“I MAY START A NEW LIFE”

AN INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND FROM A SPECIAL SCHOOL IN ENGLAND ON PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD

by

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ABSTRACT

This research explored the lived experiences of six young people who have identified special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND), who attended a special school in one local authority (LA) in southeast England, to consider what the barriers and facilitators are to preparing for adulthood (PfA).

Semi-structured interviews were used with young people with SEND to share their experiences on PfA. The interview schedule was created using the current PfA framework from the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi, 2022), which considered the following areas: education, employment and training, independent living, community inclusion and health. Interview transcripts were then analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).

Multiple personal experiential themes (PETs) were identified for each participant at an individual level, and general experiential themes (GETs) were created from cross-case analysis of the individual level data in the PETs. Four GETs were finalised to answer the research questions which explored the lived experiences of young people with SEND on PfA. The findings showed that for most GETs, there were barriers and facilitators for the participants PfA experience. The GETs were: personalised, early, and embedded support for PfA; social capital and social networks; agency; and real-world application of PfA (from theory to knowledge). Findings are discussed in relation to current literature, highlighting the unique contribution to the research area and implications for practice.

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I would like to start by thanking the young people who gave their time to share their experiences with me. This is a creation of *your* experiences, and I hope that the findings of this research will help future young people in having successful experiences of preparing for adulthood, to set them up for life in the best possible way.

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GLOSSARY

ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
CAT	Causal Agency Theory
CoP	Code of Practice
CYP	Children and Young People
DfE	Department for Education
DfH	Department for Health
EHCP	Education, Health, and Care Plan
EP	Educational Psychologist
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
LA	Local Authority
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
PCP	Person Centered Planning
PfA	Preparation for Adulthood
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Need and Disability
SDT	Self-determination Theory

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Organisation of Thesis

Volume one of this thesis is comprised of seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the thesis, including the professional and personal context of the author's interest in the research area. The aims and rationale of the research are provided. Chapter 2 presents an overview of legislation, policy and guidance related to education, special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and preparation for adulthood (PfA). Chapter 3 provides a literature review and identifies the barriers and facilitators to PfA from existing literature and research, as well as defining the term preparation for adulthood. The contribution to research is proposed through the aims and research questions. Chapter 4 documents the methodology of the research including ontological and epistemological positioning. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is described and explored in relation to data collection and analysis. Chapter 5 presents the findings, exploring each participants experiences in detail through participant word, researcher narration and interpretation. Chapter 6 discusses the findings in relation to existing literature and returns back to the research questions. Chapter 7 concludes the research by summarising the contribution to the research area, limitations, areas for further research, and implications for practice.

1.2 Professional Context

This research was conducted as part of the applied educational and child psychology doctorate training course. As part of the doctorate, I have been on placement at the same local authority (LA), in the southeast of England, for my second and third year of training. This research forms volume one of my thesis (volume two comprises of four separate papers), in

which IPA was used to explore the lived experiences of young people with SEND from a special school, during PfA.

My professional interest in PfA stemmed from experiences working with young people with SEND in a different professional capacity. In a previous role, I worked as an education worker for a non-profit, widening participation organisation in the southwest of England. In this role I worked with young people to develop aspirations and plan for the future in terms of education, employment, training, community inclusion and independent living. It was often challenging to find the right support from school, or other services, to work together for the best outcomes of the young person. When I began my training to become an educational psychologist (EP), I wanted to explore the lived experiences of young people with SEND during PfA.

1.3 Defining Preparation for Adulthood

Preparation for adulthood is a period of time in which a young person experiences change across different areas in their life. Within research, this typically focuses on the broad areas of education, health, and care. More specifically, support is provided from professionals which spans education, employment, and training; independent living; health; and community inclusion. This research conceptualised PfA as an experience in which all young people engage with, and through the lens of psychoeducation, explored the lived experiences of young people with SEND in terms of school support, and the PfA framework (NDTi, 2022) shared as Figure 2 (see section 3.4).

1.4 Aims and Rationale of Research

The aims of the research were threefold: to contribute to a gap in research, to highlight the voice of young people with SEND by exploring their lived experiences of PfA,

and to provide recommendations for professionals supporting young people with SEND during PfA. The rationale of the research was to explore the lived experiences of young people with SEND on PfA, as there is a dearth of literature which represents the wider population of young people with SEND and their experiences of PfA. The current research basis on PfA, is fragmented into narrower focuses of specific learning difficulties such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD) or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) (Fayette & Bond, 2018; King et al., 2020; Thompson et al., 2018; White et al., 2021). Alternatively, literature focuses on parent/carer perspectives of the transition to adulthood (Dunsmuir et al., 2020; Leonard et al., 2016; Midjo & Aune, 2018).

Evidence shows that long term outcomes for young people with SEND are poor, with the transition period into adulthood often being challenging and complex (King et al., 2020; Leonard et al., 2016; White et al., 2021). There has been a greater requirement for professionals to include young people during decision making and participation within the transitional state to adulthood, based on recommendation in the Code of Practice (CoP) (Department for Education [DfE] & Department for Health [DfH], 2015) (Fayette & Bond, 2018). However, the development of support for young people after they reach school leaving age, has been subject to little research. Recent cuts to funding on the national PfA framework in 2022, also contribute to the need for continued research on this topic area, where support may be lacking at a government level.

Therefore, I identified a need to contribute to the lack of evidence which represents the experiences of PfA from young people with SEND. In addition to contributing to the lack of research in this topic area, I aimed to contribute to professional practice when supporting young people through PfA.

CHAPTER 2: LEGISLATION, POLICY, AND GUIDANCE

2.1 An Overview of Relevant Education and SEND Policy in England

The aim of this section is to highlight and present an overview of the pertinent policies that have influenced the current educational and SEND systems which are in place today, rather than providing a detailed account of the evolution of education and SEND policy from a historical perspective. Table 1 presents key education and SEND policy, guidance or report documents that have been published and/or enacted nationally, the policy documents highlighted in bold will be discussed. The other policies provide historical context of the development of education and SEND over time in England.

Table 1.

Timeline of Key Education and SEND Policy in England between 1944 and 2023

Date	Name of Policy/Document
1944	Education Act
1978	**The Warnock Report**
1981	**Education Act**
1994	United Nations Statement on Special Needs Education
1995	Disability Discrimination Act
1997	Green Paper: Excellence for all Children meeting Special Educational Needs (DfE)
1996	Tomlinson Report: Inclusive Learning
2001	The Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA)
2001	**SEN Code of Practice (DfES)**
2004	The Government's Strategy for SEN: Removing Barriers to Achievement (DfES)
2005	Warnock Article on SEN Review
2009	Macdonald Report: Proposal to make PSHE statutory
2009	Nuffield Foundation Education for All: 14-19 Year Olds
2011	Consultation - Support and Aspiration: New Approach to SEND (DfE)
2014	Care Act
2014	**Children and Families Act**
2015	**SEND Code of Practice (DfE & DfH)**
2015	SEND Reform: Further Education (DfE)
2015	SEND Complaints: Guide for Young People aged 16 to 25 in Education
2021	Green Paper SEND Review (DfE)
2022	SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan (DfE)
2022	Providing Supported Internships for Young People with an EHC Plan (DfE)

The Warnock Report (1978) concluded a four-year enquiry led by the Warnock Committee to review the educational provision for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) and remains a pivotal publication in the evolution of educational systems in England. It was the first paper to review SEND in England (Daniels et al., 2019) and from a systems perspective, impacted in the following ways: on the individual with SEND and their access to educational support and settings, the introduction of a new narrative and dialogue to consider individuals with SEND, systemic integration (inclusion) across educational settings, and LA duties in delivering their statutory requirements through statements of SEN and new services (Bowen & Ellis, 2015). The publication of the Warnock Report (1978) had been "…highly influential with respect to the development of both national and local policy and practice for SEN, primarily in England but also in the UK generally and internationally" (Lindsay et al., 2020, p.1). Although there may be conflicting perspectives of the Warnock Report (1978), it was influential in the development of the Education Act (1981) and current guidance on education and SEND.

The Education Act (1981) provided the first legislation in England to introduce the rights of parents of children with SEND, the inclusion of children with SEND into mainstream settings, and initiated the system of statutory assessment of special educational needs to provide tailored support. Many of the recommendations from the Warnock Report (1978) were legally enacted in the 1981 Education Act, such as the changes in narrative around children with SEND, who were previously referred to as 'handicapped'. Since the 1981 Education Act, there have been various iterations, research and developments of legislation, policy, and guidance to improve shortcomings in the education and SEND systems. Notably, the Children and Families Act (2014) made significant amendments to previous government publications, including defining special educational needs and learning difficulties. The Children and Families Act (2014) aimed to reform the approach taken to

support children and young people (CYP) with SEND, by adopting person-centered approaches and placing the CYP at the centre of their [local authorities and professionals] work. In addition, the SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) aimed to guide professionals working with children and young people with SEND, as well as informing parents of the processes and systems in place (Lindsay et al., 2020).

2.2 The Evolution of the SEND Code of Practice from 2001 to 2015

As of January 2022, there were 1.49 million pupils in England with SEND (DfE, 2022). The numbers of CYP with SEND have steadily increased since 2017, and the current number of pupils with Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) has increased by 50% since 2016 to 355,600 (DfE, 2022). As the need for SEND support has increased nationally, the UK government has continued to enact legislation to provide professional standards and guidance across the education system. The first code of practice came into effect in 1994, after statutory requirements were stated in the Education Act (1981) and has since been reviewed and updated to reflect the evolving knowledge and research on SEND and education in 2001 and most recently in 2015.

The SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) came in to replace the 2001 SEND CoP (Department for Education and Skills [DfES]), to readdress the ongoing difficulties and underperformance across the educational and LA systems, supporting CYP with SEND and their families (Lamb, 2009). One of the key changes was the extended age range of support which moved from 0-18 years of age to 0-25 years of age. The increase of support up to 25 year olds highlighted the challenges of young people being without support after turning 18, and slipping through the net of systems where support was still required. In addition, the changes in the 2015 CoP (DfE & DfH) paved way for a new approach to combine education, health,

and care support into one plan, which previously were solely education focused and therefore, did not provide a holistic account of a young person's needs.

The focus of shared and increased participation during decision-making processes became the forefront of good practice for professionals that support CYP with SEND, with the introduction of the CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015). Evidence showed that relationships between professionals and parents of CYP with SEND have sometimes been strained, with professionals such as teachers, being perceived as having a lack of empathy, understanding of parent concerns, and an imbalance of power within shared decision-making (Macleod et al., 2012; White et al., 2010).

The SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) recommended that improved changes to the initial teacher training and continued professional development for teachers, will enable teachers to acquire the skills and knowledge needed to meet the new expectations outlined in the 2015 SEND CoP (DfE & DfH). This included specialist training and enhanced awareness of teachers to be able to differentiate and personalise the learning for children with SEND, in order to promote inclusion in the classroom (Mitchell, 2014). In addition to the requirement for teachers to differentiate learning for children with SEND, teachers should understand the complexities in how interactions of SEND impact learning and behaviour (Peer & Reid, 2012).

2.3 Criticism of the SEND Code of Practice: Teachers

Although these changes were devised to improve the systems for individuals with SEND, it was not received by professionals without critique. Hellawell (2015) stated a key critique of the CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) that it is an "oversimplification of contested concepts" (p.16). The SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) has been perceived as a prescriptive document which threatens teacher's professional autonomy and trust in their role (Stronach et al., 2010).

Hellawell (2015) presented a discursive article to investigate and evaluate the SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) and suggested that teachers felt ill-prepared by the new code, in particular with relations to the increased expectations on teachers to identify underlying reasons behind behaviours, and to provide differentiation and personalised support.

2.4 Summary of SEND Code of Practice (DfE & DfH, 2015)

Although the SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) has been critiqued, it remains a pivotal document. It emphasised the need for effective practice from educational and other professionals to support CYP with SEND as imperative to promote positive outcomes. The SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) highlighted the new development of providing support for CYP up to the age of 25 years old, which aimed to support the transition to adult life through young person participation, and collaboration between education, health, and social care services (Dunsmuir et al., 2020). A key principle in the DfE & DfH (2015) SEND CoP, was supporting successful PfA. The document outlined information and guidance on the roles and responsibilities of local authorities (LAs) and educational settings, to support this transitional period. However, the SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) made vague statements, such as students with SEND "…should follow a coherent study programme which provides stretch and progression and enables them to achieve the best possible outcomes in adult life" (p.130) and does not clearly outline processes in *how* to achieve successful transition to adulthood.

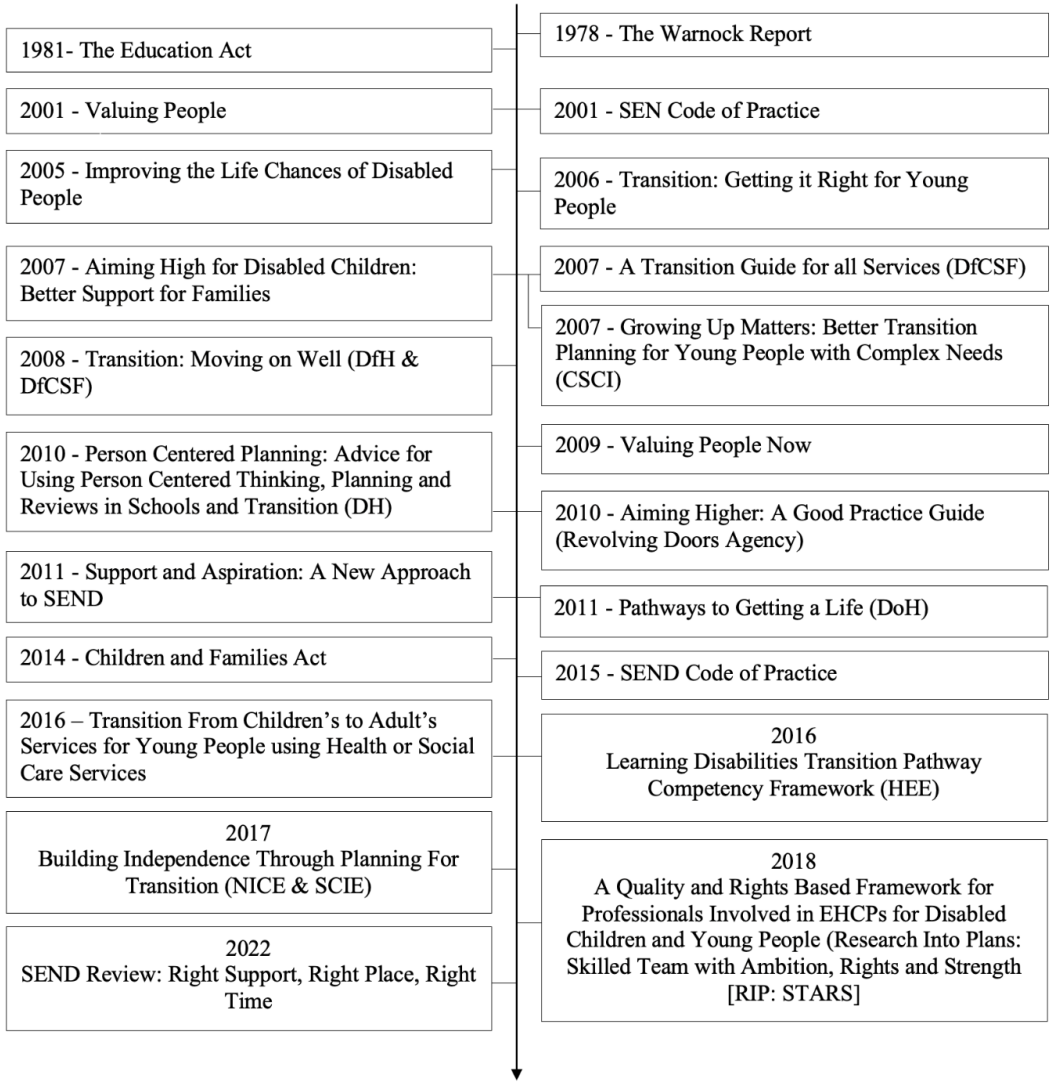
2.5 Preparation for Adulthood Policy and Guidance

There is currently no national strategy for PfA, and therefore schools and LAs in England create their own pathways, based on policy and guidance. This contributes to the continued disparity of services for young people during PfA. Figure 1 presents an overview

of policy and guidance which references transition to adulthood (referred to as PfA in this paper).

Figure 1.

Iterative Development of Preparation for Adulthood Policy and Guidance 1978-2023



The timeline of policy and guidance in Figure 1 includes health and social care documents, due to its relevance for many young people with SEND who have education, health, and care plans. The following chapter explores how the concept of PfA developed and became incorporated into the SEND Code of Practice (DfE & DfH, 2015).

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Chapter Overview

In this chapter, scoping literature on PfA will be explored including relevant theory. Firstly, existing research on PfA will be presented including the difficulties which young people with SEND may face during this transitional period of their lives. Relevant research will be included which will involve parent and professionals' perspectives of PfA. Following this, literature on the views of young people with SEND around PfA will be explored, as the scope of the literature becomes more focused on the aims of this research. This includes existing research on factors which contribute to barriers and facilitators of PfA. Consideration of the role of EPs during PfA will be explored, to contextualise the research into professional practice. Finally, the chapter concludes by returning to the rationale for this research project, and presents the research aims and questions.

3.2 Literature Review Search Strategy

The literature review was completed by using electronic databases; ERIC (EBSCO), ERIC (ProQuest), Web of Science and PsycINFO. The search was completed in an iterative manner across 14 months between February 2022 and April 2023 to search for the terms: preparation for adulthood, transition to adulthood and variations of young people with SEND (see below). In addition to using the electronic databases, snowballing of literature was utilised, to include pertinent papers to the research context (Creswell, 2003). Search terms included: "young people with SEN", "young people with SEND", "young people with autism", "young people with ASD", "young people with down syndrome", "young people with ADHD", "young people with SEMH needs", "young people with anxiety", "young people with depression" *and* "preparation for adulthood", "preparing for adulthood",

"transition to adulthood", "transitioning to adulthood". There were no specific inclusion and exclusion criteria, although papers were limited to English language and papers published between 2010 and 2023 – which would include pivotal SEND reforms in the UK education system. Papers from across the world were included in the literature search, although it is recognised that research from countries outside of the UK have different legislation, policy, and systems, however their relevance was still important for young people with SEND voice and historical understanding. The aim of the literature review was to provide a sound overview of the current literature and to identify the research gap.

3.3 Social Theory of Disability

When considering the experiences of young people with SEND preparing for adulthood, it is noteworthy to acknowledge the societal and systemic conditions in which this transitional process takes place, for contextual understanding. The social model of disability was developed to explain how the structures of society create barriers and was developed by individuals with disabilities to counteract the medical model of disability (Shakespeare, 2006). Carson and Speirs (2004) suggested that disabilities are social constructs which stem from discrimination and barriers within society and the environment culminating to make individuals with disabilities an oppressed group (Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation [UPIAS], 1975). Carson and Speirs (2004) promoted a social model based on agency and inclusion, involving individuals in the design, delivery, and management of the (housing) project; leading to a user-led database based on needs which promoted individual self-determination. Shakespeare (2006) argued that although the social model for disability has been instrumental in shaping the disability movement and civil right legislation, an updated, multifaceted approach should be taken which recognises disability as a "...complex phenomenon, requiring different levels of analysis and intervention, ranging from the medical

to the socio-political" (p.203). Through contextualising the philosophical position of individuals with SEND, the notion of identity politics is raised; introducing issues of socio-politico power, relationships and belonging, related to society. Put simply, identity politics categorises groups of people in relation to majority and minority, asking, who is more worthy? (Velasco & Bucelli, 2022).

3.4 Preparation for Adulthood

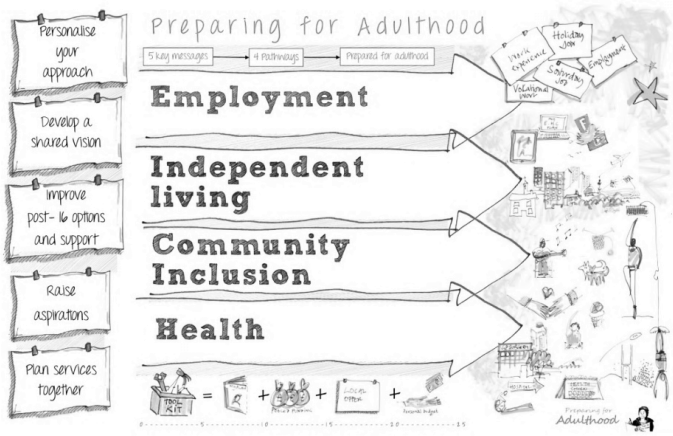
Preparation for adulthood (known as the transition to adulthood) is a universal experience for all young people. The attainment of adulthood is typically seen as a gradual phenomenon through the gaining of increased responsibilities, privileges, and rights (Ribenfors, 2021). Coined as 'emerging adulthood', Arnett (2010) described the transitionary period between adolescence and adulthood as distinctly developmental which happens between the ages of 18 to 25 and can be identified through increased personal responsibility and independent decision-making and finances. King et al. (2020) described transition from childhood to adulthood as a series of developmental milestones which include transitioning from school to further education or employment, the development of independence and life skills, and progression of friendships and relationships. For many young people and their families, especially those with SEND, the PfA experience can be challenging, stressful and bureaucratic (Gitsham, 2014 in Franklin & Sanderson, 2014).

The conceptualisation of PfA or more specifically 'post-16 transition', 'post-19 transition', 'transition to further education' and 'transition to employment' is relatively new. "…Successful transition from childhood to adulthood is context and culturally dependent" (Pao, 2017, p.191). There are no standardised measures of successful PfA, although the literature recognises markers of adult success which may for example include employment (Lindstrom et al., 2011) or independent living (Leonard et al., 2016).

The introduction of focused support for young people with SEND during their experiences of transition and change towards adulthood, was initially highlighted in the Warnock Report (1978) and has been referenced in policy and guidance documents since: Education Act (1981); Children and Families Act (2014); SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015). The DfE contracted the National Development Team for Inclusion (NDTi) from 2011 to support the writing of section 8 of the CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015), under the Children and Families Act (2014). The materials produced as part of this went on to form the PfA framework with the aim to "…support young people into adulthood with paid employment, good health, independent living and friends, relationships and community inclusion" (NDTi, 2022, para 6). The DfE funding for the PfA programme ended in 2022. Figure 2 presents an overview of the key messages and pathways which make up the PfA programme.

Figure 2.

The Preparing for Adulthood Programme (Designed and Delivered by the National Development Team for Inclusion) (2022)



3.4.1 Preparation for Adulthood: Combining Education, Health, and Care

The aim of the PfA framework is to support a young person with various aspects of their life, with a collaborated approach from education, health and social care as required.

Outlined in the CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) the transition into adult life should include health services and LAs working together to plan for the support for a young person, with a "…shared vision and strategy" (p.122). For all young people (up to 25 years) with SEND, outcomes from education, health and care should be jointly considered, as outlined in chapter 3 of the 2015 CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015). From a health perspective, young people with SEND, should start early with support towards PfA, to maximise best outcomes and opportunities for successful engagement with their health (King et al., 2020). Howard et al. (2021) recommends that school staff should not wait until young people turn 16 to provide PfA support but should implement it at an earlier age.

3.4.2 Conceptualising Inclusion for Young People with SEND in Preparing for Adulthood

When a young person with SEND reaches 18 years old, they must transition from children to adult services if they require continued support and care into adulthood. Assessing the needs of a young person transitioning to adult services differs depending on each local authority's service delivery, resulting in varied approaches and experiences of care and support for each individual receiving adult care (Carers UK, 2023). Transition assessments made by local authorities should consider the young person's aspirations in the following areas: employment, education, and training; independent living; relationships; and community participation (Carers UK, 2023).

As they transition into adulthood, social inclusion of young people with SEND is a key area of development and has been identified in the SEND Code of Practice (DfE & DfH, 2015) 'community inclusion', as an area in which local authorities, education, health and social care services must consider support to these people, as they prepare for adulthood (Malkani, 2021). Taheri et al. (2016) highlighted how individuals with learning disabilities were less likely to socialise with peers, engage with leisure activities and have less friends

than their peers without a disability. Research by Mencap, found that at the weekend, a third of young people with a learning disability spend less than an hour outside of home (2019). Participation in leisure based activities can help to challenge detrimental societal attitudes of individuals with learning disabilities (Scior & Werner, 2015). Malkani (2021) found that young people with SEND identified recreational opportunities as "true inclusion because of the meaningful connections that recreation can facilitate" (p.247).

To be integrated in society, an individual may benefit from participation with fulfilling activities and through meaningful connections with others (Overmars-Marx et al., 2013). One way in which a young person with SEND may experience fulfilment and connections with others is through employment. However, employment data from the British Association for Supported Employment (BASE, 2022) found that only 4.8% of adults with disabilities were in paid work. These low employment rates for adults with disabilities may be due to the consistent lack of funding for supported employment (Drake et al., 2016). Employers who recruit young people with SEND benefit from a more diverse workforce of skills, abilities, and unique contributions (The Careers and Enterprise Company, 2020). For successful transitions into the workplace, individuals with disabilities may require opportunities to get to know employers and for employers to receive support in offering training and mentoring to young people with SEND (Malkani, 2021).

In addition to the lack of supported employment for people with SEND, it has been acknowledged that there is a lack of infrastructure to house people with disabilities in the UK (Stone & Wertans, 2023). Stark findings from Stone and Wertans (2023) highlight the rise in homelessness of people with disabilities due to barriers such as lack of support and unsuitable housing. Good living conditions and housing are significant determinants of health and quality of life (Oliver et al., 2022).

Mencap (2019) identified the following areas as barriers to social inclusion for individuals with learning disabilities: inaccessibility to venues and facilities; difficulties with transport and mobility; lack of support; and negative attitudes from society towards people with disabilities. Societal perceptions of disability still have a long way to go to become more inclusive, as Scope (2017) identified, approximately 32% of people in their study believe that people with disabilities are less productive, which may perpetuate the continued disability employment gap. Dixon et al. (2018) identified the need for funding to be protected to promote diversity within employment, for government to focus on reducing prejudice and improving attitudes more generally across society, as these barriers are impacting on how people with disabilities choose to live their lives.

3.4.3 Experiences of Preparation for Adulthood for Young People with SEND

Young people with SEND experience greater challenges during PfA, which can lead to poor long-term outcomes (White et al., 2021). As explored in chapter 2, one of the main changes to the 2015 CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) was the extension of support for young people to include those up to the age of 25. The extension in the SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) age range, was set up to target the systemic issue of young people with SEND not being adequately supported into adulthood, resulting in churning within the school systems and the increased risk of becoming not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Data in a House of Commons report (Powell, 2021) showed 28% of young people with NEET in 2020, had characteristics protected under the Equality Act (2010), compared to 8% of young people without. Data from the DfE in 2022, showed that outcomes for young people with SEND are lower than young people without SEND. In terms of attainment, in the year 2020/21 18.3% of SEN pupils achieved grade 5 (a pass) or above in GCSE English and math's, compared to 58% of pupils without SEND (DfE, 2022). The following section will explore the existing

literature on some of the challenges that young people with SEND face when preparing for adulthood, and how the findings of the research area contribute to a growing knowledge of best practice.

3.4.4 Young People Voice

Research suggests that person-centered approaches and individualised PfA support improves outcomes for young people with SEND (ASD) (Thompson et al., 2018). Park and Mortell (2020), used the grid elaboration method to elicit the views of four young people with autism who attended further education mainstream colleges, on their transition experiences. The intention of the research was to provide professionals with first-hand accounts of young people's experiences of transition, to support best transition practices. However, the data was gathered from retrospective accounts of young people who already had a positive and successful transition to further education. Retrospective accounts are subject to recall bias (accurate memory of past events) (Sedgwick, 2014) and therefore, may not represent an accurate picture of the participants experiences of transition. The findings supported the need for individualised and flexible transition plans. This is consistent with the findings from King et al. (2020) who concluded that for young people with SEND, the transition to adult life requires developmentally appropriate support, and with findings from Leonard et al. (2016) who recommended that support needs to be personalised for the young person's skill development.

3.4.5 The Importance of Feeling Supported

Young people who had transitioned from a specialist college to further education shared that the people in their lives were important for their transition, such as the teachers being mentors, college feeling like a family and college being a steppingstone in their

transition to adulthood journey (Lawson & Parker, 2020). Young people with SEND value their social networks of friends and family, and the supportive environment of schools (Gaona et al., 2019). Lawson and Parker (2020) explored how young people with EHCPs make sense of relationships during transition to further education, by completing a meta-ethnographical review with semi-structured interviews, which were analysed using IPA. Lawson and Parker's (2020) findings were presented in two key themes: 'people' and 'purpose of college', subthemes included but were not limited to: school feeling like family, being in it together, teachers as mentors, decision making, college as a steppingstone, learning independent skills. Gaona et al. (2019) gathered the voices of 12 young people with autism who attended specialist settings or received specialist support, on their transition to post-16 education and employment. Data was gathered through semi-structured interviews and analysed inductively through thematic analysis. The findings showed mixed feelings about the young people's future and upcoming change, including aspirations for greater everyday independence, acknowledgement of supportive schools and having a network of family and friends to support with decision-making. Although this study was small scale, and specific to the young people interviewed as part of the research, it brought the young people's voice to the forefront of transitioning processes and made recommendations to support the young people and the support systems around them, in tailoring support and intervention which is meaningful and aligns with the young person's views.

3.4.6 How Parents Support Young People with SEND during Preparation for Adulthood

It is common for research to include parent or family views when exploring the experiences of children and young people with SEND, due to needs relating to communication (Gaona et al., 2019) and mental capacity – parents adopting an advocacy role for the young people (Dunsmuir et al., 2020). Pallisera et al. (2016) conducted qualitative

research which involved eliciting the views of young people with learning disabilities and their families. A strength of Pallisera et al.'s research (2016), was the triangulation of information by involving more participants in the data collection. Despite the importance of gathering the views of young people with SEND, Beresford et al. (2013) found that young people may have preferences for parents to support with communication around PfA. Leonard et al. (2016) explored the experiences of families of young people with Down Syndrome and found that 87% of parents were involved in transition planning for their children, as well as decision-making, compared to only 59.5% of the young people themselves. The findings suggested the need for continued advocacy and elicitation of views in research for young people with SEND, as also found by Thompson et al. (2018).

Similar experiences related to young people with SEND transitioning within education systems post-16, also exists in health services. King et al. (2020) recommends developmentally appropriate outcomes tailored to the individual, and for professionals and services to work collaboratively for best outcomes relating to wellbeing and mental health. The findings by King et al. (2020) support the need for collaboration across education, health, and care services as explored in section 3.4.1.

A significant part of the literature on PfA and young people with SEND is centered on individuals with ASD (Ganoa et al., 2019; Thompson et al., 2018) or other specific need (Hoskin, 2017; Leonard et al., 2016). In addition, although literature may seem to have explored the views of young people with SEND on their transition to adulthood, the actuality is that the research has gathered data on the parent views, or a combination of parent, professional and lesser so, young people views (Pallisera et al., 2016). Therefore, it is important to adopt a holistic approach which includes directly gathering the young person views and encouraging young person participation in decision making.

3.5 Eliciting and Actioning the Views of Young People with SEND on Preparation for Adulthood

There is a statutory requirement for professionals to include young people during decision making and participation within the transitional state to adulthood (DfE & DfH, 2015; Fayette & Bond, 2018). However, as discussed, the literature suggested that in reality, the views of young people with SEND are not consistently being included due to difficulties in eliciting views (King et al., 2020; Sharma, 2021).

3.5.1 Participation and Decision-Making

In addition to eliciting views of young people with SEND during PfA, research highlighted the importance of promoting participation during the transitional process and within decision-making. Fayette and Bond (2016) found that by gaining the views of young people with ASD and encouraging young people to make informed decisions about their school experiences, can promote autonomy. Similar findings were described by Lawson and Parker (2020), who explored the experiences of young people with EHCPs in preparing for adulthood and found links between autonomy in decision making and teachers being mentors during the process. Being autonomous for a young person with SEND may involve mediation from others who support them (Romero et al., 2020). Young people with SEND shared that they valued their social network of family and friends during decision-making processes as part of their transition to post-16 education and employment (Gaona et al., 2019).

3.5.2 Person-centered Planning

One way in which to ensure the young person's views are included during their transition to adulthood, is through person-centered planning (PCP). Originating as a tool for inclusive education, PCP was primarily used within the adult services for individuals with

learning disabilities (Jordan, 2021). The work of Helen Sanderson Associates (n.d) heavily influenced the implementation of PCP in the UK, and in 2001 the Department of Health (DoH) published the Valuing People strategy which formally required the use of PCP, during which time, it was transferred into children's services (Kusi, 2017). PCP has been cited heavily in education and SEND government legislation since, such as the Children and Families Act (2014) and the SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015). There is some evidence to support the effectiveness of using PCP in educational settings, such as Thompson et al. (2018) who explored the views of parents of young people with ASD, on their child's transition to adulthood, using structured focus groups and found that individualised, person-centered approaches could improve the outcomes for young people with ASD in their transition to adulthood. Although the research was completed in Australia, it reinforced the global use of PCP as a positively perceived approached by parents in supporting the PfA process. Fayette and Bond (2018) found similar results from interviewing and observing nine teachers from across two different special schools in England. Fayette and Bond (2018) found that the school's ethos being person-centered, enabled teachers to elicit the views of young people with autism to participate in planning their transition to adulthood, this included getting to know the pupils and supporting pupils to make informed choices. A strength of Fayette and Bond's (2018) study was the critique of considering the action of eliciting pupil's views as a check box exercise, and the recommendation for young people with autism to be taught and encouraged to make informed decisions to promote autonomy and self-efficacy in the young people throughout the PfA process. Although the research suggested that the use of PCP is a beneficial strategy of gathering the views of young people with SEND in their PfA (Howard et al., 2021; Pallisera et al., 2016) the reality may not reflect the research discussed.

3.6 Theoretical Perspectives on Preparation for Adulthood

Two key theoretical frameworks have emerged within disability research (Wehmeyer et al., 2018) to consider the transitional experience of PfA: self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2017) and causal agency theory (Shogren et al., 2017).

SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2000; 2017) is based on human motivation involving three core concepts: competence, autonomy, and relatedness which influence changes in behaviour. The theoretical relevance of SDT and PfA for SEND young people is that SDT promotes autonomy and agency (in choice and decision making) within supportive environments which can be beneficial to the young people (Hiu & Tsang, 2012). Stephens et al. (2021) applied this in showing transition readiness for young people with health needs during their transition to adulthood by involving young people in planning for their care, professionals listening to their needs and promoting a sense of mastery.

Promoting the self-determination of adolescents with disabilities has become one approach to best practice in secondary education and transition services (Shogren et al., 2019). This has been applied, in essence, as a personality construct, based on enabled support, and less specifically on motivational aspects pertaining to self-determination.

Causal agency theory (CAT) builds from SDT with a focus on developing self-determination through building environments that enables self-determination to occur (Shogren & Raley, 2022). CAT manifests itself through removing systematic, institutional, and individual barriers and can be applied through a social-ecological approach to enablement (Shogren & Raley 2022).

3.7 What Does Good Preparation for Adulthood Look Like?

Research has found difficulties in conceptualising an overall good transition into adulthood, due to the need for it to be developmentally appropriate and tailored for the young

person in mind (King et al., 2020). Considering what constitutes ‘good PfA’ for young people with SEND as a group, is not possible due to the need for support to be individualised, appropriate and aligned with the aspirations and views of the individual. However, the literature review highlighted factors which may be considered as barriers and facilitators to PfA, the next section summarises some of these factors.

3.7.1 Barriers and Facilitating Factors

Structural barriers impact some young people in accessing opportunities to achieve future aspirations related to education, employment, and training. Research found that a lack of availability to training in their local area, financial difficulties impacting participation in learning, and a lack of knowledge of opportunities locally, contributed to barriers to participation for young people, and these barriers were emphasised if the young person had a learning difficulty or disability (Spielhofer et al., 2010). Research suggested that for young people with SEND, the PfA and planning process which encompass this transitional period are often inadequate, resulting in young people with SEND not accessing their aspired goals, such as attending further education, employment, or training (Abbott & Carpenter, 2014). The professionals (from education, health, and social care) who supported the young people with SEND during their transition to adulthood, suggested that systemic challenges such as coordination between services and professionals, paperwork, report writing, resource and capacity demands are barriers to an individual’s transition to adulthood experience (Dunsmuir et al., 2020).

Facilitators of successful and positive transition to adulthood experiences have been recommended by various research, as discussed. Park and Mortell (2020) identified facilitating factors as: healthy peer relationships, positive relationships with staff, emotional and practical life skills. Research also recommended positive work experience opportunities

and early transition planning (Abbott & Carpenter, 2014). Evidence recommends that the strengths and needs of individual young people with autism should be identified and appreciated during the transition to adulthood (King et al., 2020; Park & Mortell, 2020). Gaona et al. (2019) recommended that young people with autism require individualised plans for successful PfA. Gillan and Coughlan (2010) recommended that parental engagement was important in advocating for young people with intellectual disability in relation to their aspirations for post-school transitions. Heslop et al. (2002 as cited in Morris & Atkinson, 2018, p.132) recommended that "…communication (open and effective information-sharing practices); coordination (effective inter-agency working); comprehensiveness (effective planning for all young people); continuity (of social relationships and professional support); and choice (exploring a range of options for young people with SEND and facilitating their involvement in decision-making)" were all facilitating factors in PfA.

3.8 The Role of an Educational Psychologist in Preparation for Adulthood

A range of professionals will be involved in the PfA process of whom EPs are one. The EP role in PfA is ambiguous and has been attempted to be defined in the literature with contradictory results (Newman, 2020). The SEND CoP (DfE & DfH, 2015) identified the requirements for professionals to work with young people up until the age of 25 years, which represents a pivotal development in the profession of educational psychology (Atkinson et al., 2015). Nevertheless, differences and contradictions can be found in the literature on how EPs can support young people transitioning into adulthood (Newman, 2020). Hellier (2009) reported that in Scotland, the EP role has changed to be less direct with individuals, whereas Squires (2018) recommended EPs should be completing direct assessments with individuals. The service delivery model (statutory or traded – which impacts breadth of EP work), may impact on the EPs duties, role, and responsibilities, as well as the evolution of the EP role

over time, due to increased knowledge and developing research of best practice (Winward, 2015).

Park and Mortell (2020) made recommendations for EPs to adopt an advocacy role in supporting young people with autism to share their views during decision-making opportunities around their transition to adulthood. Carter et al. (2013) suggested that school psychologists could play a role in supporting a young person's self-determination for transition planning meetings. Barrow (2013) recommended the role of EPs as distinctive in the process of post-16 transition practice, EPs could adopt a supportive, advisory role and work directly with the young people to create frameworks of best practice. Morris and Atkinson (2018) presented a summary of EP contributions to post-16 transitions across different system levels of practice (see Table 2).

Table 2.

Summary of Educational Psychology Contributions to Post-16 Transition (taken directly from Morris & Atkinson, 2018, p.142)

Level of EP work	Focus of work
Systemic	Reducing variability in transition practice
	Developing educational curricula and supportive provision
	Early identification of young people at risk of negative post-school outcomes
	Supporting parental involvement
Group	Therapeutic support
	Peer and parent support
Individual	Assessment and statutory advice
	Pupil voice
	Work with parents and families

3.9 Rationale for Research

There is a gap in the literature on PfA in seeking the lived experiences of young people with SEND on their preparation to adulthood from an educative perspective.

Currently, the literature is heavily skewed in eliciting the views of young people with autism, gathering the views of family members or professionals or from a health lens. Although there are benefits of triangulating evidence by drawing on more information from different individual perspectives (such as parents or professionals), the richness of personal knowledge and insight gained through the lived experiences in this research will provide a unique perspective. The research questions are:

1. What are the lived experiences of young people with SEND from a special school in relation to Preparation for Adulthood?

   1a. What are the participants' perceptions of barriers to Preparation for Adulthood?

   1b. What are the participants' perceptions of facilitators to Preparation for Adulthood?

CHAPTER 4: METHOD

4.1 Chapter Overview

The aim of this chapter is to outline the methodological approach used in this research. To open this chapter, the research aims and questions will be presented followed by the philosophical positioning and an overview of the three theoretical elements of IPA: phenomenology, hermeneutics, and idiography. The rationale of engaging with IPA as the methodological approach for this research is provided. Following the methodological approach, this chapter will discuss the research design and methods including sampling, recruitment, participants, ethical considerations, data collection, and data analysis. Lastly, validity and quality assurance will be discussed to conclude this chapter. Table 3 provides an overview of the research framework used in this study and will be discussed in more detail within this chapter.

Table 3.

Summary of Research Framework

Philosophical Positioning	Ontological position: Phenomenology Epistemological position: Interpretivism
Theoretical Perspectives (IPA)	Phenomenology Hermeneutics Idiography
Methodology	Qualitative, IPA
Research Design	Embedded case study design
Data Collection	Semi-structured interviews
Participants	Six students from a special school (aged between 14-19 years old) with mild to moderate special educational needs

4.2 Research Aims and Questions

The research was exploratory in nature, with the primary aim to increase educational and other professionals understanding of the lived experiences of young people with SEND (from a special school) on PfA, and a secondary aim to provide recommendations for professional practice. To explore each young person's lived experience of PfA and the individual meaning they make from this period of their lives, one overarching exploratory research question with two sub questions, were selected:

1. What are the lived experiences of young people with SEND from a special school in relation to Preparation for Adulthood?

   1a. What are the participants' perceptions of barriers to Preparation for Adulthood?

   1b. What are the participants' perceptions of facilitators to Preparation for Adulthood?

To address the research aims, an embedded case study was used. The case being the special school, and the multiple sources of evidence being the six young people as the participants (Yin, 2017). The research was interested in exploring a phenomenon of interest (PfA) and the participants were selected due to their experience of the phenomenon (Stake, 1995).

4.3 Paradigms

This research was concerned with the social phenomena of 'PfA' and the lived experience of this phenomena. Conducting research in the social world, in which phenomena such as PfA exists, required a consideration of the variety of perspectives and lens in which the world could be understood. With the aim to present conceptual clarity to this research, the

following sections will describe the relationships between philosophical positioning, research paradigms and methodology (Gray, 2004).

4.3.1 Ontological and Epistemological Positions

Ontology is the study of reality, and is fundamentally centred around the question 'what is it to exist?' (Smith, 2003). More specifically, social ontology is interested in the nature of the social world and asks questions such as 'what is the social world?' and may be focused on phenomena which exists in society such as culture, work, or peace (Matthews & Ross, 2010). In this research, the phenomenon was PfA. IPA is grounded in phenomenology, which is focused on the exploration of experiences as described by Smith et al. (2021) "…IPA researchers are especially interested in what happens when the everyday flow of lived experience takes on a particular significance for people" (p.1).

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge and is concerned with "how knowledge can be created, acquired, and communicated" (Scotland, 2012, p.9). Aligning with the theoretical perspectives of IPA, the epistemological position taken in this research was an interpretative approach. Interpretivism assumes that there are multiple, social constructed and subjective realities, which through an individual's experience, can be understood, but differs from another individual due to their unique experiences and perspectives (Thomas, 2022).

4.4 Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

IPA is based within a wider collection of phenomenological psychological approaches which take an experiential perspective (Eatough & Smith, 2017 as cited in Willig & Stainton, 2017). A core element of IPA is the interpretative approach the researcher adopts in examining, in detail, an individual's major life experience and how the individual makes sense of this experience (Smith et al., 2021). The researcher may also work within an IPA

approach to look for patterns of similarities and differences across individual cases, with regards to a particular life event (Eatough & Smith, 2017 as cited in Willig & Stainton, 2017). The experiences lived by individuals may vary drastically due to their subjective perspective of what is important. Smith et al. (2021) described this concept "…as soon as we become aware of what is happening, we have the beginnings of what can be described as 'an experience' as opposed to just experience" (p.2). The aim of IPA is to "…give voice and make sense" (Larkin et al., 2006, p.102) of participants' experiences, in relation to psychological theory and philosophical assumptions.

4.5 Theoretical Perspectives: IPA

4.5.1 Phenomenology

Smith et al. (2021) described phenomenology as the philosophical approach to studying experiences, in particular the human life and the experiences that make up our lived worlds. A key value of phenomenological philosophy is the understanding of lived experiences and this unites the major phenomenological philosophers (Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty & Sarte) who have contributed their own approach to phenomenology with a shared overall aim to make sense of life experiences (Smith et al., 2021). "…From a Heideggerian sense, the central goal of phenomenology is to approach and deal with any object of our attention in just such a way that it is allowed maximal opportunity to show itself 'as itself'" (Larkin et al., 2006, p.108).

4.5.2 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is the theory of interpretation (Smith et al., 2021). Interesting considerations made by Smith et al. (2021) on the scope of hermeneutics include: "…is it possible to uncover the intentions or original meanings…?" and "…what is the relation

between the context of the text's production… and the context of a text's interpretation (e.g., its relevance to life in the present day?)" (p.17). These questions will be considered during the research analysis process. Double hermeneutics is the researchers process of making sense of the participant's sense making. The researcher takes an active role with IPA and their own experiences and knowledge influences their interpretations of the participant's experiences (Smith et al., 2021). The hermeneutic circle describes the dynamics between "…the part and the whole…to understand the whole, you look to the parts" (Smith et al., 2021, p.22). This exercise reflects the fluid methods involved with IPA, which includes iterative processes in a non-linear fashion.

4.5.3 Idiography

Idiography is considered with the individual level of analysis, which is contrary to many psychologically minded research methods, known as a nomothetic approach, which aims to make generalised claims about a group of people. Idiography within IPA can be considered at two stages, firstly the detailed analysis which involves depth and systematic approaches (e.g., notes, themes) and secondly, the interpretation of the analysis in context, to make sense of the particular phenomenon (Smith et al., 2021).

4.6 Rationale for IPA

The IPA approach to make sense and meaning of how people experience life events within a specific environment (Smith et al, 2021), aligns with my philosophical perspective of interpretivist epistemology of the multiple realities which exist based on the unique individual experiences of a phenomenon (e.g., PfA). Generally, across educational psychology and other educational research, IPA is a commonly used methodology (Noon, 2018). As IPA typically aligns with values of educational and psychological professions – to

give voice and make sense of research. PfA is a personal experience and therefore should be researched on an individual level, as IPA does through the idiographic processes (Smith et al., 2021).

Recent IPA research from the EP profession highlighted the ways in which IPA can provide opportunities to explore a phenomenon in a way that other methods cannot. For example, Emery and Anderman (2020) described how self-report surveys offer a way to gather children and young people's perceptions, however it lacks depth in interpretation and has issues with operational definitions and weakness of the psychometric scales. IPA's inclusion of reflexivity was a key element of the data collection and analysis process, which is not a core element of other methodologies. The focus of IPA on the individual level and each participant experience, as independent to the group, sets it apart from variations of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; 2019) and engages with reflexive strategies such as bracketing to attempt to keep an open mind throughout the data collection and analysis process (Finlay, 2021). Considerations of alternative qualitative methods for data collection and analysis were made, however IPA was the only methodology to fit the requirements of the data collection and aims of the research.

4.7 Consideration of and Responses to IPA Limitations

All methodological approaches have their limitations, and this section will outline the limitations of using IPA as a qualitative framework for the research. Cuthberston and Blair (2020) explained the complexities of IPA in particular the double hermeneutic, as "…understanding the first-person perspective from the third person point of view…attempting to interpret participant (first person) perceptions and experiences, from my own researcher (third person) perspective" (p.98). Therefore, one of the principal limitations of IPA is the perceived risk of data misinterpretation which could lead to questionable

validity of the findings (Smith & Osborn, 2008). However, Smith and Osborn (2015) suggest that humans are "sense-making organisms" (p.41), and IPA is an approach to honour the complexities of human experiences which may be emotional and ambiguous through interpretation.

It has been argued that IPA relies heavily on the participant's language skills to verbally communicate their experiences (Willig, 2013) and that participants who may have speech and language difficulties or other challenges which prevent them from expressing themselves clearly through language, may provide less rich data which would result in difficulties for the researcher during data analysis (Noon, 2018). However, the use of language is broader than just words, and within a hermeneutic lens of data analysis such as semantics, the researcher can explore for example: the pauses, laughter, repetition, and tone expressed by participants to interpret meaning (Love et al., 2020). Smith et al. (2021) argue that IPA is focused on the researcher's interpretation of the participant's language more than the language itself. In this research, participants with speech and language difficulties were included, due to the importance of eliciting the voice of young people with SEND and empowering their involvement through supportive methods (such as inviting an adult to be present to help communicate). In addition, the researcher mitigated the potential risk of language reception becoming a barrier to the data collection process, by spending time with the participants beforehand to understand the overall language ability of participants.

Another identified limitation of IPA is the lack of generalisable claims that can be made, due to the small sample sizes and the in-depth analysis of unique individual experiences (Oxley, 2016). However, the aim of IPA based on its idiographic inquiry is to focus on the particular, not to make universal claims like nomothetic approaches (Cassidy et al., 2011).

4.8 Consideration of Other Qualitative Approaches

During the research design phase, alternative methodological approaches were considered and evaluated to conclude with the use of IPA being the best approach for this study. Table 4 provides an overview of alternative methodologies and the reasoning behind decision-making as to why the approach would not have been appropriate for this research.

Table 4.

Alternative Qualitative Methodological Approaches

Methodology	Evaluation for Research
Thematic Analysis (TA) Braun and Clark (2006)	TA does not have as much focus on meaning making as IPA does and aims to *elicit themes* in the data. TA does not align with the aims of this research, to interpret lived experiences by exploring data in depth for richness and nuances.
Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA) Foucault (1972; 1977; 1980)	As the focus of FDA is on *the power of language*, it was not an appropriate methodology to explore the depth of individual experiences as understood by the participant and the researcher.
Grounded Theory Glaser and Straus (1967)	Grounded theory seeks to explore and understand *processes to generate theory grounded in the data.* The aims of grounded theory did not align with the research aims and questions to explore lived experiences.
Narrative Approach Murray (2003)	Narrative approach does not align with the aims of this research - to explore the lived experiences of individual participants, regardless *of chronology or organisation of events.*
Discourse Analysis (DA) Willig (2013)	Not applicable for lived experiences. *Focus on language* would distract from meaning of young people's experience.
Ethnography	Not possible for researcher to spend a *lengthy period of time* with the participant's due to work commitments as a trainee EP for a LA.

4.9 Method

4.9.1 Sampling

This research was conducted in a special school located in the southeast of England. The school had a population of approximately 160 pupils and caters for young people aged 7-19 years old, with cognition and learning difficulties. In alignment with IPA, participants were purposively recruited to ensure that the group were homogenous (young people with SEND from a special school) within a heterogenous population. Inclusion and exclusion criteria (see table 5) were utilised to ensure that the participants met the requirements of the research.

Table 5.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria for Participant Recruitment

Inclusion Criteria	**Exclusion Criteria**
Between the age of 14 – 19 years old to ensure that they would be receiving PfA support (either beginning their experience of PfA, be within the experience or coming to end of their experience at school).	Have complex or severe SEND which impacts intellectual ability to a degree in which they would be unable to consent to participate.
Attend the special school in one LA.	Have significant ongoing safeguarding concerns whereby involvement in research may put the young person at risk – the school staff will inform the researcher in confidence where this may be the case.
Have SEND which is considered mild to moderate, where the young person has intellectual ability to consent to participate.	

4.9.2 Recruitment

I worked collaboratively with the deputy head teacher (gatekeeper) to recruit the participants through purposive sampling. Prior to recruitment, I spent time at the school to meet some of the students, and to introduce the research topic. I spent a full school day meeting students from key stage 4 (aged 14 - 16) and key stage 5 (aged 16 – 19, 19-year-olds were also referred to as school leavers) where I met with individual young people during lessons, and supported them in their learning activities, and through group talks introduced the research topic. Through this experience, I started to build rapport with the young people and engaged with some insightful conversations with young people who wanted to know more about the research area, one young person asked, "why do you want to speak to us about preparing for adulthood and not the adults?". This emphasised the importance of researching the lived experiences of young people, to empower and highlight their voice within this area. Following this visit I sent across the participant and parent information forms and consent documents (Appendix 1), to the deputy head teacher for distribution. As the deputy head teacher knew the young people best, they selected which young people they gave the research information and consent forms to, this was to ensure that the participant who were selected would be able to give informed consent to taking part in the research. The deputy headteacher then made the final selection of the participants for the research.

4.9.3 Ethics

The study gained ethical approval from the University of Birmingham's Ethical Review Process and adhered to the Code of Ethics and Conduct for research proposed by the British Psychological Society (BPS) (2021), Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2021) and British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018). A copy of the Application for Ethical Review can be found in Appendix 2.

4.9.3.1 Informed Consent

In addition to participant informed consent, I requested the consent of parents and carers for all participants who were aged between 14 and 19 years old. Before the data collection (semi-structured interviews) I verbally explained the aim of the study and what would be expected of the participant. I asked the participants to verbally consent and confirmed they had provided their consent and parent/carers consent. To ensure that the young people fully understood the aim of the study and the requirements of signing up as a participant, I read through the participant information sheet with the young person to ensure that the young person understood what would happen during the interview and that they could withdraw at any point, without any repercussions.

4.9.3.2 Confidentiality

To maintain confidentiality for participants, pseudonyms have been used to replace participants' names and the names of identifiable information such as the school, parents, friends, and geographical areas. Direct quotations will not be used where the content or wording may constitute a risk to the participant's confidentiality.

4.9.3.3 Risks to Participants

During the data collection (semi-structured interviews), I was sensitive to the participant's non-verbal cues and if the participant was showing signs of fatigue, distress, or unwillingness to take part, I asked if they would like to stop the interview or respond accordingly such as: pausing the interview, taking a break, inviting a chosen adult to support the participant during the interview.

I deemed the risks to participant and researcher as minimal although the following was noted:

- Emotional distress by exploring an important yet sometimes challenging period in a young person's life. Discussions may lead to aspirations, hopes and life goals which may be identified as unattainable by the young person or others.
- Power and positionality of the researcher during the interview process. I recognised my position as a person with no identified special educational need or disability, had not experienced having an education, health and care plan and did not attend a special school. I also recognised my power positionality as researcher who asked the questions during the interview.

To mitigate these risks in the event that a participant became significantly distressed or remained distress, I would have taken the immediate decision to terminate the interview. I would have stayed with the participant until they felt more settled and given them time and support to experience their emotions in a safe, contained space, in an appropriate and safe manner. If the participant posed immediate risk to themselves, myself, or any other persons, I would have contacted the appropriate staff members. If the staff members were not present, then any other school staff would have been notified of the situation for immediate support and safeguarding.

4.9.3.4 Feedback for Participants

After the interviews, participants were verbally debriefed. I explained that the study will form part of my university doctoral thesis (previously explained during rapport building with participants) and it will be available online and *could in the future* be published in an academic journal. Participants were given a debrief sheet, and parent/carers also had a debrief form which was sent out collectively with the participant information sheet and informed

consent. The debrief sheet informed participants that the findings of the research will be shared with them via school in an easy-to-read format. I would disseminate to the school a summary of the research findings to support the school's understanding of young people with SEND's experience of PfA and the staff's practice in supporting PfA.

Participants and parents/carers were offered the opportunity to speak with me at any point during the research, via the contact details found on the information sheet, consent forms and debrief sheet, if they wish to discuss the findings further.

4.9.4 Participants

Smith et al. (2021) provided recommendations for researchers to recruit between four to six participants, dependent on context and access to participants, when using IPA. Six young people took part in the study from one special school, in a LA in England. An overview of participant information is provided in Table 6.

Table 6.

Participant Information

Name (Pseudonym)	Year Group	Gender	Ethnicity
Ben	11	Male	White British
Amy	11	Female	White British
Cassie	14	Female	White British
Tom	11	Male	White British
Hannah	14	Female	White British
James	10	Male	White British

4.9.5 Description of Participant Interviews

As I was unable to complete pen portraits on the participants, due to a lack of participant information, this section will describe how the participants engaged with the interviews. Ben appeared confident in his responses and articulated himself well. Ben asked questions when he didn't understand a question and asked to return to his answers. Ben was a reflective individual whose interest in community-minded projects became apparent in his answers. Amy was somewhat reserved to begin with, but during the course of the interview became light-hearted in her responses, using humour to emphasise her views. Cassie appeared confident and inquisitive during the interview, wanting to elaborate on particular answers which emphasised Cassie's perceived matureness. Tom was relatively quiet during the interview, and I needed to increase my level of prompting for answers. At times, Tom appeared less engaged. Hannah appeared confident and comfortable during the interview and was reflective in her responses. James appeared engaged in the interview and was expressive in his tone of voice, although at times appeared tentative in his responses.

4.10 Data Collection

A social phenomenological perspective such as IPA, requires the researcher to interpret their participants' experience of the world, and make sense of this phenomenon as constructed by the participant (McInally & Gray-Brunton, 2021). Semi-structured interviews are one method in which to achieve the data collection goal for rich, in depth lived experiences, whilst being flexible and responsive to the participant's lead (Smith & Osborn, 2003).

Semi-structured interviews are commonly utilised as data collection methods within IPA, to support the depth of analysis required (Smith et al., 2021). Interviewing enables flexibility through the use of open and closed questions, which were exploratory in nature, as

a means to encourage the participant to share their experiences (Willig, 2008). Semi-structured interviews strike a balance between flexibility to enable the participant to explore topics of interest, whilst utilising prompts and directive questioning from the researcher to keep the interview on track, and importantly to support the articulation of participants' experiences and consequence interpretation made by the researcher. I created an interview schedule to contain the interview in a safe manner, ensuring that sensitive topics were avoided and that the interview had a focus which aligned with the research aims (Smith & Osborn, 2008). In addition, I attempted to re-phrase questions using the terms and language used by participants, to tap into the participants' conceptual experiences from their perspectives (Willig, 2001). As described by Taylor and Bodgan (1977) (as cited in Pallisera et al., 2016)

> "… interview is a technique that allows a person to orally transmit his or her personal definition of a situation to an interviewer. Thus, a story is obtained which is told from the point of view of the interviewee. The interviewer plays the role of facilitator for the interviewee's narration and helps to create an optimal social situation between inter-viewer and interviewee so that this narration can take place…" (p.393).

I used a pilot study to assess the appropriateness of semi-structured interviews, and post-pilot study deemed it to be appropriate for the demographic of young people recruited. I considered using visual prompts and other information but decided that these may be a distraction for participants or confused the participants to the aim of the session.

The semi-structured interviews were focused on particular topics, influenced by the PfA framework (NDTi, 2022), which related to specific areas of PfA: independent living, education, employment and training, community inclusion and health. The interview schedule can be found in Appendix 3.

4.11 Data Analysis

The data analysis process of IPA is outlined by Smith et al. (2021), I followed the steps suggested, outlined in Table 7. The IPA approach was adhered to and additions to the steps have been made to emphasise the analysis of individual cases and cross-cases. In addition, the terminology of *emergent themes* is now referred to as *experiential statements*, and an *individual's experiential statements* are grouped to create a *personal experiential theme* (Smith et al., 2021). Experiential statements "relate directly to the participants experiences…or to the experience of making sense of the things that happened to them" (Smith et al., 2021, p.86) and personal experiential statements (PETs) are a cluster of experiential statements and are named to reflect the characteristics of the collection of experiential statements.

Table 7.

Data Analysis Process (IPA) Recommended by Smith et al. (2021, p.78-108) and Application by the Researcher

	Steps	Researcher's Approach
1	Starting with the first case: Reading and re-reading	During the transcribing process, the researcher read and re-read the data. Post-transcription the research spend time reading the transcripts over again to get an initial sense of the participant's experiences.
2	Exploratory noting	The researcher utilised their research diary (see Appendix 4a) to make exploratory notes when something of interest was noticed, particularly during the transcription process. In addition, the researcher used columns on the transcripts to include exploratory notes next to the participants words (see Appendix 4b).

3	Constructing experiential statements	This was one stage of the hermeneutic circle, and this part of the process was timely. On a word document, I created a third column on the transcript with the exploratory notes, to write the experiential statements. The statements needed relate directly to the participant's experience (experiential) or sense making of an experience.
4	Searching for connections across experiential statements	I completed this stage on paper, by cutting out the experiential statements to be able to physically move the statements around to look for connections. This was done in the same way for each participant.
5	Naming the personal experiential themes (pets) and consolidating and organizing them in a table	Once the experiential themes had been clustered by connections I named the group - a PET (see Appendix 5). This iterative process was again very timely, and the PET name was changed many times over the course of the analysis including the writing stage.
6	Continuing the individual analysis of other cases	The same process of exploratory notes > experiential themes > grouping of themes > naming PETs occurred for all participants.
7	Working with personal experiential themes to develop group experiential themes across case	When it came to consider the GETs, the researcher had a good overview and understanding of the data at an individual level but also the convergence and divergence experiences were coming through the PETs. Using the paper PETs (and subthemes made up of experiential themes), the researcher moved the PETs around to group them into GETs (see Appendix 6). Similarly, to the PETs, the name of the GETs changed many times during the iterative process of analysis and when writing up the research findings and discussion. The GETs were finalised at the point of the draft version of the thesis, which required cross-referencing with the PETs, in line with the idiographic (see Appendix 7).

4.12 Validity and Quality Assurance

Qualitative research cannot refer to the same criteria used within quantitative research to assess for validity (Willig, 2008) therefore, specific quantitative measures of validity and quality assurance are required. Validity refers to the credibility of the research, in relation to the methodological approach and design utilised to complete the research and assess whether the approach is coherent and appropriate (Smith et al., 2021). For this research, the markers of high-quality IPA studies have been considered to assess the quality of the research in relation to the philosophy and methodology of IPA. Smith et al. (2021) recommend seven ways to assess the quality of IPA research. Table 8 shows the steps recommended by Smith et al., (2021) and how the researcher has considered these markers of quality in this research.

Table 8.

Considerations for Quality Assurance taken from Smith et al. (2021, p.151)

	Markers for High Quality in IPA Studies	**Researcher's Approach**
1	Consider the analytic span: depth > breadth	Across the analytical process, many iterations were made when considering experiential statements, PETs and GETs. Data was consolidated were appropriate, which helped to evidence in the GETs experiences of convergence and divergence. This enabled the researcher to highlight the unique experiences or findings of particular interest, especially where it contributes in a unique way to the research area.

2	Make space to elaborate on each PET or GET: saying more about less	The researcher spent a significant and extended amount of time reporting on their findings (PETs and GETs). One key decision point was ensuring that the presentation of findings was not repetitive, therefore the PETs and GETs were separated into two chapters. The GETs responded to the research questions and therefore were discussed in depth, with research, in the discussion chapter. Whereas, the PETs were presented in the findings chapter, to provide space to explore the findings on an individual level, to respect each participant's experience as they deserved.
3	Ensure high-quality data: interview skill and technique, and critical reflection	The researcher created the interview schedule using the PfA framework (NDTi, 2022). This ensured that the questions were focused on answering the research questions. The use of an interview schedule helped the researcher to avoid sensitive topics and to plan for the topics of discussion (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The researcher utilised a funnelling technique during the interview, starting broad with questioning, and then asking more specific questions based on the responses (Mueller, 2019). A pilot study was completed to test the interview questions, language and understanding, interviewer technique and style including length of interview. In academic supervision, the pilot study was reflected upon, to consider amendments and changes however due to its success, changes were not made to the interview schedule. The interview technique was flexible in line with semi-structured interview methods, to respond appropriately to the feedback (verbally and non-verbally) by the participants. This can be seen in the transcripts of the participants (see Appendix 8), in which the researcher was led by the participants to explore experiences of importance to them, whilst following the structure of the interview schedule.

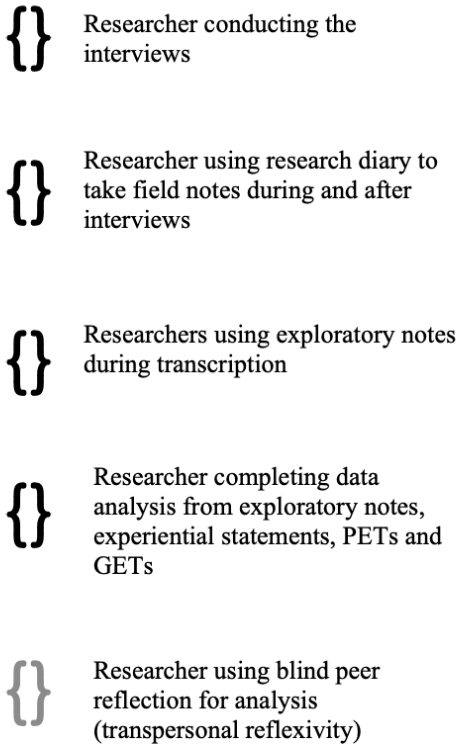
4	Demonstrate your rigour: transparency to analytic process	Paper analysis was used during the analysis process. Pictures were used during this process to snapshot the process, and to make note of interesting themes at an individual level (PET) and group level (GET). Reflective boxes were used during the analysis write up, to explain key decision points and to be transparent to the researcher's though process.
5	Detail the complexity of your analysis: convergence and divergence	The convergence and divergence of the analysis came to the forefront of the analysis within the GETs, in which the findings were considered in light of barriers or facilitators to answer the research questions. By considering the barriers and facilitators, the researcher was able to delve into the analysis to a greater level to explicate the findings.
6	Illustrate analytic depth and avoid description: adding to our insights into those experiences (multi-layered, narrative moves between group-level claims, individual-level claims, and detailed micro-analysis)	Researcher narrative has been intertwined with the participant's words, at an individual level -PETs, and then at a group level through GETs. Language has been considered within the analytic process and where of interest has been referenced.
7	Attentive and skilled writing: draw out dialogue with relevant literature, key phenomenological concepts or core theoretical frameworks	Literature has been discussed in relation to the claims made to support the findings or bring to light, new contributions. Key theoretical foundations have been introduced in the literature review and referenced in the discussion in relation to the findings.

4.13 Reflective Research

In addition to the markers of quality outlined in Table 8, I utilised methods of reflexivity to enhance the quality of the data analysis and overall findings of the research. One such method was to engage with bracketing, a process in which the researcher attempts to separate their preconceptions and assumptions from the interpretations and meaning making of individual's experiences (Reiners, 2012). Bracketing was a tool used to inform my approach to analysis, through parking my assumptions of the data I had collected and the impact of this on the findings. In this research, the engagement with bracketing had been through the interpretivist lens within the concept of reflexivity, labelled 'transpersonal reflexivity' by Dörfler and Stierand (2021). Transpersonal reflexivity (Dörfler & Stierand, 2021) using bracketing is a means to not forget what has been previously known, but to be explicit about our beliefs to consider how they may impact understanding and interpretation (Eden & Ackermann, 2018). Figure 3 (adapted from Dörfler & Stierand, 2021, p.13) shows where bracketing had been used to acknowledge my preconceptions and assumptions. Blind peer reviewing was engaged with during personal reflexivity with peers completing IPA research.

Figure 3.

Instances of Bracketing in this Research (adapted from Dörfler & Stierand, 2020, p.13)



I utilised further reflective practices to support the quality and validity of the research through the use of reflective journaling (Vicary et al., 2017). I used a research diary during the analysis process, when decision points were being made, and to note reflections and key points of interest (see Appendix 4a as already referenced on p.42 in Table 7). This enabled the key contributions to be held in mind and revised, and to create a golden thread of thought which developed over time during the research process.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter will present the findings of each participant, by exploring the PETs and subthemes alongside the researcher narrative which explores the interpretation and nuances. Smith & Osborn (2008) explain that the findings should be a narrative argument including participants' words from their transcripts to support the researcher's narrative account. Separating findings from discussion is acceptable within IPA, to first explore the participant's individual experiences in detail, and to secondly, discuss the findings in relation to literature in the discussion chapter.

Figure 4: Reflective Box 1

During the analysis process, it became apparent that the previously identified research questions did not reflect the data and were not succinct enough. The wording of the second and third research questions was previously 'what do you people with SEND experience that works well in PfA?' and the third research question was 'what do young people with SEND experience that needs further improvement in PfA?'. The terms barriers and facilitators had more clarity for the discussion chapter and for considering the implications for educational psychology professionals.

5.1.1 Overview of PETs and GETs

Each participants data was explored using an iterative process of analysis following the IPA process outlined by Smith et al. (2021). A brief recap of the process to get the PETs and GETs will be presented. The first stage of the iterative process involved making exploratory notes to code the data by examining the language and semantics of the participants interview, there are no set boundaries as to what to make notes of, it is a relatively open and free process to consider what seems important. Following this, I constructed experiential statements which "relate directly to the participants experiences…or

to the experience of making sense of the things that happened to them" (Smith et al., 2021, p.86). Construction of the experiential statements is considered a key part of the hermeneutic circle of understanding. Once the experiential statements had been created, the PETs were formed. The PETs are a cluster of experiential statements and are named to reflect the characteristics of the collection of experiential statements. This process took the most time and involved numerous iterations and reconsiderations across the writing of the thesis, up until the draft of the final version. Smaller clusters of statements created the subthemes within a PET. Table 9 presents an overview of PETs as generated through analysis of each participant's data. The GETs were created by looking for patterns of convergence and divergence across the PETs, focusing on the unique and shared aspects of experiences. GETs were created from cross-case analysis of the PETs, and an overview of GETs are presented in Table 10 and further discussed in chapter 6. Greater analysis and exploration, alongside a narrative of interpretation will be presented further into the chapter.

Table 9.

Overview of PETs for each Participant

Participant	**PETs**
Ben	Thinking ahead: setting goals and being confident
	Tapping into social networks for a better future and self-awareness for support
	Superficial understanding of PfA skills
Amy	Work experience is linked to employment aspirations
	Decision making is out of their hands, a sense of 'being done to'
	Friendships are key for a successful future
Cassie	It's about who you know

	Becoming independent through work
	"I'm excited to leave, but I'm not excited to leave" – mixed feelings about transition
	Different capabilities mean different support
Tom	"My mum and dad might be asking him if I can do more work experience"- using family networks for opportunities
	"What do you mean?" – lacking application of PfA skills
	"A sheet that we have to tick off" school opportunities for PfA are generic
Hannah	Having a job promotes a sense of adulthood
	"I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for this school" – school has been a transformative experience
	Using social network for opportunities
	"It's like a massive change but I'm excited" – mixed feelings about leaving school
James	Seeks more opportunities to explore aspirations in school
	Unrealistic or unknown expectations of adulthood
	"It's not what I want to do" – disempowerment of voice

Table 10.

Overview of GETs

GET 1	Personalised, Early and Embedded Support for PfA.
GET 2	Social Capital and Social Networks.
GET 3	Agency.
GET 4	Real-world Application of PfA (from Theory to Application).

5.2 PETs

PETs will be discussed with a narrative account to explore the interpretations of the data. The generation of PETs utilised the experiential statements across the dataset and

considered how themes formed in terms of convergence and divergence. The results and discussion will be presented in the following format:

Personal Experiential Statement (PETs)

Sub-theme(s)

Researcher interpretation.

Transcript extracts (page number).

Figure 5: Reflective Box 2

During the process of writing the results and discussion chapter PETs were being re-worded and re-ordered for each participant. This continued the iterative process of interpretation of the data analysis. For example, I merged multiple PETs for Ben's data such as 'tapping into social networks' and 'self-awareness for support' and removed subthemes which were already represented in other sub themes such as 'areas to improve' was covered adequately in 'confidence in abilities'.

5.2.1 Participant One: Ben

See appendix 9a for Ben's full transcript.

Table 11.

Participant One: Ben's PETs and Sub-themes

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	Thinking ahead: confidence and setting goals	Confidence in abilities
		Goals for the future
PET 2	Tapping into social networks for a better future and self-awareness of support	Family support
		Friendships
PET 3	Models of learning needs to be practical and embedded	Practice in the community
		Opportunities across the curriculum
		Not personalised

PET 1: Thinking Ahead: Confidence and Setting Goals

Confidence in abilities

Ben appeared to have mixed confidence in his future aspirations, he used words such as *try* and *hoping* when responding about attaining GCSEs in the next couple of years and had appeared to prepare for failure in his exams:

> *I want to try and get GCSEs… I'm really hoping. And if I can't, then that's fine because I've got another three years to do it because I'm going to head up to sixth form next year.* (p.2)

There was a sense of needing to improve on and do better in academic learning to be able to achieve his aspirations to work in ICT, as well as for skills with money. Yet when asked again, Ben was clear that he was confident in achieving his GCSEs. Alongside personal confidence, the influence of others impacted Ben's perception of his confidence and what he was capable of:

> *I still need a bit more practise because sometimes I may not know things, something I may do know thing.* (p.2)
>
> *I think I should improve on like saving money…that's a bit of a problem for me* (p.7)
>
> *Sometimes I really want to like get a bit more hard work…my teacher, I think she called that off because she said I don't think I have the right sets for it sadly* (p4)

Goals for the future

There were clear goals that Ben had thought about for his future in relation to independent living and relationships, although they were scattered with mixed levels of confidence through the continued use of words such as *try*, *maybe* and *could*. Ben's goal to have a girlfriend was phrased as through that would be an exceptional circumstance, which may reflect low self-esteem:

> *My goal is to try and like live on my own, even have a girlfriend and maybe start a family* (p.6)

Ben had thought through his independent living goals with realistic expectations in relation to societal housing challenges, and had considered the need for financial compensation to achieve his goals:

> *I want to try and get a really good job so I could earn like money for myself, for the rent… I may live in a flat one day to start off with and then I could work my way up the, you know, the housing* (p.6)

In relation to community, as part of the PfA pathway, Ben spoke positively about this experience of being part of the school's eco council and his involvement with NCS. Taking on a role model position in these community minded groups was important to Ben and he felt strongly about continuing to support his community in his future:

> *I'll definitely do more in the future. I'm hoping I can do it like supporting charity, supporting all sorts food bank"* (p.13)

PET 2: Tapping into Social Networks for A Better Future and Self-Awareness of Support

<u>Family Support</u>

Awareness of needing family support in the future was noted by Ben across various aspects of his life, particularly in relation to financial support to live independently and in managing his health:

> *It could be quite difficult for first time buyers…so that's why my mum may support me with that* (p.6)

> *Um managing my health, I haven't really thought about this yet because my mum takes care of me really a lot…so I. actually don't know because I haven't thought about it yet* (p.19)

Ben's reliance on his mum's support with his health leaves Ben at risk of becoming vulnerable to being 'done to' in the future, where his understanding of his health needs may be lacking. However, Ben has taken steps to making joint decisions about his health, with the support of his mum and envisages taking greater control over health and other life decisions in the future:

> *Cancelling my sleeping pills because I don't need them as much anymore…so that was me and my mum's decision. One of my decisions was that ingrown toenail. My mum had to sign a waiver…I'm allergic to antibiotics…*(p.21)
>
> *I'll make a lot more decisions when I'm older, for my health and also a few other things like…jobs* (p.21)

Friendships

Friendships play a key part in Ben's current experience and his future planning of continued education at Park school. Tapping into his social support network at school has influenced his decision making for the future and enabled Ben to engage with agency skills:

> *I chose that decision to go onto sixth form because my friends decided to go to sixth form* (p.10)

Having friends and positive friendships are long-term relationships that Ben perceives as supporting him in his life and are a part of his support for mental wellbeing and staying safe:

> *Friends for life. They help me for like advice* (p.16)

How can I stay emotionally healthy?...I speak to a few friends like that can help me (p.26)

If you had a friend with you then it could be a bit safe, but still got to be careful (p.8)

Although overall friendships have been positive for Ben, the complexities of friendships and their dynamics have been a source of personal development for Ben, in particular when managing conflict:

Sometimes it gets out of my control because they speak to someone else and they sometimes just left me…this person sometimes upsets me…sometimes we get in a muddle. Sometimes it can get confusing (p.16)

PET 3: Models of Learning Needs to Be Practical and Embedded

Practise in the community

Within school and external opportunities have enabled Ben to engage with skills in the community, to support his PfA. Ben alluded to a sense of achievement being part of the eco council within school and took pride in supporting the local church during a litter pick:

I did something before, which is really nice. We did like a litter picking because I'm part of the eco council… so I supported the community by doing that, so I represented the school and the community (p.13)

The NCS programme stems from community minded and social justice practices, which appears to align with Ben's goals and mindset of developing his sense of agency within the community, and having a voice in his community:

NCS…have a slogan that says "no you can do it"…you can do it as a young person. You're the voice of, you know, the community (p.13)

Opportunities across the curriculum

Although Ben described a couple of examples of how practicing PfA skills in the community have been positive and enjoyable, there appears to be a shortage of these opportunities within school. Ben repeatedly stated his wish for more opportunities for practical experiences of learnt skills and knowledge across the curriculum and PfA topics, which emphasised his appreciation of the school offer but a desire to continue to develop from a personal perspective:

> *Going out local community supporting other people…I think there should be more of that* (p.15)
>
> *They do PSHE lessons…but sometimes, I mean, I need to a bit more maybe catch up on it* (p.19)
>
> *We did road safety…I think there should be more of it in all honesty…so people can be sure, like students, like me…can be sure that they know what to do…we did it a lot more in year 10…but in all honesty there should be a bit more* (p.9)
>
> *I think more lessons should involve around money* (p.9)

Ben alluded to the fact that support isn't received as often as it was in earlier year groups and would wish for more support from school across different aspects of PfA skills:

> *Google maps yeah, that's what I did in year 10…and we did road safety… in year 11 but well, that was only like 3 outside visits…which was a bit mm* (p.8)
>
> *Year 10 trips…there were a lot more than in year 11…I don't know if it stopped because of Covid* (p.24)

<u>Not personalised</u>

The opportunities to be involved in the eco council, safety squad and leadership team are perceived by Ben as important roles within the wider school, and being part of a group with a purpose to help others aligns with his values.

The safety squad…we help students…your problems big or small we can help (p.9)

I do leadership as well… I'm really proud of that, definitely" (p.9)

However, the involvement in these groups have been offered to many of the young people at the school, which lends doubt to the personalisation of opportunities for the individual to support their aspirations and goals. Although the opportunities provided are perceived positively by Ben, they are all group or peer based which makes it challenging to personalise support:

[Independent skills] *It was like with a friend so it was, so I was totally not on my own* (p.8)

NCS…are like a group that do activities for people like me (p.13)

I'm on the leadership team in the school and I am one of the members (p.10)

There is a lack of depth to Ben's knowledge and skills of PfA aspects, including healthy living and independent living. In part, Ben's construction of PfA may be impacted by his autism, in which he may perceive the world from a polarised point of view as well as knowing in detail rote knowledge. In response to what skills and knowledge do you need to be healthy as an adult, Ben responded:

Who to phone when it's an emergency, knowing balanced diets. And then coming back to that topic, when to know if you need to go to A&E or GP…knowing when to phone 999,112 (p.18)

When prompted further about accessing emergency services, Ben recited numbers for emergency services and other organisations. It appeared that Ben had highlighted road safety and being in the community as key skills for independent living and would refer back to these at multiple points within the data. Interestingly, actions such as setting up a bank account, registering at the doctors/dentists, planning meals did not come up for Ben as part of independent living which may be due to his conceptualisation of PfA or a lack of teaching:

Learning how to be safe on the roads…what types of people ae there because they could be homeless…you know, not the best…I'm really addicted to my phone…out and about it's really not that safe because there would be people that maybe steal things (p.7)

APR rates…trying to figure out discounts (p.9)

Ben's exploration of independent living skills is important and valid; however it appears specific information has been stored by Ben rather than a broader picture of independent living. It should be noted that at other times, Ben appeared to have a relative understanding of societal difficulties with housing and therefore has acquired elements of wider independent living skills.

Figure 6: Reflective Box 3

Ben was the pilot study for the research and was hand-picked by the deputy head teacher (gatekeeper) at the school. Ben's responses to the interview provided the researcher with an expectation that other student's may have had similar experiences or conceptualisations of PfA – which was not the case. Engaging with an IPA approach has enabled the researcher to reflect on the nuances, convergence, and divergence within and across the data. Reflecting across the IPA process has been key to step away and back into the data for clarity, and to take time to consider the interpretation of the participant's interpretation of their experience at a greater depth of analysis.

5.2.2 Participant Two: Amy

See appendix 9b for Amy's full transcript.

Table 12.

Participant Two: Amy's PETs and Sub-themes

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)	Sub-themes
PET 1	Extracurricular activities linked to employment aspirations	Engaging in activities of interest linked to job aspiration
		Agency in opportunities
		Applying PfA skills through work experience
PET 2	Being passive to decision-making and understanding	Passive agent and disempowerment
		Developmentally younger understanding
PET 3	Friendships are key for a successful future	Friends influence pathways and support wellbeing

Figure 7: Reflective Box 4

During the writing of Amy's PETs, and through re-reading the transcript, it became apparent that Amy did not use the term 'work experience' when describing her time spent with horses and therefore the first PET was phrased 'extracurricular activities' although I interpreted her experience as a work experience opportunity.

PET 1: Extracurricular Activities Linked to Employment Aspirations

Engaging in activities of interest linked to job aspiration

As an animal lover, Amy is able to follow her passion for horses during extracurricular activities within school time. Although there was confusion as to how Amy became involved in her experience working with horses, it was clear that this was linked directly to Amy's aspirations for employment. Amy responded to a question about her dream job with confidence and clarity:

To work with horses… because I'm an animal lover (p.2)

Agency in opportunities

Amy was clear that it was her decision and something she wanted to be involved in and divulged the main tasks she completes during her time working with horses:

I wanted to do it (p.3)

After riding we have lunch, and after lunch we groom and tack up horses…and muck out their stables (p.4)

Equine terminology was used by Amy to describe this opportunity which portrays a sense of importance and how Amy is considering this as an important learning opportunity and a step towards her employment aspirations to work with horses.

Applying PfA skills through work experience

Although Amy may not have had much agency in her education pathway, she spoke confidently about her decision to engage with work experience which alludes to having agency in other areas of her life. Work experience has been a defining feature in Amy's experience of PfA, and has enabled Amy to apply her skills and equine knowledge into real-world experience which has also positively impacted Amy's confidence:

[Researcher: do you think that you've got the skills to do that as a job?] *100%* (p.6)

Amy was unable to conceptualise her desire for more work experience opportunities from school, which may represent a lack of discussion and options on the scope and aim of work experience.

[Researcher: what could school do to help you develop your skills and knowledge of looking after horses?] *work experience work* (p.5)

[Researcher: what would the work experience look like for you?] *don't know* (p.5)

PET 2: Being Passive to Decision Making and Understanding

Passive agent and disempowerment

Amy alluded to the fact that different people in her life appear to take control of decisions which affect Amy's future, in particular, her educational pathway:

My mum wants me to stay on at sixth form, but I don't want that (p.4)

Because my friends are going to sixth form after this year, and she wants to take me (p.10)

She wants to take me, implies that Amy's friends may at times objectify her and consider Amy as a person who can be told what to do, which removes Amy's power in decision making. As family or friends appear to make decisions for Amy, she has become a passive agent within her own life which may impact on her sense of self, self-esteem, and agency.

Developmentally younger understanding

A sense of a developmentally younger understanding of PfA was interpreted through Amy's responses. Amy immediately associated living independently with having children and understood knowledge around money being for the benefit of a child:

To buy all the baby stuff (p.8)

Amy also had a developmentally younger understanding of relationships and how to make friends when she transitions into adulthood, which suggested a lack of depth to her understanding of friendships. This surface level understanding of relationships may in the future put Amy at risk of being vulnerable to others:

Walking up to them and say "do you want to be friends with me?" (p.10)

In addition, it appeared that Amy engaged with humour when asked about independent living because, perhaps, it had not been considered seriously so far in Amy's experience at school:

So I don't have to see my sister anymore… she snores like no one's business (p.7)

Amy's knowledge of being healthy was limited to knowledge around eating fruit and vegetables, and not eating *rubbish like chocolate* which may reflect her experience of having limited autonomy of her health which may have been restricted to what she eats:

> *If you eat rubbish like chocolate that's a bad lifestyle* (p.11)
>
> *I eat fruit at breaktime* (p.12)

When prompted to expand on answers around being healthy, Amy briefly stated a topic she has learnt at school and her depth of this topic again was limited to food choices and could not explore further other topics related to health e.g., exercise and mental health. This may reflect Amy's polarised thinking on health, poor memory of lessons from school or a insufficient teaching from school:

> *We done one topic of this*, *non-healthy and healthy lifestyle* (p.11)

PET 3: Friendships Are Key for A Successful Future

<u>Friends influence pathways and support well being</u>

As described in the theme 'being passive to decision making' Amy's friends have had a major influence in Amy's understanding of the pathway she will take when she comes to the end of the year – to stay on at sixth. This could be understood, as described in the theme above, as Amy being passive in decision making. This in itself, portrays the importance of friendships in Amy's life. Amy understood her friendships as being a key component of her independence as an adult in relation to independent living skills such as paying rent and bills. A reliance on friends to support her whilst living independently was assumed by Amy, and therefore portrays a sense of power balance within their relationship:

> *Because my friends are going to sixth form after this year, and she wants to take me* (p.10)

> [Researcher: what about paying rent and your bills and things like that?] *My friend does that* (p.8)

Amy considers her friends as family which make her happy and when thinking about her future, friends are key partners in her life. In response to a question about her future and having a family, partner, Amy responded with *a family* (p.9) and when asked who a part of that family would be, Amy replied, *my friend* (p.9). Interestingly, Amy did not appear to consider romantic relationships in her future which may allude to a lack of want of romantic relationships in her future or a lack of education on this aspect of her life.

5.2.3 Participant Three: Cassie

See appendix 9c for Cassie's full transcript.

Table 13.

Participant Three: Cassie's PETs and Sub-themes

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	It's about who you know	Learning key independence skills at home
		Use of social capital for development
		Friends are freedom and safety
PET 2	"I'm excited to leave, but I'm not excited to leave" – mixed feelings about transition	Feeling bittersweet about leaving school
		Leaving the familiar is scary
		The need for personalised support
PET 3	Becoming independent through work	Sense of belonging at work
		Acquisition of PfA skills

PET 1: It's About Who You Know

Learning key independence skills at home

Cassie spoke positively about her home life and the knowledge and skills of independent living and PfA she has acquired, from growing up with her family. In addition, Cassie has experienced more adult level conversations around PfA topics, such as housing, due to circumstantial reasons of moving house with her mother:

> *So I knew a bit already, whenever mum was like looking at houses and stuff like that…she was going on about mortgages and I was like "what's that?" and she was like "oh you can get two sorts" … like I know a bit about it but I would say I know like loads the ins and outs* (p.8)

It appeared that Cassie perceived herself as already being *adult* in many ways due to the lifestyle she lives, and expectations on her from home. Cassie alluded to having a motivation to help around the house and support the household functions:

> *So I've been around the home tidying up the house, washing up, stuff like that…so being raised on that kind of sort of thing* (p.4)
>
> *Like I just didn't want to sit at home and I still help mum with the washing up* (p.4)

Use of social capital for development

Cassie has utilised her social capital to support her development in PfA, such as applying for jobs and learning to drive. Engaging with her connections who have a resource or knowledge that can support her, has been an intuitive action for Cassie.

> *I want to get a job, so my mum's partner helped me with my CV. So I done it well I wrote it all up, all by myself and he went through it because I can't spell so he went through it and changed up to make it sound more… adultish?* (p.5)

> *Even one of them said about taking me out for driving lessons when we leave…because I said I wanted to do mechanics automatic* [drive an automatic car] *because I was struggling with gear so she was like I have a mechanic automatic car and we can go out for lessons… no one in my family has one* (p.36)

Friends are freedom and safety

Utilising her social network has enabled Cassie to take agency in her future, and to attend the college open day to ascertain whether this was a pathway she wanted to take:

> *Me and my friend Hannah…we went down to look at it and then obviously ask questions* (p.20)

In addition, using her social network has opened the opportunity to socialise outside of the home, by appeasing her parents through staying in a group when out of the house.

> *It's more just like going out…I think it's that freedom that you get from having them…because if they know your parents as well then like you don't have them ringing you* (p.28)
>
> *It's always like a safety blanket in a way especially if you go out* (p.28)

Cassie referred to feeling safe when she is with her friends, and when considering her future as an independent adult, envisions living with a friend to continue being supported and feeling safe:

> *I think I would move out with a friend…I feel like I look after the house. But I don't think I can look after myself* (p.10)

PET 2 "I'm Excited to Leave, But I'm Not Excited To Leave" – Mixed Feelings About Transition

Feeling bittersweet about leaving school

Cassie alluded to feeling bittersweet about leaving school due to the positive, trusting relationships she had built with her teachers.

> *I'm sad to leave like obviously the teachers cos you get a good relationship with them all and I said that I'm gonna email them all…or find them on facebook…stalk them* (p.36)

For Cassie, it appears that she may have misinterpreted the teacher's support and positive relationship with friendship, which could potentially represent Cassie as vulnerable to adult relationships in the future. Attending school has been a positive experience for Cassie, and has enabled her to build her self-confidence through positive teacher relationships, and supported Cassie to make friends and find her voice:

> *When I first joined [school] I though "why the hell am I going to this school?"… but I would say 100% if I didn't come here I wouldn't be exactly how I am now…I literally didn't have the confidence…but I would definitely say it help with my confidence just because I was so shy* (p.36)
>
> *And my mum was speaking to them and she was like "it's actually really good because she's made friends" like before that I wouldn't say I had like friends, I only had Riley. But, um, yeah, "she's actually made friends she's, her confidence has gone up"* (p.32)
>
> *I've only started getting well my voice properly six, well not even six years ago, probably like five years ago* (p.28)

Leaving the familiar is scary

School has been a safe and familiar environment for Cassie, where she recognises the support, she has received from the adults in school and well as her self-development and progress such as with her confidence, speech, and health:

> *I'm excited to leave but I'm not excited to leave just because I've always been here like you just [get] used to it* (p.36)

The familiar safety of school is difficult to move on from, but Cassie is self-aware of preparing for adulthood and moving to college to continue working towards her goals and aspirations. Cassie alluded to a lack of communication around the transition day to college, as she was unsure of what the tasks would involve and the reasoning behind them, this suggests that there was also a lack of collaboration between school and college when organising the transition day:

> *They made us do baking and it was very weird… I was just there going to my friend, Max, going "they're actually making us do baking?"…so then we done it and I think they were just like assessing of what we're capable of* (p.23)

It may have been perceived by Cassie that the activity of baking was childish, and she felt belittled by this. Across the interview, Cassie portrays a maturity in which she prefers to be treated and acknowledged.

The need for personalised support

Cassie's awareness of other's needs shows that she perceives herself as different to her peers, and therefore is self-aware of what support she needs based on her own skillset and knowledge of PfA topics:

> *At the minute we do it by classes, but just because someone's really good at maths or someone's or someone's really good at English, that doesn't mean they're very good at independent living. They might not even know how to use a dishwasher* (p.14)
>
> *If they'd put it more into what people are more capable of, I think they'll get more out of it because me and, myself and I, and my friend, we used to just sit and talk. We didn't even really pay attention person just because we already knew it or we already knew bits about it…* (p.14)

Involvement with healthcare professionals has been a notable feature of Cassie's lived experience and this has not always been positive. Cassie alluded to the fact that professionals were not able to make Cassie feel comfortable to communicate her needs, and that often their use of terminology and mannerism have left Cassie feeling excluded and disengaged from conversations, and this has ultimately disempowered Cassie to be an active agent of her health:

> *I don't even speak to my doctors. Like I just sit there…the way they use all of these technical terms and like yeah, I know you're a doctor, but like I'm not going to understand this. You're like speaking to someone that's practically still a child…you honestly think that I'm going to understand what that means? At least speak normally…but we will just sit there and be like "okay "even now, we don't even know what you're going on about* (p.13)
>
> *If I walk into the room and I get good vibes then I'm like "oh okay" then I'll speak…if I don't, I'm not going to speak to you or if they're not trying to understand what I'm saying that's when I shut off… I just sit there and then that's when mum usually takes over* (p.16)
>
> *When it comes to stuff like that like if you're in pain or if you've got a problem, they're not going to want to talk to someone if you ain't going to, like bad vibe going*

on or anything like that…you're going to be like well, I feel uncomfortable talking to you…if you don't make it feel uncomfortable a lot of the time, especially if people were even shy like they'll come out of their shell (p.17)

PET 3: Becoming Independent Through Work

Sense of belonging at work

Since working at the bowling alley, Cassie has felt part of the team at work and alluded to feeling a sense of belonging at work through the connections and relationships she has created with her colleagues:

I've been on a break…two of them text me last night going "are you coming back?"… like it's nice…it's nice to get a little text message from them (p.8)

Acquisition of PfA skills

Having a job has enabled Cassie to experience different skills at work and to maximize the opportunity to see what type of work she enjoys:

I'm customer service. I can do a bit of reception…I can do a bit of waitressing (p.7)

In addition, Cassie has had to engage with time management skills to be able to successfully work and study at the same time as well as to ensure she isn't being taken advantage of through work or the gig economy:

I currently am on a break at the minute from there…I want some time off just because it's good having a job but at the same time it's just like yeah it can be too much…especially I work full time when I said part time (p.7)

Cassie touched upon the importance of having a sense of financial confidence and independence, separate from her parents. Cassie was able to achieve this, through working

part time at a bowling alley and recognised that it can be difficult but alluded to the sense of achievement, being able to persevere through the difficulties:

> *I wanted to earn money for myself more than like ask my parents for money… but I feel like you need to kind of even though it might be a struggle, you need to kind of learn how to do it yourself (p.5)*

The development of transferrable employment skills has been acquired through Cassie's job at the bowling alley, Cassie spoke with a sense of pride of her newly learnt skills:

> *I'm 19 I can work in the bar…I can do a bit of reception…I can do a bit of waitressing of the food* (p.7)

But Cassie has also developed confidence in her voice to speak up when she requires change in work:

> *I currently am on a break at the minute…because I just said to them I want some time off…it can be too much… like especially I work full time when I said part time…because they ain't got enough staff* (p.7)

5.2.4 Participant Four: Tom

See appendix 9d for Tom's full transcript.

Table 14.

Participant Four: Tom's PETs and Sub-themes

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	"My mum and dad might be asking him if I can do more work experience" – using family network for opportunities	Social capital
PET 2	"What do you mean?" "I don't know"– a lack of understanding and application of PfA skills	Surface level understanding
		Learning has been forgotten
		PfA lessons haven't started
PET 3	"A sheet that we have to tick off" – school opportunities are generic	Lack of personalised offer

PET 1: "My Mum and Did Might Be Asking Him If I Can Do More Work Experience" – Using Family Network for Opportunities

Social capital

Tom alludes to his utilisation of social capital. For Tom this looks like his parents asking their connections for further work experience in car mechanics, as Tom's initial work experience opportunity came from a parent's friend on Facebook:

> *One of my dad's like friends that he met on Facebook…cos his car was broken ad then they fixed my dad's car and then they did my mum's car* (p.2)

The social capital used to gain the work experience for Tom, appears to be a good fit, as Tom claims that he wants to be a mechanic when he is older. It is not clear whether Tom's aspirations stem from his work experience opportunities, so therefore being influenced by his parent's social capital, or whether the opportunity came from Tom's interest and finding a related connection to the area of work.

PET 2: "What Do You Mean? I Don't Know" – A Lack of Understanding And Application Of Pfa Skills

Surface level understanding

Throughout the interview, Tom would respond to interview questions with *I don't know* or he may shrug which implies that there is a lack of understanding from Tom's perspective on PfA. Although as it will be explored below, this could be due to poor memory and retention. Tom also gave surface level answers to some questions such as staying healthy as an adult (physically and emotionally):

> *By keeping fit, exercise… eating healthily…by having fun with like your friends… I don't' know…* (p.8)
>
> *Only life if you smile at someone, they smile back at you* (p.8)

Learning has been forgotten

In other instances, Tom appeared to have forgotten (or not know) how to responds to questions on PfA. This could be interpreted that the teaching on PfA topics is not memorable, due it's content or how it was delivered. Alternatively, the interview may have triggered Tom to be more forgetful, or this could be a normal response for Tom if he has poor long-term memory and retention. When asked about how long he had his work experience at the mechanics, which appeared to align with Tom's aspirations, he responded:

> *Er, I can't remember how long it was like every Monday, I can't remember how long it was* (p.9)

Tom also appeared to forget what support he had received from school on careers, which may suggest that the support wasn't explicit enough, there may have been a lack of support or, Tom had just forgotten when asked in the interview:

> *Yeah, we did like what we do to get, I can't remember what it was* (p.3)

In addition, Tom could not remember the options he had picked for staying on at sixth form:

> *Er I think I've picked animal care, I can't remember the other ones* (p.4)

There may also be an element of Tom not knowing how to answer the interview questions, and so then saying he couldn't remember to cut short his answer.

PfA lessons haven't started

There were elements of PfA that Tom did not appear to have thought about as much, which suggests that perhaps teaching on independent living hadn't yet happened in school, when asked had they thought about moving out of the home and living independently:

> *Um kind of but not really as much* (p.4)

When exploring what skills and knowledge Tom might need to be able to go on to be a mechanic in the future, he responded:

I don't know (p.2)

The researcher asked more explicitly whether careers (education, employment, and training) had been introduced at school, Tom appeared to believe he hadn't had conversations about this yet:

Um not really (p.3)

Figure 8: Reflective Box 5

Narrating Tom's experiences through the PETs and subthemes, made the researcher reflect on their interview technique, and how perhaps their questioning made it more challenging for the participants to respond initially. For example, with Tom, when the researcher asked about what skills Tom needed to be a mechanic he responded *I don't' really know,* but when the researcher rephrased their question to say *what kind of knowledge might you need to become a mechanic?* Tom was able to respond with *probably like maths and science.* This has been a reflection for the researcher on their interviewing technique and how it can affect the participant.

PET 3: "A Sheet That We Have to Tick Off" – School Opportunities Are Generic

Lack of personalised offer

It was interpreted that some of the school's offer for support to develop PfA skills, have not had investment by Tom, which could be due to the lack of personalisation, and application to Tom's aspirations. Tom spoke about being a role model as part of the leadership team:

I'm in the leadership…basically, you like have to be like a role model to other people and help them… we have like a sheet that we have to tick off until we like go up (p.6)

Considering Tom's aspirations to be a mechanic, there does not appear to be a clear link between on the leadership team and learning how to be a mechanic – although the researcher recognises the opportunities to practise transferrable soft skills. When asked whether being part of the leadership was important to Tom he responded by **nods head**.

Figure 9: Reflective Box 6

The researcher had to bracket their assumptions of the leadership being not personalised due to knowing that many of the other participant's had also been a part of the leadership team. It was however, not personalised for Tom based on his aspirations and assumed interests.

5.2.5 Participant Five: Hannah

See appendix 9e for Hannah's full transcript.

Table 15.

Participant Five: Hannah's PETs and Sub-themes

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	Having a job promotes a sense of adulthood	Developed confidence and independence
		Employability skills
PET 2	"I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for this school" – school has been a positive experience with areas of learning	Supported by school to achieve full potential
		Feeling proud
		Lack of real-world application
		Lack of personalised support
		Change is scary but exciting
PET 3	Taking control of the present and the future	Having agency
		Using social capital and network for opportunities
		Friendships promote a sense of adulthood

PET 1: Having a Job Promotes a Sense of Adulthood

Developed confidence and independence

Hannah spoke frequently about her job during the interview, which implies that her job is important to her. Hannah was clear about how her job has developed her confidence and independence as an individual, and it appeared that Hannah enjoyed having a different life outside of school in which she was perceived as a colleague, and part of a group, rather than a student, a sense of belonging was present:

> *I'm just glad that my confidence has grown so much from being there* (p.13)
>
> *My boss is like, put me on like a bar on my own. So, I like to have grown that independence* (p.12)
>
> *You just get to know them* [the customers] ... *what they drink…I'll always remember he likes the Carlsberg in a Guinness glass…which is weird, but I always have that ready or him* (p.17)

Employability skills

It was clear that Hannah had developed many skills from her job, which overall develops her employability. One of which is time management skills, with her commitments at both school and her job:

> *I don't know if I'm going to do that [Duke of Edinburgh] because of my work and everything* (p.11)
>
> *I'm going to be getting like quite a few more shifts…cos when I start college and I get like my days and that, I'll be done like so I can do during the day on these days…and then I could do evening whenever* (p.14)

There also appears to have been opportunities for Hannah to develop her skills at work as she spoke about picking up training and taking on more responsibility, therefore feeling a sense of achievement at work:

> *I started off, like as a glass collector…sometimes I would pour a pint…and do a drink…and now...put me on like a bar on my own* (p.12)

PET 2: "I Wouldn't Be Here Today If It Wasn't for This School" – School Has Been a Positive Experience with Areas of Learning

Supported by school to achieve full potential

Hannah alluded to the school having been life changing for her. Hannah expressed her gratefulness to school in supporting her in all aspects of her life, and that she has changed drastically since starting school, to be the person she is today:

> *When I first started… I would always play up and everything…they've helped me succeed in quite a lot of things* (p.6)

Feeling proud

Hannah is proud of the achievements she has experienced at school and attributes her success to the support she has received at school:

> *At the end of Year 11, I won the big award… I was so chuffed that It was* [me]…*like winning it, it was a big, big success that I'd made… at this school* (p.6)

Hannah alludes to winning the award at the end of Year 11 as a significant moment in her life, which raises questions as to whether she had not experienced success, or public praise much beforehand. In addition to the end of Year 11 awards, Hannah spoke proudly of being in the leadership team:

> *When you pass level six, which is the last level, you get a hoodie… and I'm the only one in the school that's earned that, which I'm quite happy about…there used to be others, but they've all left now so now I'm the only person in the school* (p.15)

There is a sense that Hannah particularly enjoys being in a special role or being the only person to experience something in the school, which makes Hannah feel special. Hannah spoke jovially about being asked to support the school staff team to introduce a new member of staff to the school, and being asked to take on roles within the school give Hannah a sense of pride:

> *We've got a new person doing it and I help her because she didn't know how to do it* (p.15)
>
> *There's a school dog…and I get on really well with the owner of the dog…I used to take like eight children out onto the playground, walk the dog* (p.15)

Interestingly, Hannah corrects herself when talking about the staff team, from them being a separate group to her, to being part of the group:

> *If they're, if we're short staffed, they would ask me to go into the primary playground* (p.15)

However, there was potential for Hannah to be used to fill in for staff gaps and that Hannah may be vulnerable to this being positioned as work experience or volunteering. Hannah alludes to this and uses humour to perhaps deflect the fact staff are asking Hannah to take on a staff related role:

> *I just volunteer basically when they need me* (p.15)
>
> *I used to always volunteer to help with school photos. But this year I didn't volunteer because I just got told that I'm doing it *laughs** (p.16)

<u>Lack of real-world application</u>

It appeared as though Hannah was not able to make connections between her involvement in different groups and experiences and how they applied to the real-world. However, this could also be due to misunderstanding the questions asked. When asked about being part of a community, Hannah responded with *Hmm* and when asked more explicitly about the school community, Hannah nodded. The researcher made a connection between Hannah's involvement with the school leadership team and being part of the school community, therefore it may be that Hannah does not perceive the school leadership team as a community. Interestingly, when Hannah spoke about her job, she mentioned that there is a committee, in which the researcher interpreted that there is a sense of being community minded at her work:

> *We've got a committee and the committee are like moaning about like wages and hours* (p.13)

In addition, Hannah's work is based within a community of which her and her dad are a part of:

> *My dad is a member there…and ever since I was 18 last year, I was going in there* (p.12)
>
> *That's the best bit about it…you have to be a member, or you have to know a member to sign you in…and then you just get to know them* (p.17)

In other ways, there was a surface level understanding of PfA which alluded to a lack of real-world application and when the researcher prompted for more information, Hannah at times could not expand on her thoughts.

<u>Lack of personalised support</u>

Preferred learning modes were expressed by Hannah, which were not being offered by school to her current year group, which alludes to a lack of personalised support in regard to delivery:

> *It was a little bit like a role play…so I thought that was pretty good to like to understand how you would pay for everything* (p.10)

Change is scary but exciting

Hannah shared her mixed feelings about leaving school and transitioning to college, which may allude to Hannah feeling reflective of her positive experiences of school, and she shared earlier in the interview:

> *It's like a big step for me because I've been at this school for 12 years, so it's like a massive change but I'm excited* (p.3)

PET 3: Taking Control of The Present and The Future

Having agency

In the present, Hannah explored elements of her life in which she has agency and control of the direction of her life. One way in which Hannah has taken agency in her life, was with gathering information to make an informed decision about going to college:

> *I got more insight and then I was like, yeah, this is kind of where I want to be* (p.4)

The decision to go to college will impact on Hannah's future pathway. In addition, Hannah's motivation to want to work, resulted in her taking agency in seeking opportunities by asking her dad to use his social capital and networks. At work, Hannah expressed where she has agency in deciding when she works:

> *When I start college and I get like my days…I can do during the day on these days…and then I could do evenings whenever* (p.14)

Using Social Capital and Network for Opportunities

Hannah used her social capital and networks to find her job, by using her parent's connections:

I asked my dad… can you ask to see if there's any jobs going? (p.12)

In addition, Hannah was able to use her social capital to learn more about different career options at home, which have influenced her educational pathway:

My mum was a child minder… and I've always loved working with children, like helping her… so I've always wanted to work with children (p.2)

At school, Hannah used her resources (school staff) to support with her college application based on their knowledge of the college application process:

I asked my teacher to help because she used to work in a college… so she helped me see if I like applied right (p.4)

Friendships Promote a Sense of Adulthood

Friendships are a resource and can provide Hannah with an opportunity to be able to live independently in the future. Consideration of how a friendship can be beneficial for independence was expressed by Hannah in relation to affordability:

Me and my best friend were talking about moving in together…if you think it is a bit cheaper than buying a house or by yourself…and then all the taxes and everything to go with it (p.8)

Friends provide Hannah with a support system, in addition to be a resource for her future. In light of being independent, Hannah spoke about attending an open day with a friend so that they could make an informed decision about whether they wanted to attend college:

Me and my mate went to the open day…I sort of went home, applied (p.3)

5.2.6 Participant Six: James

See appendix 9f for James' full transcript.

Table 16.

Participant Six: James's PETs and Sub-themes

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	Seeks more opportunities to explore aspirations in school	Time to focus on interests
		Opportunities to apply skills in context
		Motivation for career success
PET 2	Unrealistic or unknown expectations of adulthood	PfA is starting a new life
		Lack of real-world application
		Using social network for future
		Digital resources
PET 3	"It's not what I want to do" – disempowerment of voice and agency	Voice is overpowered
		Conflict of interests

PET 1: Seeks More Opportunities to Explore Aspirations in School

Time to focus on interests

James reflected on his time spent at school and how he would like to have more time to explore his interests, and again, implied that the focus at school is on core academic subjects like maths and English, so there is not enough time to focus on his interests:

> *I wish I had more time…I'd like say to Ms Taylor to go and do more photography things…but I can't because I'm too busy…English and maths and every lesson I do and that's it* (p.5)

Opportunities to apply skills in context

Opportunities in school to apply skills related to aspiration appeared to be important for James, and something he had thought about previously:

> *They should have told me…like what happens at school, like visitors, special visitors like the Mayor coming here… and trophies like people and sports activities* (p.4)

The researcher interpretated this statement by James as wanting to take the opportunities in schools to photograph special occasions, which implies that the adults in school have missed an opportunity to provide personalised support to James. When considering his future, James had an idea of what he would like that to look like:

> *And when I'm in college, I'd like to have like a job, like a newspaper job* (p.6)

Motivation for career success

James had clear aspirations to be a photographer and alluded to how this aspiration inspires him to want to be successful in his future:

> *I just feel like I'll be like professional at what I'm good at… and I want to make a good career for myself…and then I'll just want to be, like, the best I can actually be* (p.4)

Ways of being successful in his career as a photographer were explored by James which suggests that he has spent time thinking about his future and the direction he wants to take. Although some words are used incorrectly, which may be due to James' speech and language difficulties the researcher interprets the meaning expressed by James – to be making progress in his work:

> *I want to be further from my work… I can't do the same things all the time like I can't do… photography first as I've got to do work first so I can actually get good grades, good life, and good house* (p.5)

James alludes to not perceiving photography as ‘work’ and that he understands ‘work’ as academic subjects which will give him grades which in turn will result in a house and a good life.

PET 2: Unrealistic or Unknown Expectations of Adulthood

PfA is starting a new life

The transition/PfA period for James is recognised as a hugely significant part of his life, in which he inferred it could include starting a new life. This may imply that James wants to have a new life when he thinks about being older and does not see PfA as a continuation and development of his current self. When asked what preparing for adulthood means, James replied:

> *I may start a new life* (p.1)

Lack of real-world application

When discussing independent living, James considered managing parties as an important thing to consider, which seemed a unique understanding with perhaps a developmentally younger perspective:

> *You need like some rules for keeping like no parties and stuff like that actually you can have some parties but only like Halloween and Christmas* (p.8)

In addition to independent living, although James referred to living with a friend which would have financial benefits, he implied a misunderstanding of the reality of paying rent:

> *I’d like to make a deal with my landlord* (p.8)

As part of the discussion on relationships, James referred to the support that school have provided on positive and safe relationships, and quickly apologised for saying the phrase ‘sex education’, which again implies a developmentally younger conceptualisation of relationships

in adulthood. It may also imply that this is still considered a taboo subject for James, as there may be a lack of education on sexual health and relationships:

> *Yeah sex education, sorry for saying that* (p.10)

James appeared to be self-reflective during the interview and spoke about further support he would like to have from school on friendships in the future, which may reflect James' social communication difficulties:

> *I want to know about how…I should respect people… cos maybe when I say something in a joke way, they get mad* (p.10)

Using social network for future

Having a social network appears important for James, as a resource, social networks can support James in accessing independent living in the future and has considered this in terms of finances:

> *I'm just thinking maybe I can live with my mate…we can pay each other's rent and stuff and the bills* (p.7)
>
> *Yeah, share the money…if we put our money together and see how much we got, we can pay the rent* (p.9)

Digital resources

Utilising digital resources such as YouTube has been part of James' experience of learning about PfA. When the topic of emotional wellbeing was introduced in the interview, James mentioned watching funny videos, and other videos which help him to relax. When James introduced the idea that he watches YouTube videos, he says *I'll be honest* as if it is a negative thing to do, or that he has experienced a negative response from others when he says he watches YouTube:

Normally like take deep breathes in…learnt that from somebody else… I'll be honest, YouTube…it was a relaxing thing… (p.12)

PET 3: "It's Not What I Want to Do" – Disempowerment of Voice and Agency

Voice is overpowered

During exploration of his career aspiration and having opportunities to practise photography at school, James did not raise this with school staff which may imply that James' is disempowered to share his views and that James did not have the confidence to make his voice heard. At home, it appeared that James' voice may be overpowered by parents:

It's not what I want to do but I've got to do what my mum says like she said it will help me (p.6)

James alluded to the fact that although his parents may overpower his voice, they do so with his best interests.

Conflict of interests

With regards to James' future, it appeared he lacked agency in where he would attend after school. His parent's had voiced their opinion of what he should do – to stay on at sixth which conflicted with James' interest, although when he articulated this it appeared as though James may have mixed interests which have been influenced by his parent's views:

It's not what I want to do…I just wanna go like college, actually I'll stay in sixth form (p.6)

5.3 Summary of Findings

The aim of this chapter has been to explore on an individual level the participants lived experiences of PfA. Through the exploration of the participants PETs and sub-themes the researcher has narrated the unique idiography of the participants experiences. As recommended by Smith et al. (2021) I have given space to explore in depth the individual experiences of the participants. The next chapter will discuss in more detail the research questions and how they can be answered through the experiences across all participants. The GETs will be explored in relation to current literature and unique contributions will be identified.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

6.1 Chapter Overview

The discussion chapter will focus on discussing the findings of the research (GETs derived from the PETs), considering their interpretation and relatedness to existing literature, and any unexpected findings will be explored in terms of their contribution to the research area. The discussion chapter will be organised by the research questions and will refer to the GETs for detailed discussion in relation to all participant data. Although the aim of IPA is not to draw generalisable claims, the GETs incorporate unique individual experiences under shared themes. To begin the chapter, the GETs will be presented, but first the research questions are revisited:

1. What are the lived experiences of young people with SEND from a special school in relation to Preparation for Adulthood?

    1a. What are the participants' perceptions of barriers to Preparation for Adulthood?

    1b. What are the participants' perceptions of facilitators to Preparation for Adulthood?

Figure 10: Reflective Box 7

There were too many GETs and so they needed to be reviewed. Following advice from Smith et al. (2021) to consolidate an appropriate number of GETs which is also feasible for the scope of this research, all GETs were reviewed to see if they were inhabited in *at least* half of the participants in the study. The findings went from 8 GETs to 4 GETs by using this rule of thumb.

In addition, the GETs were originally going to be explored in a similar format to the PETs, however after completing the PETs in the findings chapter it was decided that as the GETs align with the research question they would be better suited in the discussion chapter where they can be considered in relation to relevant literature.

6.2 GETs

GETs will be presented through figures below, the focus of the GETs is to consider the convergence and divergence across all participants' data (Smith et al., 2021). In addition to the comparison across all participants' data, the GETs are separated into two channels: barriers *and* facilitators for research question 2 and 3. Some GETs may only portray barriers *or* facilitators. Appendix 10 shows the working out of how the sub-themes and PETs across the data set links to the GETs (idiographic process).

Figure 11: Reflective Box 8

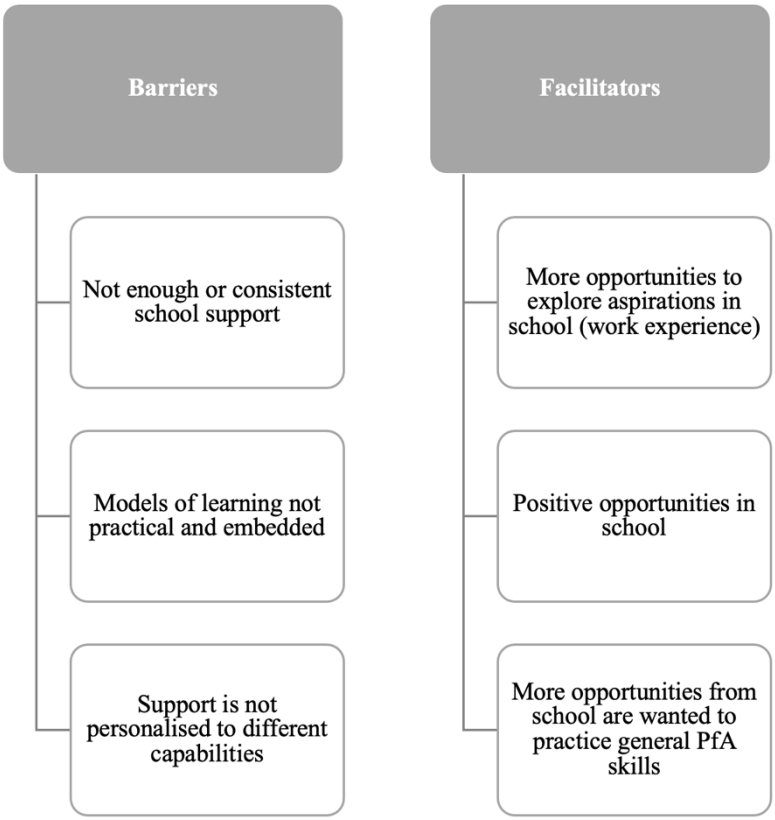
The PETs were reviewed during the final draft version of the thesis to refine the findings chapter. Consequently, the GETs were reviewed to ensure they honoured the idiographic – that the GETs could be traced back to participant's interview transcripts (See appendix 10).

6.2.1 GET 1: Personalised, Early and Embedded Support for PfA

A theme that was present across all participants' data was the need for personalised, early, and embedded support for PfA. Within the data there were convergences and divergences, which could be reflected in the barriers and facilitators of the research questions. In total, the GET was present across all six participants.

Figure 12.

GET 1: Personalised, Early and Embedded Support for PfA

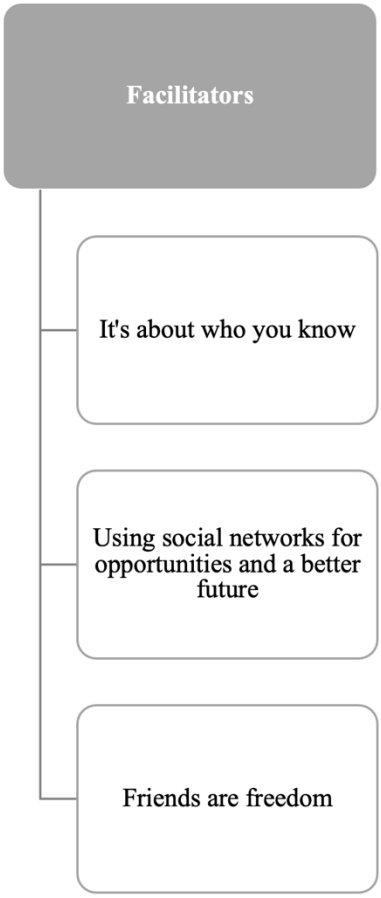


6.2.2 GET 2: Social Capital and Social Networks

All of the participants' experience of PfA involved their use of social capital and social networks which is an interesting contribution to the research area. In relation to the research questions, utilising social networks and social capital was used to benefit the young person and therefore would only be a facilitator in their experience of PfA.

Figure 13.

GET 2: Social Capital and Social Networks

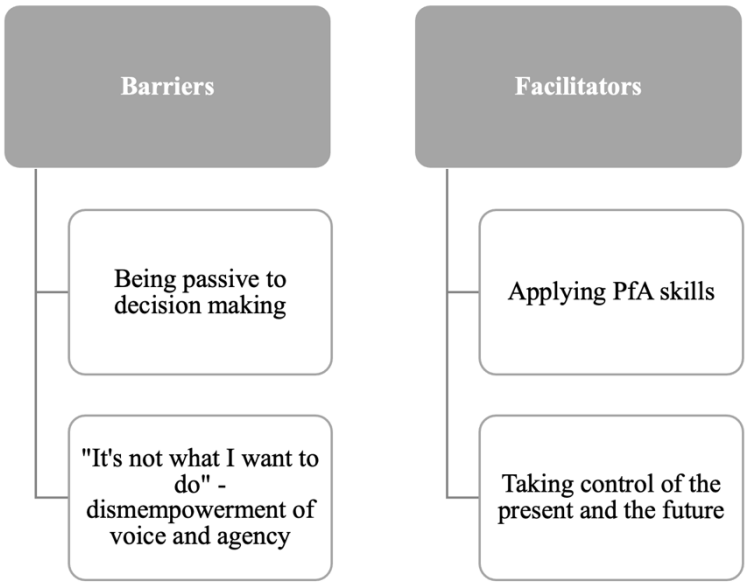


6.2.3 GET 3: Agency

Having agency of one's life was a core aspect of most participants experience of PfA. The young people have experienced both having agency within their life, and having their agency removed or overpowered by others.

Figure 14.

GET 3: Agency

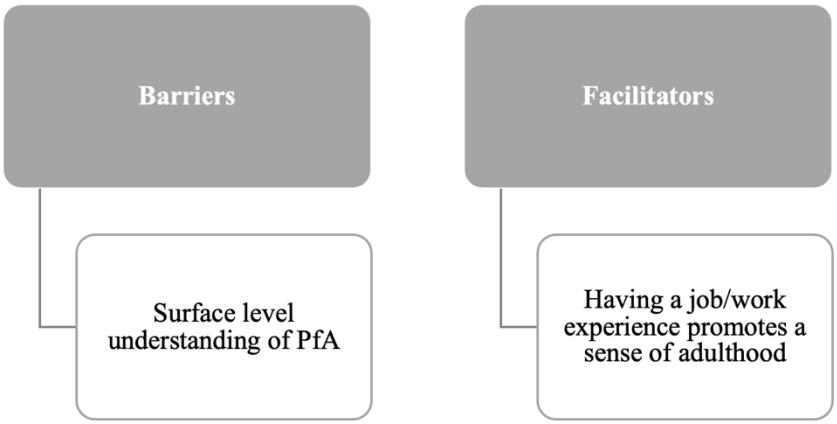


6.2.4 GET 4: Real-world Application of PfA Knowledge and Skills

Participants shared their experiences of how they conceptualise PfA through their school and home life, which constituted clear barriers and facilitators to support their real-world application and understanding of PfA knowledge and skills.

Figure 15.

GET 4: Real-world Application of PfA (from Theory to Application)



6.3 Research Question 1: What are the lived experiences of young people with SEND from a special school in relation to Preparation for Adulthood?

The experiences of the participants have been multifaceted and unique to each individual. However there have been shared experiences across the participants, which may have been interpreted differently by each participant but provide an interesting insight into their experience of PfA.

Overall, participants have felt supported by school during elements of PfA, but highlighted areas in which they would like school to provide more support or opportunities. Cassidy et al. (2018) found that PfA (life skills as sometimes known in school) should be incorporated in all lessons including unstructured times in the school day. One area of support that stands out by most participants felt they would like more opportunities, was work experience. Amy referred to enjoying her work experience with horses, as it aligned with her employment aspirations and when asked what school could do to help you develop your skills and knowledge with her chosen career, she noted that more work experience would be appreciated. This was similarly discussed by Hannah, and James referred to wanting more opportunities to explore his aspirations for photography in school.

When considering the support they received in school, most young people appreciated the offers but noted that there has not been a big enough focus on PfA generally. Ben spoke proudly about the opportunity to support others and take on senior roles in school through the eco council and school leadership programmes, this was echoed by Tom who noted his involvement in the school leadership programme which enabled him to be a role model for other students. In fact, half of the participants (Ben, Tom, and Hannah) were all part of the leadership programme in school which questions whether the support on offer is personalised and tailored to the individual's needs and aspirations. James alluded to a lack of individualised support as he spoke about wanting more opportunities from school to practise

photography which is his career aspiration. Research suggested that person-centered approaches and individualised PfA support improves outcomes for young people with SEND (ASD) (Thompson et al., 2018).

For some young people there was a shared sense of excitement and sadness around leaving school (Cassie and Hannah) and research showed that young people with SEND (ASD) often have mixed feeling around transitions including the upcoming change and the future (Gaona et al., 2019). Some young people were transitioning to college (Cassie, Amy, Hannah), and some were staying in school to attend sixth from (Ben, Tom, James). This may suggest that the transition out of the school environment to college is more challenging than the transition within school to sixth form, as it was Cassie and Hannah who shared their mixed feelings of transition.

Another convergent experience for participants during PfA was friendships. James referred to wanting more information and support on building and maintaining friendships (and relationships generally) as he gets older. King et al. (2020) suggested that the development and progression of friendships is a key milestone of the transition from childhood to adulthood. Cassie noted how her friends have provided freedom in her life, enabling her to spend time outside of the house with the safety of her friendships. Similarly, Amy spoke about how her friendships have influenced her educational pathway, but also in a transactional sense, Amy sees her friendships has enabling her to live independently in the future.

There was a mixed sense from the participants of having self-determination as known by the three components (autonomy, competence, and relatedness). However, participants did explore having varying experiences of agency in their lives, which was interpreted as having autonomy. Hiu and Tsang (2021) recommended that having self-determination is an effective attribute during the PfA process, and for those participants that shared they had components

of self-determination in their lives, it was largely related to autonomy (as opposed to competence and relatedness – the other components of SDT). Amy expressed having limited autonomy of her health which led to the sense of being a passive agent to decision making and therefore alluded to disempowerment. Having self-determination was a key factor found by Shogren et al. (2019) in employment and community engagement, particularly through teaching young people to self-regulate problem solving and setting goals for their future.

All participants explored ways in which they had agency in their lives, primarily through decision making around education, employment, training, and health. However, there were also divergent experiences related to agency in which participants experienced their voice being overpowered by adults in their lives, due to conflicting interests.

Another key finding, which represents a shared convergent experience by participants during PfA was social capital. All participants discussed their engagement with social capital to some degree, albeit not explicitly. Most participants spoke about the use of their social capital in providing opportunities for work experience or paid employment, which aligned with their aspirations. All but one participant spoke about using their social capital which exists outside of the school environment, and one participant, Cassie alluded to teachers as part of her social capital in helping her to learn to drive.

The lived experiences of the participants in this research were both convergent in many ways, such as utilising social capital, in which the GETs were formed, and additional areas of interest were noted. However, participants experiences were divergent within their unique understanding of any particular theme: school support has been appreciated but a lack of focus on PfA, more opportunities for work experience, mixed feelings of transition and friendships and varying experiences of self-determination and agency during the PfA process.

6.4 Research Question 1a: What are the participants' perceptions of barriers to Preparation for Adulthood?

To answer research question 2, the GETs will be considered in reference to the barriers associated with the theme, which has been created from all participants experience, considering the similarities and differences within the shared experience.

GET 1: Personalised, Early and Embedded Support for PfA

This GET encompassed various ways in which the participants experienced barriers to PfA. Firstly, Amy and Hannah noted that there was not enough school support on PfA, in particular in Amy's experience there was a lack of school support on healthy living. Although Amy's experience did not relate directly to any particular health needs, James alluded to a lack of confidence and developmentally younger knowledge around relationships and sexual health. Ben similarly noted his goal to have a girlfriend in the future, however it was phrased as through that would be an exceptional circumstance, which may reflect low self-esteem and lack of support in changing relationships in adulthood. Research suggested that young people with disabilities may experience less sexual health education than their peers who do not have disabilities (Szydlowski, 2016) so it would be important to ensure comprehensive support for young people with SEND across all aspects of health education. Hannah shared that there had been inconsistent teaching around life skills, and that it had only started in year 12. Similarly, Ben talked about how independent living skills such as being out in public safely and navigating yourself around using Google Maps happened in year 10 but had teetered off since he was in year 11. This is consistent with recent findings from Howard et al. (2021) who recommended that school staff should implement PfA teaching as early as possible and not wait until the young people reach a certain age (16 years old).

The models of learning were not practical or embedded, as interpreted through Ben and James' experience. Ben noted that he would appreciate practical opportunities to engage with the local community to support with charitable work. In addition, Ben noted that increased support on how to develop his financial skills and confidence would be appreciated, such as managing money in practical ways. Divergently, James noted his desire for more opportunities to practise his career aspiration of photography. This supports research by Cassidy et al. (2018) in which PfA (life skills) were embedded across the school day including through targeting the young person's interest and found that positive engagement of students through embedding life skills across the curriculum.

Following the noted experience of a lack of practical and embedded PfA, participants spoke of the generalised (not personalised) support they accessed in school. Cassie spoke of school support being better when it was personalised to the individual person's capabilities, and Hannah referred to her preference of learning – through practicing and role play. Across participants, it became clear that the support offered from school has been well received, but there appears to be some areas which are lacking such as the modality of learning, the breadth of skills and knowledge and the timeliness of topics being introduced to students. The support being tailored to the individuals also appears to be lacking at times, Cassie noted that the support on housing and independent living was given in a group setting, in which there was a significant gap between the skill level Cassie and her friend, to the others in the group. This is consistent with the findings from King et al. (2020) who found that for young people with SEND, the transition to adult life requires developmentally appropriate support, and with findings from Leonard et al. (2016) who recommended that support needs to be personalised for the young person's skill development.

GET 3: Agency

The importance of agency for the participants was an unexpected finding from the research. Being passive to decision making was a core experience for Amy, and it was interpreted that this contributed to feelings of disempowerment and a loss of voice and ownership of her current life and future decisions about her aspirations. Similarly, James's experience of being a passive agent in decision making became apparent through the discussion of his future educational pathway. James had a passion for photography and wanted to pursue this further in school and by attending college, however, his parents have decided for him staying on at sixth form would be the best option. It appeared that James did not have an opportunity to share his voice during this decision-making process, and therefore school are unknown to his views. Considering Bandura's theory of human agency (2001) it is apparent that Amy and James did not have opportunities to exercise direct personal agency but engaged with proxy agency and shared intentionality, utilising the support and good intentions from their family to act on their behalf, for example with applying to college courses. However, it would be interesting to consider whether young people could work together (peer support) as opposed with adults (parents, carers, or teachers) to make known their preferred future pathway, and if given, opportunities to share their views and opinions might change the outcome of their future life decisions. In addition, the use of peer support could be implemented at smaller decision points in daily life, such as choosing what foods to eat/activities to engage with (Amy). The similarities between self-determination and agency have been outlined by Brock et al. (2020) in relation to young people with severe disabilities. Although the participants in this research do not have severe disabilities, the findings align with the message by Brock et al. (2020) which suggested that use of peer support arrangements may promote agency for young people by utilising a different channel of support.

GET 4: Real-world Application of PfA (from Theory to Application)

A lack of real-world application of PfA was interpreted from all of the individual participants' experiences, evidencing surface level understanding. However, Ribenfors (2021) highlighted important distinctions of theory to practice in relation to PfA cornerstones such as independent living and work, that for some young people, these goals – which may be seen as application of PfA in the real world – may not be their intention or desired outcomes.

Half of the participants (Ben, Tom, and Hannah) had been involved with community minded groups or were a part of wider group which served a community purpose. Ben alluded to his roles in different groups outside of school (eco-council and NCS) and being able to support the community through activities such as litter picking. However, within school, the participants did not make connections between the leadership team, or eco council with being community minded. When Amy was asked what it means to be a part of the community, she replied with *not sure*. When Tom was asked if he does anything at school to make him feel part of the community, he replied *what do you mean?.* Tom was unable to conceptualise elements of PfA into real world applications, when discussing being part of a community – Tom did not make links to his experience being part of the leadership team, until he was prompted. Research suggests that for young people with ASD, connections with the community do not happen without intent and planned support (Carter et al., 2013). Therefore, perhaps links with community inclusion were not explicit for the participants to make connections of their community mindedness or community inclusion.

The reality of PfA, for James, meant getting a job *does it mean like what job will I have and stuff* and for many of the other participants, work experience and employment was a key part of their PfA experience and that they valued this opportunity in their experiences of PfA. Pallisera et al. (2012) found that young people with disabilities required training and resource support for their integration into employment, therefore, there may need to be

further education around employment and its link to reality (e.g., how to be successful in their career). When asked to expand on their careers and what skills and knowledge they would need to achieve their career aspirations, Ben and James could not conceptualise how to get to their careers. Ben was vague in identifying his career path, and expressed his desire to do networking, but could not name a specific job. Tom did not appear to have an understanding between education and employment and how they are related, and appeared unable to explore how learning is related to becoming a mechanic.

In terms of independent living Tom had a surface level understanding of what it meant in reality, to live independently. This may simply reflect a lack of thought on the subject matter, which could be due to lack of support with planning for independent living in school, or a lack of engagement with this area of his future life. James also did not appear to have a realistic expectation of independent living, and when discussing paying rent, had a misunderstanding of how this worked. The lack of real-world application for independent living skills and knowledge assumes that there is more to be done in supporting this area of PfA. Malkani (2021) found that young adults with SEND identified aspects of independent living which were important to them for PfA, which included shared vision between the services to support (health, social care, home, and school). It may be for the participants in this study, their SEND impacts on the reality of independent living and therefore conceptualising this during the interviews was challenging as there were barriers which existed in terms of support in other areas of their lives, outside of education.

In relation to health, participants were asked to explore how they plan to stay physically and emotionally healthy during PfA /the transition into adulthood. The responses were surface level, and developmentally younger in terms of understanding. Amy and Tom could not expand further than eating a healthy diet and exercising on staying healthy. Hannah found it challenging to consider how to look after her emotional wellbeing. Research shows

that for young people with SEND, they are at risk of continuing to experience poor health support (Baggio et al., 2019), including mental health needs (Park & Mortell, 2020) which may be due to the complexities of transitioning to adult services in health and care, as well as managing their PfA with regards to educational pathways. Support on staying physically and emotionally healthy could be provided as part of the PfA support in school, with opportunities to practise staying healthy through agency in their school day. Taking control of staying healthy may support the welfare of the young person during transition to mitigate the stress in relation to wider systemic challenges of transition.

6.5 Research Question 1b: What are the participants' perceptions of facilitators to preparation for adulthood?

As with research question 2, to answer research question 3, the GETs will be considered in reference to the facilitating factors associated with the theme, which has been created from all participants' experience, considering the similarities and differences within the shared experience.

GET 1: Personalised, Early, And Embedded Support for PfA

Participants expressed their want for more opportunities (such as work experience) to explore their aspirations in school as a factor which would facilitate their PfA. Amy identified that school could help with her skill and knowledge development through more work experience but could not identify *what* work experience would be helpful. This raises a question as to whether there is scope for more support identifying different types of work experience opportunities and how they can support the young person in their future. Similarly, Hannah expressed her desire for having had more work experience opportunities in previous years (Year 10, 11 and sixth form). James was more explicit in wanting specific

opportunities to practise photography (his career aspiration) and gave examples of ways in which the school could enable this – through photographing special occasions or visitors to the school. Research is lacking in exploring the requirements of work experience for young people with SEND during PfA, although research does promote opportunities for employability engagement and support for the 'labour market' (Pallisera et al., 2012). Lawson and Parker (2020) found that young people with EHCPs referred to college as a 'steppingstone' for their PfA, which alludes to the importance of experiencing a breadth and depth of work experience opportunities during this transitional period of life.

Positive opportunities and experiences in school to promote PfA were identified by Tom, who shared his experiences of being supporting by school to develop his social skills through games. In addition, Tom spoke about being part of the leadership team and how he is able to be a role model for others. Similarly, Ben expressed his pride of being part of the leadership team and feeling support by teachers to be a part of this team. From another perspective, Cassie has felt support by the school in her transition to college, by organising a transition day to get to know the staff.

In addition to more opportunities to explore aspirations at school through work experience, the participants expressed wanting more general opportunities to practise PfA in school. Specifically, James and Hannah spoke about more information on independent living, and that this topic doesn't get introduced until Year 12, which is too late.

Research on PfA support in school has focused on what the professionals such as educational psychologists can do to support the curricula and provision at a systemic level to enable opportunities and provide support for PfA (Morris & Atkinson, 2018). Dunsmuir et al., (2020) support the need for professional support in planning transitions and PfA, to ensure the support is adequate, which involves professionals supporting the planning and organisation of the context enables practice/delivery of service. The findings discussed in this

research, provide another level of insight into what practical support young people with SEND would appreciate to facilitate their PfA.

GET 2: Social Capital and Social Networks

A unique contribution to the research topic (PfA) for young people with SEND, and an unexpected finding from the research, was how all the participants spoke about their social capital and social networks as part of their experience of PfA. The concept of social capital did not emerge in the background review of young people with SEND and PfA. In this research, social capital can be defined as human relationships, interactions and networks which function to facilitate action within a societal structure. Social capital theories (Coleman 1988; Bourdieu 1977; Putnam 2001) have been explored from various perspectives, which either highlight social capital as a resource for the individual (Bourdieu, 1977) or as a resource for society (Putman, 2001). Key distinguishments in the literature refer to bridging, bonding, and linking social capital, all serve varying purposes but are interlinked in their mechanisms. Plagens (2011) identifies networks, norms, and relationships as the three dimensions of social capital. Within the findings of this research, participants typically referred to bonding social capital, which occurs between and within people (or groups) with shared characteristics and bonds, often seen within friends, families, or communities in which the individual or group helps others who they have a bond with (Martikke, 2017). Participants explored their experiences of family or friends helping them to find opportunities for work experience, or paid employment.

Cassie, Tom and Hannah discussed how they harnessed their social capital of who they know (or who their family had connections with) to support them in finding work experience or employment opportunities. Cassie has engaged with her social capital to get her job, by asking family members to help her with her CV, alternatively Hannah gained her job

by asking her dad to find work from people he knew in the local community. Similarly for Tom, he gained his work experience from his dad's friend on Facebook. Awareness of needing family support (use of social networks) in the future was noted by Ben across various aspects of his life, particularly in relation to financial support to live independently and in managing his health. Young people's lives can be shaped by their access to social networks. Benefitting from social networks includes connections to others which align with shared norms, trust, and values as well as exposure to new experiences, which contributes to the young person's social capital (Allan & Catts, 2012). Acquiring social networks and social capital can positively influence life outcomes for young people, such as with education and employment (Mann et al., 2018; Hagell et al., 2019).

In addition to harnessing social capital, where it was present, the participants spoke about using their social networks as a resource to make progress in their life. Cassie spoke about her friends as freedom, enabling her to be able to attend a college open day and socialise more outside of the home. In addition, Amy spoke about her friends as a means to be able to live independently and support her in paying rent and bills. Research found that through encouragement, young people with SEND would influence their peer's participation during PfA related activities (Malkani, 2021).

Interestingly, Cassie explored using teachers within her social capital and networks to support her with PfA related requirements, where her personal social capital and networks at home did not meet her need. Cassie spoke about asking teachers to help her with driving lessons as she didn't have a small, automatic car in her family to practise with. Colclough (2012) stated that, "…attending school can also be instrumental in promoting changes in the values and attitudes of students in ways that provide them with new forms of social and cultural capital" (p. 2).

It should be considered that although having social capital and social networks are facilitating factors to the participants experience of PfA, there may be young people with/without SEND who *do not* have social capital or an accessible social network. In some ways, having access to a social network or having social capital reflects the concept of a 'postcode lottery', in which a person's circumstances (financial, geographical) may impact on their access to opportunities and support. Hewett et al. (2017) found that young people with visual impairments were subject to varying levels of support for PfA due to 'postcode lottery'. Therefore, there may be a role for schools to provide opportunities to plug the gap where social capital may be lacking (Neves et al., 2019). Schools are social environments in which networks and structures are in place to provide support for children and young people to learn. School communities can differ in their approaches to support the pupils, based on whether they take a privatistic outlook (to benefit solely one child) or a solidaristic perspective (to benefit all children) (Plagens, 2011) tapping into the norms dimension of social capital.

In alignment with the findings of Trainor et al. (2020) it would appear that social capital and social networks play a pivotal role in the PfA experiences of the participants in this research, and therefore further research into the function and influence of social capital on PfA outcomes is key.

GET 3: Agency

Another interesting finding from this research was the divergent experiences across the participants in having agency in their life. In this section, agency is explored in relation to *having* agency to put into practise PfA skills and taking control of the present and future. Agency is explored across the literature with reference to transitioning to adulthood and PfA. Fayette and Bond (2018) highlighted the importance of supporting young people to make

informed choices to improve their perceptions of their abilities and autonomy in life. Park and Mortell (2020) found that young adults with autism who had already transitioned to further education found that agency and autonomy were important aspects of their transition. Midjo and Aune (2018) supported the notion of young people with SEND being active agents in their life, who should be centered in planning for their future. For some of the participants, taking control of the present and future referred to being involved during decision making processes about their life. For Ben, this referred to health related decisions, to come off sleeping tablets.

In other ways, having agency to engage with PfA skills in the real-world, through their own experiences was also highlighted amongst the participants. Amy had agency in her work experience opportunity, by choosing to work at a stable, as this aligned with her career aspirations. Therefore, having agency in her current life and supporting her future self by gaining experience in a relevant field of work. Ben expressed his enjoyment of having agency to be community minded by being part of the eco-council and doing litter picks. In another experience, Ben spoke about having a sense of social justice in which he will take control of his future life and continue to support the local community through food banks. Whereas Hannah spoke about having agency of her time, by choosing when she will work based on her college commitments.

The findings of this research are suggestive of the concept that having self-determination (particularly autonomy) promotes positive outcomes in employment and community inclusion (Shogren et al., 2019). The contribution of the findings in discussion of the current literature, provide alternative methods in which to promote agency other than through decision making (as largely referenced in the current literature), such as with exploring self-interests in community minded practices/social justice and having agency over time.

GET 4: Real-world Application of PfA (from Theory to Application)

As discussed in response to the research questions, having a job or work experience promotes a sense of adulthood for the participants, in which they can experience real-world applications of PfA skills and knowledge. An interesting consideration which applies for the research findings, are that having valued social roles (such as being employed, working within an organisation, supporting the community, or a role with another purpose) can promotes positive life experiences (Connaughton & Cline, 2021). Supportive of this, Baggio et al. (2019) argued that successful transitions are often measured with the 'big five' which includes having social roles (among educational attainment, independent living, and employment).

Hannah spoke about developing confidence, independence, and employability skills through her job. Similarly, Cassie explored acquisition of PfA skills through her job in which she perceives her current job as an experience to try something new, different, and fun, as she may not be able to do that when she is older and has a settled career. Cassie spoke confidently about managing her time, understanding working patterns and shifts, and developing professional relationships with colleagues. Interestingly, Cassie also alluded to perceiving herself as already acquiring independent skills through helping her mum at home, which is a strategy in which Cassie practises PfA skills in the 'real world'. On the other hand, Amy spoke about engaging with extracurricular activities and work experience at a stable, to develop her skills and knowledge with horses, linked to her employment aspirations. In a different way, Ben spoke about his involvement with community projects such as litter picking and NCS, which alluded to opportunities for Ben to develop his sense of social justice, through real-world application.

The findings discussed in relation to the literature, suggest that having social roles, whether in employment, community, or work experience opportunities, are beneficial for

young people during PfA. Therefore, a consideration for practice could be to ensure that the young people have opportunities to develop a role in which they value, in the 'real-world', outside of the school environment. Having a particular role provides opportunity to practise PfA skills and knowledge therefore engaging with the transference of PfA theory to application.

6.6 Summary of Discussion

This chapter discussed the main findings of the research in relation to existing literature new contribution to the research area. Overall, participants reported positive and negatives around PfA and throughout their discussion of their lived experiences, shared areas of success which facilitate their PfA and areas for improvements which currently may be perceived as barriers to their PfA. Table 11 provides an overview of the factors which were interpreted to be barriers and facilitators across the participants' shared experiences (of both convergent and divergent experiences) within this research.

Table 17.

Barriers and Facilitators to PfA from Young People with SEND from a Special School in England

Barriers to PfA	Personalised, Early and Embedded Support for PfA Not enough school support (not consistent). Models of learning not practical and embedded. Support is not personalised to different capabilities. School opportunities are generic. Agency Being passive to decision making. "It's not what I want to do" – disempowerment of voice and agency. Real-word Application Surface level understanding of PfA.
Facilitators to PfA	Personalised, Early and Embedded Support for PfA More opportunities to explore aspirations in school. Positive opportunities in school. More opportunities from school are wanted to practice PfA skills. Social Capital and Social Networks It's about who you know. Using social network for opportunities and a better future. Friends are freedom. Agency Applying PfA skills. Taking control of the present and the future. Real-world Application of PfA (from Theory to Application) Having a job/work experience promotes a sense of adulthood.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Chapter Overview

To conclude the research, this chapter will summarise the research and findings, making note of the key contributions to the research area. The strengths and limitations will be presented, to thoroughly critique the research and acknowledge its areas of improvements. Following the critique, implications for professional practice will be explored to further contribute to the research area in supporting best practice. Areas of further research will be offered, in addition to the reasons for their consideration. Finally, a concluding comment will be presented.

7.2 Summary and Contribution to Research

The two key contributions to literature found from this research of young people with SEND on their lived experience of PfA included: 1) having agency over their life in relation to decision making about their future and opportunities and, 2) the importance of utilising and engaging with their social capital for opportunities and progression. The latter contribution around social capital is a unique finding, as the concept of social capital in relation to young people with SEND during PfA did not emerge during the literature scope.

The findings of this research highlight the multifaceted experiences of PfA for a homogenous group of young people with SEND from a special school. Although many experiences have been shared by all participants, unique interpretations of their experiences evidence the complexities of PfA and the need for comprehensive support. The research questions have been considered in reference to participants narrative of their experiences, and through a practical consideration of what the barriers and facilitators are to PfA.

Unexpected findings have developed through the iterative analysis of the data which contribute to the research area and provide a unique perspective to consider how to support young people with SEND during their transition to adulthood – from young people's perspective. First, ensuring young people with SEND have agency. Agency is a significant component to uphold during the planning and actioning of PfA experiences as discussed by the participants of this study. Utilising peer support and continuing to engage with parents and school staff to provide agency by proxy if direct agency is not possible. Essentially, consider how to involve young people during decision making, and provide space for the views of young people to be at the centre of PfA. Second, the participants of this study engaged with and utilised their social capital and social networks to seek opportunities for work experience and employment. There are multiple reasons as to why the participants relied on social capital and networks for opportunities, but it could be due to a lack of opportunities in school which supported them in getting closer to their aspirations. Use of social capital is only beneficial for a young person when it aligns with their aspirations, and therefore some young people may not have this opportunity depending on who they or their family have connections with. Considerations of the inequities that can come from using social capital should be made, and that some young people may not have connections that can support them in gaining work experience, employment, or other opportunities. Third, the participants in this study highlighted the gap between theory and application of PfA skills and knowledge.

7.3 Critical Evaluation of Research

As with IPA research, the findings cannot be used to make generalised claims. Therefore, the findings of this research, and the discussion the findings in relation to current literature are only applicable for the young people with SEND who completed this research.

The findings of this research are explored within the double hermeneutic, which involves the researcher's interpretation of young people's experiences, which can lead to data misinterpretation and therefore reduced validity (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The researcher employed strategies to mitigate the risk of misinterpretation through the use of reflexibility by bracketing assumptions (used as an approach to inform my thinking and analysis), reflective boxes within this paper, by keeping a research diary to note key decision points and points of interest (Appendix 11) and through blind peer reviewing of the confidential data.

The levels of analysis were a timely and iterative process and due to the scope of the research report the PETs were constantly reviewed and refined during the writing of the research, right up to the submission of the thesis. This required multiple examinations and cross-references of the current PETs to the GETs, in alignment to the idiographic. There is potential that the findings do not do justice to the voice of the participants, and that due to my interpretations, their experiences may not have been thoroughly explored in the research. The GETs were presented in a format to answer the research questions, whilst portraying the general themes (convergent and divergent) across the participant group.

The participants of this research were all White British, diversity of cultural and ethnic contexts was not explored. Participants were not recruited based on their demographic background. I did not write pen portraits in line with IPA advice, due to a lack of background information of the participants. Future research should consider greater breadth of ethnicity and cultural backgrounds, and present participant information in the context of pen portraits

for a greater awareness of the participant group and who they represent in relation to the research area.

The research included retrospective accounts of PfA experiences, as well as current experiences, which may have increased the likelihood of inaccuracy (Merterns, 2019), although the aim of this research was not to explore accuracy of recall (Park & Mortell, 2020).

As noted in section 4.9.1 purposive sampling was utilised with a gatekeeper (the deputy head teacher) which may have impacted the findings if participants were selected by the deputy head teacher based on the assumption, they may provide more positive accounts of PfA experience. However, the findings present a mixed experience of PfA with convergent and divergent experiences across the participant group.

7.4 Key Limitations of Research

7.4.1 Participant Selection

The selection of the participants by the deputy headteacher was a limitation because the participants could have been biased to having a positive and successful experience of PfA, or could have had a particularly unique or challenging experience that the deputy head teacher wanted to share vicariously through the young people's interviews.

7.4.2 Lack of Pen Portraits

I was unable to utilise pen portraits in this research due to a lack of information gathered on the participants during the data collection stage. The limitation of not including pen portraits is that the reader cannot create a picture of the participants using informal descriptions made by the researcher. I have included a section to describe how each

participant engaged with the research to substitute pen portraits, however as this was written retrospectively it may not be as accurate as pen portraits would have been.

7.4.3 Pilot Data

As part of the research process, I conducted a pilot interview (Ben) and included the pilot data in my overall results. By including my pilot data in the overall dataset, I acknowledge that Ben's results may have been different if I had interviewed him after experiencing the interview with other participants. Although the content of interview did not differ after completing the pilot study, my interview techniques may have improved with time and practise, resulting in more detailed or different results from Ben.

7.4.4 Data Collection Method: Interviews

A consideration was made by the researcher to utilise a data collection method which could be accessible to the participants and provide an opportunity for the participants to share their lived experiences without barriers. Based on the pilot study and support from the gatekeeper, the use of semi-structured interviews was deemed most appropriate, however awareness of existing research using alternative or adaptive methods for data collection was considered. On reflection, additional methods such as the use of visual prompts or cue cards, in addition to definition and clarification on terminology e.g., community, could have been utilised to make the research more accessible for the participants.

Multi-modalities are often utilised during research with children or young people, to promote the use of three dimensional, visual and kinaesthetic modes of communication which can support and enhance the voice of children and young people (Tatham-Fashanu, 2022). In particular, young people with SEND, may face additional barriers to expressing their views (Sharma, 2021). The use of visual prompts, including photographs are often references in

literature on research methods with children and young people. For young people with SEND, research highlights the effectiveness of using photovoice, the use of photographs or pictures, either selected or taken by the participants to enhance their narration of experiences (Pallisera et al., 2016). However ethical considerations have to be made when using visual approaches in research such as, consent and confidentiality (Mitchell, 2011; Wall, 2017). Another method utilised in research with young people that have autism is the grid elaboration method (GEM). The free association grid elaboration method involves visually structured interviews in which the participant is asked to draw into the gird their associations (first response) to a topic and has been (Park & Mortell, 2020). One of the aims of GEM is to redefine power dynamics in social research (Billington, 2013).

Other methods exist within the literature of research with children and young people with SEND which are not limited to: the mosaic approach (Beresford et al., 2004), talking mats (Rabiee et al., 2005) and the use of assistive technology and apps. For this research, the use of semi-structured interviews was deemed most appropriate, based on the feedback from the pilot study, and the researcher's understanding of the participant's capacity to engage effectively with semi-structured interviews without resources from rapport building. However, on reflection, if I were to do the research again I would engage with adaptive approaches to support the interviews such as the use of visual prompts or cue cards, in addition to definition and clarification on terminology e.g., 'community' and 'preparing for adulthood' to add clarity to my questions and to make the research more accessible for the participants.

7.5 Implications for Professionals Supporting with PfA

The findings of the research cannot be generalised wider than the participants who completed the study, in line with the aims of IPA. However, the findings lend themselves to

clear implications for professional practice which, when considered objectively, appear useful for all young people (not just those with SEND) or those who have been involved in this research. Table 18 presents an overview of suggested implications for professionals supporting with PfA (including but not limited to EPs). The findings of this research, as presented in Table 18 have been disseminated to the special school in which the participants attended, to support the school's understanding of young people with SEND's experience of PfA and the staff's practice in supporting PfA.

Table 18.

Suggested Implications for Professionals Supporting with PfA

1	Support schools with implementing PfA **support early**, which is **embedded across the curriculum** and make it **personalised**, using young person voice and person-centered practice.
2	**Promote agency** in young people, such as through decision-making and taking control in their life (utilising friendships and peer support).
3	Getting to know the young person will enable the adults to understand the young person's **social capital and social networks**, to recognise where they can 'plug the gaps' e.g., setting up mentoring programmes for career aspirations, finding work experience which aligns with career aspirations, residential trips or university student hall visits to experience living independently and taking control of health and engagement with community (NCS) or similar scheme seems useful.
4	Promote and explore opportunities for young people to engage with **work experience opportunities**, to support young people to transfer theory into practice for **real-world application** of PfA skills and knowledge.

7.5 Further Research

The research focus was on the lived experiences of young people with SEND from a special school. Existing literature has researched into the transition to/PfA for young people with specific needs or through including the voice of parents or professionals. However,

further research may benefit from comparing the experience of young people who attend mainstream school to young people who attend a special school.

As a key finding from this research found that young people with SEND utilised their social capital and social networks for opportunities to apply their PfA skills (e.g., through work experience and employment), it may also be interesting to compare the experiences of young people with SEND from across geographical areas, and socioeconomic status to explore their social capital and social networks in terms of support. In addition, some young people may have more specific interests and that can be harder for social capital to meet and fulfil, and so what does this mean for how school and professionals can meet their needs in their educational setting where social capital is lacking?

Further research into these topic areas may provide greater insight into how professionals can support young people with SEND through PfA, where their social capital, social networks or local offers may not be meeting their needs/aspirations.

7.6 Concluding Comment

To conclude, this small-scale exploratory study has contributed to empowering the voices of young people with SEND during PfA in research and practice. This research contributes to the existing literature on young people with SEND views of PfA. To my knowledge, this research is the first to solely explore young people views without parent or professional views, or for young people with a specific special educational need or disability. This research provides a unique and novel contribution to research on transition to/PfA for young people with SEND and aims to support professionals working with young people in this transitional time of their lives. The findings of the research empower the voice of young people with SEND and provides professionals with recommendations of how to support during PfA which centres on supporting agency, becoming aware of young people's social

capital and social networks, offer opportunities of real-world application of PfA skills (such as work experience) and provide personalised, early and embedded support for PfA. In the words of Ben "*I really want to be like an autistic kid that can like change the world or something like that"* and James *"I may start a new life"* which highlights the importance of getting PfA right for young people with SEND.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1

Participant and Parent Information Forms and Consent Documents

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Participant Consent Form

If you are happy to take part, please complete and sign the consent form below.

	Please tick box
1. I confirm that I have read the attached Participant Information Sheet describing the project and have had time to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered to my satisfaction.	
2. I understand that it is entirely up to me whether I take part in the study and that I am free to withdraw my data at any time up to a week after my interview. I understand that after this time, my interview data will have been transcribed and anonymised and so cannot be withdrawn.	
3. I understand that my personal and identifiable information will be kept anonymised through use of pseudonyms (different names) when Ellie writes up her research.	
4. I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded, and where visuals have been used, pictures may also be taken of my views (not of the participant).	
5. I agree to Ellie using some of the things I have said as an example of young people's lived experiences. Where these are published, they will be completely anonymised (through the use of pseudonyms – using a different name to your name) so no one will be able to identify you. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.	
6. I agree to take part in the above project.	

If you have any questions, please contact Ellie using the following contact details:

_____ _____ _____

Name of participant Date Signature

_____ _____ _____

Name of researcher Date Signature

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Parent/Carer Consent Form

Providing my consent for: _____
(Name of Child)

	Please tick ✓
I have read the Information Sheet and understand the nature of the research: using interviews to explore the lived experiences of young people with SEND on preparation for adulthood.	
I understand that this project forms part of the University of Birmingham postgraduate doctoral research towards Ellie Turner's professional qualification as an educational psychologist.	
I consent for my child to take part in the research study.	
I understand that my child can withdraw from the study at any point up until 1 week after the interviews.	
I understand that my child's personal and identifiable information will be kept anonymised through use of pseudonyms, through data analysis and writing.	

If you have any questions, please contact the researcher using the following contact details

_____ _____ _____
Name of parent/carer Date Signature

_____ _____ _____
Name of researcher Date Signature

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Information Sheet for Participants and Parents/Carers

My name is Ellie Turner, and I am a trainee educational psychologist in the 2nd year of my doctoral studies at the University of Birmingham. I am currently on placement at LA. During my time with the service, I am hoping to carry out a research project on the lived experience of young people with SEND from a special school on preparation for adulthood.

You/your child has indicated that they would like to be involved in the project and I am seeking your consent (for your child) to take part in the research. This project will involve me separately interviewing young people, with a supportive adult if needed/requested by the young person. The interviews will be approximately an hour and will take place in school.

What would the interview be about?

The interview questions will be based upon the national initiative 'preparation for adulthood' outcomes which involve the following areas:

- Education, employment, and training
- Independent living
- Community inclusion
- Health

The interview will also discuss the young person's aspirations, what skills and knowledge they need and how school has supported them to develop these skills.

Practical Elements of the Research Project:

- The interviews will be audio-recorded, and pictures may be used to support the conversation. Only I, Ellie, will listen to the recording.
- Anonymity and confidentiality will be maintained. This means:
    - You/your child's name will be changed in the formal report. This means that only I, Ellie, will know who has said what.
    - Locations, school names and other participants' names will also be changed.
    - The recorded interviews will be kept in a password-protected and secure format.
- I, Ellie, will have to share information with the school's designated safeguarding lead(s) if a safeguarding concern arises.
- The views of you/your child will be included anonymously in the final research project which will form part of my doctoral thesis and will be written up as a formal report. This may include photos of the pictures used to support the conversation during interview.
- If you/your child decides that you no longer wish to take part, then you can withdraw your data up to one week after the date of the interview. This can be done by using my contact details below.

If you/your child wishes to participate, please respond to this information sheet, by filling out the information below and returning to school or send via email to Ellie using her contact details. You will then be asked to sign a consent form once this has been returned.

Thank you for taking the time to read this. If you have any questions or would like to talk through the information provided please feel free to contact me at

My supervisor is X and can be contacted at X

Yours sincerely,

Ellie Turner
Trainee Educational Psychologist
University of Birmingham

.....

Participant Interest – Information Sheet

Participant's name: _____

If appropriate, parent/guardian name (please print): _____

Date: _____

Please return to Ellie via email: or (insert staff member)

Appendix 2

Copy of the Application for Ethical Review

UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Application for Ethics Review Form

Guidance Notes:

What is the purpose of this form?

This form should be completed to seek ethics review for research projects to be undertaken by University of Birmingham staff, PGR students or visiting/emeritus researchers who will be carrying out research which will be attributed to the University.

Who should complete it?

For a staff project – the lead researcher/Principal Investigator on the project.
For a PGR student project – the student's academic supervisor, in discussion with the student.

Students undertaking undergraduate projects and taught postgraduate (PGT) students should refer to their Department/School for advice

When should it be completed?

After you have completed the University's online ethics self-assessment form (SAF), **IF** the SAF indicates that ethics review is required. You should apply in good time to ensure that you receive a favourable ethics opinion prior to the commencement of the project and it is recommended that you allow at least 60 working days for the ethics process to be completed.

How should it be submitted?

An electronic version of the completed form should be submitted to the Research Ethics Officer, at the following email address: aer-ethics@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

What should be included with it?

Copies of any relevant supporting information and participant documentation, research tools (e.g. interview topic guides, questionnaires, etc) and where appropriate a health & safety risk assessment for the project (see section 10 of this form for further information about risk assessments).

What should applicants read before submitting this form?

Before submitting, you should ensure that you have read and understood the following information and guidance and that you have taken it into account when completing your application:

- The information and guidance provided on the University's ethics webpages (https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/finance/accounting/Research-Support-Group/Research-Ethics/Ethical-Review-of-Research.aspx)

- The University's Code of Practice for Research (https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/university/legal/research.pdf)

- The guidance on Data Protection for researchers provided by the University's Legal Services team at https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/legal-services/What-we-do/Data-Protection/resources.aspx.

Section 1: Basic Project Details

Project Title: Preparation for Adulthood: The Lived Experiences of Young People with SEND from a Special School

Is this project a:

University of Birmingham Staff Research project ☐
University of Birmingham Postgraduate Research (PGR) Student project ☒
Other (Please specify below) ☐
Click or tap here to enter text.

Details of the Principal Investigator or Lead Supervisor (for PGR student projects):

Title: Dr
First name: Nick
Last name: Bozic

Position held: Academic Supervisor
School/Department: Education

Telephone: N/A
Email address

Details of any Co-Investigators or Co-Supervisors (for PGR student projects):

Title: Click or tap here to enter text.
First name: Click or tap here to enter text.
Last name: Click or tap here to enter text.

Position held: Click or tap here to enter text.
School/Department Click or tap here to enter text.

Telephone: Click or tap here to enter text.
Email address: Click or tap here to enter text.

Details of the student for PGR student projects:

Title: Miss
First name: Ellie
Last name: Turner

Course of study: Applied Educational and Child Psychology Doctorate
Email address: Click or tap here to enter text.

Project start and end dates:
Estimated start date of project: 01/05/2022
Estimated end date of project: 01/07/2023

Funding:
Sources of funding: N/A

Section 2: Summary of Project

Describe the purpose, background rationale for the proposed project, as well as the hypotheses/research questions to be examined and expected outcomes. This description should be in everyday language that is free from jargon - please explain any technical terms or discipline-specific phrases. Please do not provide extensive academic background material or references.

Rationale:
The purpose of the proposed research is to explore the lived experiences of young people with special educational needs, on preparing for adulthood. There is a dearth of literature which represents the wider population of young people with SEND and their experiences of preparation for adulthood. The current research basis on preparation for adulthood, is fragmented into narrower focuses of specific learning difficulties such as ASD or ADHD (e.g., White et al., 2021; Wisner-Carlson & Flis, 2020; King et al., 2020; Thompson et al., 2018; Fayette & Bond, 2018). Alternatively, literature focuses on parent/carer perspectives of the transition to adulthood (e.g., Mao, 2012; Leonard et al., 2016).

Evidence shows that long term outcomes for young people with a special educational need and/or disability are poor, with the transition period into adulthood often being challenging and complex (White et al., 2021; King et al., 2020; Leonard et al., 2016) and there is a greater requirement for professionals to include young people during decision making and participation within the transitional state to adulthood (Fayette & Bond, 2018). However, the development of support for young people after they reach school leaving age has been subject to little research (MacKay, 2020).

Therefore, the researcher has identified a need to contribute to the lack of evidence which represents the experiences of preparation for adulthood from young people with SEND. In addition to contributing to the lack of research in this topic area, the researcher hopes to contribute to professional practice when supporting young people through preparation for adulthood.

Research questions:
1. How do young people with SEND experience preparation for adulthood?
2. What do young people with SEND experience that works well in supporting young people with SEND during transition to adulthood?
3. What do you people experience that needs further improvements when supporting young people with SEND prepare for adulthood?

Expected outcomes:
The proposed research could improve outcomes for individuals with SEND, during the preparation for adulthood process. By raising awareness and understanding of how young people experience this aspect of their education, it may improve outcomes for young people such as achieving their desired aspirations and expectations in all areas of preparation for adulthood. In addition to improved outcomes for young people, the research may present areas of improvement and

highlight best practice for professionals working with young people during preparation for adulthood – such as Educational Psychologists.

Section 3: Conduct and location of Project

Conduct of project

Please give a description of the research methodology that will be used. If more than one methodology or phase will be involved, please separate these out clearly and refer to them consistently throughout the rest of this form.

This study will adopt an embedded case study design, as recommended by Yin (2013). The case being the specialist secondary school, and the multiple sources of evidence being the 4-6 young people as the participants. The aim is to explore the lived experiences of young people with SEND on preparation for adulthood, therefore the researcher will be taking on an interpretivist epistemology and realism ontological perspective, to gain rich data, full of the experiences of the young people. Adopting an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach, the researcher will use semi-structured interviews (Appendix G) to examine how the young people make sense of the preparation for adulthood experience (Smith et al., 2009; Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). If needed, additional use of visuals will be provided, such as photographs/representation image of topic areas e.g., finances (a picture of money), relationships (an image of friends), dependent on the individual communication needs of the participants.

Geographic location of project

State the geographic locations where the project and all associated fieldwork will be carried out. If the project will involve travel to areas which may be considered unsafe, either in the UK or overseas, please ensure that the risks of this (or any other non-trivial health and safety risks associated with the research) are addressed by a documented health and safety risk assessment, as described in section 10 of this form.

Central Bedfordshire Council Educational Psychology Team (the researcher's placement) and a special secondary school in Central Bedfordshire (for the recruitment of participants)

Section 4: Research Participants and Recruitment

Does the project involve human participants?

Note: 'Participation' includes both active participation (such as when participants take part in an interview) and cases where participants take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time (for example, in crowd behaviour research).

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have answered NO please go on to Section 8 of this form. If you have answered YES please complete the rest of this section and then continue on to section 5.

Who will the participants be?

Describe the number of participants and important characteristics (such as age, gender, location,

affiliation, level of fitness, intellectual ability etc.). Specify any inclusion/exclusion criteria to be used.

This study will use purposive sampling to recruit young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities at a special secondary school in Central Bedfordshire Council. The study will aim to recruit 4-6 participants, as recommended by Smith, Flowers and Lark (2009) as an appropriate number for IPA., from all genders. The researcher will be working with an identified special school where the researcher's placement supervisor has built a positive working relationship.

Participants:
The researcher will aim to recruit 4-6 young people with mild to moderate special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), specific details of the young person's needs and/or disability will be unknown until recruitment. The special school's admission statement reads "whose primary need falls within the cognition and learning strand of SEND" and that pupils will have "an education, health and care plan (EHCP) which indicates specific learning difficulties as the primary SEND. The pupil will experience… one or more of the following areas…"

- Dyslexia (written language difficulties)
- Dysgraphia (written language difficulties)
- Dyscalculia (numeracy and working memory difficulties)
- Dyspraxia (developmental coordination disorder)

"The pupil as an additional diagnosis could present with characteristics identified below which present alongside specific learning difficulties…"

- Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and/or Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD) where symptoms may be classified as mild, moderate
- Developmental Language Disorder (DLD)
- Speech language and communication needs
- Auditory processing disorder
- General learning difficulty (such as: fragile X syndrome, downs syndrome, foetal alcohol syndrome, global developmental delay and cognitive impairment due to brain injury not to be deemed as severe)

- The young people will be aged between 14-19 years old, and be either beginning their preparation for adulthood experience, be within the process or coming to the end of the process.

- All participants will be students at one special school in central Bedfordshire.

- The young people will have varying intellectual ability, where appropriate, the young people will receive adult support to make informed consent, access and engage in the research.

Inclusion criteria:

- A young person who has a special educational need and disability (SEND) and an education, health and care plan (EHCP).
- Attends the special secondary school.
- Aged between 14-19 years old.

Exclusion criteria:

- Have complex/severe needs which impacts intellectual ability to a degree in which they cannot provide informed consent (which is not to be expected due to the admission statement of the special school as detailed above).
- Have significant ongoing safeguarding concerns whereby involvement in research may put the young person at risk – the school staff will inform the researcher in confidence where this may be the case.

A pilot study will be conducted, to assess the suitability and accessibility of the semi-structured interview schedule (Appendix G), including the validity of the questions (e.g., do the questions align with my research aims). The pilot will be completed by participants who meet the inclusion/exclusion criteria of the research project and will be recruited through the described procedure below. The pilot will also test whether the participant recruitment process is successful and if this needs to be amended.

How will the participants be recruited?

Please state clearly how the participants will be identified, approached and recruited. Include any relationship between the investigator(s) and participant(s) (e.g. instructor-student). Please ensure that you attach a copy of any poster(s), advertisement(s) or letter(s) to be used for recruitment.

1. After obtaining ethical approval, information sheets (Appendix A) will be shared with the school, to provide an outline of the study, including what the involvement of participants will be and aims for dissemination.
2. A meeting will be organised to discuss the research information provided and will provide an opportunity for the school to ask questions.
3. The school will think about potential participants who fit the inclusion/exclusion criteria and share the research information sheet and speak to the students about whether they would like to take part in the study.
4. Potential participants who express interest will then be asked to provide consent to participate. For participants under the age of 18 years old, a signed parent/guardian consent form (Appendix B) will be required, in addition to the young person's own consent (Appendix C). (Please see below section for further information on consent). Participants and/or parents can scan and email the form back to the researcher or pass it back to school. The researchers contact details will be provided on the information sheet and consent form, to enable participants and/or parents to ask questions or get in touch.
5. If the researcher feels that a student **cannot** access the activities and therefore be unable to take part in the study, the researcher will send the student and the parent letter (Appendix D) via a staff member to thank them for their interest but there is limited space.
6. Once consent has been sought, the researcher will arrange to speak to participants either one a one-to-one basis, or as a group, to explain the study in more detail. The researcher will talk through their right to withdraw and confidentiality. In addition to talk about the research, by meeting with the participants the researcher hopes to build rapport and gauge (alongside staff knowledge) as to whether the participant will be able to access the semi-structured interviews (Appendix G) during data collection. Additional visits will be arranged, if appropriate, to continue rapport building.

Section 5: Consent

What process will be used to obtain consent?

Describe the process that the investigator(s) will be using to obtain valid consent. If consent is not to be obtained explain why. If the participants are under the age of 16 it would usually be necessary to obtain parental consent and the process for this should be described in full, including whether parental consent will be opt-in or opt-out.

The researcher will provide an information sheet (Appendix A) which outlines the purpose of the study, what involvement will mean to participants and how the research findings will be disseminated. This information sheet will be shared to school staff and to young people at school as part of the recruitment process. The information sheet will be easy to read, and include visuals to support understanding of the research topic. The researchers details will be included on the information sheet should potential parents/participants have further questions about the study. The school staff will support the researcher by scoping out potential participants, and supporting explanation of the research throughout the school day (where the researcher is absent).

Prior Consent:
If a young person expresses interest in the study, the next steps will be to gain informed consent from the young people directly (Appendix C) and if they are under 18 years of age, parent/carer consent will also be required (Appendix B). If consent is given, this will be sent back to the research either directly through email or via school.

Consent at Interview:
Before beginning the semi-structured interviews (Appendix G) (the data collection), the researcher will verbally explain the aim of the study and what will be expected of the participant should they agree to continue. The researcher will also tell them that they can withdraw at any point during the interview with no consequences. Once the data has been collected, participants may withdraw up to one week after interviews. The researcher will ask if the participants have any questions and will emphasise that they do not have to take part if they do not want to ,and that there are no consequences for not doing so.

If they wish to take part, the researcher will ask them to verbally consent, and confirm that they have provided their consent and parent/carer consent if they are under the age of 18 years old.

During the data collection, the researcher will be sensitive to the participants' non-verbal cues. If the participant was to show signs of fatigue, distress or unwillingness to take part, the researcher would ask whether they would like to stop the interview. The researcher would then signal that they have the right to withdraw if they feel they need to and there will be no consequences.

Post Interview:
During the debrief, the researcher will remind the participants that they can withdraw their data up until one week after the interview.

This information will also be provided to participants and parents as a written debrief sheet (Appendix E).

The researcher has used their professional judgement through evidence based research, when making decisions around gaining consent from young people with SEND. A paper by Attwood and Atkinson (2020), described the following ethical procedure when carrying out a single case study with a post-16 student with learning difficulties, of which I have compared my procedure and adopted where the researcher felt appropriate:

Ethical approval was sought from the university ethics committee. A strict exclusion criteria was implemented, which specified: no young person with significant mental health problems, or whom school have any significant safeguarding concerns about, and to note have a poor attendance record, to ensure the research was ethically appropriate for the participant. The recruitment of a participant was guided by Morris et al's. (1993) findings regarding what people with learning difficulties should be told about to give informed consent. Therefore, the participant had to demonstrate understanding around the purpose of the intervention and the risks and benefits and express a clear decision to participate with a rationale. This information was included in a simplified information sheet incorporating verbal question and answers (Q&A) to clarify the participant's understanding of the research. Importantly, written consent was also obtained from the participant, as was parent/carer consent, due to the participant being under the age of 18 years old and potentially vulnerable because of their learning difficulties.

The researcher has taken the decision to follow the ethical stance by Attwood and Atkinson (2020), that any young person under the age of 18 years old must have parent/carer consent *in addition* to their own consent. The decision was made due to the young people in this research having SEND and an EHCP and therefore are likely to be vulnerable to some extent/capacity.

Please be aware that if the project involves over 16s who lack capacity to consent, separate approval will be required from the Health Research Authority (HRA) in line with the Mental Capacity Act.

Please attach a copy of the Participant Information Sheet (if applicable), the Consent Form (if applicable), the content of any telephone script (if applicable) and any other material that will be used in the consent process.

Note: Guidance from Legal Services on wording relating to the Data Protection Act 2018 can be accessed at https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/legal-services/What-we-do/Data-Protection/resources.aspx.

Use of deception?

Will the participants be deceived in any way about the purpose of the study?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If yes, please describe the nature and extent of the deception involved. Include how and when the deception will be revealed, and the nature of any explanation/debrief will be provided to the participants after the study has taken place.

N/A

Section 6: Participant compensation, withdrawal and feedback to participants

What, if any, feedback will be provided to participants?

Explain any feedback/ information that will be provided to the participants after participation in the research (e.g. a more complete description of the purpose of the research, or access to the results of the research).

After the interview has been completed, the participants will be debriefed verbally. The researcher will explain that the study will form part of their university doctoral thesis, which will be available online and may be published in an academic journal. The researcher will also explain that there will be details of further support and services if they require it.

This information will also be written up in a debrief sheet (Appendix E) and given to the participants and parents/carers. The debrief sheet (Appendix E) will inform participants and parents/carers, that the findings of the research will be shared with them via school (the researcher will present the findings in an easy to read format for the participants).

Participants and parents/carers will be offered the opportunity to speak with the researcher, via the contact details which can be found on the information sheet (Appendix A) consent forms (Appendix B and C) and debrief sheet (Appendix E), if they wish to discuss the findings further.

What arrangements will be in place for participant withdrawal?

Describe how the participants will be informed of their right to withdraw from the project, explain any consequences for the participant of withdrawing from the study and indicate what will be done with the participant's data if they withdraw.

There will be no consequence for participants if they choose to withdraw from the study. If a participant requests to withdraw from the study after data collection has taken place, but within the one-week 'window' summarised above, pictures of visuals, audio recordings and any written transcripts or notes will be deleted, and the data removed from any analysis.

Participants' right to withdraw from the study and the parents' right to withdraw their child from the study will be stated explicitly in the consent forms (Appendix B and Appendix C) and debrief sheet (Appendix E). The researcher will also verbally repeat the participants right to withdraw during the face-to-face interviews (Appendix G). Participants can withdraw any time during the interview and a maximum of one week from data collection (after interviews), as after this time data analysis will be in progress. The reason for this one week timeframe is that data collection is likely to happen during summer term, and if a participant does withdraw, then the researcher will need adequate time to recruit additional participants. In addition, the researcher has expressed this timeframe of one week to withdraw after the interview at various points e.g., within the information sheet, consent forms and verbally before interviews and therefore has given sufficient notice for this.

During the data collection, as mentioned previously, the researcher will be sensitive to the participants' non-verbal cues. If the participant was to show signs of fatigue, distress, or unwillingness to take part, the research would ask whether they would like to stop the interview. The researcher would then signal that they have the right to withdraw if they feel they need to and there will be no consequences

After the interview, the researcher will debrief the participant and check again that they confirm for the data to be used in the study. The researcher will also remind them during the debrief that they can withdraw from the study until one week after the interview. This will also be included in a written debrief form for participants to take away and share with parents/carers. The debrief form will have the researcher's contact details so that parents/carers can withdraw their child from the study up to one week following the data collection (interview).

Please confirm the specific date/timescale to be used as the deadline for participant withdrawal and ensure that this is consistently stated across all participant documentation. This is considered preferable to allowing participants to 'withdraw at any time' as presumably there will be a point beyond which it will not be possible to remove their data from the study (e.g. because analysis has started, the findings have been published, etc).

Participants will be free to withdraw from the research study before, during or up to one week after their individual data collection takes place. Participants and their respective parents /carers will be provided with a date (to be confirmed, once ethical approval has been sought) that they can withdraw, and their parent/carer is able to contact me to do this. This will be stated in the consent forms and debrief form.

What arrangements will be in place for participant compensation?

Will participants receive compensation for participation?

Yes ☐
No ☒

If yes, please provide further information about the nature and value of any compensation and clarify whether it will be financial or non-financial.

N/A

If participants choose to withdraw, how will you deal with compensation?

N/A

Section 7: Confidentiality/anonymity

Will the identity of the participants be known to the researcher?

Will participants be truly anonymous (i.e. their identity will not be known to the researcher)?

Yes ☐
No ☒

In what format will data be stored?

Will participants' data be stored in identifiable format, or will it be anonymised or pseudo-anonymised (i.e. an assigned ID code or number will be used instead of the participant's name and a key will kept allowing the researcher to identify a participant's data)?

Anonymity cannot be offered as the study involves data collection through face-to-face interviews. In the participant and parent/carer information sheet, it will state that the research will involve this method of data collection.

During the write up of the research, participants will be pseudo-anonymised, so that they cannot be identified by anyone other than the researcher (for the purposes of withdrawing data if necessary). The participants' respective school will also be assigned a pseudonym to remove further possibilities

of identification. The local authority in which the schools are in will also be given a pseudonym. Again, only the researcher will be able to identify these. A record of which pseudonym applies to which participant will be stored separately from the data, in a password-protected file on the UoB BEAR DataShare. The data will be stored securely and can be withdrawn on request. As such, the data will be confidential but not anonymous.

Participants and their parents/carers will also be informed that the final write up of the research will form the basis of the researcher's doctoral research thesis, which will later be available online and may be published at a later date. Participants will be made aware that their names and any identifying information will not appear in the final report. Participants will be told that excerpts from interview transcripts will be included in the final write-up of the study, provided there are no risks that quotations would render participants identifiable.

If a participant discloses that they, or others are at risk of harm or illegal activity, confidentiality may be breached. In the event of risks relating to safeguarding or child protection arising from an interview, local authority and school safeguarding/whistleblowing procedures would be followed.

Parents/carers and participants are fully apprised of these measures, and this will be record in all the consent forms and debrief sheet.

Will participants' data be treated as confidential?

Will participants' data be treated as confidential (i.e. they will not be identified in any outputs from the study and their identity will not be disclosed to any third party)?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If you have answered no to the question above, meaning that participants' data will not be treated as confidential (i.e. their data and/or identities may be revealed in the research outputs or otherwise to third parties), please provide further information and justification for this:

The participants' data will be treated as confidential. However, there is a risk that individual participants could be identified through the research as there is a small size. This risk will be minimised by ensuring that the names of any individuals, organisations or geographical locations are not reported in the written presentation of the research. All names will be given pseudonyms. Whilst information about the participants (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity) will be reported, this information will not be linked to individual participants to ensure that this information could not serve to identify participants and their responses to individuals who know them. Finally, as noted above, direct quotations will not be used where their content or wording may constitute any risks to participants' identifiability.

Section 8: Storage, access and disposal of data

How and where will the data (both paper and electronic) be stored, what arrangements will be in place to keep it secure and who will have access to it?

Please note that for long-term storage, data should usually be held on a secure University of Birmingham IT system, for example BEAR (see https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/it/teams/infrastructure/research/bear/index.aspx).

Click or tap here to enter text.

Data retention and disposal

The University usually requires data to be held for a minimum of 10 years to allow for verification. Will you retain your data for at least 10 years?

Yes ☒
No ☐

If data will be held for less than 10 years, please provide further justification:

N/A

What arrangements will be in place for the secure disposal of data?

A data management plan will be put in place for this research.

Immediately after each participant interview, the electronically audio-recorded data and any digital photos of visuals will be transferred from the audio-recording device or camera device onto an online platform to a password protected folder on UoB's BEAR DataShare. Audio and visual files will then be erased from the recording device, camera, or online platform.

Electronic transcripts will also be held in a password-protected folder on UoB BEAR DataShare.

Printed transcripts, written notes and consent forms will be locked in a secure cabinet and then subsequently, will be electronically scanned into and stored in the UoB BEAR DataShare.

In accordance with university research policy, data will be stored on UoB BEAR DataShare for 10 years after completion of the project. A 10-year expiry date will be set for the electronic data stored on UOB BEAR DataShare.

Section 9: Other approvals required

Are you aware of any other national or local approvals required to carry out this research?

E.g. clearance from the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), Local Authority approval for work involving Social Care, local ethics/governance approvals if the work will be carried out overseas, or approval from NOMS or HMPPS for work involving police or prisons? If so, please provide further details:

Click or tap here to enter text.

For projects involving NHS staff, is approval from the Health Research Authority (HRA) needed in addition to University ethics approval?

If your project will involve NHS staff, please go to the HRA decision tool at http://www.hra-decisiontools.org.uk/research/ to establish whether the NHS would consider your project to be research, thus requiring HRA approval in addition to University ethics approval. Is HRA approval required?

Yes ☐
No ☐

Please include a print out of the HRA decision tool outcome with your application.

Section 10: Risks and benefits/significance

Benefits/significance of the research

Insight and contribution to literature, and professional practice implications: This research aims to provide a unique contribution to evidence base of preparation for adulthood, by exploring the lived experiences of young people with SEND. As discussed earlier in the application, there is a lack of literature which highlights the voice of young people during the transitional stage to adulthood and therefore this research project aims to elevate the perspectives and experiences as told by the young people themselves. In addition, this research may provide insightful practice recommendations for professionals working with young people during preparation for adulthood, such as educational psychologists.

Risks of the research

Outline any potential risks (including risks to research staff, research participants, other individuals not involved in the research, the environment and/or society and the measures that will be taken to minimise any risks and the procedures to be adopted in the event of mishap.) ***Please ensure that you include any risks relating to overseas travel and working in overseas locations as part of the study, particularly if the work will involve travel to/working in areas considered unsafe and/or subject to travel warnings from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (see*** https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice)***. Please also be aware that the University insurer, UMAL, offers access to RiskMonitor Traveller, a service which provides 24/7/365 security advice for all travellers and you are advised to make use of this service (see https://umal.co.uk/travel/pre-travel-advice/).***

The outlining of the risks in this section does not circumvent the need to carry out and document a detailed Health and Safety risk assessment where appropriate – see below.

The researcher deems the risks to participant or researcher as minimal, however the following have been noted:

- Emotional distress by exploring an important yet sometimes challenging period in a young person's life. Discussions may lead to aspirations, hopes and life goals which may be identified as unattainable by the young person or others.

- Power and positionality of the researcher during the interview process. As the researcher, it is imperative that I recognise my position as a person with no identified special educational need or disability, and have not experienced having an education health and care plan during my education.

The emotional wellbeing of the participant is the priority of the interview. In the event of a participant becoming significantly distressed or remaining distressed, the researcher will immediately take the decision to terminate the interview. The researcher will stay with the participant until they feel more settled, and give them time and support to experience their emotions in a safe space and contain emotions in an appropriate and safe manner. Where the participant poses immediate risk to themselves, the researcher of any other persons in the school, the researcher will contact the appropriate staff members. If the staff members are not present, then any other school staff will be notified of the situation for immediate support and safeguarding. Ahead of each interview, the researcher will speak with the participant to identify an adult in school who they wish to name as their safe adult, should they need support during the interview. Please see 'Protocol for Managing Potential Distress in Interviews' (Appendix F).

University Health & Safety (H&S) risk assessment

For projects of more than minimal H&S risk it is essential that a H&S risk assessment is carried out and signed off in accordance with the process in place within your School/College and you must provide a copy of this with your application. The risk may be non-trivial because of travel to, or working in, a potentially unsafe location, or because of the nature of research that will carried out there. It could also involve (irrespective of location) H&S risks to research participants, or other individuals not involved directly in the research. Further information about the risk assessment process for research can be found at https://intranet.birmingham.ac.uk/hr/wellbeing/worksafe/policy/Research-Risk-Assessment-and-Mitigation-Plans-RAMPs.aspx.

Please note that travel to (or through) 'FCO Red zones' requires approval by the University's Research Travel Approval Panel, and will only be approved in exceptional circumstances where sufficient mitigation of risk can be demonstrated.

Section 11: Any other issues

Does the research raise any ethical issues not dealt with elsewhere in this form?

If yes, please provide further information:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Do you wish to provide any other information about this research not already provided, or to seek the opinion of the Ethics Committee on any particular issue?

If yes, please provide further information:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section 12: Peer review

Has your project received scientific peer review?

Yes ☐
No ☐

If yes, please provide further details about the source of the review (e.g. independent peer review as part of the funding process or peer review from supervisors for PGR student projects):

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section 13: Nominate an expert reviewer

For certain types of project, including those of an interventional nature or those involving significant risks, it may be helpful (and you may be asked) to nominate an expert reviewer for your project. If you anticipate that this may apply to your work and you would like to nominate an expert reviewer at this stage, please provide details below.

Title: Click or tap here to enter text.
First name: Click or tap here to enter text.
Last name: Click or tap here to enter text.
Email address: Click or tap here to enter text.
Phone number: Click or tap here to enter text.

Brief explanation of reasons for nominating and/or nominee's suitability:

Click or tap here to enter text.

Section 14: Document checklist

Please check that the following documents, where applicable, are attached to your application:

Recruitment advertisement ☐
Participant information sheet ☒
Participant consent forms ☒
Parent/Carer consent forms ☒
Semi-structured interview schedule ☒
Interview/focus group topic guide ☐

Please proof-read study documentation and ensure that it is appropriate for the intended audience before submission.

Section 15: Applicant declaration

Please read the statements below and tick the boxes to indicate your agreement:

I submit this application on the basis that the information it contains is confidential and will be used by the University of Birmingham for the purposes of ethical review and monitoring of the research project described herein, and to satisfy reporting requirements to regulatory bodies. The information will not be used for any other purpose without my prior consent. ☒

The information in this form together with any accompanying information is complete and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief and I take full responsibility for it. ☒

I undertake to abide by University Code of Practice for Research (https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/university/legal/research.pdf) alongside any other relevant professional bodies' codes of conduct and/or ethical guidelines. ☒

The researcher will report any changes affecting the ethical aspects of the project to the University of Birmingham Research Ethics Officer. ☒

The researcher will report any adverse or unforeseen events which occur to the relevant Ethics Committee via the University of Birmingham Research Ethics Officer. ☒

Please now save your completed form and email a copy to the Research Ethics Officer, at aer-ethics@contacts.bham.ac.uk. As noted above, please do not submit a paper copy.

Appendix 3

Interview Schedule

Pre-Interview Questions

Please fill provide the following information before the interview. This is to help me to get an overview of participants' background. All personal data will be stored securely.

Age:	
Gender:	
Religion:	
Special educational needs or disabilities (SEND):	

Interview Questions

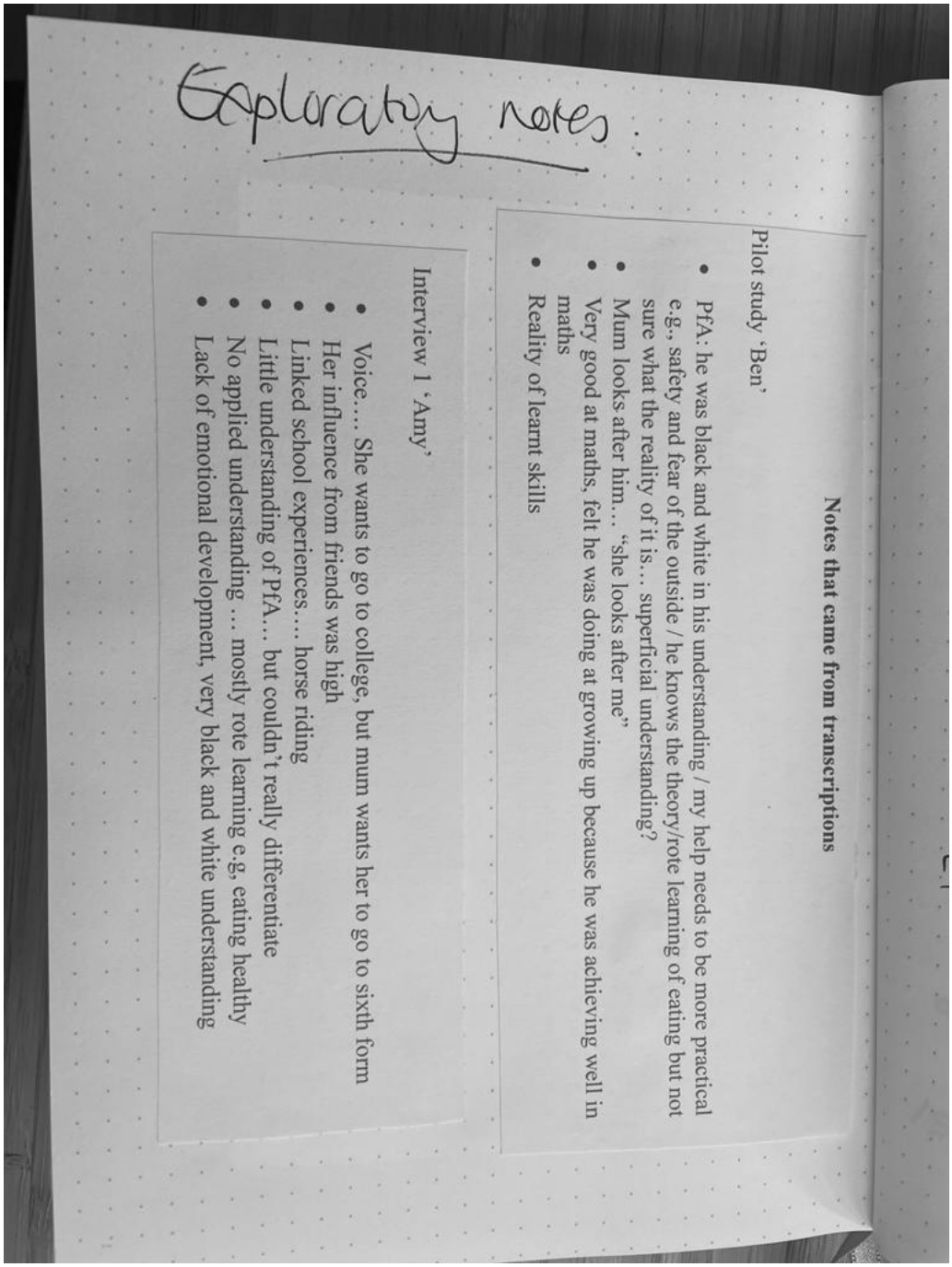
Themes	Questions
Education, Employment and Training	• What are your aspirations for education, employment, and training? • How have school helped you developed your skills and knowledge to achieve your aspirations? • What are the positives and negatives in working towards education, employment, and training in your future? • Can you tell me about how you have come to choose your post-16/post-19 priorities for employment/further training or education leading to paid employment? • How/what has your involvement been in making decisions around education/employment and training? • How confident do you feel that you have the skills needed to follow your career path, or how do you think you might develop these?
Independent Living	• What aspirations do you have about living independently? • What skills and knowledge do you need to have to live independently? • How does school support you to develop your skills and knowledge to live independently? • What are the positives and negatives in working towards independent living? • How confident do you feel about managing finances? • How/what has your involvement been in making decisions around independent living?

Community Inclusion	• What aspirations do you have about friendships and involvement in your local community? • What skills and knowledge do you need to create and maintain friendships and to be included in your community? • How does school support you to develop these skills? • What are the positives and negatives in working towards community inclusion? • How much do you know about accessing emergency services? • How much control do you have over whom you spend your time with? • How do you think these relationships might be helpful in your transition to adulthood? • How 'street safe' do you feel? What does 'street safe' mean to you? • How/what has your involvement been in making decisions around community inclusion?
Health	• What skills and knowledge do you need to be healthy into adulthood? • How does school support you to develop these skills? • What are the positives and negatives in working towards good health in the future? • How much do you know about managing your own health? (e.g., making dental and optical appointments) • How do you plan to stay physically and emotionally healthy into adulthood? • How/what has your involvement been in making decisions around health?

Questions for the interview have been created using the Preparation for Adulthood (PfA) outcomes which can be found here - yeded5wb636481748062535810.pdf (preparingforadulthood.org.uk) *and previous research.*

Appendix 4a

Research Diary: Exploratory Notes



Exploratory notes

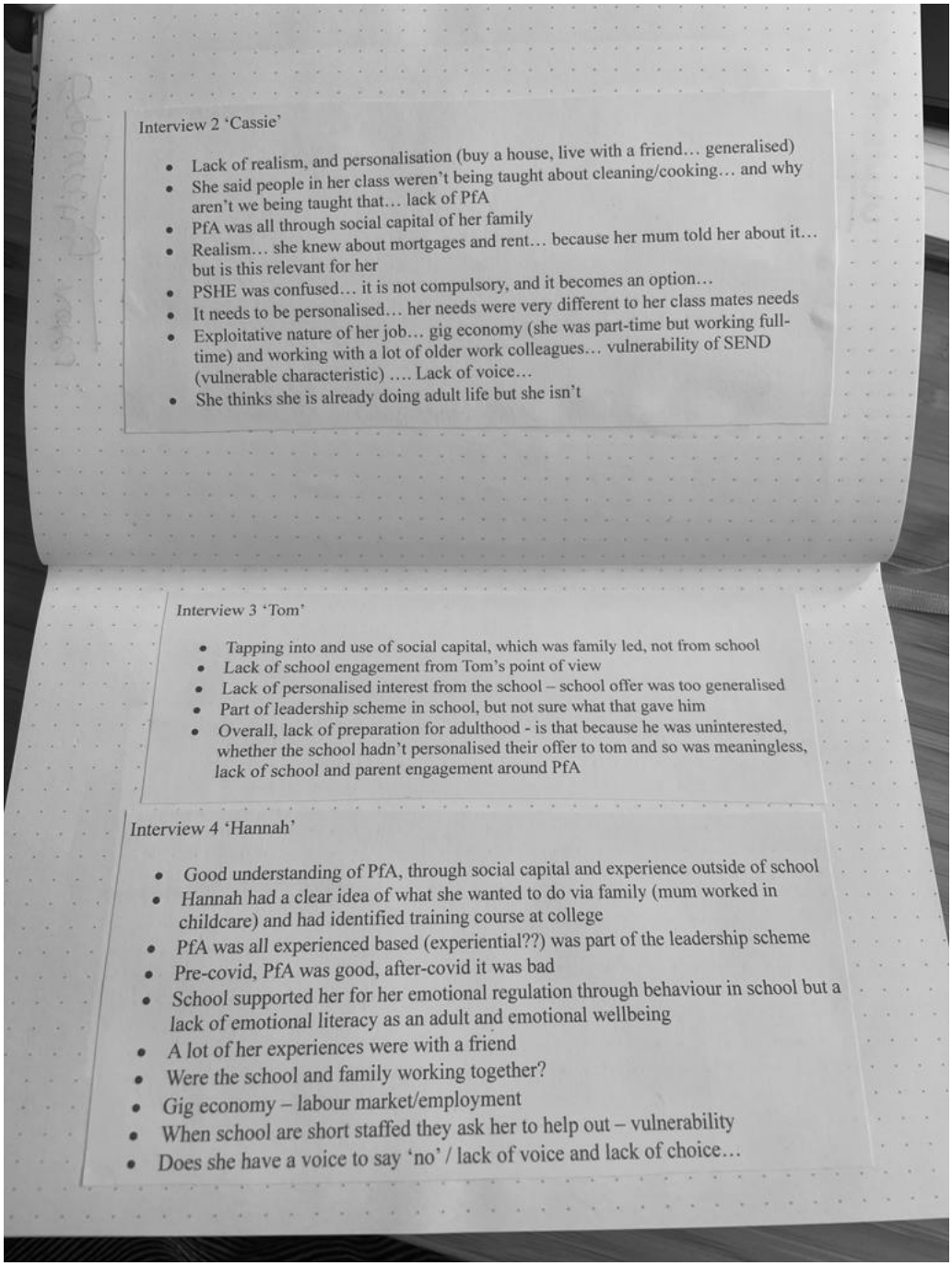
Notes that came from transcriptions

Pilot study 'Ben'

- PfA: he was black and white in his understanding / my help needs to be more practical e.g., safety and fear of the outside / he knows the theory/rote learning of eating but not sure what the reality of it is... superficial understanding?
- Mum looks after him... "she looks after me"
- Very good at maths, felt he was doing at growing up because he was achieving well in maths
- Reality of learnt skills

Interview 1 'Amy'

- Voice.... She wants to go to college, but mum wants her to go to sixth form
- Her influence from friends was high
- Linked school experiences.... horse riding
- Little understanding of PfA... but couldn't really differentiate
- No applied understanding ... mostly rote learning e.g, eating healthy
- Lack of emotional development, very black and white understanding



Interview 2 'Cassie'

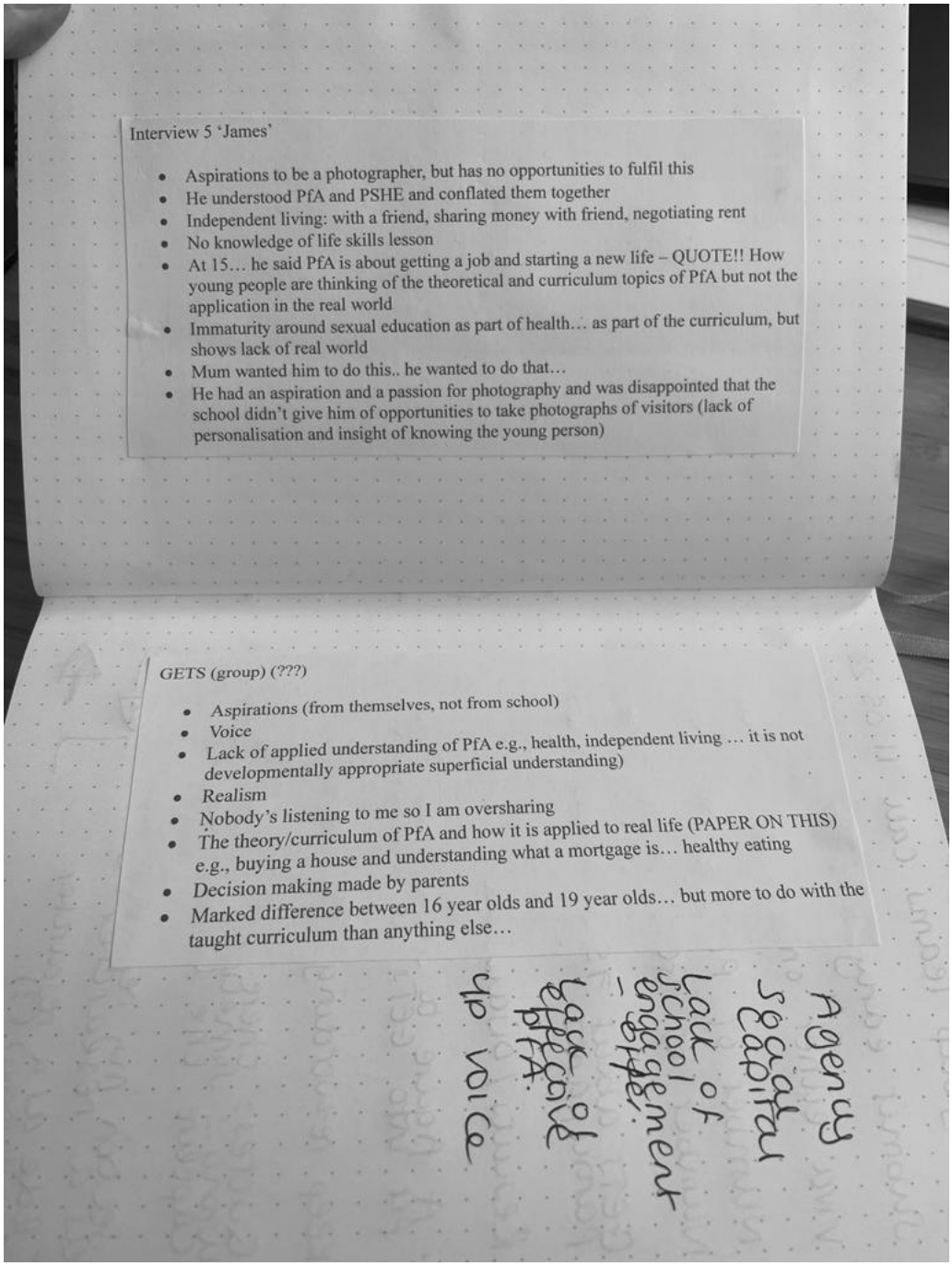
- Lack of realism, and personalisation (buy a house, live with a friend… generalised)
- She said people in her class weren't being taught about cleaning/cooking… and why aren't we being taught that… lack of PfA
- PfA was all through social capital of her family
- Realism… she knew about mortgages and rent… because her mum told her about it… but is this relevant for her
- PSHE was confused… it is not compulsory, and it becomes an option…
- It needs to be personalised… her needs were very different to her class mates needs
- Exploitative nature of her job… gig economy (she was part-time but working full-time) and working with a lot of older work colleagues… vulnerability of SEND (vulnerable characteristic) …. Lack of voice…
- She thinks she is already doing adult life but she isn't

Interview 3 'Tom'

- Tapping into and use of social capital, which was family led, not from school
- Lack of school engagement from Tom's point of view
- Lack of personalised interest from the school – school offer was too generalised
- Part of leadership scheme in school, but not sure what that gave him
- Overall, lack of preparation for adulthood - is that because he was uninterested, whether the school hadn't personalised their offer to tom and so was meaningless, lack of school and parent engagement around PfA

Interview 4 'Hannah'

- Good understanding of PfA, through social capital and experience outside of school
- Hannah had a clear idea of what she wanted to do via family (mum worked in childcare) and had identified training course at college
- PfA was all experienced based (experiential??) was part of the leadership scheme
- Pre-covid, PfA was good, after-covid it was bad
- School supported her for her emotional regulation through behaviour in school but a lack of emotional literacy as an adult and emotional wellbeing
- A lot of her experiences were with a friend
- Were the school and family working together?
- Gig economy – labour market/employment
- When school are short staffed they ask her to help out – vulnerability
- Does she have a voice to say 'no' / lack of voice and lack of choice…



Interview 5 'James'

- Aspirations to be a photographer, but has no opportunities to fulfil this
- He understood PfA and PSHE and conflated them together
- Independent living: with a friend, sharing money with friend, negotiating rent
- No knowledge of life skills lesson
- At 15… he said PfA is about getting a job and starting a new life – QUOTE!! How young people are thinking of the theoretical and curriculum topics of PfA but not the application in the real world
- Immaturity around sexual education as part of health… as part of the curriculum, but shows lack of real world
- Mum wanted him to do this.. he wanted to do that…
- He had an aspiration and a passion for photography and was disappointed that the school didn't give him of opportunities to take photographs of visitors (lack of personalisation and insight of knowing the young person)

GETS (group) (???)

- Aspirations (from themselves, not from school)
- Voice
- Lack of applied understanding of PfA e.g., health, independent living … it is not developmentally appropriate superficial understanding)
- Realism
- Nobody's listening to me so I am oversharing
- The theory/curriculum of PfA and how it is applied to real life (PAPER ON THIS) e.g., buying a house and understanding what a mortgage is… healthy eating
- Decision making made by parents
- Marked difference between 16 year olds and 19 year olds… but more to do with the taught curriculum than anything else…

Agency
Social Capital
Lack of School engagement - Effective PfA.
Lack of Voice

Appendix 4b

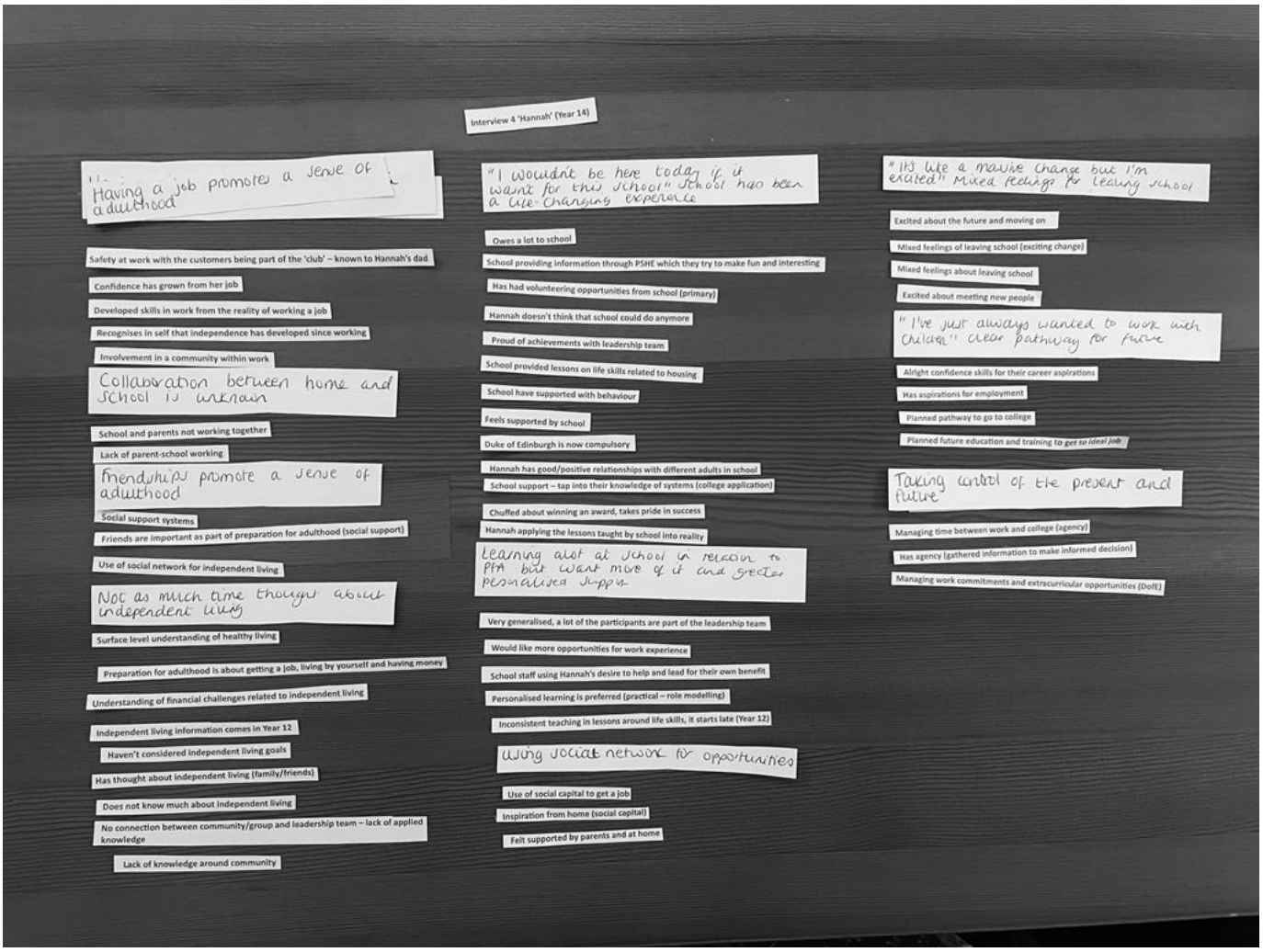
Example of Transcript: Exploratory Notes

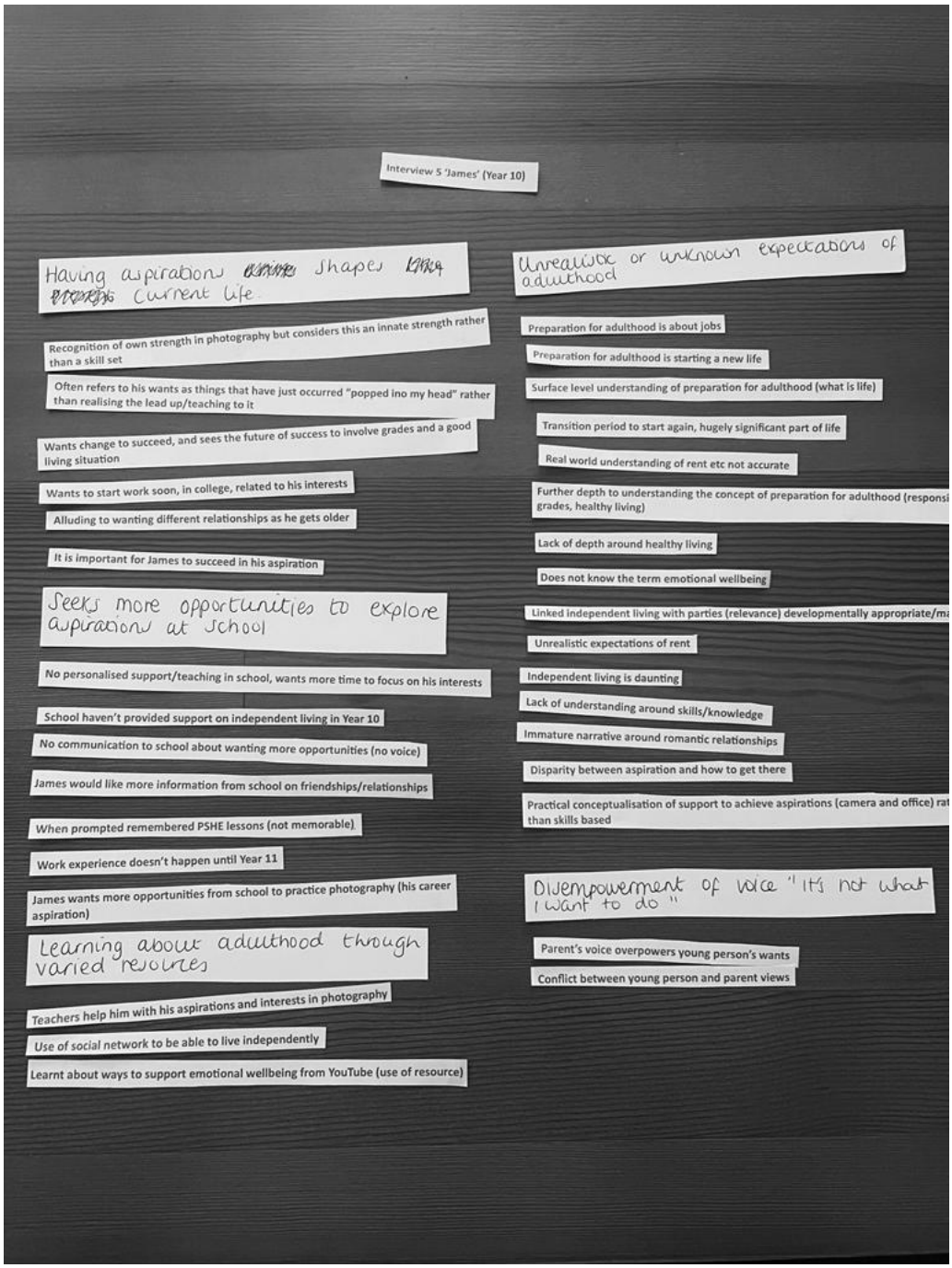
Interview 5 'James' (Year 10)

Experiential Statements	Transcript	Exploratory Notes
	R: So it's just recording like that, can you see? ***P: Yeah*** R: I'm going to just put it down here so it's not too distracting, um, and it's just going to go in the background, if that's okay. So just to check James, you are happy to have this conversation with me this morning? ***P: Yes*** R: Perfect. That's great. Shouldn't take too long, it's been about 20 minutes so far, if that, so far this morning when I've been speaking to different people. If you don't want to answer any questions, you don't have to. If you need more information, you can just ask me to expand a bit more, explain what I'm asking you. And if you want to stop at any time, you can stop ***P: Okay*** R: Okay. So there's no pressure to kind of continue with that at all either. So, um, if I say preparation for adulthood, does that mean anything to you that the phrase preparing for adulthood?	
Preparation for adulthood is about jobs	***P: Does it mean like what job will I have and stuff?*** R: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, definitely. What else? Does it mean anything else to you? If you think about, so there's the job side of things, what else about kind of going into adulthood and getting older do you think it might mean?	Linked PfA to jobs
Preparation for adulthood is starting a new life Transition period to start again, hugely significant part of life	***P: I may start a new life*** R: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, definitely. Do you do things is there a session or a lesson called life skills? Do you do any of that at Park School? ***P: No*** R: You don't? Have you had any like PSHE lessons?	Transition period is a hugely significant part of life, starting again… why would it be starting a new life rather than continuing current life James doesn't think that school do any life skills
When prompted remembered PSHE lessons (not memorable)	***P: Yes, we yes, we do*** R: Yes ***P: And we done childcare as well*** R: Amazing. Could you tell me a bit more about that, the childcare or the PSHE, whichever	When prompted remembered PSHE lessons, perhaps wording of life skills

Appendix 5

Examples of Paper Analysis of PETs

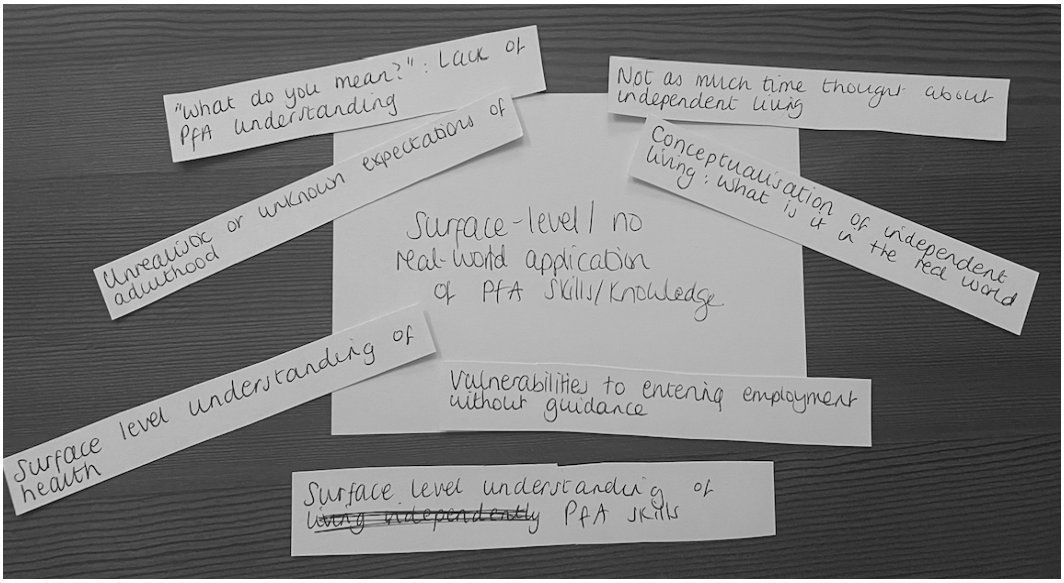



Interview 5 'James' (Year 10)
Having aspirations shapes current life
Recognition of own strength in photography but considers this an innate strength rather than a skill set
Often refers to his wants as things that have just occurred "popped ino my head" rather than realising the lead up/teaching to it
Wants change to succeed, and sees the future of success to involve grades and a good living situation
Wants to start work soon, in college, related to his interests
Alluding to wanting different relationships as he gets older
It is important for James to succeed in his aspiration
Seeks more opportunities to explore aspirations at school
No personalised support/teaching in school, wants more time to focus on his interests
School haven't provided support on independent living in Year 10
No communication to school about wanting more opportunities (no voice)
James would like more information from school on friendships/relationships
When prompted remembered PSHE lessons (not memorable)
Work experience doesn't happen until Year 11
James wants more opportunities from school to practice photography (his career aspiration)
Learning about adulthood through varied resources
Teachers help him with his aspirations and interests in photography
Use of social network to be able to live independently
Learnt about ways to support emotional wellbeing from YouTube (use of resource)
Unrealistic or unknown expectations of adulthood
Preparation for adulthood is about jobs
Preparation for adulthood is starting a new life
Surface level understanding of preparation for adulthood (what is life)
Transition period to start again, hugely significant part of life
Real world understanding of rent etc not accurate
Further depth to understanding the concept of preparation for adulthood (responsi
grades, healthy living)
Lack of depth around healthy living
Does not know the term emotional wellbeing
Linked independent living with parties (relevance) developmentally appropriate/ma
Unrealistic expectations of rent
Independent living is daunting
Lack of understanding around skills/knowledge
Immature narrative around romantic relationships
Disparity between aspiration and how to get there
Practical conceptualisation of support to achieve aspirations (camera and office) ra
than skills based
Disempowerment of voice "It's not what I want to do"
Parent's voice overpowers young person's wants
Conflict between young person and parent views

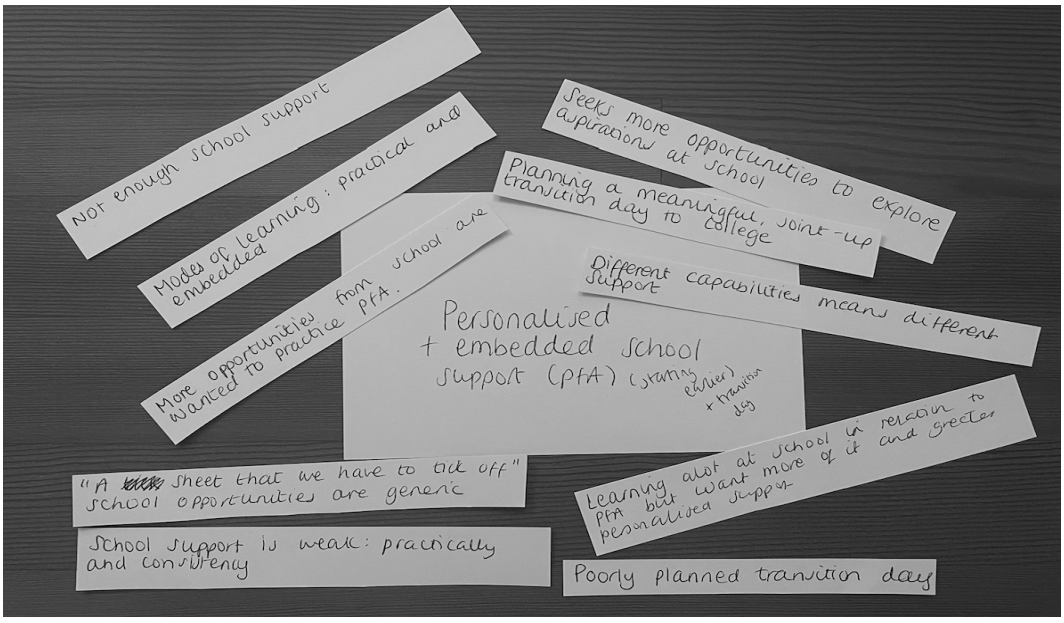
Appendix 6

Examples of Original Gets from Paper Analysis

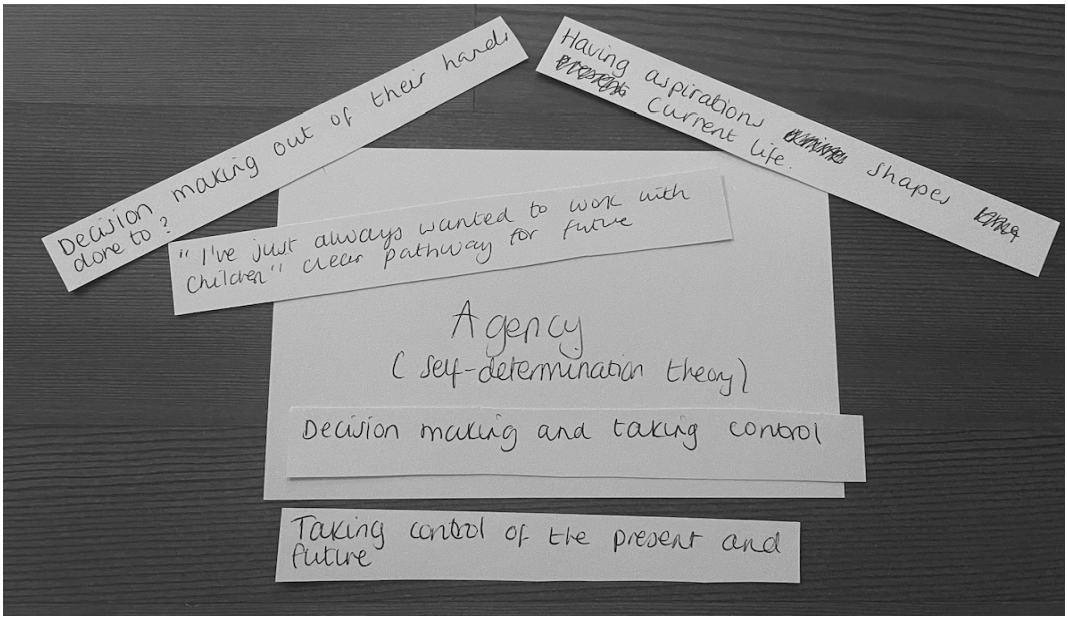
GET: Surface Level Understanding and Lack of Real-World Application of PfA Skills and Knowledge



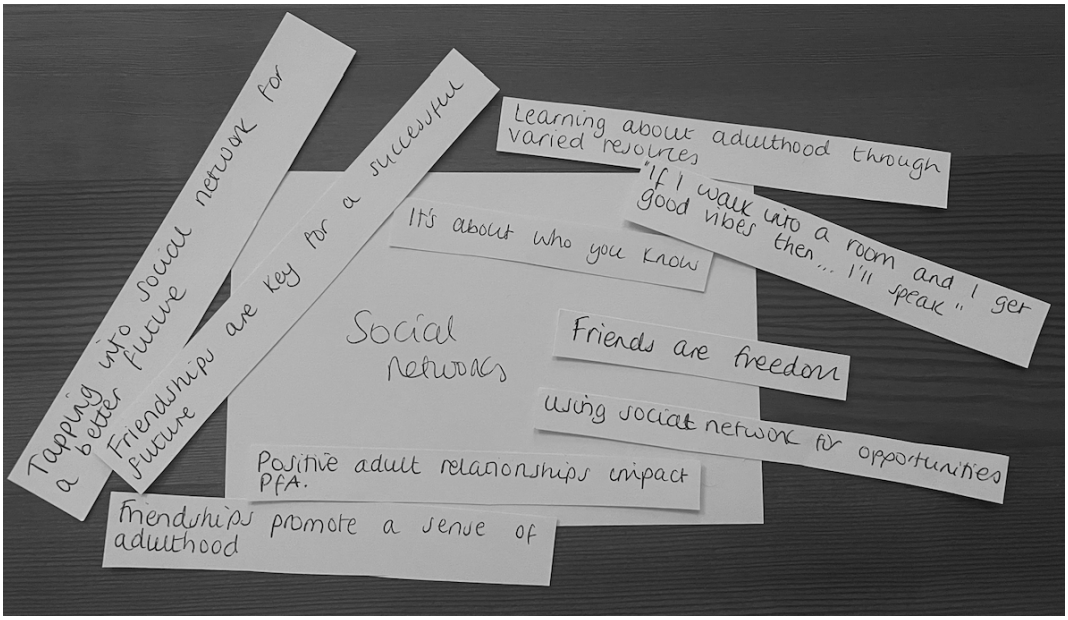
GET: Personalised, Early and Embedded School Support for PfA



GET: Having Agency in PfA



GET: Social Capital / Network



Appendix 7

Final iteration of GETs: Cross-referenced with PETs

GET 1 GET 2 GET 3 GET 4

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) **JAMES**	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	Seeks more opportunities to explore aspirations in school	Time to focus on interests
		Opportunities to apply skills in context
PET 2	Unrealistic or unknown expectations of adulthood	PfA is starting a new life
		Lack of real-world application
		Using social network for future
PET 3	"It's not what I want to do" - disempowerment of voice and agency	Voice is overpowered
		Conflict of interests

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) **HANNAH**	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	Having a job promotes a sense of adulthood	Developed confidence and independence
		Employability skills
PET 2	"I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for this school" – school has been a positive experience with areas of development	Supported by school to achieve full potential
		Feeling proud
		Lack of real-world application
		Lack of personalised support
		Change is scary but exciting
PET 3		Having agency

GET 1 GET 2 GET 3 GET 4

	Taking control of the present and the future	Using social capital and network for opportunities
		Friendships promote a sense of adulthood

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) TOM	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	"My mum and dad might be asking him if I can do more work experience" – using family network for opportunities	Social capital
PET 2	"What do you mean?" "I don't know"– a lack of understanding and application of PfA skills	Surface level understanding
		Learning has been forgotten
		PfA lessons haven't started
PET 3	"A sheet that we have to tick off" – school opportunities are generic	Lack of personalised offer

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) CASSIE	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	It's about who you know	Learning key independence skills at home
		Use of social capital for development
		Friends are freedom and safety
PET 2	"I'm excited to leave, but I'm not excited to leave" – mixed feelings about transition	Feeling bittersweet about leaving school
		Leaving the familiar is scary

GET 1 GET 2 GET 3 GET 4

		The need for personalised support
PET 3	Becoming independent through work	Sense of belonging at work
		Acquisition of PfA skills

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) **AMY**	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	Extracurricular activities linked to employment aspirations	Engaging in activities of interest linked to job aspiration
		Agency in opportunities
		Applying PfA skills through work experience
PET 2	Being passive to decision-making and a lack of understanding	Passive agent and disempowerment
		Developmentally younger understanding
PET 3	Friendships are key for a successful future	Friends influence pathways and support wellbeing

	Personal Experiential Themes (PETs) **BEN**	**Sub-themes**
PET 1	Thinking ahead: confidence and setting goals	Confidence in abilities
		Goals for the future
PET 2	Tapping into social networks for a better future and self-awareness of support	Family support
		Friendships
PET 3		Practice in the community

	Models of learning needs to be practical and embedded	Opportunities across the curriculum
		Not personalised

Appendix 8

Example of Transcript: Researcher Flexibility to Interview Questions

Interview 5 transcript REDACTED
Pseudonym – James ASD, ADHD, cognition and learning, language difficulties (Year 10)

P: I need a camera
R: Yeah
P: And like have my own workspace like they give me like folders
R: Yep
P: Every photo I take in and I like to have my own office *laughs*
R: Yeah a nice office *laughs* your own workspace that sounds really, really nice. Do you think that there's any subjects at school that will help you to become a good photographer?
P: I don't know
R: Not sure. Is there anything at the minute that you were doing that does help you get into photography a bit more?
P: Yeah, it's just teachers help me sometimes
R: Mhmm yep. How do they help you? What do they do to help you?
P: Oh, they help me a lot, they help me do a folder, they let me do my own thing like photography that's it
R: Lovely. That sounds really nice. And I guess you've got the option to do your presentation the other week when I can see that was a nice opportunity to show off some of the work that you've done as well. That was really lovely
P: Yeah
R: And so why photography? What makes you want to go and do a photography or become a photographer?
P: It just sort of happened like popped in my head I see what I'm good at, I'm good at taking photos that's why
R: Yeah lovely is it something that you do? Do you take photographs outside of school as well as in school?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah. Okay, fantastic. That's great. And so school have helped you to develop your skills. You're saying teachers have been really supportive of you. They help you with your folders? Is there anything else?
P: And then help me do the tests in how to be a photographer
R: Mmhmm
P: And I passed everything
R: Wow what test was that? Can you tell me a bit more?
P: Do you know like the camera turn off and switches
R: Oh gosh with all the buttons and stuff? Yes. So what happened? What did you have to do with that?
P: I got to press like buttons, take some photos and whoosh
R: *laughs* and there you go. You're a photographer. Amazing, that sounds really good. Is there anything that you think the school could do differently or more of to help you develop your skills or knowledge around becoming a photographer?
P: Well they should have told me what things I should have done, like every school thing like what happens at school, like visitors, special visitors like the Mayor coming here or any builders or any like people leaving the school and stuff
R: Yeah so if people could
P: And Trophies like people and sports activities
R: So if sports people getting their trophies, the Mayor coming in or other people coming in. What would that how would that help you in terms of becoming a photographer? Do you mean, what do you mean by that?

Appendix 9a

Full Transcript: Ben

Pilot Study REDACTED Year 11 – Autism
Pseudonym – Ben

R: It's recording now. I'm just going to leave it to the side, we can ignore it basically, that's what's going to go on while we're talking. So I have to say a few things before we start just to check that you are happy to do this with me and that you understand what the conversation is about. So I'll give you a bit of a reminder

P: OK

R: So um I'm doing some research as part of my training to become an educational psychologist. I'm really interested in working with young people like yourself that go to special educational needs schools such Park School. I'm really interested to learn what you ***might do in the future and how we can help you so how professionals can help***

P: Mmhmm

R: So you've given back some consent forms already, which is really helpful. So thank you for doing that. If you want to stop at any point, you can stop. If you want to ask any more questions, you can ask any more questions and if you want to pull out of this at any point. So once you've had the interview and you think, actually, I want to I don't do this anymore, I don't want Ellie to have my voice on a recording. I don't want my questions to be used. You can let me know, okay? And I can pull it all out and no one knows it you, it's all anonymous

P: Okay, that's fine

R: Perfect. If you're happy to get going I think we'll just get started. It's a lovely day and I think we want to be outside in the weather. Okay, so the questions are themed around preparation for adulthood outcomes. I don't know if you've heard of that before?

P: I've heard it, some of it before. Yeah

R: Yeah. So it's about kind of and one theme is education, employment and training. Another one is independent living. Another one is community inclusion and another one is health. And that's all of them. And that is the kinds of questions I'll be asking you

P: Okay

R: Okay. So let's get started. So what are your aspirations for your education, employment or training?

P: Aspirations? Is there a can you go for a bit of detail for aspiration, please?

R: Absolutely. And this is really helpful for me Ben, because I think that word might be a bit tricky. So aspirations means, what do you want in your future? What do you want to happen with your education? Education in the future? When you leave Park School, what do you want to happen?

P: What I want to happen is um hold on, is it to do with me or was it to do with like what should be better in the future?

R: About you, what do you want, if you were thinking about where you are now, so you're in year…

P: 11

R: 11, so you might spend a couple more years here at Park School doing some learning. What might that look like? What would you like to do in the next couple of years?

P: The next couple of years I want to try and get GCSEs in maths, English, ICT and a few other subjects, I'm really hoping. And if I can't, then that's fine because I've got like another three years to do it because I'm going to head up to sixth form next year

R: Exactly. That's exciting. And so why those subjects? Why English, maths and ICT? Why do you want to learn about those?

P: The reason why I want to learn about those is because I want to try and get like a job in networking, and I think those subjects those subjects that those three subjects I mentioned

would be really useful. So that's one to try and aim for a foundation level in GCSE or somewhere higher
R: Perfect. That's amazing. So thinking about employment then so a job when you leave Park School in the future, you've just spoken about networking. Is that the type of job you'd like to go in to? Is it IT?
P: ICT yeah or IT
R: Yeah, fantastic that's great. How do you think school has helped you to get there?
P: Well they helped me by… well when I was young I was struggling at school because of bullies, work, sometimes that… teachers were supportive, they were encouraging me to do my work, they've always wanted to… yeah, they've always wanted to help me. And when I got into like Year 8/9/10 I started to cope a bit more with those challenges and I was able to get onto the higher set in maths as you went into the maths room before with Mr Smith I remember that. Mm. And, I think when I do my tests now in maths, I usually get a higher grade because I have a unique feeling with maths it's like it just comes to me just like it goes through my head and it like *clicks*
R: You get it, it it's your thing
P: Yeah definitely
R: That's amazing. That's really great. And so what do you think is quite challenging about working towards, so your aspirations, if you go back to that word at the beginning… your goals, what do you want to do when you are older, you were saying ICT, maths and English GCSE, going on to have a job in ICT
P: Mmhmm
R: Is there anything that happens in school at the moment that, that doesn't help you get there or that is challenging or hard about that?
P: Um, well, sometimes I really want to like get a bit more hard work, but sometimes that may not happen because of my level, because this year Mr Smith wanted me to do GCSE in math. Miss I think my head of key stage, Mrs Taylor, that's my teacher, I think she called that off because she said I don't think I was able to do it because I don't have the right sets for it sadly
R: But you feel like you could do a bit more, a bit more of a higher level in that subject?
P: Yeah
R: Fantastic. Why do you want to go into, why do you want to do GCSEs?
P: The reason why because I find it quite fascinating and my brother is doing GCSEs and I really want to like well my brother, he's a bit of an inspiration a bit for like , right, because he's, he's in a mainstream school and he does have ADHD, dyslexia and he does, he does do GCSE. And I really want to like be like an autistic kid that, that can like that can like change the world or something like that
R: Love that. Yeah, you can do anything you want to if you want to, if you put your heart to it, absolutely, that's brilliant
P: Yeah
R: Okay, so what's about your confidence? How confident do you feel that you can go and do your GCSEs, you'll do well in them and then you could maybe get a job in ICT in the future?
P: Well my confidence levels are like between low and medium at the moment because I still need a bit more practice because sometimes I may not know things, sometimes I may do know things, such as maybe a bit of square rooting, which is a bit difficult. But I've

remembered a bit because I remember, I think Wednesday I was so close to getting the right answer. It was like 3.6 the answer and I got 3.3
R: So close
P: Yeah
R: So kind of thinking about do you think that you do well in your GCSEs? Do you have confidence in that?
P: I do have confidence in that, yeah definitely
R: Brilliant. And what about getting a job as an ICT, in ICT in the future?
P: I think that's definitely possible because I think that's definitely possible because I done my exam Wednesday which is level one
R: Brilliant, that's amazing and what about… sorry I've just forgot my question I had in my mind, let me think about it… How could school develop your confidence more? What can they do to help you feel more confident in those things?
P: Mm well just encouragement I think that would be a good thing. It just encouragement and support including along the sides of remembering things like putting in a book sometimes like that
R: Yeah
P: And I can like revise on it
R: Yeah. Perfect. That's great. Thank you so much. You're doing really well, when I'm scribbling notes, just as you can see here, it's for me to know that the word like aspiration, I might need to change that because it's not very clear. So if I'm writing, please don't feel distracted. It's just writing my own notes
P: *laughs* that's fine, that's fine
R: I've just got one final thing to ask you, so thank you for your patience. Right. Okay, so we're going to move on to the independent living theme now. So it's a similar types of questions. So what's your goal about living independently?
P: My goal is to try and like live on my own, even have a girlfriend and maybe start a family. And I want to try and get a really good job so I could earn like money for myself, for the rent and so on. And yeah, I may live in a flat one day to start off with and then I could work my way up the, you know, the housing
R: Yeah
P: Yeah, because it could be quite difficult for first buyers, most likely trying to earn like some sort of money to do that. Yeah, it would be quite hard for me. So that's why my mum may support me with that as well
R: Yeah, absolutely. It's very it's difficult to buy a house now isn't it particularly when everything's quite expensive at the minute. I definitely feel that
P: Mm yeah
R: What skills do you think you need to be able to live independently?
P: Well, confidence is one of them. Confidence. Mhm. Learning how to be safe on the roads, I know a bit of that and learning what types of people are there because they could be homeless, they could be, you know, not the best. So I just need to learn. I think I need to learn on the third on I told you. Those two I'm nearly capable of doing, but my mum does say "just make sure before you cross". I do that with my carer and I think I try and do quite well. Sometimes I may forget in my mind because my mum might say, "Oh, I think you're thinking sometimes in your mind and you may not be concentrating on things" like my phone for example, I'm really addicted to my phone well I'm trying to do my best, on not trying to be addicted to my phone. Well, I can be addicted to it at home, which is okay, but

out and about, it's really not that safe because there could be that could be people that maybe steal things or something like that, that what I need to try and improve on

R: Yeah, I'm also addicted to my phone. It's not good is it

P: Yeah, it's not good *laughs*

R: I just scroll and scroll and scroll and then don't really pay attention to anything around me

P: Yeah *laughs*

R: Which isn't so good. Okay. So you've got some the skills that you've spoken about so crossing the road safely, kind of safety of other people and danger of who's around you, being aware of your surroundings. What are the things you think you need to know about it to get to live independently? So if you're in your flat, for example, what things might you need to be able to do to live independently?

P: Well, finance, of course, learning about the area, if it could be dangerous or not, what times you should go out which which is a big thing in all honesty. But let's say if you want to go out, let's say for the night, you need to be careful usually around that time because there could be people in your area that could be not the best

R: Yeah, absolutely

P: Yeah, or if you had a friend with you then it could be a bit safe, but still got to be careful

R: Absolutely, brilliant, thank you. So how do you think school, helps you develop those skills around living independently?

P: Well, good question on that. So how does school help me? Well, they some well, in year 10, we don't do it as often now, but we use we used to go out well sometimes we used to go out with our phones like we can navigate where we should go

R: Oh yeah, yeah

P: Yeah being safe around the community, of course. Learning like what I, I need to have a think because it's…

R: That's ok, that's ok

P: So what was the question again? Sorry

R: How has school helped you to think about how you can live independently? So independent skills or independence, how has school helped you with that?

P: Helped me. So they helped me. Yeah. As one of them. That was one of them. Well it was like with a friend so it was so I was totally not on my own. The teachers were just wandering around the streets, just to make sure that me and my friends were safe

R: So did you have to get from one place to another place using like your phone like Google Maps?

P: Google maps yeah, that's what I did in year 10 before and we, we did road safety and I think that was in year 11, but we did not do it as often but well, that was only like 3 outside visits, but which was a bit mm and I think there should be more of it in all honesty. So people can be sure, like students, like me and my other students in my class so they can be sure that they know what to do. Whatever the emergency they can do all sorts because we did it a lot more in year 10, which I find quite interesting. But in all honesty there should be a bit more

R: So it kind of stops now, you haven't had more of that independent living stuff at school kind of teetered off. Okay. What, what are the things the school could do more of then to help you feel more confident about when you're living independently, what could the school do more of?

P: Yes, as mentioned, more outside visits. What else, what else could it be, well financial advice that would be one of them and finance because in Mr Smith's class, he doesn't do money, well not a lot of money
R: Okay yeah
P: So I think I think more lessons should involve around money, APR rates, all sorts like how to calculate, yeah I thought that was one of them. Trying to figure out discounts, how to use the internet safely, I'm part of Park School Safety Squad and I was invited by the head of key stage 4 to do it
R: Amazing. And what can you tell me a bit more about that, the Park School Safety Squad?
P: The safety squad does a few things. They do online safety. We help students that we can provide advice. What else, if your problems big or small we can help them
R: Oh that's lovely
P: We're going to get our own set of uniform about that. Something similar to like leadership because I do leadership as well
R: So you do leadership and Park School Safety Squad?
P: Yes
R: Amazing, that's great. Are you really proud of that?
P: I'm really proud of that, definitely. Because I'm on leadership team in the school and I am one of the members and yeah one of the members are higher up which they do support me and I do suggest ideas to them and they usually relayed on to the head of key stage 4
R: That's amazing, that's independent skills as well isn't it, being able to communicate your ideas with other people be listened to you by other people that have that kind of power. Yeah, that's really great well done. Okay. You kind of spoke about this a bit more, so I'm going to just ask a few more questions. How confident do you feel about managing your finances?
P: Not really that confident, because sometimes when I spend money on well a bit on useless things and my mum does say that to me, which I think I should improve. I think I should improve on like saving money, keeping track of what I spend, what things I want to buy, some things I don't want to buy sometimes should I stop this, should I stop that… that's a bit of a problem for me
R: Mm definitely, and I also have problems just saving it happens to everyone it's a hard thing to do. Okay, so going off topic around finances and things now, this is a different type of question. How have you been involved in making decisions about what will happen in your future for independent living? Have you had any decisions? Have you been involved in any of those kind of decisions?
P: Sort of actually because my mum said, "do you want to go to college after year 11 or do you want to go onto sixth form?" And I chose that decision to go onto sixth form because my friends decided to go to sixth form. I decided to go sixth form because it'll give me a bit more learning aspects as well. And I tried to stay on for three years because I think Park School does help me so much, you know, and so I might as well stay on for another 3 years. Yeah whatever other decisions as well… well, one of the decisions is to… it's a bit hard topic, but well, I had an ingrown toenail before and it was like no other option but I'll have to go to have, you know, go to a therapist or something like that, and I decided to get rid of that ingrown toenail, I had both of them in my feet. It was so, it was on my big toe. So it really hurt. Well, it was none of my decision to do that, but Mr Henry noticed

that was the deputy head, he did notice he did get in contact with someone and well it was sort of my decision to go or not but yeah I had to go otherwise something will happen
R: Yeah, it is better now?
P: It's really better now, that happened in year 8 and I missed out on a trip to Gulliver's Land
R: Oh no! That's annoying isn't it
P: It is annoying
R: This is boring now, but did they have to take both toenails out, did they remove both of the toenails?
P: They had to pull them out, of course an injection because that would be, that would be painful
R: Really painful. I've had slight ingrown toenails before and I know if you bump it on the corner of something, if you bump your toe
P: *exclaims* *laughs* it'll start bleeding as well
R: Yeah, yeah, I know, I can empathise with that. I know how painful those were. Okay, so we've spoken a bit about finances, you've told me where you kind of like to live in the future, thinking about stranger danger, those types of things. You've talked about paying rent and those types of things. Brilliant that all sounds really, really good. We're going to move on to community side of things now
external noise
R: It's a different type of question
P: Okay
R: Are you happy for me to continue or would you like me to shut the door?
P: Yeah, I think we should shut the door
R: Yeah it is distracting
P: It did distract me as bit, do you want me to hold the chair?
shuts door from noise
R: That's it, if we just pull that too then we can open it again when it's calm
P: There we go, that is a bit better
R: Perfect. Okay, great
P: We can continue
R: Okay, so then what are your goals about friendships and being involved in your local community when you're older?
P: Friendships and community… well supporting others of course, like supporting the community because yeah, I did something before, which is really nice. We did like a litter picking because I'm part of the eco council as well. Eco Council, School Eco Council and we picked up a lot of things and even support the community this was a church actually
R: Yeah
P: And there was a lot of things that was interesting. There was a lot of masks, a lot of cigarettes, there's a lot of… and that was even a car engine as well
R: A car engine?
P: Well like no, actually a car fuel thing. And then there was a lot of plastic, which was…
R: Oh
P: So I supported the community by doing that, so I represented the school and the community
R: Yeah. Brilliant. That sounds really, really good. Do you want to do more of that? Do you want to do more community stuff in your future?

P: Yeah, definitely. Because NCS … well I'm doing NCS and they did say something along the lines there will be some community work as well. I'll definitely do more in the future. I'm hoping I can do it like supporting charity, supporting all sorts food banks, for example, there's a Flickham food bank and most likely I'll want to try and do something like that

R: That sounds really, really good. Can you tell me a bit more about the NCS side of things?

P: NCS so it's this National Citizenship Service so this they are like a group that do activities for people like like me, for example, like young people. And we will be doing a trip in September, which is which they said it was free, but it was actually £50… a little bit of mis advertisement

R: *laughs* yeah yeah

P: But my mum did say yes to that and well and NCS they do a lot of activities, they, they have a slogan that says "no you can do it". I think it's something like that. You can do it as a young person. You're the voice of, you know, the community

R: Yeah, absolutely. That's exciting. Sounds really good. When are you doing that?

P: I'll be doing that in September when I get sixth form. Yeah yesterday we did a lot of fun activities. We were doing like we were jumping in hopes and then we had to do rock, paper, scissors, let's say this person go rock, and I got scissors, I was out, then I had to move along and then someone else had to do that. And they did rock, paper, scissors, shoot, and then went, Well, let's say they got paper and it's a rock *imitates with hands*, they can move along and along and whoever gets there first, they'll get a point and then if it's out of 3 then they will win

R: Oh that's sounds good, what was that part of then yesterday?

P: That was part of being active. And also being involved with you know, fun activities and they did. Yeah. They, and then they give us a little bit of a brief discussion about it as well, which I forgot a bit about actually

R: Yeah

P: I wish I could tell you a bit, but I could keep forgetting sometimes yeah

R: That's ok

P: I do have an issue with that sometimes. Yeah

R: Yeah. Sometimes we forget what we're going to say, I'm the same. Okay. What kind of skills do you need to be part of your community when you're older? I'm going to open the door again

P: I think they've gone

R: Just because they've gone. Oh thanks

P: That's ok, no worries

opens door again

R: Just get a bit of air

P: Awesome let's continue

R: So what skills do you think you need to be able to be part of your community?

P: Communication skills, confidence skills so you can you can speak to other people

R: Yep

P: Um, well what else, yeah, it's communication, thinking skills. So you can think of ideas on what you want to do for the community, so on, so forth

R: Yeah, yeah. Brilliant. And how does school help you develop these skills?

P: Well, talking to other people around school, sometimes going out into the local community as mentioned, um, thinking like sometimes whenever you do work you may think about idea. So they give you like so they give you all sorts of skills in all honesty

R: Great. That sounds really good, okay is there anything school could do more of?
P: Er anything the school should do more of…
R: To help develop your skills and knowledge of how you can be part of the community?
P: As I think I said before, most likely going out local community supporting other people such as the eco visit that we did before, I really enjoyed that and I think there should be more of that
R: Brilliant, thank you Ben
P: That's alright
R: Okay. This is a random question. Do you know how you can access emergency services?
P: Yes I know how to access emergency services. First of all, I think it's NHS, dot, UK, I think it is. We have 111, 999, there's police websites such as central beds police, including fire and ambulance. But there's also support lines for children such as Childline. 0800 1111. There's all sorts as well
R: Brilliant, you know a lot of them that sounds really, really good. Ok another question, how much control do you have over who you spend your time with?
P: Do I have control?
R: Yeah. Do you have the… can you make decisions about who you spend your time with?
P: Sometimes I do have control of that. Sometimes I try and say, do you want to speak tomorrow. Sometimes it gets out of my control, because they speak to someone else and they sometimes just left me, that happened to me like five times already to the same person, which is a shame. And then well and then I mostly spend my time, with a really good friends because sometimes this person sometimes upsets me. So sometimes I just want spend time with that friend
R: Yeah, that's nice. It's nice to have a good friend, they make you feel good
P: They do make me feel good just sometimes it's a mixture, sometimes they say sorry, I say sorry. Sometimes we get in a muddle. Sometimes it can get confusing, sometimes with a friendship as well
R: Yeah, absolutely. Okay. How do you think these relationships might be helpful when you transition to adulthood? So your friendships, for example, how might they be helpful to you as you move towards adulthood as well?
P: Well how will they help? It's like friends for life in all honesty
R: Nice yeah
P: Yeah so sometimes yeah it does get like that is like friends for life. They help me for like advice, I think they would do that. Yeah. Um, I don't really know what to say
R: That's ok, yeah
P: So almost, they… I don't know if you can come back to that question later and we can think about that
R: Of course we can absolutely
P: Yeah, let's do that please
R: Okay. How street safe do you feel? You spoke about quite a lot of stuff that already I think about. You said stranger danger crossing the road when you go out at night. Yeah, it's safe? How are you going to get there using your Google Maps? How street safe do you feel?
P: How street safe? So mixture actually because some places let's say Maytown for example it does not feel particularly that really safe because like because it's like it's a huge place in all honesty, and sometimes I know a lot of things out there and sometimes people may get mugged, some people may get, you know, a few things. Sometimes it happens in Flickham, it happens like…when I was at my friends house we went out and

this was Meadow Way and it's usually my mum said it's usually not the best place to go out in because it was at night and then when I should speak to Jack about that it and yeah it's a bit okay in the day but at night meh because people may be doing a lot of not the best things

R: Yeah

P: Well I went I went out which I did with my friend which was the person that I tried to speak to five times and they made that promise, but never happened. That was the person that I hanged out with

R: Yeah

P: And it was actually okay. Not too bad. A little bit dismal in all honesty *laughs*

R: *laughs*

P: And sometimes in certain places like my old house for example, it may feel okay, but sometimes it's a mixture. Yeah, well, outside my house it's like a private road, so it's usually a bit safe, but not too you know, bad. It's usually not too bad, but sometimes main road I get a bit worried about that

R: Yeah I think you're right. How places can change so in the daytime it's okay. And then at night you don't really want to walk around by yourself that can happen in a lot of places can't it

P: Because there would be like there could be a lot of not the best, you know illegal activities that can happen throughout the night

R: Yeah, definitely. Brilliant. Thank you. Okay. We're going to move onto the last section which is about health and staying healthy? Okay. So what skills and knowledge do you need to be healthy as an adult?

P: Multiple things while knowing what how what to, who to phone when it's an emergency knowing well balanced diets. And then coming back to that topic, when to know if you need to go to A&E or GP or something like that. Well another one would be knowing when to phone 999, 112 because if you pone those services, then most likely if it's for some sort of silly reason let's say my hand is like hurting let's say one, let's say I just accidentally *bang hand on table* like that, it did hurt a bit but don't worry, it just went away after 2 seconds. Let's say that, for example, that'll be a bit silly for phoning them, so I would need to know a little bit more skills on that

R: Yeah. Yeah. Okay

P: Because I haven't any, well my mum has used it before for me and used it for herself and my brother of course. And yeah. Yeah. Because my mum did have a broken [toe] that was in 2007, for a really long time and she had to use the emergency services. And then my yeah that's it. Yeah, that's right. Yeah. Oh what was the question again um sorry

R: That's ok, let me remind you. It was what skills and knowledge do you need to be a healthy adult?

P: Yeah, yeah. That knowledge, knowing yeah, those were the three things I think I may need to learn a bit more about it yeah

R: Yeah, so this is a question about that a little bit. So how do school help you develop those skills and knowledge about how you can stay healthy?

P: They do PSHE lessons and I would know what to eat. Well, they do PSHE lessons, which they are helpful. But sometimes, I mean, I need to a bit more maybe catch up on it, but I think that should happen sometimes. I think that should happen

R: What more could they do then? And you say, what else could they do?

P: Revision, revision yeah

R: And what about the topics you learn in PSHE?
P: So we do religions, we do diversity we're doing right now and healthy wellbeing, RSE and learning how to be safe from the roads. So on and so forth. I think those are the things we learn in PSHE
R: So you kind of spoke about this as well, but how much do you know about how you going to manage your own health when you're older? So you spoke about if you hurt yourself about who you might call in the emergency services. How else are you going to manage your health?
P: Um managing my health, I haven't really thought about this yet because my mum takes care of me really a lot because… how would I so… I actually don't know because I haven't thought about it yet because you know, as I mentioned
R: That's ok, you've got loads of time to think about it and this is what is really useful about this in a minute I'm going to ask you, we're going to stop the recording and I am going to ask you how I can ask some better questions. I think some of these questions might be a little bit difficult. So that's absolutely fine if you don't have an answer ok so I'm going to ask it in a different way, maybe this one will help
P: Yeah
R: How do you plan to stay physically healthy?
P: Physically healthy, so going to the gym most likely once a week, that might be my plan. Walking every day that will be a good thing. Yeah, it's feeling nature sometimes. Like fresh air for example, maybe walks. Most likely trying to like, well, try not use the cars much if I do get a car last most likely try and use bikes because they because bikes is like quite healthy to use. Yeah, walking, biking that also I may do gym, swimming. I like swimming. I haven't done swimming in such while in all honestly
R: I would love to go swimming today, it's really hot isn't it
P: It is really hot, but I'm actually coping at the moment
R: Good. Okay I'm glad, we've only got a couple more questions. So how do you plan to stay emotionally healthy? So that's your wellbeing.
P: Wellbeing, well, my wellbeing has not been really good recently because a few people actually. Well, one individual person, it's just been really down falling on me
R: Okay, how can you help yourself to stay emotionally well now and in the future?
P: Well not eating rubbish foods as much well having a well-balanced diet would be a key. Thinking positive and speaking to people. So I'm not like emotionally alone or something like that. Making sure that I'm feeling quite okay, just basics mainly
R: Yeah brilliant, that's all good. We've got one more question. Okay, so this about how have you been involved in making decisions about your health? So I don't know if that is going to be a bit of a tricky question?
P: Well, decisions on my health so most likely, well one of them was cancelling my sleeping pills because I don't need them as much anymore because I'm able to go to bed on my own and I don't really need sleeping pills, so that was me and my mum's decision. One of my decisions was that ingrown toenail and yeah, yeah, I had to and I believe my mum had to sign a waiver as well that it may go wrong or something
R: Yeah, yeah
P: Yeah well I'm allergic to antibiotics, so. Yeah. So that was one of my decisions that I had to do, sign a waiver. And one of them was cutting my finger, which was here *shows where finger had been cut* this is a long time ago
R: Oh I can see that yeah, it looks like a circle

P: Yeah, this was a long time ago, 2007 or 2010 that happened
R: What did you do?
P: I was so dumb back then it all honesty
R: Oh it happens though, accidents happen
P: My mum had to make this decision for me because I was too young at that time. I'll make a lot more decision when I'm older, for my health and also a few other things like, I don't know, like jobs for example
R: Yeah, fantastic. We've come to the end of the, of the questions. Do you want to talk about anything else, or do you want to ask me anything?
P: I want to go back on a few questions that I mentioned
R: Perfect, do you want to do that now on the recording?
P: Let's do it with the recording because I don't really care if it's recording, you know, I don't mind about getting recorded
R: Okay, so let's think about this one... So, let's think about living independently
P: Yeah that was one of them I think
R: Yeah, so we're thinking about how school can do better and how they can do worse. You kind of answered that question about what school can do
P: Yeah
R: How school have helped you develop your skills independently? So PSHE
P: *laughs* PSHE yeah
R: You spoke about how confident you felt about managing your finances. And then one of the questions is about how you have been involved in making decisions about independent living
P: Yeah
R: How have you been involved making decisions around independent living. I think that's a question that I might need to reword, so I don't know if it makes much sense. I'm getting a bit confused
P: I'm getting confused as well *laughs*
R: Let's run through these quickly. So first it was around your education, employment and training. And we asked that what you wanted in the future about education, employment and training, and you spoke about doing GCSEs, going into a job in ICT and staying on for sixth form, doing GCSEs in maths, English and those types of subjects. Happy with that answer?
P: Yeah
R: How school helped you develop the skills and knowledge. You spoke about all the learning you do in school and we spoke about what they can do, what they do to help you and we spoke about revision what they can do more of is push you up higher in the maths set and those things and how you've made your decisions to go on to do your GCSEs, I think that's when you spoke about your brother and how you want to be
P: Something similar like him, like other people in sixth form as well
R: Yeah, exactly and then we spoke about how confident you feel about getting there. And you kind of said a little bit confident, but you want to grow your confidence
P: Yes, definitely
R: Is there anything you want to add?
P: Um, no I don't think so
R: So education, employment and training. Education is doing GCSEs, employment and training is getting a job in ICT

P: Yeah
R: Independent living was the next one. So what were your goals about living independently? And you speak about potentially moving into a flat to begin with then maybe over time moving into a house?
P: Yeah
R: Having a girlfriend and a family in the future. Earning enough money to be able to buy a house, pay rent. Yeah, these kinds of things. What skills and knowledge do you need to live independently? And you spoke a lot about where you live, being safe, street wise those kinds of skills, how does school support you to develop those, to live independently. You spoke about year 10 trip where you went outside?
P: Yeah, yeah, year 10 trips. Yeah. There was a lot more than in year 11 because I don't know why they I think they don't know if I stopped because of COVID. I don't know. They stopped it because of some sort of certain reasons
R: Mhm. That's great, but it's good to know that isn't that. There's a bit more the school could do that. Yes. That's what's will be helpful about it. And how confident you feel about managing finances?
P: Not really that confident
R: I think that's what we said, and saving can be hard and that's hard as you go into adult life as well. And we asked I asked you about how has your involvement been? What is your involvement been in making decisions about independent living? And that for me is a question that I think I need to change or take out. So don't worry about that one. Okay. Community inclusion was the other one we spoke about. What were your goals about friendships and in your local community? And you spoke about very close, good close friend. And you got a friend that maybe isn't interacting with you as much anymore. And that you are going to be doing some stuff with NCS, which is really exciting
P: Yeah yeah it's exciting
R: You're part of the school eco club
P: Eco club, NCS and leadership
R: Amazing so you're involved in so much and so many community-based things already. We spoke about what skills you need to be good in the community. You speak about communication skills, about helping others, and how do schools help you to support those? I think that's where you spoke about the Eco Club and NCS as well. Um, how, how, how can you access emergency services and you had a really fab answer about how you can get hold of all sorts of NHS, community CBC
P: CBC, NSPCC, all sorts
R: So that's brilliant. One of my questions was how much control do you have OVER who you spend your time with? And that's a bit of a strange question, I think
P: *laughs* I know
R: I'm going to put a question mark on that one, I think you spoke about sometimes you, sorry go on
P: Sometimes I try and spend time with friends. Sometimes I try and spend some time with specific friends. Sometimes. Well, it's usually the same person most of the time. But I'm not the one hanging out with another person like my friends. For example. Like I said, he said all you want to speak to tomorrow. Yeah. And he doesn't. And I want to spend time with him a bit more
R: Yeah so that's been interesting I need to think about how I could ask that question in a better way

P: I understand
R: And then one of the questions was, how do you think friendships will help you move into adulthood? You were saying friends for life and you can they give you advice and you can trust them. One of my questions was how street safe do you feel?
P: *laughs*
R: I think that was all of those ones, and then we went on to the health, which is the last section. So what skills and knowledge do you need to be a healthy adult? And you had a really good answer around what food to eat, how you say physically healthy, how do school support you in those, PSHE we spoke about the different topics, diversity, all those kinds of things and healthy well-being
P: Yeah
R: Then we spoke about how much do you know about managing your own health? And you said and I wondered, actually, that might be a question how much you know about managing your own health and we spoke about the physical side of things? I wondered if there was a bit more about the emotional side of things. How can you say emotionally healthy?
P: How can I stay emotional healthy? Most likely try and spend less time social media in all honesty because it can be a bit stressful sometimes because sometimes you to deal with situations. Sometimes I do those situations and stuff. I don't have to see situations a lot, just I don't and then try and speak to the correct people like such as mum, sometimes I speak to a few of a few friends like that can help me. I don't really know a bit more as well
R: But I think that was it, when we said we haven't, that's an area that maybe you haven't thought about as much, which is fine and that's a really good point to make as well. And we spoke about how you might say physically healthy as an adult, and you said lots of different sports and physical activities that you could do and healthy eating. And then we spoke about what how involved what has your involvement been in making decisions about your health? And you spoke a bit about going off the is it sleeping tablets?
P: Going off sleeping tablets it was me and my mum's decision
R: Yeah. And things like that. That's all of them. So I'm going to stop interviewing. Stop recording sorry
P: Ok

Appendix 9b

Full Transcript: Amy

Interview 1 REDACTED — Year 11
Pseudonym – Amy

R: So it'll just be recording in the background, I've pressed record now and I will just leave it here so it's not too distracting. And so, are you happy for me to do this interview with you? Yes? Okay. Fantastic, just for the sake of the recording, say that you're nodding to me. You're saying, yes, that's fine. And you know that you can stop at any time. Yeah? If you don't want to continue, you can walk out. You don't have to say anything. If you need more help on the questions, you can just ask me. This isn't a test. You can say whatever you like as well. Say there is no one from school here because I might ask you some questions around what school could do better, and you can be very honest and open. Your voice recording, no one will be able to identify you so I won't be using your name when I write this up as a report. Okay, so it will be anonymous. So no one will know what you have said but you will know what you said, obviously. So you're giving consent and you're happy for us to go ahead? Okay. Brilliant. Okay. Okay. So first question, and this is just a bit about what you understand around preparation for adulthood. So what does that mean for you, preparation for adulthood?

P: I don't know

R: Have you heard of the preparation for adulthood outcomes about the areas of that?

P: *shakes head*

R: No. So if you are thinking about the areas of as you're getting older, you might start to think about where you go and live when you're independent living, that kind of quite those kinds of things. Have you heard about the career opportunities and what you might do when you're older, has school helped you to think about these things a little bit? What do you think?

P: Yes

R: They have, okay, cool. So that's what we're going to talk about today, we're going to talk about those different areas a little bit. Yeah. And so you can just talk about it freely with me about what you want to do when you're older, basically, and how that you'll kind of get into getting to that kind of stage in your life as well, because you're going to be nearly 16 soon. Is that right?

P: *nods head*

R: Yeah. So you'll be 16 in December. And so you might be starting to think about GCSEs or going to college or A-levels. Is that right?

P: *nods head*

R: Yeah. Okay. These are types of questions that I'm going to kind of talk about today is that alright?

P: *nods head*

R: Yeah. Okay. So what would you like to do in the future? What would your dream job be?

P: To work with horses

R: To work with horses? That's exciting. And why would you want to work with horses?

P: Because I'm animal lover

R: An animal lover. Amazing. Have you had opportunities at school to work with horses?

P: No, but I do go horse riding often

R: Brilliant

P: Outside of school too

R: Oh, exciting. So you've done horse riding outside of school and that's where you've learned a bit more about that kind of job and career

P: Yeah

R: Fantastic. Do you like working with lots of animals, or is it just horses that you're kind of…

P: Horses

R: Just horses, okay, that's brilliant. And how have school helped you to think about that as a job? Have they helped you to think about that as a job?

P: Don't know

R: Not sure, *coughs* excuse me, so is it working with horses is the kind of job you want to go into? Is it riding horses or is it cleaning horses? Is it looking after horses? What type of bit about the horses is it that you want to do?

P: Looking after horses

R: Looking after horses. Okay. Amazing. So do you do anything at school that helps you to think about how you might look after animals or horses?

P: Yes, I know how to groom horses and tack up

R: Brilliant. That's great. And you learnt that at school or was that when you did it outside of school?

P: At school

R: Could you tell me a bit more about that?

P: There's a horse-riding centre place called Pemhurst place RDA

R: Ok and what do you do there?

P: Ride
R: Yeah
P: For half an hour
R: Intervals?
P: No
R: No, just the half an hour. Okay. Amazing. That's great. And so is that something that you chose to do? Or was that someone at school told you you have to do?
P: I wanted to do it
R: That sounds really good. Amazing. So what else happens there is it Pemhurst?
P: Pemhurst
R: Pemhurst, what else happens at Pemhurst?
*interrupted by teacher to pass a message to the researcher *
P: After riding we have lunch, and after lunch we groom and tack up horses
R: Amazing
P: And muck out their stables
R: Mmhmm. Do you do anything else?
P: *shakes head*
R: Brilliant. Okay. Thank you for talking about that. That sounds really exciting. What do you want to do then in a year or twos time, are you going to go to college or are you going to go on to stay at Sixth form?
P: My mum wants me to stay on at sixth form, but I don't want that
R: What do you want to do?
P: Go to animal college
R: What do you know about animal college? What kinds of things do you know that you could do at animal c college?
P: I haven't looked round it properly yet
R: And is there one close by that you can go to see that there's a couple that you can go to?
P: Devon College
R: Mmhmm. Is that the only one you know of at the minute?
P: *nods head*
R: Yeah. That's great. So if your mum wants you to stay on at Park School and you want to go to college, how are you going to sort that kind of situation out? How will that plan out, do you think?
P: I could stay on for maybe one year or so
R: Mmhmm
P: And then go to college afterwards
R: Yeah you could do both. You could stay here for a year and then go to college. So you kind of keeping both people happy if that's kind of. Yeah. I see. I see. Okay, so what do you think that school could do? What could Park School do to help you develop your skills and knowledge of looking after horses? So your future career? What could school do more of? How could they help you a bit more with that?
P: Work experience work
R: What would that look like for you? What would the work experience look like for you that would help? Do you think?
P: Don't know
R: Not sure. Okay that's great. So I'm just going to summarize as we go along. So I make sure I've understood everything. So you would like to do a kind of animal care at horse care, sorry, specifically. So working with horses in the future, you would quite like to go to college next year, but your mum would like you to stay on at Park School. So there's a bit of a discussion around whether you stay on for a year and then go to college or that's kind of something you haven't yet decided necessarily what you're going to do. Is that right or have you made a decision yet?
P: I don't know whether I want to stay or go
R: Yeah. Okay. And you've got some time to think about that don't you. Yeah. You would like more work experience, so that would give you the opportunities to know a bit more about how to do how to look after the horses but you do at the minute, do trips to Pemhurst where you do some riding and mucking out and tack, what is it?
P: Tacking up
R: Tacking up. I'm not very good with horses' stuff I'm quite new to the phrase, what does tacking up mean?
P: It means go and get their tack and put it on the horse
R: Oh so like the equipment, the saddle and all the reigns, is it the reigns?

P: Bridle
R: The bridle, ah amazing. That's brilliant. Okay, cool. That's really helpful. Thank you for talking about that. And how confident do you feel you've got the skills to do that as a job? How confident do you feel that you can do that now that you think that you've got the skills to do that as a job?
P: 100%
R: I love it. So you're really confident you can do it, you already do it right. You go to Pemhurst, you tack up, you ride the horse for half an hour. So you feel pretty confident that you've got the skills and knowledge that you need. And that's your goal, right? Your goal in the future is to go and do that as a as a job and get paid for it. Is that right? *participant nods* Yeah. Okay, fantastic. We're going to move on then to different parts. So then think about independent living. And so that means when you're older and you all have left school where you're going to live in the future, are you happy to talk about that?
P: *nods head*
R: Yeah. Okay. What would you like to do then in the future? How would you like to live in the future? When you think about where you might be, what type of place would you live in? Who would you live with? What might that look like?
P: I want to live with my friend
R: Mmhmm, is that one friend or a group of friends?
P: One friend
R: And have you thought any more about what it would look like? So you'd like to live with one other friend? Have you got a friend in mind already who that might be?
P: *nods head*
R: That's exciting. And so you'd like with one other person. Would you like to live in a house or a flat? Or what type of place would you like to live in?
P: Flat
R: Would you like to live quite locally? Or would you like to move somewhere kind of further away?
P: Maybe…
R: Futher away? *laughs* Get to go and see the world that would be good wouldn't it. How have you made that decision then? How you come to the decision that you'd like to live with a friend and you'd like to move away? Why would you like to do that?
P: So I don't have to see my sister anymore
R: *laughs*
P: She snores like no one's business
R: Oh no, does she keep you up at night?
P: *nods head*
R: Does your friend snore? Have you checked, have you asked her if she snores?
P: Her mum does
R: Oh, so she's sick of it too. She wants some peace and quiet *laughs*
P: *nods head*
R: Amazing. Amazing. What skills do you think you need then? To live independently? To live with your friend somewhere farther away. What do you need to know? What skills do you need to have? Do you think?
R: Not sure? So if I give you some prompts, you can maybe think about them. So what about money? What kind of things do you think you need to know about money to be able to live independently.
P: To buy all the baby stuff
R: Yep, so that's thinking that you might want to have a family as well in the future?
P: *nods head*
R: Yeah, so you would like to have children in the future, do you think?
P: *nods head*
R: Yeah. What about paying rent and your bills and things like that?
P: My friend does that
R: Your friend will do that for you?
P: *nods head*
R: Does she already do that at the minute or does she? She lives with her parents doesn't she. Or her mum at least because her mum snores
P: *nods head*
R: Yeah. Okay. What about if you are living by yourself and you need to go to the doctor's or the dentist? Had you thought about how you might do that and how you would sign up to the doctors and dentists, those kind of things?

P: *shakes head*
R: Not yet. I guess you've got so you've got lots of time to think about it. Okay. So how have school helped you to develop your thinking about how you live independently? So how school helped you to develop your skills or your knowledge about that?
P: Not sure
R: Not sure. Can you remember or think of anything that you've done in your lessons or I know that do you do PSHE as well. Do you do any topics in those lessons that help you think about that?
P: *shakes head*
R: No. Okay. So what could school do differently then or what could they do more of to help you to think about those things? What do you think?
P: Not sure
R: Not sure. I guess it's a tricky one at the moment, isn't it? Quite a way of, I guess, moving out and living by yourself at the moment and but yeah, good to think about it. And you've got an idea of what you want to do, where you want to be. That's really great. Okay. So we're going to move on to thinking about your friends and relationships and being part of the community as you get older and so what types of relationships would you like in the future? So what would you like to have lots of friends? Would you like to have a family? So having a partner, those types of things, what would you like in the future?
P: A family
R: You'd like a family and why would you want a family? What does that mean to you to have a family, who would be part of that family?
P: My friend
R: Yeah. Anybody else? That's great. Okay, so you're going to live and hopefully you live with this friend, right? So this is a close friend of yours. That's brilliant. That's. That sounds really nice. And so you want to stay friends with this person? Your friends now and you would like to stay friends with them. You'd like to live with them in the future? Yeah?
P: *participant nods*
R: Okay. What does it mean to be a part of a community to you? If I said, to you, what is it to be part of the community? What would you say?
P: Not sure
R: Trickier one that one I think. Okay. What do you think? What skills and knowledge do you need to create new friendships? What do you think?
P: Walking up to them and say "do you want to be friends with me?"
R: Lovely. That sounds really good. And how do you think you maintain those friendships? How do you keep your friendship as you grow older? How do you going to keep hold of those friendships?
P: Not sure
R: Not sure, but you've already done, I guess, with your friend, so the friend that you'd like to live with. Have you been friends with them for quite a long time? So you've managed to keep a friendship with them really well, it sounds like. And that's really exciting
P: She's next door to my class
R: Oh, does she go to this school as well? Oh, lovely. So you know each other really well and you've grown up together. You go to the same school together. That sounds really really nice. How do you think, then why is it helpful to have a friend like them when you get older and as you grow up and you do things in your life?
P: Because my friends are going to sixth form after this year, and she wants to take me
R: Take you where, take you to sixth form? So she would like you to stay with her at sixth form?
P: Yeah
R: Okay. And what does she give you as a friendship. How does she make you feel as a person? How does it make you feel?
P: Happy
R: Yeah. Yeah. So she's quite supportive of you and she makes you happy. That's really lovely. That's really great. Okay, anything else you want to talk about with friendships or relationships?
P: *shakes head*
R: No. And so the last section we've got them is about health. This is staying healthy as you get older, as you're growing up over the next few years, as you're as you are now, as you are as an adult, what does it mean to you to be healthy?
P: Eat more fruit and veg
R: Yep eat more fruit and veg. Anything else?
P: *shakes head*

R: So if I was talking to you about how you stay emotionally healthy do you know what I mean when I say like emotionally healthy or your mental health, do you know what I mean when I say those things? Okay. So if I say your physical health, do know what I mean by your physical health? So you said about eating healthy. Is there anything else to say physically healthy that you think you might need to do?
P: *shakes head*
R: No, ok how does school help you to think about and develop your skills and knowledge about staying healthy?
P: We done one topic of this, non-healthy and healthy lifestyle
R: Oh, okay, cool. Could you tell me anything more about that?
P: If you eat rubbish like chocolate that's a bad lifestyle
R: Yeah, so your diet is really important. So what you eat is really important? Absolutely. And what do you think a school could do more of to help you think about how you stay healthy as you get older and as you go into adulthood?
P: I'm not sure
R: Not sure, no problem. And how do you make good decisions about how you stay healthy at the moment? How do you make decisions about that? Do you get to choose what you eat. Do you get to choose those types of things?
P: Only at lunches
R: Ok. So do you have school dinners?
P: *nods head*
R: Yeah. Okay, so you get to make those choices, but so the rest of the day, other people make choices for you?
P: I eat fruit at breaktime
R: Yep. Yep. Is that because you want to?
P: *nods head*
R: Cool. That's great. And is there anything else you'd like to talk about if you think about your preparation for adulthood or as you get older?
P: *shakes head*
R: No. And is there anything else you want to ask me or any questions about anything?
P: *shakes head*
R: No. I'm going to stop pressing the record button and I will just do that now.

Appendix 9c

Full Transcript: Cassie

Interview 2 REDACTED
Pseudonym – Cassie Speech, learning difficulties, ASD (Year 14 – school leaver)

R: Okay. So I'm recording now. I'm just going to leave that here and hope it's not too distracting for you. So thank you again for agreeing to do this. I just want to check Cassie you that you're happy to go ahead?

P: Yeah

R: Yeah brilliant. That's great. You've just given me some information about you, which is really helpful to go through, you can stop at any time, you don't have to do this if you don't want to, and you don't have to tell me why. If there is a question you don't want to answer we can skip over it, but there isn't anything I anticipate will be particularly problematic in that way. You can withdraw your data so I will talk about this at the end, but you have a week from today to tell me if you want me to delete this recording, if you're not happy or you want to not be part of the research overall, and that's absolutely fine. And if you've got any questions, just ask me along the way. There's no one from school in the room and that's fine. If you wanted an adult with you, you could have one with you. But please talk freely. Nothing will go back to school. I'm not going to tell them what you say. And it's really great to just hear about your experiences and you can talk as long as you want, about any topic in particular. There's no there's no pressure on that. Okay. So the first question I want to talk about is what preparation for adulthood means to you. And we've just had a bit of a discussion before the interview recorded that we're not sure if preparation for adulthood has a meaning for you right now, but we did talk about life skills and you had a bit of you've had some teaching for your school. Could you talk through a bit more about what that what you've had from that and what that looks like for you?

P: So basically life skills, um, from what I remember when you first joined sixth form, you do the what it was every Friday, but they changed the date for a whole afternoon so everyone in sixth form does them

R: Yeah

P: And they separate them into four different parts. So it used to be independent living, money, food and something else I can't remember the other one, but now they just do them all at once, so you have one afternoon lesson that is just life skills, or you'd pick it as an option, so they do double

R: Yeah

P: But that's more food tech. The other life skills that you have to do is more physical. So like how to do bank stuff, how to sign up for a bank, how to go shopping, plan and stuff like that

R: Yeah

P: Um, but we do them um my class we don't do them no more, we do them as an option now because first year was mandatory and second year they've changed it and um they changed it again and it was you that you can pick what one you want to do and then now it's more of an option, you don't have to do it if you don't want to

R: Yeah, yeah

P: So I don't do it. I don't know about any other people

R: Yeah

P: One of my friends don't do it. Um, but a couple people do

R: Yeah, ok cool. Thank you for that. Did you find it helpful when you had your when it was mandatory last year. Did you find it was helpful? Did you learn much from those lessons or did you feel like you kind of knew it already? Like, what was that for you?

P: I feel like it was yes and no because for me, I like to know what I like to find out about stuff like that like I've always been quite good with saving my money. Like, I've, um, I can never really deal with like, a massive amount. So a lot of the time I just give it to my mum
R: *laughs*
P: So like I can't, I end up putting it in random places and forgetting about it. Um, so I usually just give it to my mum and my mum keeps it somewhere safe but I've always been good with saving money so that was never like a problem for me. Um, so but I think it, it has helped certain people. Which is obviously being in classes with loads of different people that have different needs that need extra support and this or, need, don't need as much support in this, you do see how it helps certain people, but for me didn't really because I do that stuff anyway
R: Yeah
P: The only thing that really helped was probably like we were looking for houses and like they like how much they like it costs and then we wanted to research how much our salary was, if that was a job we wanted to do and like working out how much it would cost, and if we lived with loads of people, that's the only thing that I would say probably what I realised about, which is food shopping as well, like I've always done with my mum to food shop like I've never, I've always been with her so I've kind of seen that
R: Yeah. You've been aware of it, you've been around a bit more maybe
P: It's just I've never I like I just used to let mum do the talking
R: Yeah
P: I've always been there, I used to just stay with my mum, more of less, whatever she done I more or less went. So I've been around the home tidying up the house, washing up, stuff like that
R: Yeah
P: So being raised on that kind of sort of thing
R: That's great. That's very, really good. Thank you. And you touched on something that was really interesting. I wonder if I can ask you a bit more about it. So you had a bit of you said what was helpful was thinking about and if you if you had a job, what your salary might look like and then what it would be to buy a house or to live or rent it, I guess and that's kind of the independent living side of things as well as your job and career. Could you talk a bit more about what that means for you? So what kind of job would you like? Do you know what salary you would have and how you would then look at houses and those kind of things?
P: So I currently am working at the minute
R: Oh okay
P: I work at a Bowling Alley so it's just around the corner from here so I'm currently working there at the minute, but it was only probably I've been working there for like seven months now
R: Okay
P: So like 8-9 months ago I was like I really want to get that job, I don't want to be at home. Just because I had so much free time
R: Yeah
P: And I still have a social life. I still, like, go out with my friends at lunch, go out with them at night, like it's just I wanted something else to do. Like I just didn't want to sit at home and I still help Mum with the washing up, like normal more stuff I even have to do
R: Yeah

P: Um, so, and I wanted to earn money for myself more than like ask my parents for money. So obviously you're getting older and you can ask your parents for money if you want, but for me, I don't like asking people for stuff. Like I don't even really like asking my own mum for stuff and that's like you should be alright asking your parents for stuff, but I feel like you need to kind of even though it might be a struggle, you need to kind of learn how to do it yourself and all of this. So I was like I want to get a job, so my mum's partner helped me with my CV. So I done it well I wrote it all up, all by myself and, and he went through it because I can't spell so he went through it and changed up to make it sound more… adultish?

R: I know what you mean, yes, yeah

P: Like more mature? I don't know, like let's say sophisticated, I don't know

R: Good word yeah

P: Sophisticated. So, after he done that um, I sent it off and didn't tell my mum about everything

R: Really?

P: Yeah. I kept it very quiet, I didn't want any knowing because my dad's family is very much like when one person knows, everyone knows

R: Okay yeah

P: So it's my mum's boyfriend's family. So I didn't tell anyone because I knew if I told my mum would tell him, so I was like the only person that knew was Hannah and Paige

R: Okay

P: That was it. Because I lied to the school as well saying I had a dentist appointment

R: *shock*

P: Everyone believed me, only certain teachers knew

R: Was there an element around pressure? You didn't want the pressure of people knowing?

P: Yeah, I didn't want the pressure of people knowing because I'm like… when it's just myself like when no one knows anything like oh, like when you have loads of people coming up to you like "you can do this" stuff like that, for me personally that doesn't help, for me it's just like leave it, don't speak about it or I start getting angry

R: Yeah okay

P: Like I don't want to speak about it, wait and see until what comes like all of that lot

R: Yeah

P: Like leave it, even right after I signed the stuff off I got, I've done the interview, they go well and I and my mum was going on and messaging and I was like "no leave me alone" and then me and her weren't on good terms for a couple of days because she wouldn't leave me alone, cos I started getting really annoyed with her

R: Yeah

P: So but apart from that, like, it's just like you need to learn how to do these things. Like one way or another you are gonna have to learn at some age and yes it might take some people longer, yes it might not. But when I'm for me, I like to go out, I like to do stuff like the only thing that probably holds me back is probably my English. Like literally, like vocally, I can speak to you for hours, put it on paper I can understand what it means probably a couple others but most people wont understand what it means. My handwriting is really neat so you can see it, but just you won't understand

R: So, it's writing that's more difficult for you, but speaking?

P: Yeah

R: As you're speaking now it's like, yeah, I can actually understand everything you're saying, you're very eloquent at speaking, it's brilliant. What was the job that you went for then? So what do you do now?

P: I Um, I currently am on break at the minute from there, because I just said to them I want some time off just because it's good having a job but at the same time it's just like yeah it can be too much. Like especially I work full time when I said part time but they put me down for full time sometimes just because they ain't got enough staff, and a lot of them are, so if you are not over 16 you're not allowed to stay until late, you have to stay until ten

R: Okay

P: So and obviously I'm 19 I can work in the bar

R: Yeah

P: And we only have four bar staff

R: So you're bar staff, you work behind the bar, is that your job?

P: Well, I'm customer service. I can do a bit of reception

R: Yeah. What is the place called sorry?

P: The Bowling Alley

R: The Bowling Alley, oh okay okay

P: I can do a bit of waitressing of the food but I can't make the food cos im not trained

R: Yeah ok are you enjoying it?

P: Yeah I get along with everyone there, like um obviously you don't get along with everyone, but I speak to most of them like and a lot of the time like I have my banter my laugh with the electrician and stuff like that. Yeah, and obviously I've been on break so I've two of them text me last night, going "are you coming back?", I was like, "Yeah I am I just, like, took time off" and they're like "did you get in trouble?" with a sad face and like "don't worry, I'll be back, I'm just like taking a break"

R: Yeah. Oh, that's nice that they're looking out for you

P: Like it's nice

R: Yeah, they're checking in on you

P: It's nice to get a little text message from them

R: Yeah, yeah that's amazing. So you currently are working and you've been working quite a lot over the last seven months and taking a bit of a break now and you're really enjoying it, getting to know some new people. When you spoke to… I'm just going to get back to when you mentioned that school helped you think about salaries and then how that translates to what you could do in terms of living and housing. Yeah, well, tell me a bit more about that side of things then so, what did you learn about housing and how has it helped you or did you know it already? Talk to me a bit more about that

P: So I knew a bit already, whenever mum was the like looking at houses and stuff like that, because originally we come from Maytown

R: Okay

P: So and then we lived with our nan and grandad for a little while so and then she was looking for houses so, uh, she was like, I was like, she was going on about mortgages and I was like "what's that?" and she was like "oh you can get two sorts, like one that you pay bit by bit and it's yours or one that you pay and it's nothing to do with you" and I was like, "oh" and she was like "I don't know what one" like I know a bit about it but I wouldn't say I know like loads the ins and outs like, all I know is you can get one where you pay and its yours and one where you don't have to pay…

R: Okay, yeah. Okay, well, what do you think you need? So when school gave you the information about where you could live and you had a bit of input from school and they were teaching you a bit about it, what did they tell you about what types of housing were they talking you through?

P: They were telling us obviously you can get flats, houses, stuff like that. Shared apartments, living with friends or just random people

R: Yeah

P: And I was like "oh" and they were talking about what you would have to pay like gas, electric

R: Yep

P: Your food like um your actual house and then if anything happens, it's not your fault

R: Yeah

P: That one, I don't know what that one is

R: If you I guess if you maybe if you're renting and it's for a landlord and the landlord is responsible for keep, if something breaks it's kind of up to them to fix it, if you don't kind of own it. What would you like to do then if I think, well, do you want to are you thinking about moving out soon or?

P: Not anytime soon

R: If you were to think about it or if you are thinking about it for in a few more years time, what would that look like for you?

P: Um, I'm not too sure, to be honest. Just because I don't like quiet places, I hate being at mum's house when it's quiet and no one's there just because like if you hear like a little sound you freak. Well, you don't know, you don't know like literally if they're not and I'll literally just stay in my room

R: Yeah

P: Only go downstairs to get a drink

R: Yeah. Yeah, okay. Okay. So not… Somewhere that's got a bit more going on

P: Yeah

R: Few more people around

P: Yeah. I think if I ever did move out, I think I would move out with like a friend or something like that. Just at first. Because I feel this after I feel like I look after the house. But I don't think I can look after myself. Like, I don't even like doctors and stuff like that. Like, I don't think I'd be able to look after myself

R: Yeah

P: Because even though I work… I still go out like I would say I'm a very confident person, but I'm only confident because I've got someone else there

R: Mmhmm yeah

P: So I know I've got a fall back

R: Yeah. Yeah I get that. Yeah. Absolutely. That makes sense. Okay. So if you do move out, you probably would want to move with a friend

P: Yeah just at first

R: And you understand stuff like how you would pay your bills and what that would cost and the roughly kind of… do you get those bits or is that's something you need a bit more kind of help with?

P: I would definitely say that before I even might. If I did start looking into it, I would probably go through them bits and actually work out and go into more detail. But um, all I do know at the minute about it you pay for it. If you don't pay for it, you get into trouble

R: Yeah. That's basically it isn't it. So if you um I'm going to, to skip because, I guess we've talked about that already now, which is really great. How confident do you feel about living by yourself or with a friend? How do you feel you've got the skills and knowledge to go and do it now?

P: I feel like I could, but I wouldn't want to

R: Not ready?

P: Yeah, I don't feel like I'm like, ready to do that. But I'm like, I know how it is. I know how to cook, I know how to do washing up, and I know how to iron and know how to use the dishwasher. Yeah. Like that ain't the problem it's just I would say myself, I wouldn't be able to like mentally look after myself, I can look after the house, but don't think I would be able to look after myself

R: What do you mean by that? So like self-care kind of stuff?

P: Yeah, because I don't I don't even remember it now like a lot of the time mum's like "you need to do this, you need to do this" and then I still forget even though she's just told me

R: So like day to day is that kind of what kind of things would it be that you might forget to do in the day?

P: So, like I can make myself, mum would be there, and I'll be like "I'm going to make myself a toastie or something" and then like I leave toast in the microwave and forget about it or walk off from it

R: Ah yeah

P: Or like um, what do you call it, I would like I hate baths, hate them. Um I used to only get in like showers at my dad's until my mum spoke to the whoever owned about it and my, um, oh, um, my paediatrician mentioned it to them and they installed one

R: Okay

P: So then I obviously wash myself more when I was at my mom's for like, like even like going to get my haircut or like, uh, getting in the shower to wash my hair I'm like I don't want to get in it, I will freeze, just because I don't like it

R: What don't you like about it, is this about showers or baths, or just in general?

P: Just in general

R: Is it going in water?

P: I can get in a swimming pool, but I can't get in

R: Is that about washing your hair? Kind of remembering that you put conditioner in or shampoo in and washing it out again?

P: Yeah it is, I remember once I washed my hair and I didn't wash it properly and when I got out my mum was like "you haven't even washed it properly" and then I wash like "oh" got back in, or a lot of the time I'm like I get in and then forget to like actually shampoo it and just condition it

R: Yeah

P: Or like random stuff like that

R: Yeah, yeah

P: Or like I don't even go to the doctor's by myself. So like I, I don't think I'll be able to do it

R: Yeah. So, you said earlier about your at your dad's house, he only had a shower or he only had a bath?

P: He had both and mum just had a bath when we first moved in there

R: And you couldn't get in the bath so they installed a shower for you that you could go in and you could have a wash and those kinds of things. Okay, so, so there's kind of some help

there from the doctors around what you needed and things. And, you mentioned there about finding it difficult, you go to the doctors with your mum still…
P: Yeah
R: Dentist same thing?
P: Same thing. Yeah everything medical, I can't do it
R: Would you know how to, would you know how to make a doctor's appointment or a dentist appointment if you needed to?
P: I would just ring them. But like I don't even speak to my doctors. Like I just sit there
R: So you know how to, but you just don't want to, why don't you like them, or what don't you like about them?
P: I don't know. I think it's just like, you know, waiting in the waiting room. And then the way they use all of these technical terms and like yeah I know you're a doctor, but like I'm not going to understand this. You're like speaking to someone that's practically like still a child so, and you're using all of this, you honestly think that I'm going to understand what that means? At least speak normally and I can understand if you're older and you want to use all of that terminology, but we will just sit there and be like, okay, even now, we don't even know what you're going on about
R: Yeah yeah, absolutely. I agree with that. I think it's important that you make things accessible. People need to understand what you're saying otherwise there's no point…
P: Literally
R: Yeah, okay. That's really helpful. So school have helped in some ways to help you understand your options of where you could live, like shared accommodation, living by yourself, living in a flat, and they did other independent life skills with you before. Is there more do you think that school could do more to help you think about moving out and doing kind of more independent skills in the future?
P: I think they could, but I think they won't be able to
R: What do you think they could do or should do?
P: Like with the whole, like independent living thing I think they should do it how they done it when they when I first joined
R: What was that like then?
P: So basically you had, um, different groups, so you were separated into four groups and then each time you like change what you were doing, but then groups were separated into what you were capable of
R: Okay yeah
P: At the minute we do it by classes, but just because someone's really good at maths or someone's or someone's really good at English, that doesn't mean they're very good at independent living. They might not even know how to use a dishwasher
R: Mm
P: Like someone but be really bad at English, or someone might be really bad at maths might know how to use a dishwasher. Like it's a bit hard for…if they'd put it more into what people are more capable of, I think they'll get more out of it because me and, myself and I, and my friend, we used to just sit and talk. We didn't even really pay attention person just because we already knew it or we already knew bits about it. We didn't need to know anything more about it, until we actually started looking into houses or until we actually started going to doctors for ourselves like we didn't need to know it, when other people did. And then we would get distracted and we would distract everyone else
R: Yeah

P: Because we couldn't just sit there
R: It's a really good point. So just to make sure I understand what you were saying. So it'd better you'd say it would be better how it was. So you'd be in groups based on how capable you are, rather than just being by a class, by class because you'll be in class with some people who don't know how to don't know what mortgages are or don't know how to make their lunch or whatever it could be, I don't know. But you do and actually for you some of it was at different level
P: Because that's daily, that stuff that I do on a daily like even though maths and English are probably, well maths is my favourite, but even though like that stuff's nothing I really do I don't like even though that is something we do, like that is like that's why that whole situation is my main, ever since we have been little my mum's always had us in the kitchen doing stuff like she's always had us baking stuff for like using the dishwasher and stuff like that. Because obviously my way or learning is physical and repeating and if someone shows me how to do it and shows me how to do it in probably like five or six steps and keep it short as anything, I could literally just, I probably wont be listening to you I'll probably be more like watching you
R: Mm hmm
P: And then just repeat, I'll repeat you. Like a lot of the time, even when Evan, my brother, he's younger than me, but he goes to Central School so it's similar to this kind of school. So even him he's really good with his English, so we used to team that so Evan used to read it and I use to be like "oh so it's do this" like stuff like that is easy so I used to help Evan with stuff like that. But I would say if they did separate into groups, it's so much easier and I think as well as that people that are more capable to learn more out of it
R: Is there anything to think about the types of things you learn then? Is there anything that you feel that you're still missing that you wish school would have given you the information on? Um, so is a, I don't know, like doctor's appointments and dentist appointments. Do you feel like they could have helped you more with that or do you feel like you actually know everything you need to know now it's just a confidence thing?
P: I feel like they could of help, but they can't like stuff like that they can't help with like. But then it's more and less, I would say it's a confident thing because I could like, if I had my mum there with me, I just I can't go in there by myself
R: Mm
P: Like nah
R: What is it about going in there by yourself that you're not so sure about?
P: I don't like like
R: How it makes you feel?
P: Yeah. Like, not even that. Like going into the room. Like, I hate like this is going to see really because I'm speaking to you but I don't like speaking to people I don't know. Like if I walk into a room and you're sitting there like
R: With a straight face
P: I'm going to be like I ain't speaking to you. If I walk into the room and I get good vibes then I'm like 'oh okay' then I'll speak
R: Yeah
P: If I don't, I'm not going to speak to you or if they're not trying to understand what I'm saying that's when I shut off
R: Yeah

P: I just sit there and I don't even know it to be honest and I just sit there and then that's when mum usually takes over
R: Yeah
P: But then the only one that I'm actually confident going to see that's my paediatrician that's because I've had, it wasn't her but she left then it was one of her colleagues, so I've seen him multiple times
R: Yeah
P: So that's the only one I like talk to out of all of them just because it never changed
R: Yeah
P: It's always the same guy
R: So there's something about having a good relationship with that person before you feel like you want to talk with them and feel listened to
P: When it comes to stuff like that like if you're in pain or if you've got a problem, they're not going to want to talk to someone if you ain't going to, like bad vibe going on or anything like that because if you don't have that going on, you're going to be like well, I feel uncomfortable talking to you like
R: Yeah
P: That's the thing. If you don't make it feel uncomfortable a lot of the time, especially if people were even shy like they'll come out of their shell
R: Yeah, yeah
P: Like it's just
R: It's a really good point. It's something to consider. And I think, like you said, even me, you've never met me before. And it was all about like how I can build that and make you feel comfortable and those kinds of things. I think that's really important. And to be listened to, to be understood and someone take the time to do that, you know, I think is really important for for people to consider. Right. Thank you so much. I feel like I've learned loads about that independent life kind of skills and living and those types of things. You've spoken about the job that you do now. You've spoken about how you enjoy that and you've been there for seven months and taking a bit of time off at the minute and those kinds of things. Is that the job you want to do for the future? Or is that just a job for now? Have you got kind of a career option or something you want to do?
P: Um it's definitely just a job for now. Like, I'll probably stay there just for a little while, just because it's income, it's just getting you used to like working, especially if you're like a, like a kid, you still want it to be fine, you don't want it to exactly be like business or what you want to do, like and I can understand a lot of people that like why wouldn't you want to work in like, because obviously I want to do hair and beauty, I want to do hairdressing, nails the whole shebang but a lot of people will be like 'why aren't you working at the hairdressers?' im like because obviously that would be beneficial because you're learning hands on, but at the same time like you want to try and do stuff that you won't probably do when you're older like especially like something like that because I can do food, I can do reception, I can do bars. So it's just something different, especially when you want it to be fun, you don't want it to be as much business because when you're this age and you're like, 'oh, okay, I'm going to go into that'
R: Yeah
P: If you do that there is a probably a massive age gap between you and your colleagues like especially if you've been to like you're still very small. Like you want to meet people

your own age and do like a job kind of near your own and then go to college. And then when you've done that, go off and do it yourself
R: Yeah, I think it's just really interesting because you'll be what you'll be doing now as well is expanding your skills. So like you said, like, like cooking to some degree or waiting, bar staff, customer service, those kinds of skills are things that you maybe wouldn't get if you went straight into beauty now. So it's quite good because you kind of developing that earlier on. So actually overall you'll have more skills and knowledge because you kind of had different jobs before you go into that. So, so you're kind of aim is eventually to go into hair and beauty
P: Yeah or orphabotomist [phlebotomist]
R: What do they do?
P: They draw blood and they do like, um, flu jabs and stuff like that
R: Oh cool
P: So it's basically like a needle course
R: How, what, why that, why would you want to go into that. Where's that come from?
P: Um, so basically my mum was a midwife
R: Okay
P: So she's been training probably ever since way before I joined the school
R: Yeah.
P: So probably eight, nine years. And she's been official for the last I would say like six seven years
R: Nice. Yeah
P: So, but um, I've like even now I'm like not a big fan of doctors like stuff like that doesn't like, creep me out, like blood doesn't creep me out, like stuff like that. I would much prefer to be like in, like for me, I'm like oh some people don't really understand like where we come from. So I'm like maybe if we do this, one I can do it because I like doing it and two as well as that I can do bank shifts, like extra and as well as like I can I more or less have conversations with, so I love having conversations with people and talking to people and getting to know people, but if I'm not getting that vibe off you like nah I'm not going to try no more
R: Yeah yeah. And so did you learn about that from your mum essentially that kind of career or did school help you think about that?
P: Um, my mum did. My mum did because I honestly have no clue what I wanted to do like I'm still like now even like do I still want to do that, do I not. And the only things that there has only been three things that I'm like I've stuck to like I've always like, like I like working with children but I don't really want to do that as a job but they just naturally float to me so I have to like them and then I really like doing hair and beauty and stuff like that, I'm always braiding other people's hair because they can't do it or I'm doing it to myself, I do the teachers even like and then the other thing was helping people. So I was like what can I do with that, so my mum was like why don't you be a firefighter or something like that so I was like 'oh I might do that' something that will keep me busy and on my feet
R: Yeah that's really interesting. So you've got a couple of ideas of where you would like to go. What's your next step, so if you're leaving are you leaving Park School?
P: Yeah, we're leaving on the 1st
R: Of July? That's like in ten days or something
P: Yeah
R: Where are you going then? When you leave here, what's your plan?

P: So I've signed up for Flickham college near Asda, so I went in for a walk, like a walk round day and the school told us about it and me and my friend Hannah and we went down to look at it and then obviously we asked questions like whatever and then I said to mum about it and she was like okay yeah let's go down together and I can ask the questions that I particularly didn't want to answer or even speak about

R: Okay

P: So mum spoke to them and then we went to this other room and it was more or less like I dunno what it's called but it's like support

R: Okay

P: Support network or something like that

R: Yeah

P: So we went there, we spoke to this lady about like what would I get like because I get lost very easily like as well like I can be like walk in one direction and be like what am I actually meant to be doing or I could go the wrong way and be like where am I and start panicking

R: Yeah. Okay

P: So my mum spoke to them and she was like er well like she's, if she knows the route she can get there, if she doesn't know the route she can't get there

R: Yeah

P: Like or if you don't tell her not by road name or street name if you don't give her like somewhere like Aldi's like opposite that or near that or I'll meet you there, then she won't be able to get there

R: Yeah. So your mum was kind of asking them what support you would be able to get to help you when you're at Flickham College

P: Yeah

R: So that's are you happy about going there then. Is that a good choice for you?

P: Yeah. Yeah, I've been accepted into the course

R: Oh amazing well done

P: I'm just waiting to hear back about days and all of that

R: Okay

P: So I can plan my work

R: Yeah

P: And that I can't work them days

R: What course is it that you are going to go and do?

P: Um hair and beauty

R: Okay cool and how long is it?

P: It is six months I believe

R: Okay. Amazing. So you kind have got a plan. So you're going to go to Flickham college for hair and beauty

P: Yeah

R: And hopefully you're going to be working part time, continue the job that you're doing and then see what happens after that. And you've got no immediate plans to move out, but potentially in a few years

P: Yeah

R: Yeah something like that

P: Yeah but we went down there with the school and they made us do baking and I find it really weird but they made us do baking

R: What all of the people from Park School went there?
P: The people that are leaving
R: Yeah the leavers
P: That are coming to Park School, well not coming to Park School, going to that college or thinking about going to college
R: Yeah
P: They asked us to come, cos they knew we were from Park School because we had to write it down and our school was in contact with them because we go to their café
R: Okay
P: Like in the café
R: Okay
P: As work experience
R: Have you done that?
P: Yeah
R: When did you have a go at doing that? Was that recently?
P: The last two years
R: Are you still doing that?
P: No, I stopped doing it, because I wanted to focus more on my English. Which is my main worry was before going off to college, was not getting my English done
R: Yeah. Okay. Are you doing a qualification in English?
P: Yeah I have done it I just need to wait to hear back
R: Okay
P: I've done one of them, passed one of them, the other one I'm waiting to hear back from
R: Okay amazing, fingers crossed
P: So yeah they made us to baking and it was very weird, they made us bake a cake or was it cupcakes either one I was just there going to my friend, Max, going 'they're actually making us to baking?' it was like do we start, do we not, like what
R: *laughs* that's strange
P: That was all they said, put an apron on, wash your hands and then find a desk
R: Did you bake anything in the end? Was it good?
P: We did but like I weren't too sure if we were meant to start
R: Yeah yeah
P: Max just started and I was like okay if you start I start cos I don't know like if I see you doing anything then I'll like
R: *laughs* I'll follow you
P: *laughs* I'll follow you, so then we done it and I think they were just like assessing of what we're capable of
R: Okay, yeah. Maybe trying to make you feel more comfortable, but you were a bit like, what?
P: Yeah what the hell
R: What's going on? Why are you making everybody do baking?
P: Yeah. So, yeah
R: Oh, that's. Yeah, that's. That's quite that
P: Then after that we had to do some sheet about what we what we're worried about, what we're not
R: Okay
P: What we done, stuff like that

R: Yeah. Okay. Okay. So get a bit of sense of you I guess
P: Yeah
R: Yeah that's interesting. Interesting. But good that they, they made the effort I guess. And so you think about the work, you've done work experience at the cafe, where is the café?
P: So it's in the actual like college building you know when you go so you have the gate thing you have to get through
R: Yeah
P: If you go to your left and follow the corridor all the way, you get to like doors and a walk bit, you go through the doors, you go left again you go all the way down until you go past two massive doors and it's down a bit on your left
R: And when were you doing that, when were you helping out that?
P: I've done it when I started sixth form
R: Okay
P: So two years ago um it was an option. And I picked it and then we went down every it was either I cant remember I think it was every Tuesday morning or Tuesday afternoon. And I was in the morning for it, for my first year and then afternoon for my second year
R: What did you do that were you serving behind the café?
P: Serving, using the till, making drinks cleaning tables
R: So was that helpful for you? Now thinking about your job at the minute?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah and what other things have you done that have school done that's been helpful for you to think about? Is that kind of been it really the work experience there that any other work experience or anything else?
P: I worked in primary school for a week. They wanted me to stay for two. But I said, but I was like, uh, you have to email to ask if I can because I don't know if I'm allowed
R: Yeah okay
P: But I done that so I've done that experience, I done the the college for two
R: Yeah
P: So that was really it
R: Yeah. Okay, cool. Thank you so much, this is really really helpful to learn more about you. How confident do you feel about your skills and knowledge to go into hair and beauty?
P: So I'm like confident in it, but it's just like like if they would like it, like I feel like I'm not worried about it, I'd be more worried about what they're thinking
R: Who's they? Who do you mean by they?
P: Whoever the person is
R: Oh who's hair or making up you're doing? Yeah okay, but do you feel like you've got the skills to do it now like or the knowledge to do it. I guess once you've gone to college
P: Yeah
R: And done your course and things
P: I would say I always kind of did because that's something I've always like done like I used to always just braid stuff or keep like drawing or braiding and I used to always do it like when I was like, in the playground or something like that
R: Yeah, yeah
P: Just to keep me busy just because I didn't like socializing with people
R: Right, yeah, okay. So it's like a nice way of interacting with people without having to kind of talk too much

P: Yeah. So I've always done that. Or it was, it was more or less the fact that I was too shy like Oh, let's think like. Yeah. So I just text them sort of two things and I've, I still do that now, but I just don't do it as much like my dad was like 'why don't you do it as a, like for like life?' and I was like no I'm not that's something that's mine like I want to keep it to myself

R: Yeah

P: And then the hair and beauty thing was just something I liked doing in my free time like doing nails and stuff like that, like always like doing it so I just stuck to it

R: That's great. Yeah, brilliant. Thank you. Um okay, we're going to move on to another topic which is around friends, relationships and being part of the community so thinking about your future, what types of relationships would you like in the future?

P: I would like, the relationships I would like is I don't know I just want my friends to want to always be there like

R: Yeah

P: And have a joke with them and all of that lot like

R: Yeah

P: As long as I still talk to them or we still see each other I honestly don't care like

R: Yeah, so you want to keep your friends you've got now, because you like them you get on well with them. Yeah. Brilliant. That's great. And, do you see yourself being part of the community, if you, like, at the minute now, do you see yourself as part of a community?

P: Not really

R: No

P: I don't really do anything community wise

R: No, is it important to you to be part of a community or not really?

P: Not really. Because like a lot of people are like 'oh, I'm a part of this, I'm doing this' like, if that's what you want to do, no issue or you want to be a part of it. But like if I'm doing alright, then I'm like fine

R: Yeah, okay, cool. So how do you think your friends then, that the ones that you really like you want to keep as you get older, you'll keep those friendships. What do they give you? What's important about having those friends as you get older? What do you think the relationship will be like?

P: Mm I don't think it will change to be honest, like a lot of them are a bunch of nutters like to be honest I don't know how I deal with them

R: *laughs*

P: Cos I would say that I'm like the most sense one in them

R: Yeah

P: They're all like looneys so literally like

R: *laughs*

P: They're either looneys or they're just annoying like to be honest I don't know how I haven't got rid of them

R: *laughs*But you love them? *laughs* even though they're looneys

P: I'm the like cold hearted one in the friendship group

R: Right okay

P: So like yeah

R: But what is it about this group of friends then that you think that why you've stuck together, what do they give you, what do you get out of being friends with them?

P: Well I would say it's more just like going out, just like I never really like used to leave my house like
R: Okay
P: I just used to just stay in. Like, the only person I actually used to leave the house was. Was my friend called Ali and is from Maytown, where I originally was. Um, but I still see them now, but I only used to go out with him like I used to never go out
R: Yeah
P: Or my dad used to never allow me to go out because obviously he thought I'd wander off or talk to people like. And I'm like, no, I'll talk to people cos if they're coming up to me and just asking a normal question like I'm gonna answer. That doesn't mean I'm not going to tell them to, like, go away or like so if I don't want to do something I'm not gonna do it. That's the one thing that I've always even though I didn't really speak like properly when I was younger or even properly a couple of years ago, I've only started getting well my
voice properly six, well not even six years ago, probably like five years ago
R: Yeah okay
P: Even then, like the one thing that I saw properly be about was I don't want to do something, I'm not doing it
R: Mm
P: So I used to not be allowed to go out or my mum would be alright, my mum would just like ask for their number. So she would always have like whoever I am with their number just in case like but my dad wouldn't let me. So like I think it's that freedom that you get from having them
R: Yeah
P: Just because if they know your parents as well then like you don't have them ringing you like you don't have anyone calling you, you know, they know you'll be alright so
R: Yeah
P: And it's what it is, it's just the laughter, the fun you get from them like the stupid things they do
R: Yeah
P: Or if they do anything stupid like and it's always it's like a safety blanket in a way especially if you go out. I would definitely say I'm the one in the friendship group that would tell someone to go away if they're not going away
R: Yeah
P: I think I wouldn't be able to do that as much as what I do if I was by myself
R: Yeah. Okay. So they give you that, that kind of safety blanket and with that comes a sense of freedom that you can go and do more stuff because you're with them
P: Yeah
R: And you can keep safe and your parents know who you're with and they can contact your friends if they can't get hold of you and those kinds of things
P: Yeah
R: That's really cool. Okay, that's great. So I think we'll go on to the last bit, which is around health. Sorry I've got something in my eye and it's really bugging me. And so health, what does it mean to be healthy to you?
P: Um not too sure to be honest, because that's something I've always struggled with
R: Yeah
P: So um, I don't know. I would say, oh healthy hmm

R: So if I was thinking about physical health, like how would you stay healthy, physically healthy as you get older or at the minute, even?
P: To look after your body, be a decent weight
R: Yeah
P: Make sure you eat the right stuff
R: Mhm
P: And make sure you're not weak and you're able to do stuff
R: Yeah. And what about like emotionally your mental health. How do you stay healthy in that sense. Do you know what I mean if I ask that question?
P: Isn't that like um, oh I don't know how to explain it. Um, like, how so like how if your body is alright um by giving it food, like, how your brain's alright if you're giving it um food but that doesn't make sense
R: No I know exactly what you mean. It's a good description. Yeah. You like you look after your body by giving it food, and you can look after your brain and your mental health by giving, doing self-care or
P: Yeah I usually listen to music, to be honest or like obviously doing my art stuff
R: Yeah
P: Or I just go on walks and stuff like that, like obviously we're still quite young and obviously there's going to be bits of drama, I just try and stay away from it like if it's ain't got my name involved or if it ain't like two against one or something like that then I'm out of it. But if it's two against one, or even if I don't like the person like that's just uncalled for, if you're gonna like that, you don't have a problem with them stay out of it, it's them two
R: Yeah
P: Like but apart from that like just don't get involved in petty stuff like
R: Yeah
P: There's no point if it's just gonna do you more harm like
R: Yeah, absolutely. Um do you think, you know, you think you've got the skills and the knowledge of how you can stay healthy?
P: Yes, but I probably don't choose to follow them
R: *laughs* so physically, I think you've got, you kind of said some things about eating the right foods, being like being able to do stuff, not being too weak and those kinds of things. And I guess you spoke then about kind of the mental health side of things, about taking a walk, not getting involved in additional drama if it's going to make you feel really down. So you feel that you've got the skill, you feel equipped to be able to do those things?
P: Even even if you don't have anyone to talk to about stuff, about all that, talking to someone as well. You know, if you don't have anyone to talk about, you can easily go to like, oh, I don't know what they're called but places you can go to talk to about that or like speak to your doctors about them if you trust them like, I do the same but not with the doctors, I don't like my doctor, just with the paeds cos I like her
R: Okay yeah so you've got a
P: I've known them like I've been under them my whole life so
R: Right
P: I've always gone to the same buildings, the same room
R: How often do you mind me asking how often you see them?
P: Um, it depends, because I used to see them like three times a year
R: Okay

P: Quite a lot. When I was younger. And then as I got older, probably like last year
R: So once a year even
P: It was two to three times a year until the last year
R: Okay
P: Because that's when I started seeing them once a year. Because when I joined sixth form, that's before I joined sixth form, I was severely underweight because I just weren't hungry like a lot of the time I'd take I would take anything I had I would take it out on food like
R: Okay
P: Or if I like, if I had a problem or if I was getting annoyed like, or, like random or like looking in the mirror, I hate looking in the mirror like
R: Okay
P: But like I try to tell myself more but it just hurts so I didn't. But then I kind of left leaving the drama and all of that lot and probably speaking to someone is the best way, right?
R: Yeah
P: Because I used to well I had the odd times that I didn't speak to them or I did and like joining Park School. So when I first joined, I spoke to them about it and I was like, Oh, now this and this stuff
R: Yeah
P: And my mum was speaking to them and she was like 'it's actually really good because she's made friends' like before that I wouldn't say I had like friends, I only had Riley. But, um, yeah, she's actually made friends shes, her confidence has gone up. And I was still probably not eating right, but then I slowly got better with it. So I'm overweight now, but I'm like, still have to be careful just because I'm overweight. I'm alright weight but I'm not that good of a weight that I can be like oh screw it like
R: Okay. And so the pediatrician helped you with that. You they were the people that you would speak to and they kind of helped you through that. And when you felt like you needed to or when you felt like you could. You could speak with them beforehand. Okay. Thank you for telling me that. I imagine that might have been quite tough at the time. I'm glad to hear you're getting better
P: Kind of get used to it, to be honest, like
R: Yeah
P: I would say at first you never really get used to it but you just get used to it and obviously you can't really tell you can't tell your parents everything. Like you'll be worried about telling them certain stuff like the worry is they get annoyed at you or antsy you just don't want them around you so that you just give them a vibe and everything and the good thing is if I wanted my mum in the room I could have my mum in the room, but a lot of the time she weren't really in there
R: Okay
P: Or they have stuff like for you to do while I was speaking so it weren't like very much like directly speaking they always had pens and pencils so I used to just draw while speaking to them just to keep myself distracted
R: Yeah. So you had did you feel that you had you could make decisions about that then so you you had the choice about how you would speak to them and whether you had your mum present or not. And so if you had. Yeah. You had some control over that to some degree?
P: Mm

R: Yeah. Okay. And was there anything else you want to talk about in terms of kind of health and staying healthy and how you might do that when your kind of getting older

P: I would just say like eat right like even if you're not hungry just go and eat cos that's the thing that didn't exactly help me cos I weren't hungry, I weren't eating and then your stomach shrinks. So my stomach was the size of my hand when I was like to be honest, probably half of my hand now, so it was so small

R: Mm yeah

P: But literally I used to hide behind my class, no one knew I was there. I was just a small girl that had braces and glasses that was really skinny. So I would say, even if you're not hungry, I'd even eat. Like even if it's something like, crisps or yoghurt I used to just survive off of junk food and that's probably not the best way about it

R: Mm

P: But even eating a sandwich or something like that

R: Yeah

P: I just always eat like lunch, I can understand breakfast, don't see the point in it but like lunch and dinner like always or even have something like in between like just so then you stretch your stomach out and or it doesn't shrink

R: Yeah

P: So you can at least eat

R: Yeah. Yeah. Sounds like you've learnt a lot from it which is yeah

P: Yeah

R: Good I appreciate it must have been tough and yeah glad that you've managed to speak to the paediatrician and they've helped and school maybe. I don't know if they would have helped at all, but yeah

P: You have, the good thing is you have feel like you have certain teachers and that, that you have that you grow a connection with

R: Yeah

P: Like especially with just the school is so small

R: Yeah

P: We end up having the same teachers for years like I've had Ms Puddle for four years

R: Okay so you've got a good relationship

P: My English teacher for like three two years, and I had her for two years for sixth form

R: Yeah

P: And had a good relationship with Mr Sam, he joined when he joined sixth form

R: Yeah

P: So I would talk to him

R: Yeah

P: Same with the teacher I got now like she joined sixth form and we were in the same class as her so I always used to speak to her

R: That's nice yeah

P: So just like say with Mr Pot next door like he was my teacher from KS4 like and he was the only one I used to really speak to apart from the TA at the time, she's no longer here

R: Okay

P: But you end up just building good friendships with the teachers like if you ever have any problems or you don't know what to do about something like you can do it like and as well as like if you angry or whatever like I can literally just get angry and start like losing it in

front of one of the ones I usually talk to. I'm alright but I wouldn't say I'm the quietest, I just end up swearing or telling everyone to leave me alone

R: Okay

P: I get really antsy, so literally I could just do that in front of them and I won't get told of because it's the fact that I'm annoyed but if someone walks past then they're like 'oh chav city' but like I don't really get told off for it cos they know I don't mean it it's just that someone's wound me up for me to be like that

R: They understand you right, they get you yeah

P: Yeah. Like if you've built that friendships with the teachers then it's easier especially with like when it comes to this for example like if you've got that relationship with them then it's like you don't have to worry about it. Like they know what you're trying to say. Or they know they know what you're trying to write

R: Yeah, yeah. That's great. Sounds really positive that you got these. And I mean, it must help having those staff members that you can go to. And like you said, if a feeling down or angry or whatever, they're not going to tell you off, but they're going to help you work through it and understand how you can how they can help you. Um that's really that's really interesting. Thank you for telling me. We've really come to the end of it. Was there anything else you want to talk about or tell me about preparation for adulthood or about Park School, or anything like that?

P: Mm I would say in Park School is when I first joined I thought 'why the hell am I going to this school?' like all of this stuff but I would say 100% if I didn't come here, I wouldn't be exactly how I am now, just because I was always like this is just literally was just so confidence booster I needed

R: Yeah great that's really good

P: I literally didn't have the confidence like as well as that I was I didn't like how that I looked, I was not confident at braces so I couldn't even speak properly before I even got braces I was under speech therapy so I couldn't even speak properly, then I got braces so I couldn't even speak even better so like that's helped with that but I would definitely say it help with my confidence just because I was so shy

R: Yeah, yeah, definitely. That's great

P: So it has helped 100%, I'm excited to leave but I'm not excited to leave just because I've always been here like you just used to it

R: Yeah

P: I'm sad to leave like obviously the teachers cos you get a good relationship with them all and I said that I'm gonna email them all

R: That's nice

P: Or find them on facebook

R: *laughs*

P: Find them on facebook, stalk them

R: Keep in touch *laughs*

P: Literally like even one of them said about taking me out for driving lessons when we leave

R: Oh lovely

P: Because I said I wanted to do mechanics automatic because I was struggling with gear so she was like I have a mechanic automatic car and we can go out for lessons I was like 'thanks miss' so no one in my family has one, we have one but it's massive

R: Ah I see yeah yeah yeah

Interview 2 REDACTED
Pseudonym – Cassie Speech, learning difficulties, ASD (Year 14 – school leaver)

P: It's massive
R: You don't want to take a big car out no
P: Compared to me it's like huge, like I know I'm like just a beginner but something smaller
R: *laughs* yeah ease yourself in, yeah yeah definitely. Okay, I'm going to stop recording, so thank you so much

Appendix 9d

Full Transcript: Tom

Interview 3 transcript REDACTED (noise was a distraction and participant's voice was faint)
Pseudonym – Tom

ASD and ADHD (Year 11)

R: Okay. So it is recording now, I'm just going to put it down to the side so it is not too distracting um if I just put it down here. Um perfect, so you're happy to go ahead for this interview?

P: Yeah

R: That's great. Thank you so much. Um as we said before, it's about the preparation for adulthood. And that means thinking about what you might want to do in the future with your education and your learning. So thinking about whether you might go on to GCSEs, stay on to go to sixth form, go to a different college and thinking about what kind of job you might like to do in the future, and you kind of have spoken about that a little bit already. The other questions will be about living independently as you get older. So thinking about housing, what you might do in the future, or if you have thought about it, you might not have thought about that yet and that's absolutely fine as well. Then we'll think about what your kind of friendships and relationships will look like as you get older. And then the last thing is about how you stay healthy as as you go into adulthood and how you know how to stay healthy, if that makes sense. Is that okay?

P: Mm

R: Okay so, can you talk to me a little bit about, so you've mentioned already preparation for adulthood for you in terms of work experience, what does it mean for you if you're thinking about how you going to prepare to be an adult? And as you get older over the next few years coming to the end of Park School or staying on at Park School, what would that look like for you?

P: Don't know

R: Not sure? So could you talk about maybe doing work experience that you've done, you said something about that being, going to mechanics for work experience?

P: Yeah it was like a mobile mechanics

R: Okay. Why did you choose to do that?

P: Er cos I want to be a mechanic

R: Okay, perfect and how did that opportunity come about to go to the mechanic's for work experience?

P: What do you mean?

R: Where is the how did you get the work experience? Was that somebody told you that it was there? Did your family help you get that? Did school help you

P: Yeah one of my dad's like friends that he met on Facebook

R: Okay yeah

P: Cos his car was broken and then they fixed my dad's car and then they did my mum's car

R: Okay, cool. Yeah. And is that something you think you want to do in the future? Kind of job you'd like to do?

P: *nods head*

R: Yeah. Perfect. Um so you'd like to maybe become a mechanic in the future. How? What does that mean in terms of your learning and education? What do you know? How do you get yourself to to become a mechanic in the future?

P: I don't know

R: You're not sure. Has anybody at school spoken about it with you or how you might get there?

P: Um not really

R: Not really, have you had any like careers conversations or anything like that?

Interview 3 transcript REDACTED (noise was a distraction and participant's voice was faint)
Pseudonym – Tom

ASD and ADHD (Year 11)

P: Yeah, we did like what we do to get I can't remember what it was
R: Yeah. No that's cool. And then I'm sure you've got loads of time so you can think about this a bit later on as well um okay. Has school help you to think about or has school helped you to develop your skills that you might need to become a mechanic?
P: I don't really know
R: Not sure. Do you know what skills you'd need if you want to become a mechanic?
P: Um
R: Not sure? That's okay. So what kind of knowledge might you need to become a mechanic?
P: Probably like maths and science
R: Yeah. Yeah. And when you did your work experience, what kind of things were you looking into or did you have did you learn anything from your work experience?
P: Yeah, yeah like changed brakes on a van um yeah
R: Yeah, that sounds cool. It's quite complex as well it's quite hard stuff to do. Okay, great. How confident do you feel that you have the skills and knowledge that you need to go on to become a mechanic in the future?
P: Um I don't really know
R: You're not really sure? No that's cool. And I guess, like we've said, you've got loads of time to think about that. Okay, so let's think about what do you want, do you know if you are going to stay at Park School for sixth form or are you going to go off to college?
P: Staying for sixth form but I don't know how long for
R: Do you know what subjects you'll do at sixth form yet? Have you had those conversations or not sure?
P: What like option type things?
R: Options, exactly yeah
P: Er I think I've picked animal care, I cant remember the other ones
R: Can't remember, do you know if it's like one or two or three?
P: I think it's four
R: You do four okay. And when you made your choices about which options you were going to take, were you thinking about how that will help you to become a mechanic?
P: Er I don't really know
R: Can't really remember. When did you when did you pick your options? Can you remember that? Was it earlier this year?
P: Yeah I cant remember what day though
R: No no no. But you're in year ten?
P: Year 11
R: Year 11. Okay. So have you thought about you might not have done. Yeah, I've thought about what you want to do when you maybe one day you might want to move out of home and live independently. Have you thought about that yet?
P: Um kind of but not really as much
R: Yeah. What would that look like for you even if it's just an ideal world? So, this is it may be you haven't got a plan yet, but this is what you would want in the future. What would that look like for you?
P: I don't really know
R: Would you like to live with friends or family in the future do you think?
P: Um probably friends

Interview 3 transcript REDACTED (noise was a distraction and participant's voice was faint)
Pseudonym – Tom

ASD and ADHD (Year 11)

R: Yeah? Have you had any conversations from school about it? Have they given you any ideas about what your options would be if you were to kind of live more independently?
P: Not really
R: Not yet, okay. Is there anything you think school could do to help you to kind of develop your skills and knowledge around what it might be to live independently?
P: I don't know
R: Not sure. Do you know what it means if I say living independently?
P: What living by yourself?
R: Yeah. So it kind of living without any adult help or anything like that. So yeah, living by yourself or with friends or people your age, that kind of thing. Yeah. Okay. So it's something you maybe would like to do in the future living with friends, but you haven't really thought about it so far yet. Again, you got a long time to think about it so that's absolutely fine. Okay, let's think about your relationships and being part of a community. What, does it mean something to you? If you're part of a community, does that mean anything to you necessarily?
P: *shakes head*
R: No. No. Do you do anything at school that makes you feel part of the community?
P: What do you mean?
R: So I think there's things like is that the Eco School Council? There's leadership, kind of.
P: I'm in the leadership
R: You are, fantastic. Can you talk to me a bit more about that. What does that mean?
P: Basically, you like have to be like a role model to other people and help them
R: Amazing yeah. What have you have you had to help anybody so far? And be a role model or is it just generally day to day you just have to be?
P: We have like a sheet that we have to tick off until we like go up
R: Yeah
P: I think I'm on leadership 3
R: Oh cool, that's amazing. That's great. Okay. So is that important to you being part of that?
P: *nods head*
R: Yeah. And I think that will give you some skills maybe in the future to think about. Okay. And then when you get older, what kinds of how do you see your friendships evolving as you kind of get older? How do you think you do? Do you think you stay friends with the people that you're friends with now? Would you like to make more friends, different friends as you get older?
P: I'll probably stay friends with the ones I'm with now
R: Yeah. What does it mean to have your friends. What do they give you? Do they give you confidence or things like that?
P: Um mostly someone to talk to
R: Yeah, yeah. Lovely. That's great. Okay. Okay. So do you think you know what kind of skills you need to keep hold of your friends or make friends as you get older?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah. Okay. Could you talk a bit more about that?
P: I don't…
R: That's fine, that's fine. Do you think school helps you to develop those skills to make friends and create new relationships?
P: Um kind of
R: Yeah. What have they done to help you think about that?

Interview 3 transcript REDACTED (noise was a distraction and participant's voice was faint)
Pseudonym – Tom

ASD and ADHD (Year 11)

P: Like team building, you have to get closer to like people and be friends
R: Yeah, that sounds good. Yeah. When have you done team building? What does that look like?
P: It's normally on Monday and we did like yesterday we did capture the flag
R: Yeah. Oh cool. Was that part of the lessons that just a team building was the lesson?
P: It was like a lesson but we all have team building in key stage four
R: Okay. Do you enjoy doing that?
P: *nods head*
R: Yeah. Okay, great. Do you think the school could do anything differently to help you make kind of feel about feel more confident with making friends or developing relationships as you get older?
P: Hmm
R: Not sure? Okay. Okay. So let's think about the last thing, which is about staying healthy. So if I say health to you, I'm kind of thinking about your physical health and then also your kind of emotional mental health and how you're feeling. And so what does it mean for you to be healthy?
P: …
R: Um how do you stay healthy physically?
P: By keeping fit, exercise
R: Yeah, keeping fit, exercise. Anything else?
P: Eating healthily
R: Yeah, great. And what about if you're going to keep healthy kind of emotionally mentally healthy? How would you do that?
P: By having fun with like your friends
R: Mhmm yeah. What would you use your family or friends for? To keep this that kind of feeling?
P: I don't know
R: Not sure? And does school help you to develop any of these skills to stay healthy?
P: Yeah
R: What. What kinds of things do they do to help you?
P: We talk about sometimes about, uh, healthy food. That's about it
R: Yeah, that's great. Do you think school could do anything differently to help you think about these skills?
P: *shakes head*
R: No? Do they talk about how you can stay kind of emotionally healthy, like your emotional wellbeing and your mental health? Do they talk about that much at school?
P: Only like if you smile at someone, they smile back at you
R: Yeah, that's nice. Yeah, that's good. That's good. Okay, that's great. Is there anything else that has kind of happened to you as you kind of thought about preparing for adulthood? Is it just so just to kind of summarize, to make sure it's around, you've had an opportunity to some work experience. How long was that for?
P: Er I can't remember how long, it was like every Monday I cant remember how long it was
R: Not sure? At the same place?
P: Yeah like the person used to come and pick me up or one time my dad dropped me off there cos my sister had an appointment

Interview 3 transcript REDACTED (noise was a distraction and participant's voice was faint)
Pseudonym – Tom

ASD and ADHD (Year 11)

R: Okay. Yeah, I was in for the whole day on a Monday. Was it just kind of the morning or the afternoon?

P: It was like I think it was the start of school time til 3, 4 ish

R: Okay. Yeah. Yeah. And do you see there's opportunities to do more of that, to do more work experience? Have you got any work experience coming up that you know about?

P: No but I think because this is like my last week of school cos year 11's have to leave earlier but my mum and dad might be asking him if I can do more work experience

R: Yeah, that would be great wouldn't it? Would you like any different types of would you think that you'd like to do some work experience anywhere else? Were you quite set that that's what you want to do, do you think?

P: *shrugs*

R: You know you're not really sure? No. Okay, brilliant. Um, so that's so you're kind of you've got your work experience, you feel like that might be an option of a career you'd like to do in the future. You're going to stay at Park School for sixth form. You've picked your options. Can't quite remember all of them at the minute, but you've picked definitely is in maths did you remember?

P: I think it was small animal care

R: That was it

P: I think it was cooking um I think ICT

R: Yeah

P: I can't remember

R: And then one other one, that's cool. And then in the future you would like to live with your friends one day, but you haven't really thought about when or where or how that you haven't really thought about that much more at the moment. Perfect um and keeping fit to stay physically healthy. Talking to your friends and family to help you kind of emotional wellbeing. Um that's brilliant. That's great. Thanks so much for your time. I'm going to stop the recording now. Let me press that

Appendix 9e

Full Transcript: Hannah

Interview 4 REDACTED — Year 14 (School leaver) – ADHD Cognition and learning difficulties

Pseudonym – Hannah — SEMH

R: It's just going to be recording there. Are you happy to go ahead with this conversation, interview style thing?

P: Yeah

R: Fantastic. Thank you. And just before we get started, I wanted to ask you a few questions. If you didn't mind me asking about your age, gender and religion. Special educational needs and things. So how old are you?

P: I'm nineteen

R: You're nineteen, so you're a leaver aren't you?

P: Yep

R: Are you leaving next week?

P: Yeah

R: Gosh, it's happening so fast. Gender, female?

P: Female

R: Are you religious at all?

P: No

R: No. And if you don't mind me asking, you don't have to answer if you don't want to. And if you know. What are your special educational needs?

P: Um it's just moderate learning difficulties

R: Okay *writing* that's great. Thank you for telling me. Okay, so I'll just repeat that around you can stop at any time and you don't have to answer any questions if you don't want to, and you can and skip answers or ask for more information if you need to. It's very, very relaxed. But I'll just ask some questions to begin with um okay. So if I say I've already kind of ask this before, but let's let's kind of go through again if I say, what does preparation for adulthood mean for you? What kinds of things spring to mind?

P: Um, I don't know. Like getting a job

R: Mmhmm yeah

P: Like a job career you want

R: Yeah

P: And um living by yourself

R: Yeah

P: Getting the money for that

R: Yeah yeah

P: Um yeah

R: That's great. Yeah. And those are the kinds of things that I am going to kind of ask you a bit more information about. That's really great. Um, okay. So what would you like to do in the future? What is your kind of career goals?

P: Um I want to work with children um yeah I just want to work with children

R: Yeah. Where's that kind of idea come from? How come meet that? How come that's what you want to do?

P: Um, well, my mum was a child minder when me and my brother were little

R: Mm hmm

P: And I've just always loved working with children, like helping her and everything

R: Mm hmm

P: Um, so, yeah, I've just always wanted to work with children

R: Yeah. Fantastic. That's great. Um so you're a school leaver now, so thinking about what's your next step? Where are you going after this?

P: Um Central College

R: And what are you going to be doing at college?
P: Um the pathways, childcare course
R: Amazing. That's exciting. And how long is that course? Is it?
P: I'm not quite sure
R: Okay yeah yeah
P: But I think it's about three years, I'm not quite sure
R: Are you looking forward to it?
P: Yeah
R: Are you feeling a bit nervous, a bit excited?
P: Um yeah like it's a big step for me because I've been at this school for 12 years, so it's like a massive change but I'm excited
R: Yeah. Yeah. Gosh, I hope it all goes well, and I'm sure it will go well for you
P: Thank you
R: Um so what what kind of made, how did you make your decision that you were going to go to college and do childcare? What was how did you make that decision?
P: Um, it wasn't really a decision I just knew
R: Okay. Yeah
P: So I didn't have I didn't have a few options. I just knew that I wanted to do this
R: Yeah
P: Um mum helped me
R: Yeah
P: Teachers at school helped me, so
R: That's great. Is that you always knew you wanted to do that? Is that because you knew that you wanted to go into childcare? So is this like a natural step? That's what you're going to do
P: Yeah
R: Perfect. And you just mentioned that school helped you a little bit and your mum helped you with kind of I guess your application was that?
P: Mm
R: What did they do to help you? How did they help you with that?
P: So um me and my mate went to the open day, and then I've told. I told Mum about it. Um so then I sort of went home, applied, mum helped me
R: Yeah
P: And then I thought I didn't do something right so then I went to another open day because my brother was going to that college as well
R: Oh okay yeah
P: So and then I got more insight and then I was like, yeah, this is kind of where I want to be
R: Yeah
P: And then I asked my teacher to help because she used to work in a college
R: Okay
P: So she helped me see if I like applied right and everything
R: Yeah
P: And I did. And then I got an email saying um I basically got a place and all of this so yeah
R: That's great. Oh, lovely. That's really good. Was there anything that you feel like school could have done and so when I ask questions about school um I'm not from Park School

myself. There's no one here from Park School, so you can be as honest and open as you want to be, and there'll be no you can have no judgments and no one will know what you said necessarily. And I'm sure it will be very positive anyway. But is there anything that school could have done differently that do you think that could have helped you kind of think about what careers you wanted or think about how you're going to get there or give you the opportunities for work experience. Is there anything that you think they could have done a little bit more of or done something a little bit differently?

P: Um, I'm not sure cos they give out um you have the opportunity of doing work experience in year ten, in year eleven

R: Yep

P: Um, and then in sixth form. Like I remember doing volunteering work down in primary

R: Okay

P: Just before Christmas

R: At this school?

P: At this school

R: Yeah

P: Cos at that point we weren't allowed to leave the premises so we, I'd done it in school and that's for my Duke of Edinburgh

R: Okay

P: Um, but yeah, I, I don't know

R: It's a hard question I guess as well, because you're, you're at the point now where you're already going on to the next step

P: Yeah

R: So you kind of got to where you want to be, I guess, which is really nice. Okay, that's great. Um so but they did give you options for some work experience and those kinds of things?

P: Yeah

R: Which was great for you and it's helped you kind of feel like where you know, where you want to be

P: Mm

R: Um how confident do you feel then about going on now to do childcare at college and becoming, what would your job be sorry? Childminder?

P: No, I don't know

R: Something to do with childcare. Yeah, yeah, no. Absolutely. So how confident do you feel that you've got the skills and knowledge to go and do that?

P: Um I feel alright to be honest

R: Yeah

P: Like, obviously I'm sad about leaving um because I've been here for so long

R: Yeah

P: And this school has helped me so much um but I am excited to just move on

R: Yeah

P: And cos I went for my taster day, it got me more excited about going

R: Yeah

P: And being the class I will be with, so yeah

R: Are you leaving, is anyone else from Park School going with you to the same college to do the same course?

P: Um not the same course no

R: No, that's exciting so you'll get to meet lots of new people and that kind of thing. And you said that Park School have helped you over 12 years. They've helped you so much. What kinds of things do you feel? What do you think about Park School now? And you're you're about to leave. What kind of things did they help you with? Just overall over the past 12 years?

P: Well, when I first started, I wasn't a the best child um like I would always play up and everything and they've helped me like with my behavior and they've helped me succeed in quite a lot of things. Like at the end of every keystage, we have an award at the end of year 11, I won the big award and I didn't realize it was going to be me

R: Ah amazing

P: But I was so chuffed that it was

R: Yeah

P: Um like winning it, it was a big, big success that I'd made

R: Yeah

P: At this school

R: Yeah

P: So

R: That's lovely. So you feel like they kind of helped you grown up with them

P: Yeah

R: And they've helped you become the person that you are today I guess and you're now going to be

P: Like I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for this school

R: Yeah lovely. That's really nice to hear um and thank you for telling me about that. So just so I'm going to summarize everything. So I've understood it correctly. So we know that you're a leaver, you're leaving next week um you're going off to college to go and do childcare? And that's your kind of career goal something to do with childcare, but you're not quite sure which job that would be yet

P: Yeah

R: And you feel like school have been really supportive in helping you with your application, particularly the teacher that worked at a college beforehand and over your 12 years here, they've helped you just grow generally, particularly with behavior, but also to become the person that you are today

P: Mm

R: That's really lovely to hear um thank you so much. So the next section I want to talk about is independent living. So what do you do you have any goals about how you want to live independently and in the future?

P: Not really

R: No? Do you know what I mean if I say independent living?

P: A little bit

R: Yeah. Shall I explain that a bit more. So when I say independent living, that's kind of where you might live away from parents or carers. So it might be, would you live in a house or a flat? Would you live with your friends? Would you live in a co-shared accommodation? Would you live by yourself? Thinking about paying rent, bills, those kinds of things? So have you got any idea and I guess this is quite a big ask because you're you're about to go to college. You've got a lot on your plate at the minute. So you maybe you haven't thought about this yet, but if you were to think about it, in an ideal world, what would that look like for you in the future?

P: Well, me and my best friend, we were talking about um like moving in together at some point. Yeah. Because then if you think it is a bit cheaper than buying a house or by yourself

R: Yeah

P: And then all like the taxes and everything to go with it

R: Yeah. Yeah

P: So like we were planning on doing that but I don't if it was a flat or house that we decided on

R: Yeah. Did you get to the point where you looked at anything or was this just kind of talking about it?

P: Yeah we had a lesson like in life skills, we had a lesson about um like they made our own like little families. And then me and my friend were like, we should actually do this

R: Yeah

P: Like cos we have to look at houses anyway for that like subject

R: Okay

P: So we just decided on like, yeah, let's do this

R: Yeah, nice idea. Was that what was that lesson? Was that when you were in what year were you when you had that lesson, was that fair recently?

P: Um I think I was in year 12 because it was just before the first lockdown

R: Okay

P: Um yeah, just before the first lockdown

R: Yeah. Exciting. That's cool. Um so that's interesting. So they kind of spoke to you about what it would be like to live independently, what your options would be, what that looks like and so school kind of helped you with the understanding of that a bit more. And have you had any help from home, has anyone from home spoken to you about what that could look like in the future, or is it mainly school kind of supporting you at the minute?

P: Yeah school. But I haven't spoken about it to my parents well I've probably mentioned it to them

R: Yeah

P: But yeah

R: Yeah. Okay, fabulous. That's great. Thank you. Um so is there anything that school could have done differently, do you think, to help you feel a bit more confident or to know a bit more about how you would live independently? So you had that lesson in year 12. Was it just a one off lesson? Did you have more information around that? Could they do more, do you think, to help you?

P: Um well, that year, was probably the best year to like learn everything. Like last year we didn't do much, this year life like life skills used to be like an option, but this year it's not an option. You have to do it whether you like it or not

R: Okay. Yeah

P: Um, but yeah, like we do, like, personal finance and health and safety and that. But it wasn't as great as the year 12 lessons

R: Okay. Why wasn't it so good?

P: Because um we actually it was like it was a little bit like a role play, like that was four of us in a group, we're a family um and they give us like we have to look up our job that we wanted to do and the salary that we would get

R: Okay

P: And then we add all of our salaries up together and then, um, we will pretend to buy a house, like we'll look at houses, pretend to buy a house

R: Yep

P: And then we'll get that cost down and then the mortgage and everything and then we'll get, we'll think of the food and the tax insurance and everything

R: Yep

P: Um so I thought that that was pretty good to like to understand how you would pay for everything

R: Mmhmm

P: Um, and the budget you will need

R: Yeah. That's really cool. So that was this year or that was year 12?

P: That was year 12

R: And then this year, what did it look like? Was it a bit less?

P: Yeah. Um, like personal finance was talking about like the, like taxes, rent and all of that

R: Yeah

P: But I, thought for me to understand everything the year 12 session was better

R: Yeah. So was it easier to learn through role play as well?

P: Yeah

R: Yeah, okay, that's really cool. Great. Um how confident do you feel about living independently in the future? Do you feel that you've got the skills and knowledge to be able to go and do that now?

P: Yeah

R: Yeah, okay, cool. So we're going to move on to friends, relationships and community inclusion. Um, and you mentioned earlier I just made a note you mentioned about doing the Duke of Edinburgh, and I wonder if you could talk a bit to talk to me a bit more about how you did that and what that involved and yeah, what you learned from that I guess

P: Mm. So um again, the Duke of Edinburgh used to be an option, so I never done it as an option. But then this year it came like mandatory that you had to do it and it's like we have our own groups. And the first time my group was volunteering and we got to pick what we wanted to do, I chose primary the the next term it was physical and we had like do running

R: Mmhmm

P: And this term I ended up doing expedition. So walking, going out and walking

R: Okay

P: Up hills and everything

R: Yeah

P: Um, and then I think we've got like an expedition camping trip coming up

R: Okay. Oh, exciting

P: But I don't know if I'm going to do that because of my work and everything

R: Yeah

P: So, yeah, that's basically what it is

R: Yeah. Okay. So when you said you did volunteering, what was that, was that volunteer you said volunteering in a school?

P: Primary, this primary

R: Oh okay

P: Yeah

R: I see. So kind of you volunteered yourself as an adult to help kind of like work experience, I guess, in a way

P: Yeah

R: Okay, that's exciting. That's cool. Are you working at the minute? Did you say you are you working outside of

P: Mmhmm

R: Yeah. What do you do? Do you mind me asking?

P: I'm a barmaid

R: Okay, cool. And how long have you been doing that?

P: Since February. I started off, like, as a glass collector

R: Yeah

P: And then I was, like, training here and there. So then it wasn't too much on my plate. So, like, sometimes I would like pour a pint or whatever

R: Yeah

P: And do a drink. Um, and now I'm my boss is like, put me on like a bar on my own. So I like have grown that independence

R: Yeah

P: To be honest, being there like my dad's friends have always said, I used to be such a quiet girl and like being there, my confidence is grown and I won't be quiet *laughs*

R: That's amazing. So you have been doing that for a few months now and that's like that's almost giving you the confidence as well to kind of speak to new, I guess, because there's so many yeah skills involved in that is in there

P: Yeah

R: And that's great. So do do you know anyone else that does the same job as you? Is there anyone else from school that does that or is it just how come you came to that kind of job? How did that happen?

P: Um well it's a social club

R: Okay

P: And my dad is a member there

R: Okay

P: Um and ever since I was 18 last year I was going in there. But then I asked my Dad, I was like, Dad, can you ask to see if there's any jobs going? And at the time there wasn't but then my boss rang me or yeah told my dad one day and was like oh I've got shifts for Hannah

R: Yeah

P: If you want to come in, so yeah

R: Yeah

P: And so I went in spoke to her and then I started with her Saturday shift, which was pretty dead in there

R: Was it? *laughs* quite quiet, were you watching the clock, trying to think how long have I got left

P: Um so, yeah. And now. Yeah, I'm just glad that my confidence has grown so much from being there

R: Yeah. That's good are you working there a lot or is it just kind of weekends or evening shifts?

P: Um well, I'm going to get more shifts

R: Yeah

P: Cos we've got committee and the committee are like moaning about like wages and hours. And if that is like too many people on and they constantly moan so like I'm only doing like one shift a week

R: Yeah

P: At the minute and whenever they need me but now because you've got two people who's left and they had bar people I'm going to be working like during the week as well

R: Okay

P: So yeah, like tomorrow I'm working seven to close and Thursday I'm working seven to close

R: Amazing

P: So, um, yeah. So I'm going to be getting like quite a few more shifts

R: Yeah, that's great. How does it feel to earn your own money?

P: Yeah good

R: Is it nice yeah is that something that you wanted as well to get out of it? To kind of, yeah. Your own money and that kind of thing

P: Yeah

R: That's great. And are you going to stay in that job whilst you go to college, do you think, to just to continue through?

P: Yeah, definitely cos um when I start college and I get like my days and that, I'll be done like so I can do during the day on these days. Yeah. Um, and then I could do evenings whenever

R: Yeah

P: Yeah cos that's what I said because I finish on the first. Um, then I said to them, I was like, if you want me to do like afternoons or whatever I can

R: Yeah yeah. Brilliant. That sounds really good. Um, sorry, I just pause completely off topic, but, um, so thinking about community inclusion and things and I wondered whether do you see yourself being a part of a community at the moment? What does that mean to, you know

P: Hmm

R: Not sure? I think I can see a leader's badge on your, is that are you a leader at this school do you feel like you're part of the school community?

P: *nods*

R: I guess yeah, what does the leader do? What's the leader badge for?

P: Um so there's like six levels and each level and when you pass that, you get badge

R: Okay

P: And when you pass level six, which is the last level, you get a hoodie, which is this hoody

R: Ah, okay

P: And I'm the only one in the school that's earned that

R: Wow

P: Which I'm quite happy about

R: Yeah

P: And like there used to be others, but they've all left now so now I'm the only person in the school

R: Yeah

P: Plus, leadership was like off for quite some time

R: Okay

P: And we've got a new person doing it and I help her because she didn't know how to do it
R: Yeah
P: So now I help her. And you basically, like, there's a lot of responsibilities that come with the hoodie. Um, I feel like anyway
R: Yeah
P: There's a school dog that comes in and, and I, I get on really well with the owner of the dog
R: Yeah
P: So, um, I used to take like eight children out um onto the playground, walk the dog. Um, yeah. And then if they're short, if we're short staffed, they would ask me to go and go into the primary background
R: Oh okay
P: Yeah to help out a little bit and, um I just volunteer basically when they need me
R: Yeah. Amazing. So when you said to, well, someone that's just started and you helped her because she didn't know much about the leadership, was that a member of staff from the school that was leading their leaders, if you like?
P: Yeah so she's a medical lady. And then she, um, she, she was I was the first person who she told about it because she was like I might need your help soon, and I was like what for? And she was like leadership. And I was like oh, you're taking it over and she was like yeah. So like I help her, um, when she needs it and yeah, like, yeah
R: And also you kind of I guess you almost help out when staff members, the actual staff of Park School need help, like going to the primary playground, if they not got members of staff, then you would always step in
P: Yeah. I used to always get asked like and school photos. I used to always volunteer to help with school photos. But this year I didn't volunteer because I just got told I'm doing it *laughs*
R: *laughs* you must be too good if they're expecting you to do it, and that's amazing. Well done. That sounds really great. And so I guess that means that you're kind of part of the community at Park School in that sense, and you've got some different roles as well. Um, is it important to you, when you kind of think about where you are, where you're living, when you're a bit older, maybe if you're living independently, that you're part of the community there? Um is that important to you or not so much?
P: Um yeah
R: Yeah, what does that look like? How would you be involved in the community, do you think?
P: I don't know
R: Not sure, no. I was thinking about maybe the bar job that you do at the minute at the social club that's quite a big part of the community it sounds like, actually, you get to know the local people
P: Yeah. That's the best bit about it cos it's not like a regular pub where you would get anyone walking in
R: Yeah
P: You have to be a member or you have to know a member to sign you in
R: Yeah

P: Um, and then you just get to know them, so, like, and you get to know what they drink which is the best so then you see them walk in and you already have their pint waiting for them

R: Yeah

P: Cos you know what they drink um like there's one person and he's so funny and he's, um I'll always remember he likes like Carlsberg in a Guinness glass

R: *laughs*

P: Which is weird but I always have that ready for him

R: Yeah, that's nice. Is this, is, this is, the social club close to where you live as well? Is it your local community or do you have them to travel there?

P: Um it's a little bit near me I wouldn't say it's close

R: No. Okay, that's um that sounds really nice. I like the idea of Yeah. Being part of that community. Like you said, you know what people want before they've already stepped in the place and you have built this relationship to people and that's really nice. It sounds like a really nice place to work. Um, so when we're thinking about like friendships and relationships in the future, what kinds of, what would that look like for you? Would you keep the same friends that you've got now? Would you like to grow your friendships a bit more? Would you like to have different relationships when you get older, things like a family and those sorts of things, what do you what does that look like for you? If you were to see yourself in as in a five years time or something, what would that look like?

P: Um, well, there's only one friend that I would like to keep

R: Yeah

P: Um and she's my best friend, so I'd like to still be friends with her

R: Yeah

P: Um I'd like to still have a boyfriend and maybe, like, grow a family at that sort of time

R: Yeah, yeah. Lovely. That sounds great. And do you have kind of support from school to think about families and relationships as you get older? Have you had discussions around that?

P: Yeah that's in our PSHE, so basically sex ed and we learn about relationships and families and everything

R: Have you found that helpful? Do you think that they give you enough information that you need to know?

P: Yeah, they try and make it fun

R: Yeah

P: Like these sex ed lessons like a quiz on puberty and whatever

R: Yeah.

P: Um yeah

R: That's good. So it keeps it light-hearted I guess so people are more engaged

P: Yeah

R: Yeah. Sounds really good. Do you think there's anything more that school could do about friendships and relationships as you get older? Do you think they could do more in PSHE and more kind of skills and knowledge around that?

P: I don't think so

R: No, no. Brilliant. Okay. Um, let's have a think about this then. Um so let's move on to the last section so around healthy being a healthy adult and, and what that means to you. So what does it mean to you to be healthy as an adult or as a person? You are an adult now. What does it mean to be healthy?

P: I don't know. Um, I don't know.
R: So if I split it up into the two sections, how do you stay, like, physically healthy?
P: Um, I walk to work
R: Yeah
P: Um, which is quite the treck walk *laughs*
R: *laughs*
P: I sometimes walk home from school
R: Yeah yeah
P: Um, yeah. I like, um, yeah, I do a lot of walking at night like if I go out and I'm with people we do a lot of walking
R: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Nice. And what about emotionally kind of your mental health? Do you feel that you've got the skills and knowledge to keep yourself kind of emotionally well?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah. What does that look like for you? If you don't mind me asking?
P: I don't know
R: Not sure *laughs* but did school give you the knowledge to, have you had sessions around that kind of how you stay, kind of how you can keep good mental health?
P: Yeah
R: What kinds of things do they do to help you to kind of, I guess, teach you about that?
P: Yeah, they just teach us, um, I think it's sort of like links into the sex ed lessons.
R: Yeah. Great. Okay. Um that's great. Um, is there anything else that comes to mind when we think about the whole preparation for adulthood? Was there anything else that you would like to talk about in terms of you and your interests around how you're going to kind of achieve the things that you want to do in your future?
P: I don't think so
R: Anything that comes to mind? No. Brilliant. Well, thank you so much. I'll stop that recording now. Do you have any questions? No? I'll just stop the recording

Appendix 9f

Full Transcript: James

Interview 5 transcript REDACTED
Pseudonym – James ASD, ADHD, cognition and learning, language difficulties (Year 10)

R: So it's just recording like that, can you see?
P: Yeah
R: I'm going to just put it down here so it's not too distracting, um, and it's just going to go in the background, if that's okay. So just to check James, you are happy to have this conversation with me this morning?
P: Yes
R: Perfect. That's great. Shouldn't take too long, it's been about 20 minutes so far, if that, so far this morning when I've been speaking to different people. If you don't want to answer any questions, you don't have to. If you need more information, you can just ask me to expand a bit more, explain what I'm asking you. And if you want to stop at any time, you can stop
P: Okay
R: Okay. So there's no pressure to kind of continue with that at all either. So, um, if I say preparation for adulthood, does that mean anything to you that the phrase preparing for adulthood?
P: Does it mean like what job will I have and stuff?
R: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, definitely. What else? Does it mean anything else to you? If you think about, so there's the job side of things, what else about kind of going into adulthood and getting older do you think it might mean?
P: I may start a new life
R: Yeah, exactly. Yeah, definitely. Do you do things is there a session or a lesson called life skills? Do you do any of that at Park School?
P: No
R: You don't? Have you had any like PSHE lessons?
P: Yes, we yes, we do
R: Yes
P: And we done childcare as well
R: Amazing. Could you tell me a bit more about that, the childcare or the PSHE, whichever
P: The PSHE teaches what is life about
R: Yeah
P: What's it, adulthood
R: Yeah, adulthood, yeah
P: And, and sometimes we learn in careers, the lesson like what Josh [jobs] would you have and our education means
R: Fantastic, yeah
P: And our PSHE teaching us how to teach us how to be like, more adult responsibility our healthy styles and making good grades and stuff like that yeah
R: That's great. Do you find it helpful, those types of lessons?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah brilliant that sounds really good. And so, James, what would you like to do in the future? In an ideal world, what would your the job be that you would like to go and do?
P: Photography
R: Photography?
P: Yeah
R: Oh, I remember your presentation when I came in last time it was coming back to me, photography, fantastic. Okay. What do you think you need then in terms of your learning to go and do photography?

Interview 5 transcript REDACTED
Pseudonym – James ASD, ADHD, cognition and learning, language difficulties (Year 10)

P: I need a camera
R: Yeah
P: And like have my own workspace like they give me like folders
R: Yep
P: Every photo I take in and I like to have my own office *laughs*
R: Yeah a nice office *laughs* your own workspace that sounds really, really nice. Do you think that there's any subjects at school that will help you to become a good photographer?
P: I don't know
R: Not sure. Is there anything at the minute that you were doing that does help you get into photography a bit more?
P: Yeah, it's just teachers help me sometimes
R: Mhmm yep. How do they help you? What do they do to help you?
P: Oh, they help me a lot, they help me do a folder, they let me do my own thing like photography that's it
R: Lovely. That sounds really nice. And I guess you've got the option to do your presentation the other week when I can see that was a nice opportunity to show off some of the work that you've done as well. That was really lovely
P: Yeah
R: And so why photography? What makes you want to go and do a photography or become a photographer?
P: It just sort of happened like popped in my head I see what I'm good at, I'm good at taking photos that's why
R: Yeah lovely is it something that you do? Do you take photographs outside of school as well as in school?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah. Okay, fantastic. That's great. And so school have helped you to develop your skills. You're saying teachers have been really supportive of you. They help you with your folders? Is there anything else?
P: And then help me do the tests in how to be a photographer
R: Mmhmm
P: And I passed everything
R: Wow what test was that? Can you tell me a bit more?
P: Do you know like the camera turn off and switches
R: Oh gosh with all the buttons and stuff? Yes. So what happened? What did you have to do with that?
P: I got to press like buttons, take some photos and whoosh
R: *laughs* and there you go. You're a photographer. Amazing, that sounds really good. Is there anything that you think the school could do differently or more of to help you develop your skills or knowledge around becoming a photographer?
P: Well they should have told me what things I should have done, like every school thing like what happens at school, like visitors, special visitors like the Mayor coming here or any builders or any like people leaving the school and stuff
R: Yeah so if people could
P: And Trophies like people and sports activities
R: So if sports people getting their trophies, the Mayor coming in or other people coming in. What would that how would that help you in terms of becoming a photographer? Do you mean, what do you mean by that?

Interview 5 transcript REDACTED
Pseudonym – James ASD, ADHD, cognition and learning, language difficulties (Year 10)

P: I just feel like I'll be like professional at what I'm good at
R: Mm
P: And I want to make a good career for myself
R: Yeah
P: And then I'll just want to be, like, the best I can actually be
R: Yeah, absolutely
P: Do you mind if I *takes drink*
R: Of course you can you help yourself. So with um, with visitors coming into school, I wonder if that's about is it opportunities for you to take photographs of those people?
P: Yeah
R: Is that what you mean? So when we have special visitors coming to school it's about you being able to take photographs of them and people taking their trophies and things?
P: Yeah
R: Ah brilliant. So that would be something you wish that you could do a bit more of?
P: Yeah
R: Fantastic. Have you have you managed to tell anyone at school about that?
P: No
R: Not yet. That's brilliant. That's great. I should say at the minute, sorry James, that I'm not from Park School, so talk freely. There's no judgment. I won't tell anyone what you say. So if there's anything else that comes to mind, please yeah
P: Yeah cos every time that I wanna do it, I do literally so basically work *sniffs* sorry
R: That's alright
P: Sorry I've got a cold
R: *laughs* are you feeling ok?
P: Yes
R: That's fine
P: I want to be further from my work, my family, I can't do the same things all the time like I can't do it like photography first as I've got to do work first so I can actually get good grades, good life and good house
R: Yes, absolutely. That's really interesting. Yeah, definitely. So you want to have your grades first so you can kind of set yourself up for life, I guess
P: Yes
R: Absolutely. That's really interesting. And so, do you feel like you've got time? So after after doing all the learning at school, do you have time left to do photography?
P: No
R: No. Do you wish you had more time?
P: I wish I had more time, yeah. And I'd like to say to Ms Taylor to go and do more photography things like everything's special. But I can't because I'm too busy. We should do more work like English and math and every lesson I do and that's it
R: Yeah, it's. It's tricky, isn't it? Are you in y10 James?
P: Yeah
R: Are you doing GCSEs at the moment? Are you doing entry level qualifications?
P: No we're doing English
R: You're doing English, are you doing maths at the moment as well?
P: We're doing it after, nah, no wait I'm doing paddle boarding
R: Paddle boarding?
P: Yeah

Interview 5 transcript REDACTED
Pseudonym – James ASD, ADHD, cognition and learning, language difficulties (Year 10)

R: That sounds really exciting. Where are you doing paddleboarding?
P: Oh, after break
R: Oh, after break today?
P: Yeah
R: What time is break, do you know?
P: 10.45.
R: Okay, I'll just make sure that you're back in time then. Fine. Okay. Brilliant. Do you know at the minute yet then James are you going to stay on to sixth form, do you think?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah. Is that what you want to do? Because it helps you with your career photography?
P: It's not what I want to do but I've got to do what my mum says like she said it will help me
R: Okay. What would you like to do?
P: I just wanna go like college, actually I'll stay in sixth form anyway
R: Yeah. So you'll stay at sixth form cos that's what your mum thinks will be best for you?
P: Yeah
R: But if you had the choice, you'd probably go to college. What would you do at college if you could? In an ideal world, if you could go to college, what would you do there?
P: I just like taking photos I feel…
R: Yeah, okay, that sounds really great
P: And when I'm in college, I'd like to have like a job, like a newspaper job
R: Mmhmm
P: Photography
R: Yeah. Okay. So taking photographs for a newspaper and things like that?
P: Yeah
R: That would be great. Have you had any opportunities for work experience? Have you done any work experience yet?
P: No I'm in year 10
R: Is it year 11 that you do work experience?
P: Yeah year 11
R: Okay. So you haven't, do you know anything about what that would look like yet?
P: No not yet
R: So maybe when you come back in September, you'll have a bit more information
P: Yeah
R: But fingers crossed, you could do something to do with photography. That would be really exciting. Okay, um, so at the moment, how confident do you feel that you've got the skills and knowledge to go on to be a photographer?
P: Oh I'm really proud of it, I really am
R: Good. I think your presentation you showed was absolutely fantastic. And I can see the passion when you're talking. I can see you're really into it and it's something that you really want to do. I think it's really great that you've got that so, so early on as well. You know exactly where you want to go down kind of career path wise. Okay, we're going to kind of stop thinking about careers and jobs and education. We're going to move on to independent living
P: Okay

Interview 5 transcript REDACTED
Pseudonym – James ASD, ADHD, cognition and learning, language difficulties (Year 10)

R: So independent living is for me, I think that's when you get a bit older and you move out of your family home and you may be live without parents or carers. Have you had any thought about that yet so far?
P: Yeah. I'm just thinking maybe I can live with my mate because I think I'm going to get like a flatmate we can pay each others rent and stuff and the bills
R: Yeah brilliant. And what type of place would you think you would like to live in?
P: A flat
R: A flat somewhere?
P: I hope it's nice
R: A nice flat yeah not a horrible flat
P: No
R: Yeah. Do you want to live locally or would you want to move away to live somewhere far away or do you want to stay quite close?
P: I don't want to move away
R: No
P: I'll just live locally
R: Yeah so live close to family and friends but live with another friend of yours
P: Yeah I might live in Flickham
R: Mmhmm yeah brilliant that sounds really good. Um, how, why do you think that. Why do you think that that's what you would like to do. How have you thought about that as an idea?
P: I don't know it just popped into my head I'd say *clicks fingers* like that
R: Mmhmm. And have you had any input from school has school taught you anything about what it means to live independently?
P: Um not at the moment
R: No. I think that your year it doesn't start happening till about maybe year 11 or 12
P: Or sixth form
R: Or even sixth form, absolutely. So maybe it's a little bit early for school now, but you've got your ideas about what you would like to do. Do you think you have the skills and knowledge to be able to live independently at this moment?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah. So what kind of things would you need to think about if you're living by yourself or with a flatmate or with a friend?
P: You need like some rules for keeping like no parties and stuff like that actually you can have some parties but only like Halloween and Christmas
R: Yep. Yeah, absolutely. What about, like, money wise thinking about?
P: I'd like to make a deal with my landlord to see how much I've got to pay and stuff
R: Yeah, absolutely. That sounds really good. And I think you said earlier about you and your flatmate would pay the rent together, you would share it together?
P: Yeah share the money it doesn't mean we've got different jobs, we have got the same money so if we put our money together and see how much we got, we can pay the rent
R: Absolutely. That sounds really good. Um so I guess school, you haven't yet had much information from school because I think maybe you're next year in the in sixth form as you said maybe that will come. Okay, that sounds great. Do you feel confident about living independently in the future at the minute or is it still a bit scary? How do you feel?
P: It feels a little bit scary yeah I can't just like move on

R: No, yeah, yeah. You've got a few years haven't you before you get to that point. Absolutely. Okay, so let's move on from independent living. We're going to think about friends and relationships and being part of a community, what types of relationships would you like to have in the future?
P: Girls
R: Yeah. So you'd like to have a partner? Girlfriend?
P: Yeah partner girlfriend
R: Would you like to have a family in the future?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah. And would you like to have lots of friends
P: I've got some friends at school
R: Yeah nice, nice. Would you like to stay friends with them as you get older?
P: Yeah
R: Yeah, that sounds great. And how have school or school helped you think about what your relationships would look like when you get older?
P: No
R: Not really, no. So have you had lessons, I'm trying to think back to life skills or PSHE have they spoken to you about relationships as you get older?
P: Yeah sex education, sorry for saying that
R: Yeah absolutely, so you've had sex ed stuff and they kind of spoken about how you have relationships when you get older. Do they speak about friendships? So not romantic relationships?
P: Yeah, yeah. Friendship, how we treat people and respect them
R: Great. Do you think that school would need to give you more information about that? Or do you think they give you enough?
P: I think maybe they should give me more information like
R: Yeah, what else would you like to learn about do you think or know about?
P: I want to know about how people, how I should respect people
R: Mmhmm yeah nice. Why is that important do you think to you?
P: Cos maybe when I say something in a joke way, they get mad and…
R: Yeah
P: Yeah
R: Okay. So kind of how you can respect people and have a joke with them and how that kind of works, those kinds of things?
P: Yeah
R: So do you have any of that support at the moment about that?
P: *nods*
R: Yeah, a little bit
P: Little bit
R: Yeah. Okay. Oh, that sounds really good. So you'd like to have a girlfriend, perhaps in the future, have a family, stay friends with the friends that you've got at the moment
P: Yeah
R: Lovely. You'd like to live with one of your friends when you get older, maybe live in a flat in Dunstable or something like that, and you going to just going to summarize what you said so I make sure I've understood it, so um stay on at sixth form because that's mainly what your mum wants to do you, in your ideal world you maybe would go to college, you want to be a photographer and you love more opportunities at school to do photography

Interview 5 transcript REDACTED
Pseudonym – James ASD, ADHD, cognition and learning, language difficulties (Year 10)

P: Yeah
R: Have I summarised that correctly?
P: Yeah
R: Brilliant, okay. We'll move on to the last section, which is about being a healthy person and being a healthy adult as you get older and those kinds of things. So when I think about health, I think about kind of the physical side of health, and I also think about your emotional wellbeing and your mental health and how you're feeling. So how do you think you'll stay healthy as an adult? You're physically healthy. How would you stay physically healthy as an adult?
P: I might do like exercise
R: Yeah
P: And try and spend time with my family as always
R: Yeah, absolutely. What do you do now to say physically healthy?
P: I don't know
R: No problem. What about your emotional health, your like wellbeing? Do you know, I mean, when I say those kinds of things?
P: No
R: So how you kind of where if you feel a bit anxious or worried or scared or if you're feeling really happy or sad, how do you make sure that you can stay kind of happy and safe?
P: I stay in my room to just calm down and stuff
R: Yeah. So you go to your room to kind of calm down and things if you're feeling a bit, okay, absolutely. Does school give you any information about how you can kind of keep emotionally, kind of
P: Normally like take deep breaths in
R: Yeah. Yeah. And has school taught you that? Was that something you learn from somewhere else?
P: Learnt that from somebody else
R: Yeah. Where did you learn that from?
P: I'll be honest, YouTube
R: Do you spend a lot of time on YouTube having a look at stuff? That's cool. What do you do on YouTube? What kind of things do you like to look at?
P: I like funny videos
R: Yeah so what YouTube videos was it that spoke about like taking deep breaths and things?
P: Oh, it was in a school, it was like a relaxing thing
R: Oh, nice. Yeah. Okay. Like to keep you calm. Lovely. That sounds really good. So and how do you think about how you say physically healthy?
P: Like doing exercise
R: Yeah
P: Try to get some fresh air. Don't stay indoors all day
R: Yeah, yeah. The school what the school do to help you think about these things. You have lessons about that? Do you do it as part of a subject?
P: Lessons
R: What lessons do you learn about it?
P: PSHE
R: Yeah PSHE, Okay, fantastic. That's been great. That's really helpful. Thank you James. Is there anything else you want to talk about or think about when preparation for adulthood?

P: No
R: No not in that sense. Okay I'm gonna stop the recordings. So thank you so much. Let me just…

Appendix 10

Idiographic Process: Sub-Themes, PETs and GETs

GET 1: Personalised, Early and Embedded Support for PfA

Group Experiential Themes (GETs)	**Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)**	**Sub-themes**
Personalised, Early and Embedded Support for PfA	***Barriers***	
	Not enough school support (not consistent) (Amy) (Hannah)	School support on healthy living is limited (Amy)
		Inconsistent teaching in lessons around life skills, it starts late (Year 12) (Hannah)
	Modes of learning not practical and embedded (Ben) (James)	School should provide opportunities for more community visits to develop independent living skills in the real word, as well as support to develop financial skills/managing money (Ben)
		Teachers should be encouraging and supporting in practical ways for learning (Ben)

		James wants more opportunities to practice photography (James)
	Support is not personalised to different capabilities (Cassie) (Tom) (Hannah)	School support was better when it was personalised on capability (Cassie)
		School support on housing is generalised (Cassie)
		James would like more information from school on friendships/relationships (James)
		Personalised learning is preferred (practicing through role-play) (Hannah)
	Facilitators	
	More opportunities to explore aspirations in school (work experience) (Amy) (James) (Hannah)	School to provide more opportunities for work experience (Amy)
		James wants more opportunities from school to practise photography (his career aspiration) (James)

		Would like more opportunities for work experience (Hannah)
	Positive opportunities in school (Tom)	School have supporting with social skills development through games (Tom)
		Being part of the leadership team means being a role model (Tom) (Ben)
	More opportunities from school are wanted to practise general PfA skills (Ben) (James) (Hannah)	Opportunities to support others and take on senior roles in school make Ben feel proud (Ben)
		School haven't provided support on independent living in Year 10 (James)
		Independent living information comes in Year 12 (Hannah)

GET 2: Social Capital and Social Networks

Group Experiential Themes (GETs)	**Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)**	**Sub-themes**
Social Capital and Social Networks	***Facilitators***	
	It's about who you know (Cassie) (Tom)	Use of social capital for development (Cassie)
		Social capital (Tom)
		Friendships (Ben)
	Using social network for opportunities and a better future (Hannah) (Ben)	Social capital (Hannah) (James)
		Family support (Ben)
		Learning key independence skills at home (Cassie)
		Friendships (Ben)
	Friends are freedom (Cassie) (Amy)	Social networks open up Cassie's world (Cassie)
		Friends are safe (Cassie)
		Friends influence pathways and support well-being (Amy)

GET 3: Agency

Group Experiential Themes (GETs)	**Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)**	**Sub-themes**
Agency	***Barriers***	
	Being passive to decision making (Amy)	Passive agent (Amy)
		Disempowerment (Amy)
	"It's not what I want to do" – disempowerment of voice and agency (James)	Voice is overpowered (James)
		Conflict of interests (James)
	Facilitators	
	Applying PfA skills (Amy) (Ben)	Work experience (Amy)
		Practise in the community (Ben)
		Family support (joint decision making) (Ben)
		Agency in opportunities (Amy)
	Taking control of the present and the future (Hannah)	Having agency (Hannah)

GET 4: Real-world Application of PfA (from Theory to Application)

Group Experiential Themes (GETs)	**Personal Experiential Themes (PETs)**	**Sub-themes**
Real-world Application of PfA (from Theory to Application)	***Barriers***	
	Surface level understanding (Ben) (Amy) (Tom) (Hannah)	Lack of understanding around careers (Ben) (James couldn't identify skills/knowledge needed for photographer)
		Work way up housing (Ben) Application of healthy living – reciting emergency contact/numbers (Ben)
		No conceptualisation of community (Amy) (Tom – part of leadership)
		Basic understanding of health – fruit and veg (Amy) – exercise and heathy eating (Tom) – couldn't expand on emotional wellbeing (Hannah)

		Lack of understanding between education and employment (Tom)
		No real-world application of independent living (Tom) (paying rent etc. – James)
		What is adulthood (James)
	Facilitators	
	Having a job/work experience promotes a sense of adulthood (Ben) (Amy) (Cassie) (James) (Hannah)	Developed confidence, independence, and employability skills) (Hannah)
		Goals for the future include getting a good job to earn money (Ben)
		Extracurricular activities linked to employment aspirations (Amy)
		Acquisition of PfA skills (Cassie)

Appendix 11

Key Decision Points in Research Diary

