception of themselves in school. As evident in the findings, a child who attends a school that instils anxiety in them, gives rise to many negative feelings and may result in low self-esteem. On the other hand, high self-esteem can be encouraged by being in a school which instils positive feelings in children. EPs need to promote children's positive self-image, by

acknowledging that each child experiences education through their own lens of reality. Theoretical frameworks such as Personal Construct Psychology can be useful tools in helping children explore their constructs, thus contributing to a positive sense of self.

5.9 Concluding remarks

This research has contributed to the knowledge that exists about children experiencing school-related anxiety. It has attempted to provide evidence on understanding children's anxiety through Personal Construct Psychology and findings are based on the children's construct system of school. As Kelly (1991) stated, constructs are different amongst different individuals, therefore the findings in this study must be seen as such. This can also serve to inform EPs and professionals working in the educational system to understand the role that the school environment can have in an anxious child's reality.

 Amongst the anxious children who participated in this study emerged the importance of relationships at school. The teacher-student relationship was an important factor in these children's ideal school. These children value the adults in school who teach in the children's best interests, while understanding their needs and keeping them engaged in learning. An environment in which children are respectful toward adults in school and towards their peers is also ideal for them to learn. This contributes towards an inclusive environment which is based on similar shared values amongst individuals. An authoritative approach in class is appreciated by these anxious students, since maintaining discipline ranks high in the type of school they would like to attend. Furthermore, being recognised and rewarded for their achievements in a number of areas serves to motivate children in their learning.

A positive disposition towards learning is generated from a happy outlook of school, whilst enjoying learning at school. This is opposite to the other end of the construct which portrays the anxious child as lacking motivation and feeling frustrated and unable to control emotions.

Finally, this study should serve to give a voice to this vulnerable group of children who might not always feel empowered to share their needs. Parents and school professionals need to listen to the children's worries and, together with professional support, identify what makes a learning environment an ideal one for them. If the educational context is catering for the children's needs including what is important to them, it is more likely that children will participate willingly in their learning environment.

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APPENDIX 1 – INFORMATION LETTER FOR PARENTS

Dear Mr / Ms _____,

I am writing to tell you about a study that is being conducted by myself within Maltese state schools. I am a second year student at the University of East London, UK, following a Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology.

My research is entitled: *My Ideal School: A Personal Construct Psychology approach to understanding the School Constructs of Children described as Anxious.* I am currently selecting participants for this research, which will comprise of children of either gender who attend state schools, are aged between 7 and 11 years, and would have been described by a professional as experiencing some form of anxiety at school. Since your child fulfils these criteria, he/she has been selected as a potential participant.

Participants will be invited individually for 1 or 2 one-hour sessions with the undersigned, during which they will be asked to draw and comment about the type of school they would not like, followed by their ideal school. The sessions will either take place at the school they attend, or at the School Psychological Service, wherever is more convenient for yourselves and your child. Children's consent will also be sought at the beginning of their first session, and a copy of their signed consent will be provided.

Should you wish that your child takes part in this study, kindly complete the attached consent form, and return it in the self-addressed envelope provided. I would like to point out that my role will be strictly that of a researcher for the purpose of the study mentioned. Should the researcher note any support that your child might require, guidance will be provided on referral for a relevant professional. In the case that you confirm interest in this study by signing and returning the consent form, and your child is not selected for the study, they will be offered the opportunity to attend a group session that could benefit their response to anxiety at school.

If you require any further clarification or would like to set up a meeting, kindly contact me. (Contact details provided on the attached consent form).

_____
Keith Pirotta
Psychology Assistant
School Psychological Service

APPENDIX 2 – INFORMATION LETTER FOR PARENTS (Maltese version)

Għażiż/a Sinjur/a _____,

Qiegħed niktiblek din l-ittra sabiex ninfurmak dwar riċerka li ser inkun qed immexxi fl-iskejjel tal-gvern f'Malta. Ninsab fit-tieni sena ta' Dottorat fil-Psikoloġija, bi speċjalizzazzjoni fl-edukazzjoni u fit-tfal, fl-Università ta' East London.

Ir-riċerka msemmija hija ntitolata: *My Ideal School: A Personal Construct Psychology approach to understanding the School Constructs of Children described as Anxious.* Bħalissa qegħdin jiġu identifikati l-parteċipanti. Dawn ser jinkludu bniet u subien li jattendu xi skola tal-gvern, li għandhom età bejn is-7 u 11-il sena, u li mil-lat ta' professjonist, ikunu jidhru anzjużi, speċjalment l-iskola. It-tifel/tifla tiegħek intgħażel/intgħażlet biex jipparteċipa/tipparteċipa f'dan l-istudju.

Il-parteċipanti ser ikunu intervistati individwalment darba jew darbtejn, għal xi siegħa kull darba. L-intervista ser issir mir-riċerkatur imsemmi hawn taħt, u ser tkun tinvolvi tpinġija u kummenti fuq it-tip ta' skola li ma togħġobhomx, segwit mill-iskola ideali għalihom. Dan l-eżerċizzju jista' jsir kemm fl-iskola jew fl-i*School Psychological Service*, skond il-kumdità tagħkom. Il-kunsens tat-tfal innifishom li jieħdu sehem f'din ir-riċerka, ser tingħata importanza fil-bidu tal-ewwel laqgħa. Tingħataw kopja tal-kunsens iffirmat mit-tfal tagħkom.

Jekk tixtiequ lit-tifel/tifla tagħkom jipparteċipaw f'din ir-riċerka, tistgħu timlew il-formola ta' kunsens, mehmuża ma' din l-ittra u tibagħtuha lura fl-envelop ipprovdut. Importanti li tkunu tafu li r-rwol tiegħi ser ikun dak ta' riċerkatur għall-għan ta' dan l-istudju. F'każ ta' xi diffikultà emozzjonali evidenti fit-tfal, tkunu ggwidati fejn tinsab l-aħjar għajnuna professjonali għat-tifel/tifla tiegħek. Jekk tkunu interessati li tipparteċipaw u għal xi raġuni, it-tifel/tifla ma jkunux magħżula, ikollhom l-opportunità li jattendu ma' grupp li jkun immirat biex jgħin lit-tfal iwieġbu b'mod aħjar kif jaffaċċjaw l-ansjetà fl-iskola.

Jekk għandkom xi diffikultà, jew teħtieġu aktar informazzjoni, tistgħu tikkuntattjawni permezz tad-dettalji li jidhru fil-formula tal-kunsens.

_____
Keith Pirotta
Psychology Assistant
School Psychological Service

APPENDIX 3 – PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Name of Researcher
Keith Pirotta
Name of University
University of East London, United Kingdom
Title of Study
My Ideal School: A Personal Construct Psychology approach to understanding the School Constructs of Children described as Anxious
Contact details of researcher

✉ keith.pirotta@gov.mt
 ☎ (+356) 21242882
 🖳 Student Services Dept.,
   School Psychological Service,
   Triq Fra G. Pace Forno,
   Hamrun. HMR 1100. Malta

Please read this form carefully. If you are willing to allow your son / daughter to participant in this study, kindly fill in your child's name and school, sign the declaration and fill in the date below. You can use the self-addressed envelope to post this form back. If you do not understand anything and would like more information, please contact the researcher using the above contact details.

- Participation is entirely voluntary.
- My child will be free to refuse to answer any questions.
- My child will be free to withdraw at any time.
- Information about my child will be treated in strict confidence and will not be named in any written work arising from this research.
- I understand that the research will involve between 1 and 2 one-hour interviews with my child, during which he/she will be asked draw and comment about school.
- Interviews will be audio-recorded. The recordings will be used solely for research purposes and will be destroyed after completion of the research. Soft copy of transcripts will be kept for a period of 3 years after finalising the research.
- The drawings may be used as part of the results or discussion section of this research, but in no way will contain details that may identify your child.
- Progress of this research will be discussed with relevant University research staff.

Upon completion of this research, you will be provided feedback on the results of the study. Please tick this box if you **do not** want to receive feedback ☐

A copy of this signed consent form will be sent back to you for you to keep.

I freely give my consent for my son / daughter to participate in this study.

Name & surname of child _____

Name of school _____

Signature of mother / legal guardian _____

Signature of father / legal guardian _____

Date _____

APPENDIX 4 – PARENTAL INFORMED CONSENT FORM (Maltese version)

Isem tar-Riċerkatur
Keith Pirotta
Università
University of East London, United Kingdom
Titlu tar-riċerka
My Ideal School: A Personal Construct Psychology approach to understanding the School Constructs of Children described as Anxious
Kuntatt

✉ keith.pirotta@gov.mt
☏ (+356) 21242882
🖷 Student Services Dept.,
  School Psychological Service,
  Triq Fra G. Pace Forno,
  Hamrun. HMR 1100. Malta

Wieħed għandu jaqra din il-formola b'attenzjoni. Jekk tixtiequ lit-tifel/tifla tagħkom jieħdu sehem f'din ir-riċerka, imlew isem it-tifel/tifla, iffirmaw id-dikjarazzjoni, u niżżlu d-data. Tistgħu tużaw l-envelop ipprovdut biex tibagħtu l-formola lura lir-riċerkatur. Jekk hemm xi ħaġa li mhix ċara u tixtiequ aktar informazzjoni, tistgħu tikkuntattjawni permezz tad-dettalji li jidhru hawn fuq.

- Il-parteċipazzjoni hija volontarja.
- It-tifel/tifla għandhom d-dritt li jirrifjutaw li jwieġbu kwalunkwe mistoqsija.
- It-tifel/tifla huma liberi li jwaqqfu l-involviment tagħhom f'kull ħin.
- L-informazzjoni dwar it-tifel/tifla ser tinżamm kunfidenzjali, filwaqt li fix-xogħol li jagħmlu mhux ser jidher l-isem jew xi mod ieħor kif jista' jkunu identifikati t-tfal li jkunu għamluh.
- Nifhem li l-parteċipanti ser ikunu intervistati individwalment bejn darba jew darbtejn, għal xi siegħa kull darba.
- L-awdjo tal-intervisti biss ser ikun rekordjat. Dan l-awdjo ser jintuża biss għall-iskop ta' din ir-riċerka. Meta titlesta r-riċerka, l-awdjo tal-intervista jintrema.
- It-tpinġijiet tat-tfal jistgħu jintużaw fil-preżentazzjoni tat-teżi, imma ma jkun hemm ebda dettal li bih tinkixef l-identità tat-tifel/tifla tagħkom.
- Ikun hemm konsultazzjoni kontinwa dwar l-iżvilupp ta' din ir-riċerka mal-istaff tal-Università.

Tingħataw 'feedback' tar-riżultat tar-riċerka aktar 'il quddiem meta titlesta u tkun approvata mill-Università.
Jekk ma tixtieqx li tingħata dan il-'feedback', agħmlu salib f'din il-kaxxa. ☐

Kopja ta' din il-formola tintbagħtilkom lura.

———

Nagħti kunsens liberu biex it-tifel/tifla tiegħi jipparteċipaw f'din ir-riċerka.

Isem u kunjom it-tifel/tifla _____

Isem tal-iskola _____

Firma tal-omm / kustodju legali _____

Firma tal-missier / kustodju legali _____

Data _____
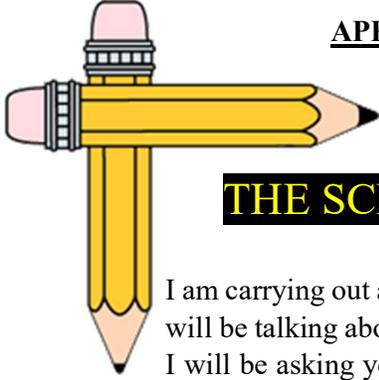
THE SCHOOL THAT I WOULD LIKE TO GO TO

I am carrying out a research which looks at what anxious children think about school. We will be talking about the type of school you would not like to go to and your ideal school. I will be asking you to draw and comment about these. Information will be confidential and although other people may see your drawings, no one will know that they belong to you. Participation is up to you and you can stop at any time.

Researcher: Keith Pirotta _____ (sign)

- I know what I'll be doing during my interview. I would like to take part and draw about school. If I do not feel comfortable drawing something, it's OK and I can choose not to draw.
- I will be asked some questions about my drawing, but if I don't feel sure, I can decide not to reply.
- I can decide to stop my participation in this interview, and I can either tell the interviewer or my parents about this.
- I will meet the interviewer once or twice, for around 1 hour each time.
- Our conversation will be recorded not to forget anything important. The recordings will be used only for this project and will be destroyed at the end of this project. A written copy of our conversation will be kept for three years, but will not refer to my name, so no one will know that it was mine.
- My drawings may be seen by others, but my name will not be written on any of the drawings and nobody will know that they belonged to me.
- If I do not understand anything, I can ask questions.

I would like to draw and talk about what I think about school.

Name of child: ……………………………………………………

Date: ……………………………………………………
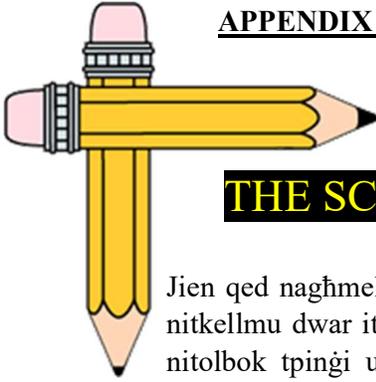
THE SCHOOL THAT I WOULD LIKE TO GO TO

Jien qed nagħmel riċerka dwar tfal li jbatu minn ansjetà u x'jaħsbu dwar l-iskola. Ser nitkellmu dwar it-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha u l-iskola ideali tiegħek. Ser nitolbok tpinġi u titkellem dwar dawn it-tipi ta' skejjel. L-informazzjoni ser tibqa' bejnietna. Għalkemm xi studjużi oħra jistgħu jaraw din l-informazzjoni, ħadd mhu ser ikun jaf min int. Il-parteċipazzjoni hija f'idejk u tista' tieqaf meta jogħġbok.

Riċerkatur: Keith Pirotta _____ (firma)

- Naf għalxiex jiena dieħel b'din l-intervista. Nixtieq nieħu sehem u npinġi dwar l-iskola. Jekk ma nħossnix komdu jien hu npinġi, nista' nieqaf x'ħin irrid.
- Ser inkun mistoqsi dwar it-tpinġija tiegħi, u jekk ma nħossnix komdu nista' ma nweġibx.
- Nista' nieqaf mill-intervista x'ħin irrid billi ninforma lil min qed jintervistani jew lill-ġenituri tiegħi.
- Se nkun intervistat darba jew darbtejn għal xi siegħa kull darba.
- Biex ma jintilef xejn importanti, l-awdjo tal-intervista se jkun rekordjat. L-intervisti se jintużaw għal din ir-riċerka biss. Fi tmiem din ir-riċerka, l-intervisti se jitħassru. Kopja bil-miktub tinżamm għal tliet snin, iżda ismi mhu se jidher imkien biex ħadd ma jkun jaf li kienet tiegħi.
- Jista' jkun li xi studjużi jaraw it-tpinġijiet tiegħi iżda ismi mhu se jidher imkien biex ħadd ma jkun jaf li kienu tiegħi.
- Nista' nsaqsi fejn ma nifhimx.

Nixtieq inpinġi u nitkellem dwar l-iskola.

Isem it-tifel/tifla: ……………………………………………………

Data: ……………………………………………………………

APPENDIX 7 – INFORMATION LETTER FOR HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Mr / Ms _____,

I am writing to tell you about a study that is being conducted by myself within Maltese state schools. I am a second year student at the University of East London, UK, following a Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology. I am employed with the Government of Malta as a Psychology Assistant within the School Psychological Service, Ministry for Education and Employment.

The title of my research is: *My Ideal School: A Personal Construct Psychology approach to understanding the School Constructs of Children described as Anxious.* Following ethical approval to conduct this research by both the University and the Research and Development Department within the Ministry for Education and Employment, I have selected participants for this research, which comprise of children of either gender who attend state schools, are aged between 7 and 11 years, and would have been described by a professional as experiencing some form of anxiety at school. One or more children who attend the school within your remit have been selected as potential participants.

Participants will be invited individually for 1 or 2 one-hour sessions with the undersigned, during which they will be asked to draw and comment about the type of school they would not like, followed by their ideal school. The sessions will either take place at the school they attend, or at the School Psychological Service, wherever is more convenient for their parents and the children. Parental and children's consent will also be sought prior to involvement.

The role of the undersigned will be strictly that of a researcher for the purpose of the study mentioned. Should the interview reveal the need for any further support for the child, the parents will be offered guidance on referral for a relevant professional.

Should you require any further clarification or would like to set up a meeting to discuss this further, kindly contact me.

_____
Keith Pirotta
Psychology Assistant
School Psychological Service
✉ keith.pirotta@gov.mt
✆ (+356) 21242882

Parts 1 and 2 are *Drawing the Ideal School technique* (Williams & Hanke, 2007)
Part 3 is adapted from Drawing the Ideal Self (Moran, 2001)

Part 1: Drawing the kind of school you would not like

    i.   The school

Think about the kind of school you would not like to go to. This is not a real school. Make a quick drawing of this school in the middle of this paper. Tell me three things about this school. What kind of school is this?

    ii.   The classroom

Think about the sort of classroom you would not like to be in. Make a quick drawing of this classroom in the school. Draw some of the things in this classroom.

    iii.   The children

Think about some of the children at the school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these children. What are the children doing? Tell me three things about these children.

    iv.   The adults

Think about some of the adults at the school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these adults. What are these adults doing? Tell me three things about these adults.

    v.   Me

Think about the kind of school you would not like to go to. Make a quick drawing of what you would be doing at this school. Tell me three things about the way you feel at this school.

Part 2: Drawing the kind of school you would like

    i.   The school

Think about the kind of school you would like to go to. This is not a real school. Make a quick drawing in the middle of this paper. Tell me three things about this school. What kind of school is this?

    ii.   The classroom

Think about the sort of classroom you would like to be in. Make a quick drawing of this classroom in the school. Draw some of the things in this classroom.

    iii.   The children

Think about some of the children at the school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these children. What are the children doing? Tell me three things about these children.

iv.   The adults

Think about some of the adults at the school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of some of these adults. What are the adults doing? Tell me three things about these adults.

v.   Me

Think about the kind of school you would like to go to. Make a quick drawing of what you would be doing at this school. Tell me three things about the way you feel at this school.

Part 3: Ratings

i.   We have the kind of school you would not like to go to on the left, and the kind of school you would like to go to on the right. Where would your current school most likely fit on this scale?

ii.   Where would you like your school to be in an ideal world? What would it require to qualify as your Ideal school? What would you settle for?

iii.   Think about your worst school. Where would it fit on this scale? Was it more like the school you would not like to go to? That's a long way from where you want to be.

iv.   Think again about your current school. Tell me three things that others can do to help your school be more like your Ideal school. Tell me three things that you can do next to help your school be more like your Ideal school.

APPENDIX 9 – INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (Maltese version)

L-1 u t-2 parti miġjuba minn *Drawing the Ideal School technique* (Williams & Hanke, 2007)
It-3 parti addattat minn *Drawing the Ideal Self* (Moran, 2001)

L-ewwel parti: Tpinġija ta' tip ta' skola li ma togħġbokx

   i.   L-iskola
Aħseb f'tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi. Din mhix skola vera. Pinġi din l-iskola f'nofs il-paġna. Għidli tliet affarijiet dwar din l-iskola. X'tip ta'skola hi?

   ii.   Il-klassi
Aħseb f'tip ta' klassi li ma tixtieqx tkun fiha. Pinġi dil-klassi fl-iskola. Pinġi xi affarijiet li ssib f'dil-klassi.

   iii.   It-tfal
Aħseb fi tfal fl-iskola fejn ma tixtieqx tattendi. Pinġi xi wħud minn dawn it-tfal. X'qed jagħmlu t-tfal? Semmi tliet affarijiet dwar dawn it-tfal.

   iv.   L-adulti
Aħseb fl-adulti fl-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi. Pinġi xi wħud minn dawn l-adulti. X'qed jagħmlu l-adulti? Semmi tliet affarijiet dwar dawn l-adulti.

   v.   Jien
Aħseb f'tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi. Pinġi xi tkun qed tagħmel f'din l-iskola. Semmi tliet affarijiet dwar kif tħossok f'din l-iskola.

It-tieni parti: Tpinġija ta' tip ta' skola li togħġobni

   i.   L-iskola
Aħseb f'tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi. Din mhix skola vera. Pinġi din l-iskola f'nofs il-paġna. Għidli tliet affarijiet dwar din l-iskola. X'tip ta'skola hi?

   ii.   Il-klassi
Aħseb f'tip ta' klassi li tixtieq tkun fiha. Pinġi dil-klassi fl-iskola. Pinġi xi affarijiet li ssib f'dil-klassi.

   iii.   It-tfal
Aħseb fi tfal fl-iskola fejn tixtieq tattendi. Pinġi xi wħud minn dawn it-tfal. X'qed jagħmlu t-tfal? Semmi tliet affarijiet dwar dawn it-tfal.

   iv.   L-adulti
Aħseb fl-adulti fl-iskola li tixtieq tattendi. Pinġi xi wħud minn dawn l-adulti. X'qed jagħmlu l-adulti? Semmi tliet affarijiet dwar dawn l-adulti.

v.   Jien

Aħseb f'tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi. Pinġi xi tkun qed tagħmel f'din l-iskola. Semmi tliet affarijiet dwar kif tħossok f'din l-iskola.

<u>It-tielet parti: Valutazzjoni</u>

i.   Fuq ix-xellug għandna it-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi, u fuq il-lemin għandna l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi. Fejn tinsab l-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa f'din il-linja?

ii.   F'dinja ideali, fejn tixtieq li tkun tinsab l-iskola tiegħek. Xi trid tbiddel biex tkun bħall-iskola ideali? Biex tikkuntenta?

iii.   Aħseb fl-agħar skola li attendejt. Fejn tinsab l-iskola f'din il-linja? Tixbaħ l-iskola li ma xtaqtx tattendi? Tinsab 'il bogħod minn fejn tixtieq tkun.

iv.   Erġa' aħseb fl-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa. Semmi tliet affarijiet li ħaddieħor jista' jagħmel biex l-iskola tiegħek issir bħall-iskola ideali tiegħek. Semmi tliet affarijiet li inti tista' tagħmel biex l-iskola tiegħek tqarreb lejn l-iskola ideali tiegħek.

Raw Interviews
(Audio data & drawings)

Transcription of audio data
(appendix 11)

Organising comments into
categories according to pre-
established interview criteria
(appendices 14, 15)

Generation of codes
(appendices 12, 13)

Grouping codes into themes
(appendix 16)

Thematic map
(figure 4.1)

Translation / Interpretation
of selected quotes for
'Findings' chapter

Presentation of research
study's findings
(chapter 4)

Discussion of research
study's findings
(chapter 5)
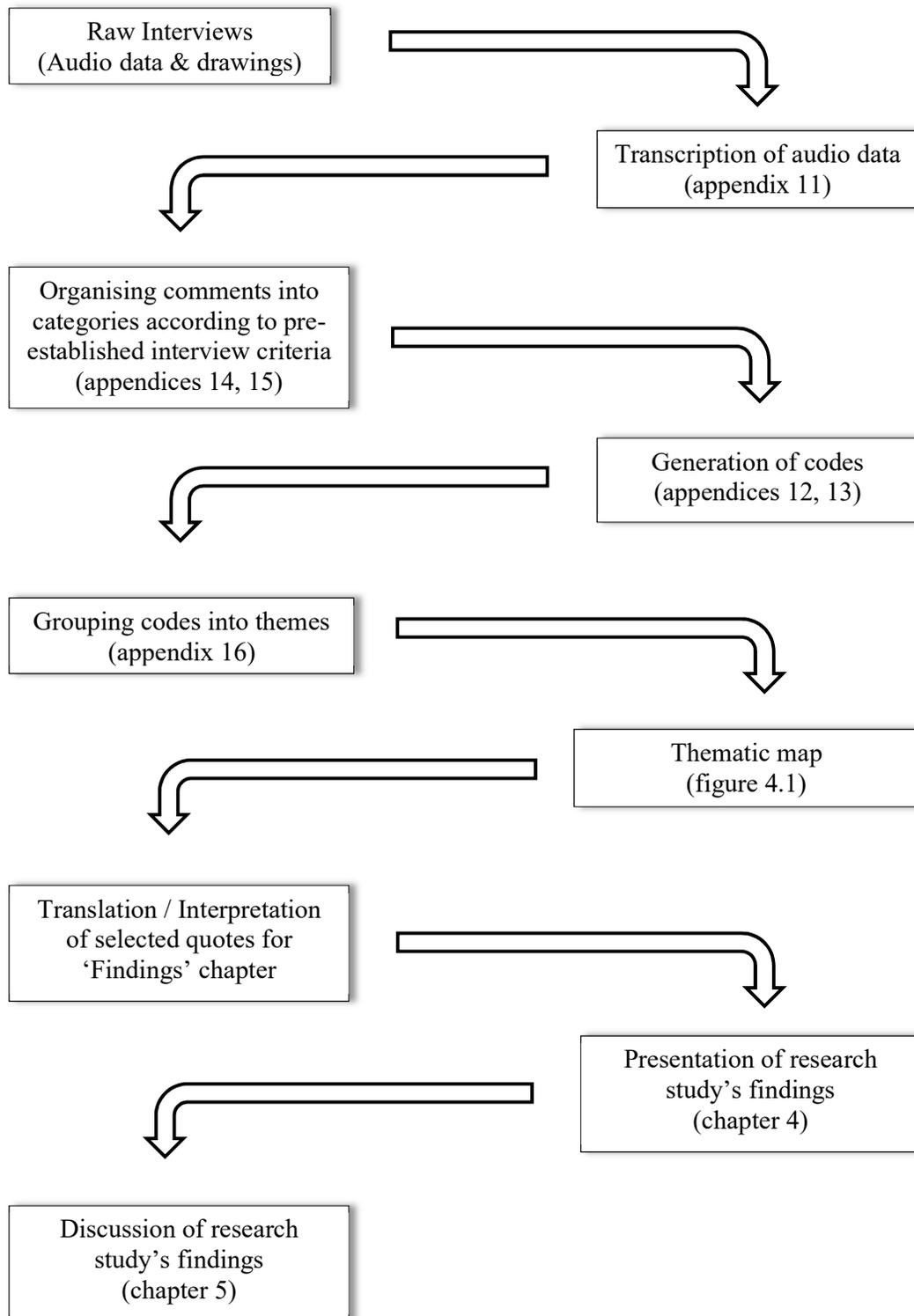
P2 Gary's² transcript

R = Researcher
C = Child

R: Ħa nkunu qed inpinġu u nitkellmu fuq tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi u tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi. Orrajt? Ħa npinġu ftit u ħa nistoqsik xi ftit mistoqsijiet. Tajjeb? ... Tippreferi tpinġi b'lapes jew biro?
C: Lapes.
R: Aħseb f'tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi. Din mhix skola vera, ma teżistix din l-iskola.
C: Kif tkun?
R: Iva. Aħseb ftit f'din l-iskola. Kif tkun it-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi?
C: Nista' npinġi l-iskola tagħna?
R: Pinġi din l-iskola fuq din il-paġna. Din hija skola li ma teżistix. Aħseb ftit f'din it-tip ta' skola.
C: (Ipinġi)
R: Qed tpinġi skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi.
C: L-iskola tiegħi.
R: Tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi.
C: Imma mhux eżatt... Twieqi. Tlieta oħra, imma minn barra... Il-bieb, mhux eżatt ħa npinġih... Lest. Dan il-bieb tas-surmast, minn ġewwa.
R: Il-bieb tas-surmast, minn ġewwa. U dawn x'inhuma?
C: It-twieqi.
R: It –twieqi. Kollha twieqi dawn?
C: Eħe.
R: Orrajt.
C: Dawn taparsi t-twieqi tagħna.
R: Dan, jiġifieri qisek qiegħed tara l-iskola minn quddiem?
C: Iva. Imma iktar kbira.
R: Iktar kbira. OK.
C: U għandha iktar twieqi.
R: Orrajt. Tista' tgħidli tliet affarijiet fuq din it-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha?
C: Ehm.
R: Tliet affarijiet.
C: Ehm. It –teacher.
R: OK. Ejja niffukaw naqra fuq l-iskola qabel it-teacher. Qed nitkellmu fuq l-iskola. Din hija tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi. Pinġejt l-iskola inti. Din it-tip ta' skola, tliet affarijiet fuq din l-iskola.
C: Li jdejquni? Filgħodu.
R: X'jiġri filgħodu?
C: Għax ġieli... darba... noqogħdu nilagħbu futbol, u imbagħad il-Miss li jkun hemm tħallina bilqiegħda hekk niċċassaw u ma nagħmlu xejn. Ikolli aptit nibqa' barra. U... is-surmast idejjaqni ftit. U... dak.
R: X'għandu s-surmast li jdejqek?
C: Hekk, qisu... ma nafx. Ma nafx.
R: Idejqek il-mod kif iġib ruħu magħkom, jew...?

---

² Fictitious name

C: Jgħajjat. Filgħodu ġieli jgħajjat waħda magħna, ma' kulħadd, x'ħin inkunu qed nagħmlu t-talba. U... u... hemm tifel. Ma jħallinix nilgħab dak. Imma issa qed iħallini nilgħab. Qabel ma kienx.
R: Qabel ma kienx iħallik tilgħab.
C: Eħe.
R: OK. X'tip ta' skola hi?
C: X'jiġifieri?
R: Din it-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha, kieku kellek tiddiskrivihieli, forsi f'kelma jew fi ftit kliem, x'tip ta' skola hi?
C: Hmm. Ma nafx.
R: Tixtieq tpinġi xi ħaġa iktar f'din l-istampa?
C: (Ipinġi)
C: Taparsi l-pajp tal-ilma.
R: Tixtieq tgħid xi ħaġa oħra fuq din l-istampa?
C: Le
R: OK. Mela ħa nħalluha hawnhekk din. Din hija tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha.... Ħa nagħtik karta hawnhekk. Nixtieqek tpinġi hawnhekk, f'din il-biċċa t'hawnhekk. Ser inpinġi erba' affarijiet differenti. Hawnhekk nixtieqek tpinġi t-tip ta' klassi li ma tixtieqx tkun fiha.
C: Il-klassi tagħna.
R: Pinġi din il-klassi hawn fuq.
C: Il-klassi tagħna (Ipinġi)
R: Din hija t-tip ta' klassi li ma tixtieqx tkun fiha
C: (Ipinġi)
C: Is-siġġijiet, uwijja nagħmel erbgħa.
R: Tista' tagħmel kemm trid.
C: Għax qegħdin twenty-one.
R: OK.
C: U... il-whiteboard... u whiteboard oħra... interactive.
R: OK? Dik hija t-tip ta' klassi li ma tixtieqx tkun fiha, hux hekk?
C: Imbagħad hemm it-twieqi.
R: Jiġifieri hawnhekk għandek is-siġġijiet, hux hekk?
C: Eħe. Hawn it-twieqi, u mbagħad hawn il-ħajt, hawn il-bieb, u hawn iċ-ċarts mal-ħajt. U mbagħad hawn it-teacher u LSA l-oħra.
R: OK.
C: Nerġa' npinġi siġġu.
R: Orrajt. Hemm xi affarijiet oħra li ssib f'din il-klassi?
C: Ċarts. Kellna teacher oħra LSA telqet imma.
R: OK. Hawnhekk issa pinġi... aħseb ftit fit-tfal li jattendu din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tkun fiha. Pinġi xi wħud minn dawn it-tfal, m'hemmx għalfejn tpinġihom kollha. Pinġi ftit dawn it-tfal...
C: Li jdejquni...
R: Li jmorru f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha
C: Dawk qishom tfal li jdejquni
R: X'ikunu qed jagħmlu dawn it-tfal?
C: Ma jħallunix nilgħab u hekk.
R: Ma jħallikx tilgħab
C: (Ipinġi).
R: Kompli pinġi, issa nitkellmu fuqhom.
C: Imbagħad hemm ħafna iktar
R: OK
C: Qisha bitħa

157

R: Jiġifieri hemm it-tfal fil-bitħa, hux hekk?

C: Eħe. Hawn ħafna tfal... imbagħad dawn titla' żewġ tarġiet, hawn il-bieb, hawn titla' żewġ tarġiet, u hawn il-klassijiet, imbagħad hawn kuritur. Imbagħad din-naħa, fej nitkellmu jiena u Mr **** (psychologist), u nilagħbu.

R: OK. Tista' issemmili tliet affarijiet li jkunu qed jagħmlu dawn it-tfal, li jmorru fl-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi.

C: Ehm, ma jħallunix nilgħab. Dan M, il-barrani, qalli "if you play with me, I don't care". Imbagħad x'jismu, ma ridtx iktar ħbieb u imbagħad qed iħalluni nilgħab. U... emm... darba qaluli "Liar liar, pants on fire" nigdeb.

R: OK, għajruk li tigdeb jigifieri?

C: Iva, dan darba qalli Liar

R: Hemm xi affarijiet oħra li jagħmlu dawn it-tfal?

C: Naħseb Mr **** (psychologist) jaf iktar għax insejt. Ee eħe, li joqogħdu jimbuttawni u hekk. Darba l-futbol qalli t-tackles ħallihom għalija. Imma imbagħad għamilna ħbieb. Konna neżlin għall-brejk u qbadna hekk niċċajtaw. Imbagħad qbadna u għedtilha s-sliding tackles issa nagħmilhom għall-oħrajn. Meta nkunu qed nilagħbu biex noħdilhom il-ballun. U qalli l-isliding tackles ħallihom f'idi mhux f'idek. Int kemm tiskurja biss. Għedtlu le, suppost l-attacker hux.

R: OK, imma dan mhux l-iskola hux hekk? Meta tkun it-trejning?

C: Le, anke l-iskola.

R: Jiġifieri jkun hemm tfal li jgħidulek kif għandek tilgħab? Qed nifhem sew?

C: Eħe.

R: OK. Jekk jiġik f'moħħok xi ħaġa oħra waqt li qed nitkellmu, tista' tgħidli... Issa hawn isfel, nixtieqek taħseb fl-adulti.

C: Adulti?

R: Adulti, jiġifieri t-teachers, is-surmast, mhux it-tfal. In-nies adulti, il-kbar li jkun hemm f'din l-iskola.

C: It-teacher tqabbiżhomli.

R: Pinġi xi ftit, hawnhekk minn dawn in-nies, minn dawn l-adulti.

C: Inpinġi pereżempju it-teacher u nikteb teacher?

R: Kif trid. Tista' tagħmel hekk jekk trid... Pinġi xi ftit dawn l-adulti u forsi xi jkunu qed jagħmlu

C: Ma nafx inpinġi eżatt

R: Ma jimpurtax

C: Hekk... it-teacher... dawk

R: X'ikunu qegħdin jagħmlu dawn in-nies?

C: It-teacher tqabbiżhomli, iddejjaqni. Is-surmast jgħidli, darba kellna 'pygama day' u ma ridtx immur. Din ċemplet lis-surmast, u s-surmast bagħat għalijja biex ninżel ħdejh, ikellmini u qalli "Ejja bil-piġama" qalli "Irrid narak bil-piġama".

R: OK. Ejja nerġgħu mmorru lura għat-teacher. Għedtli tqabbiżhomlok, x'tagħmel it-teacher? Tista' issemmili xi affarijiet li tagħmel?

C: Iddejjaqni, bħal tal-futbol. Twaqqagħni għal giddieb, tgħajjat miegħi. Tgħidli dejjem bin-notes. Hekk. U tal-HW. Pereżempju ma nkunx nafu, tgħidli mhux taqbad u tħallihom barra, tgħidli trid tagħmilhom. U ġieli ma nkunx nafhom, u taqbad question mark u fil-brejk taqbad tgħidli mal-ħajt. Jekk ma nlestihomx illum pereżempju noqgħod għada, jekk ma nlestihomx għada, noqgħod l-għada. Hekk mal-ħajt.

R: OK

C: Pereżempju jekk jimbuttani xi ħadd u nolqot lil ta' quddiemi, u ta' quddiemi jolqot lit-teacher, ta' quddiemi jwaħħal fija, u ta' warajja jwaħħal fija wkoll. U naqla' 'break in'

R: Jiġifieri jwaħħlu fik, hux hekk?

C: Eħe.

158

R: U la qegħdin nitkellmu fuq it-teacher, tagħtik ċans tispjegalha x'ġara? Tisimgħak?

C: Ġieli.

R: Ġieli tisimak u ġieli le.

C: Ġieli, imma iktar le.

R: Iktar le milli iva, jiġifieri ma tantx tisimgħak, hux hekk?

C: Eħe.

R: Hemm xi affarijiet oħra li jagħmlu dawn l-adulti. It-teacher jew is-surmast pereżempju. Forsi tgħidli iktar fuq is-surmast pereżempju.

C: Is-surmast le.

R: Meta semmejtli tal-'pygama day' x'għamel eżatt li dejqek?

C: Għax, u t-teacher ukoll, għax għedtilha nista' niġi casual Miss? Qaltli le għax hi 'pygama day'. U għedtilha ma rridx immur lill-mummy. Fil-karnival meta morna l-iskola, xejn ma lbist ta'.

R: Jiġifieri, ikkoreġini jekk jien żbaljat. Ħa nipprova nara hux qed nifhmek sew. Forsi li ddejqek il-fatt li ridukom bilfors tmorru bil-piġama.

C: Eħe.

R: U int qisek ħassejtek sfurzat li trid tagħmel hekk bilfors?

C: Eħe. Imma ma mortx. Mort casual u imbagħad qlajt għajta min-naħa l-oħra. Mit-teacher għax ġejt casual.

R: OK. Hemm xi affarijiet oħra li tixtieq issemmi fuq in-nies, l-adulti?

C: Le.

R: Issa, l-aħħar tpinġija, għal din il-biċċa... Aħseb fik. Inti xi tkun qed tagħmel f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi? Pinġi lilek innifsek u xi tkun qed tagħmel f'din l-iskola

C: Niċċassa? Ġieli tgħidli 'Fhimt Gary?' Ngħidilha 'iva' u filwaqt ma nkunx fhimt. U ġieli biex naqbad neħles minnha sew għax ilbieraħ mort ngħidilha 'Miss nista' immur toilet fil-brejk?'. Qaltli li ilek tmur sitt darbiet. Imbagħad qaltli 'Mur bilqiegħda' u ma bagħtitnix.

R: Kif tħossok f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi?

C: Imdejjaq.

R: Imdejjaq. X'iktar? Hemm xi...

C: Ma nkunx irrid immur

R: Ma tkunx tird tmur. Għalfejn ma tkunx trid tmur?

C: Ħabba t-teacher. Ehm... dawk. Tgħidli dejjem bin-notes u hekk.

R: OK.

C: Tgħidli 'Inti biss bin-notes hawn'. Tgħidli 'dejjem bin-notes'. Imbagħad l-għada jkun hemm żewġt itfal u jmorru jtuha note u ma tgħidilhom xejn.

R: OK. Qisu jdejjqek dal-fatt li ma tisimgħekx, ma tagħtikx ċans tispjega.

C: Ijja.

R: Hemm xi ħaġa oħra li tixtieq tgħidli fuq dawn it-tpinġijiet, fuq it-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi? Qabel ma nimxu għal xi ħaġa oħra?

C: Le.

R: Kuntent bihom? Mela ħa nagħmluhom hawn għalissa...

Issa nixtieqek taħseb ftit f'tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi. Mhux skola ta' vera, din hija skola li ma teżistix. Imma nixtieqek taħseb ftit fit-tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi u tpinġiha hawnhekk.

C: (Ipinġi)

Tista' tpinġi li trid Gary. Din hija t-tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. Kif tkun din l-iskola?

C: Din l-assistant head... Insejt kif qegħda. Hawn żewġ twieqi u l-kamra ta' barra. Le. Hawn il-klassi. Għax hawn tliet sulari għandna. Inpinġi żewġ twieqi biss.

R: Eħe.

C: Imbagħad hawn klassi oħra. Hekk, għax hawn year 1 u hawn year 2. Għax year 1 u year 2 kienu fl-istess sular, imma ħa inpinġi il-year 2 hawn. Klassi oħra hawn, klassi oħra hawn u klassi oħra hawn. Daqshekk.

R: OK. Tispjegali naqra? Qed tgħidli dawn huma klassijiet hux hekk?

C: Dawn it-twieqi ta' klassi, dawn it-twieqi ta' klassi oħra. Hawn it-twieqi tas-segretarja Hawn, dan l-office ta' ġewwa u dan il-bieb. Dawn hawn żewġ klassijiet propja u tal-year 3.

R: U dawk year 2. OK... Tista' issemmili tliet affarijiet fuq din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha?

C: Ġo din?

R: Iva

C: Kont nieħu pjaċir ħafna ħafna ħafna għax it-teachers ma kinux jgħajtu miegħi. Ftit kienu jgħajtu. Ġie li biex inniżżel il-flus, pereżempju ikollna xi outing, tgħidli, fil-year 1, kienet tgħidli Gary mur agħti dawn lil Ms J. U kont immur intihomla. Fil-year 2, mur agħti dawn lil Ms J. U kont immur. Fil-year 3 ukoll. Kont nieħu pjaċir ħafna.

R: Kienu jqabduk tagħmel affarijiet jiġifieri hux?

C: Kont ngħinha biex inlesti. Tgħidli diġa lest Gary? Tgħidli 'mur ġib xogħlok'. Tikkoreġih Tgħidli 'mur'... pereżempju 'għin lil dak, għin lil dak, għin lil dak u hekk'. Kont nieħu pjaċir. Ġieli qgħadt... kont nieħu ħafna pjaċir ngħin lil tifel fuq wheelchair, nilgħab miegħu, fil-year 2. Imbagħad fil-year 3 kellna teacher oħra, kellna LSA, kellha tifla imma.

R: Jiġifieri l-fatt li kont tgħin lil tfal oħra, kont tieħu gost?

C: Eħe. U ġieli qgħadt qisu... dak li joqgħod itellef, tiktbu fuq il-whiteboard u jkollu 'break in'. Ġieli qgħadt 'break-in' jien.

R: OK. Jiġifieri int tixtieq tattendi...

C: Tgħidli, u ġieli kont noqgħod niċċassa, tgħidli 'kompli Gary'. Ngħidilha 'naħsel miss?'. Tgħidli 'kompli'. Qbadt u tarani nikteb.

R: Int tixtieq tattendi skola fejn ikollok opportunitajiet...

C: Nixtieq nerġa qiegħed f'din l-iskola.

R: OK. Tixtieq tagħmel dawn l-affarijiet meta tkun fi skola li tixtieq tattendi. Aħseb ftit issa hawnhekk fit-tip ta' klassi li inti tixtieq tkun fiha, f'din l-iskola li int tixtieq tattendi.

C: (Ipinġi)

R: Għandna s-siġġijiet hawnhekk, hux hekk?

C: Eħe.

R: Dawn il-whiteboards? L-interactive...

C: Dan mhux l-interactive, dak bil-markers.

R: Orrajt. U dan huwa whiteboard ieħor?

C: Dak l-interactive.

R: Din x'inhi?

C: Il-mejda tat-teacher

R: Togħġbok din it-tip ta' klassi?

C: Eħe. Speakers. Hawn wajer u hawn kaxxa żgħira tas-surround. U t-teacher. Uwijja pinġejtha kbira.

R: Hemm xi affarijiet oħra li ssib f'din il-klassi li tixtieq tkun fiha?

C: Hawn hawn il-bieb imbagħad. U ħafna ċarts.

R: Jogħġbuk iċ-ċarts fil-klassi?

C: Insomma.

R: Tidher ferħan meta taħseb fiha dil-klassi.

C: Daqs kemm kien hemm tfal.

R: X'jagħmlu? Aħseb ftit fihom dawn it-tfal li jattendu din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi.

C: Iħalluni nilgħab.

R: OK. X'jagħmlu dawn it-tfal. Pinġihom ftit. Iħalluk tilgħab, hux hekk? X'jagħmlu iktar dawn it-tfal.

C: Dan mhux żgħir daqshekk (waqt li qiegħed ipinġi).

R: Tista' issemmili tliet affarijiet fuqhom dawn it-tfal. Semmejtli li jħalluk tilgħab, hux hekk?

C: Eħe

R: X'iktar? X'jagħmlu iktar dawn it-tfal?

C: Jekk ġieli waqajt, jiġu jgħinuni.

R: Jiġu jgħinuk. X'iktar? X'jagħmlu iktar dawn it-tfal.

C: Pereżempju din, darba nesit tixtrili d-dqiq għal cooking. Huma kellhom żewġ boroż u, ixxerjajniehom.

R: Jiġifieri tieħu gost meta t-tfal jaqsmu miegħek, jixxerjaw.

C: Eħe. U ġieli imbagħad kien hemm żewġ twins, kienu jiġu jagħtuna, lili kienu joqogħdu jiġru warajja, darba waqqgħuni, u tgħidx kemm ġrejna warajhom lura u waqqajniehom aħna. U kienu jiġru ħafna. Imbagħad qbadna u imbuttajniehom u waqgħu kollha.

R: Jaqbżu għalik.

C: Eħe.

R: Tieħu gost meta kienu jaqbżu għalik.

C: U imbagħad ġieli konna niġru ħafna, l-għaraq iqattar minn wiċċna għax bdejna niġru warajhom. Imbagħad għajjejna u sakkarnihom ġor-rokna. Jien mort niġri minn hawn. Imbagħad dan ġie minn hawn, 'W' minn hawn, 'M' minn hawn, 'K' minn hawn, jien minn hawn u imbagħad l-oħrajn jilagħbu. Lil dak għedtlu itlaq 'l hemm. Għax ħa jweġġgħuk. Mhux biex inkeċċi ta.

R: Kontu tieħdu gost flimkiem hux?

C: Eħe. U meta ma jħallinix nilgħab dat-tifel, issa ngħidlu 'nista' nilgħab'?. Jgħidli 'iva'. Jien xorta bqajt infittxu. Dejjem jgħidli iwa iwa iwa. Qalli meta ma jħallikx tilgħab, ejja ilgħab.

R: Tmur miegħu hux hekk?

C: Eħe.

R: Ejja naħsbu ftit fuq l-adulti issa.

C: It-teachers...

R: It-teachers, is-surmast...

C: Eħe.

R: F'din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha, x'ikunu qegħdin jagħmlu? Pinġi ftit.

C: Ehm. Ms ***. L-oħra Ms ***, *** , u *** (Isemmi l-għalliema)

R: Tista' ssemmili tliet affarijiet li jagħmlu dawn?

C: Kienu jfissduni. Ġieli kellna outing, darba kont insejt il-lunch u imbagħad kellna outing, din niżżlitli l-lunch u imbagħad daqq il-brejk, imbagħad mort ħdejhom, għedtilhom ġiet il-mummy ittini l-lunch. Qaltli 'Iva'. U ġieli nsejt il-HW, tgħidli uwijja ma jimpurtax, u kont nilgħab.

R: Tieħu gost b'dawn l-affarijiet?

C: Kont nieħu ħafna gost.

R: Minn kif kienu jġibu ruħhom miegħek?

C: Eħe. Aħjar mit-teacher tal-year 4.

R: Hemm xi affarijiet oħra li tieħu gost?

C: Le. Il-Madam, ġieli biex noqgħod naqra.

R: Kont toqgħod taqralhom?

C: Eh.

R: Jiġifieri l-fatt li kienu jqabbduk tagħmel.

C: Imbagħad ħadthom id-dar din qalet qisu file, imma għamlitli qisu ħabel, u qabdet u kont noqgħod naqra.

R: Jiġifieri kienu jagħtuk opportunitajiet biex titgħallem iktar.

C: Eħe.

R: Orrajt. Issa, inti tal-aħħar. Xi tkun qed tagħmel f'din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi?

C: Nieħu pjaċir.

R: X'tagħmel iktar? Xi tkun qed tagħmel biex tieħu pjaċir?

C: Boq.

R: Kif tħossok f'din it-tip ta' skola?

C: Hekk orrajt, nieħu pjaċir ħafna. U ġieli darba... jien ma kont ismar hekk, tgħidli fejn mort ġejt ismar daqshekk? Għidtilha 'mort ġurnata Kemmuna Miss'.

R: Jiġifieri tkun qed tirrakkontalhom inti x'tagħmel.

C: Darba din qatgħetli xagħri u qas għarfitni l-Miss. Darba mort bil-punti ġo rasi, qaltli hemm x'għamilt Mastru Gerfex?

R: Kienu jiċċajtaw miegħek jiġifieri ukoll?

C: Għidtilha 'għax kont qed nilgħab il-garaxx tal-kuġin tal-mummy, qbadt kont qed niġri, kont għadni żgħir , Paħħ, u waqajt'.

R: OK.

C: Imbagħad darba għidtilha 'Miss ara x-xemx nieżla fuqna' Għax kienet fuqna, għidtilha nieżla fuqna.

R: OK. Mela għandna l-aħħar biċċa x'nagħmlu. Mela hawnhekk għandek it-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha, tkellimna fuq l-iskola, fuq il-klassi, fuq it-tfal, l-adulti u inti xi tkun qed tagħmel. U hawnhekk għandna t-tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. Għandna qisu żewġ estremi, hux hekk, fejn ma tridx tkun u fejn tixtieq tkun. Issa hawnhekk ħa nagħmillek karta fin-nofs u ħa nagħmillek line hemmhekk. Fuq dan il-line, għamilli sinjal fejn tinsab l-iskola illi tattendi fiha bħalissa, jekk tinsabx iktar viċin 'l hawn jew 'l hawn.

C: X'jiġifieri?

R: Għamilli marka fuq dan il-line jekk hux iktar viċin 'l hawn jew iktar viċin 'l hawn.

C: Liema hu l-aħjar?

R: L-iskola li tattendi bħalissa...

C: Fejn immur... Din in-naħa fejn immur.

R: Issa, f'dinja ideali, f'dinja li tixtieq tkun fiha, f'dinja sabiħa, qisu fejn kollox ikun tajjeb, għamilli sinjal fejn tixtieq li tkun l-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa. Issa, xi trid tbiddel biex l-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa...

C: It-teacher.

R: Tiġi hawn.

C: It-teacher, is-surmast, kollox.

R: Jiġifieri tixtieq ikollok teacher differenti hux hekk?

C: Eħe.

R: U kif tkun it-teacher differenti?

C: Kwieta, kif kont hawn.

R: OK teacher kwieta.

C: U Miss *** (isem l-għalliema) u Miss *** (isem l-għalliema) jibqgħu hawn. U Miss *** (isem l-għalliema) li qisha l-Assistant Head, titlaq.

R: Hawnhekk qed nitkellmu fuq l-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa. Din hija l-agħar skola li qatt attendejt jew ġieli kien hemm xi skola agħar minnha?

C: Le s'issa dik.

R: Jiġifieri din hija l-agħar skola li qatt attendejt. U tinsab 'il bogħod hux hekk minn fejn tixtieq tkun.

C: Din 10, hawn nieħu pjaċir ħafna, u hawn 2 jew 1.

R: Biex din l-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa issir bħall-iskola li vera tieħu gost fiha li vera tixtieq tkun fiha, semmili tliet affarijiet li jista' jagħmel ħaddieħor biex din l-iskola ssir tajba bħal din l-iskola.

162

C: Emmm, it-teachers. Nixtieq dawn il-ħbieb li kelli hawn jiġu fil-klassi tiegħi, it-teachers li kelli hemm jiġu hawn. Kollox li hawn imur hawn.

R: U li hawn hawn qed nitkellmu fuq tfal li jilagħbu miegħek, ikunu ħbieb tiegħek hux hekk.

C: Eħe.

R: Teachers, għidli ftit iktar fuq it-teachers

C: Ikunu kwieti ħafna. Jekk inweġġa kienu jċemplu lil din

R: Jieħdu interess, jikkomunikaw mal-mama`?

C: Eħe. Darba infraġt. Ċemplu lil mummy u qgħadt ħdejn Ms *** (isem l-għaliema) sakemm għaddieli imbagħad baqa' joħroġli imbagħad għaddieli, qaltli qisek ma kellek xejn.

R: Hemm xi ħaġa oħra li jista' jagħmel ħaddieħor biex din l-iskola issir bħall-iskola ideali tiegħek?

C: Le. Eħe dawn jiswoppjaw.

R: L-aħħar ħaġa li ħa nistaqsik. Biex l-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa issir bħall-iskola ideali tiegħek, semmili tliet affarijiet li tista' tagħmel int.

C: Boqq.

R: Aħseb ftit. Tliet affarijiet li tista' tagħmel inti biex l-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa issir bħall-iskola ideali....

C: Li ma niċċaqlaqx, nipprova. Ma niġġielidx u ma taqbiżlix.

R: Qisek tikkontrolla ftit l-emozzjonijiet tiegħek?

C: Nipprova.

R: Hemm xi affarijiet oħra li tixtieq tgħidli?

C: Le.

P3 - Eric[3] – transcript for coding

R = Researcher
C = Child

R: Ser inkunu qegħdin npinġu u nitkellmu fuq it-tip ta' skola li ma togħġbokx, li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha, u t-tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. OK?
C: OK.
R: Mela issa nixtieqek taħseb ftit f'tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi. Din mhix skola ta' vera. Pinġi din l-iskola fuq dik il-paġna.
C: OK. Ħa nagħmel nofsha r-realta` għax fl-iskola tiegħi ġieli jinqala' ħafna problemi, eżempju ġlied u hekk.
R: Int aħseb ftit kif inhi t-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha. U pinġiha hemmhekk.
C: OK. Naħseb u npinġi. Nikteb le? Inpinġi biss?
R: Jekk trid tpinġi u tikteb, tista' wkoll ta.
C: OK.
(ipinġi)
C: Twaħħal bl-Ingliż?
R: Blame?
C: Iva. Thank you.
C: Lest.
R: Tista' tgħidli tliet affarijiet dwar dik l-iskola?
C: Li jdejquni?
R: Eħe
C: Li eżempju t-tajjeb jeħel mal-ħazin. U fil-brejks joqogħdu jiġġieldu, jilagħbu goff, ħafna goff.
R: OK. It-tfal jilagħbu goff fil-brejks?
C: Eħe. Imbagħad jeħilha ħaddieħor li mhux qiegħed jilgħab magħhom, eżempju. Kif fir-realta' ġieli tiġrili l-iskola.
R: OK.
C: U oħra dik. Eżempju t-'teacher' qiegħda tispjega u min ipaċpaċ 'l hemm u 'l hawn, u b'hekk ma nistax nisma' sew.
R: OK jiġifieri għax it-tfal ma jagħtux kas lit-'teacher'?
C: Mhux kulħadd. Hemm min jagħti, hemm min le. Imbagħad hemm min ipaċpaċ waqt il-lezzjoni wkoll.
R: OK. Imma int ma tixtieqx tkun fi skola fejn ikun hemm ħafna tpaċpiċ hux hekk?
C: Le. Fejn hemm nies intelliġenti inħobb jien.
R: OK. Nixtieqek taħseb ftit f'tip ta' klassi li ma tixtieqx tkun fiha.
C: Klassi? Mhux skola.
R: Klassi. Tip ta' klassi li ma tixtieqx tkun fiha. Pinġi din il-klassi li ssib f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha f'din il-biċċa hawn fuq.
C: Klassi jiġifieri Year 5, year 6, xi ħaġa hekk hux?
R: Eżatt. Pinġi xi affarijiet li ssib f'din il-klassi li ma tixtieqx tkun fiha.
C: Eżempju npinġi d-desk u ħaddieħor joqgħod iweġġa' lil xulxin.
C: Ħa npinġi l-'whiteboard' hemm u 'whiteboard' hemm għax aħna għandna 'electronic whiteboard' u wieħed mhux 'electronic'.
(ipinġi)
C: Lest

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[3] Fictitious name

R: OK. Tixtieq tgħidli naqra x'hawn hawnhekk?

C: Tfal fil-brejk, għax l-iżjed li jiġru affarijiet mhux sbieħ, fil-brejk. Fil-brejk huma eżempju jiġru u hekk, imbagħad jekk xi ħadd jaqa', mhux dejjem dik tiġri, xi kultant, jidħku bih

R: Jaqa' xi ħadd bi żball?

C: Jaqa' bi żball u jidħku bih. Eżempju dan xi ħadd joħodlu l-lapes, u l-persuna jrid jerġa' jieħdu u joqogħdu iwaddbuh 'l hemm u 'l hawn, u l-oħrajn joqogħdu jilagħbu bil-lapes tiegħu. Imbagħad ikissrulu, imbagħad ħafna biki u eżempju t-'teacher' tmur f'dik tal-coffee, qiegħda tmur tieħu café, ma tkunx taf x'jiġri. Imbagħad jeħilha kulħadd u mhux sew ukoll. U dak jien m'iniex qed nieħu gost għax joqogħdu jiġġieldu u jagħmlu.

R: Nixtieqek taħseb ftit fit-tfal li jmorru din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha. Pinġi xi wħud minn dawn it-tfal u x'ikunu qegħdin jagħmlu hemmhekk.

C: Li jdejqu lil ħafna?

R: Tfal li jmorru f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha. X'ikunu qed jagħmlu t-tfal.

C: OK. Klassi bilfors jew nista' npenġihom jiġġieldu?

R: Tista' tpinġi lilhom kif trid, fejn trid.

C: (ipinġi) Lest

R: Tgħidli naqta' x'inhuma jagħmlu?

C: L-istess bħal din imma naqra dawk qegħdin joqogħdu jgħajru fuq il-familji, li xi kultant tiġri vera differenti. Issa. U xi ftit jiġġieldu wkoll. Eżempju fil-brejk x'ħin noħorgu barra, ma nafx x'joqogħdu jivvintaw, jien qatt ma nilgħab magħhom. Joqogħdu qishom ħa jaqbdu dan, imma mhux 'catch' vera, qishom qegħdin gwerra jiġġieldu, qishom il-Ġermaniżi vs l-Ingliżi. Joqogħdu eżempju tifel, jaqbdu t-tifel, anke nisa ġieli jieħdu sehem u jiġġieldu, li rari biex issib nisa jiġġieldu wkoll, joqogħdu jweġġgħu xi tifel. Imbagħad hemm min li jrid iweġġa', agħar. Għax eżempju jgħid "Aqbduni, aqbduni". U joqogħdu jaqbduh. U jgħidu "komplu aqbduni", u jkomplu jaqbduh u imbagħad iweġġa', u ħafna biki għax hekk. Ġie li teħilha t-'teacher' ukoll. Mhux fair.

R: OK. Jiġifieri semmejtli tfal li jgħajru fuq il-familji, tfal li jiġġieldu u jweġġgħu. Hemm xi ħaġa oħra li tixtieq tgħidli fuq dawn it-tfal?

C: Eħe. Dawk it-tfal ġieli, eżempju lili, issa dik fuqi wkoll, imma għandha x'taqsam naqra għax jiddejqu ħafna dawk. Lili ġieli, jien ma nafx eżatt għalfejn lili jitilquni, eżempju fil-groups, eżempju meta jiġi tal-PE u hekk, lili jaħsbuni weak u jħallu barra biss lil min hu weak. Imbagħad fil-verita' ma nkunx weak. Jien għax eżempju m'iniex tajjeb ħafna fil-futbol, qabel kont, imma issa le, jaħsbu li jiena m'iniex tajjeb għal sports u hekk. Jien qiegħed nitgħallem il-karate, jiġifieri mhijomx qegħdin jgħidu l-verita'.

R: Jigifieri meta ma jinkludukx għall-isports hux hekk?

C: Eħe.

R: Hemm xi ħaġa oħra li tixtieq tgħidli, jew immorru għal tpinġija oħra?

C: Tpinġija oħra, għax lest.

R: Aħseb ftit issa fl-adulti f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha.

C: Ngħidlek il-verita' ħadd mill-adults m'hu qed idejjaqni imma ġieli jinqala' ġlied bejn 'adult' u 'adult', 'parent' u 'parent'.

R: Inti aħseb ftit mhux biss fl-'adults' li taf inti. Immaġina li din hija skola li ma teżistix. Immaġinaha din l-iskola. Kieku kellek tmur f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tmur fiha inti, x'ikunu qegħdin jagħmlu l-'adults'. Pinġi xi ftit minn dawn l-'adults' u x'ikunu qegħdin jagħmlu.

(ipinġi)

R: Tista ssemmili tliet affarijiet dwar dawn l-adulti?

C: Dawk qegħdin tnejn 'teachers' li qegħdin f'klassi differenti, imma qegħdin fl-istess skola li qegħdin igergru għall-'photocopies' u fil-verita' l-'photocopies' kienet għamlimthom u ġara xi ħaġa fil-printer u dawk iddeċiedu biex jiġġieldu għax għadhom ma ġewx il-photocopies minn eżempju 2 weeks. U l-persuni qed jinkwieta għax mhux

gejjin photocopies għax il-printer bil-ħsara eżempju u anke l-persuna għamel ħażin għax ma qalilhomx li eżempju l-printer ma jaħdimx. Tistennew għal eżempju 1 week oħra.

R: OK. Jiġifieri qed tgħid jekk qed nifhem sew, li jdejquk li qegħdin jiġġieldu bejniethom għax damu ma ġew il-photocopies imbagħad hemm l-ieħor li ma spjegalhomx sew li l-photocopier mhux qed taħdem sew hux hekk? U hemm xi ħaġa oħra li ddejqek?

C: Anke eżempju teachers... issa din m'għandhomx x'jaqsmu 'fightings' u hekk imma għandu x'jaqsam 'teachers' eżempju, tnejn ħa nsemmi affarijiet mhux bilfors fl-iskola tiegħi imma jista jkun li jeżistu vera teachers li eżempju huma flok jispjegawlhom jgħidu ibdew eżempju malajr.

R: Jiġiefieri jagħtuhom ix-xogħol lit-tfal mingħajr ma jispjegaw.

C: U t-tieni waħda eżempju ma jgħidulhomx, ma jtuhomx ħafna 'homework' eżempju, waqt li qegħdin lejliet l-eżami, eżempju 'past papers' xejn. Ituhom xi 2 kotba jew hekk ftit,u ftit wisq ma jkunx biżżejjed biex tistudja għall-eżami. U eżempju ma jtuhomx il-kotba imbagħad tal-eżami. Kif ħa jistudjaw imbagħad?

R: Jiġifieri meta ma jagħtuhomx biżżejjed xogħol biex ikun jistgħu jistudjaw hux hekk?

C: Eħe.

R: L-aħħar tpinġija għal din il-biċċa, nixtieqek taħseb... mela għadna fl-istess skola – l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha. Aħseb ftit, inti xi tkun qed tagħmel f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha. U pinġi lilek innifsek hawn, xi tkun qed tagħmel inti f'din l-iskola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha.

C: Issa jiena mhux dejjem l-innocenti inkun. Għax qabel meta kont il-kinder kien vera jħossni aħjar, ħafna aħjar minn hawn issa. Ngħidlek il-verita' minħabba f'dak l'attitudni u hekk, qed insir nitgħallem minnhom. Jien nipprova minn kollox biex ma neħilx u ma nagħmilx il-ħażen. Eżempju huma iġegħluni u ġieli taqbiżli u ġieli ngħajjat magħhom u ġieli meta ngħajjat magħhom, taqbadni teacher u neħilha jiena imbagħad. Eżempju l-ħażin ma jidhirx imbagħad it-tajjeb jidher qed jagħmel il-ħażin minħabba l-ħażin.

R: Tista' issemmili tliet affarijiet dwar kif tħossok f'din l-iskola.

C: Jien l-iskola inħossni xi kultant tajjeb u xi kultant ħażin.

R: OK. F'din it-tip ta' skola kif tħossok?

C: Xi kultant inħossni tajjeb u xi kultant iħossni ħażin. Skond kif iqumu u hekk. Jiġiefieri kif iħossuhom, dejjem jiġġieldu fil-brejk imma jien ma nistax ngħidilhom "Ieqfu". Mhumiex se jisimgħu minni, m'iniex eżempju l-'king' tal-iskola, m'iniex.

R: Qisek m'għandekx kontroll fuq dak li jagħmlu hux hekk?

C: Eħe.

R: Hemm xi 'feelings' oħrajn li jkollok?

C: Eħe. Il-feeling oħra hija li anke l-ħbieb tiegħi jilagħbu magħhom ma' nies li qegħdin jiggoffaw. Il-ħażin jarawh sabiħ u jidħlu fiha. U jien niddejjaq, u ġieli jitilquni, iħalluni waħdi fil-brejk.

R: Tħossok imdejjaq jiġifieri?

C: Eħe. Imbagħad nagħmel minn kollox biex noħloq game waħdi. Eżempju 'jogging', nipprova nagħmel xi ħaġa 'healthy'.

R: Hemm xi ħaġa oħra li tixtieq tgħidli kif tħossok f'din l-iskola?

C: Iva. Illum niżlu ħafna tfal mill 'Head' għax kienu qegħdin jiġġieldu. Irġiel l-iżjed li jiġġieldu eżempju anke irġiel innoċenti ġieli jaqbdu magħhom. Huma qabdu jiġġieldu u jagħtu bil-ponn. Jien aqqas ħarist lejhom, vera beżżgħuni, mhux beżżgħuni ħadt qata' hekk ta, imma beżżgħuni jiġifieri ngħid "Din l-iskola għandha ħafna 'bullying'"

R: Issa ħa naħsbu ftit f'tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. Din hija skola li ma teżistix, ħa nimmaġinawha din l-iskola. Nixtieqek fuq din il-paġna tpinġi kif tkun din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha.

C: Lest.

R: Tista' isemmili tliet affarijiet dwar din l-iskola?

C: Li hija tajba mhux ħażina. Li togħġobni, li hija importanti għalija li taħfer. Għax kieku kulħadd kien jaħfer ma kellniex daqshekk ġlied u hekk. Ifhimni, impossibli biex kulħadd jaħfer lil xulxin u hekk. Iebsa dik ħafna, eżempju xi ħadd seraqlek ħa nivvinta biljun eżempju flus, ikollok aptit tarrestah malajr. Mhux forgiving biss, love, li nħobbu lil xulxin mhux eżempju jien inħobb lil ħabib tiegħi biss. Irridu inħobbu lil kulħadd, anke teachers jew adulti, irridu nuru rispett ukoll. Imbagħad kindness, inkunu kind ma' kulħadd, mhux eżempju jekk naraw persuna inkunu suppervi, eżempju ikun miġġieled, ikollu problemi mal-familja, xorta irridu nuru kindness. Anke fl-iskola. Kindness, love, forgiving... dawk suppost kullimkien, mhux l-iskola biss.

R: OK. X'tip ta' skola hi din?

C: Skola tal-imħabba. Li rari biex issib.

R: Issa nixtieqek taħseb ftit fil-klassi li tixtieq tkun fiha. Qed nitkellmu fuq l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. F'din il-biċċa nixtieqek tpinġi ftit il-klassi li tixtieq tkun fiha, pinġi xi affarijiet li ssib f'din il-klassi u kif tkun.

C: Anke nies u tfal u hekk?

R: Iktar 'il quddiem ħa nistaqsik tpinġi fuq it-tfal bħal m'għamilna fid-drawings ta' qabel. Jiġifieri li trid tinkludi f'din il-klassi tista tinkludi

R: X'issib fiha din il-klassi?

C: Fil-klassi insib eżempju ħafna kindness, ħafna hekk eżempju lit-teacher ma jwaqqfuhiex mill-ispjega, ituha ċans dejjem tispjega. Fil-brejk eżempju mhux joqogħdu jiġġieldu, joqogħdu jitkellmu fuq affarijiet mhux fil-familja u hekk, jitkellmu affarijiet sbieħ u hekk. Kind, u dejjem juru rispett, eżempju jekk jiġi guest fil-klassi, flok jgħidu " U issa ġie guest" eżempju jgħidulu "Hello" jew dak, juru rispett. Imbagħad jagħmlu ħbieb ġodda.

R: Tajjeb ħafna. Sabiħa tidher dil-klassi hux hekk? OK hawnhekk issa nixtieqek taħseb ftit fit-tfal li jattendu din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. Pinġi xi wħud minn dawn it-tfal u x'ikunu qegħdin jagħmlu.

C: (ipinġi) Lest.

R: Tista ssemmili tliet affarijiet dwar dawn it-tfal?

C: Iva. Kumbinazzjoni tlieta hawn. Mela meta jiġi guest, ġa semmejtha, jagħmlu 'shake hands' jew m'hemmx għalfejn tagħmel hekk, anke tagħmel ħbieb ġodda u tipprova tfehmu eżempju anke jekk ikun 'sick', tgħidlu l-HW jew hekk.

R: Jiġifieri jkunu dħulin hux hekk?

C: Iva. U anke eżempju ta' min hu ġilda differenti, ġilda sewda, ġilda bajdanija, ġilda naqra skura bħal din eżempju, xorta trid tirrispettahom u tagħmel love magħhom, xorta trid tagħmel ħbieb, mhux eżempju jitilquh il-persuna, jista' jkun girl jew boy. Eżempju aħna l-iskola tagħna waħda girl ta' ġilda sewda u xorta nagħmlu ħbieb. Eżempju penġejtu naqra hekk għax m'għandix kulur. U oħra "people that are fat or slender". Slender, mhux slender monstru dan, slender thin jiġifieri, għax hemm dak. Respect and still love them. Xorta tirrispettahom għax m'għandhomx differenza, xorta jibqgħu bnedmin, xorta ħbieb. M'hemmx għalfejn bnedmin biss li tagħmel ħbieb, anke mal-annimali, eżempju.

R: OK. Thank you. Mela hawnhekk ha npinġu, nixtieqek taħseb ftit fl-adulti li qegħdin f'din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. Pinġi xi wħud minn dawn l-adulti hawnhekk u x'ikunu qegħdin jagħmlu.

C: (ipinġi) Lest.

R: Tista' ssemmili tliet affarijiet fuqhom dawn l-adulti?

C: OK kif għedt. Anke short u tall xorta you have to love them all. Issa hemm LSA. Hux LSA tgħin tfal li għandhom bżonn naqra għajnuna? Jiena għandi eżempju. Imma issa qisni nifhem waħdi. Issa dan l-LSA, hu kien jaf li jrid kafe, imma ma setax għax kien qed jikkoreġi fil-brejk, eżempju, u t-tfal jilagħbu barra u hemm xi ħaddiehor jieħu

R: OK. Kindness, hemm xi ħaġa oħra apparti kindness li tixtieq tgħidli fuq l-adulti?

C: Iva. Kieku kelli naqra iktar spazju kont inpenġi adulti ukoll, din kontra.

R: Tixtieq tpinġihom hawn l-adulti l-oħra imbagħad inpinġu t-tpinġija l-oħra fuq wara?

C: OK.

R: X'qed jigri hemmhekk?

C: Hemmhekk, is-surmast kien joqgħod jaħdem ħafna, u issa wasallu ż-żmien biex jitlaq għax xjaħ. Qabel kellna surmast imma issa Head mara. Għax xjaħ, kien old, u qallu "Take a rest għax kien baqagħlu 5 days oħra, eżempju biex jibqa' dak. Imbagħad ried jieqaf għax imbagħad he's getting old and he will be too weak to complete his job.

R: Jiġifieri adulti li jistrieħu qed tgħid inti?

C: Eħe. Inħalluhom jistrieħu naqra għax waslu għaż-żmien biex jiefqu mill-job u waslu f'age...

R: Issa inti. Aħseb ftit inti kif tkun f'din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. Xi tkun qed tagħmel, u pinġi hemmhekk.

C: X'inkun qed nagħmel?

R: Pinġi lilek innifsek xi tkun qed tagħmel f'din l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi.

C: (ipinġi) Lest.

R: Kif tħossok f'din l-iskola? Għidli tliet affarijiet dwar kif tħossok.

C: Inħossni vera tajjeb, li kieku nkun hemm. Inħossni komdu. U jħossni bla ġlied, eżempju meta ngħaddi l-eżami eżempju, ma jkollix x'noqgħod naħseb, eżempju għax il-ħabib telaqni, għax it-teacher dan. Kollox orrajt.

R: Ma jkollokx fuq xiex tinkwieta.

C: Mela. Eħe. Jiena min idejjaqni fil-verita', jiena ma nagħtix kas, inħallih jgħid ħalli imbagħad jieqaf.

R: Hawnhekk għandna t-tip ta' skola li ma tixtieqx tattendi fiha, u fuq il-lemin għandna t-tip ta' skola li tixtieq tattendi fiha. Għandna żewġ estremi, hux hekk. Issa hawnhekk għamiltlek linja. Tista tagħmilli sinjal fuq din il-linja fejn tinsab l-iskola tiegħek bħalissa, fejn tattendi fiha bħalissa.

C: Il-vera?

R: Iva fil-verita'. Fejn tinsab, iktar viċin 'l hawn, iktar viċin 'l hawn? Fejn? Għamilli sinjal fuq dan il-line.

C: Vera nixtieq li tkun 'l hawn, imma fil-verita'...

R: Issa f'dinja ideali, jiġifieri f'dinja fejn nimmaġinaw li kollox ikun tajjeb, kif nixtiequ, fejn kieku tinsab l-iskola li tattendi fiha?

C: Hawnhekk

R: OK. Għamilli sinjal.

R: Xi trid tbiddel biex l-iskola tiegħek minn hawn issir hemm.

C: X'inhi il-question?

R: Mela. Xi trid tbiddel biex l-iskola tiegħek li tattendi fiha bħalissa tkun bħall-iskola ideali?

C: No Idea. Qas naf. Nimmaġina jew kif nagħmilha vera?

R: Aħseb ftit.

C: Irrid nipprova ngħidilhom biex jagħmlu it-tajjeb mill-ħażin. Nipprova ngħidilhom, mhux inbeżżagħhom, nagħmlilhom warning li jekk toqogħdu ħżiena u hekk, nispiċċaw ħażin kollha. U mhux fair ħabba f'hekk għax aħna wkoll ġieli minn din-naħa, b'hekk għedtlek no idea għax minn din-naħa anke ġieli ġie s-sir tad-dixxplina, ġiet il-Madam, xorta baqgħu hemmhekk. Xorta baqgħu jiġġieldu. Kieku kont Head jew Headmaster, kont nifridhom, min jiġġieled kont inwaqqafhom billi ngħidilhom warning u jinfirdu minn xulxin, l-iskejjel jinfirdu, eżempju. Jew ngħidilhom "Għamlu t-tajjeb u l-ħażin ħalluh barra, tagħmluhx qatt", li diffiċli naqra. U nipprova jiena eżempju inpenġilhom

x'jista jiġri fil-futur jekk nibqgħu sejrin hekk. Nixtieq intihom messaġġ, forsi jitilgħu 'l hemm flok 'l hemm. Għax dawn fil-verita' anke qaluli kelma ħażina li ma tgħoddx għat-tfal. U jisimgħu affarijiet mid-dar u jġibuhom hawnhekk li huma ħżiena wkoll.

R: Aħseb ftit issa fl-agħar skola li attendejt.

C: L-agħar waħda?

R: L-agħar waħda.

C: Fil-verita'?

R: Fil-verita'. Fejn tinsab l-iskola fuq din il-linja?

C: X'jiġifieri?

R: L-agħar skola li qatt attendejt, kieku fejn timmarkaha fuq din il-linja? Hawnhekk l-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa.

C: Din l-agħar.

R: OK. Tinsab 'il bogħod ħafna minn fejn tixtieq tkun hux hekk?

C: Iva

R: Issa ħa nerġgħu naħsbu ftit fl-iskola li tattendi fiha bħalissa, li hija din. Semmili tliet affarjiet li ħaddieħor jista' jagħmel biex l-iskola tiegħek issir bħall-iskola ideali.

C: Ħaddieħor jista' jieqaf mill-ġlied. Dik l-ewwel waħda. Two, li jaħfru lil xulxin u nkun 'l hawnhekk, eżempju fin-nofs jekk jibqgħu jaħfru kuljum. Nuru rispett, guests, ġilda differenti, min hu oħxon, min hu irqiq, dejjem. U eżempju meta nagħmlu f'group work, ma naqblux, eżempju l-leader jipprova minn kollox, eżempju hemm leaders ukoll, ġieli jkun hemm leaders fil-verita' ġieli jkunu hekk qishom huma jaħsbu jikkmandaw kollox u jagħmlu anke l-ħażen ġieli. La leaders jaħsbu li jistgħu jagħmlu li jridu eżempju. Għax ġibli hekk, ġibli dak ... fil-groups eżempju, jien naf u int ma tafx, jgħidu ħafna hekk. Mela allura huma iridu iwaqqfu dak, jirrispettaw lil xulxin, jaqblu ma' xulxin, anke jekk ma taqbilx, nippruvaw naqblu lil xulxin u mhux bil-ġlied, bil-kalma. U eżempju jekk inkellmu lil xi ħadd min dejjaqni, bil-kalma, ħalli imbagħad forsi nimxu 'l hemmhekk. U bil-mod il-mod nibdew nimxu għal kind. U issa qegħdin nirranġaw naqra fil-verita'. Meta konna fil-year 3, u fil- year 4 u year 2, ġieli konna niġġieldu agħar mil-lum. Dawk jiena kont f'kinder, differenti minnhom. Għax jiena qabel meta kont fil-kinder kont immur *** (isem l-iskola), u illum *** (isem l-iskola). Jiġifieri huma fil-kinder *** (isem l-iskola) baqgħu mal-istess post u jien iċċaqlaqt il-post. Kien hemm sieħbi kien qalli kollox x'jagħmlu. Qalli kien hemm persuna meta titlaq it-teacher kien jitla' fuq is-siġġu u joqgħod idaħħaq lil ħaddieħor bil-ħażen. U l-persuni mhux suppost jidħqu bil-ħażen. Jidħqu bit-tajjeb. Innaqsu dawk l-affarijiet u mhux sew jekk kulħadd qed jidħaq minbarra persuna, jiġifieri l-persuna għajruh jew hekk. U irid ikun hemm nuqqas minn hekk ukoll ħalli jkollna 'friendship' u ħafna 'respecting' u għajnuna.

R: Hemm xi affarijiet li inti tista' tagħmel biex l-iskola tiegħek li tattendi fiha bħalissa issir bħall-iskola ideali?

C: Jien nista' nagħmel li, għax hekk li titlaq l-iskola mhix xi ħaġa sabiħa, mhux se tirranġa kollox. Mela jiena għandi bżonn jekk il-leader qed jgħajjat miegħi, 'zip' jiena ħalli ma naqlax problemi. Imma xorta nieħu sehem, m'iniex qed ngħid leader eżempju naħdmu fi gruppi, mhux eżempju nirrispondi lura jew hekk, ma ngħid xejn imma xorta nieħu sehem mal-grupp, ma nagħtix kas x'qed jgħid il-leader u imbagħad plus li jiena nista' nagħmel, nipprova inbiddilha li nipprova ngħidlu lil-leader x'jista' jiġri fil-futur u nipprova nagħmlu tajjeb. U x'nista' nagħmel ukoll li nurih it-tajjeb, ma nurihx il-ħażin, eżempju jidħaq bit-tajjeb mhux bil-ħażin. Eżempju persuni li qed jagħmlu xi ħaġa ħażina, u qed jidħaq bihom, mhux sew. Jiena l-iktar li naf kif jiena nista' ngħix ħajja tajba l-iskola, imma xorta m'iniex tajjeb daqshekk, mhux hemm, immaġina kieku vera kont hemmhekk.

IDEAL SCHOOL

1. ADULTS

Teachers who nurture students' strengths and celebrate success

(LIAM p.6)
"Ikollhom xi meeting biex it-teachers iparlaw fuq it-tfal. Tal-art iparlaw kemm jagħmlu tajbin fuq l-art, tal-music iparlaw kemm jafu fuq music, u l-PE master jara kemm jafu fuq futbol... X'jagħmlu tajjeb kullimkien – hawn kemm jafu fuq PE, futbol, hawn kemm jafu fuq musika, hawn kemm jafu fuq creativity, jiġifieri art u hawn kemm jafu jitgħallmu. Għalhekk ikollhom xi meeting."
"...jiġifieri min kien l-aktar tajjeb, u wkoll xi ħadd jaqla l-medal min kien tajjeb. Ukoll jgħidu 1 out of 10 kemm kienu tajjeb, pereżempju tifel kien 7 out of 10."
"Dawn l-adulti jkunu jiġu t-tfal u jgħidulhom "Kemm kontu bravi" u jtuna xi rigal..."

Teachers who live up to their job expectations

(RACHEL p.6)
"It-teachers joqogħdu jgħallmu"

Teachers who don't shout

(LIAM p.4)
"... li jkun teachers ma jgħajtux…"

(GARY p.6)
"Kont nieħu pjaċir ħafna ħafna ħafna għax it-teachers ma kienux jgħajtu miegħi. Ftit kienu jgħajtu."

Teachers possessing positive values

(GARY p.7)
"Kienu jfissduni."

(RACHEL p.4)
"U teachers u hekk ikunu jħobbuhom lit-tfal"

(RACHEL p.6)
"...u jgħinu wkoll"
"Ikun kind hekk"

(ERIC p.5)
"Issa dan l-LSA, hu kien jaf li jrid kafe`, imma ma setgħax għax kien qed jikkoreġi fil-brejk, eżempju, u t-tfal jilgħabu barra u hemm xi ħadd ieħor jieħu ħsiebhom bilfors. U

170

hu ried kafe` imma hu ma setgħax iqum u l-LSA indunat u hi għamlitlu l-kafe`. Imbagħad qalilha "thank you, how kind". Ħafna kindness kieku."

(YANIKA p.7)
"Jagħtu kas."
"Jgħinuna mhux iħalluna naqdfu għalina."

Allowing children to help out

(GARY p.6)
"Ġieli biex inniżżel il-flus, pereżempju ikollna xi outing, tgħidli, fil-year 1, kienet tgħidli Gary mur għati dawn lil Ms J. U kont immur intihomla. Fil-year 2, mur għati dawn lil Ms J. U kont immur. Fil-year 3 ukoll. Kont nieħu pjaċir ħafna."

Offering opportunities to help teacher

(GARY p.6)
"C: Kont ngħinha biex inlesti. Tgħidli diġa lest Gary? Tgħidli 'mur ġib xogħlok'. Tikkoreġih Tgħidli 'mur'... pereżempju 'għin lil dak, għin lil dak, għin lil dak u hekk'. Kont nieħu pjaċir."

Offering opportunities to learn

(GARY p.8)
"C: Il Madam, ġieli biex noqgħod naqra.
R: Kont toqgħod taqralhom?
C: Eh."

2. CHILDREN

Children who foster inclusion

(GARY p.6)
"Iħalluni nilgħab"

 (RACHEL p.5)
"Dawn ħadu pjaċir li qegħda hawn jiena eżempju ġdida"
"Jilagħbu miegħi"

(ERIC p.5)
"...meta jiġi guest, ġa semmejtha, jagħmlu 'shake hands' jew m'hemmx għalfejn tagħmel hekk, anke tagħmel ħbieb ġodda u tipprova tfehmu eżempju anke jekk ikun 'sick', tgħidlu l-HW jew hekk."
"U anke eżempju ta' min hu ġilda differenti, ġilda sewda, ġilda bajdanija, ġilda naqra skura bħal din eżempju, xorta trid tirrispettahom u tagħmel love magħhom, xorta trid tagħmel ħbieb, mhux eżempju jitilquh il-persuna, jista' jkun girl jew boy."

"U oħra 'people that are fat or slender'. Slender, mhux slender monstru dan, slender thin jiġifieri, għax hemm dak. Respect and still love them. Xorta tirrispettahom għax m'għandomx differenza, xorta jibqaw bnedmin, xorta ħbieb."

(LIAM p.5)
"U dawn it-tfal , jiena nħobbu din il-klassi, u inħobbu il-PE iktar għax nilgħabu futbol u nilgħabu cops and robbers."

Helpful & friendly

(GARY p.7)
"Jekk ġieli waqajt, jiġu jgħinuni"
"Pereżempju din darba nesit tixtrili d-dqiq għal cooking. Huma kellhom żewġ boros u, ixxerjajnihom."

(RACHEL p.4)
"Ikun hemm tfal hekk kind"
(RACHEL p.5)
"...immorru għand xulxin"

(ERIC p.5)
"Kind, u dejjem juru rispett..."

Stand up for each other

(GARY p.7)
"C: U ġieli imbagħad kien hemm żewġ twins, kienu jiġu jtuna, lili kienu joqogħdu jiġru warajja, darba waqqawni, u tgħidx kemm ġrejna warajhom lura u waqqajnihom aħna. U kienu jiġru ħafna. Imbagħad qbadna u imbuttajnihom u waqgħu kollha.
R: Jaqbżu għalik
C: Ehe"

Intelligent children

(ERIC p.1)
"Fejn hemm nies intelliġenti inħobb jien."

Respect towards teachers

(ERIC p.5)
"...lit-teacher ma jwaqqfuhix mill-ispjega, ituha ċans dejjem tispjega."

(YANIKA p.6)
"Meta jqassmulna karta għall-outings pereżempju, mhux iwaddbuhom ma l-art mallewwel."

Follow their duties

(YANIKA p.6)
"Jattendu fil-klassi, mhux jiskartaw"

3.   MYSELF IN THE IDEAL SCHOOL

Positive feelings
(LIAM p.7)
"Inħossni lucky, inħossni tajjeb u nħossni helped"

 (GARY p.8)
"Nieħu pjaċir"

(RACHEL p.6)
"Inħossni ferħana, u nixtieq noqgħod hawn għal-dejjem f'din l-iskola."
"Inkun eċitata li ġejt hawnhekk"

(ERIC p.6)
"Inħossni vera tajjeb, li kieku nkun hemm. Inħossni komdu."

(YANIKA p.7)
"Kulħadd ikun happy"

Jokes, Narrates experiences

(GARY p.8)
"R: Kif tħossok f'din it-tip ta' skola?
C: Hekk orrajt, nieħu pjaċir ħafna. U ġieli darba... jien ma kont ismar hekk, tgħidli fejn mort ġejt ismar daqshekk? Għidtilha 'mort ġurnata Kemmuna Miss'.
R: Jiġifieri tkun qed tirrakkontalhom inti x'tagħmel.
C: Darba din qatgħetli xagħri u qas għarfitni l-Miss. Darba mort bil-punti ġo rasi, qaltli hemm x'għamilt Mastru Gerfex?
R: Kienu jiċċajtaw miegħek jiġifieri ukoll?
C: Għidtilha 'għax kont qed nilgħab il-garaxx tal-kuġin tal-mummy, qbadt kont qed niġri, kont għadni zgħir , Paħħ, u waqajt'.
R: OK
C: Imbagħad darba għidtilha 'Miss ara x-xemx nieżla fuqna' Għax kienet fuqna, għedtilha nieżla fuqna."

Plays with friends

(RACHEL p. 6)
"...nista' ngħid li qed nilgħab mal-ħabiba?"

Nothing to worry about

(ERIC p.6)
"U jħossni bla ġlied, eżempju meta ngħaddi l-eżami eżempju, ma jkollix x'noqod naħseb, eżempju għax il-ħabib telaqni, għax it-teacher dan. Kollox orrajt."

(YANIKA p.8)
"Tmur skola normali"

Respect

(YANIKA p.8)
"Li għax ħa tkun bl-LSA, mhux ha jgħidulek bl-ispecial needs… Naħseb kieku jiefqu jgħidu hekk inkun happy. Inkun happy u mmur kuljum."

More time out of class / doing PE / engaged in activities

(LIAM p.4)
"ikun hemm PE Monday u Friday... Għax Monday ikun meta it-tfal, it-teachers jgħajtu tikka imma qisha ikollhom xi party, imma ikollhom l-ischoolwork, kemm ikollhom HW biss. Għalhekk ikollhom PE. U Friday għax l-istess xi ħaġa, għalhekk. U jkollna l-brejk tikka zgħira iktar longer, għalhekk."
"ġol-parties, ikollna l-party ta' l-Easter, u meta ikollna, ikollna xi easter egg hunt ġo l-iskola."

(LIAM p.5)
"Dawn it-tfal u jiena nħobbu mmorru PE għax it's our favourite day of the year ikollna PE. U jkollna qisha 3 weeks, ikollna PE biss, il- PE jiġu l-morning, jiġi qabel ma nibdew l-iskola, ngħidu prayer u hekk, nibdew PE u imbagħad qabel immorru nagħmlu PE u l-aħħar xi ħaġa qisha ġo nofsinhar."
"Dawn it-tfal iħobbu PE għax huma kull darba li jibdew PE s-sir jgħidilhom "Streċjaw naqra u ilgħabu naqra futbol qabel tibdew" għax illum ħa nilgħabu futbol, jew baseball u hekk. Joqogħdu jitgħallmu."

Limited writing

(LIAM p.5)
"Hawn naqra writing"

Students allowed to contribute to the design of classes

(LIAM p.5)
"U hawn ikollhom, il-floor ikun tas-superheroes, u hawn iwaħħlu xi statue ta' Ġesu' ġos-salib."

Opportunities to help other children

(GARY p.6)
"C: Ġieli qgħadt... kont nieħu ħafna pjaċir ngħin lil tifel fuq wheelchair, nilgħab miegħu, fil-year 2. Imbagħad fil-year 3 kellna teacher oħra, kellna LSA, kellha tifla imma.
R: Iġifieri l-fatt li kont tgħin lil tfal oħra, kont tieħu gost?
C: Eħe."

A school that looks nice

(RACHEL p.4)
"Tkun ħafna sabiħa eżempju, togħġobni"

(RACHEL p.4)
"C: Din slide u din bandli
R: OK. Jiġifieri l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha, tixtieq li jkollha l-bandli wkoll
C: Le, ikunu ħdejha"

Value-driven school

(ERIC p.4)
"Li hija tajba mhux ħażina. Li togħġobni, li hija importanti għalija li taħfer. Għax kieku kulħadd kien jaħfer ma kellnix daqshekk ġlied u hekk... mhux forgiving biss, love, li nħobbu lil xulxin mhux eżempju jien inħobb lil ħabib tiegħi biss. Irridu inħobbu lil kulħadd, anke teachers jew adulti, irridu niru rispett ukoll. Imbagħad kindness, inkunu kind ma' kulħadd, mhux eżempju jekk naraw persuna nkunu suppervi, eżempju jkun miġġieled, ikollu problemi mal-familja, xorta irridu nuru kindness. Anke fl-iskola. Kindness, love, foregiving... dawk suppost kullimkien, mhux l-iskola biss."
"Skola tal-imħabba. Li rari biex issib."

Less restrictive

(YANIKA p.5)
"Mingħajr gates... Kull ma jkun hemm skola normali imma mingħajr gates. Għax bil-gates tħossha qisha ħabs."
"Ma jirranġawx nofs l-iskola jirranġaw l-iskejjel kollha. Aw il-klassijiet kollha, mhux nofs klassijiet... Pereżempju hemm siġġijiet minnhom, kif tpoġġi fuqhom, jaqgħu. Għallinqas ineħħu dawk... Safety"

Organised

(YANIKA p.6)
"C: Ikun hemm xi ħaġa biex inżommu l-basktijiet fuqhom għax ma l-art ġie li jwaqqgħu xi ilma jew hekk jew inkella jkun għadu ma nixifx xi ħaġa u tħammġu. U xi kultant meta, anke tmur, ikun hemm xi locker għall-basktijiet, għax meta tmur it-toilet xi kultant joqgħodu ifittxulek ġo fih.

R: OK. Mela int jogħġbuk l-affarijiet, semmejtli l-hooks jogħġbuk, l-affarijiet li jpoġġu l-affarijiet in order hux hekk? Togħġbok l-ordni hux hekk?
C: Organised
R: U jogħġbok il-fatt li jkollok dak l-ispazju tiegħek fejn tista' tkun tgħid żammejt l-affarijiet tiegħek mingħajr ħadd ma jmissomlok, hux hekk? Semmejtli il-locker, li jkollok dak is-safe space fejn tista' żżomm xi affarijiet. Sewwa qed ngħid?
C: Ijja."

TYPE OF SCHOOL THEY WOULD NOT LIKE TO ATTEND

1. ADULTS

Adults that shout

(LIAM p.3)
"It-teachers jgħajtu"
"Li n-nies joqogħdu jgħajtu fil-wiċċ tat-tfal"

(YANIKA p.4)
"kont nidħol tard jgħajjat"

(GARY p.2)
"is-surmast... Jgħajjat. Filgħodu ġieli jgħajjat waħda magħna, ma kulħadd, x'ħin inkunu qed nagħmlu t-talba."

Not allowing children to take their break as a consequence for not doing HW

(LIAM p.3)
"...toqgħod tugża lis-surmast tgħidilna. Imbagħad jekk ma nlestux il-HW, ma mmorrux il-brejk. Any teacher tagħmel hekk"
"Meta jkollna l-break, min ma jlestix il-HW jibqa barra ġol-break joqgħod jikteb il-HW... u jekk ilesti xorta jibqa hemm"

Too much writing

(LIAM p.1)
"Ma nħobbx nattendi fiha din l-iskola għax il-miss tagħmlilna niktbu ħafna, veru long. Ma nixtieqx noqogħdu niktbu affarijiet long."

Authoritarian approach to teaching

(GARY p.4)
"It-teacher tqabbiżomli... Iddejjaqni, bħal tal-futbol. Twaqqani għal-giddieb, tgħajjat miegħi. Tgħidli dejjem bin-notes. Hekk. U tal-HW. Pereżempju ma nkunx nafu, tgħidli mhux taqbad u tħallihom barra, tgħidli trid tagħmilhom. U ġieli ma nkunx nafhom, u taqbad question mark u fil-break taqbad tgħidli mal-ħajt. Jekk ma nlestihomx illum pereżempju noqgħod għada, jekk ma nlestihomx għada, noqgħod l-għada. Hekk mal-ħajt."

Not listening to the child's voice

(GARY p.4)
"C: Pereżempju jekk jimbuttani xi ħadd u nolqot lil ta' quddiemi, u ta' quddiemi jolqot lit-teacher, ta' quddiemi jwaħħal fijja, u ta' warajja jwaħħal fijja wkoll. U naqla 'break in'
R: Jiġifieri jwaħħlu fik, hux hekk?
C: Eħe
R: U la qegħdin nitkellmu fuq it-teacher, ittik ċans tispjegala x'ġara? Tisimgħak?
C: Ġieli
R: Ġieli tisimak u ġieli le
C: Ġieli, imma iktar le"

(GARY p.5)
"C: Tgħidli 'Inti biss bin-notes hawn'. Tgħidli 'dejjem bin-notes'. Imbagħad l-għada jkun hemm żewġt itfal u jmorru jtuha note u ma tgħidilhom xejn."

Unhelpful

(RACHEL p.3)
"...eżempju niddejjaq jekk ma tgħinix"

(YANIKA p.4)
"ma kienx jgħini, ma kienx jagħti kas, kont nidħol tard jgħajjat, iħallini hemmhekk nibki għal xejn"

Poor teaching skills

(ERIC p.3)
"jista' jkun li jeżistu vera teachers li eżempju huma flok jispjegawlhom jgħidu ibdew eżempju malajr."

(YANIKA p.4)
"Teachers li kull ma jridu jieħdu l-paga u ma jimpurtagħhomx, jagħmlu l-lesson u jitilqu 'il barra."

Not enough support to study for exams

(ERIC p.3)
"ma jtuhomx ħafna homework eżempju, waqt li qegħdin lejliet l-eżami, eżempju past papers xejn. Ituhom xi 2 kotba jew hekk ftit, u ftit wisq ma jkunx biżżejjed biex tistudja għall-eżami. U eżempju ma jtuhomx il-kotba imbagħad ta' l-eżami. Kif ħa jistudjaw imbagħad?"

Favouritism towards certain students

(YANIKA p.3)
"...għandhom preferenzi għal waħda, jew għal dik, jew għal dak."

Shouting

(LIAM p.2)
"Dawn it-tfal jgħajtu ħafna ġol klassi"

Non-inclusive

(LIAM p.2)
"fil-break ma jħallux naqra tfal jilagħbu"

(GARY p.3)
"Ma jħallunix nilgħab u hekk"
"Ehm, ma jħallunix nilgħab. Dan M, il-barrani, qalli "if you play with me, I don't care". Imbagħad x'jismu, ma ridtx iktar ħbieb u imbagħad qed iħalluni nilgħab. U... emm... darba qaluli "Liar liar, pants on fire" nigdeb."

(ERIC p.2)
"meta jiġi tal-PE u hekk, lili jaħsbuni weak u jħallu barra biss lil min hu weak"

Bullying & fighting

(LIAM p.2)
"...it-tfal joqogħdu bi żball jagħmlu lit-tfal l-oħrajn jaqgħu meta jilgħabu"

(GARY p.3)
"li joqogħdu jimbuttawni"

(ERIC p.2)
"Fil-break huma eżempju jiġru u hekk, imbagħad jekk xi ħadd jaqa', mhux dejjem dik tiġri, xi kultant, jidħku bih"
"**...**dawk qegħdin joqogħdu jgħajru fuq il-familji**"**
"…joqogħdu jweġġaw xi tifel"

(YANIKA p.2)
"Jagħmlu qishom l-iskola tagħhom"

Blaming others for wrongdoing

(YANIKA p.3)
"Tieqa ħarġu minnha. U wara jgħidu li xi ħadd ieħor ġiegħelhom"
"kulħadd "Mhux jien għamiltha, dik ġiegħlitni""

Not trustworthy

(RACHEL p.2)
"Joqogħdu jgħidu ħafna sigrieti"
"...joqogħdu jgħidu fuq il-best friends"

(YANIKA p.3)
"teachers kwieti li ħa jħalluk tagħmel li trid, mis-seba jieħdulek l'id"

Challenged / helpless

(LIAM p.3)
"Qed naqra ktieb u mhux qed nifhem sewwa. Għalhekk qed ngħid "this is hard""

(GARY p.5)
"Niċċassa... ngħidilha 'iva' u filwaqt ma nkunx fhimt"

(RACHEL p.3)
"Noqgħod fuq is-sufan u ma nagħmel xejn."

(ERIC p.4)
"Xi kultant inħossni tajjeb u xi kultant iħossni ħażin. Skond kif iqumu u hekk. Jiġiefieri kif iħosshom, dejjem jiġġieldu fil-break imma jien ma nistgħax ngħidlhom "Ieqfu". Mhumiex se jisimgħu minni, m'iniex eżempju l-king tal-iskola, m'iniex."

Nervous

(LIAM p.3)
"Inħossni nervus."

(ERIC p.4/5)
"Jien nipprova minn kollox biex ma neħilx u ma nagħmilx il-ħażen. Eżempju huma iġegħluni u ġieli taqbizli u ġieli ngħajjat magħhom u ġieli meta ngħajjat magħhom, taqbadni teacher u neħila jiena imbagħad. Eżempju l-ħażin ma jidhirx imbagħad it-tajjeb jidher qed jagħmel il-ħażin minħabba l-ħażin."

Feeling sad

(LIAM p.3)
"Inħossni ħażin."

(GARY p.5)
"Imdejjaq"

(RACHEL p.4)
"imdejqa"
"nibki għax ma jkollix ħbieb"

Worried

(LIAM p.3)
"... inħossni qisni worried... Ninkwieta li mux ħa nlesti xi ħaġa skola mux ħa nilħaq inlestiha u noqgħod ninkwieta hekk"

Refusal to go

(GARY p.5)
"Ma nkunx irrid immur"

(RACHEL p.4)
"nirrabja, inkun irrid immur skola oħra"

(YANIKA p.4)
"Ma noqgħodx hemmhekk, nitlaq"

Feeling excluded / lonely

(RACHEL p.4)
"ħadd ma jilgħab miegħi"

(ERIC p.4)
"l-ħbieb tiegħi jilgħabu magħhom ma' nies li qegħdin jiggoffaw. Il-ħażin jarawh sabiħ u jidħlu fiha. U jien niddejjaq, u ġieli jitilquni, iħalluni waħdi fil-break... imbagħad nagħmel minn kollox biex noħloq game waħdi"

Bullying

(ERIC p.4)
"Din l-iskola għandha ħafna bullying"
(ERIC p.2)
"Eżempju dan xi ħadd joħodlu l-lapes, u l-persuna jrid jerġa jieħdu u joqogħdu iwaddbuh 'l hemm u 'l hawn, u l-oħrajn joqogħdu jilgħabu bil-lapes tiegħu. Imbagħad ikissruhulu"

Short breaks

(LIAM p.1)
"Nixtieq il-break ikun longer bħal-ischool. Għax it's not fair, għax il-break ma jdumx u l-iskola jdum. At least idum tikka l-break"

Shouting

(LIAM p.2)
"Din il-klassi jkun fiha ħafna għajjat u jiena biss inkun kwiet. Nipprova nikkonċentra ħafna imma ma nifhimx, qisni ġo moħħi meta immur skola nipprova pereżempju ġo moħħi nipprova nippikturja kollox l-istess imma ma nafx nikkonċentra hekk naħseb nikkonċentra u turina it-teacher, u qed nipprova nikkonċentra għalhekk għandi ktieb."

Time outside of class not used beneficially

(GARY p.1/2)
"Għax ġieli... darba... noqogħdu nilagħbu futbol, u imbgħad il-Miss li jkun hemm tħallina bilqiegħda hekk niċċassaw u ma nagħmlu xejn. Ikolli aptit nibqa' barra."

Too much stairs

(RACHEL p.1)
"Ma jkunx hemm ħafna taraġ pereżempju"

Dirty

(RACHEL p.1)
"li jagħmlu, jagħmlu toilet mal-art ġieli"

Too much homework

(RACHEL p.1)
"Li ma jkollnix ħafna homeworks"

Many copybooks in class

(RACHEL p.2)
"jkun hemm ħafna pitazzi"

Everyone gets punished, including those who did not deserve to be

(ERIC p.1)
"t-tajjeb jeħel mal-ħażin"
"Imbagħad jeħilha ħaddieħor li mhux qiegħed jilgħab magħhom"
(ERIC p.2)
"ma tkunx taf x'jiġri. Imbagħad jeħila kulħadd u mhux sew ukoll"

Rough play

(ERIC p.1)
"fil-breaks joqogħdu jiġġieldu, jilgħabu goff, ħafna goff."

Talking during teacher's explanation

(ERIC p.1)
"t-teacher qiegħda tispjega u min ipaċpaċ 'l hemm u 'l hawn, u b'hekk ma nistgħax nisma' sew."

Mixed genders / bullying

(YANIKA p.1)
"Li ddejjaqni din l-idea tal-boys u girls, li qegħdin flimkien... Għandek il-ġurnata sħiħa ma tistgħax tmur it-toilet. Ma jħallukx tidħol, joqogħdu żewġ boys"

Students with vulgar behaviour / calling teachers names

(YANIKA. P.1)
"Fejn ikun hemm il-ħamalli... Joffendu t-teachers"

Frustration over technical issues at school

(ERIC p.3)
"Dawk qegħdin tnejn teachers li qegħdin f'klassi differenti, imma qegħdin fl-istess skola li qegħdin igergru għal-photocopies u fil-verita' l-photocopies kienet għamlimthom u ġara xi ħaġa fil-printer u dawk iddeċiedu biex jiġġieldu għax għadhom ma ġewx il-

photocopies minn eżempju 2 weeks. U l-persuna qed jinkwieta għax mhux ġejjin photocopies għax il-printer bil-ħsara eżempju u anke l-persuna għamel ħażin għax ma qalilhomx li eżempju l-printer ma jaħdimx. Tistennew għal eżempju 1 week oħra."

INFLUENCE IN MAKING THEIR OWN SCHOOL LIKE THEIR IDEAL SCHOOL

<u>LIAM p.7-9</u>

"li l-ħbieb ma jħallux jilgħab u nbiddilha hawn għax il-PE kulħadd jista' jilgħab."
"Hawn qed titgħallem waħdek… issa tista' mhux waħdek titgħallem, issa ma iktar"
"Hawn kienu tfal u issa din il-girl qed tibki għax din kienet din tal-arti... Issa meta kibru adulti u saru teachers u sirs, issa ftakru li meta bdew jidħqu b'din tgħallmu saru ħbieb u mhux jidħqu bihom"
"First you start as students and then become adults and realise what you have done"
"Jiġifieri xorta waħda tkun l-istess skola imma jbiddlu kollox, mix-up. Jirreplacjaw dal-building b'xi ħaġa li xorta tkun l-istess, flok tkun hekk u jkun fiha affarijiet ħżiena hekk, ħa nbiddluha… kollox differenti, tiġi hekk, brand new"
"Pereżempju dak hemm tifel ieħor u kien jiddejjaq wisq, wisq, wisq. Kien jgħid "I had enough. <mark>Għandi bżonn naqbad responsabbiltà u ngħid lis-surmast."</mark> Jgħolli idejh lit-teacher u tgħidlu "Nista' immur għand is-surmast?" Jgħdilek "Iva", tmur, hekk ara. Imbagħad timxi u tgħidlu "nistgħu inbiddlu skola?" Jekk jgħidlek Iva jew Le. <mark>Imma kieku kien jgħidlek Iva kien ibiddilha hekk pereżempju jgħidlek "kif trida.""</mark>
"<mark>Jiena kieku kont ngħid lis-surmast "Jien nixtieq inbiddel". Jekk jgħidli Le, kont nimmaġina ġo moħħi d-dar imbagħad kont niktibha x'imkien u kont nikteb kollox li jrid jinbidel u kont nuri lis-surmast nerġa, kien jgħidli Iva u kont ngħidlu kif jitfagħha</mark>"
"Inġiblu list, nikteb dak kollu li jrid jinbidel, nurih, ngħidlu kif irrid"
"Kieku naqbad ir-responsabbiltà u meta nikber ngħidilhom biex nibbuildja my own school. Flok <mark>inbiddel din l-iskola hawn, nibbuildja oħra, oħra iktar sabiħa minn hemm</mark>"

<u>GARY p.8-10</u>

"It-teacher, is-surmast, kollox"
"it-teachers. Nixtieq dawn il-ħbieb li kelli hawn jiġu fil-klassi tiegħi, it-teachers li kelli hemm jiġu hawn."
<mark>"Li ma niċċaqlaqx, nipprova. Ma niġġielidx u ma taqbiżlix"</mark>

(RACHEL p.7-8)
"Ikun hawn ġnien hawn"
"jkun hemm pool"
"ikolli hafna iktar hbieb"
<mark>"Ngħid lis-surmast biex eżempju jagħmel ġnien eżempju, ikun hemm naqra vojt x'imkien u jagħmel naqra ġnien"</mark>
<mark>"Qas naf. Għax eżempju dak jien mhux is-surmast"</mark>
<mark>"Noqgħod nilgħab magħhom"</mark>
"Jiena nieħu pjaċir eżempju nagħmel ħbieb ġodda"

"No Idea. Qas naf. Nimmaġina jew kif nagħmilha vera?"
"Irrid nipprova ngħidlhom biex jagħmlu it-tajjeb mill-ħażin. Nipprova ngħidlhom, mhux inbeżżagħhom, nagħmillhom warning li jekk toqogħdu ħżiena u hekk, nispiċċaw ħażin kollha. U mhux fair ħabba f'hekk għax aħna wkoll ġieli minn din-naħa, b'hekk għedtlek no idea għax minn din-naħa anke ġieli ġie is-sir tad-dixxplina, ġiet il-Madam, xorta baqgħu hemmhekk. Xorta baqgħu jiġġieldu. Kieku kont Head jew Headmaster, kont nifridhom, min jiġġieled kont inwaqqafhom billi ngħidilhom warning u jinfirdu minn xulxin, l-iskejjel jinfirdu, eżempju. Jew ngħidilhom "Għamlu t-tajjeb u l-ħażin ħalluh barra, tagħmluhx qatt", li diffiċli naqra. U nipprova jiena eżempju inpenġilhom x'jista' jiġri fil-futur jekk nibqgħu sejrin hekk. Nixtieq intihom messaġġ, forsi jitilgħu l'hemm flok l'hemm. Għax dawn fil-verita' anke qaluli kelma ħażina li ma tgħoddx għat-tfal. U jisimgħu affarijiet mid-dar u jġibuhom hawnhekk li huma ħżiena wkoll."
"Ħaddieħor jista' jieqaf mill-ġlied. Dik l-ewwel waħda. Two, li jaħfru lil xulxin u nkun l-hawnhekk, eżempju fin-nofs jekk jibqgħu jaħfru kuljum. Nuru rispett, guests, ġilda differenti, min hu oħxon, min hu irqiq, dejjem. U eżempju meta nagħmlu f'group work, ma naqblux, eżempju l-leader jipprova minn kollox, eżempju hemm leaders ukoll, ġieli jkun hemm leaders fil-verita' ġieli jkunu hekk qishom huma jaħsbu jikkmandaw kollox u jagħmlu anke l-ħażen ġieli. La leaders jaħsbu li jistgħu jagħmlu li jridu eżempju. Għax ġibli hekk, ġibli dak ... fil-groups eżempju, jien naf u int ma tafx, jgħidu ħafna hekk. Mela allura huma jridu iwaqqfu dak, jirrispettaw lil xulxin, jaqblu xulxin, anke jekk ma taqbilx, nippruvaw naqblu lil xulxin u mhux bil-ġlied, bil-kalma. U eżempju jekk inkellmu lil xi ħadd min dejjaqni, bil-kalma, ħalli imbagħad forsi nimxu 'l hemmhekk. U bil-mod il-mod nibdew nimxu għal kind."

"Jien nista' nagħmel li, għax hekk li titlaq l-iskola mhix xi ħaġa sabiħa, mhux se tirranġa kollox. Mela jiena għandi bżonn jekk il-leader qed jgħajjat miegħi, zip jiena ħalli ma naqlax problemi. Imma xorta nieħu sehem, m'iniex qed ngħid leader eżempju naħdmu fi gruppi, mhux eżempju nirrispondi lura jew hekk, ma ngħid xejn imma xorta nieħu sehem mal-grupp, ma nagħtix kas x'qed jgħid il-leader u mbagħad plus li jiena nista' nagħmel, nipprova inbiddilha li nipprova ngħidlu lil-leader x'jista' jiġri fil-futur u nipprova nagħmlu tajjeb. U x'nista' nagħmel ukoll li nurih it-tajjeb, ma nurihx il-ħażin, eżempju jidħaq bit-tajjeb mhux bil-ħażin. Eżempju persuni li qed jagħmlu xi ħaġa ħażina, u qed jidħaq bihom, mhux sew. Jiena l-iktar li naf kif jiena nista' ngħix ħajja tajba l-iskola, imma xorta minix tajjeb daqshekk, mhux hemm, immaġina kieku vera kont hemmhekk."

"Xi kultant tkun trid tbiddel kollox, xi kultant ma tkunx trid tbiddel xejn. Pereżempju dawk it-tfal li joqgħodu jgħajtu għalxejn, ġie li jgħajtu ġieli jkellmuk, jgħidulek bonġu. Jiġifieri xi kultant trid tbiddel xi ħaġa u xi kultant ma trid tbiddel xejn"
"L-iskola mhux ha titla' hemmhekk, mhux ha ntellagħha jien żgur… Imma għallinqas nitla' hemmhekk jien… Intella miegħi min irrid jitla'"

APPENDIX 14 – ORGANISING DATA (Preliminary stages – Ideal school)

Adults Theme 1: TEACHING STYLE / PROFESSIONAL ROLE			
Coding unit	Description	Quote (kind of school they would not like to attend)	Quote (ideal school)
Shouting	In an ideal school, adults would not shout with students in class or during breaktime.	(LIAM p.1) "…tgħajjatx it-teacher" (LIAM p.3) "It-teacher qed tgħajjat ma dan qed jikkrajja" "It-teachers jgħajtu" "Li n-nies joqgħodu jgħajtu fil-wiċċ tat-tfal" (YANIKA p.2) "Jekk inti kwieta u tagħmel xi ħaġa ħażina darba ħa jgħajtu." (YANIKA p.4) "kont nidħol tard jgħajjat" (GARY p.2) "is-surmast… Jgħajjat. Filgħodu ġieli jgħajjat waħda magħna, ma kulħadd, x'ħin inkunu qed nagħmlu t-talba."	(LIAM p.4) "… li jkun teachers ma jgħajtux…" (GARY p.6) "Kont nieħu pjaċir ħafna ħafna ħafna għax it-teachers ma kienux jgħajtu miegħi. Ftit kienu jgħajtu."
Use of consequences	The application of consequences to students for not carrying out their work.	(LIAM p.3) "…toqgħod tugża lis-surmast tgħidilna. Imbagħad jekk ma nlestux il-HW, ma mmorrux il-break. Any teacher tagħmel hekk"	

		"Meta jkollna l-break, min ma jlestix il-HW jibqa barra ġol-brejk joqgħod jikteb il-HW... u jekk ilesti xorta jibqa hemm"	
Writing tasks	The amount of writing that teachers would expect out of children during learning tasks.	(LIAM p.1) "Ma nħobbx nattendi fiha din l-iskola għax il-miss tagħmlilna niktbu ħafna, veru long. Ma nixtieqx noqogħdu niktbu affarijiet long."	
Authoritarian	Teacher enforcing a rigid disciplinarian approach	(GARY p.4) "It-teacher tqabbiżomli... Iddejjaqni, bħal tal-futbol. Twaqqani għal-giddieb, tgħajjat miegħi. Tgħidlli dejjem bin-notes. Hekk. U tal-HW. Pereżempju ma nkunx nafu, tgħidli mhux taqbad u tħallihom barra, tgħidli trid tagħmilhom. U ġieli ma nkunx nafhom, u taqbad question mark u fil-brejk taqbad tgħidli mal-ħajt. Jekk ma nlestihomx illum pereżempju noqgħod għada, jekk ma nlestihomx għada, noqgħod l-għada. Hekk mal-ħajt." (YANIKA p.3) "l-girls bilfors iridu jiktbu għax inkella jeħlu detention"	
Authoritative	Establishing discipline and confidence in authority in a respectful way	(YANIKA p.9) "Għax orrajt id-dixxiplina tajba imma m'għadnix fl-antik li trid tagħmel kollox li jgħidulek. Huma għalihom naħseb għadhom l-anqas biss jaqblu... huma	(YANIKA p.8) "Iżommulhom ħalli ma jibqgħux kif inhuma. Mhux qed ngħid jgħajtu magħhom jew hekk, imma ... Għax qishom jaħsbu dawn l-imqarbin trid toqogħdilhom kwieta biex joqogħdu dawn"

| | | għadhom iridu li jtuk daqq f'idejk bir-riga jew jagħmlulek il-dik ma dahrek. Qishom irrabjati għax waqfuha din u qed joħorġuha fuq it-tfal." | |

Adults Theme 2: TEACHER VALUES			
Coding unit	Description	Quote (kind of school they would not like to attend)	Quote (ideal school)
Altruism	The altruistic values that adults would possess as persons within the professional role, transmitting their humanitarian aspect with children.	(RACHEL p.3) "...eżempju niddejjaq jekk ma tgħinix" (YANIKA p.4) "ma kienx jgħini, ma kienx jagħti kas, kont nidħol tard jgħajjat, iħallini hemmhekk nibki għal xejn"	(GARY p.7) "Kienu jfissduni." (RACHEL p.4) "U teachers u hekk ikunu jħobbuhom lit-tfal" (RACHEL p.6) "...u jgħinu wkoll" "Ikun kind hekk" (ERIC p.5) "Issa dan l-LSA, hu kien jaf li jrid kafe`, imma ma setgħax għax kien qed jikkoreġi fil-break, eżempju, u t-tfal jilgħabu barra u hemm xi ħaddiehor jieħu ħsiebhom bilfors. U hu ried kafe` imma hu ma setgħax iqum u l-LSA indunat u hi għamlitlu l-kafe`. Imbagħad qalilha "thank you, how kind". Ħafna kindness kieku." (YANIKA p.7) "Jaghtu kas." "Jgħinuna mhux iħalluna naqdfu għalina."

188

Dedication	The extent to which teachers are dedicated in doing their job.	(ERIC p.3) "jista jkun li jeżistu vera teachers li eżempju huma flok jispjegawlhom jgħidu ibdew eżempju malajr." (YANIKA p.4) "Teachers li kull ma jridu jieħdu l-paga u ma jimpurtagħhomx, jagħmlu l-lesson u jitilqu 'il barra."	(RACHEL p.6) "It-teachers joqgħodu jgħallmu"
Discrimination	Adults not treating all students in the same manner	(YANIKA p.3) "l-boys tħallihom jilgħabu l-karti, u l-girls bilfors iridu jiktbu għax inkella jeħlu detention" "U din ratha li qed tigdeb u t-teacher għandha l-preferenzi għall-boys u weħlet fiha xorta" "għandhom preferenzi għal waħda, jew għal dik, jew għal dak"	

Adults Theme 3: CHILD-CENTRED THINKING			
<u>Coding unit</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Quote</u> (kind of school they would not like to attend)	<u>Quote</u> (ideal school)
Child's voice	Listening to what children have to say / listening to the children's perspective	(GARY p.4) "C: Pereżempju jekk jimbuttani xi ħadd u nolqot lil ta' quddiemi, u ta' quddiemi jolqot lit-teacher, ta' quddiemi jwaħħal fijja, u ta' warajja jwaħħal fijja wkoll. U naqla 'break in'	

189

		R: Iġifieri jwaħħlu fik, hux hekk?	
		C: Eħe	
		R: U la qegħdin nitkellmu fuq it-teacher, ittik ċans tispjegala x'ġara? Tisimgħak?	
		C: Ġieli	
		R: Ġieli tisimak u ġieli le	
		C: Ġieli, imma iktar le"	
		(GARY p.5)	
		"C: Tgħidli 'Inti biss bin-notes hawn'. Tgħidli 'dejjem bin-notes'. Imbagħad l-għada jkun hemm żewġt itfal u jmorru jtuha note u ma tgħidilhom xejn."	
Individual needs	Catering for different abilities	(ERIC p.3) "ma jtuhomx ħafna homework eżempju, waqt li qegħdin lejliet l-eżami, eżempju past papers xejn. Ituhom xi 2 kotba jew hekk ftit, u ftit wisq ma jkunx biżżejjed biex tistudja għal-eżami. U eżempju ma jtuhomx il-kotba imbagħad ta' l-eżami. Kif ħa jistudjaw imbagħad?"	
Child's strengths	Nurturing children's strengths and celebrating success		(LIAM p.6) "Ikollhom xi meeting biex it-teachers iparlaw fuq it-tfal. Ta' l-art iparlaw kemm jagħmlu tajbin fuq l-art, tal-music iparlaw kemm jafu fuq music, u il-PE master jara kemm jafu fuq futbol... X'jagħmlu tajjeb kullimkien – hawn kemm jafu fuq PE, futbol, hawn kemm jafu fuq musika, hawn kemm

			jafu fuq creativity, iġifieri art u hawn kemm jafu jitgħallmu. Għalhekk ikollhom xi meeting." "...jiġifieri min kien l-aktar tajjeb, u wkoll xi ħadd jaqla l-medal min kien tajjeb. Ukoll jgħidu 1 out of 10 kemm kienu tajjeb, pereżempju tifel kien 7 out of 10." "Dawn l-adulti jkunu jiġu t-tfal u jgħidulhom "Kemm kontu bravi" u jtuna xi rigal..."

Children Theme 1: INCLUSIVE APPROACH			
Coding unit	Description	Quote (kind of school they would not like to attend)	Quote (ideal school)
Play together	Children play together during break time and during sports activities. Feeling excluded from activities.	(LIAM p.2) "dawn it-tfal qed jiddejqu, qed jibku għax ma jħallihomx jilgħabu" "fil-break ma jħallux naqra tfal jilgħabu" (GARY p.2) "hemm tifel. Ma jħallinix nilgħab dak. Imma issa qed iħallini nilgħab. Qabel ma kienx." (GARY p.3) "Ma jħallunix nilgħab u hekk" "Ehm, ma jħallunix nilgħab. Dan M, il-barrani, qalli "if you play with me, I don't care". Imbagħad x'jismu, ma ridtx iktar ħbieb u imbagħad qed iħalluni nilgħab. U... emm... darba qaluli "Liar liar, pants on fire" nigdeb."	(GARY p.6) "Iħalluni nilgħab" (GARY p.7) "U meta ma jħallinix nilgħab dat-tifel, issa ngħidlu 'nista' nilgħab'?. Jgħidli 'iva'. Jien xorta bqajt infittxu. Dejjem jgħidli iwa iwa iwa. Qalli meta ma jħallikx tilgħab, ejja ilgħab" (RACHEL p.5) "Jilagħbu miegħi" (LIAM p.5) "U dawn it-tfal , jiena inħobbha din il-klassi, u inħobbu il-PE iktar għax nilgħabu futbol u nilgħabu cops and robbers."

		(ERIC p.2)	
		"meta jiġi tal-PE u hekk, lili jaħsbuni weak u jħallu barra biss lil min hu weak" (RACHEL p.4) "ħadd ma jilgħab miegħi" (ERIC p.4) "l-ħbieb tiegħi jilgħabu magħhom ma nies li qegħdin jiggoffaw. Il-ħażin jarawh sabiħ u jidħlu fiha. U jien niddejjaq, u ġieli jitilquni, iħalluni waħdi fil-break... imbagħad nagħmel minn kollox biex noħloq game waħdi. Eżempju jogging, nipprova nagħmel xi ħaġa healthy."	
Celebrate diversity	Including children who may be different		(RACHEL p.5) "Dawn ħadu pjaċir li qegħda hawn jiena eżempju ġdida" (ERIC p.5) "...meta jiġi guest, ġa semmejtha, jagħmlu 'shake hands' jew m'hemmx għalfejn tagħmel hekk, anke tagħmel ħbieb ġodda u tipprova tfehmu eżempju anke jekk ikun 'sick', tgħidlu l-HW jew hekk." "U anke eżempju ta' min hu ġilda differenti, ġilda sewda, ġilda bajdanija, ġilda naqra skura bħal din eżempju, xorta trid tirrispettahom u tagħmel love magħhom, xorta trid tagħmel ħbieb, mhux eżempju jitilquh il-persuna, jista' jkun girl jew boy."

			"U oħra 'people that are fat or slender'. Slender, mhux slender monstru dan, slender thin iġfieri, għax hemm dak. Respect and still love them. Xorta tirrispettahom għax m'għandomx differenza, xorta jibqaw bnedmin, xorta ħbieb."
Discourage bullying	Standing up for others in need and discourage bullying	(LIAM p.2) "...it-tfal joqogħdu bi żball jagħmlu lit-tfal l-oħrajn jaqgħu meta jilgħabu" (GARY p.3) "li joqgħdu jimbuttawni" (ERIC p.2) "Fil-break huma eżempju jiġru u hekk, imbagħad jekk xi ħadd jaqa', mhux dejjem dik tiġri, xi kultant, jidħku bih" **"...**dawk qegħdin joqogħdu jgħajru fuq il-familji**"** "...joqogħdu jweġġaw xi tifel" (YANIKA p.2) "Jagħmlu qishom l-iskola tagħhom"	(GARY p.7) "C: U ġieli imbagħad kien hemm żewġ twins, kienu jiġu jtuna, lili kienu joqogħdu jiġru warajja, darba waqqawni, u tgħidx kemm ġrejna warajhom lura u waqqajnihom aħna. U kienu jiġru ħafna. Imbagħad qbadna u imbuttajnihom u waqgħu kollha. R: Jaqbżu għalik C: Eħe"

Children Theme 2: SHARED VALUES & QUALITIES			
<u>Coding unit</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Quote</u> (kind of school they would not like to attend)	<u>Quote</u> (ideal school)
Trust	Being comfortable to trust other children	(RACHEL p.2) "Joqogħdu jgħidu ħafna sigrieti" "...joqogħdu jgħidu fuq il-best friends" (YANIKA p.3)	

		"teachers kwieti li ħa jħalluk tagħmel li trid, mis-seba joħdulek l'id"	
Kindness	Being kind and helpful towards other children		(GARY p.7) "Jekk ġieli waqajt, jiġu jgħinuni" "Pereżempju din darba nesit tixtrili d-dqiq għal cooking. Huma kellhom żewġ boros u, ixxerjajnihom." (RACHEL p.4) "Ikun hemm tfal hekk kind" (RACHEL p.5) "...immorru għand xulxin" (ERIC p.5) "Kind, u dejjem juru rispett..."
Learning needs	Having similar learning abilities		(ERIC p.1) "hemm min ipaċpaċ waqt il-lezzjoni...fejn hemm nies intelliġenti inħobb jien."

Children Theme 3: RESPECT			
Coding unit	Description	Quote (kind of school they would not like to attend)	Quote (ideal school)
Shouting	Children shouting in the classroom	(LIAM p.2) "Dawn it-tfal jgħajtu ħafna ġol klassi"	
Blaming others	Blaming innocent children and potentially getting them into trouble	(YANIKA p.3) "Tieqa ħarġu minnha. U wara jgħidu li xi ħadd ieħor ġiegħelhom" "kulħadd "Mhux jien għamiltha, dik ġiegħlitni""	

194

Respecting authority	Respecting adults in school	(YANIKA p.1) "Dakinhar kien hemm waħda kiesha, imbuttata lit-teacher"	(ERIC p.5) "...lit-teacher ma jwaqqfuhix mill-ispjega, ituha ċans dejjem tispjega." (YANIKA p.6) "Meta jqassmulna karta għal outings pereżempju, mhux iwaddbuhom mal-art mallewwel."
Follow duties	Children who follow their duties as students at school		(YANIKA p.6) "Jattendu fil-klassi, mhux jiskartaw"
Making fun of others	Making fun of other children in need	(LIAM p.3) "Qed jidħqu bih. Qed jibki"	

Themes about myself in the kind of school I would not like to attend: NEGATIVE FEELINGS / EXPERIENCES		
Coding unit	Description	Quote
Challenged	Finding it difficult to learn or to have an active role in their learning experience at school	(LIAM p.3) "Qed naqra ktieb u mhux qed nifhem sewwa. Għalhekk qed ngħid "this is hard"" (GARY p.5) "Niċċassa... ngħidilha 'iva' u filwaqt ma nkunx fhimt" (RACHEL p.2) "Għax ġieli, jien eżempju ma nifhimx HW, għalhekk ġieli jdejquni... għax eżempju tispjegalna it-teacher u mbagħad ma nifhimx" (RACHEL p.3) "Noqgħod fuq is-sufan u ma nagħmel xejn." (ERIC p.4) "Xi kultant inħossni tajjeb u xi kultant iħossni ħażin. Skond kif iqumu u hekk. Jiġifieri kif iħosshom, dejjem jiġġieldu fil-break imma jien ma nistgħax ngħidlhom "ieqfu". Mhumiex se jisimgħu minni, m'iniex eżempju l-king tal-iskola, m'iniex."
Agitated / impulsive	Not giving much thought to one's actions	(LIAM p.3) "Inħossni nervus."

		(ERIC p.3/4)
		"Jien nipprova minn kollox biex ma neħilx u ma nagħmilx il-ħażen. Eżempju huma iġiegħluni u ġieli taqbiżli u ġieli ngħajjat magħhom u ġieli meta ngħajjat magħhom, taqbadni teacher u neħila jiena imbagħad. Eżempju l-ħażin ma jidhirx imbagħad it-tajjeb jidher qed jagħmel il-ħażin minħabba l-ħażin."
		(YANIKA p.8)
		"mhux għax ikunu iridu jweġġgħuni imma qaluli tnejn u avżajthom 'min jerġa jgħidli bl-ispecial needs ... ħa taqbiżli iċ-ċinga' Eżatti faqani l-ieħor"
Sad	Feeling sad and of low morale	(LIAM p.3)
		"Inħossni ħażin."
		(GARY p.5)
		"Imdejjaq"
		(RACHEL p.4)
		"imdejqa"
		"nibki għax ma jkollix ħbieb"
Worried	Worried about what can go wrong	(LIAM p.3)
		"... inħossni qisni worried... Ninkwieta li mux ħa nlesti xi ħaġa skola mux ħa nilħaq inlestiha u noqgħod ninkwieta hekk"
Refusal to attend school	Refusing to attend school	(GARY p.5)
		"Ma nkunx irrid immur"
		(RACHEL p.4)
		"nirrabja, inkun irrid immur skola oħra"
		(YANIKA p.4)
		"Ma noqgħodx hemmhekk, nitlaq"

196

Themes about myself in the kind of school I would like to attend: POSITIVE FEELINGS / EXPERIENCES		
Coding unit	Description	Quote
Happy	Feeling happy and content about the way they are experiencing school	(LIAM p.7) "Inħossni lucky, inħossni tajjeb u nħossni helped" (GARY p.8) "Hekk orrajt, nieħu pjaċir ħafna." (RACHEL p.6) "Inħossni ferħana, u nixtieq noqgħod hawn għal-dejjem f'din l-iskola." "Inkun eċitata li ġejt hawnhekk" (ERIC p.6) "Inħossni vera tajjeb, li kieku nkun hemm. Inħossni komdu." (YANIKA p.7) "Kulħadd ikun happy" (YANIKA p.8) "Li għax ħa tkun bl-LSA, mhux ħa jgħidulek bl-ispecial needs… Naħseb kieku jiefqu jgħidu hekk inkun happy. Inkun happy u mmur kuljum."
Being carefree	No need to worry about what might happen	(ERIC p.6) "U jħossni bla ġlied, eżempju meta ngħaddi l-eżami eżempju, ma jkollix x'noqod naħseb, eżempju għax il-ħabib telaqni, għax it-teacher dan. Kollox orrajt." (YANIKA p.8) "Tmur skola normali"
Friendship	Playing with friends	(RACHEL p. 6) "…nista' ngħid li qed nilgħab mal-ħabiba?" "Eżempju qed iwaddbu il-ballun" (RACHEL p.7) "ikolli ħafna iktar ħbieb" (RACHEL p.8) "Jiena nieħu pjaċir eżempju nagħmel ħbieb ġodda"

School Theme 1: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT / LAYOUT			
Coding unit	Description	Quote (kind of school they would not like to attend)	Quote (ideal school)
Concentration	Ability to concentrate amidst distractions	(LIAM p.2) "Din il-klassi jkun fiha ħafna għajjat u jiena biss inkun kwiet. Nipprova nikkonċentra ħafna imma ma nifhimx, qisni ġo moħħi meta immur skola nipprova pereżempju ġo moħħi nipprova nippikturja kollox l-istess imma ma nafx nikkonċentra hekk naħseb nikkonċentra u turina it-teacher, u qed nipprova nikkonċentra għalhekk għandi ktieb." "Għajjat u mhux qed jgħinuni, qed igerfxuli moħħi" (ERIC p.1) "t-teacher qiegħda tispjega u min ipaċpaċ 'l hemm u 'l hawn, u b'hekk ma nistgħax nisma' sew." "Imbagħad hemm min ipaċpaċ waqt il-lezzjoni wkoll"	
Work activities	The work given by the teachers to students		(RACHEL p.1) "Li ma jkollnix ħafna homeworks għax ġieli eżempju nagħmel is-Sibt, Friday inkun nixtieq nagħmel xi ħaġa u ma nkunx nista' nagħmilhom għax ikolli ħafna HW" (LIAM p.4) "U suppost Saturday, tista' ma jkollomx HW"

198

			(LIAM p.5) "Hawn naqra writing"
Copybooks	Amount of copybooks in the classroom	(RACHEL p.2) "jkun hemm ħafna pitazzi"	
Punishment	When other children are punished unfairly, or as a consequence of a student's / few students misbehaviour	(ERIC p.1) "t-tajjeb jeħel mal-ħażin" "Imbagħad jeħilha ħaddieħor li mhux qiegħed jilgħab magħhom" (ERIC p.2) "ma tkunx taf x'jiġri. Imbagħad jeħila kulħadd u mhux sew ukoll" (YANIKA p.2) "xi kultant il-kwiet jeħel" "għax tidħol darba tard il-kwieta, il-kwieta teħilha"	(YANIKA p.10) "Mhux jeħilha l-kwiet ukoll"
Student involvement	Students involved in the design / decorating of classrooms		(LIAM p.5) "U hawn ikollhom, il-floor ikun tas-superheroes, u hawn iwaħħlu xi statue ta' Ġesu' ġos-salib."
Own space in class	Students to have an allocated space for their belongings		(YANIKA p.6) "C: Ikun hemm xi ħaġa biex inżommu l-basktijiet fuqhom għax mal-art ġieli jwaqqgħu xi ilma jew hekk jew inkella jkun għadu ma nixifx xi ħaġa u tħammġu. U xi kultant meta, anke tmur, ikun hemm xi loker għal basktijiet, għax meta tmur it-toilet xi kultant joqgħodu ifittxulek go fih. R: OK. Mela int jogħġbuk l-affarijiet, semmejtli l-hooks jogħġbuk, l-affarijiet li jpoġġu l-affarijiet in order hux hekk? Togħġbok l-ordni hux hekk?"

| | | | C: Organised
R: U togħġbok il-fatt li jkollok dak l-ispazju tiegħek fejn tista' tkun tgħid żammejt l-affarijiet tiegħek mingħajr ħadd ma jmissomlok, hux hekk? Semmejtli il-loker, li jkollok dak is-safe space fejn tista' żżomm xi affarijiet. Sewwa qed ngħid?
C: Ijja." |

School Theme 2: VIOLENT BEHAVIOUR & LANGUAGE			
<u>Coding unit</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Quote</u> (kind of school they would not like to attend)	<u>Quote</u> (ideal school)
Bullying	Bullying amongst students	(ERIC p.4) "Huma qabdu jiġġieldu u jagħtu bil-ponn. Jien aqas ħarist lejhom, vera beżżawni, mhux beżżawni ħadt qata' hekk ta, imma beżżawni jiġifieri ngħid 'Din l-iskola għandha ħafna bullying'" (ERIC p.2) "Eżempju dan xi ħadd joħodlu l-lapes, u l-persuna jrid jerġa jieħdu u joqogħdu iwaddbuh 'l hemm u 'l hawn, u l-oħrajn joqogħdu jilagħbu bil-lapes tiegħu. Imbagħad ikissruhulu"	
Gender-related bullying	Bullying between gender	(YANIKA p.1) "Li ddejjaqni din l-idea tal-boys u girls, li qegħdin flimkien... Għandek il-ġurnata	

200

		sħiħa ma tistax tmur it-toilet. Ma jħallukx tidħol, joqogħdu żewġ boys"	
Rough play	Children playing rough among themselves	(ERIC p.1) "fil-breaks joqogħdu jiġġieldu, jilagħbu goff, ħafna goff." (ERIC p.2) "ħaddieħor joqgħod iweġġa lil xulxin"	(ERIC p.5) "Fil-break eżempju mhux joqogħdu jiġġieldu, joqogħdu jitkellmu fuq affarijiet mhux fil-familja u hekk, jitkellmu affarijiet sbieħ u hekk"
Rude language	Students using offensive language towards teachers	(YANIKA. P.1) "Fejn ikun hemm il-ħamalli... Joffendu t-teachers"	

School Theme 3: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY & BREAKTIME			
Coding unit	Description	Quote (kind of school they would not like to attend)	Quote (ideal school)
Time spent during breaks	Having short breaks	(LIAM p.1) "Nixtieq il-break ikun longer bħal-ischool. Għax it's not fair, għax il-break ma jdumx u l-iskola jdum. At least idum tikka l-break"	
Good use of time when not in class	Maximizing the time outside of class to benefit children	(GARY p.1/2) "Għax ġieli... darba... noqogħdu nilagħbu futbol, u imbgħad il-Miss li jkun hemm tħallina bilqiegħda hekk niċċassaw u ma nagħmlu xejn. Ikolli aptit nibqa' barra."	(LIAM p.4) "ġol-parties, ikollna l-party ta' l-Easter, u meta ikollna, ikollna xi easter egg hunt ġo l-iskola."
Increase in Physical Education lessons	More lessons during the week dedicated for physical education and movement		(LIAM p.4) "ikun hemm PE Monday u Friday... Għax Monday ikun meta it-tfal, it-teachers jgħajtu tikka imma

201

| | | | qisha ikollhom xi party, imma ikollhom l-ischoolwork, kemm ikollhom HW biss. Għalhekk ikollhom PE. U Friday għax l-istess xi ħaġa, għalhekk. U jkollna l-break tikka zgħira iktar longer, għalhekk."
(LIAM p.5)
"Din meta jkollna PE. U hawn miktub "I'm happy" U hawn qed jgħid "Good luck". U ngħidlu "thanks" għax qed nilgħabu futbol fil PE."
(LIAM p.5)
"Dawn it-tfal u jiena inħobbu immorru PE għax it's our favourite day of the year ikollna PE. U jkollna qisha 3 weeks, ikollna PE biss, il- PE jiġu l-morning, jiġi qabel ma nibdew l-iskola, ngħidu prayer u hekk, nibdew PE u mbagħad qabel immorru nagħmlu PE u l-aħħar xi ħaġa qisha ġo nofsinhar."
"Dawn it-tfal iħobbu PE għax huma kull darba li jibdew PE s-sir jgħidilhom "Streċċjaw naqra u ilagħbu naqra futbol qabel tibdew" għax illum ħa nilagħbu futbol, jew baseball u hekk. Joqogħdu jitagħllmu." |
| School holidays | Less time spent at school | | (LIAM p.4)
"C: ...Bħalissa m'hawnx it-tfal hawn għax illum Tuesday ngħidu, Tuesday ma tistgħax tiġi u anke Wednesday u Sunday biss ma tistax tiġi.
R: Jiġifieri Tuesday, Wednesday u Sunday ma tistgħax tmur fiha dil-klassi |

			C: Ma tistgħax. Anke ġol-klassi l-oħra, it's a holiday"

| School Theme 4: SCHOOL BUILDING			
<u>Coding unit</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Quote</u> (kind of school they would not like to attend)	<u>Quote</u> (ideal school)
Stairs	Amount of stairs		(LIAM p.9) "li ma titlax l-istairs" (RACHEL p.1) "Ma jkunx hemm ħafna taraġ pereżempju"
Cleanliness	Level of hygiene around school	(RACHEL p.1) "li jagħmlu, jagħmlu toilet mal-art ġieli"	
Aesthetically attractive	School that looks nice		(LIAM p.3) "Hawn għamilt pathway biex timxi u hawn hawn miktub " Welcome we're glad". U suppost kellha tgħid "Welcome we're glad your're here" imma ma toqgħodx. U l-bieb ikun hemm tnejn, ikollhom windows bil-fjuri, xi fenced roof u qisha ikun hemm gaġġa biċċa hawn u ikun hemm il-ġnien hemm." (LIAM p.9) "Nixtieq ikun hemm xi painting flok ikun hemm xi sign." "Nixtieq bħad-dar tiegħi, jkun hemm fjuri fil-windows ħalli nista' nara l-beauty" (RACHEL p.4) "Tkun ħafna sabiħa eżempju, togħġobni" (RACHEL p.4)

			"C: Din slide u din bandli R: OK. Jiġifieri l-iskola li tixtieq tattendi fiha, tixtieq li jkollha l-bandli wkoll C: Le, jkunu ħdejha" (RACHEL p.7) "Ikun hawn ġnien hawn... jkun hemm pool
Appears restrictive	A school that makes children feel 'locked up' inside		(YANIKA p.5) "Mingħajr gates... Kull ma jkun hemm skola normali imma mingħajr gates. Għax bil-gates tħossa qisha ħabs."
Safety	Keeping furniture and surroundings safe		(YANIKA p.5) "Ma jirranġawx nofs l-iskola jirranġaw l-iskejjel kollha. Aw il-klassijiet kollha, mhux nofs klassijiet... Pereżempju hemm siġġijiet minnhom, kif tpoġġi fuqhom, jaqgħu. Għallinqas ineħħu dawk... Safety"
Windows in classroom	Amount and position of windows in classroom		(LIAM p.9) "ma rridx ħafna windows jew hekk għax imbagħad ma narax sew. Two biss... tweġġa għajnejk mix-xemx minn barra"

School Theme 5: SCHOOL ETHOS			
Coding unit	Description	Quote (kind of school they would not like to attend)	Quote (ideal school)
Altruism	Opportunities to help other children		(GARY p.6) "C: Ġieli qgħadt... kont nieħu ħafna pjaċir ngħin lil tifel fuq wheelchair, nilgħab miegħu, fil-year 2.

			Imbagħad fil-year 3 kellna teacher oħra, kellna LSA, kellha tifla imma. R: Jiġifieri l-fatt li kont tgħin lil tfal oħra, kont tieħu gost? C: Eħe."
Values based on love for others	School that encourages values such as kindness, forgiveness, love		(ERIC p.4) "Li hija tajba mhux ħażina. Li togħġobni, li hija importanti għalija li taħfer. Għax kieku kulħadd kien jaħfer ma kellnix daqshekk ġlied u hekk... mhux forgiving biss, love, li nħobbu lil xulxin mhux eżempju jien inħobb lil ħabib tiegħi biss. Irridu inħobbu lil kulħadd, anke teachers jew adulti, irridu niru rispett ukoll. Imbagħad kindness, inkunu kind ma kulħadd, mhux eżempju jekk naraw persuna inkunu suppervi, eżempju ikun miġġieled, ikollu problemi mal-familja, xorta irridu nuru kindness. Anke fl-iskola. Kindness, love, foregiving... dawk suppost kullimkien, mhux l-iskola biss." "Skola tal-imħabba. Li rari biex issib."
Feeling useful	Taking initiative in helping out adults and peers		(GARY p.6) "Ġieli biex inniżżel il-flus, pereżempju ikollna xi outing, tgħidli, fil-year 1, kienet tgħidli Gary mur agħti dawn lil Ms J. U kont immur intihomla. Fil-year 2, mur agħti dawn lil Ms J. U kont immur. Fil-year 3 ukoll. Kont nieħu pjaċir ħafna." (GARY p.6)

			"C: Kont ngħinha biex inlesti. Tgħidli diġa lest Gary? Tgħidli 'mur ġib xogħlok'. Tikkoreġih Tgħidli 'mur'... pereżempju 'għin lil dak, għin lil dak, għin lil dak u hekk'. Kont nieħu pjaċir." (GARY p.6) "U ġieli qadt qisu... dak li joqgħod itellef, tiktbu fuq il-whiteboard u jkollu 'break in'" (GARY p.8) "C: Il-Madam, ġieli biex noqgħod naqra. R: Kont toqgħod taqralhom? C: Eh."
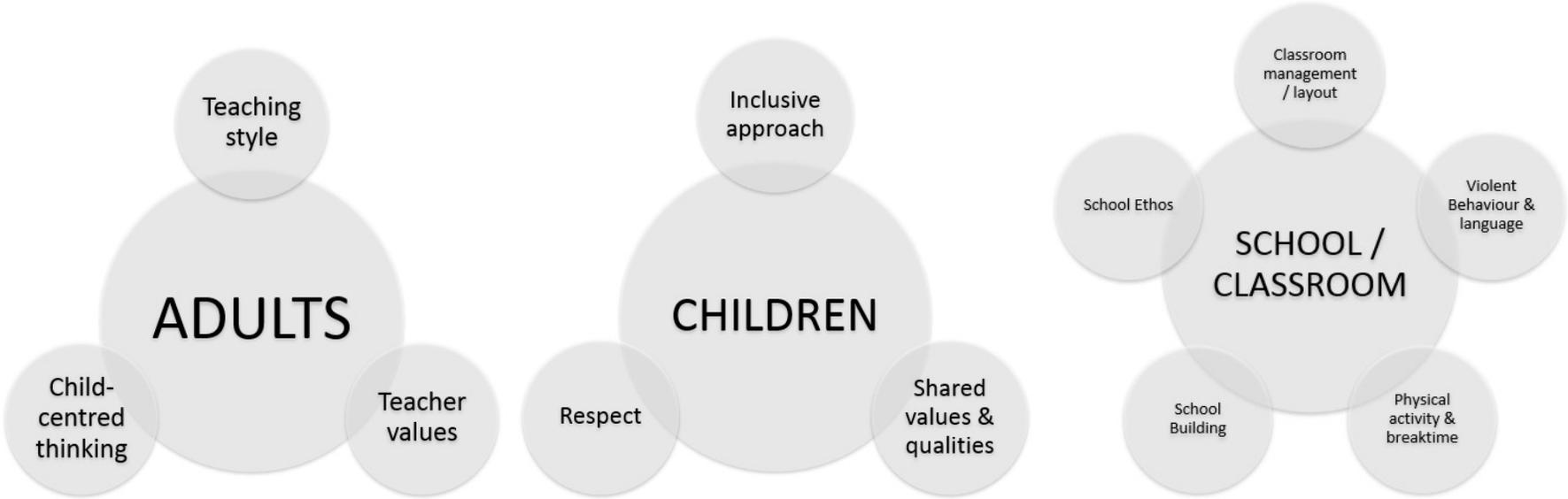
NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION

For research involving human participants
BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

SUPERVISOR: Dr Mary Robinson   **REVIEWER: Luis Jimenez**

STUDENT: Keith Ian Pirotta

Title of proposed study: My Ideal School: A Personal Construct Psychology approach to understanding the School Constructs of Children described as Anxious

Course: Professional Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology

DECISION *(Delete as necessary)***:**

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*APPROVED, BUT MINOR CONDITIONS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES

APPROVED: Ethics approval for the above named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice) to the date it is submitted for assessment/examination.

APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED <u>BEFORE</u> THE RESEARCH COMMENCES (see Minor Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is <u>not</u> required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made <u>before</u> the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box below when all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to her/his supervisor for their records. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.

NOT APPROVED, MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED (see Major Amendments box below)**:** In this circumstance, a revised ethics application must be submitted and approved before any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.

Minor amendments required *(for reviewer)*:

1. Briefing procedure with the actual participating children would also need to be written and included. (besides the information written in the consent form for children). 2. Debriefing procedure with the children would also need to be included (besides the one described as taking place only with the parents of participant children).

Amendments proposed by researcher:

1. During the initial part of the first session with participants, the researcher will introduce oneself, explain what the research is about, and why they have been selected. The researcher will explain that although parents have given permission for their children to take part, the child's consent is also important. The researcher, together with the child will read through the child consent form and both sign if agreed. Before the semi-structured interview starts, the researcher will check if the child is unsure about anything.

2. Towards the end of the final session with the children, it will be explained to them that they will be invited together with their parents for feedback about the results of the study. They will again be reassured that no one will be able to identify the children's drawings. The parents will be invited together with the participants for a group feedback session on the findings of the study. During this session, time will be allowed for parents and children to ask about the drawings, and if requested an individual session with participant and parents to go through their own drawing.

Major amendments required *(for reviewer):*

Confirmation of making the above minor amendments *(for students)*:

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data. Student's name *(Typed name to act as signature):* Keith Pirotta Student number: 1330286   Date: 16.01.2015

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER *(for reviewer)*

If the proposed research could expose the <u>researcher</u> to any of kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard? Please rate the degree of risk:

	HIGH
	MEDIUM
x	LOW

Reviewer comments in relation to researcher risk (if any):

Reviewer *(Typed name to act as signature)*: Dr. Luis Jimenez

Date: 12.01.2015

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee (moderator of School ethics approvals)

PLEASE NOTE:

*For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's insurance and indemnity policy, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

*For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's insurance and indemnity policy, travel approval from UEL (not the School of Psychology) must be gained if a researcher intends to travel overseas to collect data, even if this involves the researcher travelling to his/her home country to conduct the research. Application details can be found here: http://www.uel.ac.uk/gradschool/ethics/fieldwork/

DECV014 - 39

DIRETTORAT GĦAL
KWALITA' U STANDARDS FL-EDUKAZZJONI
FURJANA VLT 2000
MALTA

DIRECTORATE FOR
QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION
FLORIANA VLT 2000
MALTA

Request for Research in State Schools

A. (Please use BLOCK LETTERS)

Surname: PIROTTA   Name: KEITH

I.D. Card Number: 393284 (M)

Telephone No: 21424681 .   Mobile No: 99858316 .

Address: ROSES CRT, APT. 5, TRIQ CARMELO FARRUGIA

Locality: LIJA   Post Code: LJA 1632

E-mail Address: KEITHPIROTTA @ GMAIL.COM

Faculty: PSYCHOLOGY   Course: UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON PROFESSIONAL DOCTORATE IN EDUCATIONAL & CHILD PSYCHOLOGY   Year Ending: 2016

Title of Research: MY IDEAL SCHOOL: A PERSONAL CONSTRUCT PSYCHOLOGY APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING THE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTS OF CHILDREN DESCRIBED AS ANXIOUS.

Aims of research: ☐ Long Essay   ☐ Dissertation   ☑ Thesis   ☐ Publication

Time Frame: FEB 2015 - JUNE 2015 (DATA COLLECTION)   Language Used: ENGLISH/MALTESE

Description of methodology: REFER TO ATTACHED.

School/s where research is to be carried out: Depending on population sample. Primary schools within state colleges.

Years / Forms: 3-6   Age range of students: 7-11

* Telephone and mobile numbers will only be used in strict confidence and will not be divulged to third parties.
I accept to abide by the rules and regulations re Research in State Schools and to comply with the
Data Protection Act 2001.
Warning to applicants - Any false statement, misrepresentation of concealment of material fact on this
form or any document presented in support of this application may be grounds for criminal prosecution.

Signature of applicant: _____   Date: 17/12/14

1

B. Tutor's Approval (where applicable)

The above research work is being carried out under my supervision.

Tutor's Name: Dr MARY ROBINSON Signature: _May Robinson_

Faculty: PSYCHOLOGY   Faculty Stamp:

UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON
SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY
WATER LANE
LONDON E15 4LZ
TEL 020 8223 3000

C. Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education Office Approval

The above request for permission to carry out research in State Schools is granted/approved according
to the official rules and regulations, subject to approval from the University of Malta Ethics Committee.

RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
DEPARTMENT
Ministry for Education and Employment
Floriana VLT 2000

Date: 05 / 01 / 2015   Official Stamp

Louis Scerri
(Research and Development Department)
Assistant Director
Research and Development
Department

Director

Conditions for the approval of a request by a student to carry out research work in State Schools

Permission for research in State Schools is subject to the following conditions:

1. The official request form is to be accompanied by a copy of the questionnaire and / or any relevant material intended for use in schools during research work.

2. The original request form, showing the relevant signatures and approval, must be presented to the Head of School.

3. All research work is carried out at the discretion of the relative Head of School and subject to their conditions.

4. Researchers are to observe strict confidentiality at all times.

5. The Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education reserves the right to withdraw permission to carry out research in State Schools at any time and without prior notice.

6. Students are expected to restrict their research to a minimum of students / teachers / administrators / schools, and to avoid any waste of time during their visits to schools.

7. As soon as the research in question is completed, the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education assumes the right to a full copy (in print/on C.D.) of the research work carried out in State Schools. **Researchers are to forward the copies to the Assistant Director, International Research, Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education.**

8. Researchers are to hand a copy of their Research in print or on C.D. to the relative School/s.

9. In the case of video recordings, researchers have to obtain prior permission from the Head of School and the teacher of the class concerned. Any adults recognisable in the video are to give their explicit consent. Parents of students recognisable in the video are also to be requested to approve that their siblings may be video-recorded. Two copies of the consent forms are necessary, one copy is to be deposited with the Head of School, and the other copy is to accompany the Request Form for Research in State Schools. Once the video recording is completed, one copy of the videotape is to be forwarded to the Head of School. The Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education reserves the right to request another copy.

10. The video recording's use is to be limited to this sole research and may not be used for other research without the full consent of interested parties including the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education.

2