Challenging behaviour in primary schools: How is the problem constructed by professionals in North West England?

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Abbreviations and Glossary

ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder	
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group –	This is a group of General Practitioner's from practices within a local authority
BESD	Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development	
DMDD	Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder	
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan–	This is part of the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice, it is a planning process used to assess pupils needs
FSM	Free school meal	
KS1	Key Stage 1	Mainstream school pupils age 5-7 years.
KS2	Key Stage 2	Mainstream school pupils age 7-11 years.
NG's	Nurture Groups	A provision to support pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	
Ofsted	Office for Standards in Education	
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment	
PPA	Preparation, Planning and Assessment	This is allocated time given to teachers each week out of the classroom
SEMHD	Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties	A category within the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice in which pupils with 'challenging' behaviour may be placed.
SEN	Special Educational Needs	
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator	
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability	

Abstract

The management of 'challenging' behaviour plays a central role in primary schools. However, there are no consistent answers to why behaviour is perceived to be a problem across time and place. The aim of this study was to explore challenging behaviour and how it is constructed as a problem by professionals in mainstream primary schools in North West England. Three research questions shaped the study:

1. What actions are applied, by professionals to pupils defined as having challenging behaviour?
2. How is professional knowledge and discourse mobilised to justify these actions?
3. How is challenging behaviour constructed, by professionals , as a problem in the case study primary schools?

The research was designed as a qualitative single case study that included three embedded sub-units of analysis. I analysed the perspectives of 10 staff from two mainstream schools and three staff from the local authority. The works of Michel Foucault and his commentators formed the basis of the theoretical framework.

The study found competing perspectives amongst practitioners regarding the problem of challenging behaviour. Pupils deviating from behavioural expectations were often identified based on their lack of self-regulation or productivity. A small proportion of pupils were categorised by schools as unmanageable and needing alternative educational provision. Implementation of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE,2015) was found to be problematic and the interpretation of this code raises the risk of pupils becoming wrongly medicalised.

The problem of challenging behaviour was constructed by schools as a lack of resources and support from the local authority. The local authority locates the problem and solutions with schools' behaviour management strategies and their utilisation of resources. Deconstructing different representations of challenging behaviours provides an opportunity to improve joint working, policy implementation and, most importantly, to resisting a focus on solutions in order to better understand how the construction of the problem shapes educational experience.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.0 Confronting the 'problem' of challenging behaviour

This thesis explores the issue of challenging behaviour, which is a research 'problem' that has emerged from my professional practice. I have been a qualified primary school teacher for thirteen years and have worked in several schools within North West England. I have worked as a mainstream class teacher, behaviour support teacher and behaviour support unit manager, and have taken the lead on 'looked after' children within a mainstream school (LAC Teacher). Before entering the teaching profession I had a successful career in senior management across national health services (NHS) and social care sectors. Throughout my whole career I have developed a breadth of experience in policy implementation and practice related to children and families. I have often been appointed to a position to either implement change or identify and solve a perceived problem. I have always been interested in and equally frustrated by how, as professionals, we problematise individuals, groups or situations based on very little reflection on how the problem is constructed. 'Challenging' behaviour is a contested term adopted by schools to define pupil behaviour that teachers may find difficult to manage. As a teacher, the constant inconsistencies I found in the response to pupils perceived to be 'difficult' or 'challenging', and thus identified as a problem, lead me to pursue this study.

At the start of the academic year in 2016, I received a call from the newly appointed headteacher at Orchard Grove Primary School. This is the school that I had successfully trained in and previously worked for as a class teacher. The headteacher said she had heard that I was very good at working with 'difficult pupils', of which the school appeared to have several. The school was perceived by the headteacher, staff and local authority (LA) as being in crisis, especially in key stage two (KS2). After further discussions and meetings, I was offered the position of behaviour support teacher and manager of a temporary small behaviour support unit (BSU), located in the school building and close to mainstream classes. The BSU initially had six full-time pupils (identified as the most 'challenging' by senior staff) who attended the unit instead of their mainstream class. Other pupils came into the

unit when they were perceived as unable to manage their behaviour in mainstream classrooms.

In the weeks before I formally took up my position, I went into the school, observed both pupils and staff and recorded observations in my reflective journal. Having worked at the school previously, I already knew some of the pupils and staff. I observed that there were very few un-disrupted lessons taking place. In both corridors and classrooms, pupils were displaying aggressive behaviour (e.g. physically attacking staff and property, verbally abusive), resulting in a significant amount of physical restraints made on pupils by teaching staff. Short term exclusions had increased and several pupils were on the verge of permanent exclusion as staff found them unmanageable. Once I had taken up the post of managing the BSU, I had several meetings and made day-to-day observations of staff and pupils. Both groups often came across as believing they were treated unjustly. Several teachers believed that, in any other school, the 'challenging' pupils would have been excluded. They felt they should not have to deal with such behaviour and did not understand why certain pupils had not been permanently excluded. Pupils believed that staff did not listen or care, with pupils often questioning why they had to stay in the BSU and not be in their class. Pupils often felt that they were not at fault, with some expressing hatred for the staff and school.

A behaviour support team was established with four regular core members of staff (including myself) and also, if necessary, we drew upon the availability of teaching assistants throughout the school. The core team were strongly committed to advocating on behalf of pupils, while at the same time supporting teaching staff. By listening and gaining trust, I and other staff began to unravel the many frustrations of staff and pupils. It became clear that there were many elements to the problematisation of pupil's behaviour. We gradually began to break down some of the constructs underpinning the problem including pressures and expectations around the curriculum, clarity around the behaviour policy, behaviour management training, pupils learning barriers, and parent involvement and support. However, what was still very apparent was that staff were not consistent in terms of when, how and why a pupil was deemed to become 'challenging'.

I also found this to be the case when discussing 'challenging' behaviour in external networks. Educational professionals including teaching staff, and LA staff (such as social workers, educational psychologists, behaviour support specialists etc), appeared to have no clear understanding or agreement as to when a pupil is or should be identified as 'challenging.' For example, in some schools a pupil consistently talking in class or not completing tasks was identified as 'challenging' whereas in another school, or even within the same school, such behaviour was not perceived as challenging. Within the LA's geographical area, the number of referrals to the behaviour specialist school had increased to the point where they extended the school, but still had demands for places that outstretched availability. When demand for places cannot be met, pupils are at risk of being placed outside of the LA's geographical area or they may continue to be placed in a school that has been identified by school staff as not meeting their needs. I felt that exploring how and why challenging behaviour is problematised within mainstream schools may provide a greater understanding of the increased demand for placements in a specialist behaviour school.

I had hands on experience of the challenges facing Orchard Grove School (pseudonym) and although I began to unravel the constructs around challenging behaviour, I wanted to explore this phenomenon further. There has been much written on pupil's behaviour and how it is perceived by teaching staff (Childerhouse, 2017; Baars and Menzies, 2015; Cole and Knowles, MacLure et al, 2012; 2011; Macleod, 2006; Emerson, 2001). Having moved on from Orchard Grove, and two years into my five-year doctorate course, I decided to broaden my own professional understanding and explore how challenging behaviour is constructed as a problem.

1.2 Contextualising the problem of challenging behaviour in English schools

Teachers in England are required to manage pupil behaviour as part of their professional performance as outlined in the teaching standards (DfE, 2012). The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) is a (non-ministerial) department of the UK government, responsible for inspecting school standards including those related to pupil behaviour. When schools are inspected by Ofsted there are four possible gradings that a school can receive: Grade 1: Outstanding; Grade 2: Good; Grade 3:

Requires Improvement; and Grade 4: Inadequate. Alongside academic progress, managing pupils' behaviour is a familiar daily undertaking for teaching staff. Over recent decades, behaviour management has emerged as an area of professional training and development that has generated many 'tools' and approaches. Different approaches, from zero tolerance of pupils not abiding by school rules and behaviour policies to more nurturing strategies, have been implemented with varying degrees of success (Dix, 2017; Bennet, 2017; DfE, 2016; Menzies and Baars, 2015; Ofsted, 2012; Emerson, 2001; Cooper,1999)

There are no exact definitions of challenging behaviour that professional judgments are built upon. If a pupil is not adhering to rules and expectations, their behaviour may become categorised as 'challenging'. However, this category is not static and behaviour may be viewed differently depending on the context and rules of a given time and place. The categorisation and problematisation of challenging behaviour encompass different contextual features such as environment and social and cultural expectations (Cole and Knowles, 2011; Emerson, 2001; Cooper, 1999). An emphasis on 'fixing' the pupil is often seen as the solution when their behaviour is deemed challenging and problematic (Maguire et al, 2010). An increased number of pupils identified as 'challenging' and unmanageable in mainstream schools has resulted in higher referrals and admission to alternative provision such as special schools and pupil referral units (DfE, 2017; HoC, 2018).

In September 2014, the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice was published with the expectation that professionals identify the underlying reasons why pupils may present with 'challenging' behaviour. This policy drew attention to causation as the problem. Pupils consistently identified as presenting with challenging behaviour may be categorised as having or experiencing 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties'(SEMHD). However, a recent report by the Department of Education highlighted several problems in relation to the implementation of the SEND Code of Practice (DfE, 2019). The report highlights miscommunication between schools and the LA, and a lack of robust systems to ensure pupils needing support can access it. Over the last few decades, researchers have suggested that schools and LAs are constantly under pressure to deliver improved academic results that are regularly monitored by government

agencies such as Ofsted (Brown and Carr, 2019; Popkewitz, 2012; Ball, 2003;1993). As demands on school's increase, resources are further stretched and policies and guidelines, such as the SEND Code of Practice, highlight the difficulty in locating a planned and/or open assessment of resources to implement government policy (HoC,2018). Clarity on how challenging behaviour is problematised is difficult to achieve if different stakeholders, such as those within schools and LA's, have varied interpretations of what the 'problem' is.

The expectations and descriptions of pupils behaviour have been continually reviewed and changed within English schools. Currently, behaviours perceived to fall outside of expected norms are often categorised and placed within an educational, social and health model that is supported by policy such as the SEND Code of Practice. This policy is also influenced by debates surrounding two main competing models of disability: (1) a social model; and (2) a medical model. The social model does not identify the individual with special educational needs and disabilities as the problem. Instead, the problem is located in society and a pupil's difficulty accessing society is attributed to factors such as a lack of responsiveness or support. In contrast, the medical model assumes that a pupil's disabilities are the problem and need to be fixed. As Childerhouse argues, 'professionals implementing the documentation[SEND Code of Practice], such as classroom teachers, will be influenced by the discourses dominant within the policies' (2017:21). Although this study will not explore these models of disability in great depth, it is important to note how the SEND Code of Practice (DfE,2015) and practitioners may be influenced by these two models and associated discourses.

Education policy is often a complicated tool of control and becomes construed in different ways as it is enacted. The expectations and pressures upon professionals to enact a policy are often compounded by the differing perceptions and discourses that shape the interpretation and implementation of individual or competing policies (Casmiro, 2016; Braun et al., 2011; Ball, 1993). Therefore, this study attempts to unravel some of the complexities of policy and practice infrastructures in relation to challenging behaviour. As a practitioner and researcher, I believe there is a need to revisit policies and practices, in order to critically analyse the discursive

constructions underpinning how a problem such as 'challenging' behaviour is represented.

1.3 Aim and approaches

The aim of this study was to explore how challenging behaviour is constructed, by professionals, in mainstream primary schools in North West England. The study examined how pupils with challenging behaviour are identified and understood to be problematic. Three main research questions guided my investigation:

1. What actions are applied, by professionals, to pupils defined as having challenging behaviour?
2. How is professional knowledge and discourse mobilised to justify these actions?
3. How is challenging behaviour constructed, by professionals, as a problem in the case study primary schools?

The order of questions reflects my initial focus on concrete practices before moving to consider how practice and discourse shape the construction of the problem. I chose an interpretive qualitative approach to gain a more in-depth understanding of participant's perspectives. I adopted an embedded single case study design, as described by Yin (2003), allowing me to collate data from different sources within the same context. Initially, I focused my research within two mainstream primary schools and used pseudonyms – Orchard Grove Primary School and Treetop Primary School . As the study evolved, it was evident that the LA, who govern these schools and also supply services to support pupils, were often perceived by school participants as part of the 'problem'. I therefore decided to include LA participants to enrich my data and provide a more balanced analysis.

My theoretical framework is underpinned by a Foucauldian perspective. Michel Foucault's works on power, governmentality, discourse and knowledge provides appropriate 'tools' to explore educational infrastructures and policies. Foucault (1972; 1975;1977) identifies discourse as a process that establishes and embeds knowledge within practice. Foucault does not look to solve problems, but rather seeks to understand how problems have been constructed, as I aimed to do in this study. Having first looked at practice applied to pupils defined as having 'challenging' behaviour, I then worked up to the analysis of discourse. I used

thematic analysis informed by a Foucauldian discourse analysis approach to identify patterns across the data. I have also drawn on the work of several authors who have developed approaches drawing on Foucault (Bacchi, 2012; Graham, 2011; Hacking, 2007). The work of these scholars transports Foucault's concepts into the exploration of contemporary education, making his ideas and concepts more easily accessible to practitioners and researchers. Hacking (2007) provides a contemporary interpretation of how discourse becomes knowledge. He refers to 'engines of discovery' and emphasises how administrative systems are used by professionals to mobilise discourse in the assimilation of knowledge and to establish 'truths'. Graham (2005; 2011) conducted research in primary schools in Australia and demonstrated how a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis, can be successfully applied to interpret and analyse the problematisation of challenging behaviour. Although drawing upon Graham's work, this study applies Foucauldian discourse analysis in the different context of English schools and specifically in relation to my own professional practice. The works of Bacchi (2012), particularly her 'What is the problem represented to be?' (WPR) framework, has provided a practical approach to investigate how and why a problem is constructed. Bacchi highlights how the analysis of policy and practice provide an insight into the interpretations of a given 'problem' and what is left unproblematised.

Applying this Foucauldian lens, I endeavoured throughout this research to deconstruct established 'truths' embedded within discourses that shape education policy and practice relating to behaviour. I have explored and attempted to understand and interpret the perspectives of my participants and how discourse and power relations exist within educational practice in my study sites. This study thus aims to provide insights into how educational professionals problematise pupils perceived to display 'challenging' behaviour, in order to provide practitioners and researchers with a greater understanding of how discourse shapes educational practice and the categorisation of pupils.

1.4 Outline of the following chapters

In Chapter 2, I review relevant bodies of theoretical and empirical literature. I draw upon key works of Foucault (1979; 1977; 1973; 1972) and other scholars inspired by his works. Through this Foucauldian lens, I illustrate how knowledge underpins

discourse and how the body and social institutions are continually shaped by political infrastructures. Then, I analyse how technologies of disciplinary power are utilised to create a divide between expected behavioural 'norms' and 'others' whose behaviours fall outside the boundaries of 'normality'. I also identify how disciplinary mechanisms such as separation and partition are used to create closed and excluded communities (Foucault,1977; Elden, 2003). Drawing on the work of Hacking (2007), I demonstrate how knowledge and discourse that underpins the development of labels assigned to people with certain behaviours can be critically interrogated using his framework. The limitations of a Foucauldian approach are explored with reference to alternative theorists who argue for a move away from, or further development of, Foucauldian models (Feher, 2009; Fraser, 2003; Deleuze,1992). I then engage with the work of several authors who have explored and analysed the categorisation and responses to pupil behaviour (Childerhouse, 2017; McClusky et al, 2016; Maguire et al, 2010; Macleod 2006; Graham, 2005). I also draw upon 'grey' literature, such government reports and policies, relating to pupil behaviour management. In particular, I explore the SEND Code of Practice and studies related to the implementation of this Code. Analysing both theoretical and grey literature, offers the opportunity to deconstruct how challenging behaviour is problematised and how different constructions of the 'problem' may have implications for the 'solutions' pursued by stakeholders.

In Chapter 3, I provide an account of the journey I took to define and shape the theoretical framework of my study. I begin by considering different research paradigms and recognise that there is not a clear alignment between methodologies and paradigms. Although Foucault does not provide general methods for a qualitative study of this type, he does provide an approach to working with discourse that can be applied when analysing my participants' responses. This is evident in the works of Graham (2011; 2005) and Bacchi (2012) who both draw on Foucault's notion of discourse to develop concrete tools for analysing policy and practice. I introduce and discuss their work, explaining why I have drawn upon it in my study. I justify how and why I used an embedded single case study (Yin, 2003) to answer the research questions by conducting fieldwork in two primary schools and one LA in the North West England. I also provide a detailed account of the research context

and the methods used in the collection and analysis of data. Finally, I consider researcher positioning and ethical considerations.

In Chapter 4, I provide a detailed analysis and discussion of the findings. Three main themes are identified in response to my research questions:

(1) How is challenging behaviour perceived;

(2) Responding to challenging behaviour; and

(3) Managing resources.

I also explore participant's solutions to the problems they identified. By applying Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach, I identify several silences within the problematisation of challenging behaviour. I apply Bacchi's main questions to identify how the problem is represented and align these with examples of the analysed data from the case study. This provides an insight into how schools and the LA have constructed the problem of challenging behaviour differently.

In Chapter 5, I return to the research questions and provide answers based on my findings. I also suggest areas for future research and practice, before highlighting the overall significance and contribution of the study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

The focus of the study is how professional's perceptions frame 'problem' pupils, within educational knowledge and discourse, and specifically in the case study schools and their contexts. In this chapter consideration and discussion is given to literature pertaining to the evolvement and mobilisation of discourse and knowledge within an academic and empirical setting. This provides a theoretical framework in which to identify with the context of the study focus. I review a combination of Foucauldian literature that is used to inform my theoretical framework, as well as empirical literature on education policy and, specifically, special educational needs and disability (SEND) policies and practices.

In the first main section, I explore the works of Michel Foucault to provide philosophical and historical context to my research. I use a Foucauldian perspective to explore educational infrastructures and policies. Key concepts from Foucault's works such as governmentality, technologies of power, knowledge and discourse are examined. I also discuss the work of Ian Hacking who argues that knowledge is constructed to categorise people, and this categorisation feeds into practice, administrative systems and subjectivities. I continue this first main section by discussing the notion of problematisation to understand how policy problems are constructed, perceived and interpreted. A discussion of the limitations of a Foucauldian approach concludes this section.

The next main section will examine education policy, including in a global context. I will look at what constitutes policy, identifying how texts, technologies and discourses underpin the knowledge that regulates policy through a particular mode of power and control. The final section will then focus on government approaches to pupils presenting with challenging behaviour. I will explore how policy and professionals respond to challenging behaviour. In particular, I will discuss the more recent categorisation of behaviour within the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE,2015) and how this policy is implemented and reviewed. The concluding part of this section will analyse the resource

implications of responding to pupils perceived to be presenting with challenging behaviour.

2.1 Applying Foucault to study the schooling of pupils under SEND

Foucauldian theories provide a theoretical framework to understand how governmentality and technologies of power are weaved into the micro-dynamics of everyday life. In this section, I examine Foucault's understanding of problematisation as an attempt to deconstruct established 'truths' that have been woven through discursive frameworks. I draw on primary texts authored by Foucault and relevant secondary literature. Finally, to give a more balanced assessment of Foucault's work, I examine the limitations to his approach in current times.

2.1.1 Foucault and Genealogy

Drawing on Foucauldian theories of knowledge, power and control provides this study with a theoretical framework to explore how professionals work within contexts shaped by discourse to legitimise and reproduce knowledge as a tool of power and control. Foucault builds on Nietzsche's writings on genealogy, in which he explores how history emerges and can be studied through an archaeology of knowledge. In particular, Nietzsche argued that to understand the origins of history it is necessary to understand how intellectual and moral trends shape the establishment of 'facts' and the interpretation of truths. Foucault also believed in critically analysing 'truths', arguing that 'history is inherently flawed if conducted as a search for "origins"…genealogy is an alternative approach' (Prado, 2000:33). Genealogy can be used to explore historical data, but not in the traditional linear approach of sequencing events. Instead, it focuses on 'what has not been revealed' and the critical yet small details that shape history. This study is not driven by a genealogical approach and in-depth analysis of historical data. However, it is useful to draw on Foucault's' analysis of how 'truths' in the present are established and to explore how discourse is woven within the problematisation of a phenomenon, such as challenging behaviour.

Foucault's main works that employ his genealogical method are *Discipline and Punish (1977), The Birth of the Clinic (1973)* and *The History of Sexuality (1976)*. In these works, Foucault uses historical data to illustrate how knowledge is underpinned by discourse, and how power relations may redirect and alter discourse to redefine knowledge and 'truths'. Foucault argues that knowledge is imbricated with power. In his genealogical work, he explores the shifting ways that the body and social institutions have been shaped by and operate within political infrastructures. He identifies how separation, such as exclusion and use of confined space, as in prisons or with medical patients, constitutes a technology of control to demarcate deviations from the 'norm' (Foucault, 1977;1988). Such technologies of control are used within schools, for example, to manage pupils who deviate from the expected 'normal' behaviour and are thus separated by moving them into another location away from mainstream classrooms. Foucault also discusses *objectification*, where domination is more oblique and wrapped in scientific classification; for example, how the body was seen as an object that could be represented through scientific classification. Returning to the example of schools, the increased number of pupils identified as having a medical condition such as an 'attention deficit hyperactivity disorder' (ADHD) or autism is an example of such classification (Graham, 2005). Scientific classifications become a technique of control providing the 'expert' with powerful knowledge (facts, evidence) to label an individual and separate them from the 'norm' (Hacking, 2007). Foucault also identifies modes of *subjectification*, through which the individual produces himself or herself as a subject (Rabinow,1984). For example, an individual may be active in identifying themselves with a category, such as pupils who self-identify with a particular sexual orientation or religion.

Genealogy, the approach used by Foucault, was used in this study to understand how the body is dominated and manoeuvred within contemporary political and social infrastructures, helping one to establish not the truth or validity of a categorisation or label, but how, when and through what processes it evolved. Hook maintains that 'genealogy thus is not directed primarily towards the cultivation of knowledge - and certainly not the "discovery of truth" - but rather towards the generation of critique' (2005:7). Critiquing the formulation of a category or label, such as in this study regarding the problematisation of challenging behaviour, assists with the unravelling

of the reasoning and perceptions underpinning a given categorisation. As Tamboukou explains, 'genealogy [involves] attempting to go further by tracing possible ways of thinking differently, instead of accepting and legitimating what are already the 'truths' of our world' (1999:203).

Foucault did not write an extended history of education or focus on it to the same extent as other institutions and practices such as prisons, sexuality and medicine, but his fundamental beliefs about how governmentality and power structures emerge within institutions can be used to understand aspects of educational institutions and practices. As Prado (2020:3) notes, '[t]here is no single work that adequately represents the complex, variegated and evolutionary totality of Foucault's vision. In fact, Foucault's work resists holistic interpretation'. This study does not involve a detailed and systematic application of Foucault or, indeed, an analysis of the many facets of education, but draws on relevant aspects of Foucault's work to gain insight into the management of challenging behaviour in schools. Whilst Foucault conducted his work through genealogical-historical approaches, this thesis utilises Foucauldian concepts to examine contemporary educational practices. Attempting to unravel educational institutions and practice, using Foucault's 'tool kit,' may produce findings that contradict or question our professional and/or personal perceptions of our actions or practice and can be, as Leask states, 'a decidedly fraught affair' (2012:58). Contemporary scholars such as Hacking (2007), Graham (2011) and Bacchi (2012), bring Foucault's ideas and concepts alive, giving practitioners a way to examine a phenomenon such as challenging behaviour. The work of such scholars provides practical tools to explore how education is governed, and how educational practice and its agents become entangled in technologies of power. Moreover, examining discourse and knowledge that shapes education governance allows greater insight into otherwise less visible elements of our educational systems.

2.1.2 Governmentality

In his historical exploration of how societies have been governed, Foucault argued that the use of political economy, population statistics and the development of a whole complex of knowledges, constituted an apparatus that moved control away

from the territoriality of feudal systems to customary law that shaped sovereignty (Faubion, 1994). Foucault believed that due to the growth in society, power evolved in ways that meant that autocrats could no longer effectively hold onto sovereign power (Perryman et al, 2017). Collating and analysing statistics created a new type of political rationality and became the science of state power. Foucault (1984) believed that a new regime of power emerged as state administration of the population evolved. He termed this new regime 'bio-power', which involves the categorisation of the human species according to, for example, patterns in births, deaths and marriages within a population. The regime of biopower constructs human features and behaviours as an object of political power. This knowledge construes a population into a society that becomes governable. Bio-power creates a technology of security in terms of knowing more about a population in order to protect and provide for it, but also creates an inter-dependant technology of discipline by using patterns of statistics to direct people to act in the interest of the population. The body is objectified in order that it be controlled and manipulated by technologies that join together knowledge and power (Rabinow, 1984). Bio-power brings with it the creation of the political subject, who is the object of state power and a docile body within this regime.

Foucault (1984) used the term governmentality to describe the technologies of modern government. Through a Foucauldian lens, government is an administrative apparatus that uses technologies of power and technologies of self. These technologies become interconnected and are often disguised within an infrastructure that uses agents to manage a population in particular ways. For example, in education there are many agents such as the LA and school personnel who work to enact the government's administrative directives, including policies and guidelines. Polices such as those relating to special educational needs and managing behaviour are built upon bodies of knowledge that guide an 'army' of agents in the 'battle' to secure and control a given population. The knowledge that underpins government guidance and how it directs practice is important and must be carefully analysed to unravel how a problematisation of a population has been constructed. As Bacchi (2010) suggests, when taking a Foucauldian perspective, we should not study government in a narrow sense, but rather the array of knowledges and practices that underpin government policies. Foucault understands

power in the context of governmentality to be devolved and distributed within social technologies. Although government administers the apparatus of control, there will be 'definite, albeit unpredictable ends' (Powell, 2018:300) as agents use technologies and bodies of knowledge to guide conduct.

In education, we have seen the increased use of technical tools in the management of school performance. The state exercises its power over the population through agents and techniques such as educational leaders and policymakers who use numbers, measurements and comparison as governance tools (Ball, 2013). By understanding how technologies of governance are used within schools, we are able to analyse the political rationalities and mechanisms that underpin governmentality (Powell, 2018). As individuals, we do regulate our conduct and as Perryman et al. (2017) argue, governmentality describes how and why the self, shapes its own conduct, which is not only a matter of global, national and local political control. For example, a teacher wanting to be acknowledged as effective will regulate their behaviour in particular ways depending on the context. They will shape their practice to meet the criteria that are encompassed within the body of knowledge that defines a teacher as 'good' or 'outstanding'; for example, improved pupil performance and behaviour. It can thus be argued that governmentality plays a 'double trick' of achieving individual accountability for performance and instilling the belief that changing outcomes requires improving the teacher's psychological approach to them (Brown and Carr, 2019). Such performativity and accountability culture, according to Ball, have a personal psychological impact on individual teachers, possibly resulting in 'value schizophrenia as commitment, judgement and authenticity in practice is sacrificed for impression and performance' (2003:221).

2.1.3 Technologies of Power

Foucault's view of history, as expressed in *Discipline and Punish(1977)*, focuses upon discontinuity in terms of shifts in practices like punishment, torture, discipline and so on. For example, in the past there were a small number of crimes which would be publicly punished in terms of torture, whereas now we have many more crimes that can be punished, but we appear to punish less harshly and less publicly. Foucault does not look at witness accounts of prison or reports of events that have happened. Instead, he focuses on plans and ideas about how a structure might

develop through power and knowledge—or discourse, focusing on what is accepted as 'truth' by people and groups. Therefore, primarily recognizing the political and scientific regimes that are widely interpreted and constantly redefined.

Foucault's theories on power offer advantages over other approaches like Marxism, where power is viewed as being held by a dominant group. Foucault sees power as being distributed and usually hidden in the micro-dynamics of everyday life (Foucault, 1977; Foucault,1980). Power is not necessarily negative, except when it is misused (Ball, 2013). What constitutes a misuse, may differ according to who exerts the power and who is affected by it. For example, a pupil being disciplined by a teacher for their behaviour may feel this is a misuse of power if they perceive their behaviour as acceptable. The teacher may see disciplining the pupil as productive because it prevents behaviour that is unproductive for creating a particular learning environment. Ball argues that power is thus not merely prohibitive, but also productive and discursive (2013). How one perceives power and/or utilises it will impact on how acceptable it may be. In order for power to be accepted and have its hold, it should not only be an external force but also a force that 'traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse' (Rabinow, 1984:61).

Foucault (1977) is well known for his work on the panopticon model and the use of surveillance to manipulate the subject and produce forms of self-control. Jeremy Bentham, who developed the panopticon model and who believed in the utilitarian pursuit of the greatest good for the greatest number, thought the panopticon would aid social improvement because of its efficiency. He presented it not as a tool of oppression but of improvement, but as Foucault observed, it is still a tool of control. The ultimate aim of the model is to produce the effect that the observed (prisoners) feel as though they are being watched all of the time. In terms of surveillance, Foucault uses it to describe not just observing but over-seeing in order to change or affect something. It is not passive; it seeks to enact power by encouraging the observed to self-regulate their behaviour in a certain way. It is important to remember that the panopticon is a theory and not a reality; the panopticon was never actually introduced in a prison in its original form. Rather than an actual apparatus of surveillance, the panopticon could also be seen as a metaphor for

technologies of the self with roots in educational institutions. As Deacon notes, in an often-overlooked comment Foucault observes that 'it was a school, the 'pedagogical machine' of the Ecole Militaire, that may have provided the inspiration for the panopticon' (2006:181).

The panopticon model can be used as a tool to consider how power is constructed through surveillance and discipline in schools and other educational institutions. In principle, the panopticon design has never worked very well. Gallagher (2010) explains that the panopticon is a model where power is exercised through surveillance. He quotes Elden (2003), who argues that it may be useful to look upon the panopticon as the culmination of disciplinary power, rather than its most basic form. Gallagher suggests that analysis of schools will benefit most if they take the panopticon as a point of departure, not as a direct model or tool to be directly applied but something to move beyond. His data suggests that surveillance is far more messy, complicated and compromised than the idealised scheme of the panopticon might suggest. Foucault does not see surveillance as a clearly defined tool or practice; it is complicated and does not just consist of actual observation but includes the compiling of detailed dossiers and reports that track the behaviours of those being observed (Prado, 2018:63).

Foucault (1977) contrasts the panopticon model with the outbreak of leprosy in a town to distinguish between mechanisms of disciplinary power. The Panopticon, unlike the plague, is a 'generalizable model of functioning; a way of defining power relations in terms of the everyday life of men' (Foucault,1977:205). Normalisation in the form of rules, judgements and regimes becomes a tool of power. As explained by Rabinow, Foucault defines normalisation as 'a systematic creation, classification and control of "anomalies" in the social body' (1984:21). Technologies of normalisation are techniques for dealing with anomalies such as social deviations. Thus, while Foucault saw the Panopticon as a form of architecture, he understood it primarily as a technology of government. He believed the Panopticon functioned as a laboratory of power (1977).

In the plague -stricken town, power is immobilised as the lepers are separated from the 'normal' population and become an exiled community. The fear of the plague

creates the disciplinary mechanisms to control the 'abnormal' individuals – to exclude them. New mechanisms of separation and partition are mobilised, firstly by creating an enclosed community of exiled lepers and a separately located pure community, and secondly by creating a disciplined society (Foucault,1977). Elden's work highlights the use of space and separation, as in the leper colony, as a technology of control, arguing that many followers of Foucault concentrate on the panopticon model. He argues less importance is given to the other valuable aspects of his work, such as his analysis of how lepers and people with the plague were dealt with by separating them and thus excluding them from uninfected communities (2003:243).

According to Foucault (1977), mechanisms of disciplinary power are used to maintain control by making people more docile. For example, we teach children how to sit still and be obedient, making them less resistant by creating a 'norm' of self-regulation. As teachers we often stand at the front of a classroom to survey and identify pupil's behaviour; however, it is the pupil's perception of being observed that encourages their self-regulation rather than the teacher's ability to individually and continuously observe and control each pupil. Gallagher (2010) argues that surveillance is a discontinuous process that cannot guarantee docility in the classroom, although it is and was widely used by teachers. Docility was found to be the aim of strategies used within schools, and not an embedded part of the institutional structure, that was only ever partially and temporarily effective. He suggests surveillance should be seen as activities designed primarily to produce an illusion of control in the face of untamable chaos.

Technologies of power are not just used by the elite, they are woven into everyday structures within our work, home and social lives, and as agents we contribute to how power is distributed. According to Villadsen (2006:3), Foucault challenges the impression that repressive power is held at the centre of the modern state, arguing that it can be found in 'mundane micro-social relations' (Foucault, 1981:92). Within education, there are a variety of professionals tasked with administrating technologies that manage perceived problems within a disciplinary model to ensure control. As individuals we adopt technologies of the self that enable us to create or maintain our identity and position in a given context. Villadsen (2006) explains that

modern power has made people more self-governing, crossing the boundaries of work, social hierarchies and home to shape their individual identities and careers. He argues that modern work-life requires employees to shape their identities in particular ways. Within a Foucauldian model, technologies of self, enable an individual to be made responsible for developing and monitoring their progress whilst remaining at arms-length from their employer, for example. These technologies of self could be procedures and instruments used to transform individuals through their choice of actions. There is a culture within education to be a reflective teacher and a 'belief in internal validity, a deliberate creation of a discourse around self-improvement and reflexivity' (Perryman et al, 2017:755). Moreover, there is now an increased focus on testing and grading of pupils throughout the school year to ensure they are making academic progress. How much progress pupils have made, could be discussed in the teacher's performance review. The teacher is held responsible for explaining and documenting why a pupil may not be meeting the projected grades. In the attempt to achieve an improved performance review, a teacher may self-reflect and transform their approach to teaching.

Popkewitz demonstrates how the use of numbers as a technology within schools is 'embodied in a grid of cultural practices that 'act' on teachers and children's lives in the classroom' (2012:169). The measurement of pupil achievements and school standards are correlated with the 'effective teacher' and the good or outstanding school. Popkewitz demonstrates that numbers are not only representations, but also become actors and 'social facts' woven into a grid of practices. The commonly used practice of testing pupils enables some pupils to rise to the challenge, demonstrate what they have learnt and thrive on this approach. For other pupils, testing, and being seen as unable to reach the standard grades, can be perceived as them failing, rather than as a problem with the system of testing. Testing and performance measurement can thus impact on the well-being and mental health of pupils who are not identified as high achievers (Brown and Carr, 2019). Pupils may resist conforming to achievement by testing or come from a disadvantaged background that impacts on their ability to demonstrate their learning in the required way. Brown and Carr (2019) employ Foucault's notion of *homo economicus* to argue that high stakes testing within schools may explain why high achieving pupils, who associate

high results with better rewards and opportunities, can engage with the education system and thrive on the pursuit of success. However, it does not always work for the low achieving and disadvantaged pupils who may not often succeed and could result in a crisis of mental health in young people (2019:260/1).

Teachers play a crucial role in how technologies of power are implemented in schools and, in order to be an 'effective' teacher, they often explore ways to implement policies that will construct them as such. Perryman et al (2017) discuss how teachers demonstrate technologies of self when they apply a bottom-up approach to policy development and ownership. Teachers self-direction and ownership break down government policy into practice to be enacted (Braun et al, 2011). This, as Foucauldian's would argue, keeps government at arms-length, but maintains control by using technologies of power to shape practice.

2.1.4 Knowledge and Discourse

In his work, *The archaeology of knowledge (1972)*, Foucault offers a historical perspective on concepts of discourse and how language can be transformed and interpreted. He distinguishes between the use of language in the grammatical or linguistic sense and how it is used in practice. Bacchi and Bonham explain that '[i]n Foucault the term "discourse" refers to knowledge, what is "within the true" rather than to language' (2014:174). They argue that discursive practice is about knowledge formation and power. Bacchi and Bonham argue that Foucault is often mis-quoted to the effect that language is mistakenly identified with purely linguistic practices, rather than seeing language as how people shape and are shaped by discourse, which thus forms knowledge. Foucault explores how discourses become the archaeology of knowledge, in a varied formation rather than following a linear progressive route. In a varied formation, discourse patterns recognise knowledge shifts but not a singular view cemented within a particular time. The order of archaeology is not set within a system or idea, it is linked to multiple levels of discourse formulations (Foucault,1972).

Foucault argues that there are links between language and our practices, and he argues that power operates through the discourses we use. We act within discursive practices that encompass unstated intentions and functions. Rules, systems and

procedures make it possible to make statements and have them accepted as true (Foucault, 1981). Knowledge is driven by discourses, which generate the rules that determine by who and in which settings or contexts practice is driven and directed. For example, on a practice-based level the implementation of a school behaviour policy, is often shaped and developed by larger scale government policies. Knowledge works within a constituted framework that needs to be unpicked if we are to understand how power is produced through knowledge (Popkewitz and Brennan,1997).

As discourse evolves into established knowledge it becomes a more transparent phenomenon to explore and question, such as, challenging behaviour and the associated knowledge that has emerged in educational practice. Foucault argues that although discourse produces power, it can also be the starting point for resistance and an opposing strategy that may make it fragile and possible to thwart (1998:100-1). As knowledge is a powerful tool that is often perceived to be at the foundation of government policies, particularly in 'evidence-based' policy paradigms, it becomes inevitable that in order to question a policy the knowledge base must also be investigated. Woermann (2012) interprets Foucault's approach as one that neither delivers judgement nor poses alternatives for the emancipation of society. His approach does not lead us to ask: 'What are the foundations of our knowledge?' Instead we should ask: 'How have we come to accept the types of knowledge that we presume to be legitimate, valid and true? (2012:112).

Discourses underpinning knowledge form part of our cultural constructions that, over time or within a different context, can be deconstructed and reorganized. The knowledge we perceive as true, believable or probable shapes our professional practice. Adams (2012) argues that professionalism thus functions as a Foucauldian episteme. She maintains that the professionalism episteme stimulates and organises new varied discursive articulations outside the purview of occupations and locates and privileges particular subjectivities. Therefore, the language and knowledge previously used in workplace structures and cultures are transformed through the implementation of politically shaped, professional discourse. Adams (2012) claims that the professionalism episteme normalises and disciplines in a way that stamps out diversity of thought and people, removing conflict and dissent and resulting in some people being privileged and others marginalised. Disciplinary

discourse within the professional context thus operates under the guise of normalisation. The 'norm' is a social construction and based on observations of the 'average' expected behaviour. It is used in the thinking of educationalists when categorising and labelling behaviour, and 'it can be unsettling to acknowledge that the 'norm' is a fiction (Graham and Slee, 2007).

We often use labels to describe people and categorise them. Categorisation allows us to separate people i.e. the good pupil, the challenging pupil, the effective teacher and so on. The knowledge used to establish a label or categorisation legitimises it and provides the ability to compare and make judgments about categories. Hacking (2007), in his work on 'making up people', suggests that seven 'engines' are used to drive discovery in the human sciences and how knowledge is produced. Such 'engines of discovery' include counting and quantifying to create norms and other practices listed in Table 2.1. Hacking explains how we use numerical data to medicalise, biologise and geneticise. Using examples from the changes in autism, obesity and homosexuality, he suggests we 'medicalise kinds of deviant people relentlessly, not always with success' (2007:309). The first seven engines are attempts to produce knowledge and understanding of behaviours for categorisation and 'the potential for improving or controlling deviant human behaviour' (2007:311). These seven engines may be seen to provide the 'evidence' and justification for applying a name or label to a person. For example, quantifying certain behaviours that have been observed leads to the observer and the observed becoming identified in light of that behaviour. In schools, this could be a pupil presenting with disruptive behaviours who is then categorised in order to be managed; for example, defining the pupil as deviant and in need of control. Drawing on Foucault's ideas of power-knowledge, Hackings 'discovery engines' are followed by three further engines (*normalising*: using treatment to change behaviour; *bureaucracy*: administrative systems to identify category; and *resistance*: people taking back control) that consolidate the discovered knowledge which is then reinforced through an administrative bureaucracy.

Table 2.1:Hacking's Ten Engines

This table, identifies Hackings (2007) discovery engines and provides examples	
The first seven engines are designed for discovery	
1. Counting	How many we have within a defined category i.e. children with autism in given population.
2. Quantity	What is above or below a given average/standard: i.e. weight used to identify obesity or underweight
3. Norms	Deviations from the perceived norms: i.e. children measured against development standards at a given age.
4. Correlation	Attempting to associate a label such as autism with another variable – gender, heredity etc.
5. Clinical Medicine	Medicalising conditions and behaviours that may not have previously been viewed as a problem i.e. people with excess body fat now seen as obese.
6. Biology	Biological causes – sole responsibility taken away from the person, i.e. chemical imbalance causes the increased weight or behaviour patterns.
7. Genetics	The medical and biological factors are connected to genetics. For example a person's condition is genetic and through socialisation.
The following three engines normalise the discovered knowledge	
8. Normalise (**_Engine of Practice_**)	Using behavioural therapies or medical treatments to change people's behaviour or a condition that is perceived as different or deviating from the 'norm.'
9. Bureaucracy (**_Engine of Administration_**)	Implementation of administrative systems that seek to identify what and who falls within a given category and thus needs intervention.
10. Resistance (**_Engine of Resistance to the Knowers)_**	People who attempt to take back control from the experts and institutions that have administered, medicalised and tried to normalise behaviours or conditions i.e. groups/individuals arguing against or refusing classification of sexual orientation.

Within these last three engines, systems are put in place to make deviant subjects become more 'normal.' In education and other public organisations, government policies and guidelines are weaved into an administrative bureaucracy. These become tools to aid an agent (e.g. teacher, manager, health worker) in gaining control and to 'assist' pupils to behave in a more 'normal' way. Hacking acknowledges that such bureaucracy is not always negative as it can help identify pupils who may need developmental support and specialist services. The engine of resistance involves people who may have been medicalised, normalised and administered taking back control to create new categorisations, experts or institutions (Hacking, 2007:311). Historically, and in recent policy that will be discussed later in this chapter, it is evident that pupils seen as presenting with behaviour not defined as normal are continually re-categorised from 'mad'(pupil

needing medication to control behaviour) and 'bad'(pupil responsible for their behaviour) social behaviour to medical models of explanation and categorisation (Macleod, 2006). Knowledge and discourse underpin not only the development of labels, but also the practices through which people with certain behaviours are problematised and then re/categorised, or how they resist such labelling.

2.1.5 Problematisation

Problematisation is an approach that, as reflective practitioners, encourages us to question why a problem is represented as such, and how, when and by whom it has been constructed. It assists in analysing how knowledge has been constructed and perceived as 'truths.' Foucault's understanding of problematisation is an attempt to deconstruct established 'truths' that have been woven through discursive frameworks. Bacchi (2012:1) shows how Paulo Freire(1972) has also used problematisation as 'a strategy for developing critical consciousness', whereas Foucault's approach is more a 'description of thinking as a practice [rather] than a diagnosis of ideological manipulation.' She argues that, although Foucault and Freire may approach problematisation differently, it is the enquiry into the term that matters. Graham (2007:71) argued that when we are trying to understand how a child's behaviour has become a 'problem' through a Foucauldian lens, it is about 'problematizing taken-for-granted practices and assumptions by looking at them differently but not to validate what is already there'. As a researcher trying to explore the construction of 'truths' it is important to recognise the mechanisms of power that form part of a problematisation process and outcome (Bacchi,1999;2012). A study that explores the problematisations of a phenomenon such as 'challenging' behaviour 'offers researchers the possibility of getting inside thinking—including one's own thinking—observing how "things" come to be' (Bacchi, 2012:7). Thus, Frederiksen et al argue that 'Foucault's work can serve as an adequate framework for [such] research studies' (2015: 208).

2.1.6 Limitations of Foucault in current times

Whilst the use of Foucault and other Foucauldian theorists will provide a framework in which to analyse the findings of my research, it is also useful to acknowledge that there are limitations to this approach. Thomson (2004) suggests that a Foucauldian approach is limited because he was writing about historical cases and his arguments

may not be applicable to the more current global political and economic situation of today's society. I will explore this critique further in the sub-section below on the impact of globalisation but in this section, I have focused on more general limitations of Foucault's work.

As a novice researcher and philosopher, it has been important to explore different interpretations of Foucault's work and combine them with my own interpretations. Butin (2006) has questioned the different interpretations of Foucault's work by authors that followed on from Ball (1990), whom he believed introduced a generation of scholars to Foucault's thought. He suggests that authors such as Jardine (2005) and Peters and Burbles (2004) offer a vision of Foucault as a philosopher of freedom who suggests that we can free ourselves from our cultures, structures and practices. He then considers Chowers (2004) and suggests that he interprets Foucault as helping us to move around systems that we are entrapped in. However, Butin argues that to 'trap Foucault in terms of liberation/entrapment binaries is to miss the deeply ironic point that this is what Foucault was working against' (2006:378). For example, Cheshier (1999:3) writes that Foucault saw contemporary society as placing us all under surveillance. He argues that it would not make sense within a Foucauldian framework to speak of ending or overcoming power relations. Instead, he suggests that individuals can use power oppressively or productively, although these evaluations will always be relative. Wang (2011:153) believed that power and knowledge 'does not have any concrete content, essence or external purpose in Foucault: nor does it signify any truth or representation and should not be mobilised as a solution or investigation of knowledge in education.' Wang concludes that identifying theory as practice, as Foucault (1977:208) does, is a continual contest between power and resistance, resulting in a constant struggle of what one identifies as their own knowledge and truths (2011).

However, Hacking argues that although Foucault did not elaborate on how to incorporate the possibilities and impossibilities of politics in everyday life, he has given us ways to understand 'what is said, what can be said, and what is possible' (2004:300). My interpretation of Foucault does not seek to discover how we escape entrapment or free ourselves; instead, I aim to understand the perceptions of those studied and how discourse and power relations exist within educational practice.

Rather than using Foucault's work as a tool to identify the rights and wrongs in the problematisation of pupils with challenging behaviour, this study will explore the 'why' and 'how' of the problematisation.

2.2 The Construction of Policy

2.2.0 Introduction

This section will begin by identifying what policy is, how it is constructed and how it is enacted. I will then examine how policy operates as a complicated tool of control and becomes construed in different ways as it is enacted. The latter part of this section considers the impact of globalization on education policy and questions the possible move from Foucault's model of discipline to other potential modes of control.

2.2.1 What is policy?

Policies are often used as governmental technologies that control a given system and are enacted by agents within different layers of society. Foucauldian approaches have been successfully taken up in education to analyse policy and this section will discuss the complexities of policy infrastructures. Seeking to answer the question 'What is Policy?', Ball (1993) argues that policy should be viewed both in terms of written texts and discourses. Policy as text is written documentation developed by governing agencies which is then disseminated. Policy as discourse is the interpretation and meaning that informs the policy text and its enactment. Ball suggests that interpretation is subjective and results in different enactments and understandings of the policy, which are influenced by the context in which it is received.

The power and control that policy enactors may hold or are perceived to have, could influence the interpretation and enactment of a policy. Enacting a policy becomes more complex when several professionals and/or organisations have a stake in its enactment as there may be different interpretations of the policy depending upon the context. Bowe et al (1992) see policy processes as complex and subject to policy contexts that shape both the generation and enactment of policy, which cannot be seen as a simple linear process. There are often several policies relating to one subject and this may impact on how a given policy is enacted. If one aspect of policy

is more important to a stakeholder than another, this may impact on the way in which the policy is operationalised. As Ball points out, a focused interest in part of a policy, or the priority given to one of a number of inter-related policies, can have an adverse impact.

> When we focus analytically on one policy or one text, we forget that other policies and texts are in circulation and the enactment of one may inhibit or contradict or influence the possibility of the enactment of others. (Ball, 1993:13)

Policy is not a straightforward tool of control because it becomes construed in different ways as it is disseminated across scales, for example from a national to local settings. When a policy is disseminated to schools, for example, how it is enacted depends on the local context in which it is received. As argued by Casimiro (2016), policy in schools is contextually mediated, translated and interpreted. She also sees policy as multi-faceted, which can result in policy discourses becoming incoherent and messy. She argues that policy produces subject positions and, although it may aim to bring stability, it can also destabilise a situation (2016:8). According to Braun et al (2011:588), enactments can take place in four different contextual dimensions. Firstly, there is the situational context where the policy is enacted, such as a school. Secondly, who is enacting the policy affects the professional context. Thirdly, the accompanying budgets and resources shape and impact on the material context. Fourthly, those outside of the situational context of a school may also have an impact, such as the LA or Ofsted inspectors, and this creates an external context for enactment. When there are several policies, the contextual dimensions may differ, thus contradicting or supporting the associated enactments.

When a policy is created it is often due to society encountering a problem that is perceived as needing intervention. How a problem is perceived or constructed will depend on the discourse underpinning it. Bacchi (2000) discusses policy as discourse and demonstrates how 'problems' become framed within policy proposals and proposed actions. She believes discursive constructions within policy processes can be usefully reconstructed by policy analysts, but emphasis should not be limited to those groups seen as powerful, as they are not the only producers

and subjects of policy as discourse. The arguments made by Bacchi highlight the need for professionals to revisit policies and critically analyse the discursive constructions underpinning what the problem is represented to be. However, enactors of policy may not perceive themselves as influencers of policy discourse. Riseborough (2006:156) has shown that policy does not just happen to teachers but is 'rather a happening accomplished by them'. He argues that teachers' cooperation is the primary adjustment they make and then their interpretation is the secondary adjustment. Those in power will influence educationalists acceptance of and cooperation with policy, and it will grow and accumulate new meanings as it travels down the hierarchy (Riseborough, 2006). From a Foucauldian governmental perspective, teachers translate policy by using ethical techniques of reflection and self-improvement (Perryman et al , 2017). The notion of self-improvement to better oneself is consistent with Foucault's (2008) views on the neoliberal, 'homo-economicus' model of self-enterprise. In this model, we become our own marketers of our self and how productive we can be within a system. Schools and teachers are often judged on the way they buy in into this system (Brown and Carr 2019:249).

As there are different dimensional contexts impacting the enactment of policy, it is not always possible for those enacting it to have control over each dimensional context in order to respond to problems represented in policy texts. In the early 1990s, Ball argued that policies posed problems to their subjects and that such problems must be responded to in context. He suggested that responses to the problems posed by policy texts would be localised and should be expected to display ad hocery and messiness (1993:12). A decade later, Ball (2003) found that teachers had become uncertain and were not sure what to prioritise and what was valued. Teachers questioned their role and whether they did things because they believed in them and felt how they performed was important and worthwhile, or whether their response was justified 'because it will be measured or compared? It will make us look good!' (2003:220). As educationalists, it is important that we are not passive in our acceptance of policy. It is necessary, as Webb (2013) argues, that we should problematize policy rather than accepting the normative practices of government and institutions. Webb maintains that past problematisations of policy have mostly taken place at the textual level, but using Ball's theory of enactment,

policy problematisation can be better understood in relation to how the policy is actualised.

2.2.2 The impact of globalisation on education policy: From discipline to control

Globalisation has influenced national education policies in many ways. Rizvi and Lingard state that globalisation affects education 'structurally, in policy terms, and the experience young people bring with them' (2000:421). The globalized economy has grown since the post-war Keynesian social welfare state emerged into a neoliberal state apparatus. There is an increased transnational activity and more emphasis on privatization and preparing an appropriately skilled workforce for a global economy. Rizvi and Lingard (2010) argue that governments discursively construct globalisation as interwoven with neoliberalism such that the demands and needs of a global economy are seen to be deliverable through a neoliberal market model. However, Rizvi and Lingard believe that globalisation cannot be easily defined and dependency on a neoliberal model is a social imaginary, a concept drawn from Taylor (2004). Social imaginaries arise from people envisioning how they fit in society from a cultural, economic and political context and how these notions fuel expectations of themselves and others.

In 2015, at the Goldsmith University of London, Michel Feher delivered a course of lectures debating why we should not reject the existence of the neoliberalism condition but embrace it (Feher, 2015). Neoliberalism has, according to Feher, taken on a new form as capitalism and globalisation has ascended throughout the last few decades. He argues that the 'new-' (neo) liberalism has transformed strands within this global ideological construct such as finance, corporate governance and new public management, enabling it to have a more robust and resilient infrastructure. In this move to create a successful global market there has been a change in workforce policy with people transformed from being employed to making them employable. The workforce is conceived as human capital, and this requires individuals to invest in themselves and be motivated to increase their labour power and future capital. With reference to Foucault's work, *The Birth of Biopolitics* (1979), Feher (2009) draws on Foucault's notion of subjective transformation, in which people become the 'entrepreneur of oneself', moving away from conceiving of their

labour separately from their domestic or leisure lives. Feher argues this is replaced by a subjective position in which people act as self-portfolio managers. The distinction between labour and domestic positions is collapsing, people are managing different aspects of their labour which transcends the workplace and seek to create value from all domains of a person's life. Feher (2009:30) describes how human capital theory, within a neoliberal infrastructure, has created a workforce ideology of people striving to invest in themselves in all aspects of their lives in order to increase their future value.

Feher thus argues that neoliberalism treats people as producers, entrepreneurs and investors in themselves rather than consumers. In order to build one's labour power and capital, people must build their self-esteem to increase their value in an ever-present market where human capital can gain or lose value. All aspects of their life will contribute to either the appreciation or depreciation of themselves. Self-esteem and appreciation are valorised as capital and good models of behaviour, and this allows the government to introduce models that direct our conduct to increase these dimensions of human capital. However, 'neoliberal subjects do not own their human capital, they invest in it' (Feher, 2009:34). The danger of working toward increasing the value of one's human capital by investing in oneself is that people may start to see not only their labour as a commodity but also themselves as a product of exchange. As different aspects of people's life become invested in their portfolio of skills and experiences that may feed or deplete their self-appreciation, the risk of compromising what part of oneself and life that was separate from capital increases. Within a neoliberal framework, the workforce is not the employed but the employable (Feher, 2015).

It is important when applying a Foucauldian theoretical framework to acknowledge how the global picture has changed since his work was published, in ways mapped by scholars such as Feher. Fraser (2003) also argues that to apply Foucault today one needs to acknowledge that Foucauldian theory and interpretation is embedded in a Keynesian model of economics and a Fordist discipline of totalisation, which became 'socially concentrated within a national framework' (2003:163). She links social order and control to Fordist discipline and the enactment of this model in public institutions. In order to use Foucault today, we must consider the move from

discipline to flexibilization because 'Fordist discipline wanes in the face of globalisation, its orientation to self-regulate tends to dissipate too' (Fraser, 2003:166). In terms of the panopticon and surveillance, Dupont believes there is an increased influence of the internet and disruptive media technologies that 'redefine how people watch each other's various efforts to monitor their activities' (2008:262). Deleuze (1992) also recognised that the use of Foucault's notion of disciplinary control was framed within a society where discipline stops and starts within each enclosed environment people travel through, such as school, hospital, factory, family. Although he agreed with much of Foucault's work on disciplinary societies, Deleuze argued that 'societies of control' are overlaying the disciplinary model of closed environments. Societies of control sit within frameworks of coexistence where nothing stops, one is never finished but continues modulating oneself in a network of open environments, rather than being moulded by discrete institutions. With the increase in marketisation and computerised technology affecting policy reforms, 'new forces are knocking at the door' (1992:4).

Fraser (2003) also discusses how nationalist frameworks and social relations are becoming denationalised as they cross territorial borders into a more transnational and multi-layered network. She believes we need to 'map the multiple layers of governmentality recognising the distinct functions, some global, regional, local and subnational' (2003:167). In his influential article, 'Big Policies/Small World', which looks at international perspectives on education, Ball (2010) reinforces the need to continue to look both nationally and locally when taking a global perspective. Although he sees the need to recognise the power in globalisation, he also cites Weiss's (1997) warning against the 'myth of the powerless state' (2010:120). It is evident that unitary state governance is shifting to become incorporated in globalised networks, and this is having an impact on national and local education. However, this does not suggest the power of state governance is becoming depleted, rather it is 'upscaling' to a super-regional approach creating widened geographies of powers within education (Dale and Robertson, 2006).

In education, a neoliberal policy approach is evident in the international policy work of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and its influence on national policy. The OECD has successfully promoted tools such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), which attempts to

measure the skills of young people to help countries evaluate their educational systems. Data gathered from a sample of school children across participating countries feeds into a ranking framework. Through media and public attention and associated pressure, governments may look to raise the positioning of their country in the ranking of performance. Both the problems and usefulness of PISA have been explored by Sellar et al, who argue that although PISA can be useful to 'take the temperature' of educational systems and may be an effective tool if used as such, 'politicians and media commentators are often unwilling to overlook the limitations of the tests' (2017:9).

Furlong (2013), discusses how the OECD and PISA has influenced UK governments in focusing on the class teacher and modernising the teaching profession by making it more professional and accountable. Furlong also notes how the role and power of LAs has diminished as more schools become semi-autonomous academies (2013:46). Ball and Youdell (2007) believe multilateral agencies such as OECD, World Bank and international management consultants have influenced reforms in education, in particular the increase in privatisation of educational services. Applying a Foucauldian approach to governmentality, we can see how OECD and PISA have become technologies of control to create knowledge that feeds into both national and global discourses. The collection of data to measure educational performance is an example of Hacking's engines of discovery, as numbers and rankings feed into the perceptions of how the future progress of education should be modelled.

The works of Deleuze (1992), Feher (2009) and Fraser (2003) are relevant and when carrying out a study of this kind, there should be an acknowledgment of global frameworks if we are to understand power in current times. However, It is evident that a Foucauldian approach is still applicable in current times as argued by several writers, particularly around policy and power. Policies are government technologies shaped within text and discourses. All forms of policies are open to subjective interpretation and reliant on the control and power of policy enactors (Ball,1993;2003). The contextual dimensions of how a policy is interpreted and implemented is influenced by contextual dimensions (Braun et al, 2006). Within policy, 'problems' become framed in particular ways and suggest tools to fix the problem, but there is also a need to problematise policy to question how the problem

has been constructed (Bacchi, 2000; Webb, 2013). When researching challenging behaviour and how it is perceived as problem, it is important to consider the policies that frame the problem.

2.3 Policy constructions and discourses on challenging behaviour

2.3.0 Introduction

Having discussed Foucauldian approaches and how policy is developed and enacted, in this section I will focus on the definition and categorisation of challenging behaviour. I will then discuss how, once pupils are categorised as demonstrating challenging behaviour, responses to them are incorporated into policy infrastructures and discourse. As exclusion is a real possibility for pupils identified as having challenging behaviour, I will explore how schools may prevent exclusion and, when this is not achieved, the implications of alternatives to mainstream schooling. This will be followed by an analysis of the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE,2015), which is one of the main government policies implemented to support pupils with challenging behaviour. A discussion of the resource implications of responding to policy and pupils will conclude this section.

2.3.1 Defining and Categorising Challenging Behaviour

Challenging behaviour has been discussed and reviewed over the years and the terms used to label pupils with challenging behaviour continue to change. As with policy, there are different contextual features surrounding the categorisation of challenging behaviour. As Emerson (2001) argues, when we define behaviour as challenging, the social, cultural expectations and contextual factors must be understood. Cooper maintains there is 'little evidence to suggest that difficult emotional and behavioural manifestations' of pupils is related to a single condition (1999:9). Differing contextual factors mean that, as Cole and Knowles suggest, the label of challenging behaviour has not been assigned consistently (2011:19). Thus, a single definition of challenging behaviour is not evident. Behaviour appears to be challenging only if the social context, rules and expected behaviours are disrupted. Therefore, if a pupil is not adhering to expectations, they become categorised as 'challenging'. However, this category is not static and behaviour may be viewed

differently depending on the context and rules of a given time and place. Macleod (2006:162) found that it has become easy for pupils' individual agency to be denied or limited as they are categorised as 'bad' (pupil responsible for their behaviour), 'mad' (pupil needing medication to control behaviour), or 'sad' (pupil is victim of circumstance). Wright argues these categorisations provoke 'polarised responses of care and sympathy, on the one hand, and blame and discipline on the other' (2009:288).

Behaviour has been considered a category of Special Educational Needs for some time, previously falling under the label of 'Behaviour, Emotional and Social Development needs' (BESD), which has now been re-categorised in the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0-25 years (September 2014). This policy removes the label 'behaviour' based on the expectation that professionals will identify the underlying reasons why pupils may present with 'challenging' behaviour, with a focus on the causation as the problem rather than the behaviour itself. Under SEND, such pupils are now categorised as having or experiencing 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties'(SEMHD). The inclusion of mental health implies a form of ill health and the need for professional intervention. This frames the policy in terms of the medical model of disability, which may lead professionals to attach the 'problem' to the pupil and how they can be fixed, rather than looking at situational and environmental factors emphasised within a social model. Brown and Carr (2019) cite several authors and sociological studies that discuss the rise in medicalisation of behaviours, in particular Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Disruptive Mood Dysregulation Disorder (DMDD), which attract much debate and controversy as to whether these are normal childhood behaviours or whether 'increases in the diagnoses of behavioural disorders are evidence of the medicalisation of childhood in the West' (2019:244). Such debates can be understood in terms of Hacking's engines of 'making up people', where behaviours previously not recognised as such become medicalised in the categorisation process.

The problematisation of challenging behaviour continues to be a consistent feature within education. Pupils described as having challenging behaviour in the classroom, are a focus of a combined report of inspections and surveys carried out

by the government body Ofsted. This report also incorporates research from YouGov – a market research company (Ofsted, 2014). Their report claims to look 'below the radar' and suggests the low-level disruptive behaviour occurring in schools, for example, talking in class and not focusing, is a concern for teachers, senior management and parents. They suggest that low level disruptive behaviour is the cause of children in some schools frequently missing learning time. The YouGov surveys suggest that 'pupils are potentially losing up to one hour of learning in English schools...equivalent to 38 days of teaching lost per year' (2014:5). Bennett (2017) suggests that the official government reports underestimate teacher's belief that behaviour is getting worse in our schools. He believes that we have taken our 'eye off the ball' when it comes to behaviour management.

Perceptions of what constitutes challenging behaviour can differ depending upon the experience of the teacher or how often they are exposed to different behaviour incidents. Teachers with experience of teaching pupils who demonstrate severe challenging behaviour may see low level disruption as minor, whereas an inexperienced teacher may see the same behaviours as more severe. However, if a pupil already has a behaviour label, teachers of varying experience may perceive all levels of disruption as a major concern and respond as such (Childerhouse, 2017:19).

2.3.2 Responding to Challenging Behaviour

Within schools there are policies and infrastructures that derive from national policies and guidance from the government. As outlined earlier, how a government policy is interpreted and enacted will be influenced by multiple contexts. Maguire et al (2010) found that policy enacted in schools may be centrally controlled, produced and distributed but actors enact policy in diverse ways. Therefore, at a micro-level of implementation, perceived control may be weakened by what happens in reality. Controlling the implementation of a policy becomes more difficult when there are several different enactors and contexts in play. When responding to pupils perceived as challenging, a teacher, school or LA may respond differently to a given policy.

When pupils are perceived as challenging, most schools will have a policy that directs the action to be taken. In line with the medical disability model, Maguire et al (2010) suggest that policies such as step systems are used in the classroom to 'fix' behaviour, with educators and policy makers believing this will also 'fix' learning. When considering how to fix behaviour, it is often seen as a problem with the pupil rather than the classroom (Sullivan et al, 2014). When a pupil is seen as deviating from the boundaries of 'normal' expectations a system of punishment is often implemented within school behaviour policies and procedures. Such policies are broadly shaped by government policy, but they will also be shaped by headteachers and staff depending upon local interpretation. The Department for Education (2018) found the uptake of 'zero-tolerance behaviour policies' which have seen an increase in popularity since their use in popular TV shows such as 'Educating Yorkshire', demonstrating their use in school improvement, means that in the case of exclusions, some children are being forced out of the mainstream school for an issue that could have been dealt with by schools. As evidenced previously, there is not a consistent definition of what challenging behaviour is or how it is categorised in terms of minor or severe, but Daniels and Cole found that the actual or threatened assault on pupils, followed by staff, were the most commonly cited reasons for exclusion (2010:124).

To avoid pushing pupils out of mainstream schooling, alternatives have been recommended and trialed. Ofsted (2011) carried out a survey of nurture groups, this is a small group of pupils taught by school staff, it provides social and emotional care alongside academic learning. They found that nurture groups worked well, they proved to be a good setting for children at risk of exclusion due to their behaviour. They acknowledge that settings within schools may differ, but all children spent time in mainstream schools throughout the week. Ofsted praised the use of nurture groups for having a clear plan for each child's transition back into class. They also recommend that each child should make both academic and social progress. Ofsted released a briefing paper titled 'Additional provision to manage behaviour and the use of exclusion' (2012). They identified 'loose' systems to manage the removal of pupils from class and recommend three different ways to facilitate additional provision to manage behaviour:

- internal exclusion (a pupil will spend a day or more away from their peers);

- learning support units (in-school provision for extended periods of internal exclusion); and
- nurture groups (a small supportive class where pupils spend part of the week there and also in their mainstream class).

The Inclusion Trust (2015) recommends additional support such as academic intervention aimed at individual's needs and effective nurture groups that combine academic and social intervention. A structured environment that is safe and secure is crucial. Identifying 'hooks of success' that a pupil may have outside of the core curriculum in less formal settings, both inside and outside of school, can be beneficial. Hughes and Schlosser carried out a systematic review of nurture groups (NGs) and found that, although models differed, 'introducing NGs into schools may have whole class benefits in terms of mainstream class teachers becoming more nurturing and children benefitting from this both directly and indirectly' (2014:405). Improvements to children's well-being were evident 'at least in the short term', but more research was needed to evaluate longer term effects of NGs. Bennett, who was also commissioned by the Department for Education to explore behaviour in schools, recommends that mainstream schools should provide internal facilities for children with behavioural problems. Bennett urged the government to find the funding for internal units at schools with higher than the average levels of challenging behaviour (2017).

Taking a nurturing approach is an alternative and/or additional course of action towards pupils identified as 'challenging.' This approach aligns with the social model of disability by moving beyond the pupils and looking at factors in the school environment that may impact on pupil behaviour. Within a nurture group, staff aim to break down barriers to learning by applying focused and supportive intervention to pupils who may struggle socially or emotionally. Warin and Hibbin (2016) argued, schools that de-emphasise sanction systems are more successful in providing effective nurture groups. They found the least effective schools had an isolation room and a behaviour unit and used what they termed 'the will to punish' in traffic light step systems or using Class Dojos (visual electronic points system displayed against pupil names on class whiteboard) as a reward for good behaviour and that can be taken away for bad behaviour. Pupils who have exhausted behavioural

intervention provided in mainstream schools often find themselves at the final stage of disciplinary policies and become permanently excluded. This can lead to schools seeking assistance from the LA to find alternative provision.

2.3.3 Exclusion and Alternatives to Mainstream Schools

Within current government policy, the headteacher or a deputy acting on their behalf has the power to exclude a pupil from school. It is usual that several fixed periods of exclusion will have taken place, up to a maximum of 45 days in a school year, before permanent exclusion; however, if a pupil has displayed severe violence they can be permanently excluded before reaching the 45-day maximum (Department for Education, 2017). A pupil in one school may be more at risk if the headteacher has a different view or tolerance of pupil's behaviour.

> The headteacher must decide the standard of behaviour expected of pupils at the school. He or she must also determine the school rules and any disciplinary penalties for breaking the rules (Department for Education, 2016:4).

In a survey carried out by Ofsted (2009), headteachers gave various reasons for excluding pupils and the school's capacity to deal with challenging behaviour differed depending on the philosophy of the school, LA support and economic factors within the school's context. Excluding pupils is enacted when schools believe they have exhausted all their strategies to facilitate pupil inclusion in their main classroom or/and other settings within school. There are inequalities in the rates of school inclusion, with some schools being more inclusive than others, though it is unclear how inclusion is 'rated'. Gazeley et al (2015) argue that exclusion data in schools needs to be further contextualized to capture what is and is not included, because it only shows the 'tip of an ice-berg'. They concluded that a whole school approach is necessary to ensure that pupils who need it received alternative provision and quality support.

On behalf of The Inclusion Trust, Menzies and Baars (2015) brought together a number of professionals from 14 sectors to discuss, debate and find common areas of agreement on pupils who are challenged by the mainstream educational system

and become 'pushed out learners,' a term adopted by the Trust for pupils marginalized and excluded from current models of education. They explored whether mainstream schools can really deliver on high expectations for all young people including those at risk of becoming 'pushed out learners'. Their inspection reports identified that

> [t]oo often, as seen in 34 instances so far this term, pupils are sent to the inclusion room and the problem is not tackled at the source to reach long-term solutions (2015:21).

Pupils do not always start the school day on a level footing and may experience factors outside of school that influence their success in the classroom. Gazeley (2010) believes that school exclusion processes are inextricably connected to other social and educational processes. Gazeley found that, beyond the social disadvantages that accompanied some pupils, such as poverty, parental expectations and pupil's and parent's low attainment in education, the approach and attitudes of educationalists also demonstrated a lack of understanding and flexibility. Their study highlights the use of managed referrals (transferring a pupil to another mainstream school) as an alternative to permanent exclusion. However, managed referrals could be another approach to pushing pupils into another school where their needs may not be met and the 'problem' deconstructed/unresolved. McClusky et al (2015) suggest that children who experience exclusion are likely to have additional or special needs and males are more likely to be excluded than females. Macrae et al argue there is a need to acknowledge the relationship between social exclusion and educational exclusion. They believe the attitudes and perceptions of school professionals and gatekeepers have to be taken into consideration when exploring why and how exclusion takes place (2003:99). How professionals problematise matters, such as pupil behaviour, relates to the works of Bacchi (2012) who argues there is a need to deconstruct both policy and practice to investigate perceptions underpinning both the problem and solution.

There is a considerable rise in the number of fixed period exclusions in primary schools. This increase is driven by higher levels of fixed period exclusion for assault against an adult, persistent disruptive behaviour and assault against a pupil

(Department for Education, July 2015). A more recent report states that in 2016-2017 there continued to be a rise in both fixed term and permanent exclusion in primary schools (Department for Education, July 2018). When a pupil is permanently excluded, alternative provision may involve a managed transfer to another mainstream school, referral to a specialist behavioural school or a pupil referral unit. McClusky et el argued 'that outcomes for children educated out of mainstream are very poor' (2015:604). In a later article, McClusky et al add that managed moves created a displacement problem as headteachers use this to avoid exclusion processes although they did acknowledge such a move, if not used as such, could be helpful to a pupil (2016:537).

A pupil referral unit (PRU) provides short term and long-term alternative provision for pupils perceived to be at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools. Mills and Thomson (2018) found that permanent exclusions could be used by schools instead of a short-term exclusion, as the LA then has the funding responsibility for long term pupils. They also found parents lacked information and this made them feel anxious. Communication about pupils worked best when comprehensive information was shared. Schools unlikely to use alternative provision were reported to have strategies and consistent approaches to managing behaviour (2018:10/11).

Although Ofsted (2012) have recommended systems to help pupils with challenging behaviour, internal exclusion followed by external exclusion, may be viewed by professionals to be the only option. This is likely to be the situation if demand for pupils' additional support outstretches available resources to fund government recommendations. When pupils move to alternative provision, their needs may still not be met, nor their perceived problems solved. In 2018, the House of Commons (2018) published a report detailing the issues surrounding alternative provision and the increase in exclusions. In what it terms a scandal, it explains that often, alternative provision has become an overlooked part of the education system. Although the report argues that alternative provision is the best solution for the pupils surveyed for this report, it was recognised that in many cases the children and parents who experience exclusions have no voice. It is a system that largely favours the schools, which in some cases are found to 'rush towards exclusion' or even recommend voluntary withdrawal to parents without first putting in place

alternative support. Conflict between parent and school is discussed throughout and the recommendations are largely aimed at supporting children and their caregivers so that clear guidelines and a more inclusive education for all can be a closer reality.

Recommendations from the House of Commons (2018) report include designated advocates, increased involvement from LAs and a responsibility to publish exclusions data (including internal exclusions). Interestingly, the report suggests that schools should be supported more, particularly as the accountability culture in education is part of the issue surrounding increased exclusions. However, it is also argued that schools should be challenged more on their use of exclusions as a punishment.

2.3.4 The SEND Code of Practice

As part of the SEND Code of Practice, pupils requiring additional support should have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. An EHC plan, documents agreed actions for pupils falling within one of the four broad areas of needs as defined in the SEND Code of Practice. In 2019, the Department for Education (DfE) produced a report entitled 'Support for pupils with special education needs and disabilities in England' which explains that, of the 1.3 million pupils in England recorded as having special educational needs or disabilities, 79.4% do not have an EHC plan but have been identified as having some additional support requirements. The majority of these children attended mainstream schools, whilst their counterparts who had an EHC were found to have nearly half of their number in special needs schools. It reports that the number of children with an EHC plan has risen by 16.8% since 2014, which is in some way explained by the rise in population, whilst the numbers of pupils identified as having SEND but no EHC plan have decreased. The decrease is attributed not to the number of children with SEND decreasing or the population decreasing, but with the way these children and their needs are recorded.

Within the SEND Code of Practice, Health, Social Care and Education are to work together with parents and pupils to ensure an integrated approach to achieving the best outcomes for children and young people. Joint working is not a new concept to schools and LA's, the Children and Families Act (2014) introduced legislation to reform and improve the joint working between Health, Social Care and Education.

EHC plans are the vehicle for driving services together and improving assessment. LA's are responsible for providing information referred to as the 'Local Offer' to parents and carers about what is available for children and young people categorised under SEND, including the eligibility and process of EHC plans. The SEND document, according to Allan and Youdell, is an 'empty architecture' of things that should and must be done (2017:75). Allan and Youdell argue 'the non-specific obligation generated through the Code's empty architecture is somewhat taken over by the high level of prescription associated with the preparation, development, publishing and review of the Local Offer' (2017:79). They have introduced the concept of 'ghosting', which describes how SEND policies can contribute to 'actively erasing a person or thing, while creating an impression of its continued presence' (2017:74). They argue the joining together, and sometimes separation, of special education needs and disabilities within SEND, is arbitrary. There is no specific meaning of what each component is, or any diagnosis of the given group label and individual categorisations. If the SEND policy lacks substance and direction, policy interpreters and enactors are likely to be inconsistent in their engagement with it.

2.3.5 Resource Implications

When a pupil is perceived as presenting with challenging behaviour, additional resources are often sought to help 'fix' the pupil and/or, as recommended in government policy, they are moved away from the mainstream classroom. Groom and Rose (2005) found that a growing number of teaching assistants (TAs) were being deployed to assist the teacher with behaviour management and this approach worked well, but in today's economic climate TAs are not seen as a financial priority. However, Webster et al (2011) argue, teaching assistants should be deployed using a 'wider pedagogical role model (WPR)' which focuses on a TAs preparedness, deployment and practice. They claim by applying this model, it will enable headteachers to assess the impact TAs have on meeting pupils needs. The WPR model can be used to assess '[d]irect impact TAs have on pupil achievement, and how it can frame future decisions about the intentions and expected outcomes of TA deployment' (2011:17).

Many schools are dealing with budget cuts and losing TAs who often take on the responsibility of providing additional support to pupils with challenging behaviour.

Skipp and Hopwood (2016), on behalf of the Department for Education, found schools commonly deployed TAs as specific resource for pupils with SEND, in particular, when support was stated in pupil's EHC plans. TAs were also used for intervention with pupils needing SEND support, including to assist with independence and inclusion. Schools reported that limited funding meant they could not afford the number of TAs they needed and increased expectations of TAs who were on low pay and with access to limited training had an impact on recruitment. Schools reported over 50% reduction in the number of TAs they employed with an increase expected in the future. Reduction was due to rationalization processes.

Schools may struggle to fund additional support for a pupil if he or she does not have an EHC plan, which provides part of the financial costs of supporting a pupil with additional needs. Skipp and Hopwood (2016), found that there are several issues with the EHC process that still need to be addressed for it to be effective. The Department for Education (2019) suggests that because of the changes in the way SEND is recorded, it has been difficult to grasp the provision and 'value for money' each LA and provider is giving to those in need. Whilst the funding has been increased, the increase is not sufficient to meet the higher demand and moreover, the lack of transparency with funding and spending means that outcomes are difficult to measure. Despite most LA's overspending their budgets, the rise in number of children accessing special schools means that the funding does not keep pace with requirement. A lack of full assessment during the 2014 reforms has meant that financial and collaborative working has not been adequately considered and it is suggested in the report that work must be done in order to make SEND funding and provision more sustainable. The report highlights that no one appears to be aware of what resources or funding are available and there is a distinct lack of central accountability and direction (DFE, 2019). Greater oversight and a designated senior person in each authority is one way in which the House of Commons suggest this lack of central accountability could be addressed. The report emphasises that a lack of funding, organisation and communication, emerges with potential for change at both local and governmental level.

Having analysed the context in which policy on challenging behaviour is constructed and enacted in this section, it is evident that there is no clear definition of challenging

behaviour. The complexities surrounding the context in which both policy and behaviour is perceived cannot be underestimated, However, such complexities have not prevented pupils who are perceived as behaving outside of the boundaries of expected 'norms' to be categorised and problematized in particular ways. These pupils are placed within a bureaucratic process of policy and practice that can result in in them becoming excluded from mainstream classes and often from their school.

2.4 Summary

Many authors have identified how pupils are manoeuvred through a system that categorises their behaviour as problematic to justify actions applied to them (Childerhouse, 2017; McClusky et al, 2016; MacLure et al, 2012; Maguire et al, 2010; Graham, 2005; Macleod 2006). Over recent decades, behaviour management has emerged as an area of professional training and development that has generated many 'tools' and approaches that have been implemented with varying degrees of success (Bennet, 2017; DfE, 2016; Menzies and Baars, 2015; Ofsted, 2012; Emerson, 2001; Cooper,1999). Solutions in relation to tackling 'challenging' behaviour have formed part of government policies for many decades, more recently the SEND Code of Practice (2014), yet still the 'problem' persists in schools. The problem persists despite these studies and constant policy attention. The posed policy 'solutions' are not addressing what the problem is perceived to be. This suggests there is a lack of understanding of how the 'problem' is constructed by stakeholders. Focusing on problem construction opens a new line of inquiry into a research area that is well-traversed but remains a persistent issue for practitioners. Therefore, exploration and understanding of how the 'problem' of challenging behaviour is constructed by stakeholders, would add new knowledge to this phenomenon.

In order to begin answering the question of how challenging behaviour is problematised in my case study, I have reviewed Foucauldian approaches for analysing features of education that contribute to both establishing and acting upon the problem of challenging behaviour. Focusing on technologies of control and normalisation in this study provides an opportunity to question and understand what actions are applied to pupils perceived as having challenging behaviour.

'Grey' literature such as policies and government reports that focus on pupil behaviour, have formed a significant part of the literature review. The importance of understanding and analysing discourse and knowledge underpinning the policies and actions we apply in education, is reinforced in this study. Reviewing the use of technologies of control, such as policies and procedures, used to justify the actions applied to pupils with challenging behaviour, provides the opportunity to consider if they are fit for purpose. In order to maintain power, policies and guidelines are disseminated throughout organisations that sit within complex and often fluid contexts. Control can be dispersed as policies are enacted at a local level such as within a school. This creates inconsistences in identifying what constitutes challenging behaviour and how to respond to the problem. Bacchi (2012) provides a simple but incisive conceptual tool to analyse how problems are represented in policy. This study draws on Bacchi's work to analyse how, as part of their response to challenging behaviour in schools, the government have incorporated the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice. Implementation of the SEND Code of Practice highlights a blurred and improvised approach to the problematisation of challenging behaviour, especially in relation to managing the associated resources. To gain a greater understanding of how problematisation has evolved, a Foucauldian approach encourages looking at how, where and by whom the problem is represented. This study encompasses the analysis of grey literature alongside the works of theoretical authors that have explored the problem in categorisation and professional responses to pupil behaviour. Including an analysis of grey literature such as government policies and guidelines provides an insight into how established 'solutions' to 'problems' have been implemented.

Within professional practice, established knowledge underpins discourse that evolves into established 'truths'. Hacking (2007) demonstrates how 'engines of discovery' provide the knowledge to underpin the labels and categories we use and how these become embedded within practice and policy. It is evident that pupils perceived as 'challenging' are problematised and often find themselves segregated and excluded from mainstream classes. When a pupil is unable to be 'fixed' and returned within the boundaries of expected behaviour, permanent alternative educational provision may be sought. Applying Hacking's work in this study provides

the opportunity to identify how discourse and knowledge underpins the categorisation of 'challenging' behaviour in education practice.

This study offers other scholars' insight into how and why stakeholder constructions have led to them identifying pupils behaviour as problematic. Rather than just focusing on the 'problem' and actions applied to pupils, investigating how and by who the problem is constructed may provide a platform for posing a more successful approach to pursued 'solutions'. Analysing both theoretical and 'grey' literature, offers the unique opportunity to understand not just the 'problem', but how solutions are woven into representations of the problem. This will encourage stakeholders to investigate and review, how discourse constructs and knowledge have directed their practice and where there may be different stakeholder interpretations of the 'problem.' It will also encourage practitioners and researchers to recognise how deconstruction of the problem will aid the review of established solutions before engaging with new ones.

Chapter 3 Methodology and Methods

3.0 Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore how challenging behaviour is constructed by professionals in primary schools in North West England. To achieve this aim, I used a Foucauldian theoretical framework and an interpretive qualitative approach, within a single-case study design, to answer the following research questions.

1. What actions are applied by professionals to pupils defined as having challenging behaviour?
2. How is professional knowledge and discourse mobilized to justify these actions?
3. How is challenging behaviour constructed as a problem by professionals in the case study primary schools?

To answer these questions, I employed a single case study design with three embedded units of analysis: Orchard Grove School, Treetop School (pseudonyms) and the Local Authority (LA). I collected relevant documents and conducted interviews with thirteen participants in the primary schools and the LA, as outlined in Table 3.1 below. A more detailed description of participants and their context is provided in the research design sub-section of this chapter. Including a variety of participants provided a greater understanding of how the problematisation of 'challenging behaviour' is conceived and acted upon in the different educational contexts of schools and the LA.

This chapter begins with a discussion of the philosophical considerations underpinning my study to justify my research design. I briefly explore different research paradigms that rest upon alternative philosophical and scientific presuppositions. Next, I examine how Foucault has inspired me to conceive of discourse as producing knowledge when exploring how challenging behaviour is problematised. Analytical tools developed by Bacchi (2012) and Graham (2011) aided an undertaking of Foucauldian discourse analysis and these tools are also explored in this chapter. The context of participants that took part in this case study is then described, before moving on to explaining and justifying my case study design. The second part of the chapter provides a detailed description of the

methods I used to generate data and identify discourse and actions underpinning the categorisation and problematisation of pupils. In conclusion, ethical considerations and my standpoint as the researcher will be discussed.

3.1 Research Paradigms

The methodology underpinning a researcher's approach may be aligned to a particular paradigm or drawn from different paradigms underpinned by competing philosophical and scientific approaches. Kuhn (1970) provided several interpretations of a paradigm and how a shift in research theory and perspectives may take place or one approach may dominate as an existing paradigm (Crook and Garratt, 2011). As acknowledged by Knipe and Mackenzie (2006), the effects of a paradigm can appear somewhat mysterious as many writers fail to provide clear terminology and concepts in relation to which theoretical paradigm/s they are drawing upon. This can sometimes result in the researcher being unaware of paradigmatic influences. The notion of a static and definite 'paradigm' is also debatable and '…the word's popularity has grown in direct proportion to the watering down of its meaning, which was never exactly concrete to start with' (Gokturk, 2016:8). I understand a paradigm as a model or framework of theories, with consonant ontological and epistemological presuppositions, that can be drawn upon to explore research question/s. This may involve a combination of theories from different paradigms, including positivist and interpretivist paradigms. Although some researchers may lean towards a certain paradigm and/or a qualitative or quantitative methodological approach, 'in effect no one paradigm actually prescribes or prohibits the use of either methodological approach' (Mackenzie and Knipe, 2006:9). Trying to separate paradigms and then map onto them an 'either or' research process may lead one dimensional research and failure to obtain the knowledge that best answers a research question (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005).

It has been argued that social and educational research has been dominated by a positivist approach based on a 'scientific model' (Goldacre, 2013; Standish, 2010; Hudson, 2010). However, the perceived dominance of positivist research as a 'scientific model' is viewed as a 'myth' that has become 'divisive and detrimental to social science' (Rowbottom and Aiston, 2006:138). Positivist methodology promotes objective approaches that ostensibly provide the researcher with the knowledge to

solve a problem in a real situation. The researcher is separated from the researched object and so is considered less likely to be biased. However, it is argued that 'positivists disregard the fact that many research decisions are made throughout the research process that precede objective verification decisions' (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005:377). Positivist research often, but not always, involves a deductive approach which relies on numbers as data that are analysed to establish cause and effect. This deductive approach involves hypothesis testing, after which the hypothesis is confirmed, refuted or modified (Gray, 2014). Quantitative research using this approach mostly addresses issues at a macro-social level. In education research, quantitative research often explores the functions and dysfunctions of the education system with the aim of improving it (Poni, 2014). Evidence from quantitative research often forms the foundations of government policy that aims to improve curricula, behaviour, staff performance and so on. More recently, 'post-positivism' has emerged as a 'rich paradigm for educational research, specifically pedagogical research' (Panhwar et al, 2017:1). Panhwar et al (2017) argue that a post-positivist approach balances both positivist and interpretive approaches, recognising that a research study can have multi-dimensions and multiple methods.

The interpretivist paradigm posits that knowledge is drawn from the researcher acknowledging their subjectivity and seeing the world from the subject's experiences. Interpretivists believe that reality is constructed and usually, but not always, follow an inductive approach. Interpretivism may not begin with a theory, but throughout the research process, the researcher inductively develops a pattern of meanings that can lead to theoretical development (Mackenzie and Knipe 2006). In this study, I did start with a broad Foucauldian theoretical framework, but the patterns and themes that emerged were inductively developed and analysed within this theoretical framework. Interpretivists use data collection tools such as interviews, participant observations and document analysis that may be perceived as less rigorous than those used in quantitative research. Such data are not to be taken at face value but treated as a field of inferences in which hypothetical patterns can be identified and their validity tested (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). Interpretivists do not follow the rules of generalisation or external validity as set out by positivists. For example, they would not claim that findings from a case study, if repeated with another agent or situation, would reveal the same outcome. This is

because they argue that reality is dependent on the individuals experience and findings depend on interpretation of particular subjects or situations. However, a case study approach 'like experiments, are generalizable to theoretical propositions [but] not to populations…' (Yin,2003:10).

The interpretivist approach is, 'in essence, an ethnographic one; the interpretivist's imagination is, at heart, an anthropological one' (Hay, 2011:173). Within an interpretivist paradigm, the ontological and epistemological assumptions underlying research are based on lived experience and interpretations of reality, and therefore the notion of objective knowledge is largely rejected (Sandberg, 2005). Qualitative methods are mainly used in interpretive research, but quantitative methods can also be used if found to be appropriate for answering a research question. Education is made up of many complex components that require a researcher to be open to using an approach that best fits with the questions or problems explored. As Howe (1988) observes, citing Jackson (1968:7):

> Classroom life in my judgement is too complex an affair to be viewed or talked about from any single angle. Accordingly, as we try to grasp meaning of what school is like for students and teachers, we must not hesitate to use all ways of knowing at our disposal (11).

As Howe (1988) argued, throughout the research process of design, collecting data, analysis, and interpretation of results, qualitative elements are unlikely to be avoided. For example, statistics are based on the inferences made regarding what is a valid measure of the chosen variables to answer a research question. Such inferences, however, are embedded within assumptions and background interpretations of life experience. Therefore, the positivist and interpretivist paradigms are not purely underpinned by qualitative or quantitative methods and are not as distinct as they might first appear. Their differences exist on a continuum throughout the research process (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007). How and why a researcher chooses which element of a paradigm to inform their research approach are questions that should focus on suitable methods and acknowledge possible background assumptions and limitations.

To understand how challenging behaviour in schools has become problematized, I worked within an interpretive paradigm drawing on a Foucauldian approach. I applied an inductive approach to what people do and how they do it by identifying features of discourse, administrative measures and practice actions as if they were techniques or devices. This in turn has assisted 'in identifying connections between different elements that exist' in the problematisation of pupil's behaviour (Cooke,1994:57).

3.2 Methodology and Foucault

Foucault's writings have inspired many researchers to demonstrate how they can apply aspects of his methodology to their work (Freie and Eppley, 2014; Raaper, 2016; Graham, 2011; Wilson, 2011; Cooke, 1994). However, as Graham (2011) argues, there are no actual rules, clear processes or general methods in Foucault's approach. Graham suggests that to argue Foucault had a precise approach to research methodology would be hypocritical as this is opposite to what Foucault advocates throughout his works. This makes it difficult to follow one 'true' Foucauldian approach. Therefore, using Foucauldian theory may be viewed as 'inaccessible and dangerous, which deters some researchers from engaging with this form of analysis, particularly those in more practice-oriented fields' (Graham, 2011:2). This did not deter Graham (2005b), who applied Foucault's interpretation of discourse in her approach to understanding practice and problematisation in her work on behaviour in schools. Other theorists such as Ferreira and Neto (2018:2) have argued that although Foucault did not have a general method as such, he 'uses methodological procedures similar to those used in qualitative research' and 'Foucault considers that the method should be chosen depending on the case study and based on the construction of the problem or object of the research' (2018:5).

When drawing on Foucault, researchers should not have a prescribed approach for how one must go about research, but should be explicit about what they are doing (Graham 2011). Graham acknowledges that Foucault is very explicit about what he is doing in his works such as 'Archaeology of Knowledge'(1972) and 'The Order of Things' (1989). Foucault's approach involves methodically identifying how sentences function to reflect and shape a discursive construction. Foucault does not look for truths and the meaning of a sentence in what is said, but in what is not said

and the possible function of establishing discourse based on certain sentence constructions rather than others. It is important when analysing discourse through a Foucauldian lens that 'one looks to statements not so much for what they say but what they do; that is, one questions what the constitutive or political effects of saying this instead of that might be' (Graham, 2011:6). As demonstrated in previous studies, applying a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis can be utilised in educational settings effectively (Graham, 2005; Freie and Epply, 2014; Raaper, 2016).

As discussed in the previous chapter, Bacchi and Bonham explain that '[i]n Foucault the term "discourse" refers to knowledge, what is "within the true" rather than to language' (2014:174). Discursive practice is about knowledge formation and power. Rather than discourse being seen in a linguistic sense, it is used in Foucauldian terms to analyse how people shape and are shaped by statements and knowledge. In analysing discourse, the researcher is not seeking to reveal the 'truth' of what is or is not said by the participants. Therefore the analysis of discourse within this study aims to identify what people are saying and how social constructions are shaped by assumed knowledge about situations and problems.

In their utilisation of Foucault within qualitative research approaches, Ferreira and Nato (2018:15) argued, 'researcher's attention should not only be on reproducing Foucault's concepts, but also on following his form of theorization and his problematisation.' Through Foucault's understanding of problematisation, a researcher is able to deconstruct established 'truths' that have been woven through discursive frameworks. Arguing that problematisation occurs through discursive frameworks and practice depends on the view 'that truth is always contingent and subject to scrutiny' (Graham, 2011:4).

To explore how challenging behaviour is constructed as a problem in education, Foucauldian inspired approaches, such as Bacchi's (2012) *What is the problem represented to be?* (WPR) framework, encourage the researcher to investigate the strategies and forces involved in the problematisation process. Bacchi (2012) has provided us with a useful tool to undertake this investigation. Her six guiding questions attempt to identify the meanings and implications behind a policy's

creation. Bacchi's (2012:21) questions to be applied in the analysis of problem representation are:

1. What is the problem?
2. What presuppositions or assumptions underpin this representation of the problem?
3. How has this representation of the problem come about?
4. What is left unproblematic in this representation? Where are the silences? Can the problem be thought about differently?
5. What effects are produced by this representation of the problem?
6. How/where has the representation of the problem been produced, disseminated and defended? How has it been (or could be) questioned, disrupted and replaced?

Using these questions to critically analyse policy, according to Bacchi, reminds us that both problem and solutions are 'heavily laden with meaning' (2012:23) that may be presupposed by policy writers and subjects of policy. Unraveling discourses attached to a problematisation aids the understanding of why the problem is perceived as such. The WPR framework provides an aid to discourse analysis, which can help researchers to understand policy practices but also to apply this critical analytical approach more broadly.

Bacchi (1999) believes that describing policy as discourse is central in the recasting of policy studies. To understand the problematisation process it is important to analyse what has been identified as a problem, why and how, and what solutions are proposed as a result. Tamboukou argues that the first step of isolating a problem is tracing current practices that could relate to the diagnosed 'problem', then one must attempt to formulate the relations between practices and the problem (1999:213). When considering how pupil's behaviour is perceived as a problem in our contemporary context, knowledge and discourse must be broken down to understand why such perceptions are held and Bacchi's (2012) WPR questions can usefully inform such analytical work.

Graham (2011) claims that a Foucauldian analysis of discourse can be undertaken by analysing three processes (description, recognition and classification), which she argues are analysed throughout Foucault's works:

1) Description: It is necessary to trace and understand how statements/ discourse function to conceptualise, communicate and produce the description and validation of a 'thing' or objects (Graham, 2011:4-8).

2) Recognition: Identifying how descriptive statements have become established and validated leads to an understanding of how and why they are recognised. Within a Foucauldian approach this entails the understanding and analysis of particular bodies of knowledge that validate statements (Graham, 2011:8/9).

3) Classification: Through bodies of knowledge such as those sustained by the medical profession, discourse constructs are formulated into symptoms and procedures that enable the identification and categorisation of behaviour, for example a child's 'challenging' behaviour being defined as 'aggressive,' 'withdrawn' or 'impetuous' (Graham, 2011:9/10).

The works of Bacchi (2012) and Graham (2005;2011), and the tools they provide, have greatly inspired and encouraged my use of Foucauldian discourse analysis. When researching the problematisation of challenging behaviour, deconstructing 'truths' enables an understanding of why and how participants' knowledge shapes their assumptions and practice. Analysing how the statements from participants are underpinned by 'bodies of knowledge' provides a useful pathway to understanding how 'challenging' behaviour is problematised. When carrying out my analysis I have continued to question the effects of what participants were saying through a Foucauldian lens as the main themes started to emerge. For example, as participants repeatedly pointed to mental health issues in the categorisation of pupils, I associated such claims with Foucault's argument about how discourse becomes knowledge to validate such categorisation and the creation of 'others'. Using case study methodology has enabled me to produce an in-depth

understanding of how knowledge and discourse is mobilised to create a phenomenon.

3.3 Case studies

Case study is a research methodology that allows the researcher to explore a phenomenon, such as challenging behaviour, in a particular context. A case study is generally a preferred strategy 'when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context' (Yin, 2003:1) and when posing 'how' or 'why' research questions. A case study allows the researcher to study individuals, or groups in greater depth to provide a multi-faceted understanding of a complex issue. Using a case study approach to explore the discourse, professional knowledge and actions in schools and a LA has enabled me to 'cover contextual conditions, believing them to be highly pertinent to the phenomenon of study' (Yin, 2003:12). Case studies may be designed as single case studies focusing on one holistic case unit of analysis (for example, one school) or multiple sub-units of analysis. Case studies may also involve 'multiple case designs' which consist of multiple cases or multiple embedded cases. A holistic single case study can limit the findings and the second type of case study can support more robust findings by providing opportunities to compare more varied units of study, however it can also involve expenses and time commitment beyond that of a doctoral student (Yin, 2003).

In order to explore challenging behaviour in schools in more depth, I included embedded sub-units within a single case. Looking at sub-units within a larger case study provides a more powerful basis for data analysis – looking not only at single units but drawing comparisons across them. Using an embedded single case design gave me the 'ability to engage in … rich analysis [that] serves to better illuminate the case' (Baxter and Jack, 2010:550). Originally setting out to study two schools, I found that as themes emerged there was a voice missing – that of the LA to whom the schools are accountable. Therefore, to achieve more insight into the problematisation of challenging behaviour I gained access to LA senior participants who were responsible for the services accessed and were consistently raised as 'part of the problem' by school participants. My single embedded case study therefore contained three sub-units as illustrated in Figure 3.1.

Case Study Context

Challenging Behaviour: How is it constructed as a problem in schools?

Embedded Unit of Analysis 1
Orchard Grove Primary School

As themes emerged another sub-unit was added

Embedded Unit of Analysis 2
Treetop Primary School

Embedded Unit of Analysis 3
Local Authority
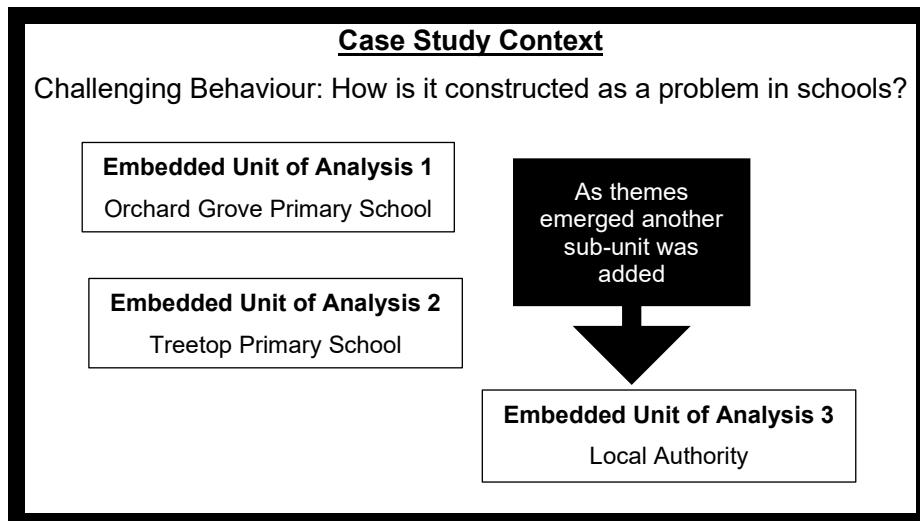
Figure 3.1: Single Embedded Case Study Design

It is important when carrying out an embedded case study not to lose track of the overall context and become focused within one of the sub-units, therefore I continually ensured that my analysis considered the overall policy and governance context and how each sub-unit was related to it (Yin, 2003).

3.4 Context and Methods

3.4.1 Participant Context

Two state mainstream primary schools and one LA were included in this case study A list of all participants and their role is outlined below in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Interview Participants

Interview Participants		
Orchard Grove School	**Treetop School**	**Local Authority(LA)**
Teaching Assistant	Teaching Assistant	Senior Manager – Behaviour Support Services **(LA-BSS)**
Class Teacher (Resource Unit)	Class Teacher	Senior Manager – Family Services **(LA-FS)**
Headteacher	Headteacher	Senior Manager – SEND Services **(LA-SS)**
Pastoral Manager	Pastoral Manager/Senco	
Class Teacher/Asst' Head	Deputy Head	

Thirteen participants from across the three organisations thus took part in the main body of this research. Five participants are from 'Orchard Grove Primary School' and five are from 'Treetop Primary School'. Three participants came from the LA in which both schools are located. The following sub-sections outline the context of each organisation.

3.4.2 Orchard Grove Primary School Context

Orchard Grove is a smaller than average school with 170 pupils on roll at the time of writing, with the capacity to admit 220 pupils. The number of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), pupils on free school meals (FSM), 'disadvantaged' pupils receiving pupil premium funding (PPF) and pupils who receive support for SEND are all above the national average. The school setting has a Pupil Resource Unit located in the same building as, and close to, mainstream classes, which caters for up to 10 pupils requiring support with profound and multiple learning and physical difficulties. It also caters for other pupils that may be assessed as requiring specialised support. In a recent Ofsted report (2019), the school was awarded 'Requires Improvement.'

Within the last few years there has been a change in leadership at Orchard Grove. The new head and LA believed that the school was in crisis due to pupil behaviour being 'out of control'. Pupil exclusion and physical intervention were high, and plans were put in place to address the perceived crisis. A temporary Behaviour Support Unit (BSU) was established in a room near to mainstream classes. It ran for one year and aimed to manage and teach the pupils seen to be most at risk of permanent exclusion due to the behaviour they presented whilst in mainstream classes.

In September 2017, the 'Hub' was established after the BSU was closed down and it is located in what was a mainstream class. The Hub differed from the BSU in that it no longer had pupils using it as their main location for education and support. Unlike the BSU, the Hub is not a space where pupils base themselves. It was created to provide a temporary location for pupils struggling in mainstream classes with either their behaviour or other issues that required a restorative or 'nurturing' intervention. At the time of research interviews, this facility had been mostly closed for several months due to the main member of the team being absent.

3.4.3 Treetop Primary School Context

Treetop is larger than the average-sized primary school with 420 pupils on roll. As with Orchard Grove, the numbers of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), pupils on free school meals (FSM), 'disadvantaged' pupils receiving pupil premium funding (PPF) and pupils who receive support for SEND are all above the national average. Two rooms within the school are being used to teach and care for pupils who may be struggling in their mainstream classes. One of these rooms (unnamed), is regularly used for children with special educational needs. Within the last year there has been a change in leadership with the previous deputy becoming the new headteacher and the recent appointment of a deputy headteacher from another borough. In a recent Ofsted report, the school was awarded 'Outstanding' in all of the inspected categories including behaviour management. Although this school has received the highest Ofsted grading, the headteacher is of the view that pupils presenting with challenging behaviour is a 'problem'.

3.4.4 Local Authority Context

Local authorities (LA's) have control over local services, including education, within a given geographical area. They have an administrative function on behalf of the government, such as implementation of policies. Three services of the LA were perceived to have an impact on Orchard Grove and Tree Top schools in relation to challenging behaviour and therefore a senior manager in each of the following services was interviewed:

- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Services (LA:SS);
- Behaviour Support Services (LA:BSS); and
- Family Services (LA:FS).

LA senior managers have a direct impact on schools as they are responsible for leading and managing services that pupils presenting with challenging behaviour may need to access. Including interviewees from the above services provides other perspectives and contexts in which to identify how challenging behaviour is problematised. How the perceptions of these staff either support or differ from school headteachers and staff provided a more in-depth and balanced analysis to answer the research question. A brief outline of each service is given below.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Services (SS): The role of this LA service is to make sure children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified and their needs met. They are responsible for overseeing the progress made by children with SEND within the local area and ensuring outcomes are effective. They have responsibility for agreeing additional funding for pupils assessed as needing it. Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission are jointly responsible for inspecting this service. The participant from this service (LA-SS) comes from a teaching background and has worked in education for most of their career. They have previously worked as headteacher in schools before joining the LA senior management team.

Behaviour Support Services (BSS): This service is financed by both primary and secondary mainstream schools, although it is managed by the LA. They provide support to schools who have difficulty managing pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Supporting headteachers and staff to develop good practice and policies is a core part of this service. Support also involves working with parents and carers, alongside their children in schools, to build better relationships and understanding. BSS also have a multi-agency team that works alongside mainstream schools and links to mental health services within the borough. This interviewee has worked for many years within this service, and prior to this they worked in schools, including as a headteacher.

Family Services (FS): The Council and NHS Foundation Trust have been working to transform and integrate services that work with children and families. The development of Family Services has seen the integration of children's health professionals with LA early years, safeguarding, protection and specialist workers to provide a coordinated and joined up offer to families in need. They provide integrated whole family support for children, young people (0-25 years) and their families. Working across four clinical commissioning group (CCG) locality areas, locality teams have geographical responsibilities and use assessments to identify need and agree a plan of action with the family and other professionals. A recent member of the LA team, the interviewee from this service previously worked as a headteacher.

3.5 Methods

Within the case study design, I have used a number of methods to enable an in-depth exploration. I began with an exploratory questionnaire to establish if challenging behaviour is perceived as a problem within the schools and the LA. The questionnaire also informed the recruitment of sites and participants. The main data collection method employed in my case study was interviews with professionals in schools and the LA. In addition to the interviews, I have examined documents pertaining to school policies and guidance/legislation disseminated to schools from both the government and LA. The following subsections provide more detail on each of these methods in addition to explaining how I carried out the analysis of the data. I will conclude by addressing the ethical considerations and researcher standpoint within this research study. A time-line documenting each stage of this research study can be found in Appendix 1.

3.5.1 Exploratory Questionnaire

A questionnaire was initially sent to headteachers of all mainstream primary schools within one LA geographical area (Appendix 2). I took this approach to gain an understanding of how prevalent the problem of challenging behaviour is across the LA's geographical area of responsibility, rather than relying on my own professional experience as a former teacher from Orchard Grove School. The questionnaire was trialed with 3 head teachers to ensure questions were clear, understandable and relevant to exploring challenging behaviour in schools. Trialing the questionnaire in this way increases the reliability of the tool (Newby, 2014). I kept the questionnaire short and straightforward, because when questionnaires are too long participants are less likely to complete them (Newby, 2014; Somekh and Lewin, 2011). The questionnaire contained mainly open questions to encourage participants to contribute their knowledge and opinions. This allowed me to obtain a richer picture and identify interpretations and perspectives through respondent's explanations (Newby, 2014). As researchers we should not assume participants have the same opinions or knowledge, and we should also be mindful of the choice of vocabulary and the concepts and information behind them (Cohen et al, 2011).

I used a Microsoft Forms electronic survey tool to send the questionnaire which allowed the participants to remain anonymous. The questionnaire was sent to 79

headteachers and 9 were returned. Although a low response rate, all participants claimed they were concerned about challenging behaviour in their school and gave examples of how it is problematised. The questionnaire asked headteachers if they agreed to further exploration/observation within their school. Initially, 3 schools agreed to take part in the study, but unfortunately one school subsequently withdrew. Each school understood that they would be treated as an embedded unit of analysis to allow for comparison of the data from different sites in a shared context.

This initial stage of the research was primarily intended as a method for identifying and recruiting interview participants. I also wanted to establish the prevalence of challenging behaviour as a phenomenon. All participants claimed that they were concerned about behaviour in their schools and did not receive the support to meet the needs of pupils presenting with challenging behaviour (Appendix 3).The questionnaire did not form part of my main data analysis, but it did provide initial indications of how pupil behaviour was perceived in schools. I also used the questions and data from the questionnaires to create a 'prompt sheet' of broad areas to explore in the interviews (Appendix 4).

3.5.2 Interviews

I interviewed five staff from each of the two schools. Initially I had intended to carry out two or three interviews in each school, however I decided that obtaining more viewpoints from staff that had different roles and status would offer a more balanced cross-section of perceptions. Some researchers may conduct interviews to represent a social context from as many viewpoints as possible, while others focus on one group of individuals (William et al, 2011:5). It was important for me to not only acquire a managerial viewpoint from headteachers and senior teachers across the two schools. I also wanted support staff and class teachers, thus obtaining a more balanced viewpoint on different perceptions and knowledge regarding pupils with challenging behaviour.

Different managerial cultures are likely to shape access to, and the outcomes of, interviews in schools and other organisations. It is important to be seen as having the support of the headteacher to gain access to school staff. Headteachers are

gatekeepers and can give access or block it, and 'gatekeepers are often the [researcher's] initial point of contact' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007:49). Fortunately, both headteachers were keen for me to interview any of their staff and at both schools there was an enthusiastic interest and willingness, shown by staff, in relation to being interviewed. At Orchard Grove school, this may have been because I was known to many of the staff and had established a good and trusting relationship. At Treetop, I had visited the headteacher before carrying out the interviews to establish a relationship and I also emailed staff at both schools with details of the research study.

School participants consistently referred to three services that they accessed in relation to pupils presenting with challenging behaviour. These were Family Services, SEND Lead Services and Behaviour Support Services. I therefore established contact with a senior manager from each of these services, two of whom knew me from my previous teaching posts within Orchard Grove school. Once I had secured interviews with the two participants that knew me in a professional capacity, I was then able to identify a senior manager from the other service. Interviewing LA participants and a mix of school staff ensured the 'breadth and variation among interviewees' provided a wider response coverage to my research aim and questions (Alvesson, 2011:6).

All interviews were semi-structured, and I used a prompt sheet to aid the process (Appendix 4). Having a more open structure facilitated the emergence of themes rather than dictating them. All but one interview was audio recorded and the interviews lasted 45-75 minutes. One participant did not want to be recorded but was happy for me to take detailed written notes, which I wrote up on my laptop within an hour of the interview ending. Interviewing educational staff that held different roles and positions of authority meant that I had an awareness of the politics and hierarchical structures that existed and continually took these into consideration. I assured all participants that recordings and transcripts would remain confidential and not shared with other participants or staff members. School-based interviews were held at the participants' school in a communal place familiar to them, while the LA interviews were held in a place suggested by participants.

3.5.3 Documentary Data

Due to their overall value, 'documents play an explicit role in any data collection in doing case studies' (Yin, 2003:87). Reading documents available on each organisation's website such as mission statements, behaviour policies and Ofsted reports, prior to carrying out the interviews, allowed me to gain an insight into the administrative framework and context that participants are working within (Table 3.2).

Table 3.2: List of documents read form each organisation

Documents from each unit of analysis		
Orchard Grove	**Treetop**	**Local Authority**
Behaviour and Discipline Policy	Behaviour and Discipline Policy	SEND Ofsted Report (2019)
SEND Policy	SEND Policy	SEND Local Offer
Mission Statement	Mission Statement	SEND Framework(draft)
Ofsted Report (2019)	Ofsted Report (2019)	BSS Service Information Leaflet/Website
Safeguarding Policy	Safeguarding Policy	BSS Care and Control Policy
Data on pupil population profiles (SEND, FSM, PP, Exclusion and Physical Restraints)	Data on pupil population profiles (SEND, FSM, PP, Exclusion and Physical Restraints)	Family Services Information Website
Update news on school Website	Update news on school Website	General Website Information

In addition to reading school and LA documents, I familiarised myself with government policies and guidelines, such as those within SEND and other related documents, to understand the wider context. This enabled me to better understand the technologies shaped by policy texts and discourses that are reliant on policy enactors such as LA managers and teaching staff (Ball,1993; 2003). Permission was sought to investigate de-identified administrative data[1] on incidents such as pupil exclusion, physical intervention and isolation that was not readily available to the public. Becoming familiar with the documentation utilised by respondent's helped to verify and augment evidence from the interviews (Yin, 2003).

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[1] Due to the sensitivity and confidentiality these data were only used as background information, enabling me to gain a better insight into behaviour management.

3.5.4 Analysis of Data

I used thematic analysis informed by Foucauldian discourse analysis to identify patterns and themes that are constant across the data. Thematic analysis is used as a method for identifying, analysing, organising, describing and reporting themes within a data set. Maguire and Delahunt (2017:3354), drawing on the works of Braun and Clarke (2006), suggest that a six-step framework is useful when undertaking thematic analysis and I used a similar approach when conducting my analysis. Braun and Clarke do not see these steps as linear or inflexible but used in relation to research questions. Below are the 6 steps and an example of each step that have been a useful tool in my analysis of data (Table 3.3).

Table 3.3: Utilisation of Braun and Clarkes (2006) thematic analysis framework

Phase/Steps	Process
Step 1: Become familiar with the data	I familiarised myself with each interview transcript and put them in a separate file relating to each unit of analysis e.g. School 1, School 2, LA. After each interview and the first reading of the transcript I made initial notes in a small notebook used only for my research data.
Step 2: Generate initial codes	I did not have pre-determined codes. Codes emerged as I went through the text identifying points of interest that related to my research question. For example, I started by putting initials, such as 'MH' for mental health, against passages of interview data. I used LL/HL to refer to defining what participants perceived as challenging behaviour and P for policy etc
Step 3: Search for themes	After listening to the recording and reading the transcripts, the simple coding used initially began to form into themes that related to the research questions and illustrated how discourse underpinned knowledge. For example: **Theme: Mental Health and Categorisation of Pupils** The following responses are illustrative of 'medical' discourse. 'I don't have mental health training' 'You could see she was obviously autistic' 'There is no support for pupils with complex needs 'They cannot work in their mainstream class' 'They are withdrawn and unresponsive' 'She disrupts the others and is not like them, their needs are not being met'
Step 4: Review themes	As the themes evolved, I continually checked that they made sense rereading the text and listening to participants recording to evidence confirming there were data to support the theme. I then started to break the themes into sub-themes.
Step 5: Define themes	As themes and sub-themes emerged further and became more concrete, I identified how and where they fitted in relation to the overall research questions. I began to match the themes more consistently with the research questions and the theoretical/conceptual framework I was working within.
Step 6: Write-up	Whilst writing up my analysis of findings I continually questioned my interpretations in relation to the data and my theoretical framework.

According to Braun and Clarke (2006:84), there are two distinguishable levels of themes: the 'semantic' level that looks at the surface meaning of the data, and the 'latent' level that goes beyond this and examines 'the underlying ideas, assumptions, and conceptualisations – and ideologies - that are theorised as shaping or informing the semantic content of the data.' Conducting a latent level of analysis allowed me to not only look at the semantics in terms of patterns emerging, but to then extend my thematic analysis into a Foucauldian analysis of discourse. Using my research questions as the framework, I identified data relevant to Graham's (2011) components - description, recognition and classification - and Bacchi's (2012) questions in her WPR framework. I systematically identified the main themes evolving from the data to develop a more in-depth analysis, establishing an interpretive account of participants perceptions and views. An example of how I identified a research area/theme within a Foucauldian analysis of discourse is outlined in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Application of Foucauldian Analysis of Discourse to Research Questions

Research Questions*	Research Area/Theme Example	Relation to Foucauldian discourse analysis frameworks	
		Graham's (2011) Discourse Component Indicator	Bacchi (WPR) Questions
Q1. What actions are applied, by professionals, to pupils defined as having challenging behaviour?	Pupils presenting as 'withdrawn,' 'disengaging' and unproductive have been defined and described as having challenging behaviour, deviating from the norm and separated as the 'other.'	**Description** (What words/sentences say to describe things/ objects)	**As different research areas/themes emerged, Graham's components and Bacchi's WPR questions became a tool for answering different research questions.** **Q1.** What is the problem? **Q2.** What presuppositions or assumptions underpin this representation of the problem?
Q2. How is professional knowledge and discourse mobilized to justify these actions?	Legal and administrative systems such as behaviour policies within educational practice affirm and locate challenging behaviour in schools.	**Recognition** (The things/objects have become located and recognised)	**Q.3** How has this representation of the problem come about? **Q.4** What is left unproblematic in this representation? Where are the silences? Can the problem be thought about differently?
Q3. How is challenging behaviour constructed, by professionals, as a problem in the case study primary schools?	Categorisation, such as within the SEND policy and medicalization processes, determine how to identify and respond to challenging behaviour.	**Classification** (Discourses and professional bodies of knowledge identify behaviours/symptoms to categorise them)	**Q.5** What effects are produced by this representation of the problem? **Q.6** How/where has the representation of the problem been produced, disseminated and defended? How has it been (or could be) questioned, disrupted and replaced?

3.6 Ethical Considerations

Before commencing this research journey, I reflected upon my own professional experience and spent the first two years of my study ensuring my research design would enhance professionals' knowledge about how we problematise challenging behaviour. It was important to me to uphold the principle that 'the prime ethical responsibility of the researcher is to pursue worthwhile knowledge...' (Hammersley and Trainou 2012:6). By interviewing other educational professionals, I hoped to avoid a perception that was based on my experience alone, thus widening and questioning my own knowledge and practice. The trust I established with respondents through my open approach and their acknowledgement of my experience, created an environment in which a robust collection and analysis of data could be implemented and underpinned by an ethical approach (Angen, 2000:387/8). Including LA participants in my research enabled me to gain the views of professionals from outside of the school environment. The LA often had different views to the school participants, and therefore throughout my analysis I constantly checked responses of all participants to ensure a balanced representation of the differing views. I treated all participants, irrelevant of status, with equal respect and assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. A few issues were raised about individual professionals by participants that they did not want to be directly quoted on because their comments may be deemed politically sensitive and confidential. I respected these concerns and ensured such data were presented confidentially in my analysis or omitted where appropriate.

Consent was gained from participants and they were also given a full explanation of the research and how they can contact me, my supervisors or the Chair of the Faculty Research Ethics and Governance Committee for further details (Appendix 5). All participants were professionals of consenting age and had the ability to provide informed consent. I was very conscious of the possible power relations between teaching staff and their headteacher, so to ensure 'free consent', once the headteacher had allowed access to their school, I went directly to participants. I informed participants at the initial contact stage, and also before and after the interview, that they could withdraw at any stage of the process. Interviews were

carried out in a familiar and safe environment and no issues were apparent or raised that caused a concern for their health and safety.

Participants were assured that their data will be anonymised and kept within a secure password protected online location. Participants were informed that if at a later date they do not want their data to be part of the research it would be excluded. To ensure anonymity and confidentiality, I used a pseudonym for each school and only referred to respondent's job title rather than their name. Throughout this research project, data was collected in line with the British Educational Research Association recommendations to ensure it is of a high ethical standard (BERA, 2018).

3.7 Researcher Standpoint

Whilst carrying out this research study, it has been crucial to recognise my own positioning and to continually reflect on my possible bias and associated ethical issues. As mentioned in Chapter 1, before carrying out this research study I was employed by one of the participating schools as a behaviour support teacher and mainstream class teacher. I had established professional relationships with the headteacher and staff and needed to be aware how this may impact on my perceptions and interpretation. I recognised that being reflexive about my standpoint and carefully self-monitoring the impact of biases, beliefs, and personal experiences was important to try and maintain the balance between the personal and the research experience (Berger 2013:2). To help with this task, I kept a reflective journal to help me consider my positioning and discuss this with academic peers and supervisors. I had resigned from my posts at Orchard Grove school a year previous to starting the study and this gave me the space to be more detached and observe from the 'outside'. However, as acknowledged throughout the discussion earlier in this chapter, it is not possible to be objective (Sandberg, 2005). My experience within Orchard Grove, and life in general, will impact on the reflections and interpretations I make. Therefore, I continually questioned 'why' and 'how' I arrived at my analysis and endeavoured to deconstruct my own 'truths'.

I had always maintained a good relationship with all staff at Orchard Grove school and they knew I had direct experience of pupils perceived as 'challenging.' This gave

me credibility resulting in staff being very candid throughout their interviews. On several occasions, participants would say 'you'll know what I mean' or 'you've seen what it is like,' and I avoided responding to such comments to maintain a distance from their interpretations. I also had similar experiences with participants from Treetop school and the LA. Again, I believe it helped because they knew I was a teacher and had experience of working with and supporting 'challenging' pupils.

As the study and my reflexivity evolved, I realised that my experience and professional knowledge could conflict with participants own interpretations of how challenging behaviour is problematised. Having been a teacher constantly advocating for pupils perceived to be challenging, I had to sustain an internal dialogue and recognise that my knowledge, perceptions and interpretations may not be that of the research participants (Pitard, 2017). I have positioned myself as the researcher consistently, but have acknowledged and reflected upon how my own life experience may have had an impact on my research as raised in the final chapter.

3.8 Summary

In order to answer my research questions, I have worked within an interpretive paradigm that incorporates a Foucauldian approach to examining discourse and deconstructing 'truths' to understand the problematisation of challenging behaviour. Not establishing a theoretical understanding to support a researcher's judgment 'risks naivety and leaves interpretations standing on shaky ground' (Alvesson, 2012:40). Drawing on the works of Bacchi (2012) and Graham (2005; 2011), I carried out a thematic discourse analysis through a Foucauldian lens and within a framework that provided consistency and rigor.

Adopting an embedded single case study design, as defined by Yin (2003), has allowed me to collate data from different sources within the same context. Having access to internal and external documents such as behaviour policies and Ofsted reports gave me a greater insight into the context participants are working within. Carrying out semi-structured interviews across schools and the LA provided me with a rich data set and viewpoints from participants that came from a different standpoint in the problematisation of pupils perceived as challenging.

Throughout the research process I have ensured that good ethical standards were implemented and maintained. Having been a reflective practitioner throughout my career, I recognised the importance of applying a reflective approach to my research. This approach kept me constantly aware of my positioning as a researcher. My methodology and methods provide firm foundations for the analysis of my findings in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Findings

4.0 Introduction

This chapter will present analysis of the main themes that emerged from the data generated in this case study. In order to explore how challenging behaviour is constructed as a problem by professionals, participants were selected from three separate but embedded units of analysis. The three embedded units included different levels of employees within two state community mainstream primary schools (Orchard Grove and Treetop), and LA senior managers responsible for providing services and support to these schools. I interviewed ten staff across both schools. Within the LA, I interviewed one senior manager from each of the following services – SEND Services (LA-SS); Behaviour Support Services (LA-BSS); and Family Services (LA-FS).

A number of themes and areas of interest emerged from the interview data. The four main sections of this chapter are organised around the main themes: (1) how challenging behaviour is perceived; (2) responses to challenging behaviour; (3) managing resources; and (4) exploring solutions to the problem. How challenging behaviour is constructed as a problem in schools will be explored and analysed in-depth within the context in which the data was collected and interpreted, as described in Chapter 3. The analysis throughout this chapter is shaped by my research questions which focus on how challenging behaviour is constructed as a problem and how professional knowledge and discourse are mobilised to justify actions taken towards 'challenging' pupils.

The analysis of the data in the first section of this chapter provides evidence of how pupil's behaviour is perceived and described within relevant discourses, and how it is identified by participants as a problem. I will then analyse how medicalisation of pupils and their home life is perceived as influencing pupil's behaviour. This will be followed by a discussion of the local authority (LA) perspective on how challenging behaviour has become problematised in schools. In the second section, the responses and actions taken regarding pupils perceived as 'challenging' are analysed. I focus on the SEND Code of Practice because it is one of the main government policies implemented in response to challenging pupils and was

constantly raised by staff. I also focus on the application in schools of behaviour policy and behaviour management tools. In the third section, I move on to analyse the financial and resource implications associated with managing the needs of pupils presenting with challenging behaviour. In the final section, participants proposed solutions to the problem of challenging behaviour are discussed in relation to Bacchi's (2012), 'What is the Problem Represented to be' (WPR) approach. The findings on how the problem of challenging behaviour is constructed are presented in a summary table aligned to Bacchi's WPR questions (Table 4.2). I argue that the deconstruction of a problem may impact on the proposed solutions.

4.1 How is challenging behaviour perceived?

4.1.1 When behaviour becomes a problem

All school-based participants said they had experienced and witnessed what they perceive to be challenging behaviour in their schools. However, there appears to be no single definition of a pupil presenting with challenging behaviour within the discourses about behaviour in these schools. This concurs with the position taken by others who state there is no clear definition of challenging behaviour and it is dependent on the social context (Emerson, 2001; Cooper, 1999; Cole and Knowles, 2011). Staff described a spectrum of behaviours from low-level disruption, such as talking in class, kicking or rocking on chairs and pupils becoming withdrawn, to increased levels of disruptive behaviours that may include violent acts to pupils, staff or property and pupils who are totally withdrawn. There is a belief in both schools that a 'regular handful' of pupils display behaviours that become hard to control within their behaviour management strategies. Participants' reflections on why pupils behaved as they did mainly focus on pupil needs such as additional support in the form of 1-1 tutoring, mental health intervention or external factors such as difficult family circumstances.

In Orchard Grove school, all staff interviewed believed that behaviour has improved over the last two academic years. While challenging behaviour is still considered a problem, it is not as problematic as it was previously. A recent Ofsted inspection gave the school a 'Requires Improvement' (RI) category. Ofsted recommended the school should be setting even higher expectations for pupils' behaviour in lessons. They did recognise that there had been progress in the management of behaviour

since the new headteacher was appointed and reported that high rates of disruptive behaviour and exclusions are no longer the norm (Ofsted Report, 2019). The headteacher acknowledged the progress in managing behaviour and related challenging behaviour to how productive a pupil is perceived to be in their class.

> We've had a huge drop in children - I always hate to use the word - refusing to do what the teachers asked, because it's loaded. It puts it in such a negative connotation. For whatever reason, the children don't do the work and their behaviour can be perceived, certainly by the adults [teaching staff], as being defiant, refuse to do, won't do what I asked. Actually, we've got a significant drop in that. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

Pupils' behaviour appears to be labelled by teachers as 'defiant' due to their lack of productivity. This suggests that pupils in Orchard Grove, who do not fit within the normalised expectations of behaviour, and refuse to be productive, are then identified as 'challenging'. Staff believed the ability to manage pupils was a problem, with one teacher stating, 'it becomes challenging when we are unable to manage their behaviour' (Orchard Grove Class Teacher).

In Treetop school, a recently appointed headteacher focused on changing the approach to managing behaviour. Ofsted (2019) noted that since the previous inspection, when the school had received the categorisation of 'Good,' new approaches had led to improvement. On this more recent inspection, Ofsted graded Treetop 'Outstanding' and reported 'the standard of behaviour in classrooms is very high' (Ofsted, 2019:7). However, the headteacher has given behaviour priority on the school's agenda and, contrary to the Ofsted perception, they believe challenging behaviour in the school has increased and has become a problem. The school had a significant rise in external exclusions from 2016 to 2018, but in 2019 external exclusions were reduced. Data on internal exclusions was not available, but the headteacher and staff believed they had increased, which may be due to the decrease in external exclusion. This raises questions about the Ofsted observations because these problems were not identified in the inspection. At Treetop, the headteacher believed that although challenging behaviour was becoming more of a problem, it was due to a small number of pupils.

The three that really struggle, it would be them where I'd be asking for the support. The children [whose] behaviour isn't great, we can accept that, and we can do something about that, but it's the ones with so many needs that it doesn't fall into the remit. (Treetop Headteacher)

The headteacher described manageable behaviour as pupils having low self-esteem and being apathetic and unwilling to do their work, and this was considered easy to turn around. He saw challenging behaviour as 'shouting and shouting out, losing their temper, defiance, that's more challenging for us to deal with' (Treetop Headteacher). It is evident that the discourse of challenging behaviour in Treetop is shaped by expectations of what is manageable or not.

Interestingly, pupils who become withdrawn or unable to engage are seen as displaying a 'level' of challenging behaviour across both schools. A teacher from Treetop and a pastoral manager at Orchard Grove observed that:

Sometimes they withdraw and just do not engage … this can be challenging but usually I can encourage them to get involved before their behaviour escalates or becomes a problem. (Treetop Class Teacher)

I suppose, the classic challenges would be, you have the overt physical aggression when things are being thrown, and the child is really obviously really angry. That's coming out in aggression, that's a challenge. Other kinds of challenge would be around when a child [who] almost does the opposite of that, and they just go completely into themselves. (Orchard Grove Pastoral Manager)

Staff perceived a loss of control when pupils refused to adhere to the expected behaviour of being productive and act within the school's rules and guidelines. Challenging behaviour is perceived as a spectrum with aggressive behaviour at one end and withdrawn behaviour at the other, with the former being characterised by a physically/verbally disruptive pupil and the latter a pupil who does not engage.

Foucault (1977,1984) argues that power is hidden in the micro-dynamics of everyday life, such as within a school or classroom, and technologies such as rules

and policies partly aim to create docile bodies that follow the expected behaviours by becoming productive members of society. Disciplinary technologies produce normalising judgements that not only characterise a behaviour but also the reward or punishment attached to it. Those who do not fall within a group considered to be the 'norm' are identified as the 'other'. Considering Foucault's theory of power and abnormality, those children resisting the 'norm' in terms of classroom expectations become labelled as disruptive or withdrawn and they are identified as different from the children meeting expectations.

Children at both Treetop and Orchard Grove who refuse to engage by not accessing the curriculum in the way the behaviour management tools and technologies dictate encourage the teacher to treat them as the 'other'. The withdrawn pupil is not being productive, so the teacher, in this problematisation of behaviour, may proceed to categorise that pupil as challenging. However, this could also be interpreted as the pupil holding onto their power by not being docile and performing as expected, thus holding onto their agency by resisting the teacher's strategies of discipline and behaviour management. Gallagher (2010) argues that docility may only be partially and temporarily effective as a mode of resistance because it is a strategy rather than an institutional structure. A strategy is open to interpretation and application and its effectiveness can be arbitrary. It is evident that the behaviour management strategy is not always effective, pupils who refuse to engage or resist are not being as productive or as docile as the school expects.

When staff at both Treetop and Orchard Grove discussed 'high-level' challenging behaviour, the same few pupils were given as examples of being the most challenging, even by staff who did not work on a regular basis with these pupils. This could relate to a number of theories on both discourse and labelling. For example, pupils' 'challenging' behaviours have become part of the discourse between all school staff. In both schools where these 'few' pupils are continually exemplified as 'challenging', discourse serves to enhance both the label and the associated problem. The behaviour discourse associated with these pupils appears to be accepted as official knowledge about them and their needs. Bacchi and Bonham (2014) argue that discourse evolves into knowledge. Once a pupil is labelled as having 'challenging behaviour' this can be viewed as a 'true' assessment

of them. From a Foucauldian perspective, it is evident that 'normalisation' and accepted levels of behaviour have been established in both schools. As agents of the classification of 'normal' and 'challenging' behaviour, teachers and other staff look to identify anomalies and then reclassify them as challenging, because it is beyond their control to manage them in the classroom.

4.1.2 'Medicalising' challenging behaviour

Mental health was raised by staff across both Orchard Grove and Treetop as a factor contributing to pupils' behaviour. One pupil in particular, from Treetop school, was given as an example by a number of participating staff. This pupil, who fell into the 'few' whom staff felt were not having their needs met, had difficulties in school most days and was believed to have mental health problems along with other family members. The headteacher in Treetop very passionately explained an example of mental health issues using this pupil's case. They began by describing how a BBC program on mental health depicted children from 'good' homes and with parents able to fight for the support their child needs. However, the headteacher's concern was for families like that of the pupil in their school who were not as fortunate:

> If your mother has mental health issues and is not getting out of bed, which is the case with one of our children, how is that mother meant to support that child? She [the pupil] can't switch off from what's going on at home when in school. We don't have the skills to support her actually, but on top of that it's a whole family that needs the support. When I go to a meeting about that family [with LA staff], I don't come away and feel that that family is getting the support that it needs or even the capacity to do it. (Treetop Headteacher)

Other pupils were highlighted across both Orchard Grove and Treetop as having mental health issues that impact on their behaviour and become barriers for them. How and why staff believed them to have mental illness was unclear, and from observations of staff, it was not a 'diagnosis' based on a professional medical opinion. Several staff believed there to be a lack of mental health expertise and support within, and externally accessible to, schools.

The government guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools states that schools and staff should try to identify pupils with mental health problems.

Only medical professionals should make a formal diagnosis of a mental health condition. Schools, however, are well-placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be suffering from a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. This may include withdrawn pupils whose needs may otherwise go unrecognised. (DfE,2018:12)

Here we can see the association between withdrawn behaviour and mental health in official policy guidance. The interpretation of this guidance can produce the risk of some pupils becoming wrongly labelled and categorised. Teachers identifying perceived mental health issues can then interpret their observations as diagnosis of a pupil, even though the pupil has not been medically observed or diagnosed. This risk of incorrectly categorising a pupil has become a matter of public debate. For example, it is emphasised in recent media commentary in the Telegraph, where the education editor quotes Tom Bennett (an advisor to the Secretary of State for Education) as saying 'Schools need to be careful not to overreach their expertise and try to do the job of trained experts in mental health'. Bennett claimed there was a danger of 'medicalising' normal childhood emotions and teachers giving out 'amateur diagnosis' (Turner, 2018).

Hacking suggests that we 'medicalize kinds of deviant people relentlessly, not always with success' (2007:311). Behaviours of pupils identified as challenging have moved away from the perceived norm of expected behaviours. In an effort to understand why their strategies are not working, teachers may seek to discover and produce the knowledge to justify pupils deviating from the norm. Having tried the behavioural strategies known to them, teachers may believe there are other reasons beyond their control and associated with the pupil's mental health. Once a pupil becomes labelled from a recognised professional body, they become easier to categorise and control. If a pupil is diagnosed as fitting within the medical model, then services can be identified to meet their needs. However, this approach also reduces the need for schools to reflect critically on what the norm should be and whether a pupil's behaviour is actually 'abnormal'. It is an approach that focuses on 'fixing' the pupil rather than exploring issues with systems and expectations. Leaning towards mental health explanations, for some of the pupils perceived as 'challenging', may produce a misguided picture within child mental health services.

As Childerhouse (2017) argued, it is evident here that, similar to the medical model of disability, the 'problem' and deficit is attached to the pupil and not to societal factors as proposed in the social model. Not fully exploring childhood behaviour in its broad contexts may incite an increase in the diagnosis of behaviour disorders and the 'medicalisation of childhood' (Brown and Carr, 2019:244).

In Orchard Grove, all staff thought that a small number of pupils in the resource unit presented with the most challenging behaviour, in particular a pupil who was previously in a mainstream class and who has consistently displayed challenging behaviour since joining the school. Several staff suggested this pupil should not have been placed in the resource room but could not be taught and managed in her mainstream class either.

> This child will refuse to do absolutely anything asked. We very rarely get any work from this child … you will see them around the school, throwing things, destroying the library, breaking things, which she does on a regular basis. It hasn't helped the resource room. You can see a decline with the children in the resource room, in their behaviour, since that child moved into the room. They don't like her, and they're scared of her. (Orchard Grove TA)

Staff at Orchard Grove believed this pupil's needs could not be met at the school and they had exhausted all of their strategies to manage her behaviour. A pupil who is not being productive may be viewed as demonstrating challenging behaviour, and as we see above 'the child will refuse to do absolutely anything asked'. Although other pupils in the resource room were also seen as having challenging behaviours, such as shouting and physically attacking staff, they had been formally diagnosed as having a medical condition. There seemed to be an acceptance that pupils who were in the resource room before the 'challenging' pupil from a mainstream class arrived behaved as they did due to their recognised disabilities. The pupil from mainstream did not have any formally diagnosed medical condition and, although a pupil who required support, she did not 'fit' in the resource unit. A resource unit teacher explained 'we can manage the other children, we understand they may struggle because of their other conditions such as autism, ADHD or other complex needs…' Similar perceptions were evident in Treetop school. Although they did not have a dedicated resource unit, pupils who had difficulty managing in mainstream

due to formally diagnosed medical conditions, such as autism, were identified as needing an alternative room due to their difficulties and this was manageable and appeared to be 'accepted'.

Medicalised pupils appeared to work within a less rigid regime of expectations, including relating to their productivity. Challenging behaviour presented by these pupils was viewed slightly differently and staff at both schools appeared to accept their need to use a designated room or additional resources. As a class teacher of a pupil with autism explained in Orchard Grove, 'I can understand why they are behaving like that and we can manage it in the class because we know what he does'. A class teacher in Treetop explained, in relation to a pupil on the autism spectrum, that 'of course they need to use the room (designated room) as they cannot always cope in class'. Responses from both schools raise the question of how pupils individual agency is limited when they are viewed as fitting (or not) in a given category. Although not mirroring the 'sad', 'bad' and 'mad' framework of Macleod (2006), pupils who were perceived as having a medicalised label (Macleod's 'mad') were seen as more 'entitled' to additional support, understanding and acceptance than those without. As suggested by Wright (2009), categories can attract care and sympathy or discipline and blame. In both schools, a more sympathetic and flexible approach was taken towards formally diagnosed pupils than those perceived as challenging with no medical diagnosis to modify their status within the disciplinary context. As teachers become more pressured to manage behaviour and increase academic productivity, mistaken diagnosis by teachers may lead to an increase in the number of pupils behaviour being mistakenly given a formal medical diagnosis.

4.1.3 Impact of Pupils' Home Life

Expectations concerning the appropriateness of some behaviours may be determined by what is perceived as generally accepted within a given school or home context (Emerson, 2001). Differences in behavioural expectations between home and school were considered by the headteachers and staff in both schools to be a problem. The belief is that the problem of challenging behaviour arises before a pupil's school day starts and when they return home. Participants believed behaviour in school is context-based and they learn expected behaviours, but these

may not be followed in other contexts out of school. Some unacceptable 'in school' behaviours presented by pupils are thought to sometimes be considered acceptable at home.

> Even if we develop what I believe we are developing, which is context-based behaviour, when they come to school, this is how they behave, and these are the rules that they follow. We know certainly from reports from parents of the park and other community users, the moment they walk out of our door and go into the community, they behave differently. … If a child is struggling to regulate their behaviour, or they're deviating from what you would see as expected parameters, it's a problem, immediately. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

The headteacher's perception that pupils need to be regulated or regulate themselves, can be understood in terms of Foucault's work on docility. In order to control pupils, staff use their power to implement rules and regulations to establish the 'normal' expectations of behaviour at school. Such power relations extend to parents and a pupil's home life when, on admission to school, they are asked to sign up to a school's rules and regulations.

Through the implementation of behaviour management practices and policies in schools, expectations begin to cross school-home boundaries. These expectations are reinforced when a parent is contacted due to the behaviour of their child or even the parent's behaviour. Indeed, a number of staff mentioned parents sometimes presented with challenging behaviour. For example, a parent was observed by a TA aggressively shouting at pupils through a fence whilst their child and other pupils were in the playground, and the participant explained that 'the parent obviously was in the wrong. I just went straight to the headteacher, they contacted the parent reminding her this was not acceptable behaviour' (Orchard Grove TA). This participant's example highlights how school behaviour expectations can cross school-home boundaries.

MacLure et al (2012:450) found that children's behaviour is often constructed in 'discursive frames', making reference to parents and/or community as a cause for the perceived failure of a child to conform to school expectations. It would appear

that control of not only pupils, but also parents and family situations, may contribute to how challenging behaviour is perceived. The perceptions teachers may have of a pupil's parent or carer, or their home life, could impact on the home-school relationship. As MacLure et al argue:

> The 'discursive framing' of children's reputation by reference to their homes and families raises issues relating to home–school relations—a cornerstone of UK primary education. (2012:465)

Several participants, across both schools, felt they had no control of what happens out of school, but pupils home lives do impact on behaviour in school. For example:

> I think the biggest barrier's what goes on at home, you have no control over that … Do they feel more comfortable here to share with us and to let it out, I think, some of the time. That is one of the biggest challenges, it's what's happening outside is reflected here. (Orchard Grove Pastoral Manager)

> Every child who comes in our school has a different experience at home and that experience will differ significantly. The impact of some of the children's home life can be challenging and that will help them become the person that they become - if their home life is in disarray, for want of a better word, it causes problems. (Treetop Headteacher)

School participants' perceptions are embedded into discursive frames that construct challenging behaviour as a problem not only in school but also originating in their home circumstances. The expectation in school that pupils' ability to self-regulate to become more productive and successful demonstrates the influence of both Foucault's disciplinary technologies and Feher's (2009; 2015) description of how people are encouraged to invest in themselves to increase their human capital value. Disciplinary strategies such as behaviour policies are used to reinforce expectations of how a pupil should self-regulate their behaviour whilst in school. Reinforcing the ability of a pupil to self-regulate their behaviour teaches them that regulated behaviour increases their potential to succeed. The more a pupil succeeds the more likely s/he is perceived as a productive member of the school and society more broadly. The increased productivity of pupils and teachers in school enables

success in terms of being perceived as 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted, for example. Beyond the boundaries of schools, disciplinary strategies may not be the most apparent control mode. Feher argues that human capital is a subjectivity and a mode of control that operates in all components of people's lives. Therefore, this mode of control crosses the boundaries between school and home life. To increase their human capital, individuals (pupils and teachers) must invest in themselves and be motivated to increase their 'value'. It is not only the pupil's school life that affects their potential human capital value, but also how they invest in themselves outside of school. Parents who perceive their child's progression at school as an investment in their future may be more inclined to endorse a school's strategy on pupil productivity and self-regulation at home. Pupils who are in home and community environments that offer opportunities to learn and experience new skills, and who are encouraged by parents to 'progress' and be more productive, are likely to increase their future human capital. However, situations such as parents' in/ability and unwillingness to invest in the concept of 'progressing themselves' and their children can depreciate a pupil's productivity and 'value'. For example, if a parent does not share the same behaviour expectations as school and/or do not recognise their child's success in school as a valued asset, then a pupil's human capital may have limited potential to grow. Additionally, as Gazeley (2010) argues, pupils who are perceived as unable to access mainstream schools due to their challenging behaviour, that then become excluded, are often also excluded from social activities outside of school. Challenging behaviour is increasingly synonymous with failure to correctly invest in one's human capital. This restricted access to non-school activities and opportunities may further diminish and/or limit their human capital, by denying them the opportunities to develop important skills and succeed. Access to after-school activities, can provide a range of positive benefits, such as 'providing opportunities for children to succeed, fostering self-esteem and confidence' (Callanan et al,2015:1).

4.1.4 Local Authority Perspective

LA participants held a different perspective on challenging behaviour, arguing that schools are amplifying the 'problem' due to the initial approach taken when a pupil does not fit into the usual and expected pattern of behaviour. LA senior managers

felt that behaviour in schools is sometimes problematised when it should not be, or that pupils are wrongly labelled. The Family Support Lead (LA-FS) gave an example of visiting a school and, whilst stood inside a school entrance, observing a senior member of staff raising their voice and reprimanding a pupil walking to the entrance who did not have a school tie on. The pupil had his tie in his pocket. This pupil was previously identified as a 'challenge' and when approached in this way the label was reinforced by him being verbally abusive. It later emerged that the pupil had intended to wear his tie as soon as he was in school, but because he had been approached in such a way, his behaviour confirmed the senior teacher's perceptions. As this participant explained, '[t]here is an assumption that if pupils don't behave as expected [wearing a tie] they are a problem' (LA-FS).

Other LA participants also questioned the approach taken by schools when dealing with pupils who present with 'challenging' behaviour. They believed more could and should be done in schools to support pupils and prevent them from becoming identified as having challenging behaviour that then becomes a problem.

> Pupils are labelled at the lower-level disruption stage and then escalated to challenging behaviour rather than being dealt with and helped at low-level stage. (LA-SS)

> We don't look at it in terms of behaviour that challenges or challenging behaviour. We look at it as presenting behaviours. The presenting behaviours or the barriers to learning that a school gives us. What are the behaviours that are causing the difficulty and how is the difficulty described, what is the barrier to learning? (LA-BSS)

The LA acknowledged a pupil's home life may impact on behaviour in schools. However, they believed context-based behaviours at home, 'if displayed [in school] need to be managed in school'(LA-SS).

There is an inconsistency between schools and the LA in terms of how challenging behaviour is constructed, including in relation to views about when and why it is a problem. The discourse appears multi-faceted, with actors not being consistent in their interpretation of the 'what', 'how' and 'why' of behaviour that is perceived as a

problem. This may be due to the differing context in which problematisation takes place, such as policy implementation and resource allocation, and how practice is embedded in those contexts (Ball, 1993; Cashmiro, 2016; Bacchi, 2012).

4.1.5 Summary

Bacchi's (2012) six questions regarding how problems are represented can be usefully applied to the analysis above to understand how challenging behaviour is perceived by different participants A few pupils that present as displaying challenging behaviour are seen to be continually resisting the disciplinary technologies within schools. This has resulted in staff deeming them unmanageable and consequently both schools are unable to meet their needs. Problems with behaviour are expected and accepted, different 'levels' of behaviour lack a common definition, and what is considered 'low level' to some teachers may not be for others. Perceiving pupils as already being a problem due to the assumptions about parental and home influences creates an underlying discourse of behavioural expectations. The labelling and categorisation of those that fall within medical discourses and policies permits the acceptance of behaviour being a problem. Those pupils who presented over and above the acceptable 'level' of 'challenging behaviour' were identified as unmanageable even by those who did not teach them.

However, there were several silences in the representation of challenging behaviour as a problem. For example, there was little emphasis on the impact of inconsistent use of rules and guidelines by staff. There was no reflection on how the configuration of classrooms or lessons may not give a pupil what they need in order to follow expectations and be productive. If teachers and support staff had explored further and looked at the 'barriers to learning' as posed by LA participants, this may have had a different impact on the problematisation of challenging behaviour. For example, pupils who are withdrawn and unproductive may present as such because they cannot understand or manage expectations. A pupil may be dealing with a more pressing issue of need that consumed them and prevented engagement and productivity, and more consideration may need to be given when responding to such pupils. For example, a teaching assistant was very enthusiastic about training courses she and other members of staff received, saying it had helped her understand and deal with pupils more effectively. Although it was acknowledged by

some staff that they would benefit from further mental health training, this acknowledgment rested on assumptions about pupils mental health being the reason for their lack of docility or resistance to the expected norms of behaviour.

The problem of challenging behaviour presented by participants is constructed through what Bacchi (2012) describes as the 'presuppositions or assumptions' held within the representation of the problem. For example, the risk of unnecessary medicalisation of pupils demonstrates a significant effect that may be produced when the problem of challenging behaviour is represented as a medical issue. The silences regarding the context in which pupils are categorised as problematic need to be unsilenced by digging deeper into the meaning behind stakeholders interpretations. This requires different stakeholders such as school and LA staff creating an open, reflective and explorative environment to share their perceptions and interpretations. Further exploration of the impact of a pupil's productivity and expectations on how a classroom and learning should function need to be deconstructed. The problem is often focused on pupils fixing their behaviour rather than the other factors such as the functioning of the classroom (Sullivan et al, 2014).

4.2 Responding to challenging behaviour

4.2.0 Introduction

This section will examine how the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice (DfE,2015) has been enacted in Treetop and Orchard Grove schools. I will then explore the behaviour policies in both schools and how these have been enacted. Exclusion is part of the behaviour policy and an option used by headteachers. The following sub-sections identify how pupils may find themselves on the path to exclusion and how a restorative approach has been implemented in both schools. The final section will consider alternative educational provision, which is an option when schools and local authorities believe pupils needs are unable to be met within mainstream schools.

4.2.1 The SEND Code of Practice

Educational policies such as the SEND Code of Practice are technical tools that ensure labels and categories are embedded by agents who are given 'approval' to intervene with pupils. These policies facilitate separating pupils as the 'other'

through strategies devised to support them with their additional educational needs. Those pupils identified as needing SEND support fall within one or more of four categories (sensory/physical, communication/interaction, cognitive/learning or social, emotional and mental health difficulties). How a pupil is categorised may impact on their routes and rights to support. An outcome of labelling pupils within the SEND Code of Practice is acknowledgment that they have the right to support and resources. An education, health and care (EHC) plan is a tool identified within the SEND Code of Practice to identify a pupil's needs and how they can be met. The Code details how this should be achieved and who contributes to providing the support if and when necessary. It often involves additional support from outside of mainstream school and attracts additional funds for costs incurred. How a child or young person's needs are initially identified varies, and could be initiated by schools, parents or other practitioners working within LA services. However, once identified, pupils can access the EHC assessment process which aims to identify unmet needs. Information collated and submitted from schools on their observations of a pupil, and the impact of support already in place, forms part of the assessment process. The LA uses this information to decide if the initial assessment process has correctly identified unmet needs that require ongoing assessment and intervention arrangements, through the implementation of an EHC plan. If the schools documented evidence within the initial assessment is considered insufficient, the LA can refuse to implement an EHC plan. Schools then have to continue to implement different strategies within their own resources to meet the pupils unmet needs until they have enough 'evidence' to demonstrate the pupil's need for an EHC plan. The EHC plan is a legal document that stays with a child or young person until they leave education provision, or the LA decides it is no longer needed. A report published by the Department of Education (2019) stated that, nationally, a significant number of mainstream pupils with SEND requiring additional support did not have an EHC plan. The report claims that the drop in the provision of EHC plans is likely to be related to how pupils are identified as needing a plan and how the application process is administered.

The administrative response of collecting written evidence on a pupil's behaviour can be linked to Foucault's theories of surveillance and disciplinary techniques. The LA controls schools through the implementation of SEND policies and procedures,

such as those underpinning the EHC assessment process. This process enforces self-observation of how financial and behaviour management within the school has helped meet the needs of pupils. This 'evidence' then becomes, as Hacking (2007) would define it, part of the discovery and engineering of categories by the schools and their affirmation by the LA. The schools' compilation of dossiers and reports are used to identify how a pupil's behaviour has deviated from the pattern of expected behaviours. Responses and actions are documented to 'prove' how staff have tried to channel a pupil back to the expected pattern of behaviour or that this is not possible. This is required in order to move a pupil into a designated category of the EHC plan. This in turn gives a 'rite of passage' to use the label as a key to possible solutions such as additional funding to manage the identified unmet needs of a pupil. For example, additional funding may be used for intervention strategies provided by a teaching assistant or specialised support staff. What the EHC process does is provide a documented history of the 'truth' of a problematisation. However, what the findings of this study highlight is ambiguity regarding what 'truth' is. The 'truths' behind the problematisation of challenging behaviour differ between the LA and schools. Participants in each site see aspects of each other's practice and management as the problem when trying to meet the needs of pupils.

4.2.2 Applying the SEND Code of Practice

In a recent Care Quality Commission and Ofsted report, the LA included in this study was criticised for not identifying a child or young persons' needs until they were in crisis and parents felt there was a delay in having their children's needs identified. They stated that such an approach 'results in further anxiety and frustration for parents and a high demand for EHC assessments' (LA Ofsted Report, 2018:4). Although identifying children's needs was documented as a weakness within the SEND process in this LA, once a pupil was identified, an EHC plan was completed within the twenty-week timeframe.

Within both Treetop and Orchard Grove, nearly all participants commented on the problems with the EHC planning process. It is seen as slow and not meeting the needs of some special educational needs pupils who may need the additional support.

> There are multiple children at our school I feel should have an EHC plan but the process of getting them is very slow. It's just a really poor system and lets children down in my opinion. It is really disappointing. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

The LA SEND participant explained that an increased number of EHC plan applications are being refused. This is because the initial SEND stage of supporting pupils using available resources and strategies within schools had not been completed. They explained that they have developed, and are in the process of implementing, a framework to direct schools through each stage of the SEND process. This framework will provide guidance and outline actions and pupil support that the LA expect schools to have implemented, hence providing a tool for teachers to manage pupils within the SEND process. The LA will be using this 'tool' to evaluate schools and review how they are meeting pupils SEND needs.

The development and implementation of this framework by the LA is a fitting example of Foucauldian governmentality. The LA is devolving and distributing their 'framework' to enable schools to take 'ownership' and simultaneously responsibility of their actions, whilst also creating agents who enact the government's SEND agenda. As Powell (2018) and Bacchi (2010) argue, such administrative technologies are used to govern how teachers implement policies, such as the SEND Code of Practice. Schools become responsible for implementing policies and procedures and the success of them. Thus, governmentality is playing a 'double trick' of achieving individual accountability for teacher/school performance and changing outcomes (Brown and Carr 2018:247/8). The framework will act as a tool of surveillance by monitoring if pupils' needs are being met according to LA expectations, and it also encourages schools to monitor themselves.

Challenging behaviour, which falls into the 'social, emotional and mental health difficulties' of the SEND categories, could possibly restrict pupil's options, or result in pupils with challenging behaviour restricting the support and options available to the other pupils that fall within other SEND categories. Staff at both Orchard Grove and Treetop felt that pupils with challenging behaviour took away resources from other pupils identified as needing regular SEND support. In the resource room at

Orchard Grove all pupils fall within the 'SEND' label, meeting at least one of the four separate categories of need. Staff at Orchard Grove described how the resource room staff meetings and reviews become focused on the pupils with challenging behaviour whilst other children under SEND within both the resource room and mainstream may be overlooked.

> Even though the other seven [pupils in the resource room] don't display the challenging behaviours that other pupils present with, they have still got a significant high level of need. You have still got a population of children that need speech and language therapy, they need OT, they need physio, there's toileting issues. (Orchard Grove Resource Teacher)

When I put the issues raised by both schools, about applying the SEND policy, to LA participants, they believed it is up to schools to identify where resources are needed and to apply resources appropriately. One LA interviewee responded as follows:

> It's up to the school to look at their SEND population. If there's challenging behaviour popping out anywhere, it's because of unmet needs. It's up to a school as a whole to look at needs and organize their resources accordingly. If you've got challenging behaviour popping out from somebody, it's like having a health and safety risk, isn't it? If you've got any health and safety risk, resources will go to that risk. If you're allowing that child to present with these behaviours because you've not looked to the underlying need, and a pupil isn't getting any resource, then Senco (special educational needs coordinator) and staff across the school should say, 'What can we do differently?' (LA-BSS)

This LA participant pushes the responsibility of meeting pupils 'unmet needs' on the schools who are 'allowing' this to happen. There is not an acknowledgement that the schools may not be able to meet pupils needs for a variety of reasons. The expression 'popping out' gives the impression that schools are not fully aware or in control of challenging behaviour. All LA staff argued that schools label pupils' behaviours as challenging before identifying barriers to learning, or define unexpected behaviour as a problem. It is evident that there is a recognisable

difference of opinion between the LA and schools and a lack of shared responsibility and understanding of the 'problem'.

LA participants believed that school responses often involve over-exaggeration of the severity of challenging behaviour and one stated, 'if you took every child out of a class that displayed challenging behaviour there would be no children left in the class' (LA-SS). All LA participants believed that too many pupils are being processed under the SEND policy and class teachers are not seeing themselves as responsible for teaching and supporting pupils with special educational needs. How challenging behaviour is constructed and dealt with in schools was seen by the LA participants as magnifying the problem.

> Schools will say that because what they want is more services, more EHC plans, more special places. What I see is a need for schools to become more inclusive to be able to teach all our children, not just some of our children. Not just 90% of our children, 100% of our children, and not regarding them as 'these children don't fit in this school'. (LA-BSS)

There is a continued and significant difference of opinion between the LA and schools as to 'why' 'how' and 'when' a pupil should have an EHC plan. This clearly represents a lack of joint working to understand how challenging behaviour is problematised. The focus of stakeholders on administration and process appears to represent, as Allan and Youdell (2017) argue, an empty architecture of things that must be done. The SEND process encourages teachers, in their problematisations, to focus and locate the 'cause' in pupils (e.g. medical explanations) or their home circumstances. In contrast, the LA participants focus on what the schools are or are not doing and creating more performance and monitoring tools, such as their SEND framework, thus pushing the responsibility of meeting pupils unmet needs on to schools.

4.2.3 Applying Behaviour Policy

Contrary to the LA's opinion above, both Orchard Grove and Treetop believed they recognised pupils needs and managing behaviour involved understanding challenging behaviour as an indicator of unmet needs that may fall within SEND.

However, the response to a pupil presenting with challenging behaviour differed slightly between schools. The Orchard Grove headteacher believed children had to learn to self-regulate by understanding the expected behaviours and learning how to control their behaviour within these expectations. The Treetop headteacher believed schools should facilitate a pupil wanting to behave by helping them understand the ways in which it benefits the pupil and school.

> You have to recognize that children's behaviour is telling you something, and when you try and unpick with a child what that something is, you've got some way to helping that child learn how to regulate and control their behaviour. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

> Instead of making them behave, our approach is to make them want to behave and we put that in place. (Treetop Headteacher)

When considering Treetop's response above, there is some evidence of Feher's argument regarding human capital and an attempt to move away from a disciplinary model. Human capitalist subjectivities, as argued by Feher (2009), encourage people to increase their value in an ever-present market and make them (pupils) employable in the future. Encouraging pupils to behave and be productive is here based on the promise of 'aspiring to greater things' in their future life. As Treetop's behaviour policy states, 'Our Positive Behaviour Policy is based on our core values of Care, Aspire, Achieve' (Treetop Behaviour Policy, 2018).

Orchard Grove have an extensive policy to manage behaviour, which includes stages of and consequences for behaviour. They also have a staffed 'Hub' that is there to support pupils, teachers and parents and is often used for a 'time out' for pupils struggling in their mainstream class. If a pupil is perceived to be 'misbehaving,' and previous attempts to address pupil behaviour have not been successful, the behaviour policy states that the pupil should be sent to the Hub. The Hub was temporarily closed at the time of conducting this research study. When Orchard Grove was considered to be in crisis and dealing with a large number of high-level behavioural incidents, they said they would have ignored or not even considered trying to deal with less disruptive behaviours as they were too busy dealing with more serious and disruptive behaviours. Now they believe there is an

emphasis on higher expectations of pupil's behaviour and so all unacceptable behaviours, from minor chatting to more extreme behaviour, is 'picked up'. Foucault refers to discipline as a political anatomy of details, it is the 'little things' that go on to provide the rationality of technologies used for the bigger things (Rabinow, 1986:183-4). Therefore, if Orchard Grove no longer accept the minor disruptive behaviours, they are able to rationalise why more challenging behaviour is even less acceptable and thus impose a greater consequence. Reducing the incidence of very challenging behaviour thus changes how challenging behaviour is problematized.

In Orchard Grove, when a pupil continues to display unacceptable behaviours and the consequences or management approaches do not appear to work, they may be 'put on report', which involves asking a parent to come into school to discuss the behaviour targets on the report and the reasons for them. The report is completed every week and should then be sent to parents. Due to time restraints and staff availability, parents are not consistently involved and informed.

> I think sometimes people forget, and sometimes children are put on report as a knee jerk reaction. There are two things, one is the knee jerk and the other which is definite, is that there is not enough staff to cover people having meetings with parents left, right and centre. I think quite often parents are told that their child is going on report and then that is that. So they are informed of it [the child is given a report card to carry with them]. It is not done to a child and then the parents are told later. A meeting does happen, but it is very informal, and it is rushed at the end of the day. It is not how it should be done. (Orchard Grove Class Teacher/Assistant Headteacher)

Report cards cover behaviour in all contexts of the school day - playground and classroom - even if the pupil does not display the behaviour in class and only when on the playground. Consideration of the context in which the pupil 'misbehaved' does not appear to occur when applying this approach to behaviour management. Once a label is attached to a pupil it is carried throughout the school day. Carrying the report card throughout the day reminds the pupil, peers and staff that s/he is one of the 'others'. If labelling becomes consistently applied then it is likely that pupils will internalise the label (Bird, 2011).

Staff at Orchard Grove did not appear to apply the behaviour policy consistently throughout the school. The Orchard Grove headteacher sees inconsistency in the implementation of the behaviour policy as normal because staff are 'human beings' and 'it's not possible' for them to always be consistent. Pupils may behave differently depending on the teacher or TA working with them. Some staff are seen to follow the behaviour policy steps more rigidly than those staff who may have a 'really close' relationship with the pupils and who do not need to apply all the steps rigidly. One class in particular was cited as changing their behaviour when the teacher was not in the classroom. The headteacher believed that it is because teachers have a closer relationship than TAs who apply the policy more rigidly. The headteacher gave the example in one classroom where the pupils are seen to behave when the teacher is in the room, because that teacher 'just has to raise an eyebrow' and it is enough and they do not need to use the policy. However, the TA has a different perspective:

> I think it's because the teacher is so strict. I think the children feel like when I come in, they're able to be themselves a bit more and express themselves a bit more. I don't think it's just a lack of respect. I think it is that they can relax a bit more around me than their normal teacher. (Orchard Grove TA).

At Orchard Grove the behaviour policy is centrally disseminated, however it is evident that the enactment of the policy depends on who the agent is – teacher or TA – and the approach they take. This can result in pupils responding differently in how they behave and how much control the teacher or TA is perceived to have. This reflects Maguire et al's (2010) finding that when policy actors implement policy in diverse ways, intentions within the behaviour policy may be weakened at the micro-level of enactment. The different interpretation and implementation by stakeholders can lead to deviations from the intent of the policy text when embedded into practice. The Orchard Grove headteacher and senior staff believe that the policy needs reviewing because it is now quite 'draconian' and, although necessary when first introduced to control the behaviour of pupils, it is now too long and should be less consequence driven. Other staff interviewed also felt that the policy needed updating, but they still used it as a tool of behaviour management.

In Treetop school, new approaches to behaviour have centred around staff and pupil relationships and the headteacher has introduced a framework based on Paul Dix's theory as described in *Adults Change – Children Change* (2018). Dix believes that 'with the right culture the strategies used become less important and culture is set by the behaviour of adults' (2018:2). Dix argues for moving away from punitive approaches such as zero tolerance. The headteacher said they had spent over a year researching behaviour and the different approaches for managing behaviour in Treetop.

> We carried out a lot of research. A lot of schools went for zero tolerance and very strict sanctions. We believed that if we show those children [pupils presenting with challenging behaviour] that they're safe and cared for here, then their behaviour is more likely to improve because they want to behave. (Treetop Headteacher)

However, Treetop still have a short behaviour policy that briefly outlines consequences to unacceptable behaviour, which includes internal and external exclusion. Staff felt the policy was consistently applied with regards to challenging behaviour but may need reviewing as it is a 'developing' tool.

> Consistency is one of the key aspects that we're trying to work on. I still don't think it's exactly there, because we tried to change our approach more recently. Across different classes we maybe lack that consistency, but personally, I feel like I'm consistent with the high-profile children, most challenging children. We have a consistent approach to them. (Treetop Class Teacher)

Ensuring consistency with pupils presenting with the 'most challenging behaviour' is identified, as more of a priority, than a consistent whole school enactment of the behaviour policy. All participants in Treetop appeared to support the headteacher's stance that behaviour management should be about care not punishment, but they wanted clarity on using the policy as a tool in order to control pupil behaviour. The caring and supportive approach advocated by Treetop is in conflict with the focused approach of the consistent discipline of the 'more challenging' pupils. This approach to the 'challenging' pupils presents an example of Wright's (2009) 'polarised

response' and the use of discipline to control the 'mad' 'sad' or 'bad.' The pupils categorised at Treetop as 'high-profile', although part of the schools nurturing framework, are seen to need additional management through discipline due to their behaviour. This leads teachers to make different concessions for those pupils not perceived as challenging and those making a 'bad choice' in how they behave.

The deputy headteacher in Treetop felt that the policy needed to be more specific and clearer, not only for staff but also for pupils.

> The behaviour policies, we will review again, we're constantly on a cycle with that. My personal feeling is it needs to be tighter on 'if you do this, this is what you can expect to happen'. Not in a punitive way, but in a way that children are very clear, because when there's ambiguity, children don't like it. From children who have never been in any trouble, they want to see that there's a system in place to keep them safe. Yes. We're still on a journey with that, I would say, and it's not there yet. (Treetop Deputy Headteacher)

It is interesting to note the reference to keeping the pupils who have always behaved 'safe,' rather than referring to all pupils. In the works of Foucault (1977) and Elden (2003) they argue how separation of the 'other' is mobilised not only in the physical sense, but also creates a sense of threat or/and lack of safety to 'normalised behaviour' caused by the other (such as a challenging pupil). The underpinning discourse of a policy can demonstrate how the 'othering' of pupils emerges within policy enactment. There is, by this participant, a separating and partitioning of 'well behaved pupils' from the 'misbehaved' which then becomes mobilised into discourse, unpinning behaviour policy reasoning and implementation. The behaviour policy is a disciplinary mechanism that emphasises expected behaviours at the same time as keeping the school community safe from those not meeting those expectations.

Several participants in Orchard Grove and Treetop made a point of acknowledging behaviour policies were not always carried out consistently but were keen to express their ability to do this. As one senior teacher at Orchard Grove stated, 'Not everyone sticks to the policy steps, sometimes they miss out a step or just ignore behaviours'.

At Treetop, another teacher claimed, 'I implement the behaviour policy when necessary but not everyone does … some staff need more support to be consistent'. Looking at such responses through a Foucauldian lens suggests that teachers are keen to self-promote and be seen as performing according to the expectation that they maintain control. As Ball (2003) found, teachers may feel that how they perform is important when comparing themselves with other staff in relation to their use of a policy to manage behaviour. Government agencies, such as Ofsted, promote the need for schools to control and manage behaviour effectively. The LA are there to ensure government policy is localised and enacted in schools. For teachers to be seen as effective, they must be seen to own and enact policy that aims to control pupil behaviour at the micro-level (Perryman et al, 2017; Popkewitz, 2012).

The behaviour policy in both schools is a technology that allows staff to monitor and bring pupils 'back in line' if they are presenting behaviour that deviates from the norms of what is acceptable. For a pupil, the behaviour policy may be a tool used to help them self-regulate or one to deviate from the expected patterns of behaviour. Self-regulation allows a pupil to resist impulsive behaviour and maintain control, and for many pupils this may be achievable. However, self-regulation is caught-up in complex concepts of self-efficacy, self-beliefs and self-responsibility (Mowat, 2010). Therefore, pupils who deviate from the expected patterns of behaviour outlined in a policy may see 'deviancy' as a preferable response in difficult situations. For example, if a pupil lacks confidence in completing a task, becoming withdrawn or creating a diversion may be easier for them than failing.

4.2.4 A Restorative Approach to Prevent Challenging Behaviour

Both schools advocate for the use of a restorative approach to help resolve some disruptions involving pupils falling out, arguing, or fighting, which could lead to further disruption or challenging behaviour. Sellman et al (2013) found that this approach complements other behaviour management strategies in schools. Restorative approaches to behaviour management are evident across both schools as an active and immediate strategy to defuse or de-escalate volatile situations. It is a tool used to explore who is involved, and why and how a conflict between pupils or pupil and staff occurred. The aim of a restorative approach is to restore good relationships 'when there has been conflict or harm, and developing school ethos,

policies and procedures to reduce the possibility of such conflict and harm arising' (McClusky et al, 2008:405).

Both Orchard Grove and Treetop promote the ownership of a restorative approach with pupils by training them to be 'Restorative Ambassadors'. Pupils are encouraged to self-regulate and peer surveillance is used to affect the desired change in behaviour. Training pupils to be ambassadors helps the system of restorative discourse and practice to become embedded, thus securing the accepted knowledge underpinning the disciplinary function of the school. This is not necessarily a negative approach if restorative practice helps meet the needs of pupils and prevents the management of pupil behaviour developing into a crisis situation. However, how pupils needs are defined and what constitutes a crisis is not consistent in teacher's perceptions of challenging behaviour. Also, actively putting this behaviour management tool into practice is sometimes difficult due to the availability of staff time to sit and talk to individual pupils.

The LA participants did not feel that staff in schools were using a restorative approach effectively and 'do not consistently apply it' (LA-SS). They argued that schools need to look further into a pupil's needs and challenges and must try to address them in a more restorative way. They believed actively exploring why a pupil behaves in a 'challenging' way is not pursued sufficiently by teachers. As pupils become labelled as challenging and reprimanded and/or moved from the classroom, a positive relationship between pupil and teacher becomes more difficult to restore. If a pupil is not given the opportunity to explore their needs and just become isolated from the classroom, this can impact on the pupil's relationship with both the teacher and their peers.

In both schools, restorative conversations may take place in an allocated room or in the pupils' classrooms. Participants from both schools believed that due to time restraints, and lack of staff to cover whilst restorative conversations took place, restorative practice is not always possible. This situation appeared to be amplified in Orchard Grove due to the lack of TAs across the school. Also, the closure of the 'Hub', whose staff would usually assist in restorative conversations, compounded the problem.

There's no one that I can send for from The Hub, to come and have a restorative conversation. I'm finding myself starting to teach, getting the class started and then have to leave to have a restorative conversation with some of the children. Whilst I'm doing that restorative conversation, they think that's the time that they don't have to work. (Orchard Grove TA)

McClusky et al (2008) found that for restorative practice to work it had to be a whole school approach with both staff and pupils subscribing to the values of this approach, rather than just seeing it as another tool in the behaviour management box. They argued that using a restorative approach could be seen in Foucauldian terms as a mode of surveillance that ensures the compliance of pupils. However, they agree with Morrison (2007) that it also constitutes a move away from moral judgements of a perceived 'evil' act to a process of community ownership that can address the harm done (McCluskey et al, 2008:415).

4.2.5 Moving Towards Exclusion

Separating pupils has become part of the everyday management of pupils with 'challenging' behaviour. Policies specifying rules and regulations have become tools to normalise teachers' responses to behaviour, illustrating Foucault's theory of disciplinary control in which technologies of normalisation are used to control social deviations. For example, Foucault argues that the separation of people in leper colonies and throughout the plague illustrates how surveillance and power are enacted. Elden (2003) has also emphasized the use of space and technologies of separation that isolate individuals/groups to control them. Schools have the power to remove challenging pupils from the classroom as this is part of the accepted rules of behaviour management. Taking pupils away from the classroom 'community' separates them from the 'well-behaved' and reinforces a view of challenging pupils as the 'other' who need to be isolated so that their behaviour does not 'infect' the well behaved and their productivity.

Removing pupils from the classroom is an approach written into behaviour management policies in Orchard Grove and Treetop. If a pupil is perceived as being disruptive in the classroom, then a dedicated room is available in both schools.

However, participants could not always access this space because it was already being used or they did not have the available staff to be with a pupil.

The behaviour policy in Orchard Grove specifies the option of sending a pupil to the Hub if s/he has gone through the traffic light warnings used in the classroom. Warin and Hibbin (2016) believe that a system such as traffic light warnings creates a 'will to punish' and found they are less effective than a more nurturing approach and lead to pupils becoming excluded. The traffic light system is a visual aid that the whole class can see and all pupils are on 'green' at the start of the day. If they 'misbehave', then pupils move to amber then red, and if their 'unacceptable' behaviour continues they are sent to the Hub. The unavailability of the Hub, or additional staff in Orchard Grove, for pupils struggling with their behaviour in class, was raised as a policy implementation problem throughout the interviews. As noted above, one senior teacher explained that without the Hub, there is nowhere for teaching staff to send pupils who have 'got going into a crisis' (described by this teacher as a pupil's loss of control over their behaviour). Other staff mentioned that they could not follow policy because of the Hub's temporary closure.

> It's very tricky, because there is no Hub. There isn't really anywhere to send the children anymore, because our behaviour policy states that if they're just being disruptive, they should be sent to the Hub and obviously the Hub is out of use. (Orchard Grove TA)

Other staff felt that pupils were missing the Hub staff, in particular the support they received in relation to social and personal problems. However, staff also felt that it is not needed all the time for behaviour issues. As an alternative to the Hub, pupils 'misbehaving' are sent to other designated classrooms or to the headteacher.

In Treetop, pupils may be sent to another classroom and an allocated room for pupils 'who go into crises' or may need time out from mainstream classrooms. This room has an adult to support the pupil.

> I think it's maybe just a place for children with challenging behaviour, or that are stopping others from learning… If a trigger is seen as not being able to access the work, then the work is done very, very different in that room. It

seems like the children view it as a place where you play and not learn. Sometimes that might be the skill of the staff in there, to make it seem like play than actually learning. (Treetop Class Teacher)

This teacher from Treetop appears to see the benefit of having another room for a pupil to do their work using a different approach. They questioned the pupil's possible perception of seeing this as a time to 'play' rather than a less structured approach to learning. The approach of learning through play is then 'sometimes' attributed to the skill of the staff, indicating that other times they are playing, and this may not fit with the learning model. This learning approach does not appear to sit comfortably with the control and regulation of a pupil in the school system of educating through a structured curriculum. Although perceived as a benefit in terms of meeting the needs of a pupil, there is still an underlying sense that the pupil must be productive.

Separation in schools does not only occur during classroom time. Preventing pupils from taking a break with their peers is another form of separating and isolating them. Missing playtime is a consequence of unacceptable behaviour, but this is not seen to be consistently applied and play is sometimes withheld from pupils for not completing work in lessons.

Some teachers will only take it off some children and not off others … so dinner staff are inconsistent in their approach because the same children are missing playtime from things that have happened at lunchtime. The same children are in trouble, but actually when you delve deeper into it through a restorative conversation, there are other people that are involved that have not been mentioned at all and they'll come out and say, "Yes, I was equally involved." That makes it hard. (Orchard Grove Class Teacher/Assistant Head)

Whenever a pupil is sent out of a classroom or misses a playtime break, parents at both schools are sent a letter home and a text message explaining why this has happened. Sometimes a parent will be told when they come to collect their child. This reinforcement of behaviour expectations crosses the boundary from school to home, shaping home expectations in alignment with school.

At both schools, the use of a separate location and environment for pupils struggling in mainstream classes was viewed as beneficial and a useful approach to challenging behaviour. There was also a belief that a nurture room or Hub gave pupils a safe place to express their needs.

> We've got a child whose older sister tries to commit suicide quite regularly and trashes the house and things like that and then she comes in. While we would, as much as we can, work with parents. If we know it's been a bad day, we'll have a separate provision and we'll do something slightly different, give her a more settled start to the day. We can't fix what's going on at home, it's really hard. The other little boy that accessed the nurture room for a long time, he's a looked-after child and he's been told he's going to move placement. Again, it's a little beyond you and you can understand why they feel the way they do. Until he feels more settled and his life is more settled, he's going to experience these things I think and, maybe, I think school is a bit of a safe space. (Treetop Pastoral Manager)

When a nurturing and non-punitive approach is taken in an alternative location to a pupil's classroom, as described by Treetop's pastoral manager, it can be an effective approach to managing behaviour (McClusky 2008; Warin and Hibbin 2010). However, although this may appear to accommodate a pupil's needs in a school environment, it may also encourage the pupil to self- identify as the problem and to be 'othered' by pupils and staff. Isolating pupils to a 'safe place' to fix the problem may reinforce the idea that the problem is with the pupil and/or their home and not the classroom or system controlling it.

The result for the pupil and school when stages of the behaviour policies and approaches are believed to be exhausted is pupil exclusion, which may imply that they cannot be 'fixed'. All participants accepted internal exclusion of pupils as a necessary part of the discipline policy. Implementing an internal exclusion of a pupil is a stage of the exclusion policy that seeks to prevent permanent exclusion. Both Orchard Grove and Treetop do not collect data on internal exclusions, so it is difficult to assess whether these have risen or fallen. Without such data, schools are not capturing what is actually happening and, as argued by Gazeley et al (2015), their

estimation of the issue may only be the tip of an iceberg. A House of Commons report (2018) echoed an Ofsted (2015) report that argued schools should be supported by LA's in the setting up of internal units that provide a nurturing approach. However, they also recommend schools collate and publish internal exclusions in addition to the published exclusions. As both schools do not have clear data on the use of internal exclusion in terms of occurrence and causes, it is difficult to assess the need for a dedicated class or unit. Establishing a unit before collating and analysing data could in itself lead to a self-fulfilling demand rather than first looking at the success of other approaches used to understand and address challenging behaviour.

In contrast to the increased numbers documented by the Department of Education (2018), at Orchard Grove the number of external exclusions has fallen dramatically over the past three years. This is seen to be due to a cohort of pupils moving on to other educational provision, the support of Hub staff, the introduction of the behaviour policy and staff having raised expectations. In Treetop, they believe external exclusions have fallen due to their new approach of care and building staff-pupil relationships. Participants from Orchard Grove and Treetop schools said that there were still a handful of pupils whose needs could not be met. These pupils were at risk of permanent exclusion as managing their behaviour was becoming more problematic. Headteachers seem reluctant to use their power to exclude a pupil, but believe it is sometimes necessary.

> I don't want to exclude any child; I don't think that it has a positive impact. I think it's a punishment, but the punishment doesn't teach them anything. Sometimes we'll put an internal exclusion on and keep them here but we're supporting them. But I have had to do four exclusions this year which I didn't want to do … I had to do one last week when a child who'd gone through our behaviour systems refused to go into an internal exclusion, I didn't have another option in that case but to follow our behaviour policy and our behaviour policy does finish with an external exclusion. Then when he came back, things were put in place. I had to support him, so he doesn't get to that level again. (Treetop Headteacher)

The use of internal exclusion is an important stage of the behaviour policy and process. However, the lack of data detailing 'why' and 'when' a pupil is internally excluded, and 'what' strategies were used, prevents staff from fully reviewing 'how' and 'why' a pupil has moved from internal to permanent exclusion. On several occasions, both schools have argued that for a small number of 'challenging' pupils, they have exhausted all their approaches and resources. This has resulted in these pupils becoming 'at risk' of exclusion. Following government guidance, which is written into their behaviour policies, when internal or temporary exclusions have not worked, schools seek alternative placements for pupils with the assistance of the LA.

4.2.6 Alternative to Mainstream School

Staff at both Orchard Grove and Treetop gave examples of how they had changed to try and meet the needs of pupils but still felt that for a very small number of pupils they just could not meet their complex needs. The Orchard Grove Headteacher explained how, within their consortium of several headteachers from within the borough who regularly meet, each school had 1-3 pupils with complex 'challenging' behaviour. They believed alternative provision was required as pupils' needs could not be met in mainstream classes. This headteacher stated that just from this one consortium of headteachers 'they could fill a specialist school or a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU)'. They claimed there was approximately 30 – 35 pupils whose needs cannot be met in mainstream schools. Currently, there is only one primary school in the borough that specialises in pupil behaviour and this is already over-subscribed, even though it has just been expanded to accept more pupils. Mills and Thomson (2018) argued that permanent exclusions may be used by schools, instead of short-term exclusions, when a PRU is an alternative provision, because the financial responsibility then becomes that of the LA. They also found that schools less likely to use alternative provision were reported to have strategies and consistent approaches to managing behaviour (2018:10/11).

Staff from both Orchard Grove and Treetop argued that in addition to, or possibly instead of, a PRU, a fully staffed internal provision that builds and extends on their current dedicated rooms for pupils should be resourced. However, they claimed to not currently have the finances to recruit additional staff with the required skills such

as mental health and behaviour specialists. They believed that the external support from the LA was not adequate for schools to meet the needs of all pupils perceived as challenging.

The LA participants disagreed that a PRU was the solution because they believed they did not work for secondary schools and they removed the responsibility away from primary schools, as once a pupil is in a PRU they rarely maintain a link within their mainstream school.

> We don't need a pupil referral unit. In fact, we need to get rid of the ones at secondary level. First of all, the schools never want [pupils] back, because they've already got a label in that school. The second thing is, when they come out to a smaller environment, the children are not successfully included. What we need to do is improve the environment they're in by giving them more support to include the children more successfully by an outside pair of eyes, which is what we do with our behaviour mentors. They need to be loved more to improve in that setting, rather than go elsewhere to be fixed, because there's something wrong with them. They [schools] are just not meeting their needs. I'm not saying it's easy to meet the needs, I understand it's difficult. (LA-BSS)

LA participants argued that schools need to approach behaviour management in a different way by recognising the needs of the pupil before they reach crisis point. They believed if schools did this there would not be the suggested demand for alternative provision to mainstream school. In addition to schools, the LA have a responsibility to ensure the needs of pupils, falling within the SEND categories, are met. However, the LA appear to be placing the responsibility onto schools and again problematise their inability to meet pupils' needs. The schools believe they cannot meet pupils needs without further support from the LA. The contrasting perceptions of what the pupils' needs are, how they should be met and who should be responsible, is a key issue in the problematisation of challenging behaviour.

4.2.7 Summary

There are a number of issues with how schools and the LA respond to challenging behaviour. The SEND process, which is there to support pupils, is dependent upon joint working between schools and the LA. The schools argue tools such as the EHC assessment and planning process are failing to attract the required funds and support from the LA. The LA dispute this and claim that schools over-exaggerate challenging behaviour and do not act soon enough to address pupils' needs and barriers to learning.

School participants assume their behaviour policies and procedures are largely adequate, but do need reviewing for clarity and to encourage consistency. What staff do not appear to question is the reasoning and judgment informing the rules and this may form part of the problematisation of pupil's behaviour. The LA assume teachers should be able to manage and teachers make the assumption that unmanaged behaviour worsens if not 'fixed.' As found by Maguire et al (2010) and Sullivan et al (2014), participants from the schools and LA believe that by fixing pupils behaviour, learning will also be fixed. Participants from the LA and schools expect pupils to be productive and fit into an established framework of expectations. As recognised in Hacking's (2007) engines of discovery, the technologies of rules, procedures and the consequences of isolation reinforce and defend the categorisation and problematisation of a pupil presenting with challenging behaviour.

Applying Bacchi's (2012) WPR approach to question what is left unproblematic when responding to challenging behaviour, there are several silences that are not seen as part of the problem, yet are part of the discursive frame in which the problem is represented. For example, productivity is measured based on performance, rather than further exploration of a pupils understanding or ability to perform. As we move further into an educational culture of performativity, teachers judge their performance on that of pupils productivity (Ball, 2013). Thus, the problem becomes the pupil's unproductivity rather than their needs or the impact of performance accountability. The pressure on teachers to evidence performance overshadows other possible contributions in the problematisation of challenging behaviour, such as teacher–pupil relationships, classroom configurations and curriculum structures.

Such features of everyday school life are almost silent in the schools problematisation of challenging behaviour.

Delving further into other facets of why and how a pupil is perceived as challenging, other than they need to be 'fixed', may prevent a pupil being sent on a path of permanent exclusion. Internal exclusion is used to prevent a pupil needing alternative educational provision. As found in previous studies (Gazeley et al,2015; DofE, 2019), neither the schools or the LA are collating and analysing this data to gain a clear picture of why and how often internal exclusion is used. As Menzies and Baars (2015) argue, when problems are not understood and dealt with at source, mainstream pupils then become 'pushed out' learners with no long-term solution. The schools answer to meeting the needs of the few pupils in each school would be a PRU, however the LA do not see this as an option, believing them to be ineffective and not beneficial to the pupil. The LA believe schools are not being restorative enough or using their resources appropriately. As one LA participant stated: 'They need to cut their coat according to their cloth' (LA-FS). However, all changes made by schools have been out of their existing budget, including the staffed Hub at Orchard Grove and the additional room in Treetop. What the LA does not raise is the financial cost this would have for them and whether or not this is a reason for their disapproval of a PRU. LA participants do agree with schools that there may be a need for internal units but believed headteachers should assess the need and maybe 'look towards providing an internal unit in a number of schools, that other schools access and then pay towards the cost' (LA-SS). The LA did not envisage themselves funding such a provision.

4.3 Managing Resources

4.3.0 Introduction

The financial and resource implications of meeting the needs of 'challenging' pupils, whichever approach is seen to be most benefiting, was a constant aspect of all participants' problematisation of challenging behaviour. This section will explore how the management and use of resources has been problematised when considering pupils who present with challenging behaviour. I will discuss the ways in which schools have made changes to enable them to work within their budget.

Both Orchard Grove and Treetop schools believe that an ability to manage pupils perceived as challenging is limited due to financial restraints. The LA also recognised that cuts to their budget have had an impact on services they provide to schools and promote a different way of working.

4.3.1 Keeping within budget

In Orchard Grove, there has recently been a restructuring of staff due to the school having a budget that is in significant deficit because of a fall in pupil numbers and the high cost of teaching staff. There are fewer support staff and often a Teaching Assistant (TA) will cover classes when a teacher is not available. Higher level TAs regularly cover a class teacher's preparation, planning and assessment (PPA) time and also do a proportion of the lesson planning for the classes they teach (approximately 1-2 days a week). The few standard level TAs also do this when required to cover staff absences. Teaching staff do not have the regular support of a teaching assistant as they often had previously. Staff have found the reduction in support staff difficult and are concerned about further staff reductions next academic year. The headteacher is reducing the number of Key Stage 2 (KS2) classes from four to three and two of these classes will be mixed year groups when restructuring is complete. None of the classes will have a teaching assistant other than to cover the class teacher. The headteacher has decided to keep the Learning Mentor (approximately the same cost as a higher-level TA) who runs the Hub, because this role is believed to be important to meet the needs of pupils, including those who present with challenging behaviour.

> I could run four junior classes if I didn't have a learning mentor. When you're struggling to sleep at night and you're thinking about the effects on children and parents, that is a decision I have to make. Do I run four junior classes and not have a learning mentor, or do I keep my learning mentor and make everything really difficult for everybody else and run with three junior classes? That's a decision that I've had to make…So we'll have three junior classes instead of four, which is huge, and really unpopular with the staff and the parents, and that's it. That's it and that still isn't going to save us. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

The cuts to TAs at Orchard Grove correspond with the findings of the study carried out by Skipp and Hopwood (2016) on behalf of the Department of Education, which found over a 50% reduction in the number of TAs schools employed and they predicted this percentage to increase in the future. They reported that schools had reduced the number of TAs due to rationalization processes (2016:7-8).

Staff at Orchard Grove feel that further reductions in TAs will make things more difficult in terms of managing behaviour, and they believe that having staff in the Hub does support pupils and teachers. One member of staff at Orchard Grove described an incident that happened in the classroom and felt that because there was no support from another adult, learning stopped for 15 minutes. Other staff said this sometimes happens in their class. Staff believed further staff reductions would impact on the pupils.

> I think it will have a massive impact, to be honest, and I know for a fact there's another resource school [a mainstream school with a resource unit] not far from here and they've had a drop in their staff and they hardly ever get their children into mainstream classes because they don't have the staff. They have quite complex children again like we're seeing here. They don't go in [mainstream class], they might go in for assemblies and they might go in for the odd thing, but I do know that's what happened and is happening here. (Orchard Grove Resource Teacher)

All interviewees said pupils in the resource unit are accessing mainstream lessons less frequently, and this is believed by some to be due to staff shortages and pupils needing 1-1 support. The assistant headteacher, who is also a mainstream class teacher, felt the recent loss of support staff had had a huge impact and so additional cuts would be 'horrendous'. This participant stated that a few members of staff believed it was becoming unsafe for both staff and pupils when trying to manage challenging behaviour in school. They explained that 'we don't have the manpower to oversee what is happening'(Orchard Grove Assistant Headteacher). The participant believed if there was an incident where a pupil required additional support it would not be available. The lack of TAs had made this participant reconsider their approach to behaviour management to avoid needing additional support, but believed less experienced teachers struggle.

I think it's made me more aware of tackling the behaviour and calming the situation down before it gets to the point where I'm going to need somebody else in the classroom because there isn't anybody. We have quite a number of inexperienced teachers who don't know how to deal with that behaviour because they've not been exposed to having to deal with that behaviour. They've not had the chance to set their own systems in place. (Orchard Grove Assistant Headteacher)

The headteacher at Orchard Grove believes that all teachers will start to approach behaviour differently without support staff and children will become more self-regulating. They felt that support staff sometimes make a situation worse.

I went in a classroom and there were three adults in the classroom, and they were all talking, one was teaching, doing their best, and the other two were talking at children whose behaviour was - they were really loud and vocal and they were about to go into crisis, but I would have said it was a cognitive crisis rather than a real emotional crisis. It wasn't driven by fight or flight, it was driven by wanting to perform, for want of a better phrase, and the two adults [TAs] in my opinion made it worse, quite significantly. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

It is interesting to note how the headteacher at Orchard Grove starts to diagnose the pupils 'crises' as cognitive rather than a 'real emotional crisis', implying that it should be more manageable. The view taken by the headteacher is an example of how the problem of challenging behaviour is disconnected from staff resources and constructed based on the view that the presence of additional staff is detrimental to pupils behaviour and self-regulation. The headteacher 'sells' the absence of teaching assistants as an opportunity for pupils to self-regulate. What the headteacher did not appear to consider is the possible training needs of the 'two adults' providing support, which would incur a different financial cost.

Due to the implementation of the new staffing structure, the headteacher is starting to change the discourse that previously supported the need for TAs, to one that views TAs as a possible impediment to managing pupils with challenging behaviour.

The assistant headteacher had acknowledged their own and other staff concerns regarding safety and class disruption due to limited access to TAs. However, the assistant headteacher, had also begun to support the 'new' discourse within their teaching practice, by starting to consider that not relying on additional support may help pupils self-regulate. This is an example of discourse becoming the new knowledge and senior staff using their position to embed this into practice. When applying Hacking's (2007) discovery engines, pupils self-regulation is correlated with non-reliance on TA support, creating a new discourse which functions to normalise discourse into knowledge. Additional support for staff and pupils is shaped by the budget – an engine of administration - with justification for the restructuring being underpinned by a better approach to behaviour management. The teacher will not be 'talked over' and pupils will learn to self-regulate – they will become more responsible for their behaviour management and performance.

Treetop school had more teaching assistants to support class teachers and although another adult was often in the classroom with the class teacher, sometimes this was not possible as they were with pupils on 1-1 support or doing other intervention work. Overall, the deputy headteacher and other staff believed they had enough TAs to support every class when necessary. However, similar to Orchard Grove, participants discussed how maintaining a pupil within a classroom became difficult when pupils left the classroom or situated themselves in areas of the school such as corridors. Some teaching staff felt that if they did not have necessary support staff, they were at risk of a child leaving the classroom without permission which they perceived as challenging behaviour. As one teacher explained, 'if I did not have a TA, I would find it difficult to manage some pupils as they need that extra support…I could not leave the class if they decided to walk out' (Treetop-Class Teacher).

The LA participants had mixed views in relation to the reduction of teaching assistants. They acknowledged schools were financially struggling and for some schools they found it difficult to maintain a balanced budget. However, they believed schools had to identify ways to manage and reassess all resources including TAs.

The wealthy staff that grew in the noughties increased pastoral teams, increased TAs, both in the secondary and primary. I don't think it was particularly helpful to class teachers even though they will think that's helpful. Class teachers now think, 'I haven't got a TA.' The children who need the best, most skilled teaching get the least skilled person teaching them, the teacher assistant. The teacher teaches all the other children without barriers to learning. The relationship between the teacher and those children with additional needs becomes poorer. It's a two-pronged problem. If you take TAs away and the teacher has to deal with them, then they have to find a way of including those children more successfully. Yes, I get the fact that they haven't got as much resource and I understand that it is frustrating for them. However, is that [resource] being used in the right way? (LA-BSS)

The LA-SS participant, said they 'recognised schools were on their knees' but they also felt that schools needed to change and reassess how they manage resources. The response again appears to be in relation to finance and no matter how they were struggling to meet needs schools were expected to manage within their budget and reconsider the resource they claimed to need. As argued by Webster and Blatchford (2012), all LA participants believed schools should know how TAs are benefiting the pupils. Similar to the headteacher of Orchard Grove, the LA also suggests that the teacher and pupil would benefit from less support. This perspective supports the findings of Peacey (2015) and Batchford et al (2009), who both argue that pupils with special educational needs made slower progress when supported by a TA. The view from all LA participants also coincides with their acknowledgement that LA budgets have also been reduced. As Rose (2004) argued, although TAs were found to benefit pupils perceived as challenging, the economic climate would determine whether or not such support staff are a priority. Within the SEND Code of Practice it is acknowledged that TAs have a role to play in the management of pupils perceived as challenging and needing additional support. However, as Peacey (2015) argued, SEND Code of Practice recommendations do not address the question of how to employ TAs in a cost-effective way. The governments SEND policy recommends the use of TAs when supporting pupils with challenging behaviour. However, there are differing perceptions on the effective use of TAs in the classroom or as a 1-1 support from

both participants and within previous research studies (Groom and Rose, 2005; Webster and Blatchford,2012; Skipp and Hopwood, 2016). Both schools and the LA have acknowledged a reduction in the associated costs of additional staff and resources. This demonstrates contradicting contextual dimensions of policy enactment as described by Braun et al (2011), insofar as the external enactments of the SEND Code of Practice may conflict with the associated internal resources that are perceived by schools to be lacking. Also, clarification of 'why,' 'how' and 'when' a TA should support a pupil, perceived as requiring additional support, due to challenging behaviour, is not clear within the SEND Code of Practice.

4.3.2 Allocation of Additional Resources

The additional support pupils presenting with challenging behaviour can access is not just available from school resources. Implementation of the SEND Code of Practice is reliant on joint commissioning of services and a multi-agency approach to meeting the needs of pupils. Several of these services are managed by the LA and schools contribute to the cost from within their budget. Participants within schools believe that the allocation of these additional resources are not distributed based on need and are often not available.

Educational psychologists (EP) are managed by the LA Family Services and this is a provision not viewed as being allocated based on need by both schools.

> Now, we are allowed three visits a year [form an Educational Psychologist] regardless of our cohort, and if we want more than that we have to pay, and it comes down to your budget once again. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

> We pay out of our budget for educational psychologist contracted hours, I don't think it's enough because we've got a situation where there were a lot of children without a diagnosis that should have a diagnosis, or should have behaviour plans or support plans in place based on a specialist report that we can then use to put in the right things rather than just guessing which is what we do. We try and do it as well as we can, but a lot of the time before we get that education psychologist report, we're making assumptions and are not always the right assumptions. (Treetop Deputy Headteacher)

In Treetop School they have found, within their budget, additional funds to commission additional services outside of the LA to address the unmet needs, due to not having enough allocated time from the LA's educationalist psychologist. Orchard Grove, who believe they have similar unmet EP needs, do not have such funds as they are already in deficit. The LA approach of allocating the same number of EP sessions to all contributing schools, rather than based on need, is criticised by both headteachers and senior staff at both schools.

Both schools believed the LA's Behaviour Support Services (BSS) are also not allocated on need. They compared the LA model to an academy or multi-academy trust (MAT), believing that a MAT could buy in a behaviour support teacher and tailor that post to meet the needs of pupils. Whereas in the BSS model, although it is supposed to be based on need, everyone gets half a day a week even if one school has higher needs, deprivation and/or an influx of pupils with complex needs. Headteachers felt they and their peers had to consider what to reduce in terms of buy-in contracts for services provided by the LA, such as specialist behaviour support and school maintenance services, and consider what they really need.

> I think - this is my impression, my opinion. Across [the] borough, there is a very anti-academy view amongst the heads and a huge loyalty to the local authority. Whereas a majority of other places became academies across the country, this borough has kept its local authority, which is very popular amongst the heads. With the local authorities it just means slash and slash and slashed and slashed. My loyalty is to the children of this school, not to local authorities, not to anybody. It's to the children of this school. That's where every decision I make will start. If I didn't feel the local authority could provide me with the things that I needed for the children, then I will change. (Treetop Headteacher)

This headteacher continued to give examples of how they had managed to buy-in services better than those the LA were providing, such as IT equipment and maintenance, behaviour management support and pupil counselling. Achieving 'outstanding' in their Ofsted inspection, as stated by the headteacher, gave Treetop

more room to manoeuvre and they felt observation and criticism of them was less likely because they had met standards and had good performance results. They are able to increase their budget by promoting their good practice and other skills they have. The deputy headteacher gave examples of how they use their 'outstanding' label to increase Treetop's financial position.

> It does provide opportunities for us to create more revenue. Any additional revenue that we make as a school through any work or training events, we put straight into our pastoral pot because we know that that's where the money's needed and that's what we haven't got. The head and I work quite hard and doing other things. That's where the head is today. He's at something that will bring in a decent pot of money for us and we spend that on pupils. Any additional income goes straight into pastoral and behaviour. (Treetop Deputy Headteacher)

Treetop are moving some services away from the direct control of the LA, but they are still working within a Foucauldian disciplinary model that controls through surveillance and governmentality. The regular monitoring of performance and administrative technologies, such as government inspections and performance reviews, govern the extent to which headteachers can flex their 'freedoms' in the external market. As pointed out by the Treetop headteacher, although he had more flexibility with how they ran and sourced the services needed for pupils, it was because the school achieved 'outstanding,' hence the LA had less reason to intervene in how they managed the school. There did not appear to be a similar avenue for Orchard Grove to access the external market due to their budget being in deficit and their grading by Ofsted as 'Requiring Improvement' (RI). They were focusing on marketing their school, but this was to try and attract more pupils due to the very high number of vacancies. The flexibility to access service provisions outside of the LA framework appears limited to those schools who have met the grade and have a healthy budget. Although the headteacher at Treetop clearly asserted an enthusiastic approach in accessing external markets, he still acknowledged the LA's control. This headteacher claimed, that because the LA carry out their performance review, they had to be mindful of their role in possibly limiting how far they flexed their freedoms to purchase alternative services. Performance review is used here as an administrative technology that keeps

headteachers under surveillance ensuring they perform to the expectations of the LA. The LA have a conflicting duel role of monitoring the performance of headteachers at the same time as selling LA services to schools. If a headteacher breaks away from the 'normal' infrastructure and expected purchase of LA services, this may impact on their performance review. The performance review becomes a surveillance technology to control how and when a headteacher can flex their 'freedoms.' It may also limit how the headteacher at Treetop uses their power to change the LA infrastructure, especially as they claimed 'other headteachers within the borough were reluctant to do so' (Treetop Headteacher).

A greater understanding by all stakeholders of the joint commissioning of services is necessary when trying to meet pupil's needs, whether working within the LA's internal infrastructure, or a combination of internal and external markets. If joint commissioning is to work effectively the allocation of support services offered by the LA should be based on need and not an equal allocation to each school. To achieve this, the LA and headteachers would have to assess where need is greater for each service. This could be difficult if neither the LA nor schools can agree what the need is in the problematisation of challenging behaviour. If what constitutes need was agreed, to make services viable schools would still have to pay their contribution even if not in receipt of a given service. As schools such as Treetop are starting to buy services outside of LA provision, and other headteachers are forced to cut budgets, this would not be an easy approach for the LA to implement. Also, the continued growth of self-managed academies in the borough could reduce the demand for LA services. In agreement with Peacey (2015), it is necessary to question the effectiveness of joint commissioning and if 'LA's have the teeth to make this system work' (2015:17).

The demise of the LA has been evident since the introduction of semi-autonomous academies and the increased impact of globalisation (Furlong, 2013; Ball and Youdell, 2007). Although the schools in this study are not academies, they are starting to pursue possibilities in external markets and move away from the LA's internal market. If joint commissioning fails to provide services to schools in need, headteachers may continue to question what they are receiving for their financial contribution to the LA, and as Treetop have done, look to a different market.

Treetop's pursuit of better services to meet pupil's needs is an example of how marketisation is impacting on schools and the problematisation of challenging behaviour. Pursuing services such as behaviour support or IT, that are currently provided by the LA, moves away from the LA's closed service environment and their direct control. This outward reach away from the LA, strays somewhat from Foucault's notion of disciplinary control of stops and starts within each enclosed environment, nonetheless, disciplinary technologies are still in place, albeit an in/direct mode of control. As headteachers continue to come out of the LA provision of support services and buy from different markets, education is starting to resemble the social control model of Deleuze (1992).

In societies of control, institutions sit within frameworks of coexistence in a network of open environments; they are not governed directly from above by other institutions that have direct control. For example, the headteacher at Treetop has made an initial move away from operating under the control of the LA whilst currently co-operating with the LA's model of providing services. Treetop still contribute to LA services but are beginning to increase the services they buy from outside providers, which also reduces the LA's direct control. Applying Deleuze's social control model does not mean interpreting the headteachers actions as leaving the disciplinary model of Foucault. It is rather the recognition of a potential move away from the direct control of the LA in terms of what services schools access outside of LA boundaries. However, the LA may still continue to control headteachers through other technologies such as performance reviews. Schools no longer have to work entirely within a closed market, but are starting to establish a framework that interacts with both the LA and service providers in an open market. The headteacher at Treetop is using marketisation in an effort to unlock the best value for money for resources pupils need. The headteacher at Orchard Grove is also considering this approach as they struggle to balance the school budget.

As schools such Treetop and Orchard Grove start to interact across LA and open market boundaries, they increasingly exemplify the network governance model described by Ball and Junemann (2012). Network governance operates across horizontal and hierarchical structures of organisations such as government, LAs, schools and the market. Although network governance may appear to give

stakeholders (for example schools), more control, disciplinary technologies such as surveillance (performance and assessment) still maintain the government/LA control. As evident in the analysis of Treetop and Orchard Grove, government bodies such as Ofsted can limit the 'freedoms' of schools by grading their performance as 'requiring improvement' or inadequate. It is evident that Treetop (graded 'outstanding') have more 'freedoms' to trade their skills and knowledge to other educational organisations and have more access to the open market than Orchard Grove (graded 'requires improvement'). However, as quickly as governments/LAs may consent to the 'arms' length model of network governance, they can revert back to having a tighter grip. As Whitty and Wisby argued, 'new actors who fail in the eyes of governments do not survive as key players for long: the dramatic decline of the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust … provides just one illustration of this' (2016:325). Therefore, as the headteacher at Treetop recognised, 'it is maintaining 'outstanding' that [for now] keeps the LA at a distance'.

4.3.3 Resourcing Education, Health and Care Plans.

One of the main documentation processes aimed at identifying and meeting the needs of pupils presenting with challenging behaviour is an EHC plan, which falls under the umbrella of SEND. The EHC planning process is based on the premise that schools and the LA work together to identify what support pupils need. The identified support and associated resources may come from within school or from different services within the LA. This 'solution' to meeting the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour is based on a multifaceted distribution of resources allocated through administrative procedures.

Schools are allocated funds for SEND pupils in their overall budget, however this is not ring-fenced. The amount given to schools is agreed between schools and the LA and so this 'notional SEND budget' may differ between schools. Such funds within the overall budget support pupils who have not reached the stage of needing an EHC plan. The Department of Education (2019) stated that this may discourage schools to keep pupils presenting with additional needs.

> This is a notional amount within the total funding provided for mainstream schools. It is not ring-fenced, but schools are expected to use the money to

cover the first £6,000 of support per pupil with SEND. This requirement may incentivise schools to be less inclusive, by making them reluctant to admit or keep pupils with SEND who can be costly to support. (Department of Education, 2019:3)

Headteachers and senior staff at Orchard Grove and Treetop discussed how pupils with additional needs are admitted to their schools who need immediate additional support. However, this may not come with the pupil because they have not gone through the assessment cycle for a EHC plan, in their previous educational provision.

> Imagine today, I've got spare places in my school, so on Monday morning a child could start that I have never met and could come into my school and have no assessment, probably because the school that they've come from is similar to mine. They might walk through the door and I'd think 'That child looks like they might be autistic'. I would have to do a 12-month cycle, two lots of plan-do-review. During that two lots of plan-do-review for a whole year of that child's education we would not be meeting need. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

This headteacher's hypothetical pupil embodies a representation of a problem that is tied up in the financial and administrative process of the SEND Code of Practice that does not appear to present a solution for pupils. In addition to the problems identified in funding, the Department of Education(2019) argued the administrative process of the EHC plan could also prevent headteachers from treating pupils thought to require additional financial support inclusively. However, it is interesting to note how the headteacher perceives that their professional experience gives them the skills to identify and pre-empt the medicalisation of a pupil before any contextual assessment is made – the labelling and problematisation has already begun. This is accepted and reinforced by the SEND Code of Practice as educationalists are encouraged to identify possible barriers to pupils needs such as possible mental health problems.

Headteachers from both schools, believed that the needs of pupils falling within the SEND criteria has become more complex and there are increased numbers of pupils in addition to continued underfunding.

> The special needs population, the way I see this is, the world has changed significantly … They're coming through with quite significant special needs. Not just special needs that are physical, which they are, but also with all of these other things around brain development and emotional development. (Orchard Grove Headteacher)

The LA participant from within the SEND service acknowledged that some pupils are presenting with more complex needs but argued that headteachers need to first look within their own budgets before turning to the LA: 'Schools have to pay the first £6k for a pupil with SEND needs, this is already in their budgets, but headteachers do not understand this and do not breakdown their financial data' (LA-SS). The LA participant from Family Services (LA-FS) believed that schools look to EHC plans as the answer to meeting the needs of pupils by requesting additional finance so a pupil can have 1-1 support. Such support, as advocated within the SEND Code of Practice, may be provided by a TA, but as discussed earlier, schools such as Orchard Grove do not have the finances to employ TAs. However, the LA-FS participant also believed that headteachers need to look at their existing resources and 'how they can be used differently before looking to an EHC plan' (LA-FS).

Not all of the financial implications of an EHC plan involve the direct funding for additional resources in school; access to the services provided by the LA are also required. For example a school may need specialist Behaviour Support Services (LA-BSS) or social and healthcare input from the Family Services (LA-FS). School participants from both schools believed there to be a problem with accessing these services throughout the EHC plan process.

All school participants believed that each pupil going through the EHC plan assessment had to have an EP's report, yet the LA believed this was sometimes a misuse of the psychologist's time and was not necessary.

Schools often use an educational psychologist for a report to support an EHC plan application process rather than using them in alternative ways that may help meeting a pupil's needs. The belief that an educational psychologist report is always necessary to attain an EHC plan is misunderstood – one isn't always necessary. (LA-FS)

This clear misunderstanding highlights how applying for an EHC plan may take a resource, such as an EP, away from directly supporting a pupil's needs. It becomes a resource adrift within the administrative process. The administration of an EHC plan, once allocated, requires different professions such as social workers and child mental health workers to attend regular 'team around the child' (TAC) monitoring meetings. Both schools argued they had regular problems trying to progress such meetings as external professionals were either not available or consistently changed. This results in a lack of consistency between professionals and no opportunity for an integrated team to build a relationship with a pupil or parent. For example, the pastoral manager from Orchard Grove stated, 'we are on our fourth school-age plus worker (external support staff who is part of the integrated team) and on our second social worker.' Treetop staff gave similar responses. This suggests that the resources from services within the LA-FS are not available or are not being utilised to ensure the administration of the EHC plan process is productive.

Pupils under SEND do not always require an EHC plan to access support from the LA's Behaviour Support Services (BSS). This service is provided to both schools and has been viewed as useful. However, not enough support is available as it is a small service accessed by many of the LA schools in the borough. Not all staff knew when and how this support is given in schools but they did know of its existence.

We do have a lady that comes in from behaviour support, but she's also off sick at the moment. She will be off for a little while as well. At the moment, as far as I'm aware, there isn't anyone else…I've only ever seen her observe children. I've never seen anything come back from the observations. I don't know if that's just because it goes straight to the class teacher. (Orchard Grove TA)

Orchard Grove receive half a day a week, but this has not been available for some time because the person allocated to the school is on long term absence. The BSS have not replaced the person, so the pupils and staff needing this specialised support manage without. Again, this is another service within the LA that schools feel does not provide the resource needed to either prevent a pupil needing an EHC plan or to support them in acquiring one. This results in a further demand on school resources even though they already pay the LA-BSS for their services from the existing school budget.

It would seem that integrated working is not effective between the LA and schools. LA participants also acknowledged that services within the LA are not working effectively together: 'We need to be integrated but still do not understand each other's services. Systems don't talk to each other, we don't work together' (LA-SS). Another participant stated; 'Integrated working is high on the agenda, resulting in a pilot that works with all stakeholders to promote a multiagency approach'(LA-FS). However, they also acknowledge that services within the LA do not 'consistently take a joint approach'. If the different services within the LA are not working together, implementing a multifaceted package of support for a pupil becomes in itself problematic. The lack of joint working and differing views between the LA and schools starts to direct professional focus on the administrative process rather than the pupil. Differing perceptions and interpretations between schools and the LA may leave a pupil falling between categorisations of manageable and unmanageable within existing school resources. If there is not an agreement on when and how a pupil meets the assessment criteria of an EHC plan, allocating resources then becomes a problem. Policy guidelines and legislation promote the need for integrated working, but although this has been the case for many decades, it still presents as a problem. As Peacey suggested, 'although joint commissioning is legally in place (Clause 31 of the Children and Family Act), LA's are unable to make the system work' (2015:17). Recent reviews of the implementation of the SEND policies and the underpinning multiagency process continue to concur with many of the problems that research participants have identified (DfE, 2016; HoC, 2019). Without the collaboration, resources and shared understanding of all professionals within the EHC assessment and planning process, the SEND Code of Practice can

encourage misguided problematisations of challenging behaviour and empty solutions to support the needs of pupils.

4.3.4 Summary

As schools work within a finite budget, the management of resources becomes a crucial element of enacting policies and procedures. It is evident that budgets have been further stretched due to the financial implications of implementing the SEND Code of Practice. The problem that presents within the resource discourse between schools and the LA is how existing resources, in particular TAs, are deployed. The differing views between the LA and schools as to whether the way in which TAs currently support a pupil with challenging behaviour is productive concurs with the mixed views found within previous research (Peacey, 2015; Webster and Blatchford, 2012; Groom and Rose, 2005). These differing views on 'if' or 'how' to deploy a TA are not helped by the lack of direction within the SEND Code of Practice. Although advocating the deployment of TAs to support pupils with 'challenging' behaviour, the SEND Code of Practice does not explain 'how' (Peacey, 2015).

If a school believes they require additional funds they have to access this through an onerous cycle of SEND administration controlled by the LA. The LA argue that schools should be managing their budget more effectively, and thus accessing additional support presents as a problem. External resources managed by the LA are perceived by schools as not distributed based on need and some services are inconsistently available or not accessible at all. Steps taken by schools to access the open market in order to replace the services provided by the LA could, as Peacey (2015) argues, indicate the possible changing role of the LA in the future. The more schools contract services from the 'open market' instead of the LA, the less direct control the LA will have. Although schools such as Orchard Grove and Treetop are working within a framework characterised by the Foucauldian model of disciplinary control, their pursuit of services within the external market indicates the growing influence of a Deleuzian social control model where the LA still control but from a distance.

At the centre of the problematisation of managing resources is the EHC assessment and planning process. As soon as a pupil is perceived to meet the SEND criteria,

they have an additional resource available to them. How a pupil's needs are supported becomes the issue between the schools and LA. However, the evident lack of professionals working together results in an absence of joint understanding and agreement on pupils' needs. This in turn blocks access to redistribution of resources or agreement on additional funds or external resources. This has resulted in the EHC assessment and planning process becoming the problem rather than the solution that is intended.

4.4 Exploring a solution to the problem

As Bacchi (2012) argues, the solutions to a problem depend on what the problem is represented to be. After I had explored with participants how they identified and responded to pupils' perceived as 'challenging', I believed it would be useful to ask all participants what they perceived to be the solution. The previous sections of this chapter have evidenced how challenging behaviour is constructed as a problem in two primary schools. However, when all participants were asked at the end of their interview what they would put in place if they had a 'magic wand', five main solutions were suggested (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Main solutions in participants' 'wish list'

	Solutions	Number of Participants Raising the Issue
1	Remove standard assessment tests (SAT's), curriculum and assessment pressures from staff.	8/10 school participants. 2/3 LA participants.
2	A fully staffed internal school provision with experienced and specialist behaviour support including mental health.	All schools participants. All LA participants agreed this may be a solution for some schools but further evidence was needed.
3	Training for staff to support them in dealing with pupils with complex needs.	All school and LA participants.
4	Improved process for EHC plans.	All school participants.
5	Additional funding to employ extra staff and meet the needs of pupils.	All school participants.

It was interesting to note that although the curriculum and assessment pressures were only raised briefly throughout the main body of the interviews, most participants 'wished' the curriculum was more flexible and associated assessment

pressures were removed. Ball (2003) maintains that the performativity and accountability culture have a personal psychological impact on individual teachers and impacts on their judgement in teaching practice. The participants in this study did not appear to directly connect such pressure on them as teachers to that of pupils with challenging behaviours. However, participants did perceive the lack of productivity from pupils as a 'problem' and 'challenging.' It is possible that teachers perceive the curriculum as non-negotiable and perceived pressures as something they cannot change. Therefore, for teachers to acknowledge their part in the possible transference of curriculum and assessment pressures, to pupils, may expose their complicity in how the curriculum is implemented.

All school participants said an internal unit that included staff with the skills to help pupils is desirable. LA participants also believed that an internal provision in primary schools could be a possible way to help meet the needs of pupils. However, participants were still hesitant on how such provision would be developed and funded. There was the suggestion by the LA that maybe headteachers within a consortium could fund and access such a provision as they would not need to establish one in every primary school. The LA's response is an indication of how they perceive the 'problem' as a responsibility of the schools to 'solve' within their given resources. Therefore the solution continues to present differing problematisations – for the school it is resources, for the LA it is the schools lack of managing the 'problem'. However, though government policies and guidance there is a consistent push for joint working to 'solve ' the problems associated with pupils 'challenging' behaviour. Establishing internal units through a consortium of headteachers without the use of LA support services, would support the argument that the LA's role is being diminished (Peacey, 2015; Furlong, 2013). Evidence as to the demand for an internal school provision would need to be further explored if, as with the case study schools, they are not consistently collecting and analysing data on the use of external exclusion.

It was evident that some staff felt they and their peers were not sufficiently qualified in dealing with pupils' complex needs. The pressure on staff to be able to recognise a pupil's needs has increased with the implementation of SEND policies. The increased reliance on associating 'challenging' behaviour to social, emotional and

medical needs to attain additional funding is difficult when specialist support is limited. Also, the onerous administrative tasks to evidence such observations creates increased pressures on school staff to categorise a pupil. Clarity and equity of the SEND process was believed by school participants to be necessary to implement it effectively. Although the LA's Ofsted report (2018) graded the LA's SEND services as 'inadequate', the LA did not see a problem on their part in the implementation of the SEND process. Analysing policy perceptions of participants from schools and the LA again demonstrates the differing problematisations of challenging behaviour which continue in their 'wish list' of possible 'solutions'. With the reduction in staff combined with the additional needs of pupils falling within SEND categories, school staff believed more financial support to employ additional specialist staff would help. However, LA participants argued that there are no additional funds for such resources, and schools should manage with current resources.

The 'wishes' of participants in relation to meeting the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour do not conflict with past studies and government policies (DfE, 2014; 2015; 2016; 2017; 2018; 2019; Ofsted,2009; 2011; 2012; HoC,2018). Internal alternative provision facilitating 'nurture' type approaches and facilities run by skilled and trained staff is a common theme throughout government behavioural policy. Indeed, recommendations over the last decade in several government policies and reports have included within them the 'magic wand' wishes of this study's research participants. However, in searching for a solution, there are a number of presuppositions and assumptions made by both school and LA participants in their construction of the 'problem'. The consistent lack of agreement on what the problem is represented to be, is unsurprisingly, also woven into what the solutions could be.

4.4.1 Deconstructing the problem before finding a solution.

Bacchi (2012) argues that when looking to find a solution, the problem itself should be deconstructed to identify 'what the problem is represented to be' (WPR). Applying this approach, Table 4.2 provides an outline summary of how challenging behaviour has been represented by the participants in this case study.

What remains unsaid in participant's possible solutions is a reassessment of 'what is challenging behaviour.' There is an evident need for the LA and schools to form a better 'joint' understanding of what constitutes challenging behaviour and the effects of this categorisation. The solutions of participants could become a reinforcement of the problem if new support services start to create a self-fulfilling demand. For example, if all schools have an internal provision for 'challenging' pupils this presents a need to fill it with pupils to 'fix' whilst leaving other aspects of the problematisation, as highlighted in Table 4.2, unresolved.

When applying questions to deconstruct what the problem is represented to be, 'participant's actions, professional knowledge and discourse reminds us that the 'problem' and the 'solutions' are heavily laden with meaning' (Bacchi, 2012:23). What Bacchi's WPR approach allows us to do as practitioners is to question the assumptions we make in the framing of problems. Analysing the data from this case study, and addressing Bacchi's questions in Table 4.2, has provided insight into how schools and the LA framed challenging behaviour. If schools and local authorities worked together to deconstruct how challenging behaviour is problematised, it would provide a greater insight into alternative possible solutions.

Table 4.2: Snapshot application of Bacchi's (2012) WPR Questions

What problem is challenging behaviour represented to be?	
(Q1) What is the problem?	• Pupils presenting with challenging behaviour (physical and verbal violence, withdrawal and disengagement, leaving designated classroom without permission)
(Q2) What presuppositions or assumptions underpin this representation of the problem?	• Pupils and teachers should adhere to policies, rules and procedures • Pupils expected to fit into given 'normal' framework • Pupil and staff understanding and interpretation of rules and policies • LA assumption that teachers should be able to manage behaviour • Pupils should be productive as defined by the curriculum and behaviour policies • Unmanaged behaviour worsens if not 'fixed'
(Q3) How has the representation of the problem come about?	• Pupils inability to self-regulate behaviour • Pupils are unproductive and unmanageable • Pupils home life and parenting impacts on contextual behaviour • Expectations about normal behaviour • Pupils not fitting within the 'norm' need to be categorised in medical and social discourse, as for example, within the SEND policies and procedures
(Q4) What is left unproblematic in this representation? Where are the silences? Can the problem be thought about differently?	• Productivity is measured based on pupil's performance • Behaviour is context base • Impact of classroom/lesson configuration • Curriculum demands to increase performativity and evidence progress can filter pressure onto pupils • Pupil/teacher relationship- the use of behaviour management strategy and identifying pupils barriers to learning
(Q5) What effects are produced by this representation of the problem?	• Pupils identified as having unmet needs • Pupils possibly medicalised unnecessarily • Pupils self-actualisation of label, they behave as their label pre-empts them to and gradually become the label. • Limiting pupil academic and social potential • Pupils excluded • Teachers unable to meet pupils needs safely • Teachers are perceived as failing in behaviour management
(Q6)How/where has the representation of the problem been produced, disseminated and defended? How has it been (or could be) questioned, disrupted and replaced?	• Report cards • Isolation • Predominately negative perceptions • Exclusion • Reputation proceeds pupil • Government/OFSTED policy should be continually problematised • Government/OFSTED expectations not sufficiently resourced • Schools changing approach to discipline and behaviour management • LA questioning school perceptions • LA understanding school resource restraints • LA schools re-assessing and agreeing what defines challenging behaviour and unmet need

4.5 Summary

The above analysis, investigates how participants from the LA, Orchard Grove and Treetop schools have problematised challenging behaviour. This case study has

provided an insight into the educational knowledge and discourses framing 'problem' pupils. Within the participants problematisation of pupils 'challenging' behaviour, several main issues have emerged that enable their problematisations to be questioned.

The constant lack of agreement between the LA and schools as to when a pupil's behaviour becomes challenging runs throughout their formation of educational knowledge and discourses. The constant lack of agreement on pupils needs and how to respond appear to be embedded within the problematisation process. This makes a unified concept of the problem difficult, because there is not a single definition of challenging behaviour due to the many contextual and social features surrounding the label (Cole and Knowles, 2011; Emerson, 2001; Cooper, 1999). However, there is an assumption that if pupils are not adhering to the expected behaviour models defined in policies and guidelines, then such pupils are deemed 'challenging'. This is where the nuclei of the problem starts to grow and the different perceptions of what is acceptable behaviour emerge. These contrasting perspectives need to be examined and understood by stakeholders.

Policies such as the SEND Code of Practice facilitate the control of pupils presenting as challenging. Such policies frame the problem of challenging behaviour and proclaim to offer a solution. However, within the process of implementing the SEND Code of Practice, the LA and schools are risking the unnecessary medicalisation of pupils as they search for an explanation for pupils 'challenging' behaviour. The pupil becomes a 'body' manoeuvred and controlled through the policy enactment process. In an attempt to manage the more 'challenging' pupils, staff work through the administrative processes, as in Hacking's (2007) 'engines of discovery', to produce knowledge underpinning their categorisation of pupils.

Pupils resistance to, or a lack of understanding of, the expected behaviour within schools is controlled by the implementation of behaviour policies. Pupils are encouraged to self-regulate and not deviate from the boundaries of behaviour expectations. Self-regulation is believed to increase productivity and thus their performance, along with that of teachers and the school. When pupils do deviate, teaching staff see this as a pupil needing 'fixing,' and the LA argue not enough is

being done in schools to look at the 'barriers to learning.' As found by Maguire et al (2010), fixing behaviour is associated with improving learning, and participants associated learning with being productive. If pupils were withdrawn, or not engaging, and so not being productive, this was perceived as 'challenging' behaviour. Pupils are judged on their acceptance of the behaviour policy rather than policy being examined for its value. It is therefore important to continually examine both local and national policies to deconstruct the role they play in framing the problem (Bacchi, 2000).

Pupils seen as unmanageable within a mainstream school, are maneuvered through a system of internal and then external exclusion. Separation is a tool used to control, survey and prevent the influence of the excluded on other members of a population (Foucault, 1977; Elden, 2003). Internal exclusion was used by staff in both schools but, as found in other studies (DofE, 2019; Gazeley et al, 2015), there was no data collected within schools to explain why and when a pupil was in isolation. This prevents schools from capturing what is happening at a crucial stage of headteachers deciding if a pupil should be permanently excluded from their school. This deficit in information prevents exploring why a pupil is challenging and thus questions the reasoning underpinning permanent exclusion.

Underpinning many of the issues raised by school staff was the lack of resources to support pupils presenting with 'challenging' behaviour. Under the SEND Code of Practice, additional resources are channeled through the EHC planning process to meet the need of 'challenging' pupils. The lack of joint working and understanding between the LA and schools, supports previous findings that the EHC assessment and planning process is adding to the problematisation of challenging behaviour rather than establishing possible solutions (Department of Education, 2019; Peacey, 2015). The LA have control over additional SEND funds to support the EHC process. They distribute additional funds to schools once a cycle of evidence is documented and presented by schools dealing a pupil's unmet needs. The LA appear to be pushing the responsibility onto schools to meet the needs of pupils within their allocated school budget, unless they can 'prove' additional resources are required. This becomes problematic when there is a lack of agreement, between schools and the LA, as to what constitutes the needs of a pupil and 'how' and 'why' they are

identified as 'challenging.' In addition to controlling financial support, the LA are providing support services, paid for by schools, that are not allocated on need and are believed to be insufficient. This has resulted in headteachers reaching out to the open markets for support services. Such actions have opened the door to other modes of control such as Deleuze's model of social control and a possible emergence of network governance as argued by Ball and Junemann (2012). If this continues, it could result in the demise of LA support services. However, Foucauldian disciplinary technologies still maintain control, in both a direct and 'arms-length' functioning of the LA.

This in-depth analysis has revealed that the actions, knowledge and discourse of participants cannot inform solutions while the problem is represented in contradictory ways. Inevitably, when using a Foucauldian approach the findings raise more questions than answers. The findings in this study evidence the need for researchers and practitioners to further question policy and practice underpinning the problematisation of challenging behaviour.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This study aimed to explore how challenging behaviour is constructed, by professionals, as a problem in mainstream primary schools in North West England. Throughout my career, which has crossed several public sectors, including Health, Social Care and Education services, I have always been interested in how power and knowledge are woven through the subtleties of everyday life and how problems are conceived in relation to professional practice. This study has provided new insights into how challenging behaviour is constructed as a problem, without aiming to propose 'effective' solutions to this problem as it is presently constructed. I have demonstrated how professional knowledge and discourse are mobilised to justify actions taken towards pupils who are defined as having challenging behaviour and who become identified as a problem. Although designed as a small case study, my research has generated rich and in-depth data from participants from schools and the LA.

Using a Foucauldian lens has enabled me to identify the operation of technologies of power and the ways in which discourse becomes knowledge that shapes the work of professionals. To ensure the works of Michel Foucault remain applicable to education today, I have drawn on theorists who have developed and built upon Foucault's writings. Hacking (2007) has provided a valuable approach with his concept of 'engines of discovery' that highlight the systems used by professionals to mobilise discourse and knowledge and established 'truths'. Graham (2005; 2011) has demonstrated that using a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis is effective for understanding and interpreting participants responses to questions posed. Finally, the WPR tool developed by Bacchi (2012) gets at the heart of this research by enabling critical analysis of how problems are constructed.

In this final chapter, I begin by synthesising my findings to answer my research questions and demonstrate the contribution made by this study. This is followed by an acknowledgement of the limitations of the study and discussions of possible trajectories for further research and approaches that could be employed by Orchard Grove school, Treetop school and the LA in relation to the problem of challenging behaviour.

5.1 Summary of findings

Three main research questions guided my study and I will synthesise my findings to answer each question below.

5.1.1 What actions are applied by professionals to pupils defined as having challenging behaviour?

Actions applied to pupils fall within four main areas of managing challenging behaviour: (1) *low level behaviour*; (2) *separation and surveillance* of 'challenging' pupils; (3) risk of permanent *exclusion*; and (4) *SEND* policies and procedures.

Low level behaviour. Although on the surface Treetop and Orchard Grove differ in how their behaviour policy is presented and articulated, the outcomes for pupils are very similar. Both schools have behaviour policies in place to ensure pupils are aware of the consequences to behaviour perceived as unacceptable. The behaviour policy is a technology that allows staff to take action if pupils are presenting behaviour that deviates from the prescribed norms. Staff in both schools accept that there will be 'low level' challenging behaviour, such as chatting or shouting in class and other 'minor' disruptions, displayed by pupils. Such behaviours are usually acted upon through verbal warnings using approaches such as traffic light step systems displayed in the classroom. Staff in both schools saw the lack of a pupils self-regulation and productivity as a justification to respond to their perceived deviation from behavioural norms. Pupils were judged on how they bought into the behaviour policies, and if they deviate from expectations then staff viewed them as needing to be 'fixed' (Maguire et al, 2010).

Separation and surveillance. There was no significant difference between Orchard Grove and Treetop in how staff responded to pupils who were perceived to display challenging behaviour. Although Treetop had been graded by Ofsted as 'Outstanding' and Orchard Grove as 'Requires Improvement', they both responded with technologies of control such as surveillance and separation. In both schools, there are a handful of pupils that continually challenge the boundaries of expected behaviour and are therefore perceived as problematic. Such pupils come under more surveillance and are often separated from their mainstream class and moved into rooms used for internal exclusion. For some pupils, a more mobile use of

surveillance is implemented via report cards, carried around by pupils all day/week, for teaching staff to comment on. The actions carried out through the implementation of both school's behaviour policies demonstrate how surveillance and separation are used as tools of control (Foucault, 1977; Elden, 2003).

Exclusion. When pupils are perceived as unmanageable, and their needs cannot be met in mainstream school, they are at risk of permanent exclusion. Although across both schools external exclusion had fallen, internal exclusion had risen. The few pupils who were regularly internally excluded were becoming harder to manage. Within the LA geographical location, there is one specialist behaviour school, which at the time of this research was already over-subscribed. In both schools, the headteachers and staff believed they had a small number of pupils whose needs they could not be met and so believed alternative educational provision was needed. The headteacher from Orchard Grove believed, having consulted with other headteachers, that this was the case for many schools within the LA's geographical location. This headteacher believed the number of pupils wrongly placed in mainstream would fill a specialist behaviour school and the lack of access to other alternative provision was problematic. Although recent government reports acknowledge the increase in demand for alternative provision (DfE, 2017; HoC, 2018), the reasoning for alternative provision, such as an additional specialist school or pupil referral unit, is not clearly evidenced by the schools or agreed with by the LA. The LA believed schools had to do more to manage pupils behaviour within the resources they have. Both the LA and schools believed that an internal unit in some schools could be beneficial in meeting the needs of 'challenging' pupils. However, as found in other studies, both schools have a lack of data on internal inclusion (Gazely et al, 2015). Internal and external exclusion has been found to further isolate pupils within both educational and social environments (McClusky et al, 2016; McClusky et al, 2015; Menzies and Baars, 2015; Macrae et al, 2003).

SEND. The Send Code of Practice is perceived by both schools to be problematic due to the onerous administrative process and the LA's control of additional funding. The SEND Code of Practice is a system of policies and guidelines that ensure labels and categories are embedded, such as those attached to pupils with challenging behaviour. Such policies give 'approval' to professionals to intervene and apply

actions to pupils. Within SEND policies and procedures, pupil's behaviour is assessed to establish their eligibility for an education, health and care (EHC) plan, to obtain additional support from the LA. Both schools believed they did not have either the expertise or resources to support pupils they identified as particularly or persistently 'challenging' in terms of behaviour and identified the EHC process as an avenue for additional funding. However, the LA believed schools were too eager to label pupils 'challenging' and push them through the EHC process. The LA had a very different response to how schools should manage pupil behaviour before and as pupils are assessed under SEND. They believed that schools were failing to identify barriers to learning and support pupils before they became unmanageable. If a school is unable to meet the needs of a pupil, permanent exclusion could be the course of action. If a pupil is moved to an alternative educational provision, the funding responsibility moves away from school to the LA. If 'challenging' behaviour is not managed in schools due to a lack of identified funds or/and management strategies, this could result in schools using this action inappropriately (Mills and Thomson, 2018).

The different actions and technologies applied by schools and the LA reflect the knowledge and discourse that shape challenging behaviour as a problem. The four main areas of action above provide an insight into how knowledge and discourse is mobilised. Low level behaviour is managed according to discourses that vary across contexts, such as implementation of local behaviour management tools. A change in resources such as the temporary availability of the Hub in Orchard Grove or a lack of TAs pushes a change in discourse regarding how staff should manage 'challenging' pupils in the classroom when there is nowhere to send 'disruptive' pupils. When separation is not available due to resources or skilled staff, discourse may be mobilised to justify the exclusion of pupils – moving the 'problem' on. The SEND policy provides a broader and different discourse framing of challenging behaviour, guiding actions applied to pupils. The LA and schools then fit their own interpretations into this discursive framing.

5.1.2 How is professional knowledge and discourse mobilised to justify these actions?

The problem of challenging behaviour is constructed in different ways by staff in schools and the LA, yet they each pose 'solutions' as though there is a unified problem. The four main bodies of professional knowledge and discourse mobilized to justify actions and 'solutions' are: (1) *medicalisation* of pupils through the SEND Code of Practice; (2) *classroom support* (TAs); (3) pupils' *home life*; and (4) management of *resources*.

Medicalisation. The interpretation and implementation of SEND policies and guidance strengthens the risk of some pupils becoming wrongly labelled and categorised. In schools, it is evident that both external and internal technologies such as the SEND code of practice and school behaviour policies are used as tools to mobilise actions towards pupils. Policy, as both discourse and text, is interpreted by staff and becomes knowledge used in the labelling of pupils presenting as 'challenging.' Under SEND, pupils perceived as challenging are often categorised as having or experiencing Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties (SEMHD). The inclusion of mental health implies a form of ill health and the need for professional intervention and underpins the construction of the problem by staff. The issue of medicalisation has been accentuated by staff at both Orchard Grove and Treetop schools in their interpretations and perceptions of pupils' mental health. The differing approach to pupils who were perceived as having a medicalised label, compared to those without, resembled the 'sad', 'bad' and 'mad' framework of Macleod (2006). Mental health discourse became more easily mobilised when pupils had a clearly identifiable label such as autism, ADHD or severe physical and/or learning disability (Hacking, 2007; Graham, 2005). Pupils formally medicalised within this recognised framework of professional knowledge were perceived as deserving of additional support or flexibility in relation to how they self-regulated their behaviour and became productive. Those pupils seen to deviate from the boundaries of expected behaviours, but not yet formally categorized within a recognised knowledge and discourse framework, become a focus of mental health assessment. As in Hacking's (2007) 'engines of discovery', staff mobilise this health discourse when applying the 'label' of mental health needs and the LA then provide the administrative system to either agree or refute it. Such actions reflect the

discursive frame of government guidance on mental health and behaviour in schools (DfE,2016), which encourages schools and staff to identify pupils with mental health problems where behaviour is challenging.

Classroom support. The role and utilisation of TAs reflects different problem constructions and highlights an interesting example of how discourse changes due to context. Both Treetop and Orchard Grove schools have consistently used TAs to support pupils in class and for intervention work. All staff across both schools believed having TAs to support pupils with challenging behaviour was necessary. Treetop believed they were adequately resourced to provide TAs in the classroom and for pupil intervention. However, the Orchard Grove headteacher has had to reduce the number of TAs in their school due to financial difficulties. They began to change the discourse, which previously supported the need for TAs, to promote the view that TAs are a possible impediment to managing pupils with challenging behaviour. This is one of the few areas where the LA appeared to be in agreement with schools, also believing that TAs may not help a pupil to self-regulate or aid the teacher-pupil relationship. Changes in the discursive frames within Orchard Grove and the LA conflict with broader discursive frames provided by SEND policies, which advocate the use of TAs to support pupils presenting with challenging behaviour. The discourse changed at Orchard Grove due to resource pressures, therefore 'why', 'how' and 'when' discourse changes appear to be dependent on the different financial context schools are experiencing (Ball, 1993; Bacchi, 2012).

Home life. Pupils' home life forms part of schools' construction of how and why pupils' behaviour is a problem. School respondents' perceptions were discursively framed by their interpretation of pupils' home circumstances (MacLure et al, 2012). Respondents in both schools and the LA believed they had little control over parents' management of behaviour at home. They believed behaviours in the home or communities impacted on the schools 'in school' expectations of pupil behaviour. Schools thus located some of the causes of 'challenging' behaviour outside of school and with responsibility attributed to parents. Although acknowledging the impact of home context, the LA believed that whatever a pupil's home circumstances are, meeting pupils' needs and addressing challenging behaviour is a school's responsibility. However, the LA control the support services such as

social workers, family therapists and other community workers that could support families in and out of the school environment. Therefore, to accept that pupils and parents may need additional support would have resource implications for the LA.

Resources. Responses to how and why actions are applied to pupils are consistently linked to resource availability and management and significantly shaped school participants' construction of the problem. It is evident that there is a conflict between the schools and LA regarding how resources are managed. Schools believe they are under-resourced and this restricts the support they can give to a pupil, but the LA believe schools should manage resources more efficiently. The dissemination and enactment of SEND policies and procedures has created additional conflicting and problematic discursive frames around the characterisation of challenging behaviour and additional resources. The LA have control of additional funds that can be accessed by schools through an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Therefore, their discursive framing of challenging behaviour, if different to schools, could have a fundamental impact on determining who should access an EHC plan. Before releasing additional funds, the LA demand evidence from schools to demonstrate how they have met their responsibility to support pupils perceived as challenging. The LA oversee the process of schools collating information on pupils' behaviour to assess their eligibility for an EHC plan to obtain additional support from the LA. This provides a good example of how discourse becomes knowledge and is mobilised. When a pupil's behaviour deviates from the expected behaviour, this is documented creating evidence to justify categorisation and intervention. However, this approach can fail to recognise the whole context of a pupil's behaviour as it focuses on fixing the pupil and not other possible contextual factors (Brown and Carr, 2019; Sullivan et al, 2014; Maguire et al, 2010).

5.1.3 How is challenging behaviour constructed, by professionals, as a problem in primary schools?

The problem of challenging behaviour is constructed differently by schools and the LA. The different discourses shaping how the 'problem' is represented in issues such as mental health, classroom support (TAs), pupils' home life and management of resources, inform these different constructions. The SEND Code of Practice also provides a broad discursive framing and recommended 'solutions' to the 'problem' of challenging behaviour. The LA locates the problem and solutions with schools

who they believe are not managing behaviour soon enough and not using their resources effectively. Schools locate the problem with the LA's lack of support services, control of additional resources and the implementation of SEND policies, which they believe are onerous and are not meeting pupils' needs. When schools and the LA construct the problem of challenging behaviour differently it gives rise to different possible 'solutions'. In their representations of the problem and possible 'solutions' there are presuppositions or assumptions made and matters left unproblematic by schools and the LA.

Schools

The two schools did not see low-level behaviour as a problem but as manageable. There is an assumption that pupils should 'fit' into a given 'normal' framework that expects pupils to be productive as defined by the curriculum and behaviour policies. Pupils not fitting within the 'norm' are perceived to need 'fixing' and so categorised in medical and social discourse frameworks. There is an assumption that unmanaged behaviour worsens if not 'fixed' (Sullivan et al, 2014; Maguire, 2010; Macleod, 2006). A small number of pupils were identified as unable to self-regulate their behaviour and be productive. Schools focused on pupils home life and the impact of context-based behaviour, believing the different expectations at home can make it difficult for a pupil to meet school expectations. They saw pupils home life as contributing to the problem of challenging behaviour, thus reinforcing the view that the 'cause' is the pupil and partly the responsibility of parents. There is an assumption that pupils and parents should adhere to policies, rules and procedures that are based within schools expectations of 'acceptable' behaviour. As found in other research, there are silences such as assessments of pupils performance and productivity. However, participants had not raised the assessment and performance pressure they are under (Ball, 2003) and how this can add pressures onto pupils. This 'pressure' was left unproblematic in the constructs underpinning the problematisation of 'challenging' pupils and the push to ensure pupils are productive.

SEND policies and guidance have created a system of 'solutions' to support pupils defined as 'challenging' but the amount of available resources, the use of them, and schools control of them, appears to be lacking. For a small number of pupils, schools

believed they did not have either the expertise or resources to support them. However, accessing additional funds was problematic as the LA controlled what represented pupil need and how this should be evidenced. They believed the SEND process, used as a vehicle to access an EHC plan of support, relied on schools completing an onerous documented assessment of need. The LA would then validate the assessment, or not. When school participants were asked what was needed to address the problem of challenging behaviour, they stated additional specialised staff and facilities such as internal support units and an improved system for SEND policies such as the EHC assessment and planning process. There is an assumption that SEND policies, such as EHC plans are the 'solution' but as Allan and Youdell (2017) argue, they appear to be an empty architecture of things that must be done. What remains silent is how dominating discourses framed within SEND policies, such as the categorisation of pupils and proposed actions, are failing to address the problem of challenging behaviour. The lack of resources was seen as a major part of the 'problem' and schools claim this prevented them from meeting pupils needs. School participants believed the LA do not support them enough. This was not just with additional resources from the LA's SEND budget, but also with support services provided by the LA but paid for by schools. They believed the allocation of support services was problematic because they are not allocated on need but equally distributed amongst schools. This problem has pushed schools to look to the open market for support services and could threaten the continuance of LA support services (Peacey, 2015).

Local authority

The LA did not accept that schools are doing enough to prevent 'challenging' pupils from becoming a 'problem'. The LA consistently put the responsibility of meeting the needs of 'challenging' pupils onto schools. They believed schools had to utilise resources from their internal budgets to identify barriers to learning when behaviour was at 'low' disruption levels. They acknowledge that pupils may have additional needs and behaviour is difficult to manage, but believe this is largely representative of childhood behaviour today. They argued that challenging behaviour is problematised by school staff before they have tried to identify pupils needs and used different behaviour strategies to prevent pupils going into 'crises'. There was an assumption that teachers should be able to manage behaviour and when they

do not, they are failing to implement effective behaviour management strategies. The LA recognised that a pupils home life may impact on challenging behaviour. However, they did not focus on this as a 'cause' of the problem. They believed schools should still take responsibility and manage pupil behaviour.

The implementation of SEND policies and the delivery of support services to schools is the responsibility of the LA. The LA believed schools sometimes used the EHC process needlessly, and were often unable to provide evidence to support an application. Although they acknowledged school resources are stretched, they believed schools have to adjust and prioritise spending. There is an assumption that SEND policies are a 'solution' for some pupils and their needs can mostly be met within schools current budget. The LA did not, however, acknowledge short-comings in their responsibility and duty to ensure pupils needs were met by supporting schools access to additional funding and improve support services. What they have done is provide a 'framework' that assists schools in the completion of the EHC process. This ensures knowledge and discourse, underpinning what the LA defines as pupils needs, are channelled through this process and applied to those pupils reaching the EHC assessment and planning eligibility. However, what it does not provide is a joint ownership of challenging behaviour before it becomes a 'problem' and pupils are possibly medicalised and/or removed to alternative education provision. If pupils do need alternative provision this becomes costly for the LA, therefore not putting the resources into school at an earlier stage could become a false economy. The DfE (2019) argue that LAs need to be more accountable, identify where they have invested resources and have a more transparent system that identifies what and where monies have been allocated.

When there are two competing representations of the 'problem' of challenging behaviour, the possible 'solutions' are unlikely to address both constructions. The SEND Code of Practice has become the dominating discourse that channels 'solutions' through the EHC process. The LA solution is for schools to manage both behaviour and resources more effectively before accessing the EHC process. They focus on the responsibility of schools to meet pupils needs rather than identifying the 'cause'. Both schools focus on how to 'fix' the pupil and the need for additional funding. They also see a solution in the allocation of support services based on

need, not the current equal distribution between schools. The solutions within the implementation of policies and procedures both within schools and the LA, such as the SEND Code of Practice and internal behaviour policies, appear to amplify at the same time as camouflage what is left unproblematic. Solutions such as internal exclusion and medicalisation of pupils may be functional,. however, both schools and the LA fail to deconstruct the initial problem and establish a firmer understanding of how they have framed the 'problem' or question the assumptions made by all parties.

5.2 Future research and practice

As a practitioner, I have experienced the day-to-day challenge of trying to meet the needs of pupils who are struggling to access an education and unable to flourish in mainstream schools. I have worked with teachers and LA staff who have made considerable effort to meet pupils' needs. This research was not designed to solve the 'problem' of pupil behaviour or recommend solutions. Rather, my aim was to explore how the problem has been constructed. My intention was not to evaluate management strategies or policy enactment. Bacchi's WPR approach supports practitioners to question our assumptions and actions and gain a fuller picture of how we have represented challenging behaviour. If schools and local authorities worked together to deconstruct how challenging behaviour is problematised, it would provide an open space for dialogue between stakeholders to help clarify the different constructions of the problem with implications for the solutions that are pursued.

5.2.1 Possible Future Research

This study does have its limitations. There are only two primary schools within this study because the third school withdrew, resulting in a smaller sample. Including more schools may have provided different perspectives and findings. However, I did increase the number of staff interviewed in each of the two schools, resulting in an increased number of staff with varied educational roles and experience. In the local authority, the three respondents, although from different services, were all senior managers who may have a different perspective than the staff that directly support pupils such as educational psychologists, mental health workers and behaviour

support specialists. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalised and applied to all schools or staff in local authorities in this region. It is, however, possible to draw on these views to gain a better insight into how pupil behaviour is problematised and use it as a basis to explore and question views held by different stakeholders (Bacchi, 2012). There are also very important voices missing from the study – that of pupils and parents. Had time not been such a critical consideration, including their voices would have been invaluable, adding different facets to the study.

Further research could help to address the limitations of this study whilst broadening the picture of how challenging behaviour is constructed as a problem in mainstream primary schools. The following areas of research would be beneficial:

1. **Explore how pupils and parents construct challenging behaviour.**
   Parent and pupil framing of the problem may be different from that of professional stakeholders. Further research with parents and pupils would offer an opportunity to explore how their home context and expectations differ or influence the problematisation of behaviour. The parent and pupil voice would also highlight how they perceive technologies of control (such as behaviour policies) and behaviour expectations (self-regulation and productivity). Research and published government reports have identified that parents do not always have a voice and should be heard and involved more (Gazeley, 2010; HoC, 2018). Involving parents and pupils in further research to understand their expectations and how they may differ to school staff, could create the opportunity to minimise potential differences.

2. **Explore how LA practitioners construct challenging behaviour**
   This study included senior managers from the LA. Further research to explore the views of staff working directly with pupils and school staff on a daily basis (Social Workers, EP's, Therapists etc), would provide useful insight into their construction of the problem. It would provide a wider perspective on how challenging behaviour is framed amongst others who work within the support services provided by the LA, and not just a voice from those who lead these services.

3. **Compare how challenging behaviour is constructed in different types of schools.**

   This study focuses on state-run schools that have a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), pupils on free school meals (FSM), 'disadvantaged' pupils receiving pupil premium funding (PPF) and pupils who receive support for SEND. It would be useful to compare such findings with other state-run schools that have a lower number of pupils defined as having additional needs. It would also be useful to explore and compare state run schools with Academy and Private schools as they work more independently from the LA.

4. **Longitudinal study of pupils in mainstream schools categorised as 'challenging' and moved to alternative provision.**

   This study has demonstrated how 'challenging 'behaviour is constructed as a problem in primary schools and the LA. It would be useful to know how the 'problem' changes in a different context and over time when 'solutions' such as alternative educational provision are used for 'challenging' pupils. Also, if and how alternative provision meets the needs of pupils identified as 'challenging' more successfully than mainstream schools.

5.2.2 A way forward for Schools and the LA

It is evident there are many conflicting interpretations of how pupils 'challenging' behaviour becomes problematised and what actions should be applied to meet their needs. This section offers practical suggestions for stakeholders in schools and the LA. Consistent with the approach taken throughout this study, I am not proposing 'solutions' as there are many differing interpretations of the 'problem'.

Including different stakeholders from the LA and schools in a 'pupil behaviour working group' to engage with the findings of this study would facilitate an exploration and possible reconnection of the varying stakeholder interpretations. Openly reassessing how both school staff and LA staff define and interpret 'challenging' behaviour will lead to a more cohesive approach to meeting pupils' needs. An active working group could be responsible for exploring further the

'problems' identified in this study. For example, it is evident that local interpretations of the SEND Code of Practice need to be re-assessed. This would not only provide the opportunity to analyse the construction of the policy but also identify how it is supporting pupils perceived as challenging. Also, schools have identified a small number of pupils whose needs cannot be met due to a lack of expertise and/or resources. Therefore, re-evaluation of these pupils needs and how they could be further supported would be beneficial. Whether this support is provided in the form of additional resources or different behaviour management strategies, both the LA and schools would benefit from applying a more effective joint approach to the 'problems'. Schools do not want to 'fail' and lose pupils and LA's do not want to accrue long term additional costs for specialist provision if this is not the appropriate route for a pupil. Ensuring all primary schools collate and analyse data on internal exclusions would provide an evidence-based evaluation of the need for internal units. Discussions could then be had to assess funding and service implications for both schools and the LA. The lack of joint working between stakeholders has been consistently highlighted throughout this research study. Therefore, it would be beneficial to all stakeholders, in particular pupils, to evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of joint working both within the LA and the wider professional community.

5.3 Questioning the problem of 'challenging' behaviour

For practitioners and researchers it is often easier and more convenient to look for a solution rather than explore problems. However, a plethora of solutions in relation to tackling 'challenging' behaviour have formed part of government policies for many decades – yet still the 'problem' persists in schools. Such 'solutions' have become interwoven with the 'problem'. This study provides insight into how previous and current 'solutions' are not in place, such as access to specialist internal units. Also, 'solutions' that are not effectively implemented, such as joint working between stakeholders to ensure both the characterising and meeting of pupils needs. This study has shown that 'solutions' are unlikely to resolve the 'problem' of challenging behaviour in the context of this case study, due to the differing and conflicting construction of the 'problem' amongst schools and the LA. The nature of problems and how to solve them differs depending on whose 'truth' is heard.

I started this research journey wanting to understand how challenging behaviour is constructed in schools, not only as a doctoral researcher, but also as a practitioner. Having worked with many pupils perceived as 'challenging', I wanted to understand more about the different interpretations I had experienced. Many authors have identified how pupils are manoeuvred through a system that categorises their behaviour to justify actions applied to them (Childerhouse, 2017; McClusky et al, 2016; MacLure et al, 2012; Maguire et al, 2010; Graham, 2005; Macleod 2006). This study demonstrates how knowledge and discourse may encourage inappropriate 'solutions' such as medicalisation, separation, and exclusion of pupils, or decisions regarding resource allocation, based on conflicting constructions of the problem. Deconstructing knowledge and discourse at a local level between two main stakeholders (schools and the LA) has provided the opportunity to question, as a practitioner and researcher, where and how knowledge has evolved. This study has highlighted how the 'problem' cannot be deconstructed without recognising previous and current 'solutions' (such as government policy) may be embedded within the problem. My analysis highlights that it may not be the pupil that needs to be 'fixed' but the system and process used to justify the categorisation of pupils.

This study makes a significant contribution to understanding how professionals construct challenging behaviour as a problem. It also, has important implications for practice. As practitioners and researchers, we need to build on this study and continue to deconstruct how and why professionals have come to accept the expected 'norms' attached to pupil behaviour. We need to push further to hear the voices of other stakeholders, including a wider group of professionals, pupils and parents. This study emphasises how solutions to the 'problem' of challenging behaviour have failed both pupils and education professionals, and how understanding the 'problem' is the first step towards finding different solutions. Thinking differently when we are trying to solve a perceived problem will help us to avoid solutions that may further frame and augment a 'problem' that is not clearly understood. Applying a deconstructive approach provides greater insight into how challenging behaviour is problematised.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Research Timeline

Appendix 2: Exploratory Questionnaire

Appendix 3: Results of Questionnaire

Appendix 4: Interview Prompt Sheet

Appendix 5: Research Explanation Document and Consent Form

Appendix 1: Research Timeline

Research Case Study Timeline

March 2019 → Research proposal and ethics application is approved

April 2019 → Identify all Primary Schools in borough and send questionnaire

May/June 2019 → Collate response from questionnaire and identify case study schools

June 2019 → Contact schools and agree participant consent, interview schedule and access to documentation.

June/July 2019 → Interview all participants in primary schools and identify participants in LA. Continual analysis of data.

Sept/Oct 2019 → Contact and gain consent from all LA participants. Complete all interviews. Continual analysis of data.

Appendix 2: Exploratory Questionnaire

Circulated via 'Microsoft Forms' survey tool

Q1a.   How would you rate your concern of behaviour in your school?

Please tick appropriate response:

1   not concerned ☐

2   slightly concerned ☐

3   concerned ☐

4   very concerned ☐

Q1b.Please explain your rating:

Q2a.   To what extent are you as a school appropriately supported to meet the needs of pupils presenting with challenging behaviour?

Please tick appropriate response:

1   no support ☐

2   some support ☐

3   supported ☐

4   fully supported ☐

Q2b. Please explain your rating:

Q3.   What are the barriers to providing appropriate support for pupils with challenging behaviour?

(Please tick all that apply)

EHCP Process ☐   LA Support ☐   Staff availability ☐   Training ☐   Available space ☐

Ofsted ☐   Pupil home life ☐   Liaison with health/social services ☐   None ☐

Other:

_____

Q4. **Do you experience any other barriers not listed in Question 3? Please explain.**

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Q5. Please give a brief description of policy and practice, locally or more broadly, that help you manage behaviour

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Q6. Please describe the most effective policy or practice that has enabled your school to meet the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour.

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Having read the attached Research Information Sheet, would you be willing to put your school forward as part of this research project? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

If 'Yes' please provide your contact details below:

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┌──────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│ Contact Details:                                     │
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Please note that not all schools who wish to take part will be selected.

All data will be treated with the strictest confidence and kept anonymous.

Respondents 9/79

11 % Response

Question 1a: How would you rate your concern about behaviour in your school?

Not Concerned = 0   Slightly Concerned = 1   (11%)

Concerned = 7   (78%)   Very Concerned = 1 (11%)

Question 1b: Please explain your answer to Question 1a.

1. 2% of school population can have significant impact on wellbeing and education of others.

2. We have children with very complex emotional needs who need a highly skilled support package that we just cannot afford to provide as a school. Also the numbers of children who need support is increasing with each passing year.

3. Some low-level poor behaviour but nothing like it has been in previous years. There are however a number of children who have the potential to become very disruptive if not handled carefully

4. A vast majority of our children are very well behaved. About 4% have a range of needs that impact on their behaviour .

5. On the whole, the behaviour is excellent but we are getting an increasing number of individual children with complex needs/ issues who are exhibiting very challenging behaviour.

6. there are many children who have low level behaviour in school who are influenced by their home life and what they see there. it takes a great deal of time working with these children and their families trying to resolve issues that are very often not connected to school.

7. A few pupils with challenging behaviours and lack of parental support.

8. The children in this school generally behave well but there is an underlying concern that with very clear and consistent expectations their behaviour would quickly deteriorate.

9. Very positive behaviour for learning is firmly established, as is 'social' behaviour, especially in unstructured time such as playtime and lunchtime. However, no school can be complacent about ensuring good behaviour and the maintenance of it is always given a high priority.

Question 2a: To what extent is your school appropriately supported to meet the needs of pupils presenting with challenging behaviour?

No Support = 1 (11%0   Some support = 5 (56%)   Supported = 3. (33%)

Fully supported = 0

Question 2b: Please explain your answer to Question 2a

1. Behaviour Support Service involvement but this is limited in impact.

2. We have a fortnightly visit from Primary Behaviour Support Service - this is mostly for advice, they are a service facing increasing pressure too.

3. we are very experienced in working with challenging behaviour, in fact the LA has sent these types of children to us! This can impact on the running of the classrooms but little support is available from the LA for various reasons:- oversubscribed services or no service available due to spending cuts.

4. The needs of the children mentioned previously are greater than the support we receive

5. We buy back the Behaviour Support Service and have a very good, allocated teacher who visits once a week and is also at the end of an email. however, once a week really isn't enough.

6. we have Primary behaviour support in for a morning a week.

7. There is an active support service however, provision is limited and mainstream is not always suitable and able to meet the needs of all children.

8. Stockport schools de-delegate funds to support the continuation of the Behaviour Support Service without which we would be completely on our own.

9. There are a few number of children who have very challenging behaviour as a result of their additional needs. The staff are very well supported by the Primary Inclusion Team so that support can be provided at school and strategies given to parents. The Behaviour Support Service and Primary Jigsaw also provide some support although both services have very limited resources and capacity. For further, more intensive provision, the threshold is now so high that it is only in the very most challenging circumstances can the appropriate resources be accessed.

Question 3: What are the barriers to providing appropriate support for pupils with challenging behaviour? Please tick all that apply.

EHCP = 8 (89%)   LA Support = 5 (56%)   Staff Availability = 7 (78%)   Training = 3 (33%)

Available Space = 5 (56%)   Ofsted = 2 (22%)   Pupil home life = 9 (100%)

Liaison with health/social services = 7 (78%)

Question 4: Do you experience any other barriers not listed in Question 3? Please explain.

1. Constraints on budget, people having the expertise to effectively intervene, time it takes for CAMHS referral

2. Safeguarding - it is often the case that children who are supported by a social worker due to some sort of family crisis or breakdown are the children who have difficulty regulating their behaviour in school. Children at SEND school support who do not meet the criteria for EHCP often have problems with behaviour, this can be because their needs are not catered for well enough in class due to the teacher either not having appropriate support staff in place and/or not knowing how to differentiate for that child, therefore the work might be set too high, (or low), for the child to access.

3. No

4. No

5. Funding to buy personnel and to release teachers for training.

6. No

7. In house provision, expectations of other agencies and parents.

8. Dysfunctional home life; a disintegration of support services for schools and families; and growing poverty all contribute

9. The financial resources to allow schools to make appropriate provision available.

Question 5: Please give a brief description of policy and practice, locally or more broadly, that help you manage behaviour

1. We have reviewed behaviour policy to refocus pupils and staff on expectations.

2. See Behaviour Policy published on the school website.

3. strict policy followed by all those in school which are clear and acted upon across the school. this may involve removing child to another class , to the DHT or HT. Time out breaks outside if appropriate. 1;1 supervision in class and at times where we know things are difficult for the child.

4. We have a positive behaviour strategy - see Paul Dix 'When the Adults Change' This book is good - if a little idealist. I agree with the values but practical implementation has taken a great deal of adapting

5. Restorative Approaches

6. Consistency throughout the school when dealing with behaviour. We work as a team and all support each other

7. policy in place and LA support provided.

8. I'm not sure that I understand. There is a Restorative project in Stockport to which many schools have signed up. We chose not to as our approach seemed to be effective and included many Restorative techniques.

9. Long established, consistently applied and widely known behaviour management procedures underpinned by the concept of 'authoritative parenting'. Supported by the whole staff and parents / local community.

Question 6: Please describe the most effective policy or practice that has enabled your school to meet the needs of pupils with challenging behaviour.

1. Additional adult support

2. High expectations of all pupils, a 'can do' attitude. All staff and children following the rules and values of the school. The employment of a skilled Learning Mentor who provides interventions to support children with behaviour difficulties. Making good links with parents including parents coming into school and playing with their children in a supportive environment which builds positive relationships and trust at school and at home.

3. as above (as in previous question?)

4. Starting with caring for every child and ensuring they know we care for them

5. We use the restorative approach. We are very inclusive and non-judgemental. The DHT and I are very proactive in supporting the children with challenging behaviour and the teachers/ other staff dealing with it.

6. working as a consistent team

7. Circle time, consistency in approach, regular support meetings with parents, designated support staff.
8. Clear, consistent expectations; well-developed relationships; ownership by all staff

9. A whole team approach to managing behaviour with a clear and shared understanding that responsibility lies with all staff.

Question 7/18

3 respondents put their school forward for the next stage of the research project.

Research Project Title: Challenging Behaviour: How is the problem is constructed in primary schools in North West England?

Interview Prompt Sheet

(Interview to last approximately' 45minutes and audio recorded if consent given.)

Question Areas	Prompt
• Recap on interview process.	*Any questions?*
• What does challenging behaviour look like in relation to your direct work.	*Constant? Recent changes?*
• What does challenging behaviour look like in your school?	Examples of context – is it always in such context?
• When does it become a problem?	
• What useful policies and training do you find helpful?	Do you think all staff access and implement consistently??
• Outside of school what other necessary support do you receive?	Health, Social Services, Parents.
• What are the main barriers to meeting needs of challenging behaviour?	Can they be solved? Examples?
• Possible ways forward to meet the needs of pupils with 'problem' behaviour.	Locally/Nationally?
• Recap on how to contact the researcher and confidentiality.	Any questions re process?

Notes:
Check with headteachers comments on Questionnaire!

Participant Invitation Letter

To: All Primary School Headteachers
RE: **Challenging Behaviour: How is the problem constructed in primary schools in North West England?**

Dear Headteacher
I am writing to invite you to take part in my research study that aims to explore how challenging behaviour is constructed in primary schools. I am a qualified teacher completing the doctorate in education at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Pupils described as having challenging behaviour are often the focus of inspections and surveys carried out by the government body Ofsted. In a combined report by YouGov and Ofsted (2014), they claimed to look 'below the radar' and suggested that behaviour occurring in schools is a concern for teachers, senior management and parents. My research will gather the perceptions of professionals who have current, hands on experience of this behaviour to gain a greater understanding of the problem for both pupils and professionals. **Please read the Participant Information Sheet for more in-depth explanation of the research study.**

The initial part of my study is a questionnaire and I would be most grateful if you could complete it. The data from the questionnaire will give me a greater understanding of how prevalent challenging behaviour is perceived to be in the North West.
You can complete the questionnaire by clicking on the link below and it will only take approximately 10 minutes.

If you would be willing to involve your school in the next stage of the research study, then there is a section on the questionnaire that you can complete. I'm inviting Headteacher and 2-3 staff in a number of schools, to take part in 1-1 interviews. I would also want to collect de-identified administrative data as outlined in the Participant Information Sheet. **All data will remain anonymous and confidential, it will be safely secured.**

Please consider taking part in this research. You can complete the questionnaire without committing yourself to the second stage of the study. Your perspective on challenging behaviour will provide greater understanding of how we can best meet the needs of pupils.

Link to brief questionnaire:

Thank you for your time!

Kind regards

Deborah Hallworth

Participant Information Sheet

Research Title: Challenging Behaviour: How is the problem constructed in primary schools in North West England?

1. Invitation to research

My name is Deborah Hallworth and I am a qualified teacher completing the doctorate in education at Manchester Metropolitan University. I would like to invite you to take part in a research study that will provide material for my doctorate thesis.

The first part of this study is a questionnaire which I've included with this information sheet. I am using the questionnaire to gain a greater understanding of how prevalent the problem of challenging behaviour in primary schools is perceived to be. The data from the questionnaire will be collated and common themes identified and used to inform questions explored in interviews with consenting participants. I intend to explore 3 schools that have/had problems with pupils with challenging behaviour to understand how the pupil's behaviour is challenging and how it impacts on both the pupil and the school.

2. Why have I been invited?

Questionnaires will be sent to all Headteachers of primary schools within your local authority. I have consulted with a selection of Headteachers and behaviour support staff to ensure the questionnaire would be a useful tool to explore Headteachers perceptions of challenging behaviour in schools. By completing the questionnaire, you will be contributing to the initial exploration and understanding of how challenging behaviour is experienced and perceived. The data extrapolated from the questionnaire will provide a basis for more in-depth exploration in a number of schools. You are also invited to put your school forward as possible participants in the next stage of the study if you are willing to share your experience of past or current challenging behaviour within your school.

3. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide. We will describe the study and go through the information sheet, which we will give to you. We will then ask you to sign a consent form to show you agreed to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

4. What will I be asked to do?

Initially, I would be much obliged if you would take the time from your busy schedule to complete the brief questionnaire that I've included and return this to me. Then if you would be willing to participate further, please state this on the relevant section at the end of the questionnaire. The following points outline the research process if you are willing and invited to take part in the interview stage of the study.

- Within each school I will request an interview with the Head Teacher and 2 or 3 staff regularly working with pupils identified as having challenging behaviour. Once you have consented to take part in the project and been accepted, I will contact you to arrange an initial meeting to discuss the interview process and identify which staff will be interviewed.
- I will agree convenient dates to carry out the interviews which will take place in an allocated room within your school. Interviews will take up to 45minutes and will be audio recorded. Data will remain anonymous for all participants.

- I will request access to policies and agreed de-identified administrative data to gain a better understanding of the school context before interviews take place.
- I will be making reflective field notes in addition the interviews, but I will not be carrying out any direct formal observations of staff and pupils.
- Data will be kept secure throughout collection and analysis. Participant anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained throughout the research project. The data will be kept secure for 3 years after the completion of my Thesis, it will then be destroyed.

5. Are there any risks if I participate?

There are no major risks involved. Some people may feel uncomfortable being interviewed but every step will be taken to put the interviewee at ease. If you are uncomfortable with the research, then you are free to withdraw at any time.

6. Are there any advantages if I participate?

You will be part of a positive and constructive piece of research that will give you an objective insight into how challenging behaviour is perceived within your own and other primary school settings. You will have access to the research findings which can then be used in your school improvement plan and validated by the MMU. I will present the findings to your staff team and wider community if you request this.

7. What will happen with the data I provide?

When you agree to participate in this research, I will collect from you personally-identifiable information. The Manchester Metropolitan University ('the University') is the Data Controller in respect of this research and any personal data that you provide as a research participant. The University is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO), and manages personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the University's Data Protection Policy.

As a public authority acting in the public interest we rely upon the 'public task' lawful basis. When we collect special category data (such as medical information or ethnicity) we rely upon the research and archiving purposes in the public interest lawful basis. Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, we will keep the information about you that we have already obtained. We will not share your personal data collected in this form with any third parties.

If your data is shared this will be under the terms of a Research Collaboration Agreement which defines use and agrees confidentiality and information security provisions. It is the University's policy to only publish anonymised data unless you have given your explicit written consent to be identified in the research. **The University never sells personal data to third parties.**

We will only retain your personal data for as long as is necessary to achieve the research purpose. No names will be collected with any of the data. Each school and individual participant's will be given an abstract letter or number with pseudonyms used to maintain anonymity. You have the right to see any data we collect about you. Data will be anonymous and stored securely throughout collection and analysis. Parts of the data may be made public, e.g. in reports or presentations on the project. This will be done in a way that

prevents you from being identified. Your data will be destroyed 3 years after the Thesis has been completed and submitted. For further information about use of your personal data and your data protection rights please see the [University's Data Protection Pages](#).

8. What will happen to the results of the research study?
The data will be transcribed, analysed and reported. I may also publish our findings in a variety of formats, including academic journal articles, reports, social media or books. If you want to hear more about my completed project, I can provide you with copies of any publications. You will not be identified in any of these outputs.

9. Who has reviewed this research project?
The researcher has 2 supervisors who review the ongoing process of this project until the Thesis is complete and submitted. Before starting this research both supervisors, an ethics committee and 2 scrutineers of the project plan and process have reviewed it.

10. Who do I contact if I have concerns about this study or I wish to complain?
In the first instance, if you have any concerns or questions, you can contact the project lead, Deborah Hallworth: deborah.j.hallworth@mmu.ac.uk If you wish to contact the researchers Director of supervision- Sam Sellar, regarding any concerns that cannot be resolved by the project lead, contact **S.Sellar@mmu.ac.uk**

If you have any concerns regarding the personal data collected from you, our Data Protection Officer can be contacted using the legal@mmu.ac.uk e-mail address, by calling 0161 247 3331 or in writing to: Data Protection Officer, Legal Services, All Saints Building, Manchester Metropolitan University, Manchester, M15 6BH. You also have a right to lodge a complaint in respect of the processing of your personal data with the Information Commissioner's Office as the supervisory authority. Please see: https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/

THANK YOU FOR CONSIDERING PARTICIPATING IN THIS PROJECT

CONSENT FORM

Title of Research Project: **Challenging Behaviour: How is the problem constructed in primary schools in North West England?**

Name of Researcher: **Deborah J Hallworth**

Please check any boxes below to which you agree and give consent

☐ I have read the information sheet and understand the purpose of the research project and what the school and staff participation will involve.

☐ I consent to take part in the above research project.

☐ I understand that participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any time.

☐ I understand that I may be asked to participate in an interview that will be audio recorded, transcribed and de-identified for later analysis.

☐ I give permission for non-identifiable data generated from interviews, informal observations, administration records and policies to be collected for research purposes.

☐ I understand that information gained during the study may be published but I will not be identified and all personal information will remain confidential.

☐ I would like to receive regular updates on the results of the project.

Name: _____ Signed: _____

Date: _____

_____	_____	_____
Person taking consent	Date	Signature