

Promoting resilience: Working with children,  
their parents and teachers to promote the child's  
resilience through changing the narrative.

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## ABSTRACT

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Promoting resilience: Working with the children, their parents and teachers to promote the child's resilience through changing the narrative.

Resilience is the process by which protective factors enable a child to achieve desirable outcomes despite the presence of adversity in their lives. It develops through the child's interaction with their ecosystem; their family, school and wider community. A resilient child has internal resources, external supports and the interpersonal skills required to facilitate this interdependency. Narrative theory suggests that when a child's prevalent narratives focus on protective factors rather than risk factors this will form a resilient self-identity. This thesis combines resilience literature and narrative theory by exploring the process of developing children's resilience through enhancing and creating protective focussed stories through narrative therapy.

The narrative methodology Narrative Oriented Inquiry (NOI), (Hiles and Cermak, 2008) is used to gather and then explore the stories told by three children, their parents and their teachers. The children who had been identified by their teachers as needing to become more resilient were engaged in a short series of narrative therapy sessions with the aim of changing the nature of the stories they held about themselves from stories based on risk factors to those based on protective factors. The process was further supported through inviting the child's parent and teacher into the therapeutic sessions.

This thesis makes a unique contribution by exploring how children's resilience can be promoted through use of narrative therapy in professional practice. The implications for educational psychology practice and resilience research are discussed. A number of limitations to the research design are identified, specifically including the unknown impact of the narrative therapy on the children's behaviour beyond the sessions and the complex nature of the dual researcher/practitioner role.

The thesis explores the efficacy of NOI for research of this type. The processes NOI offers allow 'the told', 'the teller' and 'the telling' to inform a deep understanding of the stories shared. Interpreting the stories through the six interpretative lenses offered by NOI enabled the researcher to compare the stories told by each participant and to compare the stories told by different participants before and after the narrative therapy. The thesis offers suggestions for further development of the advice around its use and discusses the contribution NOI could make to educational psychology practice.

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

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In my professional role I am privileged to meet many children and young people who are flourishing despite the odds. Katy was just about to turn 18 when I was lucky enough to meet her. As is the custom before my involvement began her head teacher and then class teacher had told me her woeful story. Katy was living in a children's home as her family were unable to provide the care she needed from the £million+ house on the edge of our town; she had 'severe learning difficulties'; and suffered from an immunological condition which had left her paralysed in hospital for periods of 3 to 5 months on three occasions in the preceding 3 years. My bit part in her story was to complete a psychological assessment prior to her move to Further Education and Adult Social Care services; while I was able to spend time getting to know this young woman and her story I was in awe of her power. This girl who had been essentially ejected from her outwardly successful family, was coping with what seemed like a terrifying health condition and who was soon going to leave school with few academic skills was a wonder of light, love and laughter. She was hopeful about her future, funny and keen to chat about the usual nonsense 17 year old girls busy themselves with, and she spoke with warmth and excitement about the afternoons she spent with her family. What is it about this girl and so many others I meet, which means they are able to engage so positively with the world around them? What is it about Katy and her experiences that make her so resilient? It is in an endeavour to know more about these processes that led to this research.

The concept of resilience is attractive, it brings a focus on children's successes, especially when times are hard, and for many children in the UK times are hard, (it is reported that 3.7 million children live in poverty in the UK equating to over a quarter of all children, (Barnardo's, 2016) and also that 5 – 10 % of children have low levels of wellbeing (Pople, Rees, Main, & Bradshaw, 2015)). It is therefore also currently big business; a myriad of courses, resources and books are available to educators and parents wanting to foster resilience in the children in their care, and the British government is investing millions in education programmes. In May 2016 Edward Timpson, then Children and Families Minister extended funding for the 'Character Grant' to £6 million explaining that "Instilling positive character traits and academic excellence are two sides of the same coin - children that develop resilience are far more likely to succeed, not only in school but in later life, too", (DFE, 2016). In April 2016 Nicky Morgan, then education minister announced the creation of a 'character award' for schools who amongst other things provide opportunities to learn 'how to bounce back if faced with failure'. The first key point in the departmental advice Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools states "In order to help their pupils succeed, schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy", (DFE, 2015a, p. 6). There can be no doubt that schools in England and Wales are expected to play a role in promoting children's resilience, however there is no mention of resilience or mental health in the OFSTED framework so it is hard to know the depth of this commitment from central government.

Schools and other service providers have risen to the challenge of supporting children's development of resilience through providing interventions. These interventions can be preventative either providing a universal service available to all children or targeting a particular group of children who have a vulnerability or they may be provided in response to a child having experienced a specific adversity. Successful approaches for building

resilience in schools tend to increase protective factors, decrease risk factors or both. Research into the efficacy of such interventions suggests early intervention programs that develop protective factors are more likely to be effective than those focussing on reducing existing risk factors, programs based on a theoretical basis are more powerful than those which are not, (Browne, Gafni, Roberts, Byrne, & Majumdar, 2004) and also that it is important to take action at multiple levels within the child's world or ecosystem facilitating change in their relationships with family and within school for example, (Brooks, 2006).

A core aim shared by educational psychologists is 'to promote child development and learning through the application of psychology by working with individual and groups of children, teachers and other adults in schools, families, other LEA officers, health and social services and other agencies.' (Cameron, 2006). Each psychologist will bring a set of psychological frameworks they apply to this work but often achieve these aims by working as members of a team around children in families, and delivering key services such as individual assessment, consultancy, intervention, and training in the context of schools and communities (Farrell et al., 2006). The concept of resilience offers such a framework for educational psychologists "the concept of resilience ... can enable psychologists to operate effectively and productively in all aspects of their role by targeting efforts and strategies on the key factors that have been shown to be important in making a difference in people's lives" (Toland & Carrigan, 2011, p. 96).

The rationale for the research shared in this thesis is based on a professional interest in this idea of EPs using resilience theory to develop professional practice; to explore methods of working with children and the important adults around them – their parents and teachers – to enable children to develop resilience; to enable them to cope with adversity. Resilience theory offers a framework which shares constructs which are familiar to educational psychologists; there is a shared understanding of the child developing within a rich and changing ecosystem, with interrelatedness and interdependency between the child and the social systems around them and there is a desire to move away from a problem saturated version of events towards seeking strengths, protective factors and solutions in order to promote wellbeing and success.

In educational psychology practice we often work with stories: earlier I shared the story of Katy and in a similar way every time I meet a teacher or a parent they share the story they have about the child we are discussing, also each time I meet a child the child will choose to present to me a version of their story. By the time it has been considered necessary to involve an EP a problem focussed narrative is often the most dominant in the child's life; with any version of them as successful or happy having been squeezed out. There are times when it is advantageous to the school for these problem saturated versions of the story to be shared, in order to access resources for example. There are times however when the EP is given an opportunity to change the stories which are being told; to help the child, their parents and their teachers to recall or create a new version of the child; to remember that this is a child with many resources and abilities which need to be valued and built upon. In doing this the EP would be using narrative theory and practice to help the child move towards increased wellbeing, or resilience.

In this thesis theory, research and practices are brought together from both the resilience and narrative fields to explore one way in which an EP can support the development of resilience through working with the child, their parent and their teacher. The primary aim of the research is to explore ways in which the stories relating to the child's resilience, told

by and about children, can be changed following a period of narrative therapy intervention. The interactions between the participants, their stories and the ways in which they change is of interest. The intended outcome of the intervention is to develop, or make richer and louder, the stories which would be seen as useful to the child being more resilient in the face of adversity.

In seeking rigorous methods, which were congruent to the research paradigm it became apparent that the relatively new process of Narrative Oriented Inquiry (NOI) would fit well (Hiles & Čermák, 2008). However, little research relating to the use of NOI in the field of educational psychology is available and so second research aim was identified: Does Narrative Oriented Inquiry help us to explore changes in the resilience stories?

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

---

Resilience is the process by which protective factors enable a child to achieve desirable outcomes despite the presence of adversity in their lives. This definition of resilience needs clarity about the following concepts:

1. Protective factors
2. The nature of the adversity or risk factors
3. Desirable outcomes
4. And the mechanisms by which the protective and risk factors influence the outcomes

This chapter then discusses narrative theory, how narrative research methods fit within this field, and the role narrative therapy plays in helping children and others create a narrative, which is more helpful to their wellbeing.

The potential for applying narrative theory to supporting resilience development is then described and the resulting research aims stated.

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION TO RESILIENCE

An understanding of children's resilience has developed over half a century. The story of how this understanding has developed is populated with key personalities and has been shaped by their life experiences and professional areas of interest; there has been a thread of knowledge being passed through generations of researchers. There are periods of prosperity and periods of disharmony within this community. The first generation of researchers included Michael Garmezy who researched the impact on children's development of living in poverty and in families with particular stress factors (Garmezy, 1993), Werner brought a longitudinal study of the development of children on the island of Kauai (Werner & Smith, 1992) and Rutter focused on maternal relationships and the impact of severe deprivation in his study of children in Romanian institutions in the late 1980s early 1990s (Rutter, 1998).

A prolific figure in the next generation has been Ann Masten, pupil of Garmezy. Masten built on earlier research incorporating developments in the field of neurobehavioural science, genetics and epigenetic processes (Masten, 2004). Her writing expresses her excitement about the prospect of more complex statistical analysis with improved technology (Masten & Obradović, 2006). Each of these key figures has worked alongside and inspired many others to conduct research to further challenge and support their assertions and findings resulting in a rich tapestry of knowledge and theory upon which research and practice has developed in health, education and social fields.

Masten has made sense of the story by describing its evolution as 'riding four waves', (Masten, 2012). At the time of the initial wave there was an interest in defining, measuring and describing the phenomena of resilience in children. Key research questions at this time included items such as 'What are the characteristics of the resilient child?' or 'What proportion of children show resilience in a given situation/when living with a particular adversity?' The research personalities of the time had each survived some of the most cruel aspects of World War II; Garmezy having fought as a young American soldier, Werner experienced lived through bombing in Europe and Rutter was sent from the UK to relative safety in the US as a child 'seavacuee' (Masten, 2014). Their interest in resilience was part

of a great post-war interest in the psychology, psychiatry and related fields of mental health, behaviour problems and how public health could be supported. This in turn evolved into studying the variability of outcomes for children who lived through difficult times with apparent invulnerability; the study of children who achieved good outcomes despite living in poverty or with parents who had a mental illness for example.

There then came, a second wave of research, a desire to understand the resilience *processes*; what happens in a child's life to make it more likely that they would be more resilient than similar peers; asking "How does a child's resilience develop?". In the third wave researchers became concerned with testing the theories through experimental intervention studies; 'What is the impact on a child's development when the protective and promotive factors are put into place via planned interventions?' The fourth, and most recent, wave has brought a move to apply this research in the undertaking of integrative, multi-disciplinary research across multiple levels of analysis. For example, research considering the interaction between genetic make-up and resilience promoting factors, and how the impact of both changes throughout a life span (Wright & Masten, 2005).

## 2.2 RECOGNISING A RESILIENT CHILD

The first wave of research gave rich descriptions of a resilient child. A resilient child is one who is armed with the personal and social resources required to cope with adversity. The adversity may be an acute event such as the loss of a parent (Wadsworth, 1984) or violence (Hughes, Graham-Bermann, & Gruber, 2001) or the adversity may be conditions which are seen as detrimental to child development over time, such as poverty (Sameroff, Seifer, Barocas, Zax, & Greenspan, 1987) or a parent suffering with a mental illness (Rutter, 1985). It is the resilient child who can develop well 'emotionally, behaviourally, academically and interpersonally' in the face of such adversity (Goldstein and Brooks 2012).

According to Garmezy the resilient child is one who '...works well, plays well, loves well, and expects well'. He or she keeps attending school, keeps trying, keeps learning and keeps their friendships even though their world throws challenges that would be too much for others. The characteristics of a resilient child are stated frequently. There are some differences but the level of agreement between researchers is noticeable, this is illustrated in papers by Bernard (1995) and Oswald (2003). Oswald concludes that a resilient child has stable relationships with peers, problem solving skills, positive sense of being able to achieve and deal effectively with tasks, success in one or more areas of their life, communication skills, a strong attachment with at least one adult and can accept responsibility for their actions and behaviour, (Oswald, Johnson, & Howard, 2003). Bernard suggests that the resilient child has social competence, problem solving skills, critical consciousness (the ability to see how their situation is wrong and how it needs to change), autonomy and sense of purpose, (Bernard, 1995). There is a clear overlap with the features described by these two researchers, with different terminology being used for similar constructs. Oswald's 'can accept responsibility for their actions and behaviour' is at least similar to Bernard's 'critical consciousness', and 'a positive sense of being able to achieve and deal with tasks' is similar to 'autonomy'. However, although Oswald highlights the significant emphasis the field puts on relationships with others (stable relationships with peers and a strong attachment to one adult), this is less apparent in Bernard's list. She has chosen to put relationships and attachment to others as protective mechanisms rather than as a characteristic of a resilient child (see section 2.3.2.)

The International Resilience Research Project (Grotberg, 1997) resulted in a welcome simplification of the characteristics of the resilient child, (see appendix 7.1). This project concludes that the resilient child is one who can say-

- "I have... (people around me who love me and are interested in my welfare)
- "I can... (have an impact on the world around me)
- "I am... (valuable with personal strengths)"

These three statements are related to the understanding that a child's resilience can be defined by a combination of external supports, internal supports and interpersonal or social resources. The external supports include being able to use trusting relationships, the presence of structure and rules at home, parental encouragement of autonomy and having role models. The internal resources included a sense of being lovable, autonomy, self-esteem, hope and faith and trust, and locus of control. Finally, the social or interpersonal skills that are considered to be important included communication, problem solving and impulse control. The concept of a resilience being defined through these three elements- internal resources, external resources and interpersonal skills, provides the foundation of the research described in this thesis.

### 2.3 RISK, PROMOTIVE AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS

Children grow and develop with a strong drive to achieve success and wellbeing: they frequently startle and amaze the conscientious observer with their learning and the way they move through the challenges presented to them gathering and assimilating their experiences. In general, children pass through an everyday pattern of development which, enables them to learn to become independent and skilful in a range of settings and relationships. This is an 'ordinary magic' (Masten, 2014) which is accepted as normal development for children and young people. Key elements in understanding the process of resilience are risk and protective factors, these are the aspects of a child's life that make it more or less likely that they will make this successful movement through the developmental tasks required of them.

These risk and protective factors interact with the child's development from across the rich and changing ecosystem within which they are growing rather than being located entirely within the child themselves, (Howard, Dryden, & Johnson, 1999). When we use an ecosystemic perspective to understand resilience the interrelatedness and interdependency between individuals and social systems is emphasized (Waller, 2001). The child brings to the process of resilience development their own genetic makeup; abilities and predispositions, but resilience does not grow in isolation, we must also consider how these within-child factors interact with the family as a system around the child. Moreover, the child and their family exist within a community and society which affects the functioning of the family and the child's development. When understanding the development of resilience, the risk and protective factors at the level of the child, family and society need to be considered. Factors within the family and society can be 'proximal risks' which are experienced directly by the child such as witnessing violence perhaps or they could be 'distal risks' where the impact is through a proximal process such as cuts to mental health services leaving a parent more vulnerable to the impact of their illness and so less able to provide predictable, nurturing parenting for the child.

A list of risk and protective factors at the level of the child (internal resources), family and society (external resources) are given in Appendix 7.2. The research described in this thesis is concerned with both the internal resources the child brings and how they interact with the external resources present in their relationships with a parent and a teacher.

### 2.3.1 The concept of risk in child development

Many children face challenges that put the drive for development and learning at risk. A risk factor “results in an elevated probability of an undesirable outcome” (Wright, Masten, & Narayan, 2013, p. 15). The first wave of research in the field of resilience identified the risk factors present in many children’s lives. The development of large cohorts of children were studied and it was identified that many children could be considered successful, but others less so (Masten & Powell, 2003; Werner, 2001). Factors commonly present in the lives of children with less desirable outcomes were identified. Others studied cohorts of children who were unified by a common variable, such as parental mental illness (Sameroff, Gutman, & Peck, 2003) or poverty (Yates, Egeland, & Sroufe, 2003) and monitored how their development was altered.

At the within-child level risk factors include genetic make and temperament. Some children are more susceptible to mental illness, developmental disorders or ill health, some children have a sensory impairment or a learning difficulty, and some children struggle to develop communication skills. These children would be considered at greater risk of undesirable outcomes than those without these challenges to their development.

Children growing in a family living in poverty would be considered to be at greater risk, as are those who live in a family where there is violence or other forms of abuse. Children who have a parent with a mental illness or those who lose a parent through bereavement or separation would be considered more vulnerable to low levels of success.

At a wider community or society level, children living in areas plagued with disease, famine or natural disaster and those in countries torn by war or violence are clearly at risk. Children who live in communities where there is a high crime rate and low levels of supportive services are at risk, as are those who do not have access to good educational provision.

#### 2.3.1.1 *Age and gender as risk factor*

The needs of children vary as they pass through developmental stages; this leaves them relatively protected or more vulnerable at different times in their lives. An infant’s reliance on caregivers is total and so means that they are especially vulnerable to loss or absence of this care at this time, however as their development is so focussed on their immediate world and their own needs the impact of distal risk factors would be relatively less. A teenage child is very much focussed on peer relationships, their choice of friendships at this time could make risk taking behaviours more or less likely at this stage in their lives.

The Good Childhood Report 2015 compared subjective wellbeing for 10 and 16 year olds; their findings suggest there are clear declines in levels of well-being as children progress into adolescence’s (Pople, et al., 2015). As children pass through adolescence they are more likely to feel that life is less worthwhile, to feel less happiness and to feel less life satisfaction; being a teenager is an innately risky business.

It is apparent that there is an interaction between internal, or within-child risk factors, and age. Children with Special Educational needs are more likely to have low wellbeing and are



at greater risk in adolescence than in mid childhood (Gutman, 2010). This is especially so for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties or specific literacy difficulties.

Gender is also an issue, while boys have lower wellbeing in a number of measures in mid childhood, (behavioural, school and social wellbeing) this gap between the genders reduces as girls' wellbeing declines into adolescence. Being a boy is a relative risk factor in mid childhood but girls then also find adolescence difficult. The Good Wellbeing Report found that girl's subjective wellbeing was lower than that of boys aged between 10 and 17 years. Girls were more likely to report low levels of satisfaction with their appearance, time use, friends and health than boys.

### **2.3.1.2 Cumulative risks**

The deleterious impact of risk factors upon children's wellbeing is cumulative; when more risk factors are present in a child's life they are at greater risk of negative outcomes. A longitudinal study of at risk urban children, following progress from early childhood into adolescence concludes "children who experience more risk factors are at increased risk for problem", (Appleyard, Egeland, Dulmen, & Alan Sroufe, 2004, p. 242). A child who is living in a household where care and nurture is chaotic and unpredictable because of a parental mental illness is likely to be especially susceptible to the negative impact of this if there is also economic deprivation which could reduce their access to community resources beyond the family such as clubs and activities. If this child also suffers with communication difficulties they are less likely to be able to build trusting relationships with key adults in school and with peers and so isolation and opportunities for development are further reduced. Each of these factors on their own are overcome by many children, however, the combined impact means the child is at increased risk of poor outcomes. The intensity of the risk factor can also effect the extent of the impact on the child's development, for example, the risk of mortality or morbidity is related to the extent of socio economic disadvantage (Masten, 2014)

The impact of the cumulative risk is not necessarily linear however, risk level does not increase in a proportionate way with each added problem. Some risks are likely to have a bigger impact than others. Rutter (1979) suggests that problems in the child jump substantially when a combination of any four or more risk factors were present.

### **2.3.2 Promotive and Protective factors**

Protective factors are those that make it more likely that a child will achieve good outcomes. Wright and Masten (2013) clarify this further and suggest there are promotive factors and protective factors. Promotive factors are internal or external characteristics within a given situation that predict a positive outcome, and are associated with a child successfully achieving developmental tasks and wellbeing. These factors can be present in the lives of all children, whether or not they also have risk factors to contend with. They can also be called 'assets' (see models of resilience below). Such a factor could be a satisfactory level of material wealth within the family or being in receipt of nurturing parenting. They are often factors which are frequently present.

Protective factors however are those which have particular importance for those who have a high level of risk to their wellbeing. They are the factors which research has found to be helpful in shielding children from the impact of harm or moderating its impact. "Protective factors may have no detectable effect in the absence of any subsequent stressor; their role is to modify the response to later adversity rather than to foster normal development in

any direct sense", (Rutter, 1985, p. 600). An example of this kind of protective factor is problem solving strategies and skills, such as being able to ask for help when they feel that they are not safe at home; many children may have this ability within them, but thankfully for most children it will never be called upon, the ability will lie dormant if you like. Only at the point of being at risk would the protective factor be relevant.

There is a consensus that the first wave of research established a 'short list of resilience correlates' which can be considered to be protective factors (Goldstein & Brooks, 2012). As with risk and promotive factors they occur at numerous levels. They can be present at the within-child level, can be present in the child's interaction with their family or they may be factors within their community/ wider society. Rutter (1985) proposes that over a decade of research by himself and colleagues (including Garnezy, 1985; Masten & Garnezy, 1985; Rutter, 1983; Werner & Smith, 1982) has identified the protective actors we need to be aware of:

*"Individual differences caused by both constitutional and experiential factors,*

*Compensating experiences outside the home,*

*The development of self-esteem,*

*The scope and range of available opportunities,*

*An appropriate degree of structure and control,*

*The availability of personal bonds and intimate relationships and the acquisition of coping skills" (Rutter, 1985, p. 608).*

Within this we can that the three repeating themes of external support ('I have...'), interpersonal skills ('I can...') and inner strengths ('I am...") overlap with these elements; I have...people who provide a range of opportunities and appropriate structure; I am...likable with self-esteem and I can...use the skills I have to problem solve and cope, (Grotberg, 1997).

When working to support the wellbeing of children with special educational needs there is often a propensity to focus on the risk factors within a child's life. However, it is through a knowledge of the promotive and protective factors that it becomes possible to work towards solutions. Knowledge of both is required to understand their potential impact. In consultation with the child and the adults around the child educational psychologists aim to elicit the protective factors already in place and to identify those that are absent and need to be developed for the child.

### 2.3.3 Limitations within the concepts of risk and promotive factors.

The concepts risk and protective factors are empowering to educators and others involved in promoting the resilience of children and young people. They give hope that even when a seemingly overwhelming array of risk factors are present, there is an opportunity through strengthening protective factors that the child will be enabled to overcome their adversity and will yet achieve success and wellbeing.

However caution is also needed. Research in the area is not definite nor definitive; where strong conclusion are drawn about the power of a given risk or protective factor an oversimplification has often been made. Children's development is complex and the path

taken by each child is different. Any identified risk factor or protective factor may signify increased likelihood of an outcome but there is little determinism. Some areas of the popular press may suggest that the children of single mothers *will* fair less well at school, or that children who are read to each night *will* be successful academically, however, experience suggests that children and their developmental path cannot be predetermined so confidently. 'There is often a lack of precision regarding risk factors, relating to their complex and cumulative nature', (Obradovic, Shaffer, & Masten, 2012). When trying to create a plan of action for supporting successful development there is a temptation to oversimplify by suggesting that the reduction of a particular risk or putting in place a certain protective factor *will* have a direct impact on outcomes, however, children's development is rarely so straight forward. By oversimplifying these mechanisms it is possible that interventions and resources are not targeted in the most appropriate ways.

The intensity of the risk and protective factors need to be considered; it is not necessarily the case that the presence of one risk factor can be balanced out by one protective factor, as if the child's development were an act of balancing scales. Witnessing one episode of violence between parents would be seen as harmful to a child but living in a family where such events were frequent or occurred over significant time would undoubtedly be more harmful and a different level of intervention would be needed.

Sometimes risk and protective factors can be seen as being opposite ends of a continuum where at one end there can be risk but at the other a promotive or protective factor. For example poverty is often cited as putting children at risk of poor outcomes and wealth or high socio-economic status is seen as an asset (Andrews, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2013; Garmezy, 1991; Orr, 2003). The positioning along the scale makes a difference to the extent of the risk to or promotion of wellbeing and so would make a difference to the intervention required.

Those with the opportunity to intervene need to be aware that risk factors interact with other variables within the context of the child's ecosystem. For example, being born at low birth weight is a recognised risk factor. However, the significance of this risk is dependent upon many factors such as the reasons behind the low birth weight; is it due to mothers stress, drug use or illness, is it due to a congenital difficulty, to being born prematurely? These are but a few reasons why such an event can occur and each would have different implications for the future of the child and the support they may require. Timing of the risk or protective factors present in the child's life is also significant, (see section 2.3.1.1).

An additional problem in defining risks and protective factors is a tendency to overlook cultural expectations and social context in which the child is growing and for the cultural norms of the researcher to become prevalent; "life circumstances that are normative in non-dominant sociocultural contexts may be mistakenly considered by middle class, European- American researchers to be pathogenic risk factors", (Waller, 2001, p. 294)

When planning to support the development of resilience in the children we live and work with, the complexity of risk and protective factors needs to be recognised. However as seen in the second wave of resilience research an understanding of the mechanisms by which these factors act upon the child's life is also necessary.

## 2.4 PROCESSES AND MECHANISMS

### 2.4.1 Models of Resilience

In the second wave of research the focus moves from observing and measuring, recording incidence and describing the nature of resilience, to finding out about the mechanisms by which protective factors reduce or offset the potentially adverse effects of risk. This resulted in a number of models. Garmezy and Rutter offer complementary models (as described by Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994), and Masten (2014) extends these. The theoretical models provide stimulus for hypothesis generation and testing, and have offered clarity to those planning interventions, seeking change and offering support.

#### 2.4.1.1 *Compensating model*

In this simple model (Figure 1) both the risk factors and compensating variables/ assets (protective factors) have a direct and independent impact on the outcomes for the child. If the compensating factors are able to outweigh the risks the outcome would be positive, and the child would be resilient to the risk. However, the outcome is negative if the influence of the compensating variable is not equal to or greater than that of the risk factor. Masten added a third influence in recognition of some risk and promotive or protective factors, which occur within a continuum. The child's resilience is therefore dependent up on the balance of positive and negative influences upon the outcome; can protective factors compensate for the adversity faced by the child?

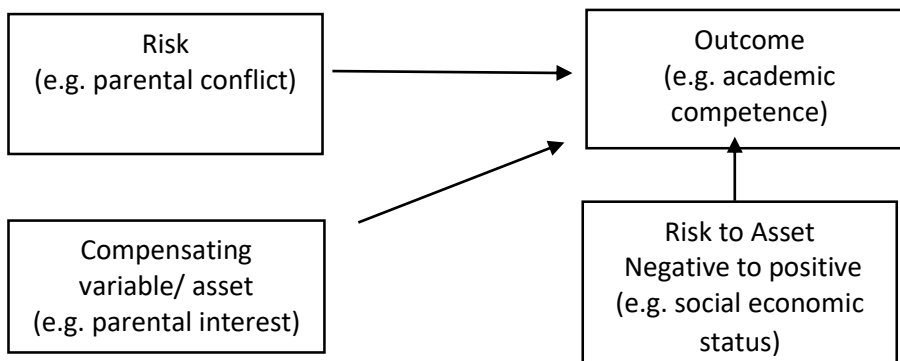


Figure 1 Compensation Model. Garmezy et al., (1984) and Masten, (2014).

#### 2.4.1.2 *Challenge model*

In this model (figure 2) the risk provides some developmental purpose for the child. There are times when a child is presented with a challenge they are able to overcome, through this experience they develop abilities or attitudes that will be helpful to them when faced with another challenge in the future. This is similar to an inoculation or steeling effect where the risk faced is not so great that it overwhelms the child, or so small that the learning is inconsequential. In this model a child who has not faced any adversity would not be considered to be resilient, yet those who have are strengthened and more empowered to be resilient in the future.

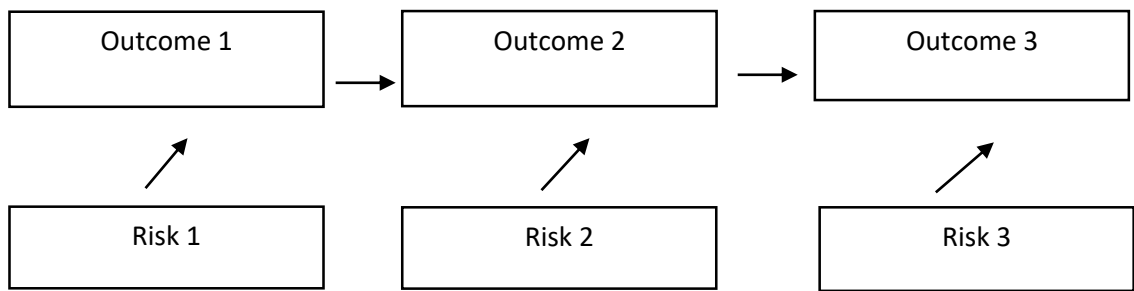


Figure 2 Challenge model. Garmezy et al., (1984)

#### 2.4.1.3 Mediator model

The ecological framework of child development is used in this instance. The model (figure 3) shows that rather than the risk factor acting directly on the child and their outcomes, risk can be permeated through a mediator. The risk (poverty) is felt by another element in the ecosystem (parent) which in turn has an impact on the child (parenting received) and their outcomes (wellbeing).

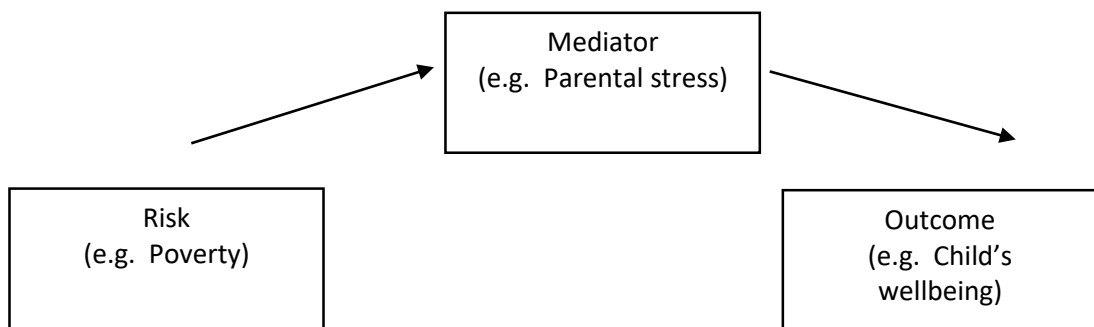


Figure 3 Mediator Model. (Masten, 2014).

#### 2.4.1.4 Protective factor model

These two models show the interaction between risk and protective factors. Protective factors can either mitigate the impact of the risk, (figure 4) or two protective factors can interact to enhance the impact of the other (figure 5), (Brook, Brook, Gordon and Whiteman, 1990, in Zimmerman and Arunkumar, 1994).

The risk/ protective model differs from the compensatory model above because in this instance the protective factor interacts with the impact of the risk on the outcome, rather than having a direct and independent influence on outcomes. For example, assertiveness and high self-esteem protect against the risk of parental conflict when the outcome measure related to depressive moods (Brook, Nomura, & Cohen, 1989) and intelligence and a supportive home protect against the risks of poverty and mothers low self-esteem when the outcome measured academic success and behavioural adjustment (Dubow & Luster, 1990).

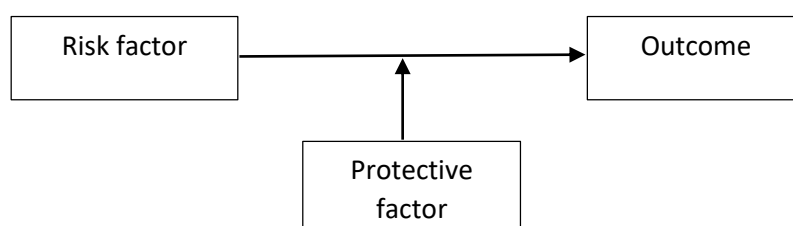


Figure 4: Risk/Protective factor model

In figure 5 it is again the interaction between the two, in this case both protective factors, which has a greater impact than each may have separately; cultural identity plus self-esteem have a greater impact on alcohol and substance use than just cultural identity alone (Zimmerman, Ramirez, Washienko, Walter, & Dyer, 1998).

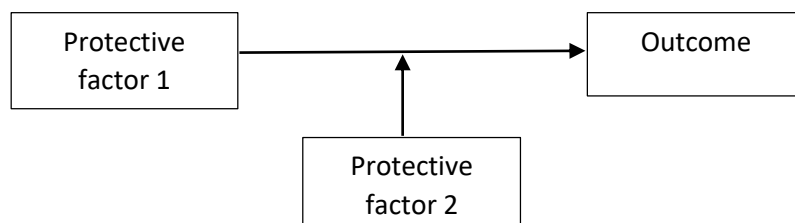


Figure 5: Protective/ Protective factor model

The models are useful to our theoretical understanding of risk, promotive and protective factors and to how children’s resilience is developed. They are not meant to be mutually exclusive nor do they attempt to be exhaustive, each child’s situation within their ecosystem is riddled with risk, promotive and protective factors exerting their influence directly, indirectly and in interaction with each other on a multitude of outcomes. To model the entirety of such a complex system would be a gargantuan task.

They do however offer a framework upon which to build interventions (see section 2.7) and in designing the intervention described in this thesis the models have provided clarity about the processes which will be called upon to effect change for the children.

#### 2.4.2 Developmental cascades

Developmental psychology has long been aware of the ways in which children’s experiences at one time will influence the ways in which they experience the world in the future and that their experiences in one domain will influence their experience of the world in another domain. Attachment theory gives us a good example of this. A safe, predictable and nurturing early relationship between a baby and their caregiver builds the foundations for future relationships but it is also considered to lay the foundation for many cognitive processes which are useful to academic success, (Bombèr, 2007). Professional experience allows one to see frequently that ‘competence begets competence’ or that problems can seem to snowball or spread over time, (Masten, Herbers, Cutuli, & Lafavor, 2008)

Resilience research is also interested in not only the mechanisms by which the child can be helped to cope with a particular adversity or to compensate for a risk factor but also how these abilities may have influence in other domains of the child’s life, over time; in ‘developmental cascades’ (Masten, 2014; Waller, 2001). *“Developmental cascades refers to the idea that function in one area or level of a system can spread to another level or domain as a result of the dynamic interplay across level and functional domains”*, (Masten, 2014, p. 79). The impact of competence or challenge in one area could cascade forward in time, and spread from one area of the child’s life to another, altering the course of development. The change may even cascade from one generation to another.

Longitudinal studies have been useful in exploring these issues (Masten & Cicchetti, 2010). The Project Competence Longitudinal Study with school children and their families in Minneapolis, USA in the 1980s followed the development of a large number of children. The scale of project and the wide range of data collected about each child allowed a range

of complex statistical analysis to be completed, controlling for a wide range of variables and controlling for continuity within domains over time. An example of a cascade identified in this way related to a propensity for conduct problems to undermine academic achievement and indirectly affect both social competence and psychological wellbeing, (Masten et al., 2005).

Awareness of this concept of developmental cascades offers further food for thought to the researcher or practitioner designing interventions and measuring impact. The impact of a risk factor can often be seen in the moment but there may well be an altering of future development; a child who loses a parent at an early age, without high quality support, will struggle at the time but there will also be implications for their development into adulthood. By intervening at an early stage the impact can be both immediate and long term, can be specific to a particular area of need or may be across domains. When evaluating the impact of an intervention care needs to be taken about the process of choosing the outcome(s).

## 2.5 OUTCOMES

### 2.5.1 What constitutes a positive outcome?

Despite the brilliant minds working to better the developmental chances of some of our most vulnerable children through research and intervention some of the concepts and constructs about outcomes for resilient children can seem, at first reading, a little vague. In a chapter requesting that some of the ambiguities are clarified Kaplan asks us to reconceptualise resilience and outcomes. Resilience has been described as the child 'maintaining adaptive functioning' (Rutter 1990), as 'effectiveness in the environment' (Masten 1994), or 'successful adaptation or transformation' (Bernard, 1995). Elsewhere Masten suggests resilience enables the child to gain 'success in age salient tasks' (Masten 2001). Resilience theory suggests that the resilient child will be able to achieve these outcomes, however, in different contexts these words could be used to describe different constructs. In hypothesis testing researchers transform these vague descriptions into a huge range of measurable variables; academic achievement, employment, drug use, mental health/illness. Kaplan makes a good argument suggesting that "variation in the nature of the desirable or undesirable developmental outcomes had led to widely different definitions of resilience", (Kaplan, 2005, p. 43).

For an educator working in England the prevalent description of a child achieving good outcomes at a school would include them 'achieving age related expectations' (DFE, 2015b). A psychologist may describe a positive outcome for a young person in terms of them overcoming the barrier which had brought them to the service in the first instance. Parents, social workers or prospective employers may recognise positive outcomes in many different ways. The child themselves may measure a positive outcome in a different way again.

It is useful to turn again to the ecological framework for child development. When identifying a successful outcome for a particular child it is crucial to consider the child themselves, the social context in which they have grown and that in which they will live, (Waller, 2001). A positive outcome for a child with a severe cognitive impairment who has not developed language is very different to a positive outcome for a verbal child who has strong cognitive abilities. A positive outcome for a child living a community beset by crime

and violence will be a child who can be assertive and confident when challenged out on the street, who can read potentially dangerous social situations well and stand up for themselves whereas a child living in a small quiet affluent English village community is more likely to need to be able to engage successfully in very different social situations in order to be considered, in general, to have achieved good outcomes by their community.

For a child to be considered resilient within a research context we need to be clear about the domain specificity (Luthar & Zigler, 1991). Researchers need to clarify in which domain of their life or within how many domains does a positive outcome need to be achieved for the child to be considered resilient? If the child has overcome adversity to achieve academic success but has not gained the social skills required to use these qualifications, have they resilience?

Also, over which time frame must the child show coping in response to an adversity before they can be considered resilient? Can the presence of positive outcomes immediately after an adversity or even during an ongoing period of challenge be sufficient, or would the child need to achieve an identified positive outcomes over time? For example a child may cope reasonably well at the time of a change of foster placement, wanting to make a good impression on their new 'family' however only once the foster parents have started to feel comfortable and safe within the new relationship may the child express their poor attachment behaviours.

Finally, within the literature there can be a lack of clarity about the difference between a risk factor and a negative outcome, or even what would be considered to be a protective factor and what would be held as a positive outcome? For example, an adolescent involved in drug use would be considered to be at risk of poor physical and emotional wellbeing, but also drug use may be seen by another researcher as a poor outcome in itself. One researcher may consider high self-esteem as a protective factor and another may have this very same variable as a positive outcome.

### 2.5.2 Measuring resilience and outcomes

Researchers 'must be able to clearly define their constructs and measure them reliably before the validity of the concept can be assessed' (Naglieri, LeBuffe, & Ross, 2013). However, in the instance of children's resilience this has proved tricky! The definition taken in this research, and by many others, is that resilience is a set of reactions, behaviours and attributes within a child's life which enable the child to cope in the face of adversity. It is this set of variables, which lead to resilience outcomes, which are used to predict resilience rather than measuring it directly.

Many measures offer to measure resilience for the researcher and practitioner; for example Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents (Prince-Embury, 2008), Devereux Student Strengths Assessments (LeBuffe, Shapiro, & Naglieri, 2009), Child and Youth Resilience Measure (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). Such tests focus on different aspects of the child's life and ask questions about different domains. This may include questions about individual traits including emotional reactivity, relationships with key adults, and environmental factors that facilitate a sense of belonging. As discussed previously, the factors that suggest the development of resilience occur at many levels: child, family and society level. In recognition of this many of the tests do ask for the views of the child, a parent and the child's teacher.



However, the concept of measuring resilience is challenged by methodological issues. For example the timing of the measures is interesting. Is the measure set to find out how resilient a child has already shown themselves to be in the face of adversity, or is it measuring a set of indicators which aim to predict how resilient a child would be should the need arise? Even if the measure of the child's resilience was taken following a difficult event as a measure of how they and others felt that they had coped with the challenge, there is an interaction between so many variables that the cause of this positive outcome would be hard to determine. Account would need to be taken of the child's abilities, the nature of the challenge, any other protective or risk factors which may be present in the ecosystem and the timing of the occurrence of these within the child's life. Would it be possible for any measure to take all of these variables into account?

In this research account has been taken of this complexity, and potential ambiguity, by clearly defining the outcomes sought as relating to the resilience stories told by and about the child; and by being transparent over the limitations of this choice. This is explained further in section 2.11 of this chapter, and again in the Methodology and Discussion chapters.

## 2.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES RELATING PROMOTING RESILIENCE

Research methodologies in this field generally fall into one of two categories; variable focussed or person focussed (Masten, 2014). Hybrids of these two can be used also.

### 2.6.1 Person focussed models of research

Person-focussed models may follow a single case example, often telling a powerful story of a life in which adversity has been overcome and success achieved. These stories can be retold in autobiographical literature (*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Maya Angelou), in film (*Billy Elliot*), in song (*Get Up Stand Up*, Bob Marley) or in fine art (*F Grass*, Ai Weiwei). The telling of these stories informs research when themes emerge across stories; a competent and caring adult within the story teller's life or door opening opportunities, talents, and a sense of self-efficacy or hopefulness. These themes then become hypotheses for further research. Narrative research suggests the mechanisms of resilience are revealed when attentively listening to the detail of these stories about the interplay between many variables, over time, within changing environments; "Personal narratives may illuminate protective factors (active or latent) in parts of a respondent's ecosystem that might not be readily apparent to researchers" (Waller, 2001, p.295). This is the model closest to the research presented in this thesis.

Person focussed models can aggregate cases, or group people who have been through a shared experience which is considered to be high risk. The researcher can compare those children who do well despite the risk with those who flounder. This is considered to be the classic model of resilience research, (figure 6).

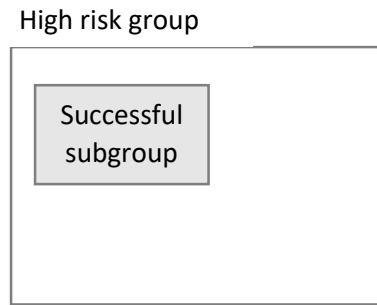


Figure 6 Classic aggregated case model of research: identifying members of a high risk group who are doing well.

An extension of this model involves also comparing the experiences and outcomes of groups who are low risk but have either had poor or good outcomes. This would then allow the researcher to identify factors more likely to lead to children showing resilience rather than simply being competent (successful but without having faced a risk) or proving maladaptive in their responses to adversity. These person focussed methodologies could be retrospective or longitudinal.

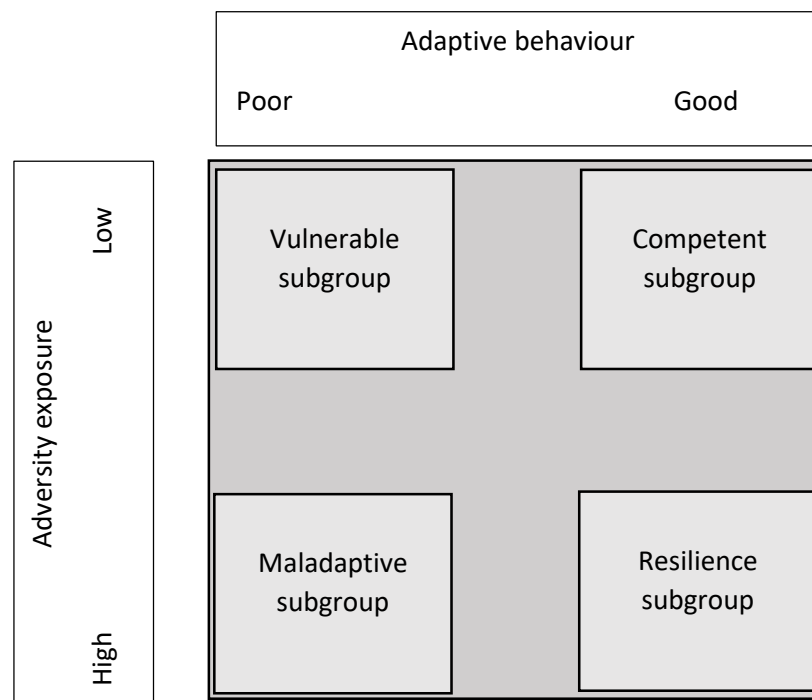


Figure 7 Expanded classic aggregated model of research: identifying groups of high/low risk and high/low success.

The numbers of children or participants who would be categorised as ‘vulnerable’ in other words have faced low risk but have not succeeded in this way often seems to be small. Researchers have suggested that this is because of the human drive to succeed or to adapt to our environment (Masten, 2014), it may of course be because the risk that stopped this person from achieving success has not been identified by the research methods chosen.

### 2.6.2 Variable focussed models of research

Variable focussed methods examine patterns of variation among characteristics of individuals. In so doing they study how the risk factor interacts with the outcome, for example considering how ethnic background / parental mental illness / high crime rate is associated with outcomes such as academic success or behaviour problems. Complex statistical analysis and modelling have been used to test the effects of multiple variables on a range of outcomes.

Qualitative methods of research, focussing on children living with a particular variable, or risk factor have a different but important dimension to add to this model of research, (Ungar, 2003). Whilst quantitative methods strive to accommodate and account for many of the variables presented in children's lives (economic status, parenting, ability, community and cultural forces and so forth) through complex statistical modelling it has unable to account for the these entirely. Qualitative methods have provided an approach which had allowed children's development of resilience to be contextualised; within their family, community and wider ecosystem; and across time.

## 2.7 INTERVENTIONS TO PROMOTE RESILIENCE

The third wave of resilience research focused on applying previously gained knowledge to effect change for children and young people. Through using this deeper understanding of resilience, risk and protective factors numerous interventions have been devised, applied and evaluated. This has happened across fields such as education, psychology, social care and psychiatry.

The models of resilience (section 2.4.1) suggest that intervention can be usefully focussed at one or more of three levels (Masten, 2014); focussing on reducing risk, increasing assets/promotive factors or facilitating development of protective factors. Reducing risk can be seen in instinctive parenting (when we help our children to cross the road safely, when we keep them away from a stray dog) and in societal practices (to promote healthy prenatal care or providing free school meals to those who need them). Increasing assets can be seen in providing concrete resources to lift children out of poverty, or to provide shelter and health care to refugees. It may be that a child needs support to be able to access the resources that otherwise may not be fully available to them; providing computers to use at home so that all the school's educational resources can be accessible. The third option is to enable the child or others in their ecosystem to develop and use protective factors; to 'restore, harness, or mobilize the power of human adaptive systems', (Masten, 2014, p.272). This may involve supporting parents to be the nurturing, effective caregiver the child needs them to be, it may involve ensuring education programs focus on developing not only rote learning of skills but also self-efficacy, self-control and social confidence, it may involve community organisations providing mentors to young people setting out in the work place.

Interventions can be at the universal or targeted level (Browne, et al., 2004). Universal programs would seek early intervention or prevention; boosting the children's immune system so that they can then cope with adversity which may come their way; the SEAL program in English schools (Humphrey et al., 2008). Targeted programs may focus on children who are considered to be at risk because they have become involved in a risky behaviour (drug use or antisocial behaviour) or because they have lived/ are living through a trauma; e.g. fostered children (Leve et al., 2012), survived a war (Wolmer, Hamiel,

Barchas, Slone, & Laor, 2011), have parents with depression (Reeslund, 2010) or because they have a diagnosis; e.g. AIDS (Eloff et al., 2014). A review of mental health programs for school aged children found that, in concurrence with the concept of 'developmental cascades', universal or early intervention programs to develop protective factors are more effective than programs to reduce existing behaviours; younger children generally benefit more than older children and interventions that build on a theoretical basis are more powerful (Browne, et al., 2004)

The focus in these interventions seem to overlap considerably around core elements of social competence, level of engagement, developing a supportive network, self-efficacy, sense of purpose/ high expectations, talents and interests (Bernard, 1995; Browne, et al., 2004; Daniel & Wassell, 2002), with the addition of optimism in the Penn Resilience Program (Seligman, Reivich, Jaycox, & Gillham, 1995).

The way in which these interventions are delivered and by whom is important to their efficacy. As seen in the ecological framework a child's development unfolds in interaction with the systems around them. Parents, family, school, friends and the wider community are all useful allies in promoting children's resilience. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation reviewed the role of parents in developing resilience "evidence tends to converge around highlighting the pivotal role of parents, or alternative care givers, in promoting the knowledge skills and environment that can help children be prepared for adversity and in supporting them through adversity" (Hill, Stafford, Seaman, Ross, & Daniel, 2007, p. 37). Parents who are warm, authoritative, responsive and supportive promote development of resilience. However, for those targeting interventions through parents (the mediator model of resilience), it can be hard to work with and engage some parents, especially those who are having a difficult time and so have children who are going to need to be resilient. This can be time consuming, appointments can be missed, and motivation is difficult to maintain in parents who are busy or do not have the resources required; in instances where parents are hard to engage working with other systems around the child can be attractive.

Schools have been recognised for their capacity to build strong bonds with the child, to develop competence in children and to build bridges with parents and other community groups (Bernard, 1995; Brooks, 2006; Dyson, Gallanaugh, Humphrey, Lendrum, & Wigelsworth, 2010; Stewart & Sun, 2004). Schools providing caring relationships, promoting high expectations and creating opportunities for participation (beyond the curriculum) are effective in supporting resilience; however, teachers are prone to underestimate the contributions they make in providing this 'protective shield', (Oswald, et al., 2003). Also, friendships offer opportunities to develop social skills and support at times of difficulty, (Oswald, et al., 2003) and effect how children spend their free time (Gilligan, 2000)

As children grow it is their parents, teachers and peers who are closest to them and have the most direct influence on development. However, systems beyond these can have 'proximal' or 'distal' effects and so interventions at these levels can also have impact; systems within the Local Authority could facilitate, or otherwise, interventions being used in schools (Cox, 2004), and projects at the community level providing opportunities for participation have been found to be effective, (Luthar, 2005).

The most effective interventions involve a number of systems around the child; programs involving more than one element of family, school or community are more likely to have positive effects than those which focus on a single element (Browne, et al., 2004). Indeed, the ecological approach is supported by many of the leading researchers in the area of resilience interventions, (Bernard, 1995; Brooks, 2006; Cox, 2004; Oswald, et al., 2003). For interventions to be effective the need to be based upon resilience research and to have ecological validity and practical appeal, (Masten, 2014).

An understanding of the resilience literature to date suggests that when working with an individual child the intervention usefully focuses on developing protective factors/ strengths, reducing risk factors, and mobilising adaptive systems – including systems within the children and important adults around them. When interventions are aimed at increasing resilience amongst a population there is capacity for impact when action is taken at all levels of the system around the child – family and friends, community and services, local and national.

## 2.8 NARRATIVE THEORY

### 2.8.1 A narrative approach to understanding the world

*“We are all tellers of tales. We each seek to provide our scattered and often confusing experiences with a sense of coherence by arranging the episodes of our lives into stories.” (Murray, 2003, p.113)*

Story telling is not new, surely it is as old as time. However the art of understanding the importance of the stories we tell each other and tell ourselves, as an aspect of science or more specifically psychology, is newer. Whereas a reductionist way of studying psychology seeks to classify and categorise, a narrative way of seeing organises everyday interpretations of the world into stories.

Narrative theory suggests that it is through stories that we are able to make sense of the events around us. They allow us to create a narrative that links the events in our ever changing world and enables us to apply some coherence and understanding to events, which may otherwise remain random. Furthermore, it is through narrative, and the stories we tell others and ourselves that we create a sense of our own identity. Such a narrative enables us to construct a connectedness to our actions, and to distinguish ourselves from others; story telling shapes our understanding of what happened, what we did and why we did it. In this way we are surrounded by stories. Stories are our way of seeing the world but also they are the way in which we construct the world ‘we live through the stories told by others and by ourselves – they have ontological status.’ (Murray, 2003, p. 112)

The narratives we hold, about ourselves and our world, are often changing and evolving. The stories we tell about ourselves will change from one situation to another as we choose to present ourselves differently in different context. Different stories about ourselves are more prevalent in one setting or another; my ‘self’ in my professional life and my ‘self’ in my home life have been quite different.

If we see the world through the eyes of a narrative theorist we expect that our story about our experiences will also change over time as our life story is revealed and we seek to make sense of the events we pass through. At any point of telling the story the narrator is aware

of the end of the story (as it stands at that time) and so constructs the account of previous events from that position of knowledge. A story of the same events but told at an earlier time would mean that the narrator would not have the same information available to them and so a different story of the same events may have been told. All stories are provisional, and subject to change, as new information becomes available.

A child at the time of their first falling out with friends in school may hold a narrative of events as other children being unkind to them while they maintain a positive sense of their own social skills, should such incidents of unkindness continue over time and seemingly become a pattern of interaction with peers their narrative of such events may start include labelling themselves as a victim of bullying. With the move into adulthood, if this comes with success in personal relationships and family, the narrative of school years may focus on the other children being unkind again and the victim element of the story become quieter or even lost.

We become skilful as listeners to and as tellers of stories, attributing agency to characters and inferring causal links between events. We draw upon this knowledge of the many, many stories already heard to complete the stories that are not fully told. Stories can be seen as following one of three primary structures (Gergen & Gergen, 1986); 'the progressive' story tells of moving towards a goal, 'the regressive' in which the reverse occurs and 'the stable' in which there is little change. Another way of analysing a story is to see the story as a 'comedy', 'romance', 'tragedy' or 'satire', (Frye, 1957, cited in Murray, 2003). Such classifications of stories help develop a deeper understanding of what is being told.

### 2.8.2 A narrative approach to understanding ourselves

A narrative theorist would see that our sense of self identity is created through the coming together of two processes, which are closely related.

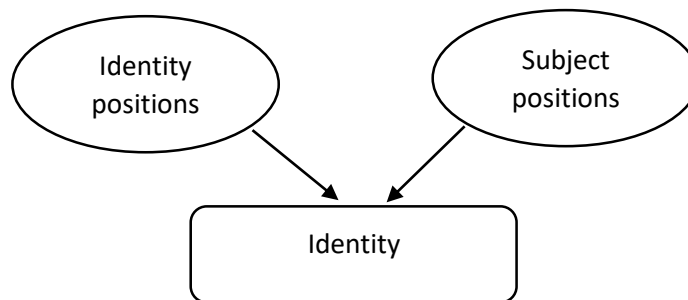


Figure 8: Identity created with (at least) two processes, (Hiles, 2007)

The social constructivist position of developing a sense of who we are from the stories we hear about ourselves is accepted in the 'subject positions'; as we are subjects of others stories about us. But in addition to this is a sense that we "can endorse, celebrate, resist and contest the subject positions offered to us"; we can position ourselves in relation to these influences in our 'identity positions' – we can be the author of our own experiences, (Hiles, 2007). In the combination of these two processes a set of narratives defining ourselves is created and our sense of our own identity formed. This model is open therefore to the ever changing sense of ourselves as we position and reposition ourselves according the social context in which we are and our interpretations of this.

This narrative approach to understanding our world and ourselves is becoming increasingly used in the research field to further our understanding of how others make sense of their

experiences. In the next section the development of narrative research methods is presented briefly and the methodology used in this thesis is introduced.

## 2.9 NARRATIVE RESEARCH

The use of narrative research methods has become popular in the fields of psychology and sociology research in the last 20 to 30 years (Murray, 2003) and comes from a combination of a humanistic approach to psychology and post-structural traditions, (Andrews, 2008). Narrative approaches have been used frequently in works with emancipatory aims (for example supporting feminism or fighting racism). To some, narrative inquiry offers to psychology a third cognitive revolution, taking us beyond the cognitive and discursive prevalent previously to a new way of understanding the human condition (Hiles & Čermák, 2008).

Narrative research can be crudely separated in to two main groups (Andrews, et al., 2013), each with very different perceptions of the meaning we can take from stories. The first can be described as *event* focussed, as illustrated by much of the work by Labov. In this a person's representation of the event, as heard in the stories told, is seen as being more or less constant; as 'recapitulating past experiences by matching a verbal sequence of clauses to the sequence of events which actually occurred'. The analysis focusses on very much on the text, its syntax and structure; taking meaning from the words on the page and nothing more. The second approach to narrative research is more focussed on the *experience* of the person telling the story. Core to this understanding of narrative is that the story teller's recollection of an event, thought or feeling will vary overtime and between contexts. That one set of events may produce many different stories – all of which may be 'true' for the teller given that time or place. This second perception of stories can be taken further when the research seeks to incorporate the role of the person who is hearing the story; the influence of co-structor or the researcher is also reflected upon in the analysis.

Narrative inquiry pertinent to this research is closely aligned to this latter approach and has a 'double signature' (Hiles & Čermák, 2008) combining social constructionist and phenomenological stances. This means that the narratives we all share have a 'situated-occasioned action' perspective; to have a full understanding of what is being said by the teller it is important for the listener to be cognisant of the situation in which it is being told, the occasion of the telling and the influence this may have on the recounting given at that time. The contexts which need to be reflected upon include the how the information shared would sit in relation to the research context (the told), where the story is shared and to whom (the telling), but also how this story fits into other stories held by the person about their life (the teller). The phenomenological element of this narrative research embraces the participatory and creative inner world of lived experience; seeking to make richer our understanding of what is being told by viewing the 'teller' as actively and creatively engaged in the processes of meaning making, organising this experience in light of other experiences and how this may influence their sense of self. As illustrated in Figure 9 the told is often 'foregrounded' but is always in interaction with the telling and the teller (Hiles, Cermák, & Chrz, 2009).

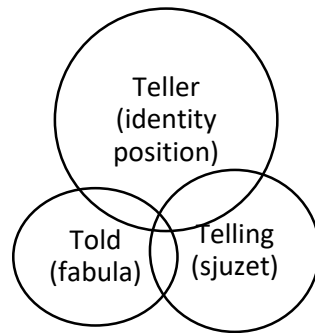


Figure 9: The teller, the telling and the told, (Hiles and Cermak and Chrz, 2009)

### 2.9.1 Data, its collection and interpretation

Despite the ubiquitous nature of stories and the increasing interest in their use in research, there continues to be disparity over the exact nature of the type of information collected, the way it is collected and the way it is to be interpreted.

The nature of the information collected in narrative research can vary hugely. Most use narrative interviews. Unlike traditional interviews that are structured around a specific set of questions to be answered, narrative interviews are designed to give the participant opportunity to share their story of a particular event or experience. This may be far reaching as in 'life story' work or focussed on a particular event such as starting a new job or an OFSTED inspection, these have been termed 'episodic' interviews, (Murray, 2003). The level of involvement of the researcher in the interview will be dependent upon the type of research question being asked. It is important to be open with readers about the role the interviewer takes in the interview- prompting, encouraging through active listening, asking for examples, or seeking points pertinent to previous research in the area. Sometimes interviews are conducted on one occasion and sometimes a relationship may be built up over time. These factors are important to the context of the narratives shared and the relationship between participant and researcher needs to be transparent and reflected upon when considering the trustworthiness of the data.

The interviews are then most frequently transcribed, sometimes this is done in great detail so that the pauses and other non-verbal elements contribute to the researchers understanding of the story, others are transcribed whilst omitting some parts of the speech such as those parts that do not contribute to the narrative (e.g. diversions, repetitions etc) so that it is easier for the reader to 'hear' the story. Other types of data collected may be letters, emails, telephone conversations or notes, pictures or pieces of art work. Observations by the observer or others (e.g. historical observations) can also be used to thicken the narrative being sought by the researcher.

The interpretation of the stories collected in narrative data starts in the mind of the researcher during the interview itself but depending upon the nature of the research question being considered the data collected will be formally analysed at multiple levels. A structural approach which focuses upon the syntax would highlight common elements across a number of stories, a thematic analysis focusses upon the content of the narrative and enables the researcher to seek interpretations of events for a particular story teller and more interpretative approaches would incorporate the story teller and the researcher's understandings of events. For some the structure of the story is important; seeking to



categorise the whole or segments, can be seen as regressive, progressive or stable with points of epiphany where there is a change from one category to another (Gergen & Gergen, 1986) and some look for a beginning, middle and end, (Murray, 2008). When looking for meaning at the level of both ‘what’ is being told; and ‘how’ it is being told researchers make a distinction between those words which give the content of the story and those which give meaning to the story; the ‘bounded’ and ‘unbounded motifs’ in narrative discourse, (Herman & Vervaeck, 2005) and ‘fabula’ and ‘sjuzet’ in Narrative Oriented Inquiry (Hiles & Čermák, 2008). The information provided at both of these levels can provide the researcher with insight into the meaning of the stories for the story teller, at that time.

Two further dimensions are employed by Lieblich, Tuval-Mashaich and Zilber (1998) creating four levels of interpretation of which some or all can be applied to narratives when the researcher is seeking meaning of not only what is being told but the meaning it had for the narrator.

<b>Holistic – Form</b>	<b>Holistic – Content</b>
<b>Categorical – Form</b>	<b>Categorical – Content</b>

Table 1: Dimensions of narrative interpretation, Lieblich et al., (1998)

The holistic elements seek meaning from the whole of the story, even when reading sections they are analysing meaning that can be taken from the parts in light of the rest of the story. The categorical elements, however, take the whole story to pieces and seek patterns and themes across the parts. The content elements seek meaning in the words which can be related to the focus of the conversation or research; be it resilience or experience of living in war; previously referred to as ‘the told’. The interpretative dimension concerned with ‘form’ however is more focussed upon the way in which the story has been told (as a comedy or romantic, with movement or static) and how the story teller positions themselves in relation to it. Lastly, Emerson and Frosh (2004) propose a very detailed ‘critical analysis’ of narratives to generate a ‘situated, psychosocial knowledge’ in which the aim is to look beyond the content of the information to the meaning it has for the individual, in their social context, without being dominated by the ‘pre-given’ meanings arising out of professional or expert discourses (research literature and practitioner knowledge) (Emerson & Frosh, 2004). This lends itself to the analysis of texts which are about situations which cannot be easily understood from constructs held about the average population (e.g. sexual abuse of boys by boys) and so the meaning for the story teller has be heard from their perspective rather than through a research based lens.

In employing a combination of narrative research methods, seeking both meaning which can be related to researched or socially defined constructs and the meaning for the teller on that occasion, a deep understanding of narratives can be gained. We can seek to understand the identity of the person sharing their story by hearing both their ‘subject positions’ and their ‘identify positions’ (as discussed in section 2.8.2).

### 2.9.2 Narrative Oriented Enquiry

Hiles and Cermak (2008) offer us a model of narrative inquiry, which manages to offer a coherent, transparent framework for narrative research building upon many of the dimensions just described and many of the elements important to the ethos of this research; Narrative Oriented Inquiry (NOI). They offer a model that ensures consistency

from research questions through data collection to analysis and interpretation; which incorporates the resilience theory research knowledge; embraces a social constructionist approach through embracing the context of the telling and the reflexivity of the researcher; a phenomenological approach is taken to hearing the story as experienced by the teller; and they encourage analysis at a structural level focussing on the holistic and categorical analysis of form and content.

A Narrative Oriented Inquiry proceeds through a series of steps designed to take meaning from the stories given at the holistic and segment level, (Hiles, Cermák et al. 2009; Hiles, Cermák et al. 2010). An illustration of the process model is given in Appendix 7.3. The six interpretative perspectives require further explanation. It is suggested by the authors of the model that it is not necessary to complete all of these six steps, only the first is required. The subsequent steps that encourage a deeper engagement with the text involve; looking for themes, looking at the story as a whole and also the parts, looking at it as a piece of discourse produced in a particular time and place and considering also how the teller positions themselves with respect to the story.

#### I. Sjuzet and Fabula

This step is a crucial first stage that facilitates the steps to follow and involves assigning the text to either fabula or sjuzet. The fabula are the parts spoken by the teller, which give the basic outline of the events or information being shared. These are described as 'bounded' because changes in it would change the essentials of the story being told. It is suggested that they can be read through, ignoring the sjuzet, and a coherent but rather flat recount of events would be maintained.

The sjuzet however, focuses on the way the story is being told, the utterances added to give emphasis, commentary or reflections. These are the 'unbounded' sections as they are the parts which would more readily change according to the time and place of the story being told.

#### II. Holistic- Content

In this analysis step we are given the opportunity to explore and establish the links and associations within the entire story. In reporting this we focus on either a broad perspective of the general theme in the story or a specific segment is highlighted, which sheds light on the whole story. This focusses mostly on the fabula.

#### III. Holistic- form

Again this focuses on the fabula to seek the form or progression of the plot given in the story, a thread that gives the whole some progression. Some researchers would seek to identify the form of the story whether it is

- Romance –affirming the social order
- Comedy – breaking and restoring the social order
- Tragedy – a loss of the social order
- Satire – a cynical challenge to the social order.

#### IV. Categorical – content

This perspective is led by defining themes within the text; categorising sections according to either themes that emerge from the text in a manner similar to grounded theory or according to themes predefined by theory (resilience theory in this case).

#### V. Categorical – form

Through looking carefully at the sjuzet this step helps us to explore the linguistic features and plot devices that offer emphasis and style in retelling the story. This is often seen in adverbs (suddenly), mental verbs (I thought), time and place, intensifiers (really, very) disruptions to chronological progression and repetitions. Through focussing on these aspects of the story the meaning it has for the teller, and the meaning that is forming during the telling can become more apparent.

#### VI. Critical analysis

In this last step of the analysis we are encouraged to look at the way in which the teller positions herself in respect of the story, how her sense of self is reflected in the story. This is based on the understanding that our narrative identity is built around what is often a series of inter-related identity positions: that our sense of self can evolve, be affirmed or challenged as we tell the story of our experiences

### 2.10 NARRATIVE THERAPY

This research is very much focused on the way in which children's resilience stories can be changed. It is interested in exploring how narrative theory, research and therapy can be used to further an understanding of how resilience can be developed. The Narrative Therapy intervention is not the focus; the efficacy of the therapy is not what is being evaluated; rather it is the nature of the changes in resilience stories. Information is shared in this section about narrative therapy, its common roots with narrative theory and some of the techniques that have been used.

As in narrative research, Narrative Therapy is based on understanding a person's experience through eliciting the stories they use to help to make sense of the world around them. Narrative therapy is a way of understanding the child's identity, their problems and the impact they have on them. It is respectful and non-blaming, it assumes people have many skills, competencies, beliefs, values, commitments and abilities that will assist them to reduce the influence of problems in their lives, (Morgan, 2000). It seeks to engage the client in conversations with the therapist in ways that enable the client to hear a narrative of their lives that is less problematic for them.

Narrative therapists hold an understanding that lives are multiple storied; no one story can reflect our entire lived experience. But often for the children who seek narrative therapy one of these stories has often become dominant- and this is often a problem focussed story. This becomes part of the child's self-identity and limits the options which are seen to be available to them. When the people who are in a position of power or influence also hold this story their dominance grows and the other stories which may have been available become further diminished (Walther & Fox, 2012). A boy who is finding it hard to meet behavioural expectations in school will be discussed in the classroom with the other children who are taught to treat him in a certain way to 'help' him, he will be discussed in

the staff room where empathetic colleagues will share with the teacher their own experiences of how difficult the child has also been for them. The parent and the teacher will meet to discuss the boy's difficulties and agree ways to write down and share the list of mistakes he has made each day. If the problem persists more professionals and 'experts' will be called in, maybe at great expense, to talk about the extent of his difficulties- seeking examples from the past and anticipating difficulties in the future. In these ways the story of the boy being a problem becomes dominant across important relationships, social contexts and over time.

The narrative therapist aims to change the relationship the child and others have with the problem situation. Many people who seek therapy, or seek therapy for others as is often the case for children, believe that the problem is a reflection of their own or the child's identity; the problems are internal to the child (White, 2007); the boy is a bad boy, he is a badly behaved boy. This is not a helpful position because 'if the person is the problem there is very little that can be done outside of taking action that is self-destructive' (White, 2007, p26), but through changing the relationship with the problem a range of possibilities becomes available. A key technique to change this relationship is in externalising the problem. Firmly locating the problem as external to the child through objectifying or personifying the problem (the anger which gets bigger, the behaviour which happens, the anxiety that comes around in school) the relationship with the problem is less fixed and less restricting. In externalising the problem rather than the child being the problem, the problem becomes the problem and the child's relationship with it is a problem. This transferring of the problem from the internal 'part of me' to the external is empowering and offers opportunities for change. The child can be helped to develop a different relationship with the problem though deconstructing its influence and seeking unique outcomes, (Morgan, 2000). This externalising the problem can also be powerful in family situations (White & Epston, 1990), and when working with teachers (Walther and Fox, 2012).

The narrative therapist aims to surface the other stories available to the child; to thicken alternative stories, which are preferred by the child and would be more helpful to them. The therapist acknowledges the alternative story and can also invite others to contribute to this process. Inviting significant others such as parents and teacher into the therapeutic conversation in this way has been called 'outsider witness practice' (Morgan, 2000; Walther & Fox, 2012) and is done through a structured set of conversations named 'definitional ceremonies' (Myerhoff, Kaminsky, & Weiss, 2007; White & Epston, 1990). This process enables the child to rehearse their preferred identity that has often, until that point, only been aired in the therapeutic context and to see whether it will 'hold' in a broader social context. To then see that the significant adult can accept and even agree with this different version of themselves can be extremely empowering. The adult will often bring either their own experiences of having needed to battle with a problem of their own or will bring information to enrich the narrative of the child being successful in the way they have identified – examples of them being brave when they were little, being kind with their grandma. In addition, the adult's relationship with the child and their problems can be eased as they too get to rehearse a different story about the child for a change; one that focusses on strength and ability rather than the problem.

In this thesis the narrative therapy techniques described here and in more detail in Appendix 7.4, are used with the children during 3 or 4 sessions to facilitate their

development of narratives supportive of their resilience. The children's parents and class teachers are invited to each session to contribute through outsider witness practices. These therapeutic sessions are different from the initial and post intervention narrative interviews with the participants, during which the aim was to gather data; to gather resilience related stories rather than to effect change for the children.

## **2.11 BRINGING TOGETHER RESILIENCE THEORY AND NARRATIVE THEORY**

The definition of resilience used in this thesis is one that describes a set of factors, which enable a child to achieve good outcomes despite the presence of an adversity or challenge that needs to be overcome. These factors include attributes developed within the child over time (emotion regulation, self-efficacy, problem solving skills for example) but also many of the key factors are present in the ecosystem around the child and are dependent on the interaction between the child and the world around them (close relationships with key adults, friendships, effective schools for example). The resilient child is one who can say "I have...people who love me and care for me in active ways", "I can...make a difference to the things which happen to me and I can achieve" and they can say "I am...valuable to my community and I am loveable".

This suggests two important features to a child's resilience. Firstly, a child's resilience is related to their perception of their own abilities – their sense of being able to take control of the world around them and the things which happen to them, do they feel that they have close friends and people who love and care for them, do they feel that they are valuable within their community? Do they feel that they have talents and abilities which will be helpful to them? Do they have faith and hope, do they have ambition? Even if in another's eyes the love they get from their parents is not good enough, or even if in another's eyes they are not intelligent, if the child feels that they have got these things on their side they will feel that they can overcome the challenges thrown their way.

Secondly, a child's resilience is developed through their interactions with the world around them, and is dependent upon the resources others can provide for them. These important others are most frequently found in the child's family and their school. It is in these environments where the child grows and develops.

### **2.11.1 A social constructionist approach to resilience**

Our perception of our own ability to be resilient in a given situation is dependent upon our perception of the situation we are in. Our perception of the adversity is dependent upon our previous experience, the perception others have of the situation and our sense of our ability to cope with it. If the adults around the child are not alarmed by the calling of a social worker, the child will take her lead and also see it as something about which they should not be concerned. It is the child's perception of their need to be resilient which is of value in this research.

Similarly, this construction of resilience suggests that we need to take context into account when in measuring a child's coping with adversity. What may be coping and even succeeding to one person may be seen as failure to another. A child who comes to school each day and has a pleasant time with his friends and his teachers and then gets to go home and play out with friends all night may report himself to be coping very well thank you very much, however, in a teachers eyes the child may not be described as successful as

they never put pen to paper or open a book. It is the child's perception of their wellbeing, within their context, which is of value in this research.

### 2.11.2 Developing a narrative of our own resilience

Narrative theories would suggest that a child will develop their own sense of self through the stories they tell to the people around them; in their families and in their schools. The stories they tell about themselves and to themselves (self-identity), are shaped by the stories they hear from the important people around them (subject positions) and how they position themselves in relation to these stories (identity position), see Hiles (2007) and section 2.8.1.1. The child's resilience self-identity, their sense of themselves being able to cope when faced with adversity will be dependent on the narratives they have about themselves with regard to the key resilience factors, summarised in the short list of "I have...", "I can..." and "I am..." and their ownership of these stories. In this way a narrative of our own resilience is developed; a 'resilience self-identity'.

This narrative will be built upon stories gathered over time, and across context; some of the stories will tell of us using our protective factors and others will tell of the risk factors we deal with or not. This collection will form what I call our resilience stories. A child's level of resilience can then be conceptualised as being dependent upon the relative presence of protective factors over risk factors.

### 2.11.3 A conceptualisation of resilience

The model provided in figure 10 encapsulates my own understanding of this conceptualisation of resilience and how it can develop in relation to the resilience stories we hold. It illustrates how narrative theory can be used to support resilience development.

The model suggests that the child's perceptions of their own resilience will be developed as the narratives of strong resilience grow and get thicker or more prevalent within the range of stories the child has at their disposal. As the child is able to give more and richer statements about 'I am..' 'I can..' and 'I have..' these will become the stories they use to define themselves and make sense of their reactions to the world around them. This will help them bounce back, to cope at times of adversity; to show resilience. This is illustrated in the diagram by the arrows pushing the resilience level up.

As the narratives of protective factors grow, the narratives which would suggest poor coping skills or risk factors become smaller, thinner and less prevalent. The inner voice of the child which says 'I cannot...', 'I do not have...' and 'I am not..' becomes quieter; the arrows pushing resilience level down, in the diagram, become fewer and less strong.

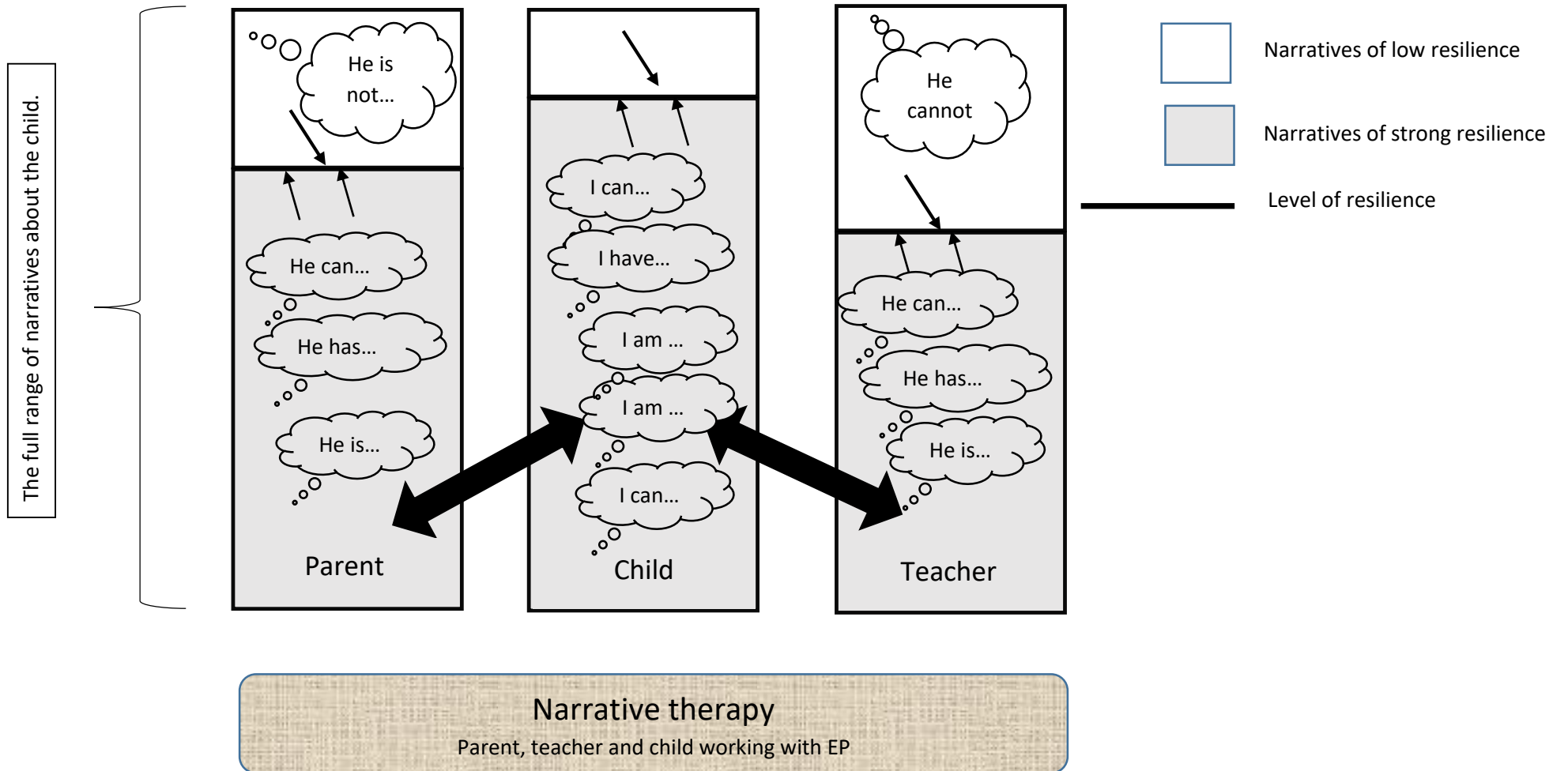
The model also shows that the parent and teacher can contribute to the child's collection of stories. As they focus upon and thicken the stories of the child showing that 'He can..', 'He has..' and 'He is..' they can then add to his collection of stories making them richer, stronger and more prevalent.

There can be an exchange of stories from the child to their parent or teacher. When the child shares their stories with the teacher and the parent they can thicken these stories for the child by adding details and offering other examples of the child showing a particular attribute for example.

In the research presented in this thesis it is intended that the momentum for this change, for this growth in the narratives of strong resilience, will come from the Narrative Therapy techniques used by the EP, working with the child and their parent and teacher.

The model could be extended by adding columns for the child's peers and the child's wider community. It has been suggested that both of these elements within the child's life can influence the child's level of resilience. It is conceivable that the child's peers and other members of the child's community (members of the church, club leaders, neighbours etc.) could also be involved in witnessing, contributing to and so thickening the child's narratives of their own resilience.

Figure 10: A model of resilience stories





## 2.12 RESEARCH AIMS

The research aims in this project have come from a professional and academic fascination with children's resilience; the awe inspiring power within some children to overcome adversity. Within professional practice I have found narrative theory and therapy techniques a useful framework but I have found little in academic literature to further my understanding of how the two interests can support each other.

Research aim 1: The primary aim of the research is to explore ways in which the resilience stories told by and about children can be changed. The aim is to explore the ways in which the stories told by the child, their parent and class teacher change following a period of narrative therapy intervention. The interactions between the participants, their stories and the ways in which they change is of interest. The intended outcome of the intervention is to develop, or make richer and louder, the stories which would be seen as useful to the child being more resilient in the face of adversity. This change is modelled in figure 10 above.

Research aim 2: Does Narrative Oriented Inquiry help us to explore changes in the resilience stories? In seeking rigorous methods which were congruent to the research paradigm it became apparent that the relatively new process of Narrative Oriented Inquiry (NOI) would fit well (Hiles & Čermák, 2008). However, little is available the research literature relating the use of NOI to the field of educational psychology and so a second research aim was identified; to explore the usefulness of this approach in answering Research Aim 1.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

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#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The first sections of this chapter sets out the methodological principles upon which the research design has been built. In describing these principles the coherence between the purpose of the research and methodology becomes apparent; the epistemological and ontological positions are consistent with the nature of the knowledge being sought; the axiological questions posed by the context of the research are soundly answered by the ethical considerations which were made. The research methods are then described and their coherence with the chosen paradigm is made apparent. The chapter ends with a section describing the process of data analysis. It is intended that enough information is shared for the reader to clearly understand the processes of the research and the basis upon which methodological and analytical decisions have been made.

The primary aim of the research is to learn about the ways in which the resilience stories told by and about children can be changed. The aim is to explore the ways in which the stories told by the child, their parent and class teacher change following a period of narrative therapy intervention. The interactions between the participants, their stories and the ways in which they change is of interest. The aim of the intervention was to develop, or make richer and louder, the stories which would be seen as useful to the child being more resilient in the face of adversity.

It was during the process of seeking a method to answer research aim 1 that an additional aim for the research became apparent. In seeking rigorous methods which were congruent to the research paradigm it became apparent that the relatively new narrative research method Narrative Oriented Inquiry (NOI) would fit well (Hiles & Čermák, 2008). However, with little in the research literature at the time, relating the use of NOI in the field of educational psychology an additional research aim came to the fore; to explore the usefulness of this approach in answering research aim 1.

Hiles (2007) asserts that ‘transparency should be recognized as the basic requirement of all qualitative research, and indeed, all scientific research’. He explains that transparency throughout the process is key to ensuring that the *procedures* used with research are replicable (rather than the *findings* as is the case in quantitative methods) and to ensuring that reflexivity is meaningfully shared with the reader and so allows for critical evaluation. His demands for transparency are exacting and start with the development of the research question and remain until the point of sharing the findings with a wider audience, see table 1.

- |   |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) Paradigmatic transparency</li><li>(ii) Methodological transparency</li><li>(iii) Transparency for interpretation and data analysis</li><li>(iv) Transparency for reflexivity</li><li>(v) Transparency in critical evaluation</li><li>(vi) Transparency in dissemination</li></ul> |
|---|

Table 2: Key areas for transparency (Hiles & Čermák, 2007)

Transparency about the development of and the conducting of this research is offered throughout the thesis but is most clearly seen in this, the Findings and Discussion chapters.

## 3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

### 3.2.1 Epistemological and ontological position

For the research to be coherent it is important that it occurs with consistent ontological and epistemological constructs. The ontological question asks “What is the nature of reality?” and the epistemological asks “What is the nature of knowledge and the relationship between the knower and the would-be known?” (Mertens, 2010). The answers to these questions put this research into a strongly constructivist paradigm. This paradigm is characterised by an understanding of reality as being social constructed and an acceptance that there can be multiple realities within one situation each of which has value. Within this paradigm it is the researcher’s role to understand the multiple social constructions held by the participants in the process of the research. However as with all narrative research there is an understanding that if we can seek to include the ‘participatory and creative inner world of lived experience’ further depth will be added to our understanding of the participants experiences (Hiles & Čermák, 2008). In this way a phenomenological bent to the research is embraced alongside the social constructivist.

Qualitative research paradigms can be considered as falling along a continuum ranging from naïve (or direct) realism to radical relativism as illustrated in Figure 11, (Willig, 2013). Narrative research methods offer flexibility in their positioning along such a continuum but primarily fall towards a more realist approach whilst accepting the nature of truth is dependent upon the teller, the telling and the told – is context dependent.

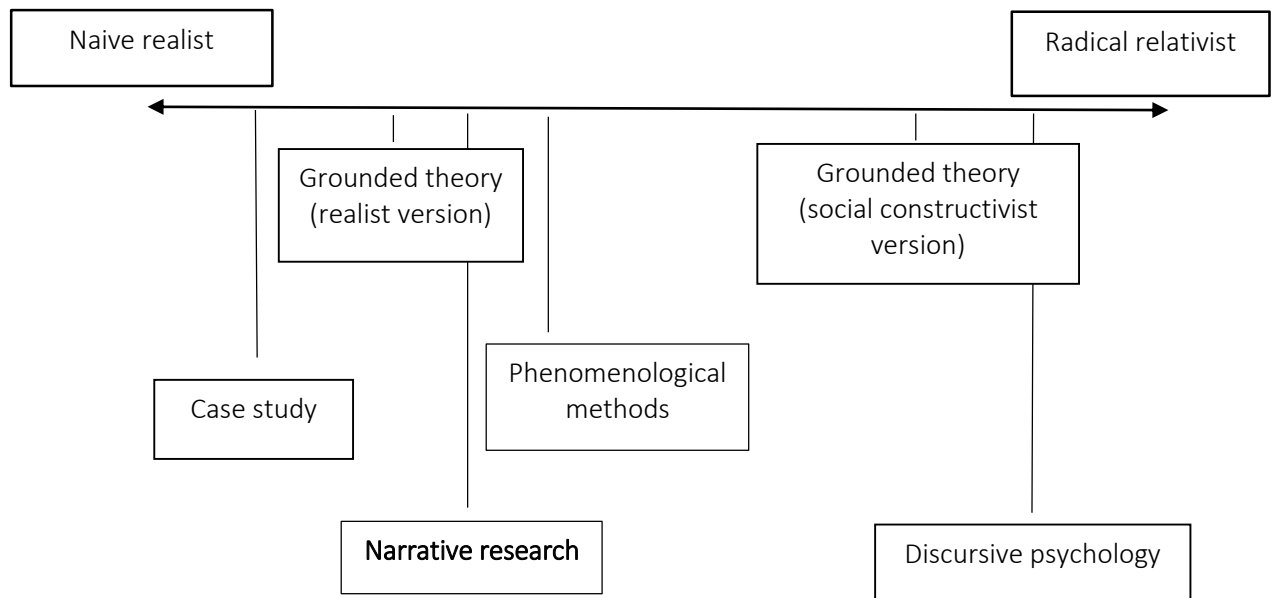


Figure 11: Epistemological and ontological positions associated with methodological approaches (Willig, 2013)

### *3.2.1.1 Ontological position within this research*

The consideration of truth within the field of narrative research is as contentious as it is in many other constructivist methodologies. Some lean to a radical realist perspective in which the world is disorderly and in a constant state of flux; these researchers are more likely to represent the stories as they are told in their entirety or to recreate the information that have been given in a representation of their own making; a poem or story based upon the information which has been told to them but packaged in a way to make its essence more accessible to a wider readership (Clough, 2002). Others at the other end of the continuum may take a more discursive analytical approach which takes an assumption that the language presented gives a factual representation of the events being recounted (Labov & Waletzky, 1997). However, many narrative researchers seem to take a middle ground- “We do not advocate on one hand total relativism that treats all narrative as texts of fiction. On the other hand, we do not take narratives at face value as complete and accurate representations of reality” (Leiblich, Tuval-Mashich, & Ziber, 1998, p. 8). The middle ground of narrative research accepts the stories shared are usually constructed around a core of commonly held ‘facts’ or life events while allowing for a wide variation in the telling of the story dependent upon the occasion of the telling and to whom it is being told; allowing for creativity in selection, addition to, emphasis on, and interpretation of these ‘remembered facts’. This creativity in the stories told may be consciously or unconsciously done by the person who is sharing their story.

Each of us will vary the stories we tell about our experiences according to the context of the telling. If offered a job interview today I would explain that ‘I am an excellent, reflective and reflexive practitioner’ yet when describing my job to a friend I will say that ‘I am hugely nosy and a little bit bossy for a living’. When I first started to work as an EP I would have described myself as ‘creative and solution oriented’, but looking back at my practice from this vantage point I can see that perhaps I was just a little too naïve. In this way narrative research methods perceive ‘truth’ to be that which is shared at a given time, to a defined audience, in a given situation and a recounting of the same event at a different time, with a different audience or in a different situation may result in a different story being told – but crucially each would be accepted by the researcher as the teller’s ‘truth’ with its own legitimacy.

The position taken in this research is that the narratives shared are subjective in the way that they are rooted in the self-identity of the person who is sharing their story. However, the self-identity of a person is not itself a constant but is subject to development over time and in relation to the context of the moment. The story or stories which they choose to tell in the interviews are rooted within the concept of themselves at that point in time as a student, parent or teacher, as they choose to present themselves on that occasion to the EP/ researcher, in relation to the topic of conversation – the child’s resilience. The stories they choose to tell will be dependent upon a huge variety of factors; perceived power relationships within the interview, the interviewee’s sense of confidence on that day, experiences before entering the interview or their understanding of the purpose of the meeting for example.

The data collected about the children’s resilience is social constructed in the way that the stories the narrator’s chose to share during the narrative interviews is mediated by their understanding of themselves at that point in time, their remembering of their feelings and

experiences of the child and the way they choose to (consciously or unconsciously) present themselves to the researcher/ EP. This last point leads to further questions about the interactions between the researcher, the participants and their stories; epistemological questions.

This understanding of 'truth' as being socially constructed and a belief that there are multiple realities each with its own authority is pervasive throughout this thesis. The very premise of the model of change is that the child's sense of self and the way he describes himself is open to change according to the influences of the important people around him – if his social context changes in the way it describes him and expects him to behave - so does the way in which he chooses to present himself to others – his narrative of himself alters.

Also, the research accepts that the participants may have multiple realities about one concept –the child's resilience. It is accepted that each person may have different views about child's resilience at different times, in different contexts or even when thinking about the child's functioning in different situations. It is accepted that a parent may be able to say that the child shows resilience on some occasions (at home) but not at others (when approaching a writing task); it may be that the child wants to be able to find stories that show themselves to be strong and able/ resilient but it may also be true that on some level they *feel* this may not be the whole truth. This variation and apparent inconsistency is accepted and welcomed by the research – it is not that one constant measure of resilience is being sought but instead a messy, complicated sometimes conflicting set of stories is accepted as valid and even useful material to work with.

### *3.2.1.2 Epistemological position within this research*

The very essence of this research is that the stories we tell to others and to ourselves are co constructed; our understanding of ourselves is very much influenced by the stories we hear being told about us and the stories we tell about ourselves. This understanding of information told as being socially constructed is brought into the epistemology of the research. The data is collected through a series of narrative interviews to which the participants and the researcher both contribute. During the narrative interviews there is a process which allows 'the joint construction of meaning' (Mishler, 1991) during which 'the inquirer and the inquired into are interlocked into an interactive process; each influencing the other' (Mertens, 2010).

It is important to be transparent about these interactions between the researcher and participants. Some of the interactions are clear and explicit in the paper work surrounding the process and in the transcripts of the interviews, but some of the interactions are unsaid and present only within the atmosphere and social context of the interviews. On the occasions of parents, teachers or children needing to meet with a psychologist each will bring a set of expectations, anxieties and hopes. Any teacher is likely to have experience of meeting with an educational psychologist for a number of purposes including the EP providing advice about professional practice, the teacher needing to convince the EP that the child has a high level of need, where the EP is seen as gatekeeper to further resources or even as a supportive listener at times of crisis. The parent may bring the preconception that things must be pretty bad if their child needs to see a psychologist and the child may simply be frustrated that they are missing a favourite lesson. The epistemology of this research acknowledges that many of these social and contextual factors will remain

unknown to the researcher, and to the participants themselves perhaps, but an acknowledgment of the implication of this interaction between the participants and the researcher has for the nature of the 'truth' of the stories is important. The stories are accepted as the versions of reality that the participants are choosing to share with the EP on this occasion.

Working with narrative material requires the researcher to listen to three voices which interact with each other; the voice of the narrator, the theoretical framework which provides the concepts and tools for interpretation and a reflexive monitoring during the time of reading, interpretation and drawing conclusions, (Leiblich, et al., 1998). This interaction between the stories told by the parents, teacher and the children, the theoretical background of resilience theory and the interpretations made by the researcher occurs in a circular motion with each re-reading of the story allowing the researcher to reflect on the resilience theory and what this tells us about the resilience of the child, but also what the narrative and resilience theory illuminates within the stories being shared.

Children's resilience and how it can be developed is an area of particular interest to me as an educational psychologist and in my academic research. Many journal articles about research in the field have been read, many books and publications describing ways in which resilience can be promoted in schools have been pored over and interventions have been put in place for individual children or small groups and reviewed. This knowledge about children's resilience was therefore, obviously, present in each of the interviews which took place and in the subsequent analysis of the data. The stories of participants have been faithfully listened to but through the lens of an understanding of children's resilience and how it is helped and not helped. The research embraces the contextual constructionist perception that all knowledge is context specific and influenced by the perspective of the person to whom it is being told. The reader's confidence that the researcher's interpretations are based in the realities shared by the participants rather than my imagination or preferred reality is increased by use of rigorous and transparent data analysis process, use of multiple quotations and provision of some of data in its (almost) raw state in the appendices to the thesis (see appendix 7.6). Where my knowledge of resilience literature has been used to interpret the stories being told or has influenced the data collected this has been made apparent - see detailed information about the process of Categorical – Content step within the NOI process in Table 4.

### 3.2.2 Narrative research methods

Narrative theory as a basis for narrative research methods is discussed in some detail in Chapter 2 Literature Review. Further information is offered here about how the NOI methodology fits within the context of the research as it was developed from research aims to the practicalities of working with the participants and collecting data.

#### 3.2.2.1 *Narrative oriented inquiry*

The approach to narrative research used in NOI has been described as 'situated – occasioned action perspective', (Hiles, et al., 2009, p. 54). In my research I have taken this to mean that the information shared by the participants needs to be perceived by the researcher as being a meaningful truth within the context of that situation (meeting an EP in school), on that occasion (at that point in time) and that the process of telling and hearing the stories is part of an active process of creating the knowledge about which the

conversation centres (an understanding of the child's resilience is developing as the conversation proceeds).

The epistemological and ontological positions of the research and the nature of the research questions demanded a lot of a research method. It required processes which would provide insight into the stories being told by the children, their parents and their teachers; that would facilitate comparing stories between participants and over time; facilitate comparing parts of the stories and their whole *and* to be mindful of the social context in which the stories are being told. Narrative Oriented Inquiry offers a method with both the rigour and flexibility needed; it provides a framework which can be repeated across stories; looks at context and content; the meaning of the stories for the participants and the meaning of the stories in relation to the resilience literature; and it looks at these strands across the whole of the story (holistic level) and distinct parts of the stories (categorical).

### 3.3 RESEARCH PROCEDURES

This section describes the processes and procedures used in gathering the data required to answer research aim 1: to explore the ways in which the stories told by the child, their parent and class teacher change following a period of narrative therapy intervention. The research process consists of initial narrative interviews with the parent, teacher and child separately to gain the stories relating to the child's resilience, subsequently engaging a child in a series of narrative therapy sessions with the aim of improving their resilience (parents and teacher are invited to contribute to each of these sessions) and then post intervention interviews with each of the participants. In addition further data is collected during the intervention process, through paperwork relating to consent, and diaries completed by the parent and teacher following each session and by the researcher/ EP throughout the process.

#### 3.3.1 Pilot study

Prior to starting the thesis research it was considered valuable to engage in a short pilot study. This consisted of conducting a narrative interview with a teacher about a child's resilience and analysing the data elicited using NOI methodology, (Duckhouse, 2014). There were three key purposes to this short research project each relating to increased familiarity with Narrative Oriented Inquiry methodology. Firstly, to improve specificity of research aims, secondly, to increase confidence that the methodology would elicit the data required to answer the research aims and thirdly, to develop skill in execution of key steps within NOI (namely narrative interview techniques and application of the six interpretative steps).

The findings of the pilot study resulted in a number of learning points which influenced the ways in which the thesis research was conducted. In the pilot study it was apparent that a narrative interview guide would facilitate targeted questioning and reduce the presence of the interviewer in the process – this was then adopted in the thesis research. The purpose of each of the six interpretative steps became more apparent; whereas prior to actively engaging in the process it had seemed that these would be somewhat repetitive in doing the analysis I saw how each step offered a new level of perception of the information and so the value of including all of them in the thesis was appreciated. Furthermore, the experience increased awareness of the importance of epistemological coherence and

consistency between the research aim, therapeutic intervention and research methodology.

In addition, this pilot study added to my learning in unintended ways. It was during this process that the duality of role, educational psychologist (EP) and researcher, became apparent. In reflecting upon the process of the interview I became aware of need to prioritise one role over the other at different points within the process. When conducting interviews in my professional role as an EP it is often important to start to effect some change on the problem situation presented to me, however in a research based narrative interview the purpose of the interviewer is to solely enable the interviewee to share their stories in the ways that they choose at that time. It was important to be transparent about this duality with the participants but also when presenting the findings of the research.

### 3.3.2 Recruitment of participants

The children were initially identified through routine meetings conducted with teachers in schools with whom I work in my role as educational psychologist with the Local Authority. During these meetings the needs of a range of children identified by the teachers are discussed. When concerns about the child's resilience were raised and it seemed appropriate for them to receive additional support for this, involvement in the research project was suggested. An exclusion criteria was also applied in that if the children were being seen or had been accepted onto the waiting list for the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), or a similar mental health provider was involved, it would not have been appropriate for the child to also engage with the narrative therapy.

Children who were to be the focus of the research were within the age range 7-11. This age group was chosen for two key reasons; firstly children of this age often have sufficient verbal reasoning skills to access a talking therapy such as narrative therapy, and secondly they often have one teacher with whom they spend most of their school day. It was important to the model of change proposed by the research that the adults invited into the therapeutic sessions had a significant role within the child's life.

Informed consent was sought from the teacher, the parent and the child. The teacher was initially approached by the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator) in the school as it was important for the teacher to feel that they could engage actively in the process and give their time willingly. They were given information about the research process, time to consider the opportunity and to ask any further questions they may have had. They were then asked to provide written consent before the first meeting. In addition, it was necessary to seek the support of the head teacher to ensure that the class teacher would be given time out of the classroom to attend the narrative interviews and the NT sessions. The head teacher was made fully aware that the research would not proceed if there was any indication that the teacher had felt that they were pressured into taking part.

The parent was initially approached by the SENCO or the class teacher. The parent was also given written information about the research process and time to consider the opportunity. They were asked to provide written consent for their own involvement and also for their child to be involved. The child was asked to give their own, verbal, consent to the process at the time of the first meeting when it was possible to give a verbal explanation of the ideas behind the research and what it would involve.



It was made clear to all of the participants, in writing before we met and reiterated verbally in the initial meeting, that anyone could withdraw their consent at any point throughout the process and that this would be accepted without prejudice. It was made clear that another way of supporting the child would have been offered in place of involvement in the research if appropriate.

### **3.3.2.1 Participants**

Consent was gained for four children to take part in the research, with the support of their parents and class teacher. Initially the research focussed on two children from the same school, Owen (Year 5, aged 9) and Kieran (Year 4, aged 8). At the point of concluding the research with Owen and Kieran, consent was gained to work with two further children in a different school, namely Daniel (Year 6, aged 11) and 'Sean' (Year 5, aged 10). These boys also attended the same school as each other.

The concerns initially raised with me about Owen related to the difficulties he was having making progress in the curriculum and the way in which he continued to be dependent on his mother to a level that was immature for his age. It was intended that further developing his resilience would enable him to act with more independence and to approach curriculum tasks with more confidence.

The concerns for Kieran focussed on his slow progress with the curriculum relative to his peers but also on his relationships at home. Although his behaviour in school was considered to be good his mum was openly vocal about her perception of him presenting challenging behaviour at home and having poor relationships with his brothers. It was hoped that involvement in the narrative therapy would enable Kieran to develop the resilience he needed to cope with the challenges he was facing in school and at home. At the point of starting to be involved in the research Kieran and his family were involved with Children's Social Care services because of concerns about the ways in which the boys were cared for at home.

Daniel's parents and teachers were concerned about his ability to manage difficult feelings such as anxiety. He presented as angry at home and at school. His confidence when approaching new curriculum based tasks and when invited to be involved in social activities such as parties or class performances was very low and led to a number of avoidance strategies (hiding under a hood, refusing to take part, reluctance to come to school or go out with the family). It was agreed that he needed to be more resilient to cope with everyday challenges, but also in anticipation of a move to secondary education the following year.

Sean was in year 5 and his teachers had expressed concern that he was low in confidence in school; in his approach to work and towards other children. There was a sense that his family were finding it hard to meet his emotional needs and that it would be helpful to him to have improved resilience.

### **3.3.3 Data collection**

A rich data set was collected using a range of methods before, during and after the process of the Narrative Therapy intervention. The data collection was be systematic, thorough and robust, (see table 2). In these ways it was possible to capture the stories of the child, parent and teacher but also my stories as a researcher and educational psychologist.

<b>Time</b>	<b>Data</b>
<b>Pre involvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Teacher completes pre involvement form used to request EP involvement. (T)</li> <li>○ Parental consent form. This includes their perception of the problem and the changes they hope to see as an outcome of the NT(P)</li> </ul>
<b>Pre intervention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Narrative interview with parent (P)</li> <li>○ Narrative interview with teacher (T)</li> <li>○ Narrative interview with the child (C)</li> <li>○ EP notes regarding the possible directions of NT (EP)</li> <li>○ Reflect on data collection process (R)</li> <li>○ In all interviews focus on the child's resilience and participants experiences of working together.</li> <li>○ Child interview will be completed verbally or through use of drawing and diagrams also according to child's abilities and preferences.</li> </ul>
<b>During the therapeutic intervention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Digital voice recording of the sessions (T,P,CH,EP)</li> <li>○ Any written letters, notes, drawings or other artefacts used in the therapeutic intervention as produced by the EP, teacher, parent or child. (T, P, CH, EP)</li> <li>○ Reflections on the therapeutic process (produced during the sessions and on reflection after the session) (EP)</li> <li>○ Reflections on the process in relation to research questions (R)</li> <li>○ Teacher and parent will be asked to complete a diary describing their responses to the therapeutic session. Ten minutes will be given to this at the end of each session</li> </ul>
<b>Post intervention</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Narrative interview with parent (P)</li> <li>○ Narrative interview with teacher (T)</li> <li>○ Narrative interview with the child (C)</li> <li>○ EP reflections on the interviews. (EP)</li> <li>○ Reflections on the process of data collection (R)</li> </ul>

Table 3 Data collection throughout the research process

(T)- teacher's story, (P) – parent's story, (C) – child's story, (EP) – therapist's story, (R) - researcher's story (research diary)

### 3.3.3.1 Narrative interview

The narrative interviews occurred during visits to the school before the therapeutic sessions had started, often with a week or two lapsing between the interview and the therapy.

Narrative Oriented Inquiry suggests the researcher uses an interview guide to focus the conversation during narrative interviews. Therefore, prompt questions were used but when it was possible to let the interviewee take the lead, and still stay on the (relatively wide) topic of the child's resilience, this was encouraged. Also the interview focussed on relationships within the participant groups – between the teacher and parent as well as the child and parent, child and teacher.

The interviews with the adults consisted solely of conversations, however when working with the children they were helped to share their thoughts, ideas and feelings using a range of drawings and diagrams. For example when it was helpful to do so the children produced

sociograms showing important people in their lives and the intensity of their attachment to them, scales from one to ten to show how they felt about different aspects of their school day or their abilities, or drawings of themselves labelled with key information. These techniques are common practice for practicing educational psychologists.

The primary focus of the interviews, before and after the narrative therapy intervention, was to gather data; to collect stories relating to the child's resilience. However, as this was often the first instance of meeting with the participants, and it was the meeting preceding the therapeutic sessions, it was also an opportunity to build a relationship; to build the trust and rapport essential to an effective therapeutic relationship.

The interviews were recorded, with the participants' agreement. However notes were made detailing my thoughts and interpretations at the time, the notes also enabled me to capture some of the information which came incidentally outside of the interview recording but influenced my perception of the relationships and the child's situation. "Sometimes after the interview has ended and the tape recorder switched off, the participant will make some additional comments that can substantially influence the interpretation of the whole narrative" (Murray, 2003, p. 118) and so in the process of conducting narrative studies the researcher is urged to pay careful attention and record in logs as much detail and commentary as they can recall about the interview. These notes proved very useful to the planning of the intervention phase but also to the analysis of the stories told.

### **3.3.3.2 Narrative therapy intervention**

The narrative therapy proceeded according to the principles described in the previous chapter 'literature search' and as detailed in Morgan (2000). These skills had been developed during a 5 day training course led by The Institute of Narrative Therapy in 2008 and then built upon through professional practice since that time in my role as an Educational Psychologist in a Local Authority.

The techniques used include externalising conversations (naming the problem), exploring the effects of the problem (mutual influence), discovering unique outcomes, thickening the preferred story, documentations, outsider witnesses and are described in more detail in Appendix 7.4. The techniques were employed flexibly according to the needs of the child as identified in the initial interviews and then as each therapeutic session progressed.

## **3.4 QUALITY ASSURANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

There are many criteria by which qualitative research can be evaluated (see table 3). As is the nature of the social constructivist researcher it is hard to pin anyone down to a definition of 'good' research which can be considered to be true across contexts and time. The checklist offered by Mertens seemed to fit a slightly different paradigm with strong links being made to more positivist or quantitative research methods (Mertens, 2010) and the criteria offered by Lieblich et al., (1998) is more applicable to their own work which seems to be more phenomenological than the research described in this thesis. Yardley's offer seems to have a stronger fit with the epistemological stance taken (Yardley, 2008). This is seen specifically in Yardley's focus on the participants experiences, how their experiences can be related to the research field (of resilience in this instance) and in the

requirement for transparency and vigour which are all central to this thesis. The usefulness of Yardley’s criteria is discussed in more detail below table 4.

<b>Mertens (2010) taken from Lincoln and Guba (1985)</b>	<b>Lieblich et al 1998</b>	<b>Yardley (2008)</b>
Credibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ prolonged and persistent engagement, peer debriefing member checks, triangulation</li> </ul>	Insightfulness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the sense of innovation or originality in the presentation of the story and its analysis</li> </ul>	Sensitivity to context
Transferability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ thick descriptions, multiple cases</li> </ul>	Width <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the comprehensiveness of evidence</li> </ul>	Commitment to rigour
Dependability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ parallels reliability</li> </ul>	Coherence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the way different parts of the interpretation create a complete and meaningful picture</li> </ul>	Coherence and transparency
Transformative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ fairness, ontological authenticity, community, reflexivity etc.</li> </ul>	Parsimony <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ the ability to provide and analysis based on a small number of concepts, and elegance or aesthetic appeal</li> </ul>	Impact and importance
Confirmability <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ chain of evidence</li> </ul>		

*Table 4* Principles for evaluating the validity of qualitative research

### 3.4.1 Sensitivity to context

Sensitivity to the theoretical context of the research in terms of development of resilience and narrative research is described in the literature review. This understanding has informed the research aims, the ways in which intervention is conducted and the analysis of the data collected (see section 3.6 Method of Data Analysis). The research aim is centred within an apparent gap in understanding rather than ‘re-discovering what is already known’ (Yardley, 2008); namely providing a link between the narrative and resilience fields, using narrative theory to inform an intervention which builds upon resilience literature.

The socio-cultural setting and the participants’ perspectives are integral to the process of narrative research and NOI in particular. Narrative methods ensure the participant’s stories are listened to very carefully, in a holistic manner. The focus is on finding out about not only the story tellers recounting of events or information but also the meaning that it holds for them at that time, in the given context.

The stories were being shared within a school building. The potential implications of this for the child, parents and teachers need to be acknowledged. For the children and the teachers the school is a very familiar place in which the EP/ researcher was a visitor therefore the balance of power could be perceived as being with them. However for the parents, they were visiting a setting in which they did not necessarily feel that belonging and about which they may or may not have difficult feelings (based on a history of being invited in to talk to the teacher about challenges their child was presenting, or based on

their own experiences of being in school as a child). In addition the opportunity to meet with an Educational Psychologist has connotations (see section 3.2.1.2) which needed to be ameliorated. The narrative interview process allowed a flexibility which enabled rapport to be developed; helping all the participants to feel comfortable with the researcher/EP.

#### **3.4.2 Commitment and rigour**

Yardley suggests that commitment to seeking new knowledge and rigour of the research can be shown through thorough data collection, depth/breadth of analysis, methodological competence/ skill and in-depth engagement with the topic.

As shown in table 2 the data collected shows considerable depth with a significant amount of information being collected about each child, over time, from a variety of sources, in a number of different formats. This enabled a good understanding of the child's situation and particularly the protective and risk factors relating to their resilience. This information was collected according to the child's but also others perspectives. The data was then thoroughly analysed using a detailed method which resulted in the data being considered from multiple perspectives – at the holistic and categorical level- highlighting the teller, the telling and the told (see section 3.6.1). The scale of the data collected and the complexity of the analysis resulted in significant depth of engagement with the resilience stories.

Although the process of using NOI was relatively new to me, elements of the process were very familiar before the research started and as the project progressed skills developed with practice. Familiarity with narrative interviews came from their use in my professional role, in previous research projects including the pilot for this study. Thematic analysis had been used effectively in previous research (Duckhouse, 2012) and the entire NOI process had been practiced in a pilot study (Duckhouse, 2014).

#### **3.4.3 Coherence and transparency**

Narrative theory is strong throughout this research; there is consistency from research aim, through data collection, intervention, data analysis, all the way to the interpretation of findings. The structure offered by NOI has supported this coherence and helped it to avoid inconsistencies in epistemology and ontology.

The NOI has also demanded a high level of transparency which has been emphasised throughout this chapter and the next primarily. This high level of transparency or reflexivity has been particularly useful in illuminating the EP and the researcher roles and how these have worked together or in conflict on occasion but it has also made explicit the ways in which conclusions have been drawn from the data whilst using the resilience theory as a lens for understanding children's development.

#### **3.4.4 Impact and importance**

The motivation for this research is manifold and is articulated clearly in the introductory chapters and discussion chapter. The value of this research is in contributing to knowledge of how children's resilience can be promoted in schools and families. Research has suggested, as discussed in section 2.7, that resilience development needs to occur within and using the resources of the context in which they grow (Bernard, 1995; Brooks, 2006; Cox, 2004; Oswald, et al., 2003). This thesis aims to provide more information about ways in which this can be done. This information is valuable to educational psychologists and others who promote the emotional wellbeing of children.

In addition, the research aims to further understanding of narrative research methods, particularly Narrative Oriented Inquiry. The aim is to consider its contribution to understanding a complex data set and in its potential use in fields beyond academic research – namely educational psychology practice.

Both of the stated research aims are unique and aim to contribute to current gaps in knowledge.

### 3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical permissions were given by the university before the research started (Appendix 7.5), this permission was granted following a detailed submission of the processes and considerations which would guide and influence the way in which the research proceeded from its inception, completion and dissemination.

The research involved building therapeutic relationships with the children, and gaining the trust of their parents and the teachers, this added a deeper layer of ethical considerations to be met.

#### 3.5.1 Professional practice boundaries

In conducting this research I was acting as a member of The University of Manchester and so was bound by the stringent ethical standards set by this organisation but I was also acting as an Educational Psychologist as employed by the Local Authority and so I was additionally bound by the Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics as set by the Health and Care Professionals Council (HCPC, 2008). It was these latter standards which enabled me to provide the therapeutic elements of the research safely and with confidence.

Throughout the process there was a need to be transparent with the participants about the dual nature of my role, throughout the process I was acting as both researcher and educational psychologist/ therapist. This duality of involvement can be potentially problematic as the aim of the researcher is the advancement of knowledge whereas the main goal of therapy is to effect change in the client (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008). It is therefore important to be transparent about these roles with the participants but also as for me to reflect upon this potential conflict and to be transparent with myself and the reader about times when one role needed to be prioritised over the other.

It was made clear to all the participants that my primary role in the school was to provide an educational psychology service to the children but the research element of the process was also made obvious– in the consent paperwork and in conversations during the process. It was made clear to them that the EP role would be prioritised over the researcher role should a conflict arise –for example it was explained that if at any point it was felt that it would be more beneficial for the child to receive a different type of support from the EP then this would have been prioritised and involvement in the research would have been stopped without prejudice.

A high level of reflexivity on my part throughout the process of data gathering, conducting the intervention and in data analysis helped in being clear about the nature of these two roles. There were times when I needed to act in a way which prioritised the therapeutic role over the researcher role. For example better research data could have been collected

through more targeted questioning in the Narrative Interviews but for the sake of the efficacy of therapeutic work it was necessary to prioritise the relationship between myself and the participants. These reflections are shared in the researcher and EP stories which were written as the research progressed (see EP and researcher story in appendix 7.6 about Daniel). The implications of this prioritising the EP role are examined in 4.2.1 in the Findings chapter and 5.4.8 in the Discussion chapter.

### 3.5.2 Informed consent

Each participant was required to give informed consent to their involvement in the process. Written information was provided for the adults and they were given the opportunity to discuss the process on the telephone or in person, with myself and with my supervisor. The parents gave written consent for their children's involvement in the research, however the children were also given the opportunity to give or withhold their consent during the initial meeting. Each participant was told that they were free to withdraw their consent at any time, and that this could be done without putting the EP provision for the child in jeopardy.

The nature of the narrative research methodology and the narrative therapy intervention meant that the participant's involvement needed to be given freely and without pressure. On each occasion of meeting the children were given a choice of whether or not to engage with me on that day, and the teachers and parents were invited to join us; it was intended that they felt motivated to attend because they knew that their contributions would be helpful rather than feeling that they must attend.

### 3.5.3 Confidentiality

Maintaining confidentiality is a core principle of Educational Psychology practice and so is a practiced part of my professional conduct. Records were kept safely according to HCPC standards (paper copies kept in locked cupboards and electronic information kept on an encrypted memory stick) and information shared only with parental consent as detailed on the research consent forms and the Local Authority parental consent forms.

In the writing up of the research it was necessary to protect the anonymity of the participants through taking care not to disclose schools names or locations.

### 3.5.4 Protection from harm

Consideration of the possible harm which may befall any of the participants as a result of their involvement in the research was made early in the planning process. These were identified as potential risks and the appropriate responses or safeguards were described in the application to the University Ethics committee. The ability to identify and minimise risk is also a key tenet of The Standards of Conduct Performance and Ethics, (HCPC, 2008) which guides my professional EP practice. The following important points were explicitly addressed.

Integral to the data collection and engaging with the narrative therapy sessions was a likelihood that the children and their parents would share stories about difficult times, thoughts or feelings. It was important therefore that as a researcher and practitioner I was acting within my professional competency and was able to respond this in a way that was helpful to the participants. As an EP I am well practiced in managing these conversations and when necessary seeking further support for the client, and supervision for myself when necessary. Within the research design was a repeated opportunity for any of the

participants to withdraw consent, this would have been used if it was felt that a different course of action would be more helpful to the child's wellbeing. In addition, as I was working in familiar school, with in a Local Authority I had worked in for over ten years a full understanding of Safeguarding responsibilities and processes was already in place.

The possibility of the children being in an emotionally vulnerable state the end of the interviews and each of the therapeutic sessions was acknowledged. Each meeting with the children was conducted to ensure that the likelihood of this was minimised. However it was important to know that should this be the case it was that the child would be given to the care of an appropriate adult who would be able to meet these needs. On each occasion of taking the child back to their classroom after our time working together a comment was made to the teacher about the likely needs of the child at that time.

The risks presented by inviting other adults into the therapeutic conversation was also identified. There was the risk that these adults would not contribute constructively and perhaps that they would do harm to the progress made by the narrative therapy. The process of inviting the adults in the conversations with the boys was managed carefully; explaining to the adults before they entered the room what the purpose of their contribution would be and giving them a chance to plan what they wanted to say, and even check with me that their ideas were helpful if they wanted to do so. There was also the risk that the parent's nonattendance at the therapeutic sessions would be perceived badly by the children and that this would make their sense of a secure base at home less strong. This was managed through carefully communication between the school and the parents so that when the parents did not attend the child was given an explanation as to why, an alternative plan was made for the parent and teacher to meet.

Finally, when working directly with children in a therapeutic relationship a level of trust is required and it is important that this is based on transparency about the nature and extent of the relationship. In this research it was important to be open with the children about the limits of my role; the number of times we were likely to meet and that I was unlikely to be able to meet with them formally in the future. In this way it was possible to manage any risk of breaking this trust and so the child feeling let down when our contact ceased.

## **3.6 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

In this section the rigorous process of exploring the data will be described and in so doing ensure that there is transparency about the way in which the research findings are based very much in the array of information collected about the boys and their resilience stories.

### **3.6.1 Processing the raw data: a chain of evidence**

Table 4 describes how the raw data was analysed in order to answer the research aims; taking it from the point of recorded interviews to a clearer understanding of the information shared in them, through the six interpretative perspectives of NOI. Although it is possible another researcher may come to different conclusions when presented with the same data it is intended that any reader can see that my conclusions were based on the data, robust thinking, and processes of analysis consistent with NOI.



<b>Action</b>	<b>Rationale</b>
<b>Transcribe the interviews</b>	<p>The sessions were transcribed so that I could reflect on the stories as they were told rather than the version that I would have recorded in notes during usual EP practice.</p> <p>Using notes would have left me open to selecting stories which were pertinent to my understanding of the situation as a researcher or pertinent to my goals as an EP.</p> <p>The process of transcription increased familiarity with the data; it contributed to my immersion in the text.</p>
<b>Re read the transcripts a number of times</b>	Further immersion in the stories.
<b>Reflect</b>	<p>Periods of reflection between readings and sessions of active analysis were helpful. Reflection included talking to colleagues or preparing for supervision for example. Thinking about the children, the process of the NT and the data analysis helped me to make a coherent story out of the numerous stories being heard (from child, parent and teacher).</p>
<b>Chunk</b>	<p>The narratives were broken into shorter sections or bite sized 'chunks'; as a notion or an idea. Sometimes this would be a phrase or a few words, or it may have been a fuller exchange of ideas between myself and the participant.</p> <p>This process helps me to see patterns in the conversation and themes of the story. It was also another way of immersing myself in the data.</p> <p>The words and phrases were chunked quickly and instinctively; it was not crucial to be careful about where the parts were separated out, as the story is analysed as a whole <i>and</i> through its parts. This process was revisited at later stages as I became more familiar with the interview and the analysis process, allowing for further separating of sections or re- joining parts to a whole.</p>
<b>Add comments regarding the key point of chunk</b>	<p>Each chunk was labelled with a key word or a phrase. This helped with later steps in the analysis and navigation around long interviews. Most of the comments were added early in the process but sometimes further comments or notes were added at later stages, as my perception of the interview became clearer.</p> <p>Accurately labelling each chunk meant that it needed to be thought about carefully and so increased familiarity with the story.</p> <p>I found that it was useful to have an extra page to make notes at this time. As I noticed narratives and patterns emerging in our interviews I was able to make quick notes which could then be used later in the analysis process.</p>
<b>Sjuzet/fabula</b>	<p>As is suggested by Hiles and Cermak the sjuzet was then underlined.</p> <p>Only the words said by the participants were subject to this categorisation; the researcher's words belong to a different</p>

	<p>story but are included in the transcript because they help to give the story coherence for the reader.</p> <p>The teachers talking about their own teaching was marked as sjuzet as they relate to the story of the teller rather than the child's story which is the most overt focus of the conversation. Also repeats are included in the sjuzet as that indicates emphasis about the way the story is being told.</p> <p>Further noting taking about the patterns and themes was used during this process.</p>
<b>Holistic- content</b>	<p>This step considers the whole of the interview and describes the overall message which was portrayed by the participant. This required a high level of familiarity with the whole of the interview; even though there may be many elements with the story it was necessary to be able to see the strongest theme or overall message of it, holistically.</p> <p>This section was often written and re written, added to and sections removed as the other steps in the analysis progressed. Sometimes it became apparent that information initially included in this section would fit more accurately into later step in the analysis and sometimes the lens offered by other steps in the process made me reconsider the things I had written in my first attempt.</p>
<b>Holistic - form</b>	<p>This required a metacognitive level of thinking about the story; rather than focussing on the content or the resilience messages it looks for genre of the story, how the narrative developed, any twists and turns, any plots that evolved or the overall form of the story.</p>
<b>Categorical - content</b>	<p>The resilience theory including that offered by Grotberg and others (see appendix 7.1) guided the thematic analysis of the text, this is given in the third column of the interview analysis tables.</p> <p>Accuracy was increased by going over this step a number of times, moving from initial, instinctive reaction to a position which could be referenced through the themes identified in the research literature.</p> <p>Consistency was increased by checking that similar chunks appearing at different times within one interview and across interviews/participants were labelled in the same way.</p>
<b>Categorical – form</b>	<p>This lens look for the meaning of the story or stories being told for the person who was telling it. Rather than focussing on the child and their resilience, this step allowed the teacher, parent or child to come to the fore. In allowing their feelings and thoughts about the child's resilience to be heard the meaning of these factors for them became apparent.</p> <p>This was done though focussing on the sjuzet and looking for words or phrases which were repeated and making a note of these patterns. It was interesting to note when someone contradicted themselves, or seemed to be going back and forth between viewpoints.</p>

	The information given in this step overlapped with that given in the next. Some cutting and pasting from one section to the other was necessary before all the information was in the right place.
<b>Critical analysis</b>	This step focussed on how the teacher, parent or child positioned themselves in relation to any changes. It was useful to focus on the sjuzet again but this time to look for ways in which the teller talked about how they felt about their own role in the process. Sometimes the language they used made this easy to see and to illustrate my understanding of their story but sometimes it was necessary to hear the tone of the person's voice or to feel the meaning of the silences and pauses or the rapid speech which flowed excitedly. In this instance it was helpful to have been a part of the interviews and hear the recorded interview.
<b>And revisiting again</b>	At the end of the six steps the information which had been highlighted by each of the lenses was re-read to ensure there was coherence; that the parts still reflected the whole. This helped me to understand more clearly particular themes or subjects or events in the conversation.
<b>Writing the summary</b>	A concise summary was written to encapsulate the tone and content of the narrative interview.
<b>Sticking to an individual</b>	The analysis of both interviews with each participant was completed before moving onto another participant. This helped to keep the story of each person, from initial meeting to the end of the research, more coherent.
<b>Comparing the pre and post NT interviews (within participant)</b>	The pre and post NT interviews given by one person were compared soon after the initial analyses were completed. The interviews were still in mind and my understanding of them easily recalled by looking through both the transcript (with sjuzet, labelled chunks and resilience factors) and the NOI analysis. The summary was a useful starting point but it was better to go back through each of the 6 steps to look for consistency and difference between the interviews. It was especially helpful to look at the resilience tables which were included in the Categorical - Content step.
<b>Comparing the pre NT interviews (across participants).</b>	When the 6 interviews were analysed and the comparisons between the pre and post interview had been made the stories told by the 3 participants in our initial meetings were compared. Comparing the summary of each gave a starting point and an initial idea of differences and similarities emerged. But going back and comparing each of the 6 steps of the analysis across the 3 participants looking for detail and confirming or otherwise my initial thoughts was necessary. It was especially helpful to look at the resilience tables included in the Categorical - Content step. A diagram of the resilience stories was created to show commonalities and differences between the participants. Diagrams were created for risk and protective factors (see figures 12 to 23). Theses figures show the possible influence

	of the parent and the teacher on the child's own resilience stories, and the links between therapeutic focus in the NT sessions and the stories shared by all participants. In making these diagrams legible and meaningful the words given by the participants were paraphrased, often using words which have been used to describe protective and risk factors in the resilience literature. An example of how the data was transformed from interview transcript to the diagram, via thematic analysis and the table of risk and protective factors is given in appendix 7.7
<b>Comparing the post NT interviews (across participants).</b>	This process was repeated with the post NT interviews. The impact of the NT was included in the diagrams of the risk and protective factors.
<b>EP story</b>	The EP story was analysed after analysis of the parent, teacher and child stories was complete. This helped me to keep their stories intact, rather than being influenced by the story as I had seen it. The raw transcripts were used to ask "What was the EP story of this interview?" using the 6 NOI steps. This was not done as thoroughly as with the stories told by the participants but rather the steps were kept in mind to facilitate objectivity. EP notes which were made during the process of the NT were also used. During this step in the data analysis I also reflected on how well I was able to maintain a focus on the EP aim of improving the child's resilience.
<b>Researcher story</b>	The researcher story of the process was the last to be analysed using the 6 NOI steps. During this step I reflected on my efficacy in my role as a researcher; how well I was able to elicit useful and complete data and how well I was able to use my knowledge of the resilience research literature to inform my questioning and responses.

*Table 5: Applying six interpretative perspectives of NOI*

A full example of the analysis process taken with the data about Daniel is given in appendix 7.6, including some of the tabulated interview transcripts with the sjuzet/fabula marked, chunking with labels and resilience factors listed; an example of the thematic analysis from transcription to model diagram; and a full NOI analysis as described above.

In these ways the raw data, of the interviews and NT sessions, research diaries and participant dairies, was transformed into data which could be used to answer the research questions.

### **3.6.1.1 Sequential learning from each participant group**

The data relating to Owen and Kieran was collected first: the data related to Owen analysed and the research aims explored and then the data relating to Kieran was analysed and the research aims explored for the second time. The work and data collection with Daniel and Sean started subsequently with the lessons learnt from the work about Owen and Kieran influencing the processes used. The data relating to Daniel was then analysed and the research aims explored for the third time. At this point it became apparent that a

saturation point had been reached in terms of the learning which could be achieved. The information collected from the work about Sean, the fourth child, was listened to and read a number of times whilst considering the research aims. Sean's needs were overlapping with the other boys – a need to become more confident in his own abilities – and so a similar approach was taken with him during the therapeutic sessions. Also, Sean's parents engaged only minimally with the process and contributed little to the changes he made. Through analysing the data in a relatively partial manner, and reflecting on the overlap between his situation and that represented by the other boys, it was confirmed that the benefit of further, thorough and time consuming, analysis would be minimal and not an effective use of time.

### **3.6.2 The process of data analysis to answer Research Aim 1**

Research aim 1 set out to explore how the stories told about resilience change as a result of Narrative Therapy intervention. The NOI analysis resulted in the data being recorded in formats which could be compared; patterns and differences identified between the initial and last interviews and across group members.

The process of some of the interpretative steps in the NOI highlighted a focus on the relationships between the participants but also between the participants and the changes which were being effected by the intervention. This added a richness to the understanding of the changes which was valuable and so was also used to answer this research aim.

The process of answering this research aim built on the immersion in the data already achieved and involved reading, making notes, re reading whilst looking for commonalities, themes and differences which illuminated firstly the process of developing the children's resilience and secondly how the relationships between the participants and the stories developed.

The research aim 1 was answered for each boy separately in Findings, section 4.1 and then the lessons learnt from the three cases were combined in the Discussion, section 5.1.

### **3.6.3 Analysis of the data to answer Research Aim 2**

The role of NOI in understanding the resilience stories told by each child was reflected on soon after answering Research Aim 1. The NOI process starts with the research question influencing the development of the Narrative Interview guide and then conducting the Narrative Interview itself. The question being asked of the data was "Does NOI help the stories to be told?" Evaluating the effectiveness of the interview guide and the way in which the interview proceeded was done primarily through the story of the Researcher and the EP; considering whether the interview resulted in useful data but also whether it provided a useful platform from which the Narrative Therapy could build.

Each of the Six Interpretative perspectives was then judged with regard to the usefulness of the information it provided in answering Research Aim 1. The question being asked at this point was "Does NOI help us to hear the stories being told?" and then because the relationships between the participants and the interactions between their stories was also important a last question was posed - "Does NOI help us to compare the stories told?"

These questions were answered initially through looking at the data provided by each case, but these outcomes were combined to provide one set of findings, as described in section 4.2 and summarised in Discussion, section 5.2.

## 4 FINDINGS

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### 4.1 RESEARCH AIM 1

The first stated aim of the research was to explore the ways in which the resilience stories told by the child, their parent and class teacher changed following a period of narrative therapy intervention. The aim of the intervention was to develop the stories which would be seen as useful to the child being more resilient in the face of adversity. The model proposed in the literature review suggests that the children's resilience will be supported by the important adults around them contributing to their development of protective resilience stories. The relationships and interactions between the participants, their stories and the ways in which they change is of interest. This chapter presents the findings firstly in relation to research aim 1, exploring the changes to each boy's resilience stories in turn, and secondly in relation to research aim 2 in which the usefulness of NOI is considered in relation to the findings provided by all three cases together.

The boys who agreed to take part in the research were different to each other. They were in different year groups and the needs they presented were different. Owen's confidence in year 5 was very low – he wanted to be more successful with learning but didn't have the problem solving skills, or self-efficacy required to make the changes. His teacher was struggling to overcome these barriers. Owen's mum knew that her son was struggling with learning but had accepted that and was happy for him to be who he was, her positive regard for him was unconditional. Kieran was in year 4, his teachers were concerned that he was struggling with learning and believing he could learn, in addition the support he received from home was not sufficient to the extent that social care were supporting his mum to make improvements. Her expectations of him with regard to learning and behaviour were low, her hope for change was also low. Daniel was the eldest of the three boys as he was in Year 6. In this instance it was the mum who had the most anxiety about her son. Daniel was struggling with learning but the priority area of concern raised by Daniel, his teacher and his mum related to his difficulties regulating his emotions. This had been labelled as anger or anxiety by different members of the group. Daniel was overwhelmed by these difficult feelings and his mother was feeling that she was unable to help. His teacher was more empowered from the beginning.

These differences in the boys additional needs and in the perceptions of others meant that the focus of the NT session was different in each case; but only to an extent. With each boy work was done to support the development of resilience stories in the 3 building blocks of resilience 'I have...', 'I am...' and 'I can...'

The first part of this chapter reports the findings revealed by analysis of the stories provided by each of the participant groups in turn. A descriptive analysis of the findings is provided in the case of each boy and is supplemented by diagrams (which illustrate the changes in a format consistent with the model proposed) and by illustrative quotes taken from the interviews.

#### 4.1.1 Exploring how the stories told about Owen's resilience changed as a result of the narrative therapy intervention.

The changes in the stories told by and about Owen before and after the NT are generally consistent with the aims of the research; there was an increase in prevalence of the resilience stories which are described as protective factors as would be consistent with a resilient self-identity (see figures 12 to 15). There was also a shift apparent in the relationships within the group.

##### 4.1.1.1 Resilience stories

The analysis showed that Owen developed new protective factors during the time of the NT intervention. He learned to talk about factors which allowed him a sense of "I can..." or self-efficacy. This included being able to produce written work and tackle tasks in class with greater confidence. He was able to talk about his singing talent. He was able to talk about a number of instances in which he was able to solve problems and act independently. Before the intervention his 'I can..' stories very much focussed on sport, but in developing a wider range of "I can..." protective factors the prevalence of sport reduced in the stories he told about himself and that others told about him.

Some of the protective factors he held before the intervention started had been maintained. The most consistently protective factor had initially been his secure base – in school and at home- and this was maintained throughout. His sense of being able to say "I have..." was a consistent strength.

*Initial interview with Owen section 6:*

*R – ... who are the people you are close to and you love, you want to be with?*

*O – Mum... Dad, brothers Ryan and Jordan...My mum's friend, Sam.*

*R - ...*

*O - My cousins...- Kieran and Liam.*

*Initial interview Owen section 7:*

*R...So let's put some friends in here people you like to hang out with*

*O – Ben...Cooper and Daniel*

*R - Would you say you have enough friends or would you like more?*

*O - I have got enough friends*

*R- You have quite a few what's his name?*

*O – Daniel... James*

*Initial interview with Owen section 9:*

*R - And who would you talk to if you were upset about something.*

*O – Ms P, Mr P, mum dad, Ryan Jordan Sam or Ben and Cooper*

*R - So you have a lot of people you can talk to about things. And would they ask you if they were upset?*

*O – Yes*



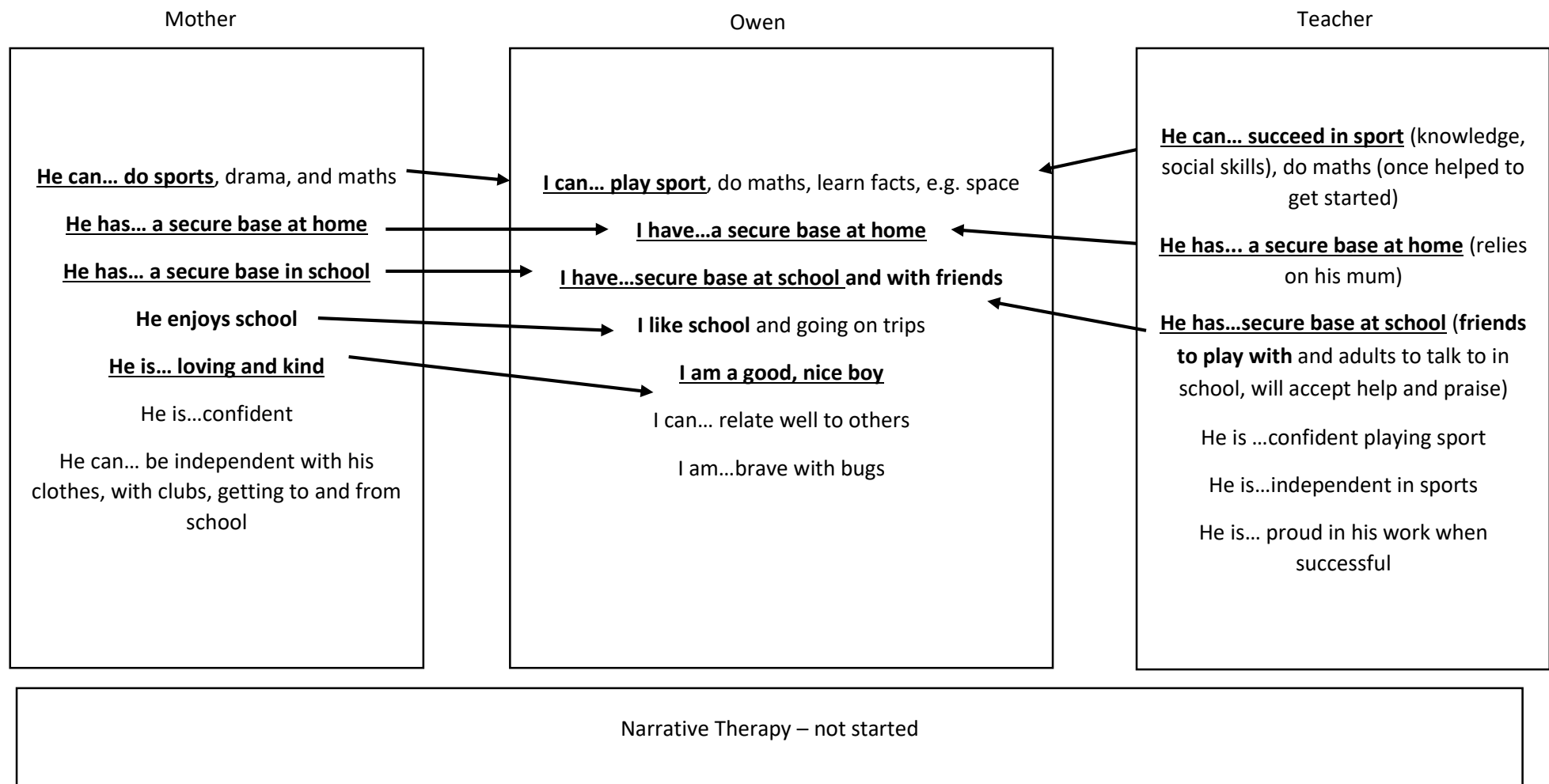


Figure 12: Resilience stories about Owen before NT: protective factors

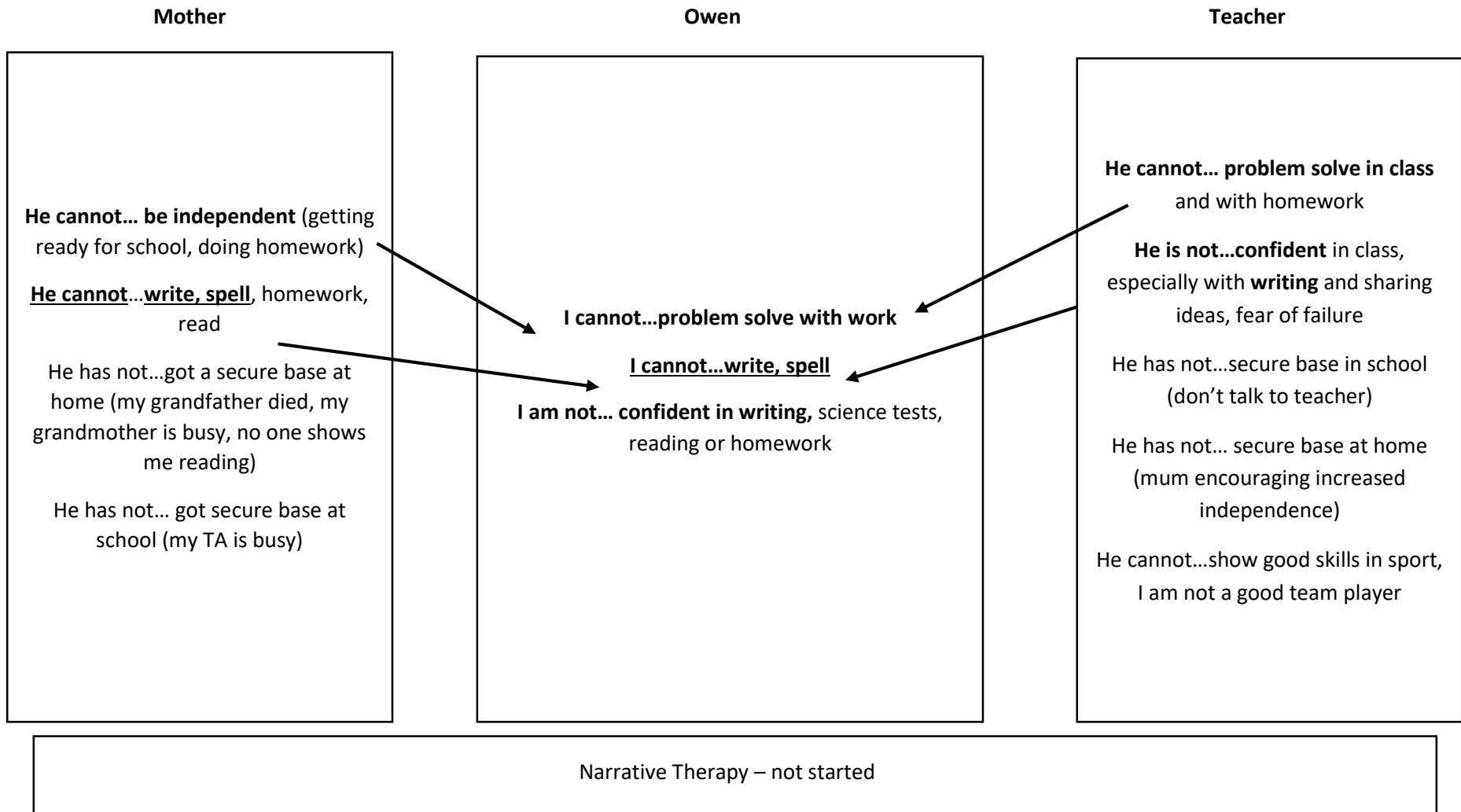


Figure 13: Resilience stories about Owen before NT: Risk factors

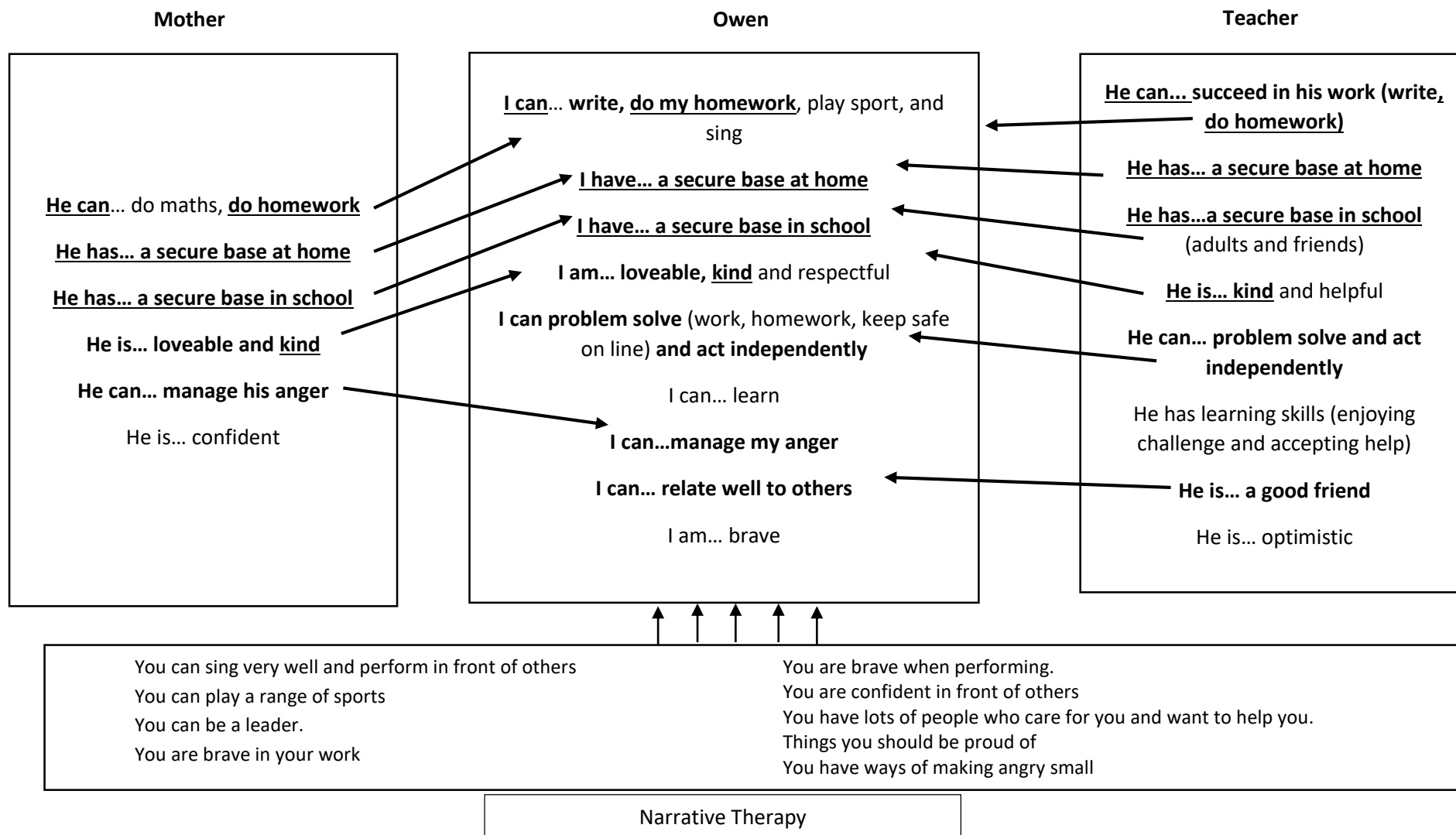


Figure 14: Resilience stories about Owen after NT: protective factors

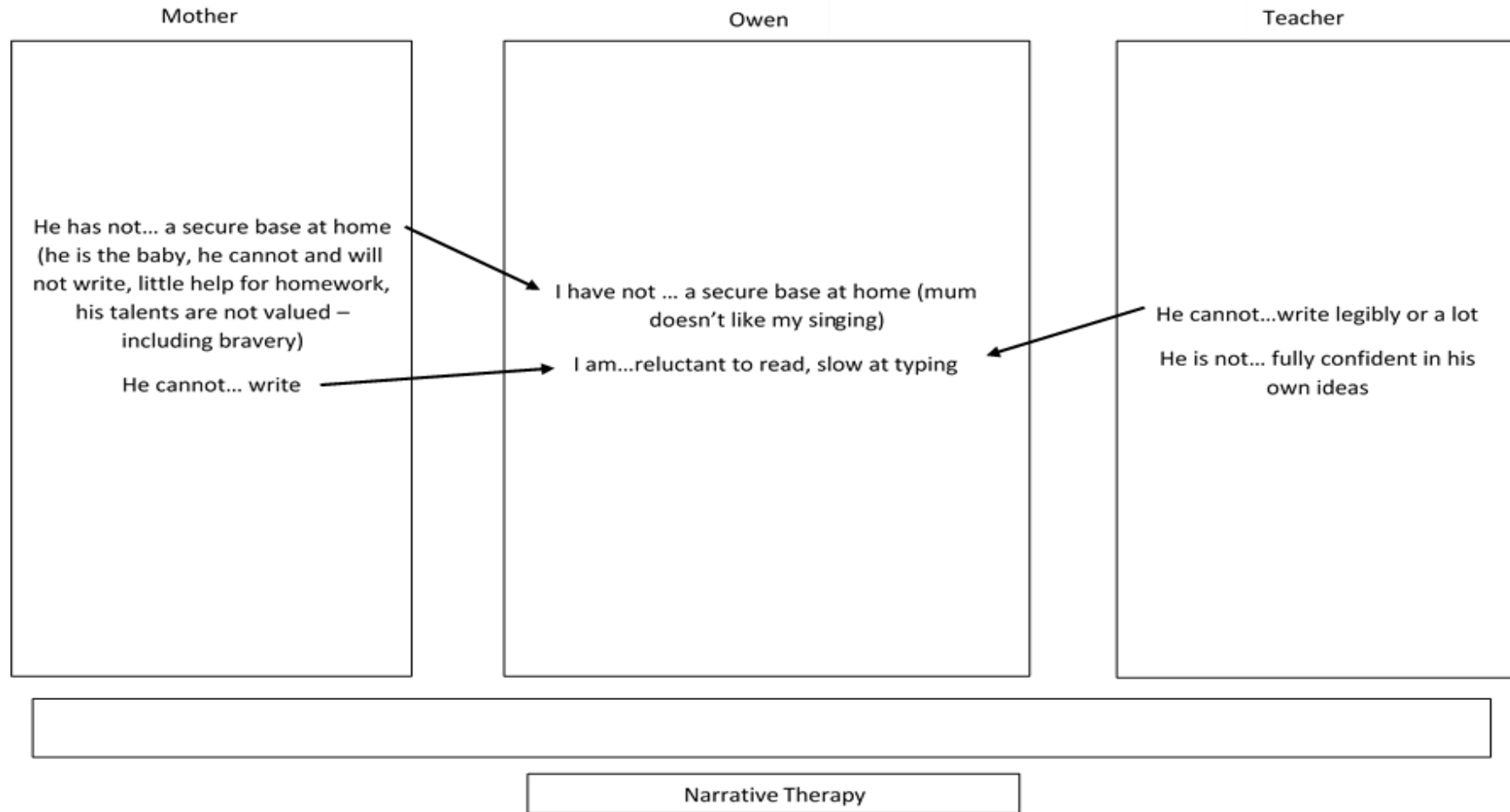


Figure 15: Resilience stories about Owen after NT: risk factors

Some of the protective factors became stronger- being owned by more participants or the stories about them becoming richer. For example Owen and his mum always saw him as a nice boy – Owen describing himself as ‘nice’ and his mum as ‘loving and kind’, but through the process this story became part of the teachers landscape of Owen also and Owen developed more meaningful vocabulary and more examples of these attributes. He heard others talking about and valuing examples of him showing kindness across situation and across time, and in turn he too was able to talk more fluently about them. In this way his “I am...kind” stories developed greatly.

*Post NT interview with Owen, section 21.*

*O - Because I am kind, my mum wants to go and get stuff out of the dryer, sometimes I go and get it for her*

*R - Do you?*

*O - Yes, and help her do the washing,*

*R - So we can have ‘helpful’*

*O - ...and I am going to be helpful helping my dad delivering the Chinese’s*

Another “I am...” story which developed related to Owen being brave. It was interesting to note that the term “brave” was not used particularly but that Owen, his mum and his teacher offered examples of about times when he was being brave, acting with more confidence, or greater independence, when faced with a challenge.

*Post NT interview with Owen section 9:*

*O - I can do rugby too. In February we are going to play before the match and go through the tunnel*

*R - You are playing on the pitch!*

*O - Yes at half time, when the fans are there! And we could be walking out with the players.*

*R - That would be fab wouldn’t it! Are you nervous?*

*O – No*

*Post NT interview with his mum section 19:*

*M - I know cos he has always been like that at home, acting and singing and dancing around the house. And you think ‘what is he doing like?’ and you think he is dead shy in front of other people, but he’s not any more*

*Post NT interview with teacher section 12:*

*T...And when they read it to each other you can see them really listening to each other. And that’s really helped his confidence because he feels he is working with someone, he’s supporting somebody else and he is accepting Kyle saying ‘What does that mean, what have you written? I don’t get it’.*

In these ways it is possible to see the links between the aims of the NT and the resilience stories developed during the process.

The stories which were told also illustrate the ways in which Owen’s behaviour was changing beyond the therapeutic setting. Owen, his mum and the teacher all reported that there were changes in the way that he was facing situations which would previously have been too hard for him to cope with; he was showing resilience. There were examples of him showing resilience in his writing work in class and when doing homework. This

suggests that it was not just the stories that were changing but also his abilities in the real world.

*Post NT interview with teacher, section 19:*

*J - Whereas sometimes if I had put them in the computer area with just one other person and a computer he'd probably would have just sat at the computer screen. Whereas today he generated a report today with no other support than a peer, and that is massive compared to 3 or 4 weeks ago, what I would have been able to get him to do.*

*Post NT interview with Owen section 26:*

*R - How are you managing with trying homework?*

*O - Good*

*R - Have you done any homework yet?*

*O - I am going to do some tonight if mum is off. If she gets home late she wants her tea and wants to watch boring TV and doesn't want me disturbing her. But if she's off tonight...*

*R - Have you done your Risley Moss homework?*

*O - Yep*

A risk factor had reduced during the process of the NT. He and his mum initially expressed concerns about Owen becoming angry. In the post NT interviews both talked of him being able to manage these difficult feelings more effectively. It had never been part of the teacher's stories about Owen (the anger was only expressed at home).

*Post NT interview with mum, section 11 and 12:*

*M- He does get angry,*

*R - We all get angry, is it an issue?*

*M- Not really, it's just normal I think. OK I wouldn't say it was.*

*R - What does he get angry about?*

*M - Just little things wind him up. It doesn't help having two older brothers.*

*R - Is he mostly angry with them?*

*M - Yes that's what I mean, its normal.*

It was Owen's teacher who most dramatically reduced the prevalence of risk stories. Initially his risk based stories had overwhelmed the protective factors but in the final interview the balance had swung the other way. The risk factors which had remained were thin and without detail. He only briefly mentions concerns about the legibility of Owen's writing and the amount he was producing whereas previously he had given a lot of detail and expressed anxiety that he was not writing and needed a lot of help to get started even.

#### **4.1.1.2 Relationships**

At the start of this process Owen and his mum clearly had a strong bond but the relationship between Owen and his teacher was less strong. The teacher was motivated to help Owen to overcome his barriers but he was finding it hard to do so and felt that Owen was not confident with him.

*Pre NT interview with teacher section 33:*

*T - But he's very, quite, if I say to him are you OK he'll nod, he won't tell me that he is struggling...so he will give it to me but again he is fearful.*

This relative lack of a close working relationship was also seen in the low level of overlap in the initial stories told by Owen and his teacher. However by the end of the process the teacher was feeling much happier about their relationship and the overlap between their resilience stories in the end was greater than the overlap between those told by Owen and his mum. Also it was the teacher who was, in the end, talking with hope about being able to help Owen maintain and build on the changes he had started.

*Post NT interview with teacher section 84:*

*T - He is fab, I just want him to excel.*

This suggests that Owen's teacher will be the most helpful to him in terms of maintaining his story of himself as a resilient boy.

This improved relationship and greater congruence in stories could be related to it being the teacher who was particularly keen to seek changes at the start of the process and it was he who attended the NT sessions more consistently – he achieved the changes he wanted and was prepared to work for.

In contrast, Owen's mother seemed to change less in her stories about Owen: her perception of Owen changed little and so her expectations of him remained the same. This presents a threat to the maintenance of the resilience change. In both interviews, before and after the NT, Owens mums' stories did not focus on changes she was hoping for or that she had seen, this may have influenced her willingness to notice changes which were starting. It could be perceived that she likes the position Owen had in the family, as the baby, and that she wasn't ready to give this up.

*Post NT interview with mum section 32:*

*M -It's hard for Owen in our house because he is just the baby. Bless him.*

In my experience, children are expected to behave in a more mature manner in school than at home and this pattern is certainly reflected in this case; Owen was raising his game in school where expectations on him were increasing and he was trying to bring this into his home life by getting on with his homework. His attempts were not being fully supported but rather were being met with expressions of surprise, disbelief and expectations that it wouldn't last.

*Post NT interview with mum section 7 and 8:*

*M - ... and I said you can't come upstairs, why don't you do your homework. And I thought he's never going to do it. But he did....and he just went down stairs sat at the table and did it and I was like oh my god ...he was like can you tell me brothers, they are distracting me while am writing. And I was like wow what has happened to you Owen?*

*Section 34,*

*R - ...like his handwriting is still painful but...*

*M - He just doesn't want to do it though I am afraid.*

The primary area of change that all three members of the group were most concerned about related to Owen's ability to cope when faced with a writing task. This was a challenge for him which was primarily based in the classroom, and an area in which any teacher would feel it is important to move forward- the writing difficulty was very present in the relationship between Owen and his teacher – in a way which would not be true for the relationship between Owen and his mum. It is only natural that the change was given greater presence in the teachers stories and less so in the mums; especially as a mum who is not overly concerned with the academic prowess of her son.

#### **4.1.1.3 *What does Owen tell us about developing resilience?***

Protective factors can become more prevalent in a child's resilience stories about themselves following NT. Stories which they already have in their narrative about themselves can be maintained or strengthened. This strengthening is seen in the child being able to use more accurate vocabulary, being able to give more detailed examples and in being able to talk more fluently about the resilience factor.

New protective resilience stories can be identified and developed through the NT. This was achieved through focussing on one small story of an event about which the child was feeling proud and through NT techniques making this a valued part of the resilience landscape the child holds about themselves, and that others hold about him.

The building blocks of resilience, 'I have...', 'I am...' and 'I can...' lend themselves to being developed into rich and prevalent stories within the resilience landscape. Each can be supported through conversation and NT activities with the child alone and when important adults are invited to contribute to the therapeutic process.

It is possible to develop increased congruence in the stories held by the child and the adults around them through such therapeutic conversations. This seems to be most likely to occur when there is shared wish to make a change and when the adult attends more of the therapy sessions.

It is possible for the protective factors to be present in both the stories told and also in the actions of the child outside the therapeutic sessions; there is some suggestion of the child showing resilience at times when previously they would not have been able to. This seems to be supported when the significant adult is able to be present in both settings (therapy and classroom in this case).

In this case, it was hard to change the parent's stories about their child when they attend only one NT session. Also this parent seemed not to have been seeking any change.

#### **4.1.2 *Exploring how the stories told about Kieran's resilience changed as a result of the narrative therapy intervention.***

Kieran's stories about himself were positive in both of the narrative interviews, however the way that he presented himself and the nature of his stories changed; they become broader in focus, richer in detail and more confidently told, see figures 16 - 19. The stories his teacher and mother tell about him change with the former making significant alterations to her portrayal of him. The relationships between Kieran stories and those told by his mum and his teacher is apparent, and the influence of the NT can be seen in Kieran's and his teacher's stories.



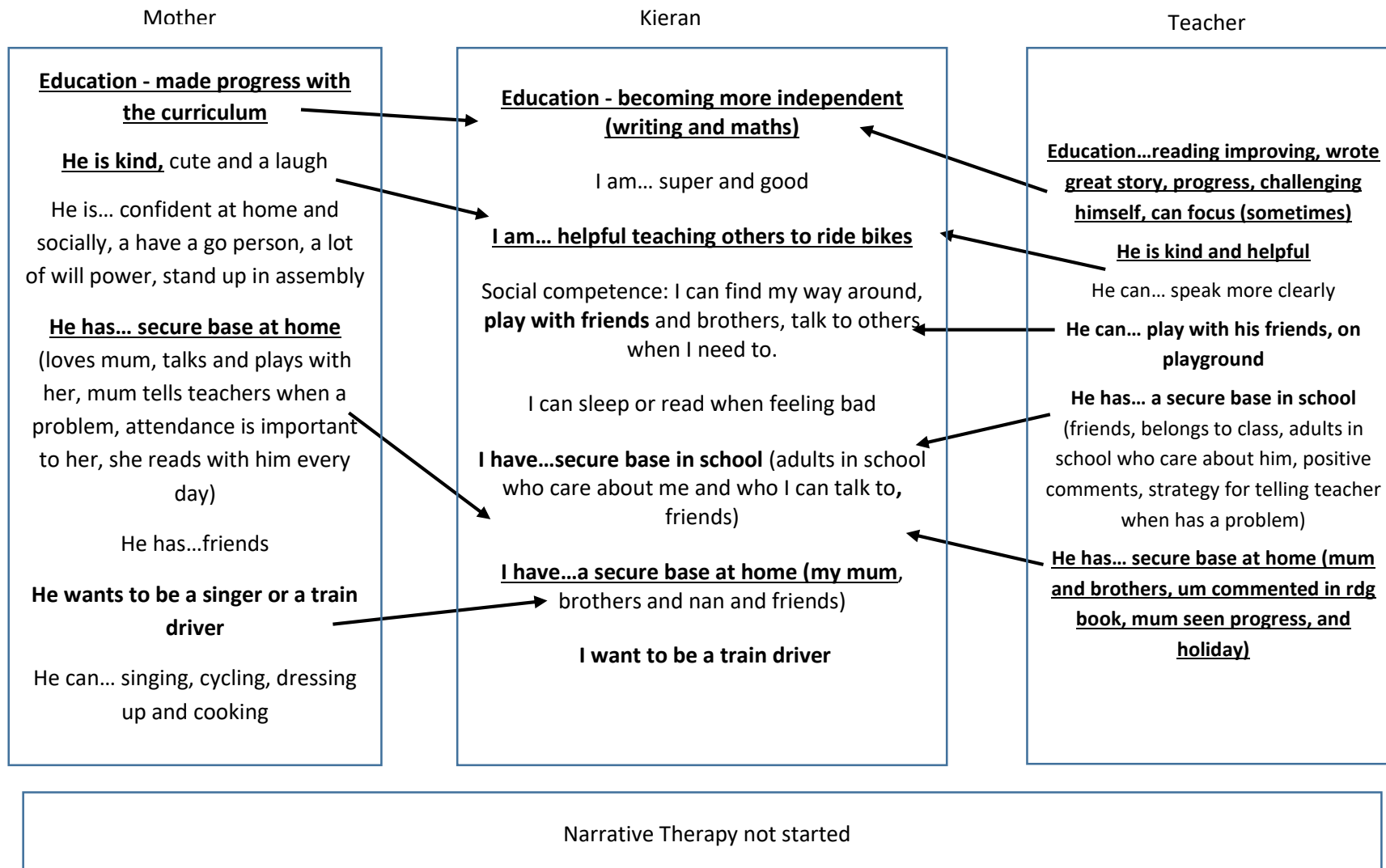


Figure 16: Resilience stories about Kieran before NT: protective factors

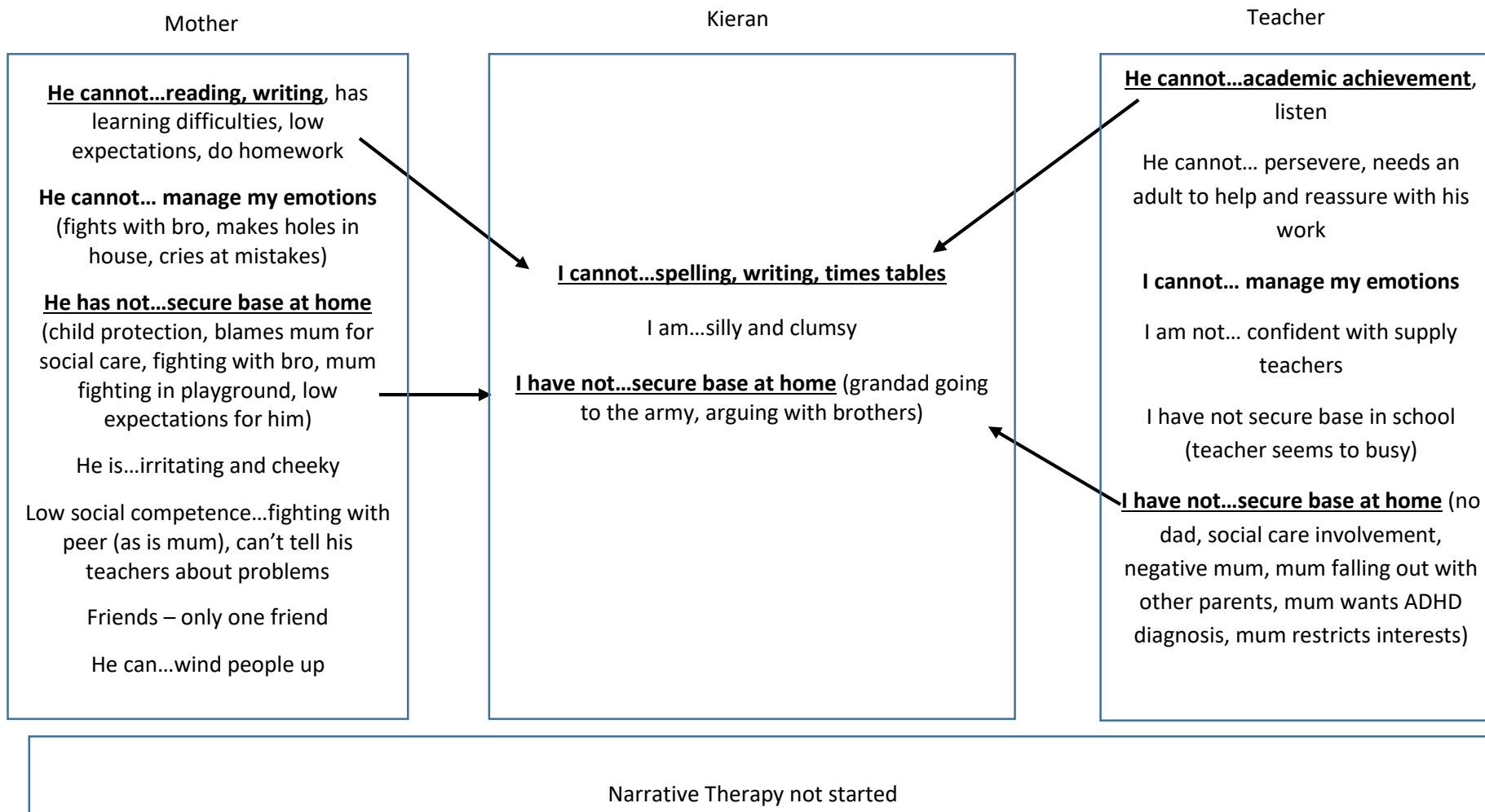


Figure 17: Resilience stories about Kieran before NT: risk factors

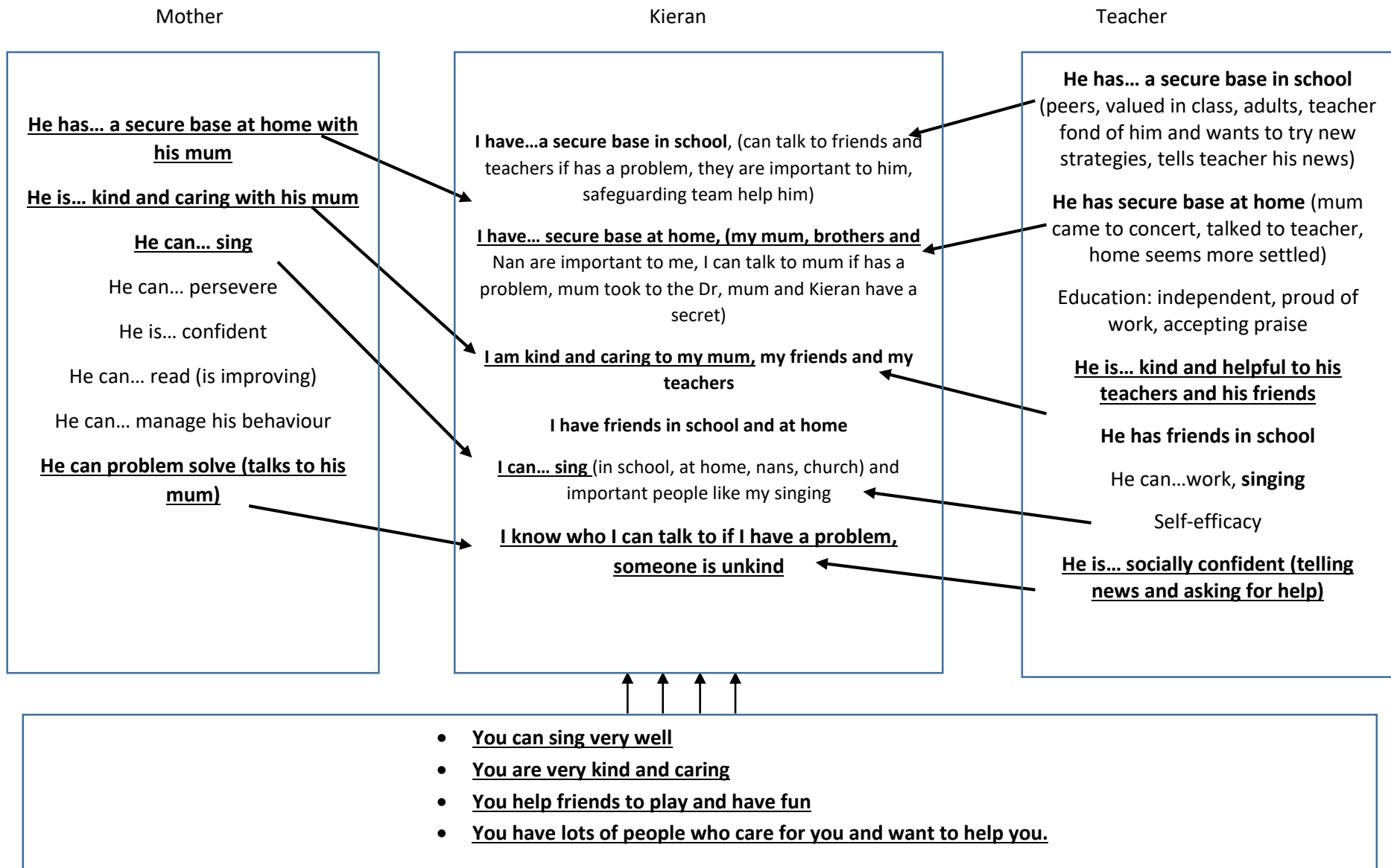


Figure 18: Resilience stories about Kieran after NT: Protective factors

Narrative Therapy

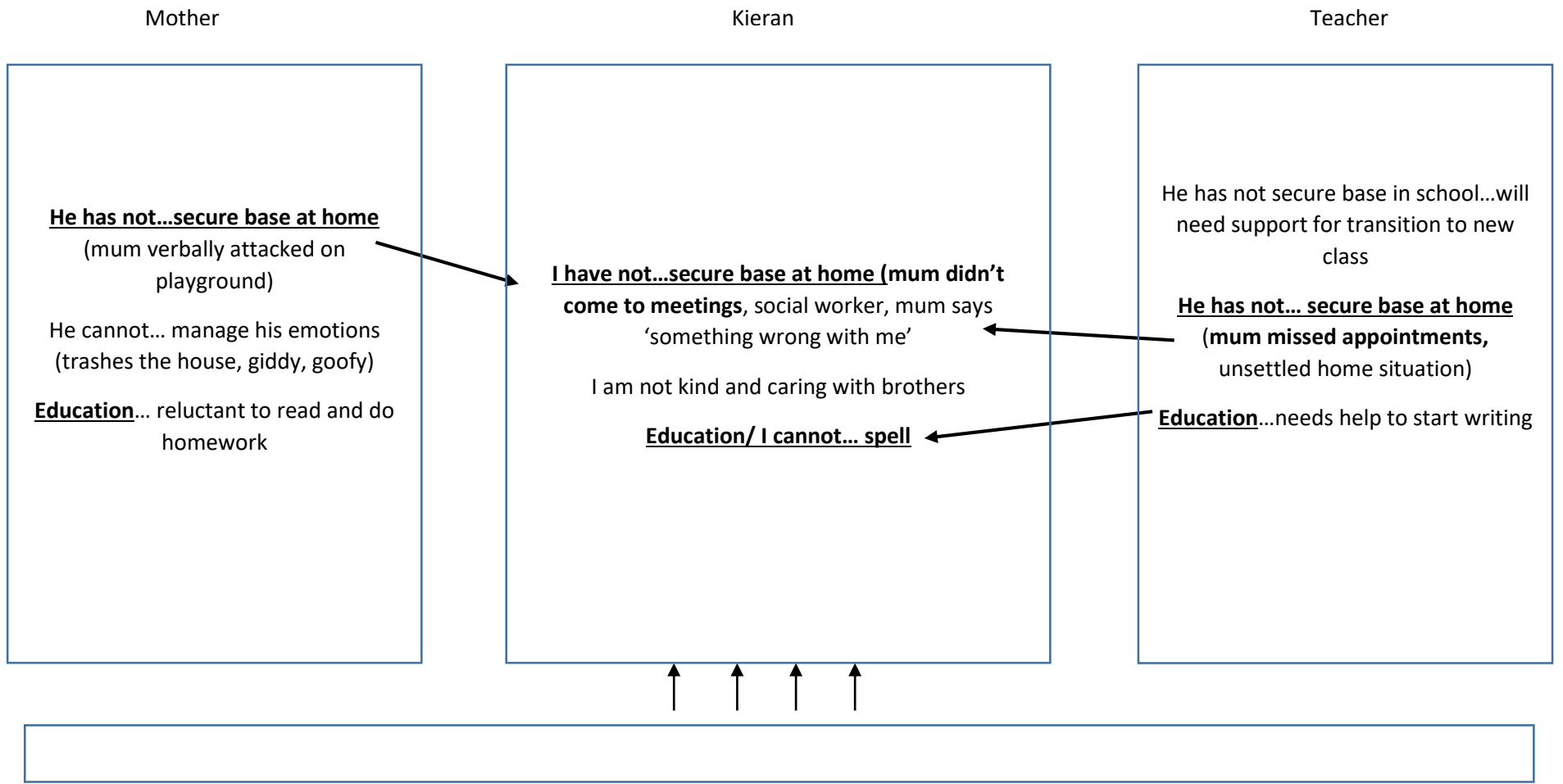


Figure 19: Resilience stories about Kieran after NT: Risk factors

#### 4.1.2.1 Resilience stories

During the process Kieran developed new protective factors to talk about and he learnt to talk about them in a fluent and interesting way. In the initial meeting his 'I am...' statements were vague; 'I am super and good', 'I am silly' and 'clumsy'; they lacked any depth or substance. However in the latter meeting he was able to talk at length about 'I am ...kind and caring'. He was able to talk about this across settings and with a number of people; helping friends play, helping his teacher, decorating the Christmas tree.

In the initial meeting no statements relating to 'I can...' were made but in the post interview he talked in an animated way about singing, and how he and others enjoyed this.

*Post NT interview, section 1, 2, and 3:*

*K - Last night I went in the church. Just singing yeah, because reverend A is leaving after Christmas*

*R - Who did you go with?*

*K - Miss Horner, Miss Holmes, Mrs Cunniffe and Mrs O'Brien and my mum and J and Thomas...*

*Post NT interview section 14: K - I always sing at home, and at school and at my nans*

Some of the protective factors which had been present at the start were strengthened. Everyone agreed from the start that Kieran had a secure base, in school or at home or in both situations. However in the latter interviews the information about this had become more detailed in Kieran's stories about himself. Also, Kieran had developed the range of people he could talk to if he had a problem; Maddie, Nan, mum, Mrs C, Miss H, Miss H and Mrs D, (school staff) brothers, friends.

In the second interview he did not talk about some of the risk factors which had been present in the first meeting, the risk factors were less prevalent. He did not talk about being silly in the last meeting, nor did he focus on his academic challenges – not mentioning his difficulties with writing and time tables. In both of the meetings Kieran talked relatively little about his academic abilities, however this was especially the case after the NT sessions.

Kieran's teacher and mother were also able to give a wider range of protective factors in the post NT interviews and the prevalence of the risk factors reduced; the stories became more closely aligned to a resilient landscape

In the post NT interview Kieran gave more details about the events he was recounting and the plans he wanted to tell me about. He was also more assertive: e.g. determined to add the details to his pictures even when I was rushing him. In the first he was focused on other people and in the second he was able to talk about himself more. These ways he showed more confidence. This may have been because he had become familiar with me, because the NT had taught him that he was interesting or both.

#### 4.1.2.2 Relationships

The stories told by the three participants became more closely aligned with each other following the intervention. There was also a high level of congruence between the

elements covered in the NT sessions and those talked about by the participants (see figure 18). These effects were keen most clearly in the teacher's stories (she has attended all of the therapy sessions to which she had been invited).

She becomes more positive in the stories she is telling about him; her portrayal of him is more definite and more confident and the stories she tells are more focussed on the factors which will be protective of his resilience. Her initial story was one of a tragic situation- a boy who was finding school difficult and who was not supported by a successful home life.

*Pre NT interview with teacher section 7:*

*T: sometimes we have days when Kieran doesn't necessarily feel good about himself or have those positive, I don't know positive feelings about himself sometimes*

*R - Ok*

*T - So that can be maybe that he's come in late, you know or something's happened at home*

However through the intervention the story becomes more hopeful and focussed on his resilience, suggesting a romantic outcome has become more likely.

*Post NT interview section 1:*

*R - How do you feel Kieran is getting on at the moment?*

*T - I feel Kieran is in a good place, I feel*

*R - I agree*

*T - I feel he is more sparky*

*R - Oh really*

*T - A little bit more sparkle about him, just more there in the class, rather than just sort of shying away. There have been lots of time recently, with Christmas and that you know, we've had performances, concerts, things like that and he has completely thrown himself in to it.*

In the post NT meeting she continues to have concerns about his home life, but this aspect of his story is given less prevalence. Instead she is able to focus on the powers within him; his talents and abilities, the ways in which he is showing her that he can be kind and caring, that he can enjoy singing and the ways in which he can be confident and assertive in these arenas.

*Section 3,*

*T: his singing and things like that, he has shone through with that the last few weeks*

*Section 4,*

*T: he is more, erm what do you call it, outgoing, as in 'can I help you do that? Can I do that? Can I give the books out?'*

*R - A little bit more assertive with his kindness?*

*T - Yes definitely, in class,*

This confidence and assertiveness will help him to overcome barriers he faces in his school work and keeping himself safe out of school. She sees him as having more abilities than she previously realised and these are abilities which will help him to be resilient.

Her concerns about his curriculum related skills and his poor independent learning skills are less present in the second interview. It is only natural that she would have initially been focussed on the barriers to his learning as it is her job to help him to overcome these things. The NT helped her to focus on the whole child and to see the attributes and abilities Kieran holds, beyond curriculum skills, which can be built upon to help in his areas of need. For example if he can become more confident in the way that he helps her and others in the classroom, he can practice being independent, assertive and 'having a go'/ using his self-efficacy. The intention would be for this skill to then be transferred to other areas such as his reading or writing. In this way, rather than tackling the problem head on, she would be coming 'through the back door', (Molnar & Lindquist, 2009).

The teacher focusses well on Kieran in both of the interviews and although she talks about her own professional practice she often relates this back to why it is important or relevant to him and his development. In both of the meetings she presents as being fond of him; she articulates this clearly and demonstrates it in the way she talks about him and the things she has done to help him.

*Initial interview with teacher section 87:*

*T: sometimes I get a little bit emotional about Kieran, I am fond of him*

*R - He is a lovely boy*

*V - And that's what I said to mum, I said I am really fond of your son, I have got a lot of time for him.*

In the second interview she seems more confident in their relationship.

*Post NT interview section 15 and 16:*

*T - I think he is a bit more open, he will come and tell me things in the morning, and he'll tell me 'oh I need to do this'. And thinking about when he has been more assertive, he will come and ask me first, he won't go and ask a TA first he will ask me if he can help me, 'can I go and get it?' So I think he possibly does see me as being more approachable.*

Her emotional responses to him suggest that she puts herself in a position of influence with regard to his ongoing resilience development.

She seems so taken with the impact of the NT principles that she suggests she is going to try similar strategies with other children in her class.

*Section 6 and 7*

*T - ... It's about valuing each individual in class, and their own talents. We are doing more following this work actually, we have celebration assembly on Friday and we do what has made us proud this week? ... But just to have those moments, because I stood up in assembly today, because I got my timetables, or I did this. To have those moments where I feel great. It's just sort of giving them time to celebrate that, I think as well.*

His mum's experience of the NT process was very different and this is reflected in the outcomes achieved. In both interviews Kieran's mum talks positively about him, but mostly she talks about herself and her own experiences; fighting on the playground, social care, her illness, friends letting her down, being 'henpecked', filling the role of mum and dad etc. She presents her situation as tragic in both of the meetings.

In the first meeting she talks for longer and is more able to focus on the conversation we were having. This means that she is able to give a wider range of information about Kieran and about his situation. In the second meeting she had little time and was distracted by her eldest son by her side and needing to pick up the youngest boy. However, the balance between risk and protective factors changes. In the second meeting she focussed less on the risk factors present in Kieran's life. His behaviour was less of an issue in these stories, she did not mention his anger regarding the child protection proceedings and she not mention his difficulties with learning in school. In this post NT meeting she focussed very much on how close he was to her and mentioned his singing.

It is not possible to say why Kieran's mum's stories changed; it may have been because her older son was present and there were things she wouldn't say in front of him (though I did not get this impression), it may have been because she knew I wanted to hear more positivity about him, it could have been because Kieran or his teacher had spoken to her about the attributes being developed in the NT sessions, or it could even have been because she had noticed a change in him...his singing did make an impression in the church.

*Post NT interview with mum, section 8:*

*M - My eyes were filling up and everything. I was dead proud.*

#### **4.1.2.3 What does Kieran tell us about developing resilience?**

The experiences of Kieran illustrate that a child can be helped to talk more confidently, fluently and articulately about his own situation and his strengths in particular; that through rehearsal he can learn to talk about himself as a person with skills, abilities and experiences which will help him to be resilient. His landscape for resilience stories can become rich and more accessible.

We can see that richer stories and greater value can be attributed to previously recognised abilities. We can see that new abilities can be identified and given a presence within the landscape and we can see that it is possible to reduce the size of the risk factors within this resilience landscape.

In this instance the NT intervention helped those around the child to notice and give value to these protective factors and enable them to talk about these attributes with the child and others. It helped the important people to be talking about similar strengths as the child, therefore increasing the prevalence of the stories in the child's life. Greater engagement with the NT sessions helped there to be greater overlap in the stories told by the participants.

The teacher's awareness of the content of the NT helped the child to transfer his learning from the NT sessions to the classroom; she was able to create opportunities and celebrate his attempts to try out the newly identified skills and attributes which had been the focus of the NT. This would further reinforce the value of this attribute for the child and so make it more likely that he would accept it as a part of his self-identity.

The experience of the NT sessions and the impact it had on Kieran meant that the teacher greatly valued the principles of the process. She took this learning and developed a process in her classroom to help all of the children to reflect upon aspects of their school week about which they feel proud and to share this with the people around them in class and at



home. It is possible that the NT with one child could have an impact on the resilience of a wider group of children.

#### 4.1.3 Exploring how the stories told about Daniel's resilience changed as a result of the narrative therapy intervention.

The differences between the resilience stories about Daniel before and after the NT are manifold and this is seen clearly in the illustrative diagrams, figures 20 to 23. The protective resilience stories he tells after the intervention are richer and the risk factors are much less prevalent. This pattern is seen in the stories told by his mum and his teacher also. Most of the data and the entirety of the NOI processing of this data is provided in appendix 7.6.

##### 4.1.3.1 Resilience stories

The stories became more positive, with a greater focus on the themes which would protect and promote his resilience. His secure base stories became richer and more convincing whether talking about home or school (I have...). The stories about him being confident in a range of situations (learning and social, at home and at school) were more frequently told (I am...). And Daniel especially, but also his teacher, were able to list more of his abilities (I can...). In addition he was able to talk in a more empowered manner about his anger and the strategies he could use to manage it.

Links between the content of the NT and the final stories collected about Daniel are apparent. The idea of being confident was introduced during the NT and was present in the final interviews with all three members of the group; initially his focus was on his anger and his teachers/mums focus was on his inability to manage his anxiety. Through the NT this was changed to them all being able to focus on his ability to cope even when he was anxious- on him trying to be confident even when he faced challenges – in school work or social situations.

*Post NT interview with Daniel: section 4- 8*

*R: can you bring out a few of the things (we talked about?)*

*D: really good at sports...coping with changes...assembly...doing my test...writing Juliet on paper...Will coming round.*

*Post NT interview with teacher: section 9*

*T: ... What I'm pleased with now is that he needs less chivvying along, he doesn't need...he doesn't need that special 'oh I have to say this or I have to do that', he just does stuff.*

*Post NT meeting with mum: section 10*

*R: So how do you think he's feeling about school at the moment?*

*M: I think he's really enjoying it, for the first time since he ever went to school, this is the best I've ever seen him and that's nice.*

The ability to cope when faced with challenging situations is core to the concept of resilience; through the NT process Daniel improved his self-efficacy.

The most striking change was in Daniel's interview. Whereas in the first interview he was keen to talk about his anger in the final interview this took up a much smaller space in the conversation. He was much happier to talk about himself as a successful person, with friends and family who liked him! (section 19, 20, 21).

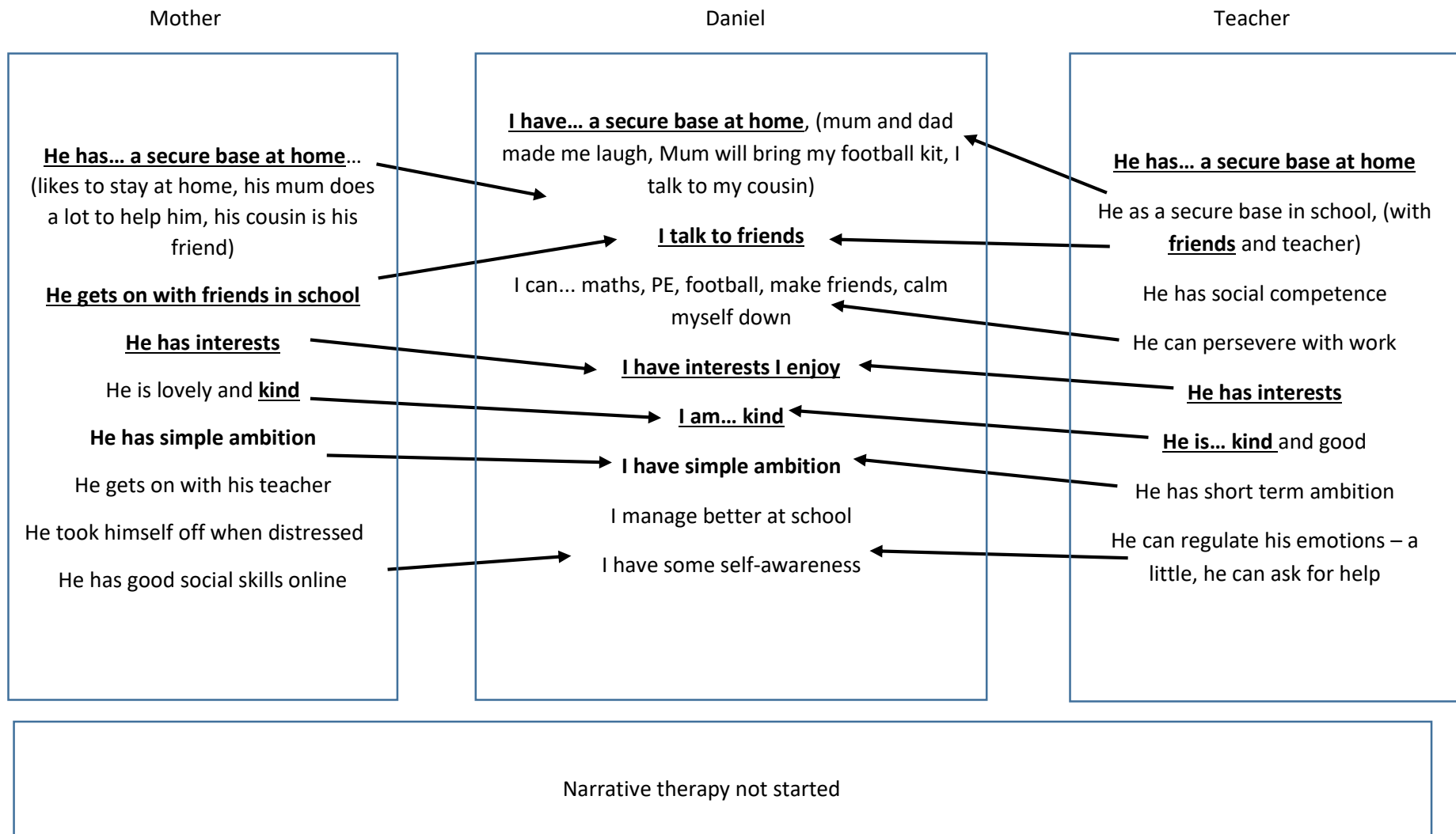


Figure 20: Resilience stories about Daniel before NT: Protective factors

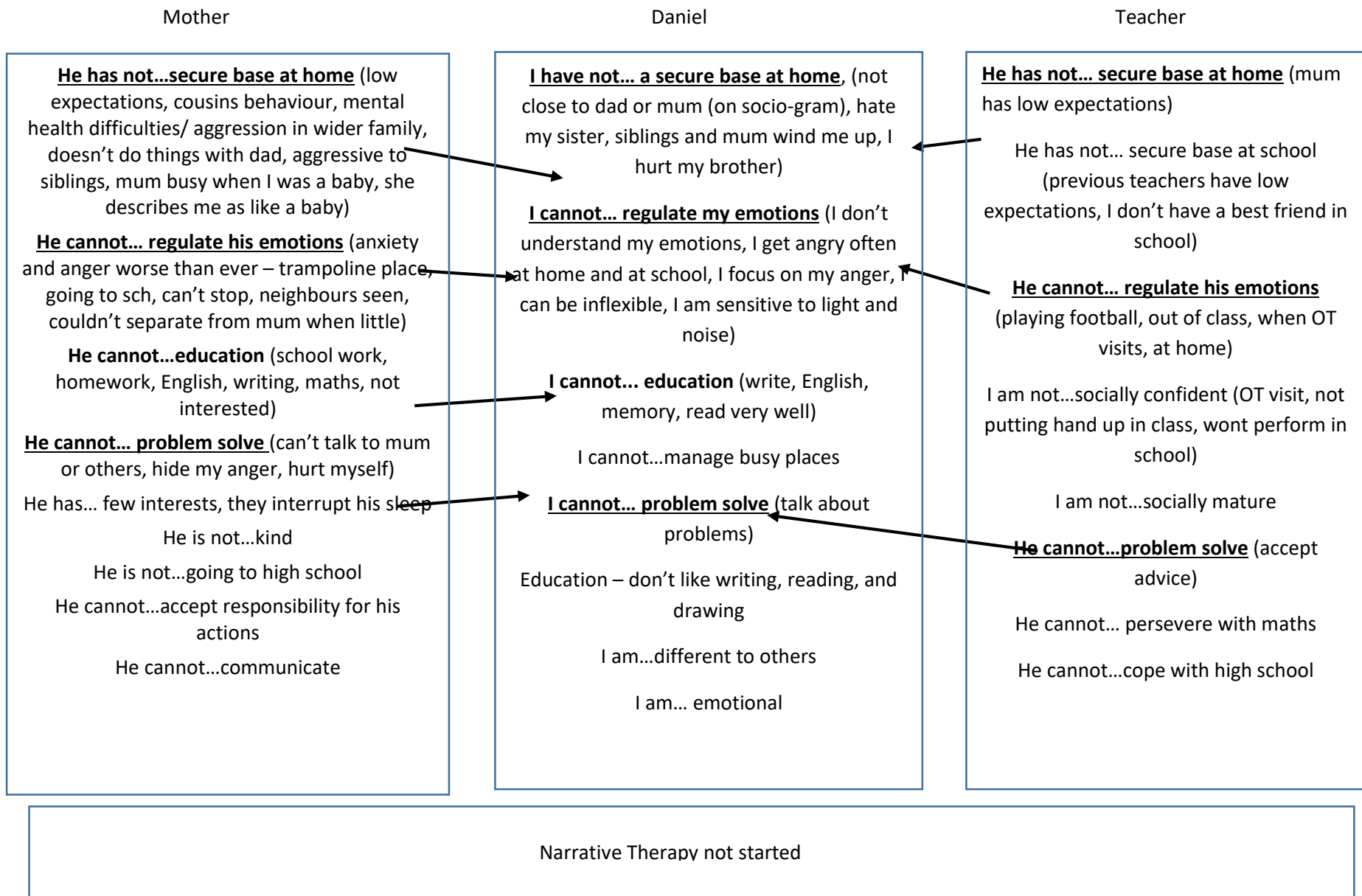


Figure 21: Resilience stories about Daniel before NT: Risk factors

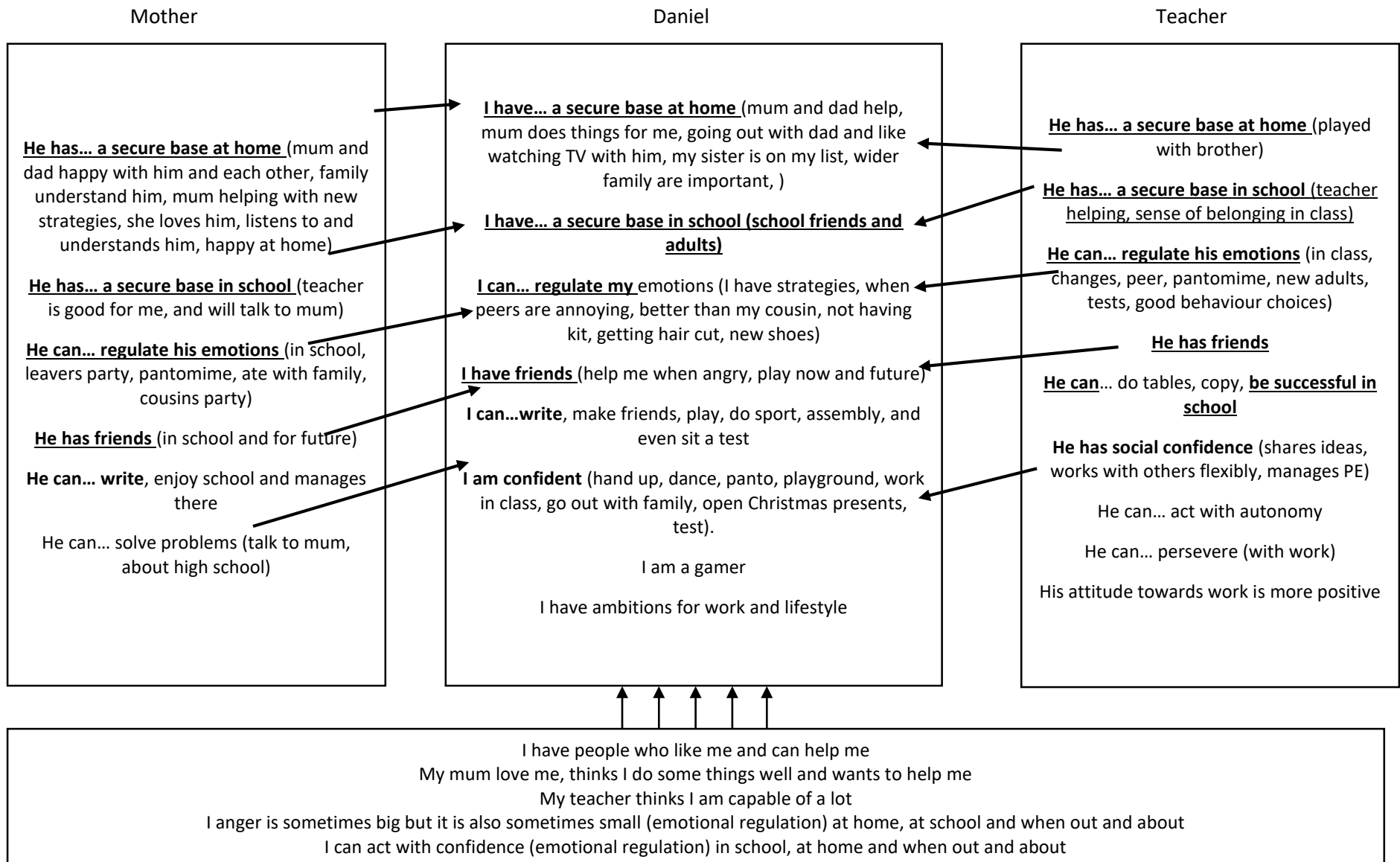


Figure 22: Resilience stories about Daniel after NT: Protective stories

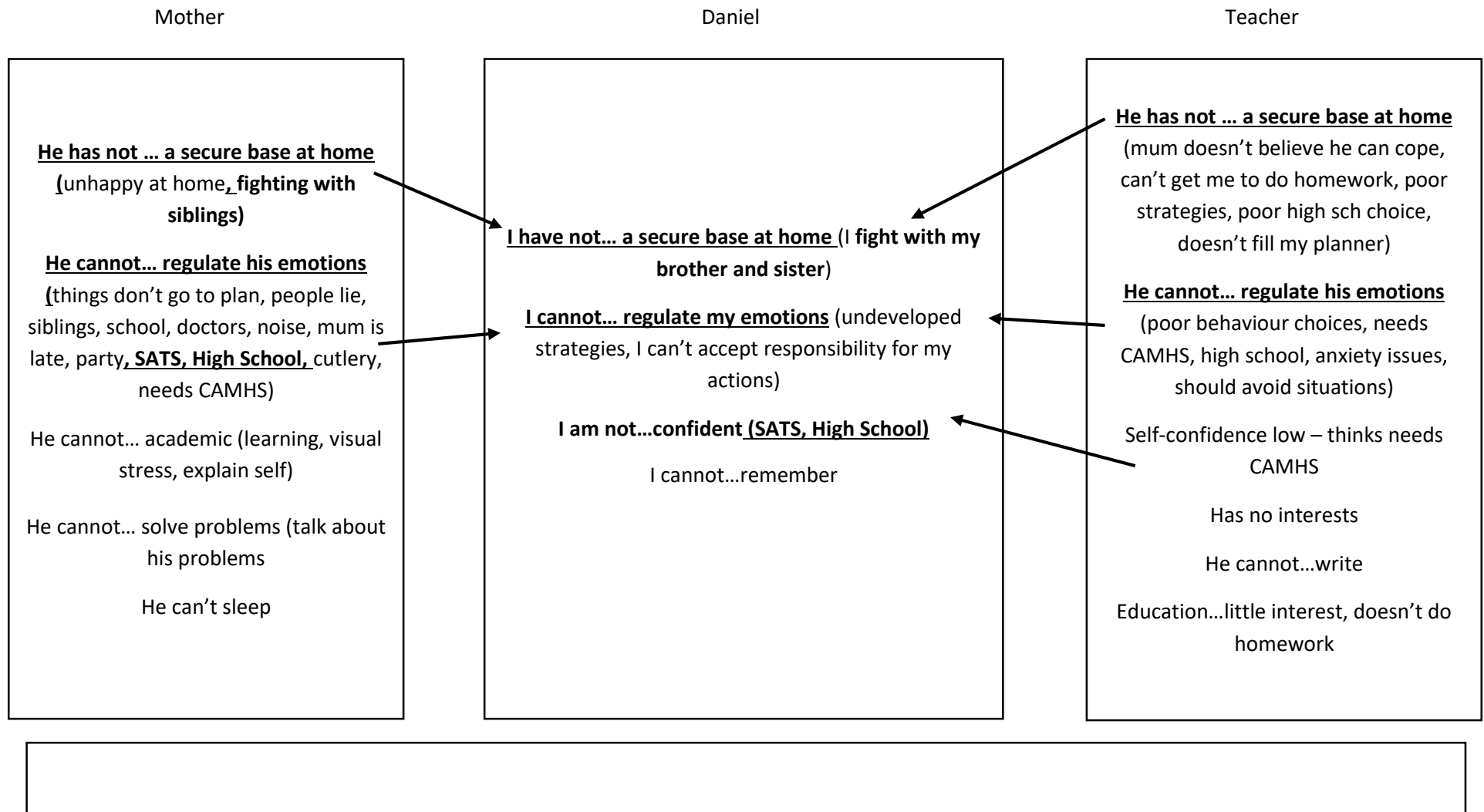


Figure 23: Resilience stories about Daniel after NT: Risk factors

His mum also appreciably changed the stories she told; although her anxiety about his anxiety was still present this was no longer drowning out the stories about him being successful and getting on well – the externalising had helped to change her relationship with him and his anxiety.

*Post NT interview with mum: Section 5*

*M: I think before that he didn't, he was like 'you don't love me, you hate me' and I've not got that. He knows I do genuinely care about him now.*

The teacher's stories changed more than she seemed to realise, but not as much as the others – possibly because she started from a more positive position early in the process.

The NT did not banish all of the concerns about Daniels emotional regulation and there was ongoing concern about his ability to manage his anxiety and related angry responses. Although all three could give examples of him managing well in the day to day business of home life and school, there was still concern that the big looming issues of moving to High School and sitting SATS would be too much for him. This was especially heard in the conversation with his mum, but also with his teacher.

*Post NT interview with teacher: section 2*

*R: Really, you're worried about whether he'll manage (at high school)?*

*T: Yeah, he won't manage in there. He'll kick back and he will be stigmatised and labelled. And he's not a bad lad.*

Although it was only a small part of the stories shared by Daniel in the final interview the adults around Daniel are not fully confident that he is going to have sufficient resilience to overcome these future barriers. According to the model proposed in this research this would be a threat to his perception of himself as resilient.

Also the NT did not overcome his mums continued concerns about the specific issues of his sleep pattern and his difficulty using cutlery. There was also some ongoing concern about his curriculum skills on the part of his mum and teacher. These were not prioritised during the NT sessions. The decision about which areas to prioritise were made by myself in my EP role and I chose the themes which both were loudest across the three interviews and which showed as areas of risk according to theoretical understanding of resilience.

#### **4.1.3.2 Relationships**

There were many similarities in the stories told by Daniel, his mum and his teacher in the initial interviews- they shared common concerns. There were also many similarities in the stories told by the three participants in the interviews after the NT, (see figures 22 and 23) .

The stories told after the NT related to the topics covered in the NT; each of the participants seemed to have become more fluent in their ability to talk about the protective factors which had been developed in the therapeutic conversations.

The teacher seemed to think that the changes in Daniels ability to cope were happening before he became involved in the NT- that Daniel was becoming more confident since he had started her class a few months previously. This may well have been the case; the teacher is skilful and his mum was able to report changes very early in the process. However, the aim of the NT was to change the stories Daniel was able to tell about himself. It is likely the teacher's interventions in class had resulted in the changes in how he

functioned in class, but it may also be true that Daniel was more able to talk about the things he was doing well, to give these a more privileged status in his conversations because of his experiences in the NT sessions. The NT enabled Daniel to capitalise on the changes he was making, and reinforced their importance. In the NT sessions he was able to rehearse these conversations about his strengths, he was able to hear that others were noticing his successes and that they were valuing the efforts he was making to improve; these techniques helped him to hold these important factors in higher regard. The model would suggest that the NT therefore promoted and consolidated his resilience in a way which may not have been the case if the success had been present in the class without him having the opportunity to reflect on them in such a concrete and public way. The experiences in class and his teachers view of him being successful informed his identity formation through the 'subject positions' whereas the NT could be conceived as supporting his positioning of himself in relation to his teachers view in the 'identity positions', as per Hiles, (2007) .

The EP reflections on his mum's development during the NT highlighted the possibility that the NT sessions helped to develop a more useful understanding of her son.

*Post NT interview with Mum: section 12:*

*And I...that's what I've learnt, how to...I think I've learnt...to be like that with Daniel as well, he prefers it, just straight with him, no lies. He takes everything for...I don't know the word, you know, if you say something that has got to be done...literal that's it and I've learnt that from Daniel and that's what's been getting him down over the years.*

*Section 13*

*It's the way you say it...yeah, yeah. 'Cause I still do it with the other two ...And if something changes I'm like...they're not bothered, whereas Daniel it's a big like... 'You said this...' and that used to get him really upset, but that doesn't happen anymore because we don't do that.*

She was more accepting of the difficulties he was having, she could now perceive them as only one aspect of his functioning and she was encouraged to value the attempts he was making to improve his reactions. This seemed to be having a series of positive effects – her altered understanding of his needs influenced her parenting strategies in a helpful way which in turn was helping Daniel to experience success at home and feel a stronger relationship with her – and so develop his resilience.

#### **4.1.3.3 What does Daniel tell us about developing resilience?**

A self-identity that includes factors seen as desirable for resilience can be reinforced through NT. When the traits have already been seen by others or by the person themselves NT can reinforce them – make them a richer or louder part of the story or stories the person tells about themselves. According to the model proposed, the process of privileging these stories of resilience allows a more resilient self-identity to be built.

In addition, personal characteristics can be introduced to a person through NT. In the process of seeking unique outcomes in a landscape of problems, alternative more helpful abilities, behaviours, beliefs, feelings or thoughts (or protective factors) can be identified,

and new and different stories can be identified. Though developing the richness of these new protective stories a more resilient self-identity is built.

Through working with key adults at the same time as the child, NT processes can enable the adults to develop a more helpful understanding of the child. The NT helps them to refocus on the things the child can do well and the attempts they are making to overcome their barriers and so they are helped to re write the stories they hold. These are told during the NT sessions and the model asserts that this then encourages the child to develop more positive stories about themselves. However, this case study helped us to see the potential effects are wider. The key adults can also pass on this positive story to a wider group, in this case his mum passes it on to Daniel's wider family and the teacher passes it on to the class via her expectations of Daniel coping. The NT containing only three people can have an impact on the stories held about a child by a much wider group of people, who will also alter their interactions with the child. In Daniel's case he was helped to be successful in class, increased his sense of belonging in the class group and was helped to avoid conflict with the wider family. In these ways the implications of NT have had a ripple effect across the wider ecosystem of the child's life. The model could be expanded to include more stories supporting resilience coming from across the system to increase the child's resilience stories about themselves.

## 4.2 RESEARCH AIM 2

In answering the first research aim it was important to have a methodology which helped the stories to be told, helped us to hear the stories and allowed for one story to be compared with others. Narrative Oriented Inquiry was chosen as it seemed to fit the requirements well. However, at the time of writing, the literature regarding its efficacy within educational psychology was limited and research aim 2 was created; does Narrative Oriented Inquiry help us to explore changes in the resilience stories told?

In this section the findings provided by all three cases is described together. Discussions about the implications of these findings is subsequently provided in the Discussions chapter. In this section illustrative examples are taken from the interviews and also the NOI analysis.

### 4.2.1 Does NOI help the stories to be told?

In NOI Narrative Interviews are used to gather stories from participants. This technique, rather than a more structured interview or questionnaire, enabled two aims of the interviews to be met. My dual role as EP and researcher meant that the interviews were a vehicle for gathering data – resilience stories about the child – and were also opportunities to prepare for the therapeutic intervention- identifying priorities and building rapport with the children and the adults.

The narrative interview technique facilitated good data collection in a way that was consistent with the paradigm of the research; accepting and valuing the truth of the participants' stories as they chose to share them. The unstructured nature of the interview meant that I could allow the participants to lead the conversation – I could show that I was interested in whatever they considered to be important at that time in relation to the child's resilience. Prompt questions were available to ensure important research areas were raised; this sometimes led to direct questions about a specific area of resilience or



were offered as an opportunity for the child or adult to talk about a particular ability or interest if they had something to say. In most instances the conversations flowed freely, with perhaps the exception of the interview with Owen's mum.

Using this unscripted interview style I was able to share my thoughts and experiences which helped me to build rapport and to show the participants that I understood and had empathy with their positions; when working with Owen's teacher I showed that I valued his approach and that we had shared views about Owen's learning and potential; when meeting with Daniel's mum I was able to share that I too had anxieties about my children moving onto high school.

The range of strategies used with the children; drawing, talking, scaling; allowed for flexibility in meeting their individual needs and confidence levels. All the boys, coincidentally, had a history of language difficulties of one kind or another, and Owen and Kieran especially were quite shy when talking to me about their situation. Having paper and pencil tasks for us both to focus on, rather than looking and talking directly to each other was an effective way of taking some of the pressure out of the interviews for them and so allowed their views to be gathered more easily.

When it came to analysis it was useful to have been part of the narrative interviews. When completing the 6<sup>th</sup> interpretative perspective – critical analysis, there was an opportunity to reflect the feelings of the participants. Sometimes the language they used made this easy to see in the transcriptions but sometimes it was necessary to hear the tone of the person's voice or to feel the meaning of the silences and pauses or the rapid speech which flowed excitedly. In this instance it was helpful to have been a part of the interviews and to have contemporaneous notes to add depth to the analysis of the stories.

*Point made in analysis of the researcher role with Kieran "I listened to this section of her story with neutrality – neither colluding with her about the social workers nor sharing my personal view that this would not be happening without good reason".*

The very nature of the narrative interview also presented some challenges. The unstructured approach to the narrative interviews, and allowing the participants to lead the focus of the interview to some extent meant that there were gaps in my understanding of some areas of my understanding of the child's resilience; not all 3 of the important building blocks of resilience were covered in detail.

*Point made in answering the research aims after Owen. "This helped me to realise that I may not have asked questions which sufficiently allowed the participants to give stories about Owen's "I am..." resilience factors"*

If it had been the intention to complete an assessment of the child's current resilience level for comparison across cases or across time, this approach would not have been satisfactory. However as change in the stories told was the focus of the research this method of data collection was satisfactory.

The research design also presented a problem that cannot be attributed to NOI. The research design required a dual role of EP and researcher to be maintained throughout the project but the conflicts this presented were most apparent in the narrative interviews. There were occasions when it was necessary to prioritise one role over the other and this

sometimes came at a cost. As is ethically appropriate it was important to prioritise the wellbeing of the child over the quality of the research data, however there were times during the initial interviews when it would have been useful to gathering data to pursue a line of questioning or to guide the focus of the interviews in a more directive manner. This would have been to the detriment of the rapport which was being built and so may have negatively influenced the efficacy of the subsequent narrative therapy and potential outcomes for the child. The cost that this had for the data collected was only made apparent at the point of analysing the stories – it would have been useful to have more detail about the resilience stories (thicker stories), to have more sjuzet (information about the teller and the telling) and about particular resilience factors (in particular the “I am...” factors seemed to be lacking). Through learning from the work about Owen and Kieran it was possible to alter the delivery of the narrative interview with the subsequent cases. During the latter interviews I was open about the nature of my two roles, which made it possible to probe in more detail.

The conflict of the dual role also became evident at the point of analysing the post NT interviews. It became apparent that in these interviews I wanted to share my own understanding of the child, and to shape the participants views based on what I had learnt during my time of working with them. This would be part of my professional EP practice when meeting with a teacher and parent at the end of my involvement – to give my views and advice. However, by presenting the EP’s stories about the child’s resilience in these narrative interviews I could have influenced the stories shared by the participants; encouraging them to agree or disagree with me.

*Post NT interview with Owen’s mum: section 1*

*R – Owens seems in happy place at the moment. He seems chattier now.*

...

*M- He’s err, a lot more, I wouldn’t say confident cos he is confident... I would say happier coming to school, even though he won’t say, he’s not like I’ve got this lesson today ugh, he’s a bit more positive*

This lesson was learnt following the first two participant groups and meant that in my post NT meetings with Daniel’s mum and his teacher I listened carefully at the start of the interviews (prioritising researcher role) and shared my views at the end of the meeting (EP role). This was hardest to achieve when working with the children when the EP urge to conclude the therapy sessions with important lessons for the children to take away was strong.

When analysing the EP role it became apparent that my professional practice of focussing on the positive was present in the interviews, this may be perceived as privileging the positive, success, protective stories over those which were more negative or related to the risk factors. For example my sjuzet often seemed to be encouraging Owen, his teacher and his parent to tell me about his successes. This was especially true in the post NT interviews when I was keen for others to hear the stories I wanted to tell about him.

The narrative interview technique for gathering data was congruent with the research paradigm, enabled the participants to share the information which was important to them and facilitated rapport building. However, it was important to keep the EP and researcher

duality in check and be transparent with the participant and readers of the research about which role was prioritised at these times.

#### 4.2.2 Does NOI help us to hear the stories?

The six interpretive steps of the NOI were crucial in hearing the detail of the stories whilst keeping the whole of the story in focus. Each step offered a new insight into either the telling, the told or the teller. The NOI analysis of the stories revealed more information than was available to me as an EP and a researcher, who had been fully involved and interested, in what was being said at the time of the narrative interviews.

The analysis or interpretation required at each of the steps was often challenging, requiring a high level of familiarity with the text. For a robust analysis of the data it was necessary to adopt a recursive approach to the process – moving backwards and forwards through the six steps adding detail and nuance to the initial analysis as a deeper understanding of the interview was revealed by each lens.

##### 4.2.2.1 *Sjuzet - Fabula*

In categorising the Sjuzet – Fabula the relative proportions of each became apparent. At first reading Kieran’s mum seemed to be presenting a lot of information about him, but this step illustrated that much of her conversation was actually about herself and her own troubles (with Kieran) and so was categorised as sjuzet.

*Initial interview with Kieran’s mum: section 4*

*M - No you are going to school. I had to literally drag all 3 kids to school on my own. You are going to school*

*R - That’s really important*

*M - I am not letting your attendance go down because of them lot.*

When analysing the interviews with Daniel’s mother and teacher the emphasis they both put on their own role in Daniel’s wellbeing became apparent (sjuzet); the prevalence of these themes in their stories was greater than my direct experience of being in the interview had led me to believe. During the interviews I was listening for information about the boys and this may have influenced my perception of the stories told but this first interpretative step helped to redress the balance.

##### 4.2.2.2 *Holistic - Content*

The Holistic – Content step focussed on the loudest messages being shared, telling us about the links and associations within the entire story. It was a useful process for understanding the stories but also in sharing the interview with others reading the research. Providing this concise snapshot of the interviews made it easier to gain a quick overview of the most prevalent aspects of the conversations. This step was however, sometimes initially difficult to complete making it necessary to come back to it for editing as further steps in the analysis unfolded. It can be seen as a summary of the facts as presented by the teller but sometimes these ‘facts’ are embedded so deeply in the sjuzet that they are hard to see at first. The resilience stories can be given in many smaller fragments which only come together as a strong narrative when other parts of the telling are filtered out through the other lenses- this is seen in Kieran’s initial interview when he talked a lot about other people – only through the other filters did we get a sense of his story about himself.

The risk to the 'holistic- content' process is that a lot of detail is lost – lost from the fabula, and the sjuzet is almost ignored. This step was a good gateway into the interviews but other steps offered more insight into the complexity and detail of the stories shared.

#### *4.2.2.3 Holistic - Form*

The Holistic – Form interpretation showed the genre of the stories being told at a holistic level- were they romantic and hopeful or tragic and focussed on the difficulties in the child's life? Sometimes this categorisation was obvious; Daniel's and his mum's stories clearly became more hopeful. However this step did shine light on an aspect of Daniel's teacher's story which was less easily noticed. In looking to see if her post NT story could still be categorised as hopeful romantic as it had been in the initial interview, I noticed that there were elements of her stories which suggested she had lost some hope; she had become a little exasperated and a sense of pending tragedy could be heard. Her loss of hope has implication for Daniel's ability to keep his resilience stories loud and clear over time. If she believes he is likely to fail; he is more likely to believe the same also.

Use of this interpretative lens offered a unique perspective on the narrative provided by the participants and in doing so deepened my understanding of the nuances of their narratives.

#### *4.2.2.4 Categorical - Content*

In the 'Categorical – Content' step it was possible to see the resilience stories most clearly – this was the 'told' element of the information shared by the participants. It pulled out of the long, sometimes wandering, texts the key phrases and comments which could be categorised as either protective of or a risk to resilience development and were then thematically analysed according to the resilience literature. It was in this step that the coherence of the research within the wider field of resilience literature can most easily be seen, (Leiblich, et al., 1998) and it was the information provided at this point that was particularly valuable in exploring Research Aim one. It provided information in a way that was immediately accessible; see the tables provided in the appendix 7.6 as an example and in the figures 12-23 in sections 4.1.1 – 3. In this interpretative step the format of the data was altered considerably and in the interests of transparency this complex process is described in detail in appendix 7.7 'From interview to model of resilience'.

The tables created in this step, allowed the resilience stories to be seen at a glance; even looking at the weight of content on either side of the tables allowed a general impression about the relative balance of these factors (table 6).

<b>Resilience factor</b>	<b>Protective factor</b>	<b>Risk factor</b>
<b><i>I am ...kind and caring</i></b>	<i>My mum My friends My teacher</i>	<i>Not with my brothers</i>
<b><i>Social competence</i></b>	<i>Social problem solving if someone is unkind</i>	
<b><i>Friendships</i></b>	<i>Friends at home and school</i>	
<b><i>I can...</i></b>	<i>Singing At home At school At Nans At church My important people value my singing</i>	<i>Can't spell anything</i>

Table 6: Taken from the analysis of the post NT interview with Kieran

This process of categorising the content threw up challenges which arose from over familiarity with the resilience factors. Sometimes I simply knew that an element which had been discussed in the interview was a protective or a risk factor for the child; I have worked in this area as a practitioner and researcher for some time; but in the interests of rigour there needed to be an explicit link to the research literature. Accuracy and consistency was also increased through going over this step a number of times, moving from initial, instinctive reaction to a position which could be referenced through the themes identified in the research literature and by checking that similar chunks appearing at different times within one interview were labelled in the same way. Similarly chunks from different participant's stories which were similar were also labelled with the same resilience factor. This hermeneutic process continued throughout the entire analysis process.

The easily accessible information presented in the categorical – content step was a double edged sword. Yes it was good to be able to access a lot of information quickly but the ease of seeing the stories presented tidily in tables means that it is tempting to privilege this information over the information provided in the other steps of NOI. Getting to grips with the complexity of the meanings of the stories for the story teller requires time and effort, of the reader and the researcher; it is tempting to be over reliant on the tabulated information and overlook the rest. It takes resolve to do justice to the story teller and 'hear' the information provided by the other interpretative steps with similar focus and attention. Emerson and Frosh, (2004) caution against privileging the researchers perspective over the that of the story teller.

#### 4.2.2.5 Categorical - Form

The subsequent 'categorical – form' and 'critical analysis' steps allowed the story of the teller and the telling to come to the surface. The two steps give information about the level of connectedness each of the participants feel to the resilience stories, to the change which is being sought and so from a therapeutic perspective tells us something about how they will proceed with the changes in the future.

The 'categorical – form' enabled the research to focus carefully on the meaning the stories held for the teller by looking in the sjuzet – seeking patterns and repeated use of words to intensify or further add to our understanding of the stories. The interpretations offered in this step were different for the children and the adults. When considering the children's stories I was looking at the meaning the children were taking from the resilience stories they were telling about themselves, (their confidence in them, the extent of their ownership of them). This allowed insight into the power these stories may have on the child as they move into the future; if they were only tentatively owned more support from important others would be needed for them to become more solidly part of the child's resilience identity.

The sjuzet of the three boys illuminated their different responses to talking about themselves. We saw that Daniel was not hugely confident in the views he was sharing in both interviews but especially in the first.

*D: Probably...trying to get...to school early I think...*

*D - I don't know. When I am going to get angry because it just happens,*

This helped me to see that Daniel would have benefited from more NT and that it was important that the people around him continue to reinforce these stories for him.

The sjuzet in Kieran's interviews showed that he was easily distracted from talking about his resilience – he would go off at a tangent and talk (at length!) about other matters on his mind. We are left to infer meaning from this, (other interpretative steps indicated that low self-esteem contributed to his low interest in talking about himself). Owen on the other hand offered very little sjuzet in the initial interview – although giving descriptions of the things he does he did this whilst sharing little of himself or how he felt about these things. In the second interview he was more present as highlighted in this extract from the initial analysis of his interviews

*"The increased incidence of sjuzet, richer use of examples, and Owen initiating some topics of conversation meant that the conversation flowed more naturally; that he was more present in the story which was told. As the conversation moved forward he became less hesitant in answering questions which were looking to celebrate his strengths".*

From this we can infer that Owen was taking more ownership of and having confidence in the protective stories he was telling.

When looking at the adult's stories through the Categorical – Form lens I learnt about the way they felt about the child and their resilience; their love or fondness for them and the confidence they had in the resilience stories they were sharing. These feelings were important to understanding the impact the stories held by the adult may have on the child. The teacher's sjuzet showed how confident they were in their portrayal of the boys.

Patterns in the sjuzet used by Owen and Kieran's teachers help us to understand that they were grappling with the apparent contradiction shown in the resilience stories (Categorical - Content) which are both protective and risk based. Owen's teacher repeatedly uses the term 'but' to show that Owen has both needs and areas of strength

*Section 15. Teacher - "... he will have a go at that, but he's quite slow at getting himself started".*

Also, he uses the term 'again' on a number of occasions to show that Owen is returning to difficult patterns of behaviour after a glimmer of hope.

*Section 40. Teacher - "Again he fell because the next day we were doing the same thing but in a different way."*

Kieran's teacher used different words to indicate inconsistencies in abilities; "sometimes" or "swings and roundabouts" or "good days and bad days". In contrast Daniel's teacher used words to intensify her views of her pupil; that he was fine; and in doing so reinforced the information which had come through the categorical content step of analysis.

*T - And when he is at school he tries really hard,*

*T - I am very pleased with Daniel*

The adult's sjuzet when looked through this lens also showed their feelings about the boys; we see the level of concern they have about the boy's resilience. Daniel's mum found a renewed confidence that her boy was a lovely boy; even with the difficulties he had. If we had only looked at through other lenses, categorical – content for example, we would have heard that he is difficult that he finds life hard and that she doesn't see that he has been or will be successful in many situations; but when we listen carefully to the sjuzet we hear that she loves him very much and feels very strongly the impact his difficulties are having on him, her other children and herself. It puts the information shared in the fabula in a very different light. In contrast Kieran's mum continued to find it hard to focus on him or the things she liked about him. This lens helps us to see that, according to the model of resilience presented, Daniel's resilience is more likely to be supported by the secure base offered by his mum than Kieran's will be by his mother.

#### **4.2.2.6 Critical analysis**

When considering the children's stories about themselves through the 'critical analysis' lens we look at how they were feeling about the stories they were telling or changes which were happening. Owen initially showed little of his views about his own position but in the end was happier to talk about his successes and to talk about them in more detail. In this way he seemed to show stronger affinity to and more positive emotion relating to the stories he was sharing. Daniel initially wanted to focus on his anger and the blame others should take but after the intervention was able to focus much more on the things he is doing well and the positive ways others were helping him.

These last two steps in the analysis of the children's interviews gave information about the level of commitment they have to the stories they told and how they felt about them. This was useful to answering research aim 1 as it illuminated the meaning that was being attached to the more 'factual' fabula. The categorical – content and holistic - content gave the bare bones of the resilience stories but the other steps, especially these last two told us

what they meant for the boys themselves. Without these steps it would have been tempting to assume that they had more ownership of the stories and that they had higher regard for the protective factors than was actually apparent.

The critical analysis step for the adults shifted the lens slightly, focussing on how the adult feels about the changes – the implications for themselves, rather than for the boys. How they have contributed to the changes, how the changes made them feel and how they feel about the future. It was in this lens we were able to see the story of the participants as parents and teachers, rather than their role in the child's development. This gave a context, in which the resilience stories had more meaning.

This step in the NOI helps us to see whether or not the parents and teachers perceived themselves as having a role to play in developing the children's resilience. Daniel's mum could see that she was behaving differently and that this was having an impact on the way that Daniel was managing where as his teacher couldn't see any difference in her behaviour, and was actually conscious of little change in Daniel's coping ability. Owen's teacher was empowered to make a difference to Owen's functioning in class and Kieran's teacher took it further and was empowered to make a difference to all the children in her class. If the adults in the therapeutic groups had not seen themselves as being impacted by the children's difficulties, or having anything to do with supporting them, the NT would have been much less successful – in fact it would have needed to start with helping them to see why their input was important.

#### 4.2.3 Does NOI help us to compare the stories over time and between participants?

The NOI process does not attempt to include information about how the analysis could be used to compare one story with another. This was not part of the remit set by Hiles and Cermak. However the question here is whether or not the information provided by the NOI helped us to compare the stories over time and between participants- did it transform the data into a format which would allow hugely complex and varied data to be compared?

The flexible nature of the narrative interview process resulted in data which was varied. The interviews were transcribed and tabulated so that they looked similar in format but the information contained within the stories was diverse. Sometimes information about the boys' resilience stories was almost buried within layers of conversation about other things or other people. The resilience themes were approached in different ways by different participants– some answered direct questions about talents or interests for example and others offered this information almost as an aside. Also, amongst the participants different themes were covered to varying degrees. This variety brought a richness to the data, but it meant that comparisons between one interview and another were not straightforward. In order to explore research aim one it was useful to be able to compare stories told by individual participants before and after the NT, but also to make comparisons between the participants. The interaction between these changing stories was of interest. The NOI process helped with converting this varied data into a consistent format which facilitated comparison.

The two holistic steps encourage the researcher to consider the essence of the interview as a whole – to identify unifying themes and the genre of the story over all. Although this does have the potential to oversimplify the complexity of the information shared, this process did reduce a hugely complicated data set into a format that could be compared. In table 7,



produced within the Holistic - Form step of analysis, we can compare the genre of the stories at a glance.

The categorical steps however looked at the details within the interviews. In the Categorical- Content interpretative step the disparate stories told by each participant were organised into themes according to the resilience literature; showing elements which were common across participants and those which persisted over time, making it easy to compare the resilience stories more easily and so to identify changes. Many different stories were told about Daniels home life for example but only when grouped into themes did it become apparent that they were talking about the same thing- the nature of his secure base at home. Similarly many different stories were told about his ability to regulate his emotions but only in the thematic analysis did it become so clearly apparent that this was such a strong theme across the interviews.

The NOI process also helped to reduce a large amount of data into smaller more manageable parts. We are initially encouraged to literally break the whole transcript into numbered segments, each being a roughly 'self-contained episode' or "move" in the telling of the story. This makes it easier to see the various topics of conversation and the individual pieces of information being shared. However the second way of breaking the whole into smaller parts was more useful, and more specific to the NOI process. Engaging with the 6 successive interpretative steps encourages the researcher to focus on one element of the story at a time in a structured manner; 6 different layers of meaning can be sought within each segment of text. There are sections which show the told, the telling and the teller all within a few sentences or a few moments of conversation and by taking the journey through the six steps these layers are revealed one at a time – in a way that is manageable, and illuminating. In this exert from the transcript of Kieran's teacher talking after the NT we can see each lens offers a different type of information; each important to the whole.

*Section 3. Kieran's teacher talking after the NT.*

*T - I think, from the talent, the one we talked about, his singing and things like that, he has shone through with that the last few weeks. With the performances we've had, he has done singing in the choir, we're practicing the MEN songs; we're singing for our carol service on Friday. And that is sort of showing his ...talent, he is not afraid to express himself in that way... I think I've been more aware of sort of homing in on ...*

<b>Interpretative step</b>	<b>Meaning taken</b>
<b>1. Sjuzet - fabula</b>	There is a focus both on Kieran's resilience factors but also her own professional practice
<b>2. Holistic – content</b>	His teacher talks positively about the changes she is seeing in Kieran
<b>3. Holistic – form</b>	She is positive about his current presentation – a romantic view
<b>4. Categorical – content</b>	I can ... sing, social confidence
<b>5. Categorical – form</b>	She shows her uncertainty – 'I think', 'sort of'
<b>6. Critical analysis</b>	She has changed in the way she notices his talents

*Table 7: Taking layers of meaning from one section of text.*

The process of breaking the data into smaller parts in this way enabled comparisons to be made more easily. It was easy to look at how each part varied from one interview to another. This is done in the various tables provided and in the models of risk and protective factors (see figures 12 to 23). The example below shows that it was also possible to compare data which was presented as prose in the analysis-

Taken from 'Analysis of the mother's interview before the NT': Section 1.1.2: Holistic – Content.

*Looking at the entirety of the interview Daniel's mum has shared a view of Daniel as having significant difficulties with anxiety and that this is manifest in number of different ways. She gives stories of his anxiety being present across contexts (such as home, school and when visiting new places), across time from when he was a little boy to now and even projecting into the future (high school, future relationships and ambitions). This perception of Daniel even persists across her perception of others opinions (other family members have said that they think he has difficulties and the mum worries that the neighbours also see him as troubled). The story of Daniel being a boy who is not coping with his emotions and his anxiety is prevalent in this interview, the story about this aspect of his development is rich in detail and extends over time.*

Taken from analysis of the mothers interview after the NT, section 1.3.2.Holistic – Content

*Section 1.3.2 The overall focus of this conversation was that Daniel was getting on better in school, with support from his teacher, and he was getting on better at home with support from his mum, (and from his dad and wider family). She shared information which suggests that there were changes in him and changes she had made, the combined impact of these were working well together. He was talking to her more about the things which were troubling him and there was a sense that he realised now that his mum does love him and does want to help. The changes were also enabling him to feel more positively about school on a day to day basis.*

Given the complexity of the data collected and the value put on its qualitative nature in this research the NOI provided a useful vehicle for comparing the stories provided by the participants – it made a lot of disparate data manageable by increasing its consistency and by breaking its complexity into smaller pieces. There is a sense that the NOI process has allowed the meaning of the stories to be used in exploring Research Aim 1. Other methods may have been more systematic but few could claim to be so thorough and true to the epistemological nature of the data.

## 5 DISCUSSION

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In this chapter a summary of the findings is presented and then the implications of these for a reconceptualisation of resilience and narrative theory is discussed. Also a discussion of the limitations of the research is provided. The chapter concludes with the contribution the research makes to the fields of resilience research, narrative methodologies and educational psychology practice and also proposals for future research are made.

### 5.1 SUMMARY RESEARCH AIM 1:

#### 5.1.1 Exploring how the resilience stories change as a result of the narrative therapy intervention

A number of themes emerged from the findings and are presented below. In this section these findings will be related to both the resilience and narrative literature reviews presented in Chapter 2. In doing so a deeper understanding of the implications of the research will be achieved.

The intended outcome of the intervention was that between the pre and post NT interviews the prevalence of the stories about protective factors would increase and the risk stories would reduce; this was the case for each of the boys. In general this was the case for the boys themselves but also for their teachers and mothers. This increased prevalence of protective factors in the stories meant that the risk factors were less present. According to the model of resilience presented in this research (figure 10, Chapter 2) privileging the protective over the risk in this way is helpful to the child developing a self-identity of being able to cope in the face of adversity, of being resilient.

##### *5.1.1.1 Strengthening previously held stories about protective factors*

For each boy the NT reinforced protective factors which were already present in their views of themselves and others views of them. After the NT They were able to share these stories with more detail giving examples over time and across contexts. Kieran already felt that he had a secure base but we made his sense of this stronger, he also knew that he liked singing but didn't see this as particularly important –through the NT he learnt how valuable this was in others eyes. Daniel had a sense of 'I can...' and 'I have...' at school but we generalised this to his life at home also, and Owen had a sense of his efficacy with sport and needed help to translate this confidence into his school work. Through making the stories about these protective factors louder and richer within the landscape of the children's self-identity their resilience will have been promoted. This change in the boys' stories can be related to the 'compensating model' of resilience (Garmezy and Rutter, 1984) in which we see the compensating asset having an impact on the outcome; Kieran's new interest is a compensating variable. Moreover his improved sense of a secure base could be perceived as an asset on a continuum from risk (low secure base) to asset (strong secure base) (Masten, 2014). Through the NT this asset moved along the continuum to a position from which it could be a more positive influence on his outcomes.

In the post NT interviews the boys became more confident, fluent and articulate when talking about their strengths. Often when meeting with visiting professional's children expect to talk about their difficulties and areas of need and so get an opportunity to rehearse that version of themselves, the NT gave them an opportunity to practice a set of

stories which are more helpful and resilience focussed. In narrative therapy terms, the boys were able to move away from the dominant problem focussed narrative of themselves towards a preferred alternative story, (Morgan, 2000).

#### *5.1.1.2 Introducing stories about new protective factors*

The NT developed new protective factors within the children's landscape of stories. Before the therapeutic sessions the children and their key adults were able to talk fluently about their difficulties, however in NT there are techniques which can be used to find instances when the problem has had less or no influence; these instances are called 'unique outcomes' (Morgan, 2000). Exploring these gives the opportunity to identify times when a different belief, ability or behaviour is shown and then to create an alternative map (White, 2007), through finding examples of this belief or ability across contexts and time. For Daniel we were able to identify times when he had needed to be confident, previously the focus had been on times when he had not been confident and his emotions had overwhelmed him but through the therapeutic conversation we identified that actually he had already been showing confidence in managing many everyday tasks. We expanded the influence of 'confidence' through looking for opportunities in which he had already shown this ability and for opportunities for him to show it in the near future. Owen and his teachers were both stumped by his low level of confidence with work but the NT helped Owen to realise that he was often brave in the sporting arena and when performing or singing. Through helping him to see being brave as something he could do, identifying how he did this and how it made him feel, he was able to experiment with trying out being brave in the classroom.

In this outcome we can see that resilience and narrative theories have combined effectively using knowledge of protective factors and assets (resilience theory) to support children to develop their resilience self-identity (narrative theory) – new protective factors were found and given a more privileged position.

#### *5.1.1.3 The landscape of resilience factors shrank but became more fertile*

In a number of post NT interviews it became apparent that the landscape of resilience stories had shrunk- the range of interests or abilities talked about reduced as the detail about the areas of focus increased. The quantity of protective factors may have reduced but the quality of them had improved, in narrative terms they had moved from 'thin' to 'thick' descriptions (Walther and Fox, 2012). The children, their teachers and parents were able to talk more fluently and more confidently about the protective factors we had identified as valuable. Kieran's teacher learnt to talk more confidently and in more detail about the abilities he was able to show in class (independence, pride and accepting praise) whereas at the beginning of her involvement in the process she had been able to give only very small examples of success (one story, one instance of trying hard). Daniel reduced the number of things he was able to do, his "I can..." statements, but he was more fluent in his conversations about the things he did talk about. This can be perceived as being supportive of the children's resilience; these protective factors have become more solid building blocks to their resilience because they are abilities they see as being concrete across contexts and time, and as being valued by others; they have more weight in compensating for risks (Masten, 2014).

#### *5.1.1.4 Stories were transferred into action*

The NT intervention led to changes not only in the ways the boys were talking about themselves and others were talking about them, but also in the way they were behaving in school and/ or at home. The research focussed on changing the stories which were being told by and about the children. However the first signs of the impact of these changes was seen in changes in the reports of children's behaviour in class and at home. There were stories of the boys trying out newly found or reinforced skills and attributes beyond the NT sessions. Kieran was singing more and enjoying it, Owen was genuinely being brave when presented with writing tasks and Daniel was practicing being socially confident by putting his hand up in class and opening his Christmas presents in front of his family.

#### *5.1.1.5 The triad of "I have...", "I can..." and "I am..." can be applied to therapeutic aims*

Identifying therapeutic aims using these three building blocks of resilience (Grotberg, 1997) was effective. There is vast range of protective factors which have been identified as useful to children's resilience in the literature, the handy trio of statements was accessible in a therapeutic context when it is sometimes necessary to think quickly and respond helpfully. A familiarity with the wider research base informed my use of these three statements.

#### *5.1.1.6 The risk stories became less prevalent*

In each case the prevalence of risk factors in the stories told about and by the boys reduced. These stories became either thinner (less detailed) or quieter (were mentioned less often).

The narrative therapy process of using unique outcomes allowed the boys and the adults to notice that there were times when their difficulties did not overwhelm them, that they could sometimes have influence over their problems. In this way the influence of the risk factors on the outcomes are reduced, this would make it easier for the protective factors/assets to compensate, (Garmezy and Rutter, 1984).

Also the externalising conversations showed the boys that there are times when they do overcome the challenges they face; they are brave even though they are feeling scared, they believe in their ability to get on with their work when it would be easier to ask for help. In narrative terms the size of the problems or risks, were reduced in the landscape of their resilience (White, 2007); and in resilience terms the boys were shown that they have the abilities that are helpful when faced with a challenge and this experience will help them in the future, as seen in the challenge model of resilience, see section 2.4.1.2 in Literature Review, (Garmezy et al, 1984).

#### *5.1.1.7 The genre of the stories changed*

The genre of the stories shared also changed. Table 7 provides a summary of the 'holistic – form' step in the NOI analysis and illustrates the general trend of movement towards a romantic leaning in the stories being told. This suggests a movement towards more hopeful outcomes for the boys. A shared sense of hope between the boys and the adults would inform the boy's perceptions of themselves and their self-identity. At this holistic level the stories do not seem to have changed as much as is suggested by other steps in the analysis.

	<b>Before</b>	<b>After</b>
<b>Kieran</b>	Romantic No sense of change	Romantic No sense of change
<b>Kieran's teacher</b>	Tragic Hopeful of change	Romantic Hopeful for the future
<b>Kieran's mum</b>	Tragic – her tragedy No sense of change	Tragic No sense of change
<b>Owen</b>	Mixture but predominantly romantic Little sense of change	More romantic Little sense of change
<b>Owen's teacher</b>	Hoping for a romantic story Wanting but not making changes	Closer to a romantic ending but still unsure of future/ what the sequel will be
<b>Owen's mum</b>	Romantic Little change possible or needed	Romantic Little change possible or needed
<b>Daniel</b>	Tragic No sense of change	More romantic but not entirely so More change indicated
<b>Daniel's teacher</b>	Hopeful and romantic, some satire Talks about change happening already	Currently romantic but anticipating tragedy Progress has stalled
<b>Daniel's mum</b>	Tragic Little sense of change happening or possible	Tentatively romantic (Cliff hanger as challenges are anticipated) Change recognised

*Table 8:* The genre of the stories before and after NT

#### **5.1.1.8** *The congruence between participants' stories can be increased*

There was a level of congruence between the focus in the NT sessions and the stories told by and about the boys in the final interviews. Also there was an increased congruence between the three participants within each group in the post NT interviews. This suggests that the opportunities to listen to each other's stories within the NT sessions had enabled them to develop shared stories about the child. Using the narrative idea of our identity being formed through both subject positions (from others) and identity positions (from ourselves) (Hiles, 2007) this would allow for future opportunities to reinforce the child's perception of themselves as resilient.

There was less of an overlap when attendance at the sessions had been less consistent; when the role of being an outsider witness was not taken on; Kieran's mum was unable to attend any of the NT sessions, and in fact only made a small amount of time for the final meeting, and her stories had less overlap than Kieran and his teacher's. The model would suggest that Kieran's mum is now less able to support his development of resilience as she cannot reinforce the resilience stories which were developed in the NT if she doesn't know them.

#### **5.1.1.9** *Involving others gives value to attributes and abilities*

Through involving the mothers and teachers in the therapeutic conversations the children were able to see that their strengths were valued by others. When present, the mums and

the teachers described times when they had been proud of the child and times when they had noticed the child showing a particular trait, skill or ability. This placed the protective factor in the landscape over time- giving examples of when the boys were little and could not remember themselves (Owen singing when he was little) and across a range of contexts (Kieran being kind in and out of school). This reinforcement by important adults increased the value of the abilities within their social context, beyond the therapeutic session. This adds further weight to the compensating power of the assets.

#### *5.1.1.10 Involving others in the NT improves relationships*

The stories suggest that a number of relationships within the research group improved. Both Daniel and his mum talked differently about each other in the post NT sessions. His mum was positively emotional about how she was enjoying Daniel and enjoying being his parent, and Daniel was able to talk about the times he had enjoyed in the family in a way which was very different from the negative way he had spoken at the beginning of the process. The structured, positive conversations in the NT session helped them to perceive each other differently; Daniel realised that his mum was proud of him and his mum remembered that there were many reasons to be proud of him. The relationship between Owen and his teacher was also greatly enhanced through this research process. In the last interview the teacher talks about enjoying working with Owen and being proud of him. These changes were brought about by the NT perception that the problem is external to the child and they reflect the change in the relationship that the child and the parent or teacher have with the problem, (White and Epston, 1990); when the overwhelming problem is externalised from the child the difficult relationship is with the problem rather than with the child. This leaves space for a more positive relationship with the child to regrow. From a resilience perspective this change has improved an asset (relationships with important adults) which will help to protect the child from risk.

#### *5.1.1.11 Involving others helps the child to transfer their stories into action*

There were instances of the traits discussed in the NT being actioned in the children's lives. Two of the mechanisms which could have facilitated changes in the children's behaviour beyond the therapeutic context are supported by the teachers and parents being part of the therapeutic conversations. Firstly, the adults noticed and celebrated the children's attempts to try out these emerging traits beyond the NT sessions and created opportunities to try out newly evolving talents. Owen's teacher knew that he was trying to be more confident in his work and so celebrated his attempts to do this in class, Kieran's teacher knew that singing was important to him and so she created opportunities for him to do this more often, and Daniel's mum knew that he was being brave even just being at the theatre and so didn't push him too far by insisting that he took his hood down. In this way the adults were enacting the mediator model of resilience (Masten, 2014), but mediating a protective factor rather than a risk.

Secondly, as proposed by the narrative model of identity formation (Hiles, 2007), the process of hearing that other, important, people also believed in these new abilities (the subject identity) would enable the children to feel greater ownership of them and more able to try them out; Owen heard that others thought he was brave and so help him to be brave in the classroom with things he had previously found overwhelming, especially as the teacher was present both when the new story was being developed and in the context of the classroom.

#### *5.1.1.12 Teacher and parents learn new skills to try with others*

There was a positive ripple effect beyond the therapeutic groups to other groups within the boy's ecosystem; with learning achieved by the adults being passed onto others. The impact was sometimes positive for the target boys- Daniel's mum passed on her new way of seeing Daniel on to the wider family – helping his dad, grandmother and aunt to recognise his difficulties and the attempts he was making to overcome them. And on occasion the impact went beyond these individuals - Kieran's teacher learnt narrative therapy techniques that she then employed with her class in an attempt to help them see their own abilities more clearly.

#### **5.1.2 Effectiveness of the intervention**

Interventions to promote resilience can be usefully focussed at one or more of three levels, (Masten, 2014); there is evidence to suggest that this use of NT was effective in all three – reducing risk, increasing promotive factors and facilitating development of protective factors.

The intervention usefully involved important systems around the child-- parents (Hill, et al., 2007) and teachers (Bernard, 1995; Zimmerman & Arunkumar, 1994) and so was also able to effect change at levels across the ecosystems as is recognised as important in the literature, (Bernard, 1995; Brooks, 2006; Cox, 2004; Oswald, et al., 2003); within child changes were achieved but also changes in their interaction with their teacher and parent. There was some suggestion that the changes in the parents and the teachers could have an impact beyond these relationships – on other systems within the child's life (wider family) but also on other systems in the adults lives (other children in the teachers class in the parents family).

However, Browne, Gafni et al (2004) also found that the most effective interventions were universal programs rather than those targeted at a particular group of children sharing a risk factor such as drug use or anxiety, (see section 2.7 Literature Review). The intervention presented in this thesis was focussed on developing the resilience of a small number of individual children, rather than aiming to change the resilience of a whole cohort, and so was limited in its effectiveness in this way. The aim on this occasion was to 'throw back the star fish' rather than 'stopping the tide'. However, through involving the teachers in narrative interviews in which they reflected upon the children's resilience and involving them in the narrative therapy sessions they were exposed to a range of potential learning opportunities. There was some suggestion that this learning could be transferred into their professional practice. In this way there was a blurring of the distinction between targeted and universal interventions; the targeted intervention was a vehicle for future change in a wider context the classrooms of the teachers now and in the future.

#### **5.1.3 Limitations of the intervention to improving resilience**

There is evidence to suggest that the intervention had a positive impact on the resilience stories told by and about the boys. However there are number of ways in which the intervention was not wholly successful and why conclusions made about the efficacy of the intervention need to be qualified.

##### *5.1.3.1 Motivation to change has an impact*

There were some participants who were less influenced by the NT process or who were more reluctant to change their stories about the children. Owen's mum's stories about him



changed relatively little; in the first interview she had seen little need for change and rather seemed to be pretty much accepting him as he was – she knew he struggled with some things in school but was proud of the things he achieved out of school. She seemed sure that he would not overcome his difficulties in school and didn't seem worried about it. In this instance the parent held a low perceived need for change in the context in which she knew the child (home). The reports from the other participants in Owen's group suggested that he did make changes at home (increased homework) but this was not strongly recognised by his mum – as she wasn't looking for the changes she wasn't able to see them so clearly.

It seems that there is an interaction between the nature of the story being changed and the context in which it is being told. The mediator model of resilience (Masten, 2014) help us to understand this. Using Owen as an illustrative example; his and the teacher's stories change more because the change was seen most often in the context which they share (the classroom); the teacher was in a position to be able to mediate the impact of the protective factor, if we had focussed on achieving a change at home would it have been easier for the mum to have mediated the changes and so be more aware of the changes?

From a narrative perspective it was harder for the mum to reposition her relationship with the 'problem' of Owen's difficulty with writing as for her it persisted as a part of him, (she did not externalise it) and moreover she didn't really have a problem with this part of her beloved baby boy. Perhaps externalising a 'problem' only works when it is a perceived as a problem and so there is motivation to change.

#### *5.1.3.2 Misunderstanding the aim of NT*

Daniel's teacher had a complex and seemingly contradictory response to the NT. At the end of the process she stated, 'off the record' that she felt the NT had had little impact- that the changes were happening before it had started. However, she engaged positively with the process and contributed usefully to the NT sessions and significantly, the nature of the stories she told about Daniel did change; her post NT interview was more positive and balanced in favour of protective factors. Her statement suggests she did not understand that it could be true that the changes could have started to occur in the classroom before the research started *and* that the NT had been effective. The aim of the NT sessions had been to reinforce these changes as important, and to show Daniel that he had been making the changes as a result of his own abilities, or self-efficacy. In doing so it would help him to see these successes as part of his own story and part of his self-identity. The NT built on the changes in the classroom, rather than being instead of them as the teacher seemed to think.

#### *5.1.3.3 The NT didn't solve all the problems*

The complexity of the boys' problems meant that it was very unlikely that all of their issues would be solved in a course of 3 or 4 therapeutic conversations; it was necessary to prioritise the focus of the intervention. In this instance priorities were identified according to the resilience literature (the "I have...I can...I am..." statements). This meant that at the end of the research the boys and the adults around them were left with risk factors in the resilience landscape which had hardly been touched upon – Daniel's inability to use metal cutlery, or Kieran's difficulty with spelling. The intention is that their increased resilience

will help them to overcome these risks to their wellbeing (as per compensating, challenge, and mediator models of resilience).

## 5.2 SUMMARY RESEARCH AIM 2: DOES NOI HELP US TO EXPLORE CHANGES IN THE RESILIENCE STORIES?

The NOI model was thoroughly and repeatedly tested; all six steps of the interpretation phase were fully employed across 18 interviews and partially across 6 more (the EP and researcher stories). The findings show that methods can effectively inform data gathering and analysis of the stories. The information provided by the 6 interpretative steps amply facilitated exploration of the research aim; NOI helps stories to be told, to be heard, and also to be compared with each other.

This research has shown that NOI offers the tools to manage a huge amount of data – and to take meaning from it at multiple levels. It offered the means by which to untangle and dissect the stories and then put them back together in such a form that they could be easily understood. In using this process to read the stories ‘everything quickly began to fall into place. Insight into the core themes of the narrative emerged – the subtleties of the telling became clearer – deeper critical issues emerged’ (Hiles, et al., 2009) It made it possible to immerse oneself in the data without drowning in it!

The flexibility of NOI is a strength. It was able to cope with the stories of very different people’ across a range of ages, abilities, confidence levels and roles (pupil, parent and teacher).

The flexibility also meant that the narrative interviews could be varied according to the participant’s abilities and interests; enabling rapport and trust to be gained. This can be effective in eliciting stories. However, the open nature of the narrative interview and the premise that the participants can lead the conversation to some extent can result in gaps in the data when applying the stories to a theoretical model. The suggestion of a ‘narrative interview guide’ goes some way to address this flaw in design, but there is no description offered of what this actually is. Use of a checklist list of questions or topics to be discussed, with flexibility, would redress this gap. Also, the open nature of the narrative interview does mean that it is open to the researcher being overly present in the interview – sharing her own thoughts and ideas. This too can be useful to building rapport but if done unskilfully would inhibit or alter the stories shared by the participants.

In NOI there is no prescribed way in which the analysis should be presented. In this research the methods of presenting the findings evolved as an understanding of them emerged. In trying to share the complexity of the data, and to compare stories across participants it was useful to tabulate some of the data and to present some in diagrams. This has neither been suggested nor discouraged by the model. Without the clarity provided by the tables and figures it would have been hard to compare the stories confidently and with transparency. In this instance the flexibility or lack of clarity about how to present findings could result in poor practice.

The authors of NOI suggest that not all 6 of the interpretative steps are necessary; ‘these approaches can be used singularly, or in any combination, drawing upon the initial analysis into *sjuzet-fabula*’, (Hiles & Čermák, 2008). However, in this thesis each of the steps offered

its own insights pertinent to the research aim. If the research question had focussed only on the resilience stories it may have been sufficient to use the steps which used the fabula – Holistic - Content and Categorical – Content, but as the model is also centred around interaction between the stories and the participants there was great value in the steps which focus on the people telling the stories and how they positioned themselves in relation to the boys and their resilience, Holistic – Form, Categorical – Form and Critical Analysis. Hiles and Cermak suggest the extent to which the NOI model is used is flexible according to the nature of the research question; and so the effectiveness and depth of the analysis is dependent up the researcher’s ability to understand the value of each of the steps, their skills in applying the interpretations, and their tenacity. Table 8 summarises the usefulness of each interpretative step for this thesis and also offers thoughts about their usefulness for narrative research in general.

Interpretative step	Value to this research; understanding the resilience stories	Value in the context of narrative research
Sjuzet – Fabula	<p>The extent to which the adult interviewees were able to focus on the child’s resilience or their own relationship with it.</p> <p>The extent to which the child was able to talk about their own resilience stories.</p>	<p>Provided the basis for further interpretative steps and so was a crucial initial step (Hiles and Cermak 2010)</p> <p>Highlighted the information which may not have been listened for by the interviewer</p> <p>Bounded and unbounded language as promoted by Herman and Vervaeck 2005</p>
Holistic – Content	<p>A good gateway into the interview, with the strongest resilience themes bring articulated early</p> <p>But the potential to loose detail within the ‘told’ and miss the ‘teller’ and ‘telling’</p>	<p>Useful for the reader to be oriented to the text early</p> <p>Articulates links with field of research (e.g. resilience) – forefronts the ‘told’ element</p> <p>Promoted by (Leiblich, et al., 1998)</p>
Holistic – Form	<p>Gave information about a sense of change in the stories told and the direction of this change</p> <p>Started the focus on the experience of the teller – deepening an understanding through focussing the lens on the nuances of what was being said.</p>	<p>In research where a sense of movement or a change within a story is important this is a valuable step (Leiblich, Tuval-Mashich et al. 1998)</p>
Categorical - Content	The most direct link with the resilience literature	The most direct link with the literature of the field of study

	<p>Showed a wide range of resilience stories (protective and risks)</p> <p>Provided a lot of detail</p> <p>Transformed the data into a format which could be compared easily</p>	<p>Facilitates condensing a lot of detail into a manageable format</p> <p>The focus is entirely on the told – not the participants relationship to the information shared</p> <p>(Leiblich, Tuval-Mashich et al. 1998)</p>
Categorical – Form	<p>The meaning the stories had for the boys; their identity position relating to resilience (Hiles 2007)- so how committed they were to the stories and the likelihood of future maintenance of this identity</p> <p>How the adults felt about the child’s resilience and so how they would be able to support its maintenance across contexts and time (see subject position, Hiles 2007, and outsider witness process Morgan 2000)</p> <p>This did not inform our understanding of the resilience stories (I have, I am, or I can) but rather told us about the level of commitment to them.</p>	<p>Focusses entirely on the sjuzet (the position of the teller in relation to the told)</p> <p>Leiblich et al suggest that a quantitative approach is taken to this interpretative step (counting use of particular forms of speech for example). This was not necessary in this instance – possibly because the other interpretative steps had already offered such a lot of context and understanding, (Leiblich, Tuval-Mashich et al. 1998)</p> <p>This is a useful step when seeking to find out a level of commitment to or belief in the stories shared.</p> <p>The value of choosing to do this step on its own is hard to see in the context of this research. However, when it is important to see how the participant relates to (how connected they feel to) the information shared this step increases in value.</p>
Critical analysis	<p>Highlighted how the boys were feeling about the resilience stories and the changes – through the sjuzet we seek their emotional responses.</p> <p>Highlighted how the adults were feeling about the changes with regard to the implications for themselves. This indicated whether they felt they could</p>	<p>The focus is again very much on the sjuzet- focussing on the teller.</p> <p>This is a useful step when it is important to see beyond the stories told and to see the emotional response to the stories shared.</p>

	<p>have an ongoing role or not in resilience maintenance</p> <p>This did not inform an understanding of the boy's resilience stories but rather whether or not the changes were seen positively.</p>	
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Table 9: Contribution of the 6 steps within research

This deep understanding of rich data comes at a cost. The most significant limitation of the NOI method relates to the time it consumes. From transcribing the interview, to reading and rereading, chunking, labelling, numbering, and onto the 6 interpretative steps. Each one of these takes some time and careful consideration of the whole of the interview. In addition, the crucially important element of transparency (Hiles & Čermák, 2007) added considerably to the time it took to show validity in the findings. The time consuming nature of the processes could be perceived as a weakness within the method; it could result in some reduction in the quality of the research at points; there is simply too much to do to do within the timeframe of the research, meaning that some parts may not be fully completed before the next action is required. This aspect of NOI tests the 'commitment and rigour' required of valid research (Yardley, 2008).

NOI was able to answer many of the quality assurance factors sought in section 3.4 of the Methodology chapter. It was able to offer sensitivity to context (to research literature, to the participants), commitment and rigour (thorough data collection, depth and breadth of analysis, engagement with the topic), coherence and transparency (the chain of evidence from interview to findings). The complexity of NOI however opens itself up to reduced validity in the high level of skill it requires of the researcher; in conducting narrative interviews, understanding the nuances of the 6 interpretative steps, presenting information clearly and knowledge of the research base, (Yardley, 2008).

The requirement to be transparent in the NOI research has been clearly stated. In this instance the requirement to be transparent increased engagement with the texts as it was important to return frequently to the transcripts in order to seek evidence for the assertions made in the NOI analysis (see appendix 7.6 about Daniel) and Findings (chapter 4).

### 5.3 RESILIENCE AND NARRATIVE THEORY REVISITED

In concluding the Literature Review chapter I proposed bringing narrative theory together with resilience research as my reading and professional practice suggested the two would support each other; that narrative theory could inform ways to support the development of resilience in children. A model of resilience development was proposed (figure 10).

The findings discussed in this chapter and the figures produced in the data analysis (figures 12 to 23) are in accord with the model proposed; the stories children tell about their resilience can change. This change can move the children's stories away from being focussed on stories which would suggest risk to their resilience and towards stories which can be seen as being helpful to being resilient.

As suggested in both the resilience and narrative literature it was effective to bring together important people within the child's ecosystem, namely their teacher and parent. Changes in the children's resilience stories can be related to similar changes in the stories significant adults tell about their resilience, and the catalyst for this change can be narrative therapy. The influence these people had on the changing stories was effected by their level of engagement (attendance at therapy sessions) but also their motivation to seek change.

Resilience literature in combination with narrative theory suggest that by changing the resilience stories the children hold about themselves in this way that they will be able to act with more resilience- in their school life, home life and beyond.

## **5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN**

The conclusions to the research are curbed by the limitations of the research design as considered here.

### **5.4.1 Impact on resilience out of the therapeutic group is unknown**

The expectation that the changed stories will change the extent to which the boys were able to cope in the face of adversity is hypothetical. Some of the stories shared by the participants described incidents of the boys showing increased resilience at home and in class but primarily the expectation that the change in stories would effect changes in coping is based on theory and has not been tested by this research design.

### **5.4.2 Outcome specificity**

The research design was clear about the outcomes which were being sought in the intervention- a change in the stories which related to the resilience factors identified in resilience research- but there was little domain specificity (Luthar and Zigler, 1991) or time frame (Kaplan, 2005).

### **5.4.3 Ongoing impact is unknown**

The findings show that the resilience stories changed but the design of the research made no attempt to learn for how long this would be maintained. Although there were examples of the boys showing increased resilience at the time of the intervention, no attempt has been made to monitor this following the intervention.

In the case of Daniel and Owen particularly there were conversations about the future which suggested that there was still more work to be done. For both of these boys the teachers and parents identified that there were challenges ahead which may prove too much for them. Some of these related to the focus of the NT and some were not the aims of the NT on these occasions.

### **5.4.4 The impact on stories the boys tell beyond the therapeutic group is unknown**

The design of the research did not seek to find out how the stories were generalised, or not, to other conversations beyond the therapeutic group. The boys developed their resilience stories within the therapeutic group but no attempt was made to see if they could also have these conversations with others in their lives; family, friends or other teachers.

#### 5.4.5 The participants perspective on the process was not fully explored

The research aim was interested in not only the resilience stories but also in the relationships and how the participants positioned themselves in relation to the boy's resilience and to the changes which were being sought. Information about the resilience and the about how they felt about the changes came through the analysis of the narrative interviews. However it would have been helpful to the evaluation of the project to have asked for feedback from the participants; regarding their view on the interview process and the narrative therapy sessions.

The diary forms which were completed by the parents and the teachers after each NT session asked the parent and teacher to report if there were any topics discussed which were of particular interest to them, whether they learnt something new, or had started to think about something differently or were reminded of something, regarding the child, themselves or how the group were working together. This had the potential to fill this gap but did not do so satisfactorily. A process for encouraging all the participant to reflect on the NT process and the topics covered is encouraged in narrative therapy literature as the 4<sup>th</sup> step in the 'definitional ceremony', (Myerhoff, Kaminsky et al, 2007), but was unfortunately not employed in these sessions.

#### 5.4.6 Sensitivity to context

It is important to acknowledge the implications of conducting the interviews in the school building may have had on perceptions of power within the dyads in the interviews. The parents come to visit the EP in the school building at the invitation of their child's teacher or the school SENCO. In this situation there is a sense of the parents being invited into a school system, that they are the visitors and that they are meeting an 'expert' who has been brought in to help them and their child. The impact of this was ameliorated somewhat by the rapport built during the interviews, but it is likely that the parents will have felt some social pressure to present themselves in a particular way; in a way that they perceived to be appropriate (Andrews, et al., 2013; Bold, 2011; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2008). This may have been as a good parent or a parent needing help. This may have altered the stories they chose to share about their child and their parenting. The potential power imbalance could have been altered by asking the parents to choose where they would feel most comfortable meeting.

The meetings between the teacher and the educational psychologist / researcher will also have been similarly rife with unmentioned meanings and potential power imbalances. Teachers are often torn between different positions when meeting with EP's; wanting to portray the children being discussed as having significant needs but also wanting to portray their own practice as effective; between asking for financial help and wanting to be able to manage without help. These differing agenda's may have been present in the interviews.

#### 5.4.7 Complexity of NOI

In applying the chosen methodology commitment and rigour have been shown (Yardley, 2008). However NOI makes great demands on the researcher in striving for these important methods of quality assurance. The process certainly ensures thorough depth/ breadth of analysis but this required a high level of skill, competence and fortitude. The time involved in engaging fully with each of the six interpretative steps is considerable. To

gain an understanding of the information sought by each step takes familiarity and the process of applying each lens to the entirety of each text needs to be thorough.

#### 5.4.8 Dual role of researcher and educational psychologist

The dual role of both researcher and educational psychologist was taken for pragmatic reasons, however in practice it has brought both strength and limitations to the research, see Findings, section 4.2.1. In both the initial and post NT interviews it was necessary, and appropriate to prioritise the role of the EP over that of the researcher; at a potential cost to the quality of the data gathered. In the initial interviews the dual roles consisted of collecting resilience stories but also collecting information and building rapport on which the subsequent NT would be based. This latter role resulted in reduced probing in the interviews. In the post NT interviews there was again a focus on collecting resilience stories but also an opportunity to share the EP view of the child which had been developed during the NT sessions- and hopefully impact future outcomes further. This potential for the EP role to be present was reflected upon during the research and reduced during latter interviews.

#### 5.4.9 Joint construction of meaning

A critical issue for NOI is joint creation of meaning between the participant and the researcher. The researcher takes an active role in the interviews and as such the stories told can be seen as being created in the moment which exists between the researcher and the participant, also the process of data analysis results in jointly produced meaning – participant as data supplier and researcher as data analyser, ‘this is inescapable, and is a simple fact of life for any qualitative researcher’, p 161 (Hiles & Čermák, 2008). It is important to acknowledge the role of the researcher in the creation of the data, its interpretation and its presentation; authenticity is created through staying close to the data and ensuring transparency has been offered. Without this restraint it is possible for the researcher; attitudes, hopes and concerns (Yardley, 2008) and expert knowledge (Emerson and Frosh, 2004) to be overly present.

### 5.5 CONTRIBUTIONS TO KNOWLEDGE

This research is unique in bringing together resilience and narrative theory in this way; building on resilience research and incorporating narrative theory to create an intervention which shows promise.

#### 5.5.1 Contributions to the field of resilience literature

Bringing together the narrative and resilience fields has contributed to the conceptualisation of resilience, particularly the notion of a resilience self-identity.

Firstly narrative *theory* has influenced a conceptualisation of resilience. A resilient child can be described as one who has a self-identity including the narratives of ‘I have...’, ‘I can...’, and ‘I am...’. Narrative theory suggests identity is built from both subject position (from the stories we are given about ourselves by others) and identity positions (how we position ourselves in relation to these stories we are given), (Hiles, 2007). Therefore a resilience identity can be conceptualised as a function of the stories told about and to the child across social contexts, and the child’s level of acceptance of them.



Narrative *research* methods have shown that they can contribute to the resilience research field; they enable us to really hear resilience narratives, be able to relate this to resilience research findings and to crucially understand the meaning that they may have for the participants (children and adults involved in interventions).

Also, although narrative *therapy* has not been subject to scrutiny in this thesis there is information to suggest that it would lend itself well to resilience development. Resilience can be perceived from a social constructivist view, and be centred on an ecological framework of development; equally narrative therapy accepts that our perception of ourselves is at least in part socially constructed and welcomes the involvement of important witnesses from other areas in the child's life.

The importance of the ecological framework of children's development for the development of resilience is accepted by many; this research contributes weight to this. The model proposed in this research gives us a process by which important adults in the child's ecosystems can become involved in contributing to the child's resilience. Adults around the child can help them to identify stories which will be helpful to them; to give the protective stories a more privileged position in the discourse around the child and in doing so they can reduce the prevalence of the risk focussed stories. There has been no attempt to measure the longevity of the changes but there is data to suggest that involving the adults had the added benefit of potentially maintaining the resilience stories. In the instances when the adult seemed to have a good understanding of the implications of the change in the stories – to have understood the narrative therapy – they spoke of continuing the new ways of seeing the child and the positive impact they expected this to have.

#### 5.5.2 Contribution to narrative theory

This thesis has applied narrative theory in the resilience field; a research arena where its presence is relatively unknown. The application of narrative theory in this new field has been explored. In doing so it offers another example of the way in the narrative perspective offers useful insight into a wide range of fields and supports the view that it is significant for the entire psychology discipline, (Hiles & Čermák, 2008).

In applying narrative theory specifically to the development of resilience for the boys who took part in the research, this thesis has illustrated one way in which the narrative conceptualisation of self-identity can be used to inform practical application of its theories. The model of change (figure 10) used the model of self-identity offered by Hiles (2007) to create an intervention that has shown to have some impact and suggest that further research into its application would be useful.

#### 5.5.3 Contributions to narrative research methods

This research has thoroughly tested the NOI model offered by Hiles and Cermak. In doing so more has been learnt about NOI, its strengths and limitations or areas for further development. When presenting NOI Hiles and Cermak suggested themselves 'that this is still a work in progress' and 'there are very many details still to flesh out', (p 160, 2008). Subsequent papers have not added significant detail, (Hiles, et al., 2009; Hiles, Čermák, & Chrz, 2010)

This research has shown that NOI can be used to effectively hear the stories which were shared by participants with a range of abilities, ages and roles (teacher, parent, and child).

The process enabled not only information (fabula) to be heard by the researcher but also the meaning each participant connected to the information they chose to share (sjuzet). NOI has proved itself useful when the research aims to explore complex issues which rely on an understanding of the narrative within the context of research literature but also requires an understanding of the meaning of content for the teller on this occasion of telling.

NOI can also be usefully used when the research requires disparate stories to be compared. This is achieved through comparing the told, the telling and the teller, rather than comparing the texts as wholes.

This research has, however, identified a number of areas in which the NOI could be further improved. The flexibility of the process has been both a strength and a limitation on this occasion.

1. NOI suggests a Narrative Interview Guide is created to be used in the narrative interviews. No information is given about the nature of this guide nor do they reference any advice provide by others. In this research it was discovered that it was useful having a succinct guide, with a list of areas to be covered, and a few suggested questions. This would not be used to structure the interview, the participants need to be able to lead the flow of conversation for the majority of the time, however it would ensure that a breadth of data is recorded- in this case covering resilience topics (fabula), but also to gain meaning of the stories being shared for the participants (sjuzet).
2. There is a need for greater clarity about the six steps interpretative steps. In the papers published by Hiles and Cermak describing NOI they do give some information about this but it is frankly, scant. At the time of writing their papers about NOI they were clearly already very fluent in narrative research methodologies. For new comers to the field it was necessary to complete a lot of further reading before being able to access the meaning of some of the interpretative steps they suggest. It would be helpful to have more information about how to complete each interpretative step and guidance about which is useful to use when. What type of research questions does each step help to answer? I have attempted to start to do this in section 5.2, table 8.
3. Finally the NOI model offers no guidance about presentation of findings. Examples of tabulated sections of text are provided in some papers to illustrate early analysis steps (Hiles & Čermák, 2007, 2008; Hiles, et al., 2009, 2010) but there is no information about how the findings can be presented. In this thesis it has proved effective to use both sections of prose and some tabulated summaries. This facilitated comparing one story with another.

#### 5.5.4 Contributions to educational psychology practice

##### 5.5.4.1 *Using narrative theory to develop children's resilience*

In this thesis we have seen that children have within themselves, within their landscape of lived experience, stories about protective factors which can be used to develop their resilience narratives. The stories about the protective factors may be very little or quiet but with careful listening, they can be identified and helped to flourish. They can be thickened

with details and examples from others, and they can be raised in value by being celebrated by others.

Too often in EP practice it is necessary to focus on the barriers to a child's success, measuring them and comparing them to criteria, this in turn runs the risk of thickening the risk factors stories in the child's life, in their narrative of themselves even. The stories about these risk factors become louder when we talk about them in detail with teachers, with parents, we write detailed descriptions of these difficulties and share them widely so that this version of the child is known before other professionals even meet with the child. In this research we saw that the adults and the children were fluent, seemingly rehearsed, in telling the stories about the risk factors at the start of the intervention; but with practice telling the stories about the protective factors became easier, and brought positive emotion and improved relationships.

It is important therefore for the EP to be aware of the implications of recording, repeating and sharing the stories told to them by clients. Within the SEN systems currently in place in English schools and local authorities a sole focus on the positive or protective factors would be difficult to maintain – too often access to resources in school and beyond is dependent on their being a clear and consistent description of a child's risk factors.

In this work we have seen the benefit listening very carefully to the stories shared by the people we work with. We have seen the importance of hearing, really hearing, the stories children tell us about their risk and protective factors – of listening not only for the fabula but also the *sjuzet* – for example an EP may know that the child is poor at spelling but unless this is perceived by the child as a risk to their resilience, then its impact is not going to be as strong as the EP may anticipate. The spelling difficulty becomes more of a barrier to wellbeing only when it is a problem for the people who are important to the child as they may pass this perception of it as an important weakness to the child.

A social constructionist view of resilience suggests that a child's level of resilience is dependent upon the narrative they have about this aspect of their development; the research literature has identified risk and protective or promotive factors for children in general, but within each child there is such a huge array of different strengths and abilities, such a huge array of lived experience that the impact of the risk and protective factors will be different for each child. With this in mind the value of standardised measures of resilience is reduced. The resilience measures available off the shelf can never match the narratives held by the child and so would be measuring only what someone else sees as important rather than the relative values of risk and protective factors as perceived by the child.

The intervention in this thesis has been effective in helping the children to change their resilience stories suggesting that narrative therapy techniques can usefully be employed by Educational Psychologists. They could be used when working with individual children, or when working with the child and their teacher and/or their parents. There is also some suggestion that teachers could usefully be trained to understand and use narrative techniques with the children in their classes to help the children to develop more helpful narratives around their learning.

#### 5.5.4.2 *What contribution does NOI make to educational psychology practice?*

In concluding the analysis of the data about each of the boys I reflected on this question and on each occasion there were lessons learnt which would influence my practice as an educational psychologist and which would usefully be shared with other EPs.

Narrative interviews have proved themselves to be effective in gathering information about the problem situation, and the perspectives others have about it. In my professional role I am practiced in listening to parents, teachers and children talk about difficult situations, and I am used to working through an active process of gaining information, setting hypotheses, testing these hypotheses and in this circular way I work towards everyone gaining a more helpful understanding of the situation and possible solutions. The change often needs to be immediate and quickly achieved. However, in the narrative interviews my role was to ask questions and to listen – I was tasked with the opposite to my usual EP role - not to change views or offer solutions. My understanding of what was being said, what was really being said, was formed in re-listening to the tapes, and in analysing the conversations through the many lenses offered by NOI. This type of listening offered a lot more than would be gained in a usual EP consultation. I heard more of what was said, I heard more of how it was being said and I heard more about what that meant for the people who were talking. As I recorded at the end of analysing the data about Daniel “... by reflecting on the data more slowly and in this structured way my own biases and interests were quietened. The EP notes suggest that these were louder before the analysis”.

The 6 interpretative steps brought greater insight. The process of categorising the stories into *sjuzet-fabula* would be useful in EP practice. The *fabula* gives the information about the child; barriers to their successful learning or wellbeing and information about their strengths which can be used to overcome these barriers. In EP practice this information is often reported, and built upon to give advice about future learning priorities and strategies to be employed. It is the *fabula* which would be tested against criteria to see if the child met criteria for additional resources. However, without the information provided by the *sjuzet* that provided by the *fabula* is less valuable. In EP practice the aim is to create change – within the child or within the adults around the child who will then be able to support the child more effectively. Their ability to change thoughts, feelings and behaviour is dependent upon their motivation. It is within the *sjuzet* that we see how the child is feeling about their difficulties and their motivation to change, and it is in the *sjuzet* that we see the way the adults position themselves in relation to the child’s difficulties. An awareness of the *sjuzet* would usefully contribute to the EPs understanding of this understanding and their ability to affect change.

The ‘categorical–content’ step encourages use of a theoretical model as a lens through which to read the stories. This process of analysis is often used by psychologists – we hear information through the lenses’ which have been developed through training and practice, and these can be many and varied; Vygotsky’s model of child development, the Motivation Cycle, features of autism to name but a few. The additional use of the other interpretative steps by an EP would ensure that the meaning of the information for the teller maintains a profile – rather than converting the information into the meaning it would have via the EP lenses. An illustrative example, when a parent reports that their child is obsessed with dinosaurs and prefers to wear their clothes inside out because they are irritated by labels and seams, as a pushed EP, I would bring my autism lens into focus and start to test

hypotheses around this. An EP who was really interested in hearing the meaning of these behaviours for the parent and child would ask different questions which would elicit useful information about their capacity to cope with these challenges (critical analysis) or their desire to change the situation (holistic-form and categorical-form). An awareness of the variety of lenses, and practice in using them to really hear what is being said, could usefully influence the way in which interviews are conducted and future actions proposed.

In these ways the quality of my EP understanding of the stories can be greatly improved by the NOI process, but this quality comes at the price of quantity. Analysing the interviews using the NOI process is massively time consuming meaning that it would take a significant shift in practice and work rate to include a rigorous and structured use of NOI. Nonetheless with increased familiarity with the 6 steps, just keeping these ideas in mind would bring depth to the way stories are listened to and heard and so could have a positive impact on the quality of the work done by EPs.

#### 5.5.5 Implications for future research

The findings suggests narrative theory could usefully inform future directions of research within the resilience field. The literature review in Chapter 2 discussed some of the limitations in resilience research; one of these was that the complexity resulting from the number of variables which influence a child's path to adult hood, the cascades of development, mean that we cannot group many children together in research or intervention groups without ignoring many influential factors. Narrative theory, research and practice shows us that each story is different and listening carefully to individual stories, embracing the complexity of an individual child's situation and history brings its own real contribution to the research field. I would suggest that this focus on the narratives of individual children brings another precious metal to be woven in alongside Masten's (2014) 'gold standard' of randomised control trials and would contribute usefully to the resilience research field.

The research in this thesis has taken a person focussed model (figure 6, section 2.6 Literature Review; Masten, 2014). Further exploration of this model would suggest that another approach to exploring the stories children hold about their resilience would be to compare the stories held by a child who is considered to be resilient (successful subgroup) with those who are not (other children in the high risk group). Taking the expanded classic aggregated model of research (Figure 7) the stories of children within each of the 4 subgroups could be compared and NOI would provide a good tool for such a comparison.

A number of the limitations to this research have centred on the lack of information about how the stories the children and others tell about their resilience translates to action in various contexts within the child's ecosystem. It would be good to extend this research design into one or more of these contexts. This could be done in a simple form in which the way in which resilience stories relate to action is explored (figure 24) or could be expanded further to incorporate an intervention and an exploration of change over time (figure 25). This however would require careful consideration of the way in which resilience was measured, standardised measures of resilience would be contradictory to narrative theory epistemology and ontology.

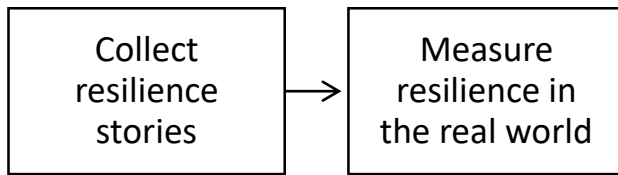


Figure 24: Exploring the link between resilience stories and resilience

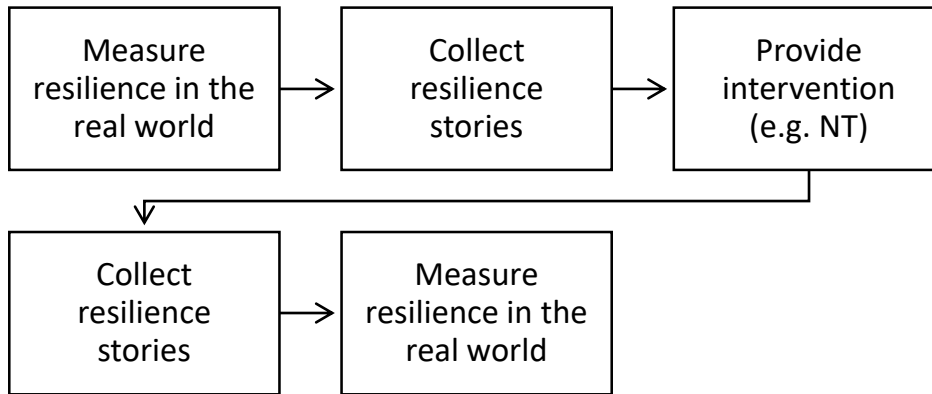


Figure 25: Suggested expanded research model

Before narrative techniques can be used confidently in the field to promote children’s resilience it would be beneficial to extend the research base. More information is needed about the outcomes for children – do the changes in narratives translate to improved coping in everyday situations? Do the conversations present in the therapeutic setting generalise to the child’s conversations in other contexts- with friends or other family members? Does the apparent increased resilience result in improved resilience generalise across situations (the ripple effect) or is it domain specific? And for how long do the changes last?

Also it would be useful to have more information about the nature of the process of involving others in the intervention; exploring further the interaction between the significant adult’s presence in the therapeutic conversations and the nature of the change the child wants to see. What is the value of having more than one familiar adult involved? Is it crucial for the adult to be present in both the therapeutic conversations and in the context in which the change is sought- if the child is seeking to feel more resilient with aspects of his school day is it important for the teacher to be involved or would a parent be able to fulfil this role as effectively.

These findings could also be built upon to develop different interventions which would further test the usefulness of narrative work in promoting resilience -Can use of narrative techniques be used to support resilience with groups of children as well as individuals? What is the efficacy of training teachers and parents in narrative theory and narrative therapy techniques so that this can influence their professional practice or parenting?

## 5.6 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis suggests that the development of resilience in children can be supported by working with the child, the parent and the teacher to develop narratives in which protective factors are developed and risk factors minimised. Through the use of Narrative Therapy techniques the prevalence of stories which suggest that the child would not cope with adversity is reduced and those which suggest that they would cope can be made richer, thicker and louder within the resilience narrative held by the child. A social constructionist and narrative perspective of resilience suggests that when a child holds a set of narratives about his self, and these are also held and shared by important adults around him, that this then will inform his self-identity. A protective resilience narrative will help the child to feel that they have a set of resources on which to call when facing adversity. Narratives which include the phrases 'I have...', 'I am ...' and 'I can...' will enable them to perceive themselves as a person who can cope.

Narrative therapy techniques can be used to thicken stories already held and develop new stories; they can be used to develop stories relating to many areas considered valuable when promoting resilience. Narrative therapy offers useful strategies for working with parents and teachers to nurture and reinforce the development of these new stories.

The aim of the research was to change the resilience stories the child told about themselves and the stories others told about them. The implications for resilience in the face of adversity, measuring reactions to the fact of an adversity, were not a focus of data collection. However in the interviews examples were given of the children behaving in ways which suggested that they were coping more effectively with the areas of their lives they were finding challenging; that they were showing resilience.

The process enabled the participants to develop more hope for the future but there is a case for more input being useful. This could have reinforced the resilience stories further and broadened the resilience landscape.

The NOI model of narrative research methods proved effective in eliciting the stories, hearing them and providing a perspective from which the stories could be compared. Contributions to this model are offered by this research. Conclusion are drawn which suggest that NOI methodology can make a useful contribution to both research and EP practice.

These findings are valuable to the resilience research field and to educational psychology practice because they suggest that resilience can be supported by very ordinary processes and systems around the child; simply talking with the adults who are around them most of the time- parent and teachers. It is accepted that the conversations used in the NT were carefully structured but the principles behind the therapeutic techniques are not complex and could be used to create patterns of conversations between parents and their children, or between teacher and their pupils. These patterns could be taught with relative ease over a number of teaching sessions with the parent or through professional training events with teachers.

These findings have implications for the resilience research field and for educational psychologists. The exploration of this intervention has proved to have 'translational synergy' (Masten, 2014) - with knowledge of both the literature and practice having

informed the design and interpretation of the research and the conclusions having mutual benefits to science and practice.



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## 7 APPENDICES

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### 7.1 RESILIENCE CHARACTERISTICS

#### Characteristics of a resilient child

Paper	Characteristics of a resilient child			
Browne et al (2004)	Have caring people for support and guidance			
Grotberg (1998)	I have... I can... I am...			
Daniel and Wassell (2002) Based on Gilligan 97	<table border="0"> <tr> <td>           Secure base.            Good self esteem            A sense of self efficacy         </td> <td style="font-size: 3em; vertical-align: middle;">}</td> <td>           Friendships            Social competence            Talents and interests            Secure base            Education            Positive values         </td> </tr> </table>	Secure base. Good self esteem A sense of self efficacy	}	Friendships Social competence Talents and interests Secure base Education Positive values
Secure base. Good self esteem A sense of self efficacy	}	Friendships Social competence Talents and interests Secure base Education Positive values		
Oswald et al (2003)	Stable relations with peers Problem solving skills Realistic future plans Positive sense of being able to achieve and deal effectively with tasks Successful in 1+ areas of their life Communication skills Strong attachment with at least one adult Accept responsibility for their actions and behaviour			
Bernard (1995)	Social competence Problem solving skills Critical consciousness Autonomy Sense of purpose			

## **Clarifying the vocabulary of resilience**

(Grotberg, 1997, 1998)

Instead of External supports and resources, the term I HAVE is used; instead of Inner, personal strengths, the term I AM is used; and instead of Social, interpersonal skills, the term, I CAN is used. With that classification, the resilience features were collapsed as follows:

### **I HAVE ...**

People around me I trust and who love me, no matter what

People who set limits for me so I know when to stop before there is danger or trouble

People who show me how to do things right by the way they do things

People who want me to learn to do things on the own

People who help me when I am sick, in danger or need to learn

### **I AM ...**

A person people can like and love

Glad to do nice things for others and show my concern

Respectful of myself and others

Willing to be responsible for what I do

Sure things will be all right

### **I CAN ...**

Talk to others about things that frighten me or bother me

Find ways to solve problems that I face

Control myself when I feel like doing something not right or dangerous

Figure out when it is a good time to talk to someone or to take action

Find someone to help me when I need

## 7.2 EXAMPLES OF RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH RESILIENCE

- ❖ taken from mental Health and Behaviour in Schools – (DFE 2015)
  - Hill 2007 (Hill, et al., 2007)
  - Cox (2004)
  - Masten (2014)

### Protective factors

Within child factors	Family	School and community
❖ Being female (in younger children)	❖ At least one good parent-child relationship	❖ Clear policy on behaviour and bullying
❖ Secure attachment experience	❖ Affection	❖ 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems
❖ Outgoing temperament as an infant	❖ Clear, consistent discipline	❖ A whole school approach to promoting good mental health
❖ Good communication skills, sociability	❖ Support for education	❖ Positive classroom management
❖ Being a planner and having belief in control	❖ Good housing	❖ A sense of belonging
❖ Humour	❖ High standard of living	❖ Positive peer influences
❖ Problem solving skills	▪ Harmony between parents	❖ Wider supportive network
❖ Positive attitude	▪ Spending time with children	❖ Opportunities for valued social roles
❖ Experiences of success and achievement	▪ Promote constructive use of leisure time	❖ Range of sport/ leisure activities
❖ Faith or spirituality	▪ Structure and rules during adolescence	○ Good peer relationships
❖ Capacity to reflect	○ Educated mother	○ Adult role models
▪ Self esteem	○ Doing things together	○ Caring adults/ teachers
▪ Self-belief	○ Stable family	○ Foster feelings of achievement
▪ Self- efficacy	○ Parental mental health	○ Respectful of the child
▪ Sense of purpose and future		○ Emphasis on exams and homework
○ Cognitive skills		
○ Good reasoning skills		
○ Reflectiveness		
○ Take responsibility for actions		
➤ Self-control; emotional regulation		



**Risk factors**

Within the child	Family	School and community
❖ Genetic influences	❖ Overt parental conflict including domestic violence	❖ Bullying
❖ Low OQ and learning difficulties	❖ Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care)	❖ Discrimination
❖ Specific developmental delay or neurodiversity	❖ Inconsistent or unclear discipline	❖ Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships
❖ Communication difficulties	❖ Hostile and rejecting relationships	❖ Deviant peer influences
❖ Difficult temperament	❖ Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs	❖ Peer pressure
❖ Physical illness	❖ Physical, sexual, neglect or emotional abuse	❖ Poor pupil teacher relationships
❖ Academic failure	❖ Parental mental illness	❖ Economic poverty
❖ Low self esteem	❖ Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder	❖ Homelessness
	❖ Death and loss – including loss of friendships	❖ Disaster, accidents, war
	➤ Overcrowding	❖ Discrimination

### 7.3 MODEL OF NARRATIVE ORIENTED INQUIRY (HILES AND ČERMÁK, 2008)

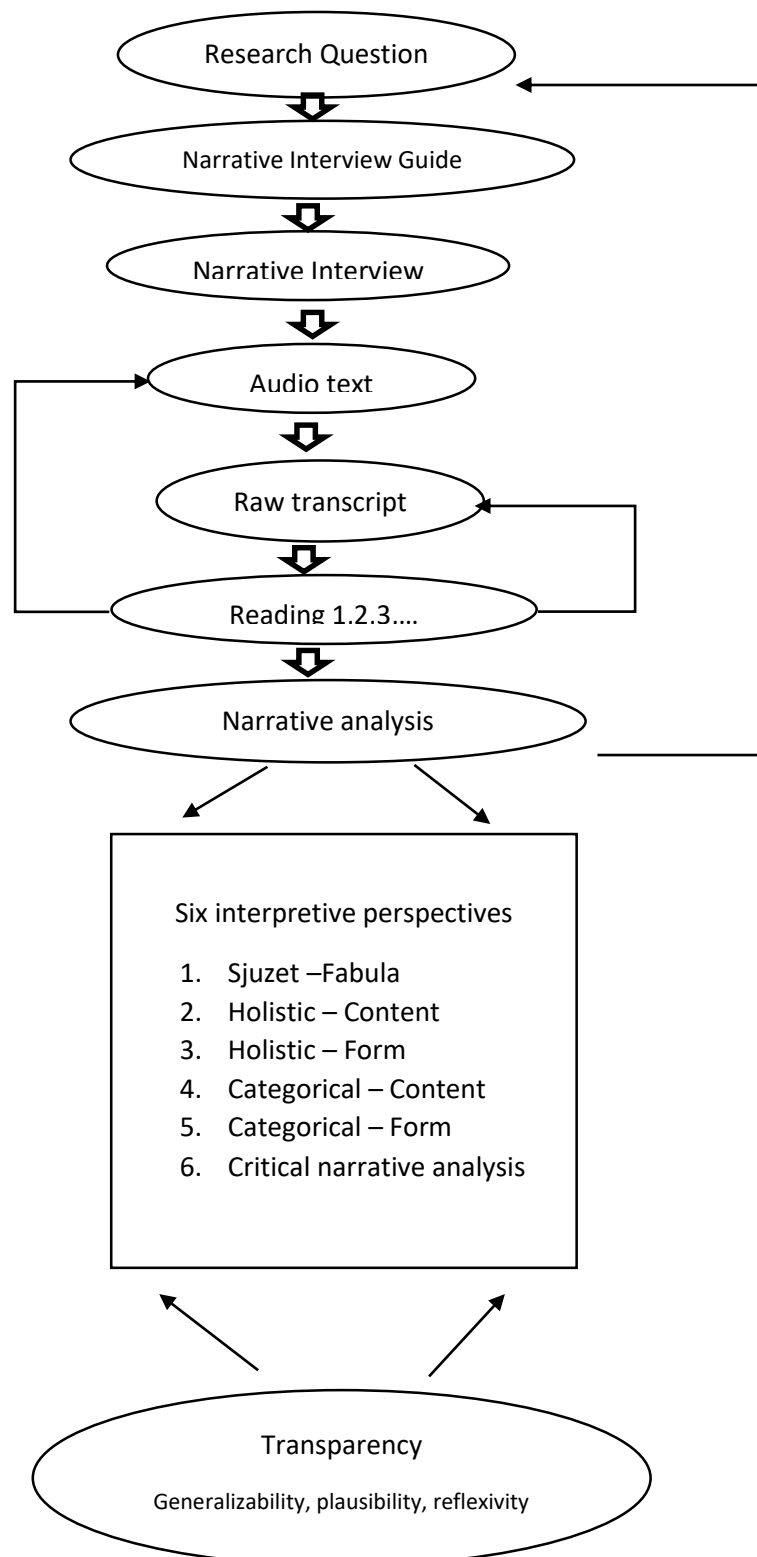


Figure 26: Model of Narrative Oriented Inquiry

## Summary of NOI steps

A Narrative Oriented Inquiry proceeds through a series of steps designed to take meaning from the stories given at the holistic and segment level, taking meaning from the words used to describe events as they occurred (fabula) and the meaning given to these words (sjuzet) by the story teller through other linguistic markers used, (Hiles, et al., 2009, 2010).

The six interpretative perspectives require further explanation. It is suggested by the authors of the model that it is not necessary to complete all of these six steps, only the first is required. The others encourage a deeper engagement with the text; looking for themes, looking at the story as a whole and also the parts, looking at it as a piece of discourse produced in a particular time and place and how the teller positions themselves with respect to the story.

### I. Sjuzet and Fabula

This step is a crucial first stage which facilitates the steps to follow and involves assigning the text to either fabula or sjuzet. The fabula are the parts which are spoken by the teller which give the basic outline of the events or information which is being shared. These are described as 'bounded' because changes in it would change the essentials of the story being told. It is suggested that they can be read through, ignoring the sjuzet, and a coherent but rather flat recount of events would be maintained.

The sjuzet however focuses on the 'way' in which the story is being told, the parts which are added to give emphasis, commentary or reflections. These are the 'unbounded' sections as they are the parts which would more readily change according to the time and place of the story being told.

### II. Holistic- Content

In this analysis step we are given the opportunity to explore and establish the links and associations within the entire story. In reporting this we focus on either a broad perspective of the general theme in the story or a specific segment is highlighted which sheds light on the whole story. This focusses mostly on the fabula.

### III. Holistic- form

Again this focuses on the fabula to seek the form or progression of the plot given in the story, a thread which gives the whole some progression. Some researchers would seek to identify the form of the story whether it is

- Romance –affirming the social order
- Comedy – break and restoring the social order
- Tragedy – a loss of the social order
- Satire – a cynical challenge to the social order.

#### IV. Categorical – content

This perspective is led by defining themes within the text; categorising sections according to either themes which emerge from the text in a manner similar to grounded theory or according to themes predefined by theory (resilience theory in this case).

#### V. Categorical – form

Through looking carefully at the sjuzet this step helps us to explore the linguistic features and plot devices that offer emphasis and style in retelling the story. This is often seen in adverbs (suddenly), mental verbs (I thought), time and place, intensifiers (really, very) disruptions to chronological progression and repetitions. Through focussing on these aspects of the story the meaning it has for the teller, and the meaning that is forming during the telling can become more apparent.

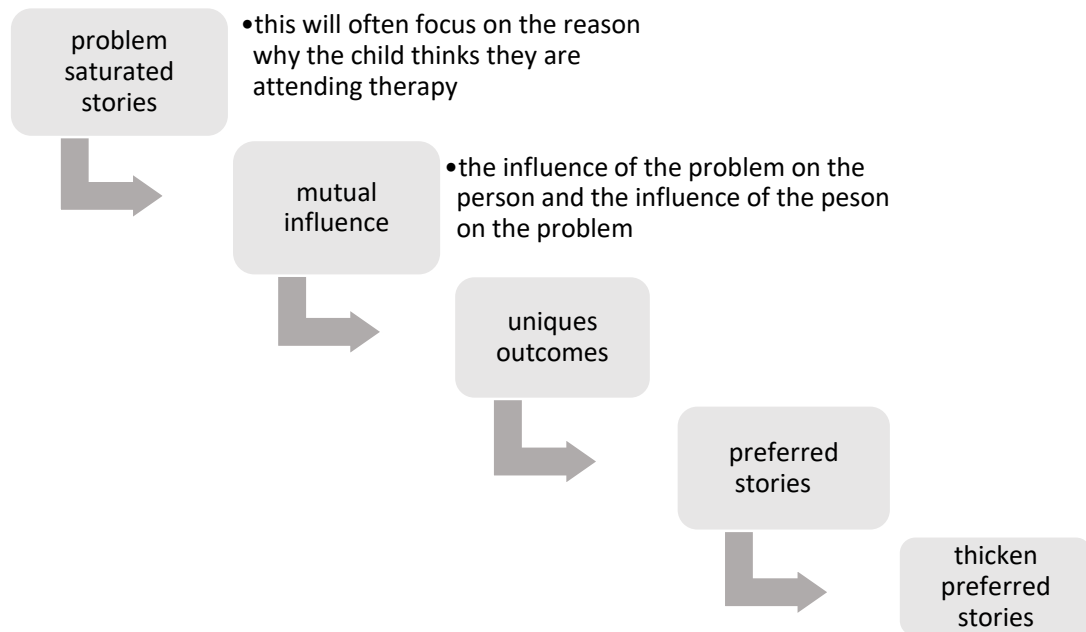
#### VI. Critical analysis

In this last step of the analysis we are encouraged to look at the way in which the teller positions herself in respect of the story, how is her sense of self reflected in the story. This is based on the understanding that our narrative identity is built around what is often a series of inter-related identity positions: that our sense of self can evolve, be affirmed or challenged as we tell the story of our experiences.

## 7.4 A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO NARRATIVE THERAPY TECHNIQUES

These descriptions of techniques are taken from Morgan (2000) and training provided by Sarah Walther, The Institute of Narrative Therapy. On this occasion the term 'child' is used to describe the person who had come to the therapy session with the therapist.

Here is a basic map of a narrative therapy conversation; moving the child from a dominant problem focussed narrative towards a more helpful preferred story.



### Thickening preferred stories

The preferred story can be helped to become thicker, richer, louder – to have a greater prevalence in the landscape of the child's life through a range of techniques including-

- Exploring knowledge and skills
- Tracing the history of the preferred story
- Naming new descriptions, new identities, preferred stories
- Spreading the news
- Outsider witnesses and definitional ceremonies
- Projecting into the future
- Letters and documents
- Rituals and celebrations

### Externalising conversations and naming

It is often easier for the child to re envisage their relationship with the problem if they can conceive of it as being something external to themselves – rather than part of them. This is helped through naming the problem or the story and talking about it as something external to the child; 'when you are angry' can become 'when the anger comes around/ is big'; 'I am weak' can become 'I get overwhelmed by a feeling of weakness'. Use of 'the' or 'a' when talking about it can help to move the problem out of the child 'you are feeling scared' becomes 'a scared feeling happens'.

In making the problem external to the child it becomes possible to talk about the problem in a less blaming, or emotionally evocative manner. It makes it easier for the child to think about the impact this problem is having, their relationship with it, and also the times when the problem is not around.

### **Mutual influence**

Through conversations about the externalised problem the child can start to talk about the effects it is having on their lives. For example: How it makes them feel, what it stops them doing, when it is most likely to be seen, do others notice when it is around, how do they feel about it?.

This conversation allows the child to go on to talk about times when the problem does not have influence but also times when they have influence over the problem- times when the problem is not present even though the trigger has occurred. 'Tell me about a time when the anger wasn't there in maths?'

### **Discovering unique outcomes**

All of our lives are multi storied; there are times when the problem has not been around, or when it asserts less influence. It is helpful to focus on these 'exceptions' or in narrative terms 'unique outcomes' to the dominant problem saturated story. This may be times when the child does not get angry, times when they are able to have a go by themselves, when they can cope with change. Through exploring these successes, naming them, and really getting to know them there is a preferred story which can be thickened.

It may be that the child does not show the problem or has different strategies when in a different sphere of their life – with friends, on the sporting field, dancing stage, at home, with their dog. These

### **Documentation**

There are many types of documentation which enable the preferred stories to be recorded. In doing so there is an opportunity for the person to be able to look back on the conversations in the therapy session and to thicken the preferred stories created. This can be done through a therapeutic letter recording the knowledges people have about their identity and skills and they can be circulated to people who are important to the person (who need to be aware of the alternative narrative available).

Also documentation can be used as a celebration or prize giving.

### **Outsider witness or definitional ceremonies**

In these meetings between the child, the therapist and the invited, trusted adult(s) a four staged conversation is held, initially the adult is invited to listen to the child and the therapist talking about the preferred story, the visiting adult is then invited to share the thoughts or feelings or images it has evoked whilst the child listens and thirdly the child talk about their response to what they have heard. In these ways the preferred story is re-told, and its richness developed. The fourth part of the conversation is when all parties reflect on the process and generally deconstruct what has been happening for them.

## 7.5 ETHICAL APPROVAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

**From:** Daniel Chung  
**Sent:** 16 June 2014 10:08  
**To:** rduckhouse@hotmail.co.uk  
**Cc:** Garry Squires  
**Subject:** Ethical Approval – CONFIRMATION for Low Risk - CORRECTION

Dear Rebecca

Ref: PRI-7784140-A1

I am pleased to confirm that your ethical approval application for course work **“Using narrative therapy techniques with a child, their parent and teacher to promote the child’s resilience.”** has been submitted as Low Risk by your supervisor.

The approval for this is on condition you supply all supporting documentation which is relevant to your research i.e. consent and participation forms, interview schedules, Questionnaires.

If you have submitted all forms mentioned above then please accept this email as confirmation that you are now able to carry out your research. If anything untoward happens during your research then please ensure you make your supervisor aware who can then raise it with the School Research Integrity Committee on your behalf.

**This approval is only for the Ethical Approval application, you are still required, if necessary, to have received approval from the Fieldwork Risk Assessment before carrying out any research.**

Regards

**Daniel Chung** | Teaching and Learning Student Support Team | School of Environment, Education and Development | Arthur Lewis Building | Oxford Road | The University of Manchester | Manchester, M13 9PL | United Kingdom Tel:+44(0)161 2753620 <http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/>

## 7.6 DATA RELATING TO DANIEL AND ITS ANALYSIS

### List of documents

- 8.5.1 - Table of initial meeting with Daniel
- 8.5.2 - Table of initial meeting with Daniel's mother
- 8.5.3 - Table of initial meeting with Daniel's teacher
- 8.5.4 - Analysis of Daniel's interviews
- 8.5.5. - Analysis of Daniel's mothers interviews
- 8.5.6. - Analysis of Daniel's teacher's interviews
- 8.5.7 - Analysis of EP story
- 8.5.8 - Analysis of researcher story
- 8.5.9 - Comparing the stories



### 7.6.1 Table of initial meeting with Daniel

1.	<p>R - How are things going for you in school at the moment?  D - I like maths,  R - Do you? That's what you were doing just then, but it looked really hard, what were you doing?  Fractions and stuff  Show me what you have got in there  D - Division  R - That looks like very long division  D - Yes short division,  R - So what kind of maths is your favourite kind of maths  D - <u>Probably</u> times tables  R - Are you good at your tables? So if I said, 6 5s? Would you be able to work it out?  D - 30  R - OK then, what, can you do hard ones? 3 9s?  D - 25  R - Try again,  D - I haven't done the 9 times tables  R - There is a trick to learning your 9s, do you know that, with your fingers  D - Mrs Bates has said that  R - So it is 27, so you are good with your tables, are you good with subtraction  D - I have done it before  R - Right, takeaways, can I have a little look at your book</p>	Likes maths	I can...maths
2.	<p>What else do you like in school?  D - <u>Probably</u> PE,  R - Oh right, what they are doing in there?  Yeah, do you like indoor or outdoor PE best?  D - Outdoor</p>	Likes PE	I can ...PE
3.	<p>R - Do you, are you a football boy  D - Yes I like football  R - Are you quite good?  D - Yes  R - Do you have a position you like to play?  D - Not really.  R - No, go anywhere</p>	Likes football	I can... football
4.	<p>There is a lot of writing for maths I just saw there. What are you like at writing?  D - I have visual stress <u>mum says</u>  R - Yes, what does that mean?  D - <u>I don't know</u>, I have to wear, <u>err, these kind of</u> sight things, for my eyes  R - Right, do you get a coloured overlay, yes.  But you don't have coloured books yes</p>	<p>Visual stress  mum says    Doesn't  understand</p>	<p>I cannot...  writing    I cannot...  visual stress</p>

	<p>D - I do have a green coloured book, a Spanish one</p> <p>R - Does that help?</p> <p>D - <u>Sort of</u> yes</p> <p>R - Cos sometimes it works for a bit and sometimes you have to go for a different colour, and have you got any exercises you have to do, like tracking exercises or anything</p> <p>D - No</p> <p>R - Alright,</p>		
5.	<p>OK so, erm hang on I have a list of questions here, probably a good idea to look at them</p> <p>So what is it do you think that your teachers or your mum might think you are struggling with a little bit.</p> <p>D - I <u>just</u> hate English</p>	Biggest problem – hates English	I cannot... English
6.	<p>...and <u>probably</u> I have a bad memory so I don't know.</p> <p>R - You don't know?</p> <p>D - Like anything <u>really</u></p> <p>R - Do you forget stuff quite a lot, OK then</p>	Has bad memory	I cannot... memory
7.	<p>Is there anything your mum might have said that she is worried about?</p> <p>D - don't know</p> <p>R - She feels that sometimes you aren't very happy at home, is that true</p> <p>D - Yes</p> <p>R - OK, how do you feel about that?</p> <p>D - I don't know</p> <p>R - Its quite hard to talk about I think isn't it</p> <p>D - Yes</p> <p>R - OK.</p>	Doesn't want to talk about difficulties at home at this point	I can't... talk about difficulties at home – EP view
8.	<p>So she also told me you are going to football club</p> <p>D - Yes it's at school, it's <u>supposed</u> to go on today,</p> <p>R - Are you going?</p> <p>D - Yes, mum is bringing my stuff</p> <p>R - That'll be good, it's good to run around isn't it.</p>	Going to football	I have... mum to bring my stuff
9.	<p>What happened with that fire alarm this morning?</p> <p>D - It was part of Kings</p> <p>R - Ah right, so if there alarm goes off you have to come out as well? How do you get on with fire alarms, some people are really stressed by it</p> <p>D - Nothing much, <u>I don't know</u>, everyone is really noisy when it is happening</p> <p>R - Right and how are you with noisiness</p>	<p>Noises give me a headache</p> <p>Hates busy places</p>	I am... sensitive to noise

	<p>D - <u>Well</u> it gives me a bad headache</p> <p>R - You are quite sensitive to sound are you? Is that the same when you go out to busy places?</p> <p>D - Yes I hate busy places.</p>		
10	<p>I got mad at Jumping Warehouse cos so many people there,</p> <p>R - Oh they are really busy those places, I've not been to the Warrington one, I've been to the Trafford one, but yes it is just really noisy cos it's such a massive room</p>	Got mad at trampoline place	I don't like busy places
11	<p>What about if you go swimming or something?</p> <p>D - when I was in year 4 or 3 <u>all the year 4 or 3 can go swimming</u> and I got a t shirt cos I was the best there</p> <p>R - Really, well done you, So can you swim now?</p>	Good experience swimming with school	I can... swim
12	<p>But I was wondering, cos sometimes it is noisy in swimming baths?</p> <p>D - Well they always have to <u>err</u>, once we had to like have our own clothes on pyjamas <u>and had to do safety and</u> I got a <u>bad</u> head ache then cos everyone had to jump in</p> <p>R - So was everybody a bit giddy and noisy?</p> <p>D - Yes</p>	Bad head when they were noisy at pool	I am... sensitive to noise
13	<p>R - What do you do if you get a bad headache?</p> <p>D - <u>don't know</u> start itching it or something</p> <p>R - Do you, really scratching your head.</p>	Itchy head when it is bad	
14	<p>Alright then. So let's do a few of these jobs then. What are you like at drawing?</p> <p>D - I don't like, I used to like drawing but not anymore because when I draw I get a bad headache.</p> <p>R - Do you. Well if you get a bad headache today will you let me know? Oh I have messed that up, right you don't have to do much drawing if you don't want to, but what I would like you to do is put a happy face at that end and put a sad face at that end and write your name. I have a little rubber if you want it. (D does as he is asked, with a little mistake and then gets it right)</p> <p>R - Perfect, oh and write your name as well so that I don't get confused about whose it is. So what we are going to do is, I am going to say a word and I want you to tell me how you feel about that thing, so if it is something that makes you feel sad or fed up or some negative emotions we will put it down here, but if it is</p>	<p>Drawing gives him a bad head</p> <p>Explain scaling task</p>	I don't like drawing

	something you really like we will put it up here, but it can go anywhere on the line,		
15	<p>...so if I said maths where would you put that?</p> <p>D - I like that.</p> <p>R - So where shall we put it? How much do you like it? Shall it go right at the top, so you put a little cross and I will write the word maths,</p>	Rates maths highly	I like maths
16	<p>... so what about reading? How do you feel about reading?</p> <p>D - <u>Well</u> it annoys me, cos I have overlays on that, but I can still see the other side so I don't <u>really</u> read often now.</p> <p>R - Tell what you mean I don't understand</p> <p>D - <u>Like</u> I have an overlay on one page but I can still see the other page with this eye</p> <p>R - So that is glaring a little bit. So how are you feeling about reading?</p> <p>D - I don't like it as much, <u>well I sort of</u> like homework <u>but</u> I don't do that often now</p> <p>R - Ok. So where would you put reading on this?</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know</u></p> <p>R - Where is your overlay?</p> <p>D - I don't know it's in my book back</p> <p>R - Shall we go and get it?</p> <p>D - I don't know, my eyes water, <u>sometimes</u> my eyes burn, like my eyes go hot</p> <p>R - Yes, do you want to go and get the overlay?</p> <p>D - I don't know if it is in the book bag or at home.</p> <p>R - Ok you do your best for me then. So where would you put reading on here then.</p> <p>D - <u>About</u> 5</p> <p>R - OK you put the cross and I will put the word.</p>	<p>Doesn't like reading (5)</p> <p>Needs overlay</p> <p>Doesn't do homework</p>	<p>I don't like reading</p> <p>I have an overlay but it doesn't work</p>
17	<p>What about writing?</p> <p>D - I used to like writing when I was in Year 4, <u>but</u> when I write faster my hand starts hurting and I start getting headaches.</p> <p>R - Ok so where would you put writing now?</p> <p>D - 7</p> <p>R - OK so you like it more that reading but not as much as a maths</p>	Writing (7) Hand hurts and head aches	I don't like writing much
18	<p>So where would you put PE?</p> <p>D - 10,</p> <p>R - Yes, so let's put it next to maths.</p>	PE (10)	I like PE
19	<p>What about assembly,</p> <p>D- <u>Err, well</u>, cos I am on the benches, I always get headaches, cos there is always lights going on my eyes, cos there is lights up there,</p>	Assembly (6)- head hurts (lights)	I am sensitive to light

	R - Yes, these lights are a bit bright aren't they, giving me a bit of a headache actually. So where would we put assembly? D - <u>Probably</u> about 6		
20.	R - What about playtime? D - I <u>kind of</u> enjoy that, R - Where would be put that D - 9	Playtime (9)	I like playtime
21.	R - Who do you play with? D - <u>Just</u> G, and J and all my friends. R - Do you have a few friends to play with? D - Yes. R - Do you ever see anyone those friends out of school? D - Yes I play with Josh and Kieran <u>sometimes</u> , they come so I play with them and Tom and yes I go to my friends' houses.	Friends to play with in and out of school	I have... friends in and out of school
22.	R - Do you. OK so we have play time, what about lunchtime? D - It is a <u>little bit</u> too noisy cos all the little ones are in there. Plus it annoys me cos you have no-where to sit cos all the food it on the floor and stuff R - Bit dirty, so where would you put lunchtime on this picture, D - <u>Probably</u> at 8	Lunchtime (8) Noisy and dirty	I am... sensitive to noise
23.	R - You can put things in the same place as others. You are alright with lunchtime. Are there any times when you are right down here? D - When I am <u>kind of</u> mad I am, R - Yes, D - <u>Cos</u> I hate getting angry, because I get a really had head ache, <u>but</u> my brother and sister wind me up sister wind me up this morning cos she was explaining stuff about my birthday which I do not want to do, R - Ok D - And, and R - So what did you do? D - I <u>don't know</u> , I <u>don't know</u> , I just got angry. Well I punched her bag <u>but</u> nothing else, R - Right. Did she get hurt? No good. So when you are feeling angry, shall we put that down there then.	Low scores – when mad  Bro and sis wind him up about birthday  He hit out at sister	I struggle to manage my emotions with my sister  Secure base – poor with bro and sis
24.	Do you get angry in school sometimes? D - yes R - Can you tell me about a time? D - ... <u>cos</u> Mrs Bates, I didn't understand	Gets mad in school when can't do work	I struggle to manage my emotions about work

	<p>something and <u>err, she</u>, I went to do it with Mrs Neild but I still didn't get it, so I got mad.</p> <p>R - Did you? What would I see you doing if you got mad?</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know</u>, my eyes go <u>sort of</u> pop and my head starts itching there, and then I think I go, <u>I don't know</u></p> <p>R - Do you start to say things or your hands to something?</p> <p>D - I start to shake <u>really</u></p> <p>R - Do you, everyone looks a bit different when they are angry</p>		
25	<p>D - I like do things in life in my way, like in PE I want to do it my way cos, how he does it, I just like to have my own games</p> <p>R - Yes</p> <p>D - My own stuff which is fun, <u>and stuff</u>, I don't like doing much things</p>	Likes things his own way	<p>Self-awareness</p> <p>Inflexible</p>
26	<p>R - So if I were to say then on here, we could go under the line if you like. If you are playing on your own what are you like usually?</p> <p>D - I usually sit down or play football with my friends.</p>	Usually plays with friends	I can occupy myself at playtime
27	<p>R - Alright but if you had some time by yourself so this could be at home or at school, how would you feel if you were playing on your own.</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know</u>, if I see a ball or something <u>it's weird</u> cos I get a head ache but then my belly like, <u>it's weird cos my belly is weird</u> and I start getting angry for some <u>weird</u> reason.</p> <p>R - Do you feel like your belly is getting tight?</p> <p>D - Yes, <u>but it's weird</u>, cos when I am mad,</p>	<p>Belly feels weird when angry</p> <p>Persists with focus on anger when I am trying to move off</p>	Struggle to manage emotions
28	<p>but when I laugh I always go weak, <u>it's weird</u></p> <p>R - Do you? Where do you go weak?</p> <p>D - I don't know, my hands are weak when I laugh.</p> <p>R - Do you laugh a lot?</p> <p>D - yes</p>	Feels weak when laughs	Struggle to understand my emotions
29	<p>R - Would you say feel the angry or laugh feeling most, which one comes more often?</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know</u>, when I am going to get angry because it just happens,</p> <p>R - Yes but which one happens most often?</p> <p>D - <u>err, probably err</u> angry , cos I have got angry loads of times</p> <p>R - Do you?</p> <p>R - Yes, ok, well we will talk a bit more about that next time we meet if that's ok, cos that is interesting to me,</p>	Angry most often	Struggles to manage emotions

30	<p>... and we will talk about that laughing feeling, what kind of things make you laugh?</p> <p>D - <u>don't know</u></p> <p>R - Does your dad get silly sometimes,</p> <p>D - Yes once he was, and mum got drunk on holiday and we was in Gran Canaria and mum was at a bar and he was making me laugh cos he was dancing with all the children there,</p> <p>R - Was he</p>	Dad and mum made him laugh on holiday	Secure base – fun time on holiday – but He couldn't join in
31	<p>and did you dance too or were you watching</p> <p>D - I was listening, music calms me down <u>kind of</u>,</p> <p>R - Does it</p> <p>D - Cos I have ear phones and I just put them on</p> <p>R - That's nice,</p>	He didn't join in the fun just watched and kept his head phones on	I can calm myself down
32	<p>and what else calms you down,</p> <p>D - <u>Don't know</u>, when I am on my Xbox with my friends that calms me down a little</p> <p>R - And on your iPad sometimes</p>	Xbox also calms him down	I can calm myself down
33	<p>Ok then, I need you to have a different colour for this one because it is a different kind of questions, choose a colour, these are good pencils. Do you like yellow?</p> <p>D - Yes</p> <p>R - So if I were to say, how good are you at something, so 10 is the best person in this school at it, and number 1 is the person who finds it the hardest, so how good are you at maths,</p> <p>D - 10</p> <p>R - Yes, put a little cross.</p>	Good at maths (10)	I can do maths
34	<p>How good are you at reading?</p> <p>D - <u>Well</u> I am getting better at reading, <u>but</u> I stopped about like 5 weeks ago I think, I think it was</p> <p>R- Why, tell me about that?</p> <p>D - Cos, I don't know <u>it's weird</u>, I didn't read at all last year when I was in year 5 cos I felt like it was really boring, when I want to do something I just forget it,</p> <p>R - So how good are you at reading would you say?</p> <p>D - <u>don't know</u> I am good at reading, I can always read at school like on the white board,</p> <p>R - So how good are you, are you one of the best or do you find it hardest</p> <p>D - <u>Kind of</u> hard, cos the overlays don't really help cos I can still see the other side.</p>	<p>Struggles to say how good he is at reading eventually goes for (1)</p> <p>Explains it because of stopped practicing and overlay</p>	I cannot do reading

	R - Right so if I made you put your mark somewhere on there where would you put it, D - A 1		
35	R - Ok how good are you at writing? D - <u>err I think</u> I am pretty rubbish anyway cos I hate English, I just like maths and sports. I am a fast runner R - Ok we will do that next, just put writing on here somewhere for me	No good at writing	I cannot write
36	. How good are you at running? D - <u>Well</u> when I was at rugby, cos my brother goes rugby, <u>he only started last week</u> , with my friend George Roberts, <u>erm</u> , which I am not allowed to go, cos I am older than them, I my sister she went to the other side, it was a long path, R - Right D - And she had to run back and forth and she had, <u>I think she had</u> , 50 seconds, but when I ran in took me 15 seconds to get there and 25 seconds to get back. R - Wow D - 30 seconds R - You were a lot faster then? D - Than Ellie yes	Good at running  Pleased he beat his sister in a running race	I can run fast
37	R - How good are you at making friends? Would you say? D - Im <u>pretty good</u> , R - Where would you put yourself on that line	Good at making friends	I am good at making friends
38	Yes, And where would you put your behaviour at school D - <u>I don't know</u> , it's a lot better than home, <u>cos I am kind of a little bit more</u> less angry at school R - So we shall do one for school and one for home D - <u>Cos</u> I don't <u>really</u> get as much anger cos no one, everyone is kind of scared to wind me up, cos then I start to go after them, R - Right. So where is your behaviour in here then? In school, the best, the worst or somewhere in the middle? D - Somewhere in the middle R - Go on then.	Behaviour in school in the middle People have stopped winding him up because they are scared of him	I cannot control my emotions and behaviour at home  My behaviour at school is better (others are different)
39	And what about your behaviour at home where would that be? D - <u>I think</u> it is really bad because they always wind me up on purpose <u>a lot</u> R - Do they? Your brother and sister? D - cos I made my brother bleed out of there.	Behaviour at home not so good – Bro and sis wind him up Bro laughs	I can't understand my brothers behaviour



	<p>R - Daniel!</p> <p>D - <u>But</u> he was winding me up <u>though</u>, I did tell him to stop but he keeps doing it on purpose. He keeps laughing after,</p> <p>R - After?</p> <p>D - Like when i</p> <p>R - After you have hurt him or after he has wound you up</p> <p>D - He laughs first, then I hurt him then he laughs, he keeps laughing until I hurt him really bad and it annoys me and it gets into my head</p> <p>R - Yes that is annoying, but sometimes people laugh cos they don't know what to do, sometimes it is about being scared, which sounds a bit back to front doesn't it.</p>		
40	<p>D - When I hate my sister, <u>she always does that</u>, looks at me like that. But I can tell what she is doing but my mum doesn't even look,</p> <p>R - Right, why don't you like her looking at you</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know</u> it just gives me a headache and I hate her, she is annoying</p>	Sister winds him up by looking at him	I hate my sister
41	<p>R - So where would you put your behaviour on here then.</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know.</u></p> <p>R - Don't want to put it on – ok – that's fine. I'm not here to make you feel stressed. How are we doing for time, we have loads of time</p>	Chooses not to rate how good/bad his behaviour is	
42	<p>Right this one is all about the people you know, we are going to put you in the middle, actually I have some plain paper, let's do it on that it will look nicer, so we are going to put Daniel in the middle and in this circle I am going to ask you to put the people you like and love and want to keep near to you, in this circle we are going to have people you like, who are alright, you know friends kind of level and we will have a box around it, so in this box we could have people that you know but you don't like them particularly, just people you know and if you wanted to, if there are people you wish would just disappear you could put their names outside. OK? So let's start from the middle, you write your name in the middle. Daniel can I ask you to use a different colour cos I won't be able to see that very</p>	Explaining socio gram task	
43	<p>So are there any people that you love that you like to keep near to you?</p> <p>D - <u>Well</u> I like G and J my friend cos he is funny, C, B H,</p>	Has friends to put in the circle	I have friends

	<p>R - ... so these people you love and to keep nearby or people you just like?</p> <p>D - All friends</p> <p>R - Put them in this circle then (2<sup>nd</sup> circle) (D writes the names) Any girls?</p> <p>D - <u>Well</u> I play with some girls but not often any more, cos it's boring.</p>		
44	<p>R - Are there any people at home or in your family you would like to put in this circle or that circle?</p> <p>D - I like playing with Will, <u>err, I</u> .... Probably that's Will <u>only</u>.</p> <p>R - Where would you put Will in the nearby circle or the next circle (nearby)?</p>	Will from his family	I have a secure base in Will
45	<p>Are there any adults you like?</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know really</u>, I just sit in my room <u>really</u> on my x box, <u>really</u>,</p>	No adults to put in – on x box instead	No secure base with adults
46	<p>R – Right. Where would you put your mum on this picture?</p> <p>D - Nowhere she winds me up <u>as well</u>,</p> <p>R - Yes but we can still love people who wind us up can't we</p> <p>D - She is shy of doing it in front of anyone else</p> <p>R - Shy of doing what honey?</p> <p>D - <u>Like</u> she is shy to wind me up in front of anyone else</p> <p>R - Yes, what does she do to wind you up?</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know</u>, she likes shouts and just gives me a headache and I start shouting back cos then she winds me up</p> <p>R - That's tricky, so where would you put her on this picture then. Go on,</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know</u></p>	<p>Mum winds him up – but not in front of other people</p> <p>Can't put her on the picture –“nowhere”</p>	My mum is not my secure base
47	<p>R - Where would you put your dad?</p> <p>D - he is funny,</p> <p>R - Where shall we put him then?</p> <p>D - <u>err, probably</u> here (third circle)</p>	Dad is funny – goes in 3 <sup>rd</sup> circle	My dad is on the edge of my secure base
48	<p>R - And what about Mrs Bates, would we put her anywhere,</p> <p>D - <u>Well</u> she doesn't shout at me, <u>but</u> she shouts at everyone else and that gives me a headache</p> <p>R - So you have mixed feelings about her, Where could we put her in this picture?</p> <p>D - <u>Err</u>, here.</p> <p>R - OK.</p>	Mrs Bates is more easily placed	Mrs Bates is on the edge of my secure base
49	<p>Any other adults you know?</p> <p>D - <u>erm, I don't know</u>,</p> <p>R - Any grandparents or aunts or uncles</p> <p>D - <u>I don't know</u></p>	No other family adults	No other adults in my secure base

50	R - OK who would you talk to then Daniel if something good had happened in school. Would you tell anybody, D - <u>Probably</u> my friends or Will	Would talk to friends	I talk to friends if something happens in school
51	R - And what if something happened in school that you were worried about? D - No one <u>really</u> , I am not worried about anything <u>really</u> . R - No, OK. Would you just keep those ideas to yourself? Cos bad things do happen sometimes don't they	No worries so no need to talk	I don't have any worries – I don't talk to anyone about my difficulties
52	D - <u>Well</u> I was helping F with his, <u>cos he has</u> , he is only in Year 3 and he was trying to go off and I was helping A's little bother F cos he was getting angry, cos he was going after R because he punched him R - Oh dear, D - And he punched him in the ear and he was going after Ryan and I do it, R - What did you have to do? D - ...hold him really. R - Did you make him feel better? D - no I <u>just</u> played with him R - And how did he feel afterwards, D - <u>I don't know</u> he just started playing R - Did he calm down after a bit? That's nice of you,	Helped a boy who was struggling with his emotions	I am kind to a boy in need
53	R - So if, let me have a little look at my questions, So who would you talk to about school? D - <u>erm</u> , R - Your friends did you say D - Yes friends and Will,	Would talk to friends about school	
54	R - And if you have hurt yourself, who would you tell? D - I don't <u>really</u> tell anyone, cos I don't <u>really</u> hurt myself, <u>I don't know why, it's weird cos</u> when I fall I don't feel anything when I am angry when I fall R - Yes you have so much adrenaline in your body when you are angry people don't feel anything. That's why people get into fights isn't it. D - I forget stuff. R - What do you mean, you forget stuff. D - I just forget stuff, <u>it's weird</u> when I am angry I forget and just go after them R - Right D - My brain, <u>just I don't know</u>	Doesn't feel hurt  Doesn't feel anything when angry  Forgets and goes after them  Refocussing on anger at his choice	I can't control myself when angry

	R - You can't think about anything, you just think about that one moment when you are angry.		
55	<p>So going back to...</p> <p>D - And my brother he, <u>he just he</u> pretends that he is not shy but I can tell when he is shy and I hate people lying</p> <p>R - Ok tell me what you mean by that a little bit</p> <p>D - Cos my sister when she was doing looking at me and stuff, and putting her tongue out like that and she was saying she wasn't and she was lying about that and it got me angry</p> <p>R - Yes that would get you angry wouldn't it? But your brother is shy sometimes is he</p> <p>D- He won't wind me up in school,</p> <p>R - Right, well that is good isn't it, we don't want to him?</p> <p>D - well I am not scared to get angry in school</p>	Hates people lying – bro and sis	Secure base – poor relationship with brother
56	<p>R - I am going to put these numbers down again, so this time, up here is very safe and down here is not at all safe, how safe do you feel when you are in school would you say?</p> <p>D - <u>err, don't know, well,</u> when I am angry I <u>just don't know.</u></p> <p>R - Just generally, normally, not when you are angry, just normally when you are in school</p> <p>D - When I am angry, I just get out of control with it, my head starts to get even more worser each day,</p> <p>R – Right. But just generally , when you are not angry, thinking about Daniel the rest of the time, when you are in class and you are getting on with your work, and you are playing football, and how safe are you feeling at those times,</p> <p>D - <u>I think</u> an 8, cos I always play football now, I just to play fighting games with Will cos he used to like them when he was here but I play football now,</p> <p>R - Ok</p>	<p>Refocuses on anger again</p> <p>Usually at 8/10 for safety at school</p>	<p>I am focussed on my anger</p> <p>I feel quite safe in school</p>
57	<p>R - So how safe do you feel when you are feeling angry,</p> <p>D - <u>probably</u> 1 because (Interrupted by someone bringing his snack)</p>	When angry feels 1/10 for safety	I do not feel safe when I am angry
58	<p>R - How safe do you feel when you are at home?</p> <p>D - <u>Probably</u> a 5 cos, <u>I don't know,</u> I get angry a lot</p>	5/10 for safe feeling at home (related to anger again)	I feel less safe at home than at school

59	R - Ok how safe do you feel when you are in your bedroom on your own? D - Safe, cos then I don't have to do anything R - Right up here then?	Feel safe in his room on his own	I feel safe in my bedroom
60	D - It feels like I have 3 modes, a happy mode, an angry mode and a sad mode. R - That's interesting. And which one is around most often? D - Angry because everyone winds me up R- How are you feeling just now, D - Alright R - Good. Well we will talk a bit more about that next time if that is alright	3 modes/ moods	I feel angry often
61	The last time I want to ask you - what are you good at? D - I am good at, <u>well I sort of</u> like drawing, like art R - That's a useful skill D - I <u>only</u> like sketching, R - Rather than painting you mean? D - I like painting	Good at drawing	I like drawing/ art
62	I like watching shows R - Do you? Tell me what you mean? D - 2 weeks ago on Tuesday afternoon I was watching Romeo and Juliet, R - Oh where you! And did you understand that? D - They were doing different accents, R - Yes they talk in some strange language, but wow, that is pretty full on if you can follow that its good. Have you got to the end? D - Yes R - Oh it's not good is it D - They did scenes, 11 scenes R - And have you watched all of them, and there is fighting isn't there.	Good at watching shows	I enjoyed watching a performance in school
63	And what other talents have you got? D - <u>I don't know</u> , I like jumping on the trampoline, I like doing front flips on it R - Wow, D - But I don't have a trampoline cos we moved house, like 2 years ago. R - Right, is that when you came from Stockport	Likes jumping (but hasn't done it in a long time)	I like trampolining
64	D - And I like doing, running <u>a lot</u> , R - Yes good.	Likes running	I like running
65	R - What do you think you will be when you are grown up? D - I don't know, I want to be a police officer,	Wants to be police officer Because he is good at	I have ambition related to my

	<p>R - Oh do you! Why is that?  D - <u>I don't know</u>  R - That's a tough job  D - Cos I like running a lot  R - Do you want to keep people safe  D - <u>Well</u> I like catching criminals, that's all I do in school.  R - Are there a lot of criminals in school?  D - <u>Well</u> there are a lot of fights in school.  R - Oh that's not good is it?</p>	<p>running and catching criminals (does this in school)</p>	<p>strengths (as I see them)</p>
66	<p>And if you had to describe yourself, what kind of boy would you say you are?  D - <u>I don't know</u>, multi kind,  R - Lots of different kinds?  D - Cos I have three modes</p>	<p>Mis understands question</p>	<p>Sees his character in relation to his emotional state</p>
67	<p>R - What kind of boy are you when you are feeling happy  D - I always have a different accent, I have a <u>weird</u> accent  R - When you are happy?  D - And my belly tingles</p>	<p>Weird accent when happy</p>	<p>Sees himself as different to others</p>
68	<p>R - Which feeling do you like best? Which mode?  D - <u>I don't know</u>, it's boring being angry – you don't do anything, but when you are angry you get to do anything you want basically,  R - Do you think?  D - But my eyes always get wonky and that gives me a head ache too</p>	<p>Being angry gets you what you want but makes him feel uncomfortable</p>	
69	<p>R - Your eyes are a thing aren't they, you need to start finding that overlay and using it more.  D - I know where it is,  R - Yes, shall we get it out for next lesson then? Is it in school?  D - I think I will go and check after?  R - Shall we go and let you have some of your playtime then? Shall I come back with you?</p>	<p>Finishing off</p>	

### 7.6.2 Table of initial meeting with Daniel's mum

1.	<p>R - This is my first conversation with Daniels mum. So the plan for this is really we have, 45 mins or so and it's just a chance for me to get to know your perspective on what is happening with Daniel just so the things you think are going well and the things you have concerns about.</p> <p>M - Yes</p> <p>R - I have some questions that I can use as prompts but it's not like I need to get through them all. It's what you think I need to know – that's what I want to know about really.</p> <p>M - Ok</p> <p>R - So, let's take it from there</p>	intro	
2.	<p>R - How do you feel he is...?</p> <p>M - Not <u>very</u>, not good at the moment. <u>I did use other children and his brother and sister to compare him to,</u></p> <p>R - Everyone does it</p>	Not good	Not successful now
3.	<p>M - <u>Erm, I was just saying to the other mums this morning.</u> I get the normal bit, the fighting and that the moaning and sibling rivalry <u>you know,</u></p>	Sibling rivalry	Poor sibling relationships
4.	<p>it's <u>more</u> his anxiety and I can't take him nowhere and he doesn't want to go out</p> <p>R - Right</p> <p>M - <u>And for example</u> when we took him to the jumping warehouse <u>that's just opened in Warrington.</u> It was Daniel and he has heard about it from his friend and he's like can I go mum, <u>and I thought fantastic</u> – he <u>never</u> asks to go <u>anywhere.</u> So we planned the day,</p>	Anxiety – can't take him out Wanted to go to trampoline place	Poor emotional regulation – anxiety (trampolining)  Wanting to try
5.	<p><u>I have to plan everything with Daniel,</u> I have got a story teller, so we did that</p> <p>R - Do you? Like a visual timetable, or just talking</p> <p>M - Just talking it through, CAMHS have advised and it has helped.</p>	Need to plan ahead with him	Secure – mum tries strategies Mum went to CAMHS for help
6.	<p><u>But</u> we had never been to the place itself and we got there <u>and I don't know why he reacted the way he did.</u> They do have to put new socks on, they are brand new they are in a packet and I passed him these socks and he just changed</p> <p>R - Oh no</p> <p>M - <u>Just</u> signing up, he was looking around, and he was getting upset, well he was getting angry and frustrated, his hood was kept up and he went into his world and he was arguing with me <u>and everything was horrible</u> he went and sat on his own and he didn't know why. <u>And I don't know why he does that when we go to places</u></p> <p>R - Did he not come round?</p>	Daniel overwhelmed by trampoline place and opts out	Settled self into café when anxious

	<p>M - No he got worse <u>and worse</u></p> <p>R - So did you leave?</p> <p>M - No I let them go and play and he went in the café and sat on his own. I gave him some money and he went and got a cake or something and sat and ate that. And then he had , oh kicked me <u>and he's not done that for a long time</u> and he started getting angry and started saying his wasn't getting in the taxi on the way home <u>and that worried me</u> can I just needed to get home then</p>		
7.	<p><u>Anyway we got home and he just went upstairs, he knew, he knows when he does it – he's always saying I don't know why I do it.</u></p> <p>R - Did he seem disappointed in himself?</p> <p>M - <u>Erm, I can't remember if he did that time, just confused that time.</u></p>	He was confused about why he couldn't do it	Can't accept responsibility for actions
8.	<p>There are times when he has fought with his brother, when he is upset, he can see what he's done, strangled them or punched them. Made his nose bleed a couple of weeks ago.</p>	Has been upset about fighting with bro – when he can see injury	
9.	<p>R - How old is his brother?</p> <p>M - A year younger, his brother is 9 and he is ten</p> <p>R - Who else is there?</p> <p>M - There is Elle, she is 8. They are close.</p>	Bro and sis	
10	<p>R - You did that quickly!</p> <p>M - <u>Yes I was very busy when they were younger. Now I think about how he was when he was a child erm I don't think he was like other children either, he was very clingy and he didn't speak or interact. He didn't play with toys but I think I was that preoccupied. I did think he was very mummsy cos he was always there, on me and he was breast fed until he was 18 months old as well. I was thinking I hope that didn't make him the way he is.</u></p> <p>R - I was going to say oh well done</p> <p>M - <u>It is a long time,</u></p>	<p>Mum was busy when he was little</p> <p>Didn't play with toys</p> <p>She is worried breastfed too long?</p>	<p>Secure base – low busy mum when an infant</p> <p>Secure base – hi – breast fed for long time</p>
11	<p><u>but even now everything is always, he's always been</u></p> <p>R - If he starts something he can't stop</p> <p>M - Yes, once started he won't stop.</p>	Once started to be upset hard to stop him	I cannot - Poor emotional regulation
12	<p><u>My problem at the moment is that I can't get him out anywhere and when I do, it's like he doesn't, he can't cope</u></p> <p>R - So do you have another example?</p> <p>M - No he just doesn't want to,</p>	Can't get him out	Low talents and interests
13	<p><u>, well I think its typical boy thing, other mums say it is.</u> He likes to stay at home, he feels safer at home.</p> <p>R - So even if you need to go to the supermarket, or you need to ...</p> <p>M -No he doesn't want to do anything</p>	<p>Doesn't want to do anything</p> <p>Like other boys</p>	Likes to stay home



14	<p>R - Can you make him?  M - He is a nightmare, <u>if I make him come out cos I have to, oh he is so embarrassing he will whisper things and say things, and he's quite</u>  R - What like?  M - <u>I don't know like....</u> I am winding him up and he just gets all frustrated. And he pinches his self.</p>	<p>Nightmare if make him go out  Embarrassing for M</p>	<p>Low emotional regulation</p>
15	<p><u>And I think he does a lot, the school don't see, has said he has been stabbing his self, he has stabbed his self in the belly with his pencil. He does a lot of things in secret Daniel. I have not mentioned it to school yet and I need to.</u> He was showing me his belly. But that's his way of dealing with things  R - That's not great is it  M - <u>No and I just don't think, I don't know why</u></p>	<p>Hurts self in school</p>	<p>Self-harm  Can't tell others when needs help (in school)</p>
16	<p>R - Why would be feeling like that in school then?  M - When he can't do, when he doesn't understand something.</p>	<p>Anxious in school when can't do something</p>	<p>Low success in school</p>
17	<p>He has got the visual stress, he has to use the coloured overlays  R - Yes I read about that  M - Yes there is a report, <u>I think that's a little bit.</u> He does seem to cope with it <u>very well</u>, the coloured paper does help. He does struggle cos he is <u>always</u> scratching his head. He come home with little cuts on his head, I think 'has he had his?' they <u>still</u> aren't using coloured paper yet, he is still coming home with black and white homework <u>and I am thinking just that might help a little bit.</u> When he is doing his homework I can see that he is scratching his head and pulling his hair <u>and you know</u>  R - Like there is tension around here.</p>	<p>Visual stress – a little bit   Struggles with homework</p>	<p>Low success with school work at home   Visual stress</p>
18	<p>So how is he getting on with the curriculum?  M - Im not sure, <u>it was Mrs Skelton who I last spoke to about that.</u>  R - Oh right, and what did she say about how he is getting on?  M - I <u>think</u> he was behind with his English, <u>he's quite</u>, he enjoys his maths, but he is starting to say it is getting a bit harder now he is in year 6. He says to me he struggles with,  R - His writing?  M - Yes his writing , he says he hates it and doesn't understand it <u>but</u> Mrs Bates says he is coming on really well,  R - Oh</p>	<p>Behind with English  Enjoys maths   Struggles with writing</p>	<p>Low success English   He feels he is struggling with maths   Low success writing   Teacher has higher expectations</p>
19	<p>M - <u>See,</u> I hear one thing from Mrs bates <u>and then</u> Daniel comes home, he thinks he is doing really</p>	<p>Mrs Bates says one thing and Daniel says another</p>	<p>He perceives failure at school</p>

	<p>bad, and maybe he's not. He says he guesses everything what he gets right.</p> <p>R - Oh does he that's interesting.</p> <p>M - <u>But</u> he is saying he is rubbish at everything, it's really hard, can't do it, doesn't understand it, it's making him angry in school. <u>But</u> then I see Mrs Bates and she says he's had a really good day and I am thinking, <u>I don't get it</u></p> <p>R - Oh yes</p> <p>M - Its hard cos I can't see it, <u>but</u> then he will say he has had a nightmare at school <u>all day</u> and it's been horrible and Mrs Bates will turn around and say he has had a fantastic day.</p>	<p>He says he can't do things and it's been horrible</p> <p>Mrs Bates says he's had a good day</p>	
20	<p><u>But like I said</u> he does do things in secret he hides his anger issues <u>quite</u> well</p> <p>R - He is so keen to present to her, 'I am fine I am fine'</p> <p>M - Yes he is very like that, and when he gets home it all comes out some days.</p>	Hides his anger issues	Doesn't ask for help with difficult situations in school
21	<p>There was one day a couple of weeks ago when he said Mrs Bates has sat at table with him and he found it easier he said. And his attitude on the way home, that is when I realised he has had a better day at school, he had a better evening. He must have had a better day.</p> <p>R - Just that reassurance of having the teacher near to him</p> <p>M - Yes</p>	Likes it when Mrs B sits with him	Secure base with teacher
22	<p>R - What is he like with friendships?</p> <p>M - <u>Apparently</u> he is <u>quite</u> good at school,</p>	Friends at school	Friendships OK in school
23	<p>he doesn't go anywhere at home</p> <p>R - He doesn't play out</p> <p>M - No, but the x box</p> <p>R - Don't they play out round your way?</p> <p>M - No don't they go anywhere, not they don't go anywhere erm</p>	Doesn't play with friends out of school	No social contact with friends out of school
24	<p><u>...and this is the problem because I can't get Daniel out of the house we are finding it hard to do anything.</u> We'll say shall we do this, shall we do that and you know, <u>life is not that easy and it's hard to plan things, especially because me and his dad work</u></p> <p>R - And three kids-it's complicated</p> <p>M - And on Saturday and we say when we have finished doing what we are doing well say let's bob swimming or something but we can't, <u>you know</u> the kids have never been swimming or anything, we can't get Daniel to go nowhere.</p>	Won't go out with family at weekend	Low talents and interests

25	<p>He loves swimming on holiday, he loves going abroad,  R - Like in a hotel pool  M - <u>Yes but where we go, have we been twice with the kids, we've been twice</u> and its dead quiet and sometimes they have the whole pool to himself and he loves it,</p>	Likes swimming in quiet pool on holiday	Likes swimming in a specific context
26	<p>but as soon as you bring him anywhere busy that's when he starts getting all <u>erm</u> like he can't/ won't do it  R - All stressed  M - Yes he <u>just</u>, his anxiety is really bad.</p>		Anxiety when out of home
27	<p><u>But I suffer from anxiety and his dads got anxiety problems</u>  R - Right so  M- So but Daniel...  R - It might be related  M - <u>We don't let Daniel know, he doesn't know half of my problems, I don't ever let him know my fears and what I am panicking about because I don't want it to rub off on Daniel.</u></p>	Mum and dad also have anxiety But try to hide it	Secure base – parents mental health is not strong
28	<p>R - So does he worry about other people, or is he worrying about himself  M - He used to worry about me, cos he used to worry about me dying, <u>but I think that's normal as well</u>  R - Kids go through a little phase  M - <u>Yes cos by daughter mentioned it last week, but Daniel it was a big thing</u>  R - It's when they realise you aren't invincible,  M - <u>Yes she just went I don't want you to have no more birthdays mummy,</u></p>	Went through a phase of worrying about mum when little	
29	<p><u>I think Daniel just worries about me, even though he says he hates me, and we have you know,</u> I am the only person he will be angry to  R - You are his safest place  M - <u>But I also know</u> he worries about me in his own little way.</p>	Angry towards mum	I am caring towards mum I am angry towards mum
30	<p>He has <u>only</u> just stopped sleeping with me, and that's another thing, he doesn't sleep at night. He doesn't sleep, I got out of my partners bed the other night, <u>because of snoring, and I couldn't sleep because he was getting stressed</u> so I got in Daniels bed and he went straight to sleep. <u>I don't know what time, I have stopped going in,</u> I have spent years trying to get him to sleep,  R - You go in an you are wanting to check they are alright and then you wake them up a little bit, and you don't know if you are doing right for trying</p>	Sleep is hard – better with mum	Poor sleep pattern

	M - <u>So I have given up</u> , so I don't know what time he goes to sleep, about 1 or 2 o'clock in the morning, he does have sleeping problems, <u>he says erm</u>		
31	R - And then is he tired in the morning M - <u>Oh I can't get him up</u> , he gets up 10 minutes before, he doesn't have breakfast, I get him dressed R - just to get him up M - And he is out the door and he is like that in a bad mood R - Oh that's not a nice way to start the day M - <u>I don't know how he gets through the days</u> ,	Rush in the morning – needs mum to help him	Poor start to the school day
32	<u>... but he has never slept. And I have only just stopped sleeping with him, well I stopped about 2 years ago for about 6 months</u> and he wouldn't sleep <u>so I started sleeping with him again cos I just wanted him to sleep</u> . He went yellow, wasn't well, was being sick all the time in school, I thought he was, dizzy in the mornings so I started sleeping with him again <u>just so I knew he was asleep. But I have stopped now</u> and he still says he is tired all the time but	Was ill with poor sleep a few years ago	Secure base – mum helped him to sleep for years
33	R - So what is he doing in his room M - He doesn't go on his x box, tv is off, but I have found him on his tablet, but I <u>think</u> he worries I have got him recorded talking, he feels like he is on the ceiling and he is floating, he has put his duvet on his head and it doesn't help. He said I have got a devito in my head and I said 'what is a devito Daniel?', can I google it, and he said one of those orange crisps in his head and he meant a Dorito. <u>And I don't know what he means</u> , he keep trying to explain to me, and he keeps saying as well, if you ask him he will tell you about it. He feels like he has got a Dorito in his head, <u>I don't know if it's because its sharp</u> ,	Goes on tablet in room  Strange physical feelings  Doritos in his head	Sensory differences
34	because Daniels way of explaining things, he can't, he's not very R - That makes it even harder, with all of these complicated feelings M - <u>And he is trying to explain to me</u> why he can't sleep, and he has said he feel likes he has got gases in his head, <u>I don't know what his night times are like</u> but I know it is strange for him. He feels like he is on the ceiling that's why he puts his quilt over his head.	Hard to explain things  Gases in his head	Communication difficulties
35	<u>I think he has got a lot going on, and there are little things</u> , he's not like other children, he is very strange he won't touch metal knife and forks.	Won't touch metal cutlery	Anxiety seen in difficulties with cutlery

	<p>R - Yes tell me about that</p> <p>M - <u>I think he has always been like that</u>, you don't think because you use plastic obviously and then when he was about 7 I was like use your knife and fork and he was always using his hands, you know</p> <p>R - Oh ok</p> <p>M - <u>And I think he was like</u>, he was I can't touch it and then he started using his sleeves <u>and cos we don't go out but</u> when I have took him out to a for a meal he just won't eat his food he will use his fingers when we do go we take plastic fork, but I don't understand</p> <p>R - Will he touch metal door handle and so?</p> <p>M - Yes toys and door handles <u>that's what I can't understand</u></p> <p>R - So what about tools or</p> <p>M - <u>I don't know, Ive not tried him with anything like that</u></p> <p>R - Im just wondering what the boundary is</p> <p>M - <u>I dont know</u></p> <p>R - What about a spoon?</p> <p>M - No spoon</p> <p>R - So it is all metal cutlery?</p> <p>M - He is very, when he goes to his grandmas he won't eat food, he won't use cutlery</p>		
36	<p><u>Obviously</u> you think has he got OCD obsessively. He is the only one who will go and wash his hands before tea, without telling him, so he does all that <u>but I don't know</u> if he thinks things are dirty but he's not overly bothered about clean stuff</p> <p>R - When he is outside he will ...</p> <p>M- <u>Well</u> no he won't get dirty, he don't hardly move, his shoes last me a year, he is dead thingy.</p>	Won't get dirty	Some sensitivity to dirt
37	<p><u>I don't know why he won't touch these metal cutlery</u>,</p> <p>R - Will he touch other things? Toothpaste, soap obviously</p> <p>M- Yes,</p> <p>R - He will touch his food,</p> <p>M - Yes he will pick up his peas, <u>that's what I mean</u>.</p>	Metal cutlery Ok touching other things	
38	<p>R - Do you ever bake with him?</p> <p>M - <u>We did all this in the summer holidays with the other kids but</u> he just won't, <u>I don't know why he won't</u>, he is very miserable <u>I don't know what he is like in school</u></p> <p>R - He presents like a different boy in school</p>	Won't do activities at home	Low interests within the house
39	<p>M - Even with his behaviour, school can't believe his behaviour at home sometimes <u>he has me in tears</u>, <u>I had my hood up cos of what he was like</u>, I had to cross the other 2 across the main road and</p>	Upset on way to school – saying going to kill self	Poor managing emotions on the way to school

	<p>tell them to go to school on their own because Daniel was creating down the other road <u>and I had to think about what do I do here, Daniel wouldn't come and they were crossing the road, I would have left him usually</u> cos he is nearly 11 and he is good with roads. But because of the mood he was in, he was saying he is going to kill himself and he doesn't think and he will run in front, when he's in a bad mood he loses it <u>and so I had to send them to school and come back from Daniel</u> and I don't talk to him when he is like that, just walk with him and let him calm down. He has been doing that a lot lately,</p>	Upsetting for mum	
40	<p>R - And did he come in? M - he came into school yeah, with school he is quite good coming to school <u>but I think</u> R - its routine</p>	Good at coming to school now	Secure base in school
41	<p>M - <u>we went through</u> months of him kicking off and hiding under the beds, R - When was that? M - he has been good for 2 and half/ 3 years but up to then from nursery I used to leave him even in year 1 and 2 and <u>his teacher would be pulling him off me</u> R - I hate those moments</p>	Used to hate coming to school	History of difficulty separating from mum
42	<p>M - <u>But what I didn't get,</u> he was fine but he never talked, he only started talking when he was 6 and half seven to teachers and children, <u>I really</u> he was that stubborn you know he did stop crying and kicking off <u>but</u> he never talked. R - But do his work? M - He didn't work and didn't do <u>anything</u> when he was a child</p>	Didn't talk in school Didn't do his work	History of communication difficulty
43	<p>He was just 7 and started settling down and realised he had to go to school and I had to work R - So the other two were in school by then, did he start to get school when everyone had to go? M - <u>I don't know why he started to accept that he had to go, I still get that every day</u></p>	Started to settle age 7	
44	<p>He thinks he isn't going to secondary school <u>I have already applied to go to Kings for him.</u> R - So that is where you want him to go? M - I want him to tell me where he wants to go, <u>it's so upsetting cos every minute I bring it up - 'I'm not going to high school' so I have had to choose for him I don't know where his friends are going so I have had to choose for him so I have gone for Kings cos I presume that's where most of his friends are going</u> R - Did you go to Kings?</p>	Said he isn't going to high school  M struggling to choose for him	Secure base - Mum has tried to look for good high school for him

	M - Yes but it's me isn't it		
45	<p>R - Did you talk to them about Daniel?  M - <u>Not really, I'm that shy so anxious so I didn't feel like I could</u>  R - I think it's scary, I mean I visit schools every day don't I and have strong conversations with the head teachers about this and that but I had to go in as a mum this time cos mine are in year 5 and we went to 3 different ones, and it feels so different going in as a parents,  M- <u>And it was my first time as well, was it yours?</u>  R - Yes you feel like a child  M - <u>And it seems so small as well, it's the first time I've been in school since leaving.</u>  R - I go in the Academy  M - <u>Oh I went there as well, there is only 2 boys going, Kieran struggles</u> and he does get on with Kieran, <u>and I thought, but I didn't really like it, I didn't get the feel</u>  R - It is a feeling isn't it  M - <u>Yes, as soon as the parents meeting with the teachers I thought I was looking around and something wasn't right. Whereas Kings feels right.</u>  R - Well that's half the battle  M - And <u>hopefully</u> he will get the feeling as well</p>	M was anxious at visitis	Mums anxiety stops her doing what he needs
46	<p>R - How do you think he will get on at high school?  M - <u>I am really worried</u>, it has taken him a long time to get settled here, I think change with Daniel and he seemed to , <u>I don't know how he is going to cope</u>, I mean he might be fine</p>	Worried about him going to high school	Low expectations for coping at high school
47	<p><u>... everyone keeps telling me he'll be fine. But they've said that for the last few years.</u> Saying he will change and he will be out, but he's not,  R - Can you see a difference in him between this year and last year?  M - <u>Erm</u>  R - Is he keeping it together more in school but letting it go at home more?  M - yes</p>	Some acknowledgement that he has changed this year	
48	<p><u>...he likes Mrs Bates, didn't like Mrs Skelton last year.</u>  R - They have quite different styles  M - <u>But all 3 of my children like Mrs bates, and it's funny cos most of the parents and the children don't like mrs bates, but everyone is always shocked when I say me and my kids really like Mrs Bates. We get on with her.</u>  R - I really like her</p>	<p>Better with Mrs B</p> <p>She is the only one who has really helped him – this year and in year 4</p>	Secure base - teacher

	<p>M - <u>And I like the fact that she is strict but she is funny with it, and she knows, I really like Mrs. Bates</u></p> <p>R - And you know what she really loves the kids that have got a little bit of a need, she is really passionate about those kids</p> <p>M- She is the one who really helped Daniel, it was January when she started, when he was in Year 4 she come about half way through and he changed then, that's when he changed actually it was her who got him to do a little bit.</p> <p>R - She is very clear about what's needed, and if you get it right she will let you know</p> <p>M - <u>Yes she is really good, so</u> I was happy when she come into year 6 cos Daniel likes her</p>		
49	<p>R - That helps, he is very keen to please her but he needs to know that he is safe enough to tell her when he is not ok doesn't he?</p> <p>M - Yes then he is coming home telling me he has had a really bad day when he should be able to tell Mrs Bates that. But he doesn't,</p>	Needs to be able to talk to Mrs B when upset	Not able to tell T when needs help
50	<p>He is a people pleaser when he doesn't know people</p> <p>R - Is he? Right. Oh I hope he is alright with me today. I will be nice</p> <p>M- He should be, <u>I didn't know you would see him today.</u> He should be fine with you, cos he knows, cos I think Miss Neild it is told him, you know she helps people who gets behind, and she is young and Daniel gets on with her,</p>	<p>A people pleaser</p> <p>Should be fine with you</p>	I am a people pleaser - Likes to please people
51	<p>R - So who are the people who are important in Daniels life?</p> <p>M - He hates Lewis and Elle, his brother and sister, he hates them.</p> <p>R - He doesn't play with them?</p> <p>M - <u>Very rarely.</u></p>	Hates bro and sis	Secure base - low with siblings
52	<p>When did he play with Elle the other day? I think it was when he had the good day, when he had slept, <u>I said to Dan, his dad is called Dan, I said and</u> I went upstairs and he was at the end of Elles bed, playing with Elle, he gets in these soft moments sometimes</p>	Played with sis the other day- notable	
53	<p>and it's rare and he seems to put his guard up a lot <u>and you know,</u> and act this horrible person to his brother, they can't look at him <u>I've never heard anything like it,</u> stop looking at me, don't look at me, they can't have fun, they come out excited about something, about school and he says to them, he can't handle it, I don't know if it's the noise and he says stop and he gets mad and tell them mum they are winding me up and everything.</p>	Horrible to bro – They can't celebrate or be happy	I am unkind to bro and sis- when they are happy



	<u>That's what I find hard as well that I have to tell them all the time, please don't cos Daniel,</u> R - He can take the joy out of other people's lives at the moment		
54	M - <u>My life is a bit thingy at the moment, I'm always nagging at him, as much as I know its normal but with his brother and sister is over the top, it's all the time they can't do anything,</u> and even at the dinner table last night, he was staring at Elle, making sure she didn't look at him but like his dad said, but you're staring at Elle, she is going to look at you, but he doesn't get it, he doesn't cry very much Daniel but he was scratching and pinching and he was getting mad and <u>his dad was saying calm down Daniel</u> but we could see the anger getting and <u>we don't know why</u>	M always nagging him  Sister can't look at him at dinner	Unkind to siblings when they are at the table
55	<u>We couldn't work out what had happened,</u> it's those little things <u>and this is why I don't think he is like other children, when I see the children his age and they are like boys and they are talking and I walk home with Stephen who is the same age and the conversations I can have with him. I don't know why,</u> Daniel is like a baby compared to them.	M and D can't understand why he is like this  He can't talk like other boys	Secure base – mum feels he is 'like a baby'
56	R - Does he tell you about school? M - No, <u>just</u> that he has had a bad day. This work has been horrendous, R - But he does say we are doing Tudors and we are doing about.... M - No way, <u>but Lewis doesn't actually, but he is so laid back. But Elle would, I love elle,</u> R - They are all so different, I do the same thing with you, and how are you so different? M- <u>Elle is the one who comes out and tells me everything, life story of the day, love elle.</u>	Talking about school – only that its bad  V different to sis	Doesn't show interest in school work
57	<u>Love all of them and that's the thing, but I said to Daniel, not that I favour Daniel,</u> but I seem to give him all of my attention, I was telling him the other day, when he as telling me I was horrible I said you know I love you so much, you are breaking my heart I said, but he was telling me that I don't love him, he was saying you don't love me, R - Like he feels like he doesn't deserve your love, do you think? M - <u>I don't know what it is</u>	D tells mum she doesn't love him	Mum tells him she loves him
58	R - So he has you and who else, does he talk to anyone? Does he say good news or bad news M - No he doesn't talk to anyone, <u>even</u> when Will comes round he doesn't <u>even</u> talk to Will	Doesn't talk to anyone not even Will	Low secure base – no one else to talk to

59	<p>R - So if he got a certificate or something?</p> <p>M - He would dread that, he is dreading his birthday. Because he doesn't want to get up in assembly,</p> <p>R - Come in and tell them</p> <p>M - <u>Yes I have to come in and tell them.</u></p>	Would dread getting up in assembly	Low social confidence - assembly
60	<p><u>But</u> he pre worries, so many weeks before, if there is exams coming up or little tests coming up, if they mention a test, <u>I hear</u> about it for weeks on end. <u>That's the only thing I hear</u>, I'm not doing it, I'm not doing it.</p>	Worries weeks before - e.g. test	Low confidence with work Poor managing feelings
61	<p>Or assemblies as well, he is not happy with assembly,</p> <p>R - You mean to stand up and do an assembly</p> <p>M - I don't think he has, I think he did one on the computer with Will last year, they sat with their backs to the audience and did the computer,</p> <p>R - Right</p> <p>M - And erm I think he did the singing in the Christmas, but they sat together him and Will.</p>	Doesn't like assemblies	Low social confidence - performance
62	<p>That's how it used to be, him and Will,</p> <p>R - Oh right</p> <p>M - <u>So I think</u> it has done him some good, Will not being here this year, because it was just him and Will last year,</p> <p>R - Well I had wondered if he had started to copy any of Will's behaviours, in the loveliest way</p> <p>M - <u>Well believe it or not Will didn't have any of these problems</u>, Daniel has always had the problems, <u>Will was very good growing up</u>; Daniel has always had these problems. That's what Becky said, Will's mum and the others have always said, they thought it was Daniel, He was the one who was always shy and wouldn't open his Christmas presents <u>and erm</u> was the one, <u>Will was quite good</u>, <u>I don't know how it happened with Will he suddenly changed</u>, when he was 6 or 7 he just changed. Whereas Daniels was always a bit, but what he did, what helped Daniel he would do thing with Will that he wouldn't usually do, cos he was shy, like run off in the field, he did copy stuff</p> <p>R - Playing stuff</p>	<p>Comparisons with cousin</p> <p>Family agree D Was worse than cousin as a small child</p>	<p>Secure base – positive and negative – cousins influence</p> <p>Wider family – talk about problems he has had</p>
63	<p>M - <u>But</u> Daniel has always had his problems, <u>cos we haven't always lived in Warrington, we have have only lived in Warrington for 3 years</u>,</p> <p>R - You were in Stockport were you?</p> <p>M - <u>Stockport and Glossop we have lived</u>, so he's <u>always</u> had his problems, he had speech therapy when he was younger, <u>I can remember them saying to me you know</u>, he was the <u>only</u> one who</p>	<p>He's always had his problems</p> <p>Struggled with speech therapy sessions as an infant</p>	Poor communication skills as young child

	<p><u>never</u> cooperated never did what the other children in the group were doing.  R - So when did he go to speech therapy?  M - When he was one and half two.  R - Ok  M - Very young,  R - Because he wasn't talking much?  M - He didn't talk for years,</p>	<p>Didn't talk for years</p>	
64	<p><u>One thing</u> he never called me mum, 'til he was 7, he always called me Megan until he was 7, it was always the thing he said Megan. <u>But</u> he is not loving with anyone, he doesn't kiss or cuddle anyone,  R - What about a teddy or anything?  M - No, nothing like that,</p>	<p>Didn't call meg mum until age 7   Doesn't cuddle anyone or anything</p>	
65	<p>Loves his Xbox, loves his iPad and that what he likes. He <u>never</u> played with toys, he used to play with a black and decker drill when he was young and he loved it, it's the <u>only</u> toy he has ever played with and had <u>but</u> he had to have it with him all the time  R - Obsessively loved it  M - Yes, but that is it, he <u>never</u> played with toys,  R - What about, say a trampoline in the garden?  M - We used to, but he has <u>never</u> been interested in anything.</p>	<p>Loves x box/ iPad,  Only toy likes was a toy drill</p>	<p>Interest – iPad/ tablet</p>
66	<p>R - Riding his bike?  M - He is getting a bike for his birthday, he has asked for a BMX, he was very indecisive cos he wanted this new x box, cos Christmas is round the corner he has gone for his bike first.  R - Do you think he will go out on it?  M - <u>I am hoping so, we will see.</u> That might be a start  R - That would be good  M - <u>So I have been looking for some good ones for him</u></p>	<p>Getting a bike</p>	<p>Interest wants a bike</p>
67	<p>R - Does his dad have a bike?  M - No he doesn't have a bike  R - Does he do anything with his dad? Can his dad play on his x box with him  M - No one can play on his x box with him.</p>	<p>Doesn't do thing with dad</p>	<p>Doesn't do much with dad</p>
68	<p>Lewis has his Xbox in my room, everything of Daniels is in his room. It is Daniel and Lewis room but Lewis can't go in it in the day.</p>	<p>Lewis can't go in shared room</p>	<p>Poor relationship with bro</p>
69	<p><u>It's really weird in the house and I don't know how to</u>  R - He is a bit in charge</p>	<p>Daniel is in charge in the house and M does know how</p>	

	<p>M - <u>Yes that is what I need to do, I have made a rod for my own back and I don't know how it has happened either,</u></p> <p>R - You have been surviving Megan! Doing your best</p> <p>M - <u>Yes, but like you said, he is controlling, I don't know why it is,</u> it's the knives and forks and everything.</p>		
70	<p>R - So you went to CAMHS and they said that their service wasn't appropriate for Daniel.</p> <p>M - Yes what they said, Daniel has a little bit of everything and what they are saying is if they send him to this person they are going to say why have you sent me this child because he is not thingy,</p>	CAMHS not accepted	
71	<p>R - OK, did they give you some strategies did they?</p> <p>M - <u>Yes with the story telling,</u> which has helped a little bit, <u>we tell him like a few days we will be going, when I know we need to go shopping, I'll say I need to go shopping, we have to go and it will be at this time, but I have to tell him,</u> he will set timers on his tablet when we are going out, <u>so I have learnt now to over things everything. I used to say 45 minutes,</u> but once that alarm goes off he'll be like mum you said 45 minutes are we going home,</p> <p>M - So you naturally say less so it doesn't sound so bad, cos you think once we get going he will be alright.</p>	Strategies given by camhs being used	
72	<p>R - And it says about St Josephs as well?</p> <p>M - <u>Yes I have just signed the form but there is a long waiting list.</u> I think that is for me and Daniel and the brothers and sisters. Cos he is horrible to them to,</p>	Wants counselling but long waiting list	Secure base - Mum wants counselling for them all
73	<p><u>... And this is what worries me as well,</u> this is getting worse, he strangled the other week. I could hear Lewis choking, and I was on the phone, I could hear him going get off me, so I went up and Daniel jumped off but he was bleeding from the nose. But when does he stop, <u>I am so worried,</u> I don't want him to get to the point where he is feeling safe enough to do it to other children. Because he does lose his temper.</p>	Worried that he is violent with bro and this could spread	Aggressive to bro
74	<p>R - Does he ever hurt anyone else apart from the ones he loves the most?</p> <p>M - It's never been, apart from school he never, he doesn't do anything else.</p>	Doesn't hurt anyone else but doesn't go anywhere	
75	<p>R - He has never done any clubs or anything?</p> <p>M - He does football after school now <u>but</u> I don't think it is going too well.</p>	Does football – not going well	Interest - football
76	<p>R - Why did he want to do that then?</p> <p>M - <u>I don't know,</u> he said he wanted to try it.</p>	Wanted to try a few things recently	Wanting to try new things

	<p>R- That's interesting isn't it</p> <p>M - He wanted to try things <u>and Lewis has been</u>, is getting into everything the football and new football boots and everything and I think he is thinking, I think he wants to do it <u>but</u> his anxiety gets the better of him <u>all the time</u>.</p> <p>R - You said he wanted to try the jumping place, and he wants to try football and he has gone, are there other things he wanted to try</p> <p>M- He wants to try rugby <u>but I know</u>,</p>	- but doesn't work out	
77	<p>he came to watch last week, that was a big thing for him, he sat there under the tree with his hood up and his ipad, <u>but</u> it was a big thing <u>and I was dead happy</u>, but he said I want to try but I think he changed his mind when he got there, <u>I am learning slowly lets go and look first</u></p> <p>R - Before you buy all the kit</p> <p>M - <u>But I don't know anything else</u></p>	Watched rugby last week	
78	<p>R - What else is he into, books, or dinosaurs, or? He has never been into anything. If he is playing a game, say a Spiderman game goes he get into Spiderman in other ways?</p> <p>M - No just the game</p>	Not into anything other than Xbox and iPad	
79	<p>R - And does he play with other people on line</p> <p>M - Yes he likes playing with and talking to people, I remember when we first got him online <u>and I was dead worried, and do you know what I remember crying to his dad, and thinking</u> I have never heard him talk so much. And he was laughing, may be that's what's made him, and he was at first he was shy but then I could hear it and he waffled his head off to his friends,</p> <p>R - Are they people he really knows, in real life?</p> <p>M - No, he has got friends on there, but I never hear him speaking to the ones he knows, it's the ones he doesn't know,</p> <p>R - Which worries me...</p> <p>M - But they do sound like they are kids. But its, he does, he does, it's nice to hear him having a laugh.</p>	Emotional about how good he was at talking to people online	Good social skills online
80	<p>But if he thinks you are happy about it, he can't have that, <u>he can't</u>, you can't show him happiness or anything, he doesn't like that either. You have to show, he is so strange, like he can't be happy about anything either, <u>I don't know why he is thinking what he is thinking</u>, he is very strange</p> <p>R - Interesting isn't it.</p>	She can't show hi that she is pleased with him	Poor social skills – when others happy
81	<p>Do you ever see him being kind or ....</p> <p>M - Not really no,</p>	Don't see him being kind	I am not kind

82	<p>R - What do you see him doing in the future, have you started to think about that?</p> <p>M - He has always said he wants to be a police man, that's what he says when I have asked <u>and I have always thought is it because</u> he wants to be safe, and he knows policeman are safe <u>and I think</u> he sees them as they help people he does like being safe.</p> <p>R - That's quite a good idea isn't it?</p> <p>M - So that's what he wants to be, a police officer still I think. But apart from that he isn't really into anything, <u>Will comes round to mine and he is like I want to do this I want to do that, too many ideas.</u></p>	<p>Ambition – policeman about being safe.</p> <p>But no other ideas</p>	<p>I have ambition to be in police</p>
83	<p>Will spoke to Daniel about High School, he knows it's not a good subject and I think he did it on purpose, so he comes back in the kitchen to me, he still says he's not going is he Megan, and I said no Will,</p> <p>R - Is he year 6 as well?</p> <p>M - Yes they are both in year 6.</p>	<p>Told cousin he doesn't want to go to high school</p>	<p>I will not cope at high school</p>
84	<p>R - So obviously the whole project is about being resilient, so I am picking up that we feel he is not very resilient,</p> <p>M - No</p> <p>R - He isn't coping with challenge</p> <p>M - No definitely not, <u>and that is what I would really like to break that cycle</u></p>	<p>He is ot resilient</p> <p>Would like to change this</p>	<p>I am not resilient</p>
85	<p>R - So how would someone else describe him, you like your neighbours or someone,</p> <p>M - <u>My neighbours probably haven't seen him much</u>, cos he isn't outside, but when they have he has probably been kicking off, that's what they will have seen, what he does, that's when we do have a lot of problems getting in and out of the house, and he has stormed home</p> <p>R - They have seen him being upset</p> <p>M- <u>That worries me sometimes</u>, when he is sat outside the house with his his hood up, and they are thinking what is he doing?</p>	<p>Others see him as upset and kicking off</p>	<p>I cannot control my emotions (neighbours)</p>
86	<p>R - What about the people he talks to online?</p> <p>M - I <u>reckon</u> they must think he is a normal nice boy, because he is alright with them</p> <p>R - He can chat to them about games</p>	<p>Online friends see him as normal</p>	<p>I have good social skills online</p>
87	<p>M - Yes games, <u>I don't</u>, that's the only thing he really enjoys. He isn't playing it, the x box all the time anymore, he used to be really into it but it's his iPad now. He gets very obsessed with his iPad with his iPad, you know certain games, 'Agerro' or something with circles and you have to get bigger</p>	<p>Obsessed with games on iPad</p>	<p>I am too focussed on gaming – stops sleep</p>

	and bigger, and he says he keeps dreaming about it at the moment, so he gets very into it, R - Obsessed at the moment M- Yes, that's his thing at the moment		
88	But you know something he might come in here in the moment, and open up, he might say I like this and I like this, <u>I have asked Mrs BM to ask Mrs B to speak to him about high school, cos</u> maybe he will speak to someone else about it, maybe he doesn't want to speak to me, he's not very good with me, and this is where St Josephs might help, just us, and open up to me, as soon as I talk to him, its shut up, don't talk to me.	Hopeful that he will open up  Doesn't want to talk to mum	I can't talk to my mum about difficult things
89	R - Have you always been together? He has never been away from you? M - He is so clingy. <u>So clingy. Erm,</u> and R - Were you well when he was little? M - <u>Yes, I was very busy, cos there was 3, I wonder would things be different, if I picked up on things when he was little. I wish, you know his anxiety and got him into clubs when he was a bit younger, you know pushed it a bit further, but...</u>	He was v clingy She was v busy with bro and sis Wishes she had pushed him more when little	
90	<u>Lewis was wild when he was a baby, we thought he had ADHD, over the trees, over the back garden, naked everywhere he went,</u> R - Oh my lord.	Little bro was v active when little	
91	The other thing I wanted us to do some thinking about over the next few weeks is working with his teacher, so how are you getting on with Mrs Bates? M - I love Mrs Bates, I am looking forward to it	Loves Mrs B	
92	... and I am looking forward to seeing if, say if it is me Daniel, Mrs bates, and seeing what he is like, because he will be different, he is different about different people. He is different about his grandma, R - So is he better behaved with her? Polite or? M - Yes,	Different with different people Better with GM	
93	... But when it's bad he don't care, nothing will stop him, he will you know, <u>thingy</u> . He is a little bit better at grandmas. She only lives 5 minutes down the round, <u>but</u> he won't go, doesn't want me to go around, I don't leave him at home a lot, he won't let me go round to grandmas	Won't stay home alone	
94	<u>Whereas Will stays at home on his own and everything. He is quite happy, Will is going really well. I think I want that, I want I don't know...</u> R - A little bit of change	Cousin will stay home alone	

95	<p>M- I think his anxiety is really bad, it's worse than it ever was. <u>But</u> in school it's alright I don't know why, I think its routine or</p> <p>R - The world is very predictable in school, especially in Mrs bates class</p>	Anxiety is worse than even but OK in school	My anxiety is worse than it ever was
96	<p>M - Yes, <u>but then I worry</u> what he will be like, is his anxiety going to be sky high when he goes?</p> <p>R - I think Kings is pretty regimented, I don't think anyone is allowed to kick off at Kings,</p> <p>M - Yes</p> <p>R - That might be good</p>	Worries about anxiety at high school	My anxiety could be worse at high school
97	<p>M - <u>I just hope, the knives and forks and things like that</u>, how will he cope with that when he gets older?</p> <p>R - How does he cope in school?</p> <p>M- He has packed lunches.</p> <p>R - Oh does he, cos if it was a school dinner he would just not eat it</p> <p>M - Not he won't pick them up, and he is really ....</p> <p>R - So at high school that could be, well at High School you can buy sandwiches,</p> <p>M - Yes but he can't go all his life without touching a metal knife and fork</p> <p>R - But it's that do you push it, or leave it, because sometimes with children if you push they push back, but if you leave it...</p> <p>M - <u>But I don't know</u> is it something in his head telling him like, it's a worry, what does he think is going to happen if he touches this knife and fork.</p> <p>R - Well it might have started with that, but now it may have become separate from that and it may have become a rule, just don't touch it.</p> <p>M - Cos he will never forget, <u>you know I forget, I will out three spoons and take it to them,</u> or they will get it and he will go 'What is that', even in a rush he won't ever touch it, he won't ever forget, it must be really drummed in,</p> <p>R - Really strict.</p> <p>M - <u>Well anyway,</u></p>	<p>Worried about cutlery at high school</p> <p>Never forgets his rules</p>	
98	<p>R - I am going to see him now</p> <p>M - He should be OK, he is the loveliest boy you will ever meet. This is the problem, he is so kind hearted; he will never hurt anyone. <u>Lewis is tough, he is rough, for</u></p> <p>R - So when do you see him being kind hearted?</p> <p>M - <u>I don't know actually</u>, it was more when he was younger I think.</p> <p>R - You just know he is,</p> <p>M - Yes</p>	Loveliest boy ever Kind but doesn't see him being kind	I am lovely I will not hurt anyone (except my brother)



	R - There is another boy in there he is not letting out?		
99	M - <u>I just worry as well cos his Uncles have all got anger issues, really bad, he's erm,</u> R - Is that your brothers? M - My partners brothers not my side, <u>obviously.</u> R - Every family has got something going on. M - <u>Yes their side, Will's uncles all have problems and it worries me.</u>	Worried has same issues as angry uncles	Low secure base – uncles mental health not good
10	R - What about Daniels dad then, M- <u>He has CBT, he has really bad depression and stuff, not depression because he is on medication. Not depression that was work that got him down, he was working for himself that was more just life. But his dad is lovely, and he loves his dad when he is silly, but his dad is not a lovey person, he doesn't give them kisses and cuddles, he does now and then, but Daniel doesn't like it.</u>	Dad has CBT for depression  Loves it when dad silly  Dad not physically affectionate either	Dads mental health is not strong
10	I think someone touched his head, yesterday was it, it might have been his grandma and went to touch his head and he went dead quick, he won't let anyone touch him. He gives me one kiss in the morning and one kiss at night, and he has to do it as well, except if he is in a really bad mood, R - He isn't a cuddly person	Doesn't like to be touched -Routine kisses only	Social skills – don't like to be touched even by family
10	So will he laugh at his dad sometimes? M - Yes, he will, he will try to stop himself from laughing, like he is embarrassed to laugh,	Too embarrassed to laugh	Low social confidence with dad
10	<u>but I was very shy as a child, I see a lot of me in him, but I was nothing like him, I kind of get it because I was like that, if there was a jar of sweets in the corner at school I wouldn't go and get one, even though I really wanted one, so I kind of get what he is like. But he is ten times, a million times worse, but I was very shy.</u> R - Boys are often trickier than girls.	Shy like mum but much worse	Mums mental health
10	M - Daniel is very complicated, the things he comes out with and says, and he wrote on the NSPCC things, they come in and he come home with a form. And they had to put where they feel safe and he has put a cheese factory, <u>and I don't know why, I was laughing</u> Laugh <u>But he wasn't in the room and I was like, why has he put that? I don't know if he has copied it.</u> R - Does he like cheese? M - <u>No!</u> R - Was he just being daft?	Sometimes it's hard to understand him	

	<p>M - No it's not like him, <u>I don't know</u> if he just copied it. He put football stadium too, <u>but that's more normal!</u></p> <p>R - I will try to find out!</p>		
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### 7.6.3 Table of last interview with Daniel's teacher

1.	<p>R: OK, so this is meeting with Lisa on the twenty something of January to just do a follow-up really to...as a kind of rounding up of...what's happened with the two boys. So we'll talk about Daniel first of all because I've just met Daniel's mum and briefly with him, just to...so I just met with him just to say...thanks for helping me really and I gave him a little...you know those children's newspapers and a packet of sweets...just to say thanks and to end it on a positive note because it didn't go so well at the end of last session.</p> <p>T: No, I understand.</p> <p>R: Did you hear that?</p> <p>T: <u>Yeah, I sorted that out...</u></p> <p>R: Well done, thank you!</p>	<p>Intro</p> <p>Problem with high school talk at end of last meeting</p> <p>T helped him</p>	<p>Secure base – T sorted a problem</p>
2.	<p>T: We've got a lot of work to do with Daniel regarding transition and the high school and when we find out where he's going...his parents have chosen to apply for a school that would not have been my recommendation.</p> <p>R: Yeah, she's fixed though isn't she so ...</p> <p>T: <u>Yeah and so...</u>I can do what I can do before I get there, but I'm...<u>glad I won't have to deal with the fallout...</u></p> <p>R: Really, you're worried about whether he'll manage?</p> <p>T: <u>Yeah</u>, he won't manage in there. He'll kick back and he will be stigmatised and labelled.</p>	<p>Worried about him and transition</p>	<p>He can't – cope with transition</p> <p>Secure base – mum made poor choice for him</p>
3.	<p>And he's not a bad lad.</p> <p>R: No!</p> <p>T: He's a boy that has anxiety issues and that's different, <u>so...</u></p> <p>R: But you can send him up with that message.</p> <p>T: I will send him up with that message and I've said I will go and I will arrange...<u>I've already arranged for some things to happen after SATS and stuff like that but</u></p>	<p>Admits he has anxiety issues</p> <p>Arranged some help</p>	<p>He can't – anxiety issues</p> <p>Secure base – planned some support</p>
4.	<p><u>...I have to deal with the short term so we're working towards the SATS and then we'll work towards the transition. And also, I'm not really talking too much about high schools because at the moment nobody knows where they're going...</u></p> <p>R: It's all just unknown which is...a nightmare...</p> <p>T: <u>And it all changes when they get where they're supposed to go anyway and then in addition to that...they have an entrance test and I don't know what's going to happen with</u></p>	<p>Aim to deal with the short term</p> <p>Worried he won't do the entrance exam</p>	<p>High school – wont cope with entrance exam</p>

	<p>regard to getting him in there to do that...that is a Saturday morning <u>and I cannot be responsible...</u></p> <p>R: And what if he doesn't do it?</p> <p>T: <u>I honestly don't know...</u>but they are fixed that that's where they want him to go.</p> <p>R: I'd just say he's just not doing it.</p> <p>T: <u>Well...</u></p> <p>R: Disability Discrimination Act, he's got an anxiety disorder, let's call it that and you can't make him do it.</p> <p>T: <u>So I don't...I don't know. I don't know how or where he stands with that...but that's on a Saturday morning, that's not on my watch is it?</u></p>	<p>She can't help him do the exam</p>	
5.	<p><u>Is that the wrong attitude?</u></p> <p>R: No, it's not your attitude that I've got a problem with</p>	<p>Seeking reassurance</p>	
6.	<p>It's how very dare they...is my problem!</p> <p>T: <u>Well, I don't think it's the right place for him to go...</u></p> <p>R: I know.</p> <p>T: <u>So whilst they how very dare they is maybe an issue,</u> it isn't where he should be going, <u>so why put him through it? Why...make him stand up and do that?</u></p> <p>R: I think he'd be feeling the same if he was going to any high school though.</p> <p>T: <u>I think he would be but I think there are unnecessary pressures and I think that the pressures that he would feel would be wherever he's going, he's worried about going into that next step of education, but this is polarising it in an unnecessary fashion.</u></p> <p>R: Making it more extreme.</p>	<p>Doesn't think Kings is the right place for him – making it worse for him</p>	<p>Secure base – questioning mums choice of high school</p>
7.	<p>T: <u>Yeah and I don't think that the...the ethos of the school is one that will suit Daniel's style of learning or his...ability to cope with it and his resilience...you know, we want him to improve his resilience, but you know, in real life you choose...if you don't like going to the pictures because it's dark...you don't go. I don't go in a lift, I climb the stairs 'cause I'm a bit claustrophobic, but I make that choice....</u></p> <p>R: And as adults we can make those choices...</p> <p>T: <u>As adults we can and so he's being funnelled down a road where...as an adult he wouldn't go.</u></p>	<p>He would be better choosing an easier option which he could cope with</p>	<p>He isn't resilient so should be helped to avoid situations</p>
8.	<p>R: Yeah. Do you think mum's changed in the last few months? Her perception of him, have you had a chance to talk to her much?</p>	<p>Doesn't talk to mum much unless there is</p>	<p>Secure base – T helps him</p>

	<p>T: <u>I don't get the opportunity to speak to mum...and I spoke...I could speak to her briefly when she...he was in Key Stage 1 when I had Elle...so I know the family...</u></p> <p>R: Oh yeah, because they don't come and pick up from your...door anymore do they?</p> <p>T: <u>Because they don't pick up from Key Stage 2, so I only see her at parents' evening...</u></p> <p>R: Or if something's gone horribly wrong.</p> <p>T: Or if something's gone horribly wrong, in which case 'Mrs Bates, will you pick up the pieces and sort it out?' So...no, I don't sense any major change. I <u>sense</u> that we cope with...and...and we deal with and...bribery seems to work quite well and that <u>seems to happen a lot so we move from one...</u></p> <p>R: Right, one thing to the next</p>	<p>a big problem – which she needs to fix</p> <p>No changes at home</p> <p>They buy him stuff</p>	<p>Secure base - mum has poor strategies</p>
9.	<p>How is he in school these days?</p> <p>T: He's fine in school...<u>and I would say that</u> there has been an improvement with him in that the beginning of the term, when he came in in September, <u>I was aware that</u> he needed sort of nurturing into the classroom <u>if you like...</u>we had a positive relationship and that continues...and I think he came back in September quite positive because we had a good relationship. <u>What I'm pleased with now is that he needs less chivvying along, he doesn't need...he doesn't need that special oh I have to say this or I have to do that, he just does stuff.</u></p> <p>R: To help him cope with his emotions or to help him get his work done?</p> <p>T: Both.</p>	<p>Fine in school</p> <p>Continues to be fine – work and emotionally</p>	<p>He can – fine in school</p> <p>Secure base – positive relationship with T</p>
10	<p><u>I mean I still have</u> to help him with his work, academically he's not making any...major leaps...<u>but...</u></p> <p>R: Right, is he making progress though? He's not closed the gap but...</p> <p>T: Baby steps...there's no gap closing going on.</p> <p>R: What gap level is he at?</p> <p>T: <u>He's probably...he might</u> get level...because we don't do levels any more...</p> <p>R: No, no, but what kind of...</p> <p>T: But he's <u>probably</u> not level 3.</p> <p>R: ...age level expectation is he? Right.</p> <p>T: He's <u>very</u> low...he can't write in sentences and stuff like that, so...</p>	<p>Still needs help with work</p> <p>V low ability</p>	<p>He can't – writing</p>

11	<p>T: <u>Yes</u>, his attitude is better and now I will get writing, <u>I don't have to...</u> I don't have any meltdowns <u>and stuff like that</u>. He was copying from the board this week, whereas in September he wouldn't do that...<u>so</u> he is getting on more with things and he recognises where he's done some...<u>you know</u>, he'll still come 'I've done this, that's good isn't it?' Or 'I've got that.'</p>	<p>Attitude better re; writing – Having a go more easily</p>	<p>He can approach work more positively</p> <p>He can copy from the board</p>
12	<p>His times tables...he still likes that, we still use that as a 'come on, you can do this.' But he's just done a mental maths test, <u>he did that before you came in</u>. He got fourteen which is an excellent score for Daniel...<u>but I'm looking for half way...half way I think he'll make a good stab at it</u>.</p> <p>R: And what would half way be?</p> <p>T: Ten. So at fourteen, you know, <u>he's belt and braces up there, so...that's quite good</u></p>	<p>Maths is coming on</p>	<p>He can timetables</p>
13	<p>And I'm doing lots of these tests...because I <u>want them to get more used to test conditions and test environments</u>.</p> <p>R: Yeah, showing off opportunities.</p> <p>T: <u>Yeah, but the tests this...the tests that we do for mental maths is a...I read it and they...so it's one of those, but this year that type of test has been removed...</u></p> <p>R: Oh right.</p> <p>T: <u>But I want them to understand that actually that's less pressure because they've got the questions to read...</u></p> <p>R: Yeah, yeah...</p> <p>T: <u>...so it's easier for them to do it, so my attitude is that if you can get fifteen in this, you're going to murder this one, so it's easier, it's more positive. And also we do that mental maths test in fifteen minutes, they do twenty questions, so if now they've got half an hour and they've got thirty five questions, well actually, you've got more time. So I want them to see that actually...although it won't be easier, that the pressure was less and I want them to know...</u></p> <p>R: To know they can cope with hard stuff...</p> <p>T: <u>To know they can cope with hard stuff and the pressure, so I'm...I am piling it on. And this term...I am putting more and more pressure on them incrementally and up 'til now he's coping.</u></p>	<p>Doing lots of practice tests</p> <p>Talking about maths tests</p> <p>He's coping with this incremental pressure</p>	<p>He can cope with tests</p>
14	<p>R: And is he showing an interest in learning or the work you're doing with him?</p>	<p>He is doing his work</p>	<p>Interests – not</p>

	<p>T: Not particularly...not any more than there was before...he does it...I don't have to drag it out of him, he will join in...at the moment he's working...we've changed the tuition groups around which as far as I'm aware...I've had no negative reports back from the tutors, that that's gone...</p>	<p>Coped with change of group</p>	<p>particularly in work</p> <p>He can work with different adults</p>
15	<p>R: Sharing any ideas?</p> <p>T: Yeah, he's been working in his team, he's been in different research teams. <u>I've got them all...it's like that...it's like spinning plates, but they're all moving round all the time...and working in different groups</u> and there is no kick back from that either, he's doing it, so that's quite positive.</p> <p>R: Yeah, that is good</p>	<p>Working in a team</p>	<p>He can work with peers</p>
16	<p>Play times, is he needing you?</p> <p>T: He never did. <u>This...for me was an issue</u>, Daniel went out to playtime, when he came in in September I told him to take his hood off and he did and that...you know, he'd come to school in the morning with his hood on, but frankly so do I in January so...it's cold, but now he comes in, he hangs his coat up, he's just got changed for PE, there was no coaxing him into his PE kit, he's <u>just</u> done it.</p> <p>R: He just does it, he knows he's doing it.</p> <p>T: He <u>just</u> does it.</p>	<p>Never needed me at play time - !!!</p> <p>Just does things without a fuss</p>	<p>He manages at play time without support</p> <p>He manages PE without support</p>
17	<p>R: How did he cope with the pantomime on Monday?</p> <p>T: Fine.</p> <p>R: Yeah, did he need to do anything special? Need his hood on for that?</p> <p>T: No, no.</p> <p>R: That's good.</p> <p>T: I can't even say I noticed him and if I'm honest...<u>I'd be a liar if I said I looked out for him because I didn't. They lined up, they went in, they watched the pantomime, they came out...end of.</u></p>	<p>Was fine in panto</p> <p>Did nothing special</p>	<p>He managed pantomime w/o support</p>
18	<p>R: OK, that's good. He was proud of himself for having managed the pantomime. It was one of the first things he said to me when we just met briefly then. He said 'oh, I did...I went to the pantomime...'</p> <p>T: There was no...<u>I just...they knew it was coming, I made sure everybody...knew it was coming, but I can't honestly with my hand on my heart say that I gave any...extra</u></p>	<p>Fine in panto</p> <p>No celebration from T re this</p>	

	<u>consideration or even thought 'oh, I must pull him out'</u>		
19	<p>...because on the whole...</p> <p>R: ...it's like he's not giving off that anxious energy so much anymore is he?</p> <p>T: No, he's not, <u>he's not</u>. For me there is no trigger...<u>I watch them all the time and now I think 'oh god, I've not been looking after him well enough...'</u> but for me I know I watch them all the time and if I...I know what they're...<u>you know, I know...</u>'right, <u>you're not happy about this, I need to do it...</u>' and he's not giving me any indication that...he was worrying about the pantomime?</p> <p>R: No.</p> <p>T: <u>Next week it's the pantomime on Monday...right, yeah, OK, we're going in, we're going to sit there, we're going to do that, we'll be at the back...right, yeah OK.</u> He never bothered.</p> <p>R: No? I think he's just...pleased with himself.</p> <p>T: <u>...so...I didn't worry, I didn't look out for him, aren't I bad?</u></p> <p>R: ...well no, I don't know if he was worrying...but I know that he's pleased that he did it.</p> <p>T: Yeah.</p> <p>R: Which is a bit different isn't it? I don't know if he was worrying about it</p>	No indication that he was worried about panto	Managing his emotions – no sign of anxiety
20	<p>Friendships, how are they going?</p> <p>T: Fine, <u>he's not...as I say, there's one...there is a girl on his table and who is currently in his tuition group...but they are working at a similar level...and in actual fact,</u> in maths Daniel is probably higher...which is why he's had to go up to that group really. And I know he's not mad keen but I haven't had any reports of problems in the tuition groups and there have been none in class. <u>I've altered the seating such that he is...he's round the corner from her and far away if that makes sense, but they're still on the same table.</u></p> <p>R: What's his problem with her? Why doesn't he like her?</p> <p>T: They just don't get on. She pushes his buttons...<u>she's...difficult.</u></p> <p>R: OK.</p> <p>T: <u>But that's...</u></p> <p>R: But he's coping with that.</p>	<p>Friendships fine</p> <p>Avoided trouble with a girl</p> <p>Playtimes fine</p>	<p>Friendships are fine</p> <p>Coped with a girl he doesn't like – managed his emotions</p>



	<p>T: He's coping with it <u>and as I say</u>, he goes out and plays...and he's usually just in amongst in.</p> <p>R: Yeah, that's what I think...yeah, that's how he tells it.</p> <p>T: ...<u>and you know</u>, it's a bit like, she asks me who he's playing with, well I don't know because he's just out there playing...<u>they're all just playing</u> and he's in amongst it. <u>There are others that are more outward or insular, sometimes with different circumstances, but he isn't one of them.</u></p> <p>R: Yeah, he's doing well with that.</p> <p>T: Yeah</p>		
21	<p><u>I took...I sent home this week his maths homework...or last week I wasn't in...they were playing battleships, but they weren't playing at all, they were doing coordinates in four quadrants, but it was battleships...</u></p> <p>R: Oh right, in four quadrants?</p> <p>T: <u>In four quadrants and he took that home</u>, it was their homework, but he reported that he played it with Lewis and Lewis won, so...they're playing games.</p> <p>R: Wow, I would be impressed if that happened.</p> <p>T: <u>So...you know</u>, I know he didn't tell you that, but that's what came home and I said 'who'd you play with?' And he went 'Lewis, but Lewis won so we're going to play it again and I'll win this time!'</p> <p>R: Wow, that's really good news isn't it?</p> <p>T: so that's positive isn't it?</p> <p>R: I'm really pleased. That's one of my worries for him really is...his relationship with his brother...that seems such a flash point. I think they're as bad as each other to be honest...</p> <p>T: <u>Well, yeah</u></p>	<p>Played battle ships with bro!</p>	<p>Secure base – played battle ships with bro</p>
22	<p><u>, but I don't...I can't worry about them when they're at home...</u></p> <p>R: No, I'm not telling you to worry about them...I'm just saying...</p> <p>T: <u>No, but I do...but I can't...I have to switch off, I can only cope with him in</u></p>	<p>She can't worry about them at home</p>	
23	<p><u>...and in class he's fine and he's making the right choices and he's loving being...it's a lovely class and they win loads of stuff, they get the extra lunch time award for good manners and they've...we've just taken a lead with sorting the cloakroom out and doing some citizenship stuff and everybody comments on how they're</u></p>	<p>Fine in class</p> <p>Whole class successful</p>	<p>Manging his emotions well in class</p>

	<u>a wonderful class to teach, to have, to be with. The supply teacher that had them last week...everybody loves them. And I give them that back all the time... 'Look, this is what's been said...' And it's great to give them positive stuff all the time.</u>		
24	R: And does he accept it? T: And he accepts it and he likes being part of it, <u>but</u> he recognises that he is part of it because... <u>if it was different then it wouldn't be...</u> R: He wouldn't accept it would he? T: He wouldn't accept it and he does, so that's that and he enjoys the privileges that they get because of it <u>so...</u>	Likes being part of successful class	Sense of belonging to the class – secure base
25	R: So is he talking about any interests? Or does he ever talk to you about things that are happening out of school? T: No, I mean he comes out with stuff like when they've done their homework or he's done this or he's done that,	Doesn't talk about interests	No particular interests
26	...he's not reading or stuff like that... <u>but...</u> he's not reading but I've started to get the homework book and planner is appearing...sorry, the reading book and planner, the homework just goes into a void generally. The book doesn't come back... R: OK, that's interesting.	Not reading  Getting planner back  No homework	Low motivation for learning at home - Not reading not doing homework
27	T: ... <u>but...you see, I wouldn't normally...I would send for a parent and say 'can we have some support from home' and send it back, but she's just going to say that he won't do it and he kicks off, so they leave it...so it's a rock and a hard place with that isn't it?</u> R: Yeah, you've got to pick your battles haven't you? And... T: <u>I don't need that one. So I send it, if he does it, fair enough...</u> R: We need him to choose to do it... T: But he has to choose to do it and at the moment he isn't choosing to do it. He comes up with quite a plausible excuse sometimes, <u>but I go...oh right, yeah OK, end of...</u> R: Too much time on your screen to be honest, whatever it was...yeah	Not pushing for homework	Secure base – mum can't get him to do homework
28	What else should I ask you about? So how do you feel that you are working with her...with Megan at the moment? T: Megan? Oh...mum...I don't see her...and that is the big difference. <u>In Key Stage 2 we don't</u>	Don't really see mum  Doesn't sign the planner	Secure base – mum doesn't fill in planner

	<p><u>really have any contact with parents other than...I have a lot of parents...that sign planners, write comments in there that come back, but Daniel's never comes back...so with other parents I can say yes I have a good relationship because they'll sign the planner to say that they did the homework, dad won or whatever...I don't get any of that. I...she doesn't...there is no reason for her to come in if...</u></p>		
29	<p>R: Is she signing the other kids'? Is she signing Lewis'?</p> <p>T: <u>I've no idea...I've no idea.</u></p> <p>R: Does she actually know she should?</p> <p>T: <u>Yeah...</u></p> <p>R: Does she?</p> <p>T: <u>Yeah...yeah, 'cause Elle always used to bring hers, so...again, that's because I know the family 'cause of Elle before, but Elle is more conscientious, she wants to do it, so...she would. Lewis is quite...behaviourist if he has...Lewis has to do things, not OCD, but that's how he remembers he's got to do it, he's got to follow this, so if I need to do that and I've done that... 'What have you learned?' 'I don't know, I've had to do that, that and that and so that's what I've done.'</u> And that's how Lewis is.</p> <p>R: You can't have the big picture stuff, very procedural kind of...</p> <p>T: <u>No...but he will comply...because he knows that he has to do this, this and this...that's Lewis, so they're all different.</u></p>	Talk about siblings	
30	<p>R: Yeah, yeah, I'm sure they are. Mum's still feeling very positively about you...and your relationship with Daniel and the impact you've had on him...I'm a little bit concerned that she thinks his success is...reliant on you, so she also is obviously very worried about him going to high school and it's about getting her to see...that some of it is stuff that Daniel has...can do now...</p>		
31	<p>T: Yeah, it is Daniel...<u>and I'm trying to sort of transfer that in...you know,</u> when he finished his maths test I said 'right, you're to go to Rebecca...' and there was no...and he just went...you know and I'll just say to him 'right, you take the register back.' Or he'll say to me 'oh, I've got to go for tuition now' because they go at various points during the day and he'll</p>	<p>Trying to teach Daniel he can do it – doesn't need teacher</p> <p>He is being independent</p>	<p>He is showing signs of independence – autonomy around school</p>

	<p>say 'it's tuition, can I go now?' 'Yeah, off you go.'</p> <p>R: Wow, that's good.</p> <p>T: So there is that...transference,</p>		
32	<p>he gets on quite well with his other tutors, so it is this positive attitude, <u>but also, both of the tutors just know that they are children that need to learn as oppose to they're coming out for any...you know, sometimes when they go off with some of the TAs, it's like 'oh, it's Daniel and he needs...'</u></p> <p>R: Have a nice time...</p> <p>T: Yeah...</p>	Gets on with other tutors	Copes with new tutors
33	<p>...and especially because Daniel spent a lot of time with Will last year...</p> <p>R: yeah.</p> <p>T: <u>And you know</u>, he'll say to me 'well...I don't get to paint the boxes' and stuff like that and I go, 'well, no but you've been and you've done this with the tutor and you've done there and you've done that...and when you come back we're going to do...' <u>we're making these origami star things at the moment, we're doing some stuff on space and the</u></p> <p>[00:18:06] and things and I said 'well, if you're going out to paint a box, you're going to miss that, what do you want to do?' 'Well...' So, <u>yeah</u>, he's quite positive about some of the stuff we do.</p>	Learn to be flexible about what he does	Flexible about what work he does – confidence
34	<p>R: Well and mum has noticed a difference in his attitude towards school. She says that he used to be moaning and reluctant and now he's keen and positive and he's also talking to her more about stuff...difficult things as well as easy things.</p>		
35	<p>T: He's more...I mean his hand goes up more, you know, <u>I notice</u> this morning we've done homework and he didn't have the homework sheet, he was sat with Lauren's but we were doing grammar and he was answering the questions, he was prepared to answer the questions, <u>I don't always ask him...but his hand...because I've got, you know, there's thirty of them in there</u>, but he does...</p> <p>R: And he copes when you don't ask him as well as when you do ask him?</p> <p>T: Yeah,</p>	He shares his ideas more	Confidence in class – shares his ideas
36	<p>...he just joins in, <u>he doesn't...he's just like everybody else.</u></p> <p>R: Yes, which is massive isn't it?</p>	He's just like everyone else – a change	Sense of belonging to class

	<p>T: Yeah.</p> <p>R: And he needs to keep hearing that and keep experiencing that, doesn't he?</p> <p>T: Yeah and I mean I don't...<u>occasionally at the beginning of the year we would start with 'right, blue table, you need to do that, Daniel that includes you.'</u></p> <p>R: OK, yeah, yeah.</p> <p>T: <u>Whereas now I don't need to do that... 'Right, boys you're on that...if you're in that research team, you need to go and do this.'</u></p> <p>And he just knows that he's part of it and he just does it whereas before it might be... 'Right, which team...who are you working with?' 'Well, can I be...</p>	since start of year	(following same instructions)
37	<p>And another one I used to get was 'well, can I be with George?' 'No, you're on this table.'</p> <p>Whereas now I don't get that...he'll just go with wherever... 'I'll do that if I can be with George.'</p> <p>'No, it doesn't work like that.'</p> <p>R: Don't do it.</p> <p>T: So he's just gone on...</p>	Can be told he can't work with a friend	
38	<p>I mean there is some...there are more people now...that he has realised that he likes to work with, <u>but also, it is a lovely class and they will work with each other and that's how they operate</u></p>	Nice class	Social confidence – work with range of peers
39	<p>. I mean the only thing about...you know, his <u>high school is that...there will be a lot of other children...most of them I think have applied for there, but quite how it works with whether they stream them and where they'd end up...I don't know.</u></p> <p>R: That's it, will he be in the same class as them?</p> <p>T: <u>And I worry about...the sort of children he will end up with.</u></p> <p>R: Might be more protected in that regard at Kings than University Academy.</p> <p>T: Yeah, yeah...possibly.</p> <p>R: And if he is seen as an anxious boy rather than a naughty boy they should approach it differently.</p> <p>T: And it depends on you know how his behaviour presents and what he does...if he decides to kick out, <u>but you see</u>, I think he's bright enough to know that because I do think he's quite manipulative sometimes...</p>	<p>Will be good to go to high school with friends</p> <p>But it depends on his behaviour</p> <p>He is manipulative</p>	Makes poor behavioural choices – can manipulate a situation

40	<p>R: Oh...yeah...mum will not let the words home schooling be mentioned in his arena because that is what he would like and he knows how he could get it...</p> <p>T: <u>Yeah and that's...you know, Daniel...and I suppose my big fear about all of this is...that</u> he's already moving onto the next one because he's got a referral for CAMHS...</p> <p>R: Yeah and I actually think that's appropriate now...</p> <p>T: And so he's telling me that now, 'well, I've got my referral for CAMHS.'</p> <p>R: Oh, has he said that to you?</p> <p>T: <u>Yeah and I think oh right...OK.</u> So he's like going from 'what will I get for that?'</p> <p>R: Oh right.</p> <p>T: <u>What will I get for that?</u></p> <p>R: Yeah, he's very object focussed. The first thing he said to me was that 'we've got a new sofa.' I know you have actually but...that's a funny thing for a boy to say isn't it? I'm glad but...</p> <p>T: <u>So yeah,</u> he can be a bit...</p> <p>R: I do think he does need to keep going to CAMHS though...</p> <p>T: <u>I don't think...as far as I know they've not been yet...</u></p> <p>R: No, she's had a letter from them saying that they're snowed under so there's been more of a delay than they would anticipate, but if he can get some CBT, I think that that would help him, hopefully building on this stuff.</p>	<p>Worried about him moving on to camhs</p> <p>He can be a bit focussed on tangible goods and rewards</p>	<p>He can't cope – CAMHS referral</p>
41	<p>T: <u>But as I say for him it's like...you know,</u> he's a bit like 'well, nobody's been in to watch me for a while and nobody's been to see me.' <u>And I don't think that it's right for him to think like that.</u></p> <p>R: OK, no. He needs to have more experience of getting on and being normal, doesn't he? People talking about him as one of the class and one of everybody else.</p> <p>T: Because otherwise he starts to single himself out and well... <u>'Well, I'm entitled to...'</u> and that <u>annoys me. So...</u></p>	<p>Feels he thinks he is entitled to special treatment</p>	<p>He seems to think he needs special help – I can't solve problems</p>
42	<p>R: Mum seems to have moved on in her understanding of him...and I think the family have as well, in terms of some of his behaviours are helping him to cope, in terms of her being very clear with him about expectations and saying it might happen when</p>		

	it might happen rather than it will happen when it might only happen. She's got some hopes for him in terms of things that he might be able to do, she's still worried that he's not comfortable going out, but he's started to challenge himself with some of those things.		
43	<p>T: He is, he's much better with things like...I mean we've had a few instances...obviously I was out last week...now...I would have had to chivvy...'right, I'm not here...but this is what's going to happen and this is what you're going to do.' And I did tell them...I always tell them, I tell all of them, 'right, I'm going somewhere...out...next week...I'm not good enough, Mr Jones is sending me out, I've got to go and do this.' So they know that I'm going and they know what their expectations were and I went through what they'd got to do and I said who would be there because I knew who was going to be there, but I am very clear with them about what the expectations is...and...are...what the expectation is and when I came back it's nice to be able to say that every member of staff that came in here knew that you knew how to behave regardless of whether it was me or not. And we've had a big thing this week because they were laughing at me because I'd said...I'm always saying to them how important they are and we have a big, I play the McFly record 'It's All About You.' It's all about you, that's what it's about, that was with the photographs and stuff like that, it's all about you, not about me, it's about you...and about their self-esteem and being positive and...lots of this stuff with them and then before I went out and I had to say 'now, it doesn't matter if I'm not here, I'm not important...' and so I'm doing this and they're like 'Mrs Bates, you're always telling us that we have to think this, but then you tell us that you're not important and...nobody will miss you and...'</p> <p>R: Aw, right back at you, yeah!</p> <p>T: Yeah... 'Well I'm glad you've noticed that, but...yeah, it doesn't work like that.' So...I have low self-esteem, but I'll deal with it, that's fine! So...</p> <p>R: My family cope with that, you don't need to.</p> <p>T: Yeah, I look after that. I know I'm not good enough, so that's that.</p>	<p>She planned with everyone when she was going to be out – but not especially with D</p> <p>She has low self-esteem but deals with it (Like D should?)</p>	<p>He can manage his emotions better</p>

44	<p>R: So...do you think that he'll be able to carry some of this learning that he's had this year especially...into his high school?</p> <p>T: I think he will as long as we maintain...what we do with him.</p>	Hope that he can keep some of this learning	He can control himself
45	<p>I think it's important that whatever changes have been made at home...and...I can't <u>honestly say that I have made a great deal of changes as a result of...</u></p> <p>R: No, I don't think you needed to, did you?</p> <p>T: <u>...this and...we've just done what we're doing, we keep doing with what works and when it doesn't we do something else and so that's that. I think the changes that have been made at home...possibly...and I don't know, obviously I've not been involved in the discussions with mum but he seems more settled</u></p>	She didn't make changes in response to the NT, but there may have been changes at home	
46	<p>He was always relatively settled at school...<u>because we were very clear with him,</u> but he just generally seems more settled...and that seems to have gone on, you know, since we've spoken to mum and things like that, so if she continues in that vein I hope...that it will be...small steps that become bigger as he goes along, the more he realises 'I can do this...and I don't have to like it, but sometimes I just have to do it,' he'll be fine.</p> <p>R: And then think back and go 'I did that even though I didn't like it, I did it! That was alright.'</p>	Doing things even if you don't like it	He can persevere when things are hard
47	<p>T: <u>Yeah, I mean we have a big thing about...I had a girl crying yesterday because it was fractions...and they don't like fractions, none of them like fractions...and...I said 'now, did it bite you? Did it hurt you? Do you need stitches? Is there any blood? Any bones broken? Do I need an ambulance? They're not going to kill you.'</u> And so that is our attitude...yeah...</p> <p>R: You don't have to like everything.</p> <p>T: <u>And so...they did some fractions yesterday and it was pants and I've told them it was pants... 'You need to do it again on Monday...you don't have to worry about it, you just don't give up.'</u> And that's the attitude that we have to these things is that you know <u>what? If you can't get your capital letters right you don't have to worry about it, you just don't give up trying. It's never a case of... 'I tried that and I can't do it, so I'm going to stop.'</u> It's 'I tried that and I'm going to try again next time.'</p>	Class strategy about coping when things are hard	



	<p><u>And we'll keep doing that and eventually it will crack.</u></p> <p>R: Which has got to be what primary school's about actually isn't it? That's...if they can go into high school with that attitude they've got a chance.</p> <p>T: <u>And so we look at... 'Look, you couldn't do this last time, you cried about this, can you do it now?'</u> 'Well, yeah, it's easy.' 'Right, why is it easy?' 'Well because I get...oh I see...'</p>		
48	<p>So it's just building on that with him really.</p> <p>R: Yeah, I think so. What else do I need to ask you about? I think that's everything. OK, let me stop that one.</p>	Teaching him to keep trying	

## 7.6.4 Analysis of Daniel's story

### 7.6.4.1 *Before the Narrative Therapy intervention*

#### **Sjuzet – Fabula**

As is the nature of the interviews with the children most of the things Daniel talks about are directly relevant to descriptions of himself; there is a lot of fabula describing the things he does and the feelings he has. In this instance the sjuzet is almost entirely used to give emphasis or insight into his feelings about the things which happen to him.

#### **Holistic – content**

The prevalent story Daniel tells about himself is a boy who is beset with difficulties which make him 'mad' or angry, he also mentions that he finds some aspects of the curriculum difficult (reading and writing). He explains that the things which make him angry can be difficulties with his eyes and headaches (in response to glare, noise, being stuck with his work) or the things that other people do to 'wind him up'. It is mostly his brother and sister, but also his mother, who wind him up. Although he talks mostly about the difficulties he has there are a few things he is keen to tell me he is good at- this includes running, maths and recent positive experiences in school with friends and work about Romeo and Juliet. There is some suggestion that his school life is more successful than his home life.

#### **Holistic – form**

The overall feel of this interview is of negativity. Daniel focusses on the things which are difficult for him- his sensory experiences and the things others do to wind him up. There is a tragic bent to his stories.

Also, there is a static energy to the stories told – there is no sense of change having happened or being imminent. Daniel's stories are mostly in the present and do not show hope for the future.

#### **Categorical – Content**

The analysis at this level shows that there are a range of both protective and risk factors present in the things Daniel talks about. Within the 'I have... a secure base' relating to his family there are more risk than protective factors; he says some pretty definite things about his mum and dad which indicate he does not see his parent as part of his secure base; choosing to put them on the edge or not in the socio-gram for example. However in other conversations he mentions little things they do which are pleasing to him. His relationships with his brother and sister is consistently negative, he repeatedly states that they wind him up, chooses not to put them in his socio-gram and even says that he hates his sister. His friendships seem to be more positive relationships; he places them clearly in his socio-gram and reports that he talks to them.

Another significant area which is risk heavy relates to his poor emotional regulation. He talks about being angry with different people and when he finds the work hard. He does not understand this anger but seems to place the responsibility for it with others or with sensory experiences of noise/glare. He does however shows self-awareness in other ways also, in describing his sensitivity to noise and glare; in describing his physiological responses to his emotions and when explaining his inflexibility.

Although he can identify some things which he can do in school there are more things that he finds hard or feels he cannot do. Also he can give examples of interests/ things he enjoys doing. He has an ambition to be a police officer and can explain this in relation to the strengths he feels he has.

Resilience factor	Protective factor	Risk Factor
I have ...secure base in my father	He made me laugh on holiday (but I couldn't join in)	My dad is on the edge of my socio-gram
I have...secure base with siblings		I hate my sister My brother and sister wind me up I hurt my brother
I have...secure base with mother	Mum will bring my football kit She made me laugh on holiday (but I couldn't join in)	My mum winds me up My mum is not on my socio gram
I have...secure base with cousin and friends	I talk to friends and cousin	
I can ...school	I can ... maths I can ... PE I can ... football	I cannot - write I cannot - English I cannot - memory I cannot - read (v well)
I can... general	I can make friends	I cannot manage busy places
Problem solving		I don't talk about any problems I have at school
I can... regulate my emotions	I can calm myself down My behaviour is better at school and I get angry less often I have some self-awareness	I don't understand my emotional responses I get angry often at home and at school (work, sister, brother, mum) I focus on my anger My behaviour and anger is often seen at home I can be inflexible I am sensitive to noise and light
Friendships	I have friends in and out of school I talk to my friends	
I have interests and things I enjoy	I like running, trampolining, watching performances, drawing, art, maths, playtime and PE	I don't like writing, reading, and drawing.
I am	Kind	Different to others Who I am relates to my emotional state

Ambition	I have ambition related to my strengths, as I see them	
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Table 10: Risk and protective factors in initial interview with Daniel

### Categorical – form

Through looking in detail at the sjuzet a number of repeated phrases appear which suggest that Daniel has a great deal of uncertainty about his situation and about his ability to understand the things he does or the thing which happen to him. We can see this in the way that he often says “probably”.

*Section 1: R - So what kind of maths is your favourite kind of maths?*

*D - Probably times tables*

*Section 2: R - What else do you like in school?*

*D - Probably PE,*

*Section 22: D - it is a little bit too noisy cos all the little ones are in there. Plus it annoys me cos you have no-where to sit cos all the food it on the floor and stuff*

*R - Bit dirty, so where would you put lunchtime on this picture,*

*D - Probably at 8*

He often says “I don’t know”

*Section 29: R - Would you say feel the angry or laugh feeling most, which one comes more often?*

*D - I don't know, when I am going to get angry because it just happens,*

*R - Yes but which one happens most often?*

*D - Err, probably err angry*

And he qualifies some of his statements with phrases such as “sort of”

*Section 13: R - What do you do if you get a bad headache?*

*D - Don't know start itching it or something*

Or with “kind of”

*Section 20: R - What about playtime?*

*D - I kind of enjoy that,*

*Section 31: D - I was listening, music calms me down kind of,*

Also, there is a section in the interview where Daniel talks about himself as ‘weird’, or as having feelings which are ‘weird’. In this way he shows that he is confused by his own feelings and that maybe also that he is not like other people.

*Section 27: D - I don't know, if I see a ball or something it's weird cos I get a head ache but then my belly like, it's weird cos my belly is weird and I start getting angry for some weird reason.*

### **Critical analysis**

The feel of this interview seemed to be that Daniel, after an initial reluctance, was keen to talk about his difficulties with anger. He refocuses on this topic even when encouraged to move on,

*Section 46: R – Right. Where would you put your mum on this picture?*

*D - Nowhere she winds me up as well,*

*Section 54: R - And if you have hurt yourself, who would you tell?*

*D - I don't really tell anyone, cos I don't really hurt myself, I don't know why, it's weird cos when I fall I don't feel anything when I am angry when I fall*

Whilst talking about his difficulties with anger he seems to put responsibility for it with others or with the difficulties he has with managing noise or glare on the paper. He does not allude to any strategies he uses to try to stop being angry and does not talk about any need to change.

He mentions that he finds reading and writing difficult but seems more interested in playing this down in the conversation – giving mixed evaluations of these skills. There is a contrast between the relatively successful boy he presents at school and the less successful boy he describes himself as being at home.

*Section 38: R - Yes, and where would you put your behaviour at school?*

*D - I don't know, it's a lot better than home, cos I am kind of a little bit more less angry at school*

*Section 39: R - And what about your behaviour at home where would that be?*

*D - I think it is really bad because they always wind me up on purpose a lot*

### **Summary**

This interview tells us a lot about how Daniel perceives himself, or at least how he chooses to present himself on this occasion. He presents a boy who is finding it hard to manage his emotions at home, and this is because his mum, brother and sister wind him up. He mentions other difficulties he has at school relating to work but presents a more positive picture in terms of the things he enjoys, his friendships and the skills he is able to show there.

He finds it hard to articulate the feeling he has – emotional and physiological but tries his best with phrases such as my 'bad head'.

#### **7.6.4.2 During the Narrative Therapy session**

##### **Session 1**

A lot of this session focussed on Daniel's feelings of anger. We talked about what it felt like/looked like when the anger was around and we talked about what he did when anger was around. Daniel was able to describe these things. It was apparent that had done other work about his anger with other adults in school.

He was able to talk about times when the anger was likely to be small, that I would be very unlikely to see it, and when it was likely to be very big and easily seen. Daniel said he felt happier when angry was small but also could see that angry was useful to him sometimes – it can feel nice and it can stop people doing stuff that makes him angry.

He accepts his mum and teacher joining us.

## **Session 2**

This session focussed on angry being small and confidence being big

During this session Daniel was able to talk about his anger seeming small in the last week – except when his brother really annoyed him. He was proud of this. He thought he was happier because he had been told that he was getting a great Christmas present next month and because he had been watching funny things on YouTube.

However anxiety/ worry seemed to have a bigger presence.

He could think of times when he had been able to overcome the anxiety – complete tests in school but was worried about going out for tea the next day before going to watch Shrek at the theatre – a big family trip out. He was also worried about the class assembly coming up.

We talked about a range of strategies he could use to help himself succeed in this challenge and set the event up as an opportunity to practice being confident.

We linked the strategies to examples of him showing that he can be confident in school and at home. He has done hard maths, some writing on the computer and had even acted out some of Romeo and Juliet in a small tuition group.

Daniel was good at talking about his successes – he seemed to enjoy it. He had also had enjoyable times playing with his brother, watching TV with his dad and playing football.

## **Session 3**

In this session we focussed on the ‘I have...many people who like me’ and ‘I am...confident’.

He was able to give a long list of times when he had been confident since we met last, and he could think of times when he was going to be able to practice being confident in the future. He was aware that it can still be hard work to be confident when there are lots of people around. We talked again about the strategies he can use when he feels anxiety (the hot feeling) getting bigger

He was also able to think of 16 people who could help him when he is feeling angry. This is many more people than were on the original socio gram he did when we first met. He named adults in school, family members, friends and even me.

### **7.6.4.3 After the Narrative Therapy intervention**

I intended that the last meeting with Daniel would be a review of all the work we had done together. Most of the session was just Daniel and myself and this went very well. Towards the end of the session his mum came, this was not included in the analysis described below. The events of that session are covered in the analysis of his mum’s role and in the EP story.

### **Sjuzet – Fabula**

A lot of the things Daniel says remain as fabula. The session is focussed on the tasks set and getting information from Daniel about his current perspective. The sjuzet noted is limited and is used to give tone to the conversation

### **Holistic – content**

The strongest story which comes out of this interview is that Daniel has many positive elements to talk about, especially with regard to the people he has connections with and the successes he has achieved in school and beyond. These successes relate to him demonstrating confidence and the things he had noticed he could do. There remains a keenness to talk about his anger, but his opportunities for venting this anger are more focussed on his brother (who he feels deserves no different).

### **Holistic – form**

There is an overall sense of both positive and negative elements within the stories shared by Daniel. There wasn't an overwhelming sense of success that would lead to a happy ending familiar in a romantically themed story, but also the sense of tragedy is not entirely prevalent. Daniel was able to imagine, with some detail, his future and this gives the story a sense of some movement and hope.

### **Categorical – Content**

The most immediate observation about this analysis of the information shared by Daniel is that there are many more protective factors present in his stories. He talks about a wide range of people who are important to him – these are often people he does things with. The only risk factor in his secure base is his relationship with his siblings; this is a point of particular difficulty for him.

Although poor regulation of his emotions continues to be a risk factor this is balanced significantly by protective factors within the same theme; he has developed some strategies to help him manage his anger and anxiety and talks about some instances of using these to good effect. He could continue to develop better awareness of the strategies he can use as the ones he mentions are focussed on the things he does to distract himself, he talks little of other useful strategies such as reaching out to others for help or changing his thinking/behaviour in response to a trigger.

Daniel talks about many more things he can be successful with than things he cannot do. He is also able to talk about many ways in which he has shown confidence already, however he does have a few up and coming events about which he is still unsure.

He has friends and can talk about the things they do together and the way that they support him. Also his ambition, with prompting, was rich. Daniel talks on a number of occasions about his interest in gaming (computing) but this is the only interest beyond school which is mentioned.

Resilience factor	Protective factor	Risk Factor
I have...secure base with parents	I named my mum and dada when thinking about people who help me My mum is coming to meet R today I am looking forward to going out with my dad today I enjoyed watching TV with my dad recently	
I have ... a relationship with my siblings	I tentatively name my sister as someone who is important to me	I fight with my brother before school and when he was on his bike I do not name him as an important person
I have...secure base with wider family	I name my aunt and grandmother as important people I talk about my cousin	
I have...a secure base in school	I name many school friends as important people I name 5 school based adults as important people	
I can regulate my emotions	I have strategies to manage my anger (hood up, head down, listen to music, watch TV, play on iPad, play with friends, accept help from peers I manage my anger when a peer is annoying My anger is better controlled than my cousins I cope with not having my PE kit I can cope with social challenges – (getting my hair cut and wearing new shoes)	My strategies for managing anger do not include – asking for help, changing my thinking  It is hard for me to talk about the strategies I use  I can't accept responsibility for my poor relationship with my brother
I can ...be successful	I can – write, get to school early, make friends, play a game, do sport, run and engage in PE, in assembly, and even sit a test	I cannot remember
I am...confident	I am confident enough to – put my hand up, dance, go to a pantomime, engage with others on the playground, work with	I am not confident that I can cope with SATS I'm not confident that I can cope with high school



	others, go out with the family, open Christmas presents in front of others, try a test.	
Friends	I have friends. They help when I am angry, I play with them, and I think I will have friends when I am older	
Interests	I am a gamer I enjoy computer games	
Ambition	My ambitions include work, house, friends, interests, a car and a pet.	

Table 11: Risk and protective factors in the post NT interview with Daniel

### Categorical – form

The sjuzet sets the tone of the conversation. Through his use of ‘probably’, ‘I think’ and ‘I don’t know’ Daniel continues to show that he is not entirely confident in his views of his situation.

*Section 28: R - Anything else you’ve worked hard at?*

*D: Probably...trying to get...to school early I think...*

*Section 55: D- I don’t know. ‘Cause he was just show...I hate people when he...shows off*

### Critical analysis

My experience of the meeting was that Daniel seemed more empowered; he was able to talk about the things he was doing well, focussed on his successes rather than his failures.

*Section 4/5: D – Really good at sports...coping with changes....assembly.*

However, to be entirely honest it is important to note that some of the positively from Daniel did come after prompts from myself; some of the positive stories were suggested to him by me– but not denied or rejected.

### Summary

This last interview with Daniel was primarily focussed on factors which will promote his resilience; a wider and more positive secure base at home and at school; a wider range of successes he can talk about and a positive “I am...” characteristic of showing examples of acting with increased confidence. A number of risk factors are still present but these focus primarily on his angry responses to his brother and anxiety about high school and SATS.

There is some suggestion that Daniel is not entirely owning these positive stories. He litters his talk with “I think...”, “I don’t know” and “Probably”. Also there are some occasions when the positivity is prompted by the therapist.

#### **7.6.4.4 *Comparing the before and after***

The difference between the stories told by Daniel before and after the NT are manifold. The initial interview was negative and the final interview more positive in tone and focus. There was a shift from risk factors being prevalent to a prevalence of protective factors.

In the first there was a large focus on his anger and the range of things which provoked these feeling in him. He has some self-awareness but was struggling to find ways to manage these feelings. In the post NT meeting angry was much smaller, but still present. He talked about his anger in a more focussed way (relating mostly to his brother) and he was starting to be aware of strategies he could use. Anger was smaller in school than at home in both interviews.

The conversation about difficulties with managing anger seemed to have been replaced with a greater focus on talking about times when he had shown confidence (overcome anxiety). He was able to produce a long list of the times when he had recently shown confidence.

An important difference in the stories relate to Daniel's depiction of his secure base. In the first meeting this was a significant area of risk to his resilience; particularly with regard to his family, and his mum especially. In the post NT interview he could list many people who could help him; he spoke more positively about his relationships with his mum and dad, with the wider family and a range of adults in school. His friendships were a protective factor in both.

In the post NT interview Daniel was more able to talk about the things he can do, rather than the things he cannot do which were prevalent previously. In the last interview he did not talk about many interests as such but was more confident in his talk about the one that was left (gaming) – as if he had learnt that this was an OK interest to have.

In the post NT meeting he was more confident in his own opinions –there were fewer 'I don't knows' etc. in the sjuzet. However it has been noted that I did lead the post NT meeting and there were times when it could be perceived that Daniel did not entirely own some of the things he was saying; it could be perceived that he was saying what he thought I wanted to hear.

The nature of Daniels description of his future had also changed. Whereas he previously talked about wanting to be a police officer, and gave no more detail, when given an opportunity to talk about his ambition post NT there was a lot of detail and hope.

## 7.6.5 Analysis of the mother's story about Daniel

### 7.6.5.1 *Before the Narrative Therapy intervention*

#### **Sjuzet – Fabula**

Daniel's mum focusses on Daniel and his situation sharing a lot of useful information; this resulted in a large amount of fabula. The sjuzet highlighted the way in which she talked about her own experiences of Daniel's difficulties so each section seems to have some sjuzet sharing how his difficulties make her feel or what they mean she needs to do. She talks also about other family members; their experiences of Daniel or comparing them to him, this is also marked as sjuzet.

#### **Holistic – content**

Looking at the entirety of the interview Daniel's mum has shared a view of Daniel as having significant difficulties with anxiety and that this is manifest in number of different ways. She gives stories of his anxiety being present across contexts (such as home, school and when visiting new places), across time from when he was a little boy to now and even projecting into the future (high school, future relationships and ambitions). This perception of Daniel even persists across her perception of others opinions (other family members have said that they think he has difficulties and the mum worries that the neighbours also see him as troubled). The story of Daniel being a boy who is not coping with his emotions and his anxiety is prevalent in this interview, the story about this aspect of his development is rich in detail and extends over time.

#### **Holistic – form**

Daniel's mum struggles to find hope in her stories. She is worried about what she may have done or not done in the past, is worried about how his behaviour is effecting him and the rest of the family at the present time but also worries about how he will be in the future. This version of events seems tragic.

#### **Categorical – Content**

The tables below help us to see clearly the protective and risk factors present in Daniel's mum's story of him. She simply states that he is not successful and that he is not resilient. The details she gives in the interview generally support these comments and there are many more risk than protective factors present. His secure base is strongest with her but even this relationship has some risks present. He has a secure base in his teacher but his relationships with other family members are not portrayed as helpful to his resilience.

Another large area in which risk factors are prevalent relates to his poor emotional regulation. A rich story of him feeling anxious and showing anger across situations is shared. Related to this are the undeveloped problem solving skills.

The description of his social skills is more mixed. He struggles to cope with some social situations within the family but seems more successful in school and online. He also struggles to take responsibility for his actions; this will make it hard for him to learn to change his responses and so become more successful, hence this is recorded as a risk factor.

He is described as unsuccessful in school work and in his communication skills; both of these suggest risks to his resilience.

His interests are limited but those he has are consuming for him and bring success and enjoyment and so may be protective of his wellbeing. He has long term ambition but this is in jeopardy because he will not accept that he needs to go to high school as a necessary step towards his ultimate goal of being in the police force.

Despite the prevalence of difficulties within the stories about her son, Daniel's mum loves him and can see qualities within him which don't often come to the fore.

Resilience factor	Protective factor	Risk Factor
I have...secure base in school	Likes his teacher	
I have...secure base in wider family	Likes to stay home Has a friendship with cousin	Wider family have low expectations of me Can copy cousins unhelpful behaviour Wider family have mental health difficulties / aggression
I have ...secure base in my father		Don't do much together His mental health difficulties make it hard for him to do some things
I have...secure base with siblings		Aggressive to brother Unkind when they are happy Shouting at them at the table Not sharing the bedroom fairly
I have...secure base with mother	She tries the strategies which have been suggested to her She took me to CAMHS She helped me to sleep for years She looked around high schools for me She breast fed me for long time She loves me I can talk to mum	Low expectations of my ability to cope at high school She describes me as like a baby She was very busy when I was a baby Her mental health prevents her from doing some things
I can ...school work		I am not interested in school work I cannot do my school work I cannot do my homework I achieve low academic success (English, writing, maths)
Problem solving		I can't talk to mum to help me solve problems I hide my anger rather than seek help

		I hurt myself when I am anxious and can't tell anyone about it
I can... regulate my emotions	I took myself off to the café in the trampoline place	I didn't control my emotions at the trampoline place, on the way to school and when I go out with the family. Once I have started I can't stop. The neighbours have seen me being angry on the door step. Mr anxiety stops me from using cutlery and going out with the family. My anxiety made it hard for me to separate from mum when I was little. My anxiety is worse than ever now My anxiety will be worse at high school. I am angry towards my mum, brother, sister and myself.
Social skills	I show good social skills online I get on with my friends in school	I don't like to be touched by anyone I don't know what to do when others are happy I am not confident enough to join in with assembly or performances. I am not confident in front of my dad I have little contact with friends out of school
I have interests	I like being on my ipad and xbox I want a bike I play football I swam on holiday	My interest in iPad/ Xbox stops me from going to sleep I don't like to do many things and my interests are limited
I am	Lovely Will not hurt anyone Keen to please Caring towards my mum	Not kind
Ambition	police	Not going to high school
Accept responsibility for actions		I can't accept responsibility for my actions
Communication skills		I found it hard to develop language when I was little I still find it hard to explain myself

Resilience		I am not resilient
General		I am not successful

Table 12: Risk and resilience factors in initial interview with Daniel's mum

### Categorical – form

The highlighted sjuzet frequently includes examples of Daniel's mum saying 'I don't know', she seems genuinely puzzled by the things he does.

*Section 6. And I don't know why he does that when we go to places*

*Section 37. I don't know why he won't touch these metal cutlery,*

*Section 55. I don't know why, Daniel is like a baby compared to them.*

She clearly loves her boy and wants me to like him. She tries to end the conversation by saying the he is a kind hearted boy but on reflection she couldn't think of recent examples of this; this impression of him is based on the things he did when he was younger.

*Section 98*

*M...he is the loveliest boy you will ever meet. This is the problem, he is so kind hearted; he will never hurt anyone. (His brother) is tough, he is rough, for*

*R - So when do you see him being kind hearted?*

*M - I don't know actually, it was more when he was younger I think.*

*R - You just know he is,*

*M - Yes*

### Critical analysis

It is also apparent that during the interview Daniel's mum bravely reflects how his difficulties are making her feel or altering what she needs to do. The impact on her is clearly strong; she feel empathy with him because of her own experience of anxiety but is sad and frustrated that his behaviour is impacting on her parenting of him and his siblings.

*Section 12. My problem at the moment is that I can't get him out anywhere and when I do, it's like he doesn't, he can't cope*

*Section 24... and this is the problem because I can't get Daniel out of the house we are finding it hard to do anything. We'll say shall we do this, shall we do that and you know, life is not that easy and it's hard to plan things, especially because me and his dad work*

*Section 84*

*R - He isn't coping with challenge*

*M - No definitely not, and that is what I would really like to break that cycle*

## **Summary**

In this interview there is a strong sense that Daniel's mum is worried about him. She presents him as a boy with a range of difficulties, particularly relating to his poor emotional regulation and anxiety. This is making it hard for him to be successful in school with his work, to go out of the house and is having an impact on family life. He struggles to get on with his siblings, is not physically close to his dad and nor do they do things together. She can see that this has been happening over time, across situations and she expects it to continue into the future.

She clearly loves him and feel sad and frustrated that this is happening and that she can't help him to resolve these issues.

### **7.6.5.2 During the Narrative Therapy session**

#### **Session 1**

In her post session diary notes Daniels mum noted how pleased she was with how he had been in the previous few weeks. He seemed happier which had made her more relaxed and happy in turn. When asked to comment in writing on her relationship with the teacher she wrote "love Mrs \_\_\_\_\_"

#### **Session 2**

During this session mum was able to describe Daniel having fun at home watching a television program. She also commented that he had been able to put the iPad down. The house seems calmer, tidier and there has been an impact on all members of the family.

#### **Session 3**

She was positive in her diary record saying that Daniel seemed more confident and settled in the meeting and that it was nice to see him smiling. She also said that she liked hearing how he was doing in class.

#### **Session 4**

During this session his mum was able to tell us about positive things she has noticed – he is talking to her and his dad more. She also stated that she loves him, and she has loved watching him dance recently. She told us his dad had said that he was "a different child at the moment" and that he had enjoyed spending time doing things together. She was looking forward to going to watch the dog racing and going to the drive in movie as a family.

IN the diary form she recorded that it was nice to see him talking and smiling and she shared that she was happy to see him getting more confident. She was feeling more relaxed about her relationship with the teacher.

Just before she left she also mentioned that Daniel was still worried about going to high school and so was she. This was very difficult for Daniel to cope with and he shut down. He stayed silent until she had left and a member of staff came to help him.

### 7.6.5.3 *After the Narrative Therapy intervention*

#### **Sjuzet – Fabula**

The sjuzet on this occasion related primarily to the ways in which Daniels mum was supporting him and her feelings about the situation. There were also descriptions, in the fabula, of how Daniel was coping at home, school and out and about.

#### **Holistic – content**

The overall focus of this conversation was that Daniel was getting on better in school, with support from his teacher, and he was getting on better at home with support from his mum, (and from his dad and wider family). She shared information which suggests that there were changes in him and changes she had made, the combined impact of these were working well together. He was talking to her more about the things which were troubling him and there was a sense that he realised now that his mum does love him and does want to help. The changes were also enabling him to feel more positively about school on a day to day basis.

His mum was able to articulate the strategies she was using; strategies she had learnt from his teacher. She also articulated her improved understanding and acceptance of his difficulties.

His significant difficulties were also present in the conversation; namely anticipated anxiety about SATS and High School and ongoing difficulties with going out to busy and noisy places and in his difficult relationship with his siblings.

The relationship she has with his class teacher continues to be positive; she rates the teacher very highly and appreciates the support she is giving to both Daniel and herself. She does however comment that the teacher still doesn't seem to completely understand how difficult Daniel can find things out of school.

#### **Holistic – form**

The form of the story being told about Daniel on this occasion was one of change, that relationships had improved and he was coping better with life on a day to day basis. There is a tentative romantic essence to this story. However, the timing of the ending of this story leaves us with a cliff hanger ending; we don't ever find out how he copes with future hurdles such as SATS, moving to high school or revisiting the troublesome trampoline park.

#### **Categorical – Content**

The table below illustrates the protective factors which she sees are now present in Daniel's secure base at home. His mum talks about the things she and others are doing to help him and there are signs that Daniel is reciprocating this improved relationship with his mum especially. A secure base in school is also presented in this interview and relationships with friends are portrayed positively.

An area which appears to present significant risk according to her stories is his ongoing difficulty with managing his emotions – specifically his anxiety. This difficulty is talked about in the past, the present and the future. And it is such an ongoing issue for his mum that she feels he needs to go to a mental health service to get help. However there are also examples of Daniel managing to cope with his feelings of anxiety across time and contexts.



The other themes illustrate examples of mixed views about particular issues; he is happy in school and doing well but still would rather not be there; he is starting to be able to talk to his mum about problem situations but has difficulty articulating himself; he is sometimes happy and sometimes unhappy at home; he is writing in school but continues to find aspects of learning challenging.

Resilience factor	Protective factor	Risk Factor
Secure base - family	Mum and dad are happy with me Mum and dad are trying to be nice to each other Whole family understand me more Mum is trying to help me and will plan to get me to trampoline park Mum is trying new strategies I know mum loves me I talk to mum about my problems Mum understands me more	Poor relationship with siblings – fighting
Secure base – school	My teacher is good for me My school will talk to my mum if I need it	
I can regulate my emotions	I can manage my anxiety when in school I can go to the leavers party I went to the pantomime I ate with the family I went to my cousins party	I can't cope when -things don't go to plan -people don't tell the truth - my brother and sister annoy me - in school - in the doctors - in a noisy/busy place - mum is late - at a party - SATS - high school - I feel pressured to do things I am anxious about I can't manage my anxiety about cutlery I need help from mental health service to manage my emotions
Friends	I have friends in school, to go to trampoline park with, to go to high school with	
Problem solving	I can problem solve through talking to my mum	I can't problem solve through talking – hard to articulate myself

	I talked to her about high school,	
I am	I am happy at home	I am unhappy at home
School	I enjoy school I can manage in school	I would prefer not to go to school
Academic	I can write	I am not successful with learning I have visual stress I can't explain myself easily
Other	I showed interest in flashing balls	I can't sleep

Table 13: Risk and protective factors from post NT interview with Daniel's mum

### Categorical – form

Daniel's mum conversation sometimes includes phrases such as 'I think', 'you know' and there are occasions when she stumbles to explain herself clearly or says outright I don't know about that. In these ways it is suggested that she is not entirely confident in her views on the situation.

There are also themes which come through the conversation which suggest that she holds potentially conflicting views. She is keen to illustrate that he is doing well – that things are better -but at the same time she is holding on to the theme of him having lots of difficulties too.

### Critical analysis

Daniel's mum often uses words which tell us how she is feeling about the situation she and her son are in. She starts and ends by stating how happy she is, but during the conversation she also tell us about being scared (high school), hopefulness and being not bothered (42), being busy, not booking a holiday, not relaxing on holiday, being emotional about things other people would not see as important (running into school, agreeing to go on the Year 6 outing).

She also talks often about the ways in which she had changed during the past few months – her understanding of Daniel has developed -

*Section 34 - I've accepted he doesn't like hugs and kisses now*

- ...and she has changed the way she parents him accordingly.

She also talks about her own need for support; support to help her help Daniel. This comes through when she is talking about whether or not they need to go to CAMHS or not

*Section 56 – “but then like I do probably need help with the school, when he goes to high school 'cause I don't know how he...I don't want to say yeah he's fine and then get to high school and that's it...he's under his bed again and I'm stuck again and then I've got to go back on the waiting list”*

-and wanting medication for his sleep.

### Summary

In summary Daniels mum is keen to say that the NT has had a positive impact on Daniel's day to day life at home and at school. She also talks about changes she has experienced

during this time, changes in her perception of Daniel and the ways in which she parents him. Despite these positive statements she also carries on going anxiety about his ability to cope with certain situations.

A range of protective factors are present in the stories told; stories which suggest a secure base at home are prevalent and there are stories about friendships, enjoying school and learning to problem solve more successfully. The loudest risk factor is his difficulty managing his feelings, other risk factors relate to difficulties with learning and poor relationships with his siblings. There is some sense of conflict in her views – she is keen to explain that things are better but also to make clear that she is still anxious about him, possibly rightly so.

#### *7.6.5.4 Comparing the before and after*

The tone of these interviews changed considerably. In the first there was a sense of tragedy; Daniel was presented as a boy not coping, with little sense of hope or change over time. In the second, hope was more prevalent and there was some sense of change having occurred already; Daniel was getting on better at home and at school. There was no romantic ending however; ellipses are needed as we do not know how he coped with SATS or the move to high school.

In both interviews Daniels mum did talk quite a bit about her own feelings and the things she needs to do to help him, although this did not produce a fabula directly describing how she sees him it did highlight another change. In the first interview her feelings were predominantly sadness and frustration, and his behaviour was impacting her ability to parent him (or not help him as she perceived it). In the post NT interviews her feelings were more mixed with hope and joy existing alongside fear and sadness. Also in the first interview her sense of not understanding him was clear but the post NT interview she was more confident in this; resulting in greater acceptance of his needs and in some parenting strategies she was finding useful.

Her worry about his anxiety was present in both interviews. However in the second alongside many examples of Daniel not being able to regulate his emotions (past, present and future) she could also now give more examples of when he was doing well with this across settings. She also talked about him being able to talk about his problems much more easily in the post NT interview.

The protection offered by a secure base was much more easily seen in the post NT interview. Initially the secure base was limited, with a poor relationship being described between herself and Daniel and between him and other family members. This was much more robust in the last interview with stories about strong relationships at home and at school prevailing.

School was seen as a more successful arena for Daniel in both the pre and post interviews with regard to him being able to regulate his emotions, but difficulties with learning were present in both. However, she did talk about improvements in writing over these months.

## 7.6.6 Analysis of the teacher's story about Daniel

### 7.6.6.1 *Before the Narrative Therapy intervention*

#### **Sjuzet – Fabula**

Daniel's teacher was able to give examples of Daniel's needs and strengths and ways in which he has shown these; this was recorded as fabula. However she often described the ways in which she had reacted or helped him through these events resulting in there being a significant amount of sjuzet. She also talked about other boys in her class, this was recorded as sjuzet but I recognised that the purpose of these stories was often to show how Daniel acted as 'one of the boys', just another member of her class.

#### **Holistic – content**

Daniel's teacher presents a story about a boy who is doing well with regard to his emotional wellbeing and also in his work. She paints a picture of a boy who has some difficult times, but that he is capable of overcoming these difficulties, especially with the strategies she has put in place. She talks about specific examples of him needing additional support but plays down the amount of support he needs to be just like other children in her class. She acknowledges that her perception of him as generally managing well and fitting in is different to how he is perceived by others (his mother, previous teachers and other service providers such as OT).

#### **Holistic – form**

The general tone of the stories told about Daniel are positive; his teacher has positive expectations and she shares examples of him meeting these expectations. There are indications that she feels that this version of Daniel is different to the version of Daniel presented by others. In the sense that she presents examples of being able to challenge, and so prove, that this prevalent story is mistaken there is some elements of 'satire' in her version of events; however the overall theme is hopeful and so 'romantic'.

#### **Categorical – Content**

This thematic analysis shows that the most prevalent protective factor in the teacher's stories about Daniel relate to the support she gives to him. She talks about the strategies she has put in place for him and the ways in which she helps him to cope with challenging situations. Her stories do not disclose any risks in this relationship. She also talks about a range of other protective relationships he has in school; with peers and another key member of staff. However she does allude to the low expectations other people in school have for him (previous teachers for example) and she states clearly that he doesn't have a particular best friend. Although she mentions that Daniel talks about his mum and that he sometimes behaves in ways which suggest that their bond is close she also mentions a number of occasions when his mum has had low expectations of his ability to cope in school.

The most frequently talked about risk factors relate to his poor regulation of his emotions and his low social confidence. A number of detailed stories are shared about his difficulties coping emotionally with an incident on the playground, in class and when an OT was due to visit him at home. She does concede that he is starting to be able to talk about his feelings, when she helps him to do so. There are also a number of stories about his low confidence

in a range of social situations in school (performances, sharing his ideas in class). This low social confidence also contributes to her low expectations regarding his ability to cope when he moves to secondary school. In contrast the teacher seems to be able to feel that his social skills are fine – he has friends, is liked by his peers and usually manages well on the playground. His social confidence and social competence are not matched – the teacher sees his abilities as stronger than Daniel perceives them to be.

The talents and interests are limited and there is little sense of ambition being shared, but Daniel is described as wanting to be kind to his mum and as a good boy, (these characteristics are offered in general terms without examples and so are thin stories).

Resilience factor	Protective factor	Risk Factor
I have a secure base in with my teacher	My teacher helps me to manage my emotions (in class, on playground, when OT visits) My teacher helps me to identify strategies I can use to manage my emotions My teacher helps me to think clearly My teacher offers to help me visit high school My teacher explains plans to me and uses a visual timetable	
I have... secure base in school	I am settled I have friends to play with in school I can talk to Mrs BM	My previous teachers have low expectations for me about my ability to cope I do not have a best friend in school
I have... secure base at home	I talk about mum and school I talk about my cousin, brother and sister	Mum has low expectations about my ability to cope
Emotional regulation	I can talk about my feelings I am learning to talk about my feelings	Poor coping when playing football Poor coping out of class Poor coping when OT visits I cannot control my feelings at home I cannot identify my feelings well
Social confidence		I am fearful of some social situations (OT visit) I do not confident enough to put up my hand in class I am not socially confident enough to perform in school

Social competence	People like to play with me at playtime Social relationships with peers are fine I usually manage well on the playground	I am a little immature
Problem solving	I can ask for help I can talk to people about my problems I can learn from others	I find it hard to accept advice
Perseverance	I can persevere with English and maths and other lessons	I cannot persevere for long with maths
High school		I cannot cope with the change I need additional nurture I need help at the time of transition I am not sure things will be alright
Talents and interests	Football Maths Times tables	
I am	Kind to my mum I am a good boy	
Future plans	I have ambition for this year	I have not shared long term ambition

Table 14: Risk and protective factors in the teacher's initial interview

### Categorical – form

Daniel's teacher uses a number of intensifiers to give strength to her view that he is fine and needs only a little help from her.

#### Section 1

*T - I am very pleased with D*

*R - Are you? Super.*

*T - He has settled well into school.*

#### Section 10

*T - And when he is at school he tries really hard,*

She also suggests that the things she does to help him are ordinary and not particularly special.

#### Section 15

*T - I have the tables set usually so that everything is fine, just one person has to move,*

### Section 17

*T - ...and I do have a visual timetable, and I go through it very day what is happening*

*R - That is helpful.*

*T - So, I do that all the time, with everybody,*

### Section 19

*T - I am always in my classroom at lunchtime so if someone needs to read or I have S come in and sometimes I have K, and D will appear and he will say, this is making me angry and I think I need...*

Even the difficulties he does have she doesn't see as particularly big issues

### Section 37

*T - ...and I said to him your stuff is on your peg, oh OK, but you need to get changed for PE and he was right fine, and he was fine, I wouldn't really know there was an issue. He was fine.*

### Critical analysis

In this interview Daniel's teacher seemed to be positioning herself as putting things in place which are helpful to Daniel but has little belief that these are special or valuable. Instead of saying 'I have done these things and they have helped' as some others would do, the gist of the stories seems to be 'he is so fine that he only needs the little things that even I can do'. Her confidence in her abilities to be a transformational teacher seem low. She did seem to be enjoying showing Daniel, and others, that he could cope better than he thought he could.

### Summary

Stories about his difficult moments are detailed so take up space in the interview, but these appear to be isolated incidents in a landscape of relative success for Daniel. The theme is of success, with protective factors in his relationship with her, other relationships in school and his social skills. He also has protective factors in his football and maths skills. The risk factors which are present relate to his poor emotional regulation and the low expectations others including his mum and previous teachers have for his ability to cope. The teacher seems to enjoy being able to show Daniel that he can cope better than he thought he could. There is a shared sense of him needing additional support as he moves to high school.

#### 7.6.6.2 During the Narrative Therapy session

### Session 1

In the diary sheet the teacher reported that Daniel was more settled at home, and told her so daily. His behaviour at school was much the same. She also suggested that she would try harder to notice angry being big and angry being small, as well as being happy. She felt that the relationship with Daniels mother was good and she is easy to talk to and appreciative.

## **Session 2**

During the session she was able to give examples of Daniel keeping angry small at times when he may have been anxious – on the art day for example. She also explained the things she had put in place to help him.

In this session the class teacher could report that she was please Daniel had recognised his own achievements.

She wrote that she was going to keep up the positive reinforcement and reassurance.

## **Session 3**

After this session the teacher verbally shared her view that Daniel says what he thinks people want to hear. He tells me that his confidence is up and his anger is down, he is ok about SATS and high school with Lisa and is not Ok when he is with his mum. She is anxious that he will go back to the old script when he goes to CAMHS in the future.

In her written diary she stated that Daniel had made a good start to the term and hadn't needed any support or encouragement to participate in activities. She also comments that he had started to develop new networks in the class without her help.

## **Session 4**

The teacher was not available to attend this session as she was out of school.

### *7.6.6.3 After the Narrative Therapy intervention*

#### **Sjuzet – Fabula**

The high frequency of sjuzet in this interview highlights the focus which was on the class teachers' views and her practice rather than describing the things which Daniel does. Also the sections of text in which she describes the things done by the whole group of children in her class were marked as sjuzet, as they didn't directly related to Daniels story; however on analysis these sections seem intended to include Daniel and illustrate that he is just one of the class – not particularly special.

#### **Holistic – content**

The overall feel of this conversation is one in which the teacher is keen to present that Daniel is coping well in school, that is he essentially just one of the class and that she doesn't need to give him additional support to help to achieve this. He has friends, is sharing his ideas and is coping with unusual events (a pantomime in school, working with new tutors, and in new peers groups). The most prominent difficulty he has at school is with the curriculum; writing specifically. These school based stories are in contrast to her depiction of his ability to cope, or more specifically – not cope, when he moves to high school.

Also, she seems to feel that others (his mother by implication) are making it harder for him to be successful, by sending him to the wrong high school and by encouraging his attendance at CAMHS. There is also a tone of possible frustration about this as she states that she can't worry about this/ do anything about it.



The teacher talks about the strategies she uses which are helpful to Daniel, but often relates these to the way that she teaches her whole class rather than them being Daniel specific strategies.

**Holistic – form**

The stories seem static with regard to Daniel in school; that there has been little change in him since earlier in the year. She concedes that there may have been some positive change at in his ability to cope at home. However there is some anticipation of difficult times ahead – at home because their strategies for supporting him are not great, and at high school because he isn’t ready to cope with the challenges of the school chosen by his mother. There is a sense of being resigned to tragedy in her tone.

**Categorical – Content**

This thematic analysis suggests that Daniel’s teacher has stories which show the factors in his life which put his resilience at risk but also a good number of stories which are protective factors. In his favour he has a secure base with her, has shown that he can manage his emotions and show social confidence in a range of situations. He has a good connections with his friends and shows signs of a sense of belonging with the class. Although he struggles with writing his more positive attitude towards his work is helping him to experience success more often.

The most prevalent risk factors in this conversation relate to the risk that the teacher sees is presented by his mum’s actions, which she seems to think of as misguided. The other most prevalent risk relates to his difficulties managing his anxieties when away from the support of school/ his teacher, particularly in relation to his anticipated move to high school but also the perception that Daniel seems to believe he needs to go to CAMHS to get further support.

Resilience factor	Protective factor	Risk Factor
I have a secure base in school	Teacher – positive relationships, planning support, helping to sort problems, believes in him	
I have a secure base at home	Played with brother	Mum - doesn’t believe I can cope at high school, -can’t get me to do homework, -has poor strategies to support me, -has made a poor high school choice, -and she doesn’t fill in my planner
Friendships	Plays with friends in school	
Social confidence	Shares ideas in class Works with a range of peers Flexible about who he will work with Works with new tutors	

	Manages PE independently	
Sense of belonging to the class	Accepts praise for the class Follows class instructions	
Emotional regulation	He can control emotions - In class, - With unpredicted changes - Regarding a girl he dislikes - No anxiety re: panto - When working with different adults - When doing tests Can make good behavioural choices	Can make poor behavioural choices (“manipulative”) Can’t cope and so needs CAMHS Wont cope with high school – transition, entrance exam, when he gets there He has anxiety issues He should be helped to avoid situations
Autonomy	Acts independently in school	He thinks he needs special help to cope with emotions (CAMHS)
Perseverance	Will persevere with tasks in class	
Interests		Has no interests
I can...	Times tables Copy from the board (now) Be successful in school	Poor writing skills
Motivation for learning	Attitude to tasks is more positive	Little interest in work Does little homework or reading at home

Table 15: Risk and protective factors in the teacher's post NT interview

### Categorical – form

This lens helps to focus on the teacher’s apparent feelings or views about Daniels position. The nuances in the conversation, in the text and in the direct experience of it, suggest that her overall feeling is one of slight exasperation. When he is with her he does well with his work, friendships and managing his emotions; but when elsewhere he is, and will be in the future, less successful. She seems to feel that too much is expected of him (to cope with the chosen high school) and that too much focus is put upon needing specialist advice (CAMHS) and that these things are making it worse for him. She doesn’t go as far as saying “if they just did it my way...” but does come close when talking about high school choice.

In her stories she emphasises the sense of Daniel being the same as the others, just one of the class by talking about the whole of the class often and talking about the things she does to support everyone. She sometimes relates this directly back to him – ‘and he copes with that’ but sometimes this is done by implication.

### Critical analysis

This lens focusses on her role in his resilience development. On a number of occasions the teacher seems to be negative about her own abilities to do the job she is required to do for Daniel. Her confidence seems low – confidence, I’m not good enough, and she seems almost resigned to the limits of her capacity- I can’t do Saturdays. There is a conflict

between her saying it's not her job to change things for him out of school and seeming to feel that if she could it would help.

She makes it pretty clear that she thinks the NT hasn't made any difference to her practice or to the way Daniel is in school. She concedes that there may have been some impact at home. However it seems that there is common ground between the NT approach and hers; both want to show him that he can do more than he sometimes believes he can!

### **Summary**

In this interview the teacher presents Daniel as essentially successful in school, especially with regard to managing his emotions, attitude towards work and getting on with other people. She is less positive about his abilities out of school and his ability to cope in the future. She suggests that he is successful in school when she gives him the support she gives to everyone. It is implied that if his mum's expectations and approach towards helping him were different he would be more able to cope with life beyond the school gates.

Many resilience factors are present in the stories she tells – social confidence in school, secure base in school, but risk factors are most prevalent within the arena of his relationship with his mum and his ability to manage his emotions when going to high school.

The teachers makes clear her role in Daniels success. She seems frustrated that she can't make the situation out of school better for him but also states that this is not her role – as if it were an unfair expectation to put on her (she was the only one to suggest that it were up to her).

#### **7.6.6.4 Comparing the before and after**

In both of these interviews Daniels teacher talked about her role in supporting Daniel and she talked about the other children in the class- the purpose of this on both occasions was to highlight how she did little specifically to support him and he could cope with most things as well as his peers.

However, a difference in tone was noted; in the first she seemed more hopeful; that he was doing well despite his difficulties and that she expected him to be successful. In the second she seemed a little resigned to him not being able to cope when he left her; yes he was still doing well with her but that events such as going to high school and the inadequate support from others would overcome him. May be this was because the trip to CAMHs and the move to high school were getting closer?

In both interviews the stories suggested that Daniel has a secure base at school; with her and friends. The relationships with family were also presented similarly across both, in a way that suggested greater risk than protection; focussing on the teachers' perception that his mum has low expectations of him, and makes poor choices about how to help him.

His difficulties with emotional regulation were present in both meetings, stories about him not managing were shared in before and after the NT sessions, however in the post NT meeting the teacher was able to provide many more examples of him coping well. This was a noticeable change.

Another noticeable change relates to the stories about Daniels social confidence, in initially this was entirely listed as a risk factor. However in the post NT meeting she gave many examples of him showing social confidence. She also talked about a number of ways in which he was demonstrating a sense of belonging to the class. There were stories about him being able to play with his friends in both interviews.

There is a change in the resilience related stories told, however the teacher didn't seem fully aware of this change or its importance. She seems to feel that this wasn't to do with the NT, but rather felt that she had made this change before my involvement.

It is possible that the change in stories told relates to the teacher telling me the things she thought I wanted to hear; everyone else (SENCO, Daniel, Mum) were saying he had difficulties, even my agreeing to become involved thickened this story, and so it would have been hard for her to go completely against this prevalent story of Daniel and his needs at this point in the process.

## 7.6.7 EP story of working with Daniel

### 7.6.7.1 *Pre involvement*

Before I started working with Daniel information was shared by the SENCO at his school. They had a number of concerns about him at home and in school. Written records suggested that he was exhibiting signs of extreme anxiety outside school and that he was having difficulty with relationships at home. In school he received speech therapy and support from the school health advisor about anger management. His teachers felt that the opportunity to develop his resilience would be beneficial.

I felt that the NT could be a useful vehicle for developing his resilience. I was aware that with a history of possible language difficulties it may be necessary to use drawing to support our conversations.

### 7.6.7.2 *Pre Narrative Therapy Interviews*

#### **Meeting Daniel's teacher**

Following this meeting I was aware that the teacher felt that there was a difference between home and schools perceptions of Daniel. She shared her view that she could manage him well and that his mum was less successful. I got the impression that she also thought his self-esteem/ self-confidence was not strong and that his curriculum skills were an issue as he was making slow progress.

As an EP I needed to know that she felt she was doing well with him. I sensed that she thought she didn't need my help to do well by Daniel- that they were getting on fine. However, in my mind, my task was to help Daniel to see more clearly what she could see – that he was doing well with many aspects of school life. Taking on these more positive stories would support his development of resilience according to the model proposed.

#### **Meeting Daniel**

This initial meeting with Daniel was quite difficult. I needed to be a researcher and let him share his views of his situation, whereas the EP in me wanted to help him to be more positive about himself even from this point. It was especially hard not to encourage him to add more people to his socio gram – it was so empty near to him that it was sad to see.

I felt that he shared as much as he could. We balanced the potentially depressing conversation about home and his difficult feelings with more positive talk about school- the things he liked and was good at..

Afterwards I wondered if Daniel has thought he was supposed to talk about his anger difficulties because that is what he had talked to the SHA about. Having the structured tasks to do helped to avoid this.

#### **Meeting mum**

Daniel's mum seemed anxious at the start of this meeting. Indeed she shared that she too suffered with anxiety – in my EP role it was important to reassure her that this process was not about judging her parenting and to reassure her that I thought she was being brave taking part in this process. Her engagement with the process showed me what a good mum she was, yet she seemed to feel that she wasn't doing a good enough job for Daniel.

She didn't need a lot of encouragement to share her thoughts about Daniel, these worries are clearly on her mind often. I didn't need to structure the interview and many stories simply flowed and we went in the directions she chose. When there was a lull in the conversation I would focus back on questions which would illicit conversation about areas of resilience

She was clearly torn between wanting to be positive about her boy who she loved very much and also wanting to tell the whole story so that he and she could be helped to change the problem situation they were in.

The EP role in this meeting was to reassure his mum that she was doing OK, building rapport for future meetings as well as gaining important information to inform my assessment of Daniels needs at that time. These roles did not conflict with the researcher role, which was prevalent.

### **What was the EP story at the point of planning the NT?**

I listened to the pre narrative interviews before starting the NT sessions. At this point it was apparent that Daniel would benefit from support to develop stories in all 3 key building blocks of resilience – I have, I am and I can. His relationships with others were not strong. He had few people in his socio-gram and talked little about successfully interacting with others. His mother and teacher mentioned concerns about friendships and social confidence.

All three members of this therapeutic group struggled to describe him in terms which would fit with protective factors in the "I am..." theme. His mum said he was a kind loving boy but couldn't think of examples. His teacher couldn't think of ways in which he contributed to the school community or showed regard for others. And he did not allude to any such characteristics.

In addition it was apparent to me as an EP that he needed more help to understand his anger differently. He had done work with the SHA about anger management and this seemed to have helped him to describe his anger and to identify triggers. NT techniques offered the opportunity to externalise the problem he was having with anger and so change his relationship with it. My initial interview with Daniel and with his mum suggested he had few strategies to help him deal with these difficult feelings and so another useful outcome of our work together could be developing such methods.

The dichotomy between mum's perception of Daniel as a boy who was struggling very much and the teacher's perception that he would be alright, with the right support, was a challenge to me. The pragmatic EP in me wanted to find the 'truth' of the situation – probably somewhere between the two views- through questioning and perhaps challenging their views, but in my researcher role I needed to accept their 'truths' as they told them at this point in the process. Working to change this could happen later.

I also wondered if the differing views held by the mum and the teacher, and their awareness of each other's views, were influencing the versions told to me. Was the mum inclined to be more negative to counter the positivity she anticipated was coming from the teacher? And was the teacher being more positive to counteract the sad tales told by mum?

### 7.6.7.3 *During the Narrative Therapy process*

#### **Session 1**

My plan for this session was to encourage Daniel to start to thicken the story of him as a successful person – to think of things he was proud of – and to ask his mum and teacher to help him add to this story – throughout time and across contexts. (I can...statements)

I also used externalising techniques to unpick more about when the anger came around and when the anger was smaller. This led to conversations about when anger wasn't around – unique outcomes – and developing a new focus – when he is confident. (I am... statements)

#### **Session 2**

We focussed again on developing the 'I can...' statements through gathering more information about things he had done that he was proud of. We used the Festival of Moments drawing sheet to help with this.

With help from his mum and teacher he wrote a long list of events he had managed and hoped to manage in the future, this supported the development of 'I can...'.

Daniel brought concerns about a family trip to the theatre planned for the next day. It was important to him to talk about this, and it was an opportunity for him to practice seeing if he could make anger small and confidence big by using a few strategies. This event changed my plans for the session but it was useful and important.

#### **Session 3**

The plan for this session was to review how he managed the family trip to the theatre, to consolidate thoughts about I am.... Confident, and to work on 'I have...' statements. The Christmas holidays had happened between this visit and the last so there was a lot of time/opportunities for success to reflect back upon.

It was easier to work on the 'I have...' statements now that Daniel was getting on better at home and school – in talking about the things he had been enjoying doing well he had mentioned different people in school and out. This gave us a way into thinking about the people he was enjoying spending time with and who seemed to be enjoying spending time with him!

At the end of this session the teacher shared with me her view that Daniel was very good at saying what other people wanted to hear or behaving in ways which fitted his perception of their expectations– telling me about times when he was confident, telling her that he was managing in school and telling his mum that he was struggling. I think she thought that this was a barrier to success; however in my view this was an accepted part of how we all behave all the time – the story we tell to others about ourselves is affected by the occasion of the telling and who we are telling it to. The aim of the NT was to enable Daniel to rehearse telling more positive stories- to give a richness to these stories to make them louder than the more negative stories which were so prevalent at the start of this process. The process also helped his mum to hear a different version of the story of her son, and so start to accept a different view of who he was and what he needed.

### **What were the EP conclusions to the NT involvement?**

I had managed to cover the elements which had been part of my original plan – to develop the ‘I have..., I am... and I can...’ stories for Daniel. He was more able to tell these stories than he had been previously. And we had talked about the anger that sometimes experienced in a more empowering way.

It had been good to be able to involve his mum and teacher so frequently. Although there were times when his mum found it hard to stay focussed on successes and shared her anxieties about Daniel more often than was helpful to the process.

I had really enjoyed the work with Daniel; he had become so much more confident in the sessions, he always seemed happy to see me and to leave his classroom to come and work with me (even if it meant missing PE or maths). Doing this work with him was easily one of the highlights to my working weeks.

#### **7.6.7.4 Post Narrative Therapy Interviews**

Evaluations of previous case studies had taught me that during these interviews I needed to try to keep my views to myself and to give an opportunity for the others to share theirs; for the EP role of sharing information and shaping views to be kept to a minimum and to allow the researcher to gather data required.

#### **Meeting teacher**

It wasn't difficult to keep the EP role quiet in this meeting the class teacher was happy to do most of the talking. My role was mostly to ask questions and reflect back what she was saying in a reassuring manner. There were occasions when I gave her some information but rather than my psychological perspective this was often information that Daniel or his mum had given me – their views of situations which were sometimes different to the teachers. I did share my worry about Daniel's poor relationship with his brother but she didn't particularly focus on this; her view was different as they had played battleships this week for Daniels homework.

#### **Meeting Daniel**

My last meeting with Daniel initially went well. I reminded him that this was the last time we were going to work together in this way and he seemed ok about that – not pleased but OK.

He was able to work with me to develop a booklet summarising all the things he had learnt – the people he had in his life, the things he was good at, the times he had shown he could be confident and ambitions for the future. The EP role was at least as present as the researcher role. During this interview the research needed me to collect Daniel's views with little influence from me as his EP. However if I hadn't shaped the conversations and activities the session may have been less successful and so would have jeopardised the effectiveness of the series of NT sessions. I used questioning to illicit his views but sometimes reminded him of things he had said in previous sessions.

At the end of this interview his mum joined us. This started well but then as we were ending the meeting she mentioned that Daniel was still anxious about high school. This was a genuine concern but mentioning it then was bad timing and it changed the tone of the meeting from one celebrating his strengths to one in which she was essentially saying ‘yes but... he won't be able to do this really big thing’. This floored Daniel's mood and he froze –



he wouldn't talk to me or his mum. His mum left and with the support of a familiar member of staff Daniel was helped to go back to his class.

I then arranged to go back to see Daniel briefly the following week to ensure that we ended on a positive note – to say thank you to him, to show him that it was OK for him to have difficult times and that such events didn't mean I had changed my view about him being strong.

### **Meeting mum**

This was a good meeting in the way that his mum was able to talk positively about the changes she had seen in Daniel. It was good to hear that she had a different set of stories to tell about him. These more positive stories sat alongside the stories of him having difficulty rather than being buried beneath them. She was also starting to tell a different story about her parenting of him, and about the way the family worked together.

The EP role was small in this meeting; I was aware that it was important for me to let her share her views rather than use it as an opportunity to reinforce my views. However this was quite easily done as we agreed on many of the things said. There were a few occasions when I was reassuring her

*Section 5 R: You do understand him, he's your boy isn't he? Yeah. You know him better than I do!*

and

*Section 13. M: but that doesn't happen anymore because we don't do that.*

*R: Oh, well done! You're great at taking stuff on aren't you?*

*M: Yeah.*

### **Summary of EP role in the Post NT interviews**

The EP role was relatively small in all of these interviews, with perhaps the exception of the meeting with Daniel. This was what I had aimed for. On reflection it may have meant that I wasn't able to share the depth of my understanding of the situation with anyone – what is the point of me knowing and not the people who are going to carry on living with this situation...

#### **7.6.7.5 Reflections on EP role after data analysis**

I kept the EP role to a minimum in the pre and post interviews. This was an improvement on the previous case studies.

I achieved my aims of developing I have, I am and I can resilience stories for Daniel. This was also expanded for his mum especially and to a lesser extent for the teacher.

Daniel and I used a range of devices to structure our conversations – talking, drawing, scaling, post-it notes/card sorting, and writing.

During the analysis of the interviews it became apparent that a change had occurred within the mum's understanding of her sons additional needs; she had developed an understanding of him that seemed to be helpful to her parenting of him and their relationship. We have no way of knowing whether this was as a direct result of the NT

sessions, however it could be argued that this is possible and even likely. When I first met his mum her story of her son was of a boy who was struggling with his emotions, specifically anxiety and anger, and this was having a negative impact on his functioning, family relationships and her ability to parent him in the way she would like. During the NT sessions she engaged in conversations which encouraged her to think about times when these difficult feelings were small, to think of times when confidence was big this enabled her to rehearse stories of Daniels difficulties not being the only story to be told; giving his identity more variety and helping her to focus on his successes and strengths. Also, the NT sessions gave her an opportunity to hear that the teacher (whom she admires greatly) and I ('an expert' in these things) thought highly of her son, rated highly his successes, whilst accepting his difficulties. Her views of her son seemed to become more closely aligned to those held by the teacher, and myself, during the process.

The analysis of the interviews also highlighted a direction of the work which wasn't fully explored. In the analysis it became apparent that the teacher's hope for Daniel's success in the future was dampened by her views of his mum's ability to make good choices for him. Her view of his secure base at home was not strong and if I had worked to improve this her stories about him it would have been more helpful to his resilience development – it would have supported his sense of a secure base at home. Mum had many protective stories about Daniel at school, but the teacher did not offer the same support in return.

I am not sure that my psychological understanding of the situation was fully shared with the others – but then this was never part of the plan of this piece of work. In my usual EP role I would finish meetings with my views and then record these in a report. This was not part of the process agreed; and was not a necessary part of the NT. The NT will hopefully stand on its own as enough...

## 7.6.8 Researcher story of Daniel

### 7.6.8.1 *Pre Narrative Therapy Interviews*

The information provided by the school suggested that Daniel met criteria for involvement in the study. He was of the right age, his needs were clearly defined, no other services was involved in meeting his needs in this area, (at the time of agreeing the work CAMHS and St Joseph's Family centred had reportedly said that he did not meet their criteria) and he obviously needed support to develop his resilience in order to manage daily challenges.

All parties agreed to take part and seemed to understand that they could change their mind at any point. The school were supportive of the class teacher being given time to come out of class.

#### **Meeting Daniel's mum**

In this meeting I had a list of prompt questions available and I did return to them on occasion but this wasn't often needed. It was easy to let the mum lead the conversation and I mostly followed her lead – asking questions to get more detail about some of the topics she raised. (This was an area of improvement identified in previous interviews).

#### **Meeting Daniel's class teacher**

Some aspects of this meeting with the class teacher were altered by the nature of my previous relationship with her. We had worked together about different children on a previous occasions – at the time of this previous work she had been a Newly Qualified Teacher and had been struggling with a very difficult class. I felt that through that work we had established an understanding of each other – our priorities for children's learning and wellbeing were similar to each other's but not always in line with the priorities of the senior management team in her school. This previous knowledge also meant that I knew that this teacher could be very straight talking, almost brusque in her manner, but that she was actually a great teacher who would work very hard, with insight, for children with additional needs. In this way I could not hold a discreet role of a researcher who was there to simply hear and record what she said, this previous relationship could have altered the content of the conversation. I feel that it would have allowed her to be open and honest, but she may also have been influenced by what she thought I wanted to hear.

During this conversation I said relatively little and steered the conversation only through questioning, with some comments which were often in agreement with what she was saying.

#### **Meeting Daniel**

It was not possible to maintain a strong researcher role during this interview. I did not offer therapeutic intervention in this session but it was necessary to protect Daniels wellbeing by focussing on both successes as well as his chosen topics of difficulty; the EP role was more prevalent than it had been in the adult meetings.

However I was able to cover many of the important resilience areas through our conversations and the tasks we completed together. I was able to mostly ask question rather than offer opinions. The questioning may have altered the focus of the conversation,

but Daniel was free to share his views as he wished. At no point did I feel it was necessary to disagree with him or encourage him to alter his views.

A rapport was built throughout the interview with him giving fuller answers as we proceeded.

#### *7.6.8.2 During NT sessions*

It was helpful that Daniel's mum and teacher were able to attend for part of each of the NT sessions. His mum also attended on an extra occasion when I had planned to meet only with Daniel. Both were able to complete the diaries regularly. This was especially kind of his mum to do this as she was very anxious about writing when it was going to be seen by others.

#### *7.6.8.3 Post Narrative Therapy Interviews*

These meetings were well organised with everyone being available at the times arranged.

#### **Meeting Daniel's mum**

In analysis of previous meetings about different children I had criticised myself for moving through the conversations to quickly in order to cover all the areas I wanted to cover – all the resilience factors- and this had come at the expense of letting the participants direct the focus of the conversation (as is good practice in narrative interviews), and at the expense of getting depth or richness of information about one particular area. On this occasion of meeting with Daniels mum for the last time I seemed to have gone to the other extreme – she guided the conversation with me asking questions and making comments which helped me to understand more about the things she was mentioning. This was useful because I feel like I know what she thinks and feels about the topics she raised but we didn't talk about all of the things I as a researcher would have been interested in.

#### **Meeting his teacher**

As with the meeting with Daniels mum I allowed the teacher to guide the focus of this conversation to large extent. This meant that we talked about the topics which had come up before- namely the things we had talked about in the NT sessions and in the initial meeting -and things which were particularly present in her mind at the time. This was good because it meant that the things which were important to her were covered but it meant that I did not gain information about the breadth of resilience factors.

#### **Meeting Daniel**

This meeting started with recapping all of the work we had done together – revisiting the things we had learnt about his abilities and the people in his life. This was important because it helped him to be able to prepare the information he needed to put in his summary booklet. However it may also have had the effect of colouring the things he then went on to mention- it may have encouraged him to focus on the aspects of his experience that were supportive of his resilience. In this way the researcher role took a back seat to the EP role in his meeting, again.

However, I feel that this can be justified. Daniel is a boy who finds it hard to articulate himself and has some apparent learning difficulties (seen in curriculum difficulties) so it was necessary to help him remember what had been done in this concrete way. In addition it

was important to the NT to finish on a positive note; celebrating his many strengths and abilities.

I feel that the data is still valid because it shows that Daniel has developed a range of stories which focus on protective factors – he was able to add good detail and depth to these stories as I introduced them. Perhaps all we can say is that with structuring, Daniel can talk about himself in ways which are supportive of his resilience. He has had experience of telling these stories repeatedly, rehearsing them and adding detail, of stories being interesting to others, and reinforced by others giving similar examples. He has examples of him having resources and abilities across time and contexts, and hope that he will be able to use them in the future.

#### *7.6.8.4 Researcher reflections after the data analysis*

NOI was crucial

It's hard to be EP and researcher with children

It's hard to be EP and researcher after having been closely involved with the participants – their perceptions of what you want to hear are even stronger (but then they also trust you more so can be honest – e.g. teacher telling me stuff when the tape is off)

But being part of the interviews was good though – the feeling and experience of it was hard to capture just in the words or just on the tape. The atmosphere in the room, the chats before and after the tape was one, the energy and non verbals between us all contributed to my understanding of the stories told. It was also helpful to the NT. Contemporaneous notes were helpful to remind me of these things.

Being immersed in the stories was useful – having lived them heard them, written them, read them....exhausting, but useful!

## 7.6.9 Comparing the stories

### 7.6.9.1 *Comparing the pre Narrative Therapy stories given by Daniel, his mum and his teacher.*

Daniel and his mum seem to present similarly negative stories in their first interviews. Both conversations were laden with talk about on Daniels part anger and feeling mad, and anxiety on his mother's part. This seemed to be using different words to label the same behaviours. The teacher on the other hand was more positive – though far from exclusively. Daniel and his mum presented stories which were categorised as tragic and static; there was a big problem whereas the teacher's stories were labelled as more hopeful.

Daniel and his mum were also similar in the way that the language they used (the sjuzet) implied that they were uncertain in their views. This was not a particular pattern in the teachers telling of events.

All three reflected that he was more successful in school than at home.

In comparing Daniels stories and his teacher there was a contrast – Daniel describes himself as weird; as different to other people he knows, whereas his teacher determinedly portrays him as just one of the boys – the same as the others.

Comparing the teacher and the mother also offers an interesting difference; the teacher sees her actions and being helpful to Daniel- with her strategies he is doing well, whereas the mum is struggling with her strategies and seems to be struggling to know how to help him.

All three tell stories relating to the risk factor of him not being able to regulate his emotions; giving richness to this story about him through offering examples over time, across contexts and when describing how others see him also (other teachers, wider family and neighbours). Both mum and teacher mention high school as a likely problem in the future. Risks within his social skills and confidence are raised by the adults also whereas Daniel doesn't perceive there to be a problem here – he talks positively about friendships.

#### **Interactions suggested by the diagram**

There are some common themes in the protective factors identified in the diagram. This includes a secure base in school either with teachers, friends or both. All mention ways in which his mum is helpful and so contributing to the secure base. They all talk about interests he has and mention that he is kind/ a good boy. They all relay simple ambitions he has in the short or long term. They all mention his social skills, the teacher has the richest stories about this whereas the mum has only really seen evidence of this online. Also they all mention that he has some limited ability to regulate his emotions – by giving a single example of doing this or by giving a strategy he uses (asks for help/ listens to music).

Both his mum and his teacher talk about the good relationship he has with the teacher; Daniel doesn't mention this although he does place her on the edge of his socio gram when prompted.

The teacher mentions that he can persevere with his work and no one else mentions this. This is the only protective which is entirely unique to her contribution. (This is protective in

that it indicates a secure base at home and his difficulties going out are recorded as a risk also).

His mum mentions that he likes to stay home a lot; this is the only protective factor which is unique to her story.

However Daniel's story has more elements which can be perceived as protective factors – he gives a list of things he can do, talents in class and beyond.

There is a high level of similarity between these protective factors when looked at from his level. However as risk factors were more prevalent in the stories shared by Dan and his mum and were a considerable presence in the teachers' stories also this focus on the protective factors can be misleading.

#### *7.6.9.2 Comparing the post Narrative Therapy stories given by Daniel, his mum and his teacher.*

All three interviews were more positive than they had been in the way that they gave many protective factors and each participant was able to talk about successes achieved in recent months. All shared stories about Daniel having strong secure base – though not all in the same way. The teacher and Daniel felt that he had a secure base in school and with friends. The teacher was not complementary about the choices being made by his mum (about needing to go to CAMHS and choice of high school) and so from her perspective the balance was tending towards risk in this sphere of his life. Daniel and his mum were both able to talk positively about their relationship with each other but also about the way other family members were relating to Daniel.

His difficulties managing his anger and anxiety were present in all of the conversations but to differing degrees. All were able to talk about times when Daniel was able to overcome these feelings, or when he had been confident, at a time when he may not have been able to do so in the past. This sense of coping was definitely more prevalent than it had been. Daniel gave more examples of success than failure, the teachers responses were very mixed whereas his mum was more focussed than the other two on the difficulties he was having/ was going to have. All were worried about future challenges and how he would cope with those.

Daniel and his teacher both talked about the 'I can...' abilities more than his mum did. The teachers examples were class room focussed whereas Daniels stories went beyond the classroom.

Both the mum and the teacher spent time venting their feelings about the situation and sharing information about how they were responding to him. The teacher maintained her view that her strategies were helping him – in fact intimating that if she could do more out of school that would be even more helpful. Meanwhile his mum had started to develop a sense of being effective– that she now had developed a better understanding of him and so was being more helpful to him. The teacher didn't seem to have noticed this change and was still frustrated by mums approach to Daniel's difficulties. Thankfully Daniel however seemed to have noticed that his mum was better for him now!

### **Interactions highlighted by the diagram**

The diagram of the protective factors mentioned in the post NT interviews shows the high level of commonality. Each tells stories which suggest a secure base at home, though most detail comes from mum and Daniel (understandably), all tell stories suggesting a secure base in school (through friends and adults). All tell stories about him regulating his emotions.

Daniel and his teacher give examples of him acting with confidence – the teacher focusses on social confidence.

Daniel tells about a range of things ‘he can...’ do, his teacher mentions a few school based things and his mum only really mentions one ability which is growing (writing).

In addition the teacher talks about elements of Daniels behaviour in school which relate to his attitude towards work (persevering and being more positive).

Daniel is the only one who mentions his skill as a gamer and he is the only one who talks about his long term ambitions with detail (although he was asked to do this).



## 7.7 FROM INTERVIEW TO MODEL OF RESILIENCE

The fourth interpretative perspective suggested by NOI, Categorical – Content, encourages analysing the data by defining themes within the text; categorising sections according to either themes which emerge from the text in a manner similar to grounded theory or according to themes predefined by theory. In this project the research literature regarding the promotion of children’s resilience was used to provide the themes (Bernard, 1995; Browne, et al., 2004; Daniel & Wassell, 2002; Grotberg, 1997, 1998; Oswald, et al., 2003). This step in the analysis followed a thematic analysis process. An illustration of this process is given below. It is taken from the narrative interview conducted with Kieran’s class teacher after the NT process has been completed. This illustration allows the reader to see how her stories about Kieran’s resilience are taken from the transcript, categorised, themes identified and then incorporated into a diagram of the landscape of Owen’s resilience stories. Through a recursive process of checking back to the interview at each stage it was possible to ensure that the concise data provided in the NOI analysis (categorical-content step) remained consistent with the information shared by the teacher in the original interview.

### Section of Interview in tabulated form

In this table are a small selection of cells from the tabulated interview to illustrate the way in which resilience factors were initially identified in the stories shared by the teacher.

2.	<p><u>For example I was the carol service at the church last night, and Kieran and another child were the only 2 that went from our class, and it was lovely to see him supporting the school outside of school as well.</u></p> <p>R - He told me about that</p> <p>T - <u>Did he?</u> The concentration holding his candle, <u>you know</u>, it better not burn me but I am still going to sing. That ‘I’ve got to keep going’, <u>sort of I know it is a completely different audience, it’s not the school</u></p> <p>R - But it’s taking part in that community stuff</p> <p>T- It’s that sense of belonging <u>really</u>, <u>which I think was quite special last night,</u></p>	<p>Trying so hard with singing</p> <p>Showing belonging to the school</p>	<p>I can...sing</p> <p>Belonging to the school</p>
5.	<p>T - <u>and then erm</u>, as in the helpful and kind aspects he is more, <u>erm what do you call it</u>, outgoing, as in ‘can I help you do that?’ Can I do that? Can I give the books out?</p> <p>R - A little bit more assertive with his kindness?</p> <p>.... <u>I know all the children in the class have responsibilities</u> but he has also taken it</p>	<p>He is more assertive with helpful and kind (using a strength to help development of an area of weakness)</p> <p>Being independent in his helpfulness</p>	<p>I am ...Kind and helpful</p> <p>More self confidence</p>



### Tabulation of Categorical – Content

In completing the ‘categorical –content’ step in the NOI this information was then collected into a table. The information contained in the data was now readily accessible but remained consistent with the information shared by the teacher in the Narrative Interview.

Resilience factor	Protective factor	Risk Factor
Education	More independent in his written work Showing pride in his written work Accepting praise for times tables work	Needs help to get started on writing work
I am ...	I am kind and helpful to my teacher and my friends	
I can ... be successful	Showing pride in his work and his singing Increased self-efficacy in his work and in the classroom	
I can... sing	Singing in a few different contexts relating to school	
Social confidence	Telling my teacher about my ideas and my news Asking my teacher if I can help her	
I have secure base in school	Friendships with peers Sense of being valued in my class Relationships with both teaching assistants and class teacher Class teacher is genuinely fond of him Class teacher wants to try new ideas to help him	Will need support with transition
I have... secure base at home	Mum came to the carol concert Mum was working with class teacher Home life seems more settled	Mum missed an appointment Not sure how settled the home situation is

### The teacher’s contribution to the model of Kieran’s resilience after the NT intervention

In order to include this amount of information into the concise model of Kieran’s resilience it was necessary to concentrate the stories further. However even in this format it is possible to see that the information included in the model is still true to the information shared by the teacher in the narrative interview.

**He has... a secure base in school**  
(peers, valued in class, adults,  
teacher fond of him and wants to  
try new strategies, tells teacher his  
news)

**He has secure base at home** (mum  
came to concert, talked to teacher,  
home seems more settled)

Education: independent, proud of  
work, accepting praise

**He is... kind and helpful to his  
teachers and his friends**

**He has friends in school**

He can...work, **singing**

Self-efficacy

**He is... socially confident (telling  
news and asking for help)**