A MIXED METHODS INVESTIGATION OF THE APPLICATION AND IMPACT OF ATTACHMENT THEORY ON THE POLICY AND PRACTICE WITHIN EARLY YEARS AND PRIMARY EDUCATION IN A SCOTTISH LOCAL AUTHORITY

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Signed:

Elizabeth. N. King

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LIST OF SYMBOLS, ABBREVIATIONS AND NOMENCLATURE

Abbreviation	Definition
ABC	Attachment and Biochemical Catch-up
ABS	Attachment Behavioural System
APA	American Psychological Association
ARC	Attachment Research Community
ASN	Additional Support Needs
BPS	British Psychological Society
CAQDAS	Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software
CELCIS	Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland
CfE	Curriculum for Excellence
CIND	Contextual Insight-Navigated Discussion
CIT	Critical Incident Technique
CLD	Community Learning and Development
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
EMT	Extended management team
GAS	Goal Attainment Scaling
GIRFEC	Getting it right for every child
HEART	How Early Attachment Relationships support Transition
IPA	Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
IWM	Internal Working Model
LACSIG	Looked After Children Strategic Implementation Group
NHS	National Health Service
ORMS	Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming Scale
SAC	Scottish Attainment Challenge
SAIA	Scottish Attachment in Action
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SIMD	Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation

SNAP	Survey Needs Analysis Programme
SOA	Single Outcome Agreements
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSP	Strange Situation Procedure
SUII	Scottish Universities Insight Institute
TA	Thematic Analysis
TAIS	Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusion Scale
VERP	Video Enhanced Reflective Practice
VIG	Video Interaction Guidance
WHO	World Health Organisation

ABSTRACT

Current Scottish Government policy for the children's workforce promotes a Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding of attachment theory, allied to individuals' self-awareness of their own attachment profile. Within this context, the four research studies reported in this thesis investigate the impact and outcomes, for early years and primary education practitioners in a large Scottish local authority, of training and coaching in attachment theory and practice. A critical realist epistemology informs a mixed methods approach whereby both qualitative and quantitative research methods are used to enrich data collection, analysis and interpretation. After applying audit methods in Study 1 to explore the understandings of the theory within a wide Children's Services workforce context, semi-structured interview techniques are used in Study 2 to undertake a more in-depth exploration of the views of attachment theory and practice of a representative sample of education practitioners. The research literature on adult learning and implementation science informs Study 3, which reports the researcher's development of a training programme, promoting knowledge of attachment theory and skills in attachment-informed practice. Two primary schools, each with a nursery class, received the training. In Study 4, one of the schools received coaching and mentoring over the academic year following the training. Using a collaborative inquiry approach, outcomes and impact of participation on outcomes for pupils, changes in practitioner practice, and policy and procedure changes at an establishment level were investigated. Benefits of the implementation of scalable training for the local authority were identified. This research extends the literature on the impact of attachment theory and attachment-informed practice in early years and primary education settings and contributes to the literature on effective training methods for education practitioners. Concluding comments discuss both the impact of the research study at the strategic level of the local authority, and areas for future investigation.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The research programme reported in this thesis is set within the context of the Scottish Government's improvement agenda. This states an aspiration for Scotland to be 'the best place for children to grow up' (2011, p. 2, 2013a, p. 13), and policy and legislation is in place to guide the journey (Scottish Executive, 2006; Scottish Government, 2014a). In 2017 John Swinney, Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills, described education as being at the core of the Scottish Government's agenda and stated that "Improving the education and life chances of our children is the defining mission of this government" (2017, p. 1). A particular concern of the government is closing the poverty related attainment gap (Sosu et al., 2014; Sosu, 2018). The Scottish Attainment Challenge (SAC) was launched in 2015, to achieve equity in education and to ensure "every child has the same opportunity to succeed" (Scottish Government, 2021). The more recent outcomes from the Independent Care Review in Scotland, detailed in 'The Promise' (2020), further define Scottish Government policy. A key aim of 'The Promise' is that young people experience "loving, supportive and nurturing relationships as a basis on which to thrive", and it promotes "a culture that values relationships between the workforce, and children and young people and their families".

To realise these ambitions, a key tenet of Scottish Government policy is tackling inequalities in outcomes for Scotland's children, as outlined in the vision for children's services (i.e. education, NHS, social work, Police Scotland, and the voluntary sector), articulated in 'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) (Scottish Executive, 2006; Scottish Government, 2014b). As "the national approach to improving the wellbeing of children and young people" (Education Scotland, 2021), the GIRFEC approach requires the use of common tools, language, and processes for children's services to consider and to plan for a child's wellbeing (2006, p. 4).

The researcher's investigation of Scottish Government policy documents directed at strategic leaders and front-line practitioners who work with children and families,

would seem to indicate a view that the understandings of and from attachment theory, are some of the key elements which can support the aspirations of the improvement agenda, and inform professional practice. Government interest in the theory is not surprising, as attachment theory, associated with the seminal work of John Bowlby (1958, 1960a, 1960b; 1952) and later Mary Ainsworth (1969), theorises a link between the quality of early parent-child relationships and the child's ongoing development and ability to benefit from learning opportunities (Barrett & Trevitt, 1991; Bowlby, 1958; Commodari, 2013; Cozolino, 2013; Read, 2014; Jane Rose et al., 2015).

The themes of attachment and relationships appear relevant to Scottish Government thinking in respect of improved outcomes. This has been, and continues to be, reflected in various Scottish Government Children's Services policies and agendas such as the 'Early Years Framework' (2009), 'Building the Ambition' (2014a) and more recently 'Realising the Ambition' (2020). All of these policies and guidance documents set long term goals for children's services to identify need and intervene early and effectively with vulnerable children and families. The aim of the Scottish Government is that "children and families are supported by a workforce which is highly skilled, well trained . . . and who have strong interpersonal skills and understanding of relationships" (p. 13). The 'Early Years Collaborative (2012d) was established to put GIRFEC principles and the 'Early Years Framework' into practice. At the launch of the collaborative the then Chief Medical Officer for Scotland, Sir Harry Burns, highlighted the role of children's services practitioners in supporting vulnerable children by encouraging positive attachments (Scottish Government, 2013a).

The resilience research of Daniel and Wassel (2002) and Daniel et al. (2011) has informed the Scottish Government's understanding of vulnerability. Daniel, Wassel and Gilligan's Resilience-Vulnerability Matrix is found on the Scottish Government's National Risk Framework as a support for the assessment of children and young people. In the matrix, vulnerability is referred to as "factors elevating impact of adverse factors on the child". It is significant for attachment theory as a

research topic, that within the framework, the first 'Resilience Indicator' is 'secure attachment to primary carer'. 'Poor attachment' is viewed as one of the 'Risk Indicators Particular to the Parent/Carer'. 'No significant or primary attachment figure' is the first of the 'Adversity Risk Indicators' and another is 'Evidence of insecure attachments'.

Further evidence of government interest in attachment theory was the decision of the Scottish Government's Looked After Children Strategic Implementation Group (LACSIG) in 2012 to commission the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland[1] (CELCIS) to undertake and report on an audit of attachment-informed practice across the children's services in all 32 Scottish local authorities. The published report, "Attachment Matters for All: An Attachment Mapping Exercise for Children's Services" (2012), recommends that attachment theory should "form a core underpinning framework for all work with children in universal services as well as specialist provision" (p. 54). The report contains specific recommendations for education practitioners:

> children who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and who present class teachers with serious challenges, and who disrupt learning for their peers, are more likely to have had sub optimal attachment experiences. An understanding of the impact of insecure and disorganised attachments may help teachers to support these children more effectively (p. 19).

As early as 2003, the UK Government document "Every child matters", talked of the need for children to have "strong attachments to adults who are committed to them long term, who support their development" (p. 44). The document promoted a "common core of training for those who work solely with children and families . . . to help secure a consistent response to children and families' needs" (p. 11). However, in 2012 the Scottish government went further in asserting the importance of attachment theory. The Scottish Government's 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in

[1] CELCIS is now 'Centre for excellence for Children's Care and Protection'

Scotland' (2012b), sets an expectation that practitioners have an understanding of the theory and are aware of their own attachment profile:

> as an employee or volunteer you will be aware of how early childhood experiences will have affected the way in which children have grown and are able to understand the world around them, and will be able to empathise and communicate with children in a way they are able to understand and respond to, informed by your understanding of the significance of your own attachment relationships (p. 16).

Attachment theory features not only in Scottish government policy and practice guidance aimed at the wide range of children's services practitioners, but in guidance specifically aimed at education practitioners. The work of education practitioners remains within the context of transformational curricular change, heralded by the 'Curriculum for Excellence' (CfE) for children and young people aged 3-18 years, initially articulated in 2004 and further developed from 2010 (Education Scotland, 2010-11). The aim of the CfE is to enable young people to be successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors, and responsible citizens.

The health and wellbeing of children and young people, and the promotion of good mental health, is now the responsibility of all education practitioners. In order to translate this responsibility into operational practice, the Scottish government launched 'Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare' in 2014. This policy document promotes good practice which creates "caring and nurturing settings that allow wellbeing, communication, curiosity, inquiry and creativity to flourish" (p. 5). This practice guidance aims to build capacity and confidence in the workforce and to translate policy guidance and theory into practice, in order to develop high quality provision. Attachment theory is outlined in the guidance as a key theory which practitioners should understand, and which should influence prevention and early intervention (pp. 31-34).

More recently, the Scottish Government launched 'Realising the Ambition' (2020), where practitioners are encouraged to understand that "although attachment is

significant throughout a child's lifespan, the early attachment process can have a life-long impact on how children deal with change and uncertainty" (p. 32).

Attachment theory and practice would seem to be receiving increasing national and international attention. Examples of non-academic literature, from newspaper articles (The New York Times, 2017), to magazines (Nursery World Magazine, 2007), discussing the education and health needs of early years and school aged children, have a focus on attachment. Positive evaluations have been published regarding the social enterprise company Brighter Futures (2018), who use attachment-based strategies with vulnerable young people (McGuire-Snieckus & Rose, 2014). James Wetz, chair of the Centre for Social Policy (Dartington), linked to the social research unit, argues in his book 'Urban village schools: putting relationships at the heart of secondary school organisation and design' (2009) that

> applying attachment theory as a clear theoretical framework, to inform schools' policy and practice, influence staff training, underpin approaches to behaviour, assessment and relationships, and to which all staff were committed, would have a profound impact on the quality of secondary school practice (p. 61).

The Nobel Laureate economist James Heckman concluded that "the common feature of successful interventions across all stages of the life cycle through adulthood is that they promote attachment and provide a secure base for exploration and learning for the child" (Kautz & Heckman, 2014).

Furthermore, some Scottish specialist day and residential care and education provisions were beginning to enquire as to how attachment theory could help them better address the needs of children and young people in their populations (Grant & King, 2011).

Similar agendas are evident at local government level. Early years and early intervention continue to be a dominant feature within the Single Outcome Agreements (SOA) (South Lanarkshire Partnership, 2013) between the Scottish

Government and each of the 32 local authorities. SOAs outline how each local authority will address outcomes related to communities, public services, employment, business, and the environment. Two of these outcomes refer directly to early years, and one more generally to the workforce:

- “Our children have the best start in life and are ready to succeed”
- “We have improved the life chances for children, young people and families at risk”
- “Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs” (Scottish Government, 2012c).

Within the local authority, the geographical setting of this research, a Children’s Services strategy group oversees the planning of strategy and the monitoring of impact and outcomes for children and young people. Influenced by key Scottish Government policies and agendas, attachment-informed practice is promoted for all children’s services practitioners within the current and previous plan (South Lanarkshire Council, 2012-18, 2021-23).

Studies by researchers such as Mary Dozier (2008), indicate that attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; Bretherton, 1992) can account for some of the observed association between poor life outcomes and the experience of harsh parenting or neglect in the early years. However, the relationship between early attachment experiences and life outcomes is complex. Kim Golding (2008) talks of the influence of a wide range of factors influencing developmental and behavioural difficulties, including “life experiences built upon genetic makeup, temperament, prenatal and birth experience, as well as attachment experience” (p. 14). Furthermore, Meins (2017) has expressed concern about the impact of UK policies which are based on simplistic interpretations of attachment theory and “caricatures of attachment research”, and of the dangers of “letting non-experts who think they know the attachment literature loose in the political arena” (p. 9).

However, rigorous research into the impact of attachment-informed practice within the early years is limited in the context of Scottish education, despite the high profile

given to the theory in policy and practice guidance. More academic research would seem to be needed in terms of outcomes of attachment-informed practice.

1.2 THE CURRENT STUDY

Given these aspects of the social and political context for practitioners who work within children's services, this research is driven by the imperative to investigate the impact and outcomes of an understanding of attachment theory in children's services practitioners. What difference does it make for children and young people?

Given the extensive range of roles and responsibilities within children's services, a decision was made to undertake initial data collection within the multi-agency children's services context, thereafter, focusing on education practitioners. The researcher adopted the view that a scholarly approach, with studies of rigorous methodological quality, is needed to extend the literature on attachment theory and its impact on education practitioners, as well as on education policy and practice.

The findings will be of interest not only to the research participants but to groups such as teacher training institutions, the Scottish Government, local authority, and policy makers, as well as educational psychologists, teachers, the early years workforce, and health practitioners. The investigation also provides a critique of the efficacy of the Scottish Government's "Attachment Mapping Exercise" recommendation that, where necessary, "developing an attachment-informed approach for all professionals working with children, including those within the universal services, offers the best prospect for effective early intervention for children whatever their age and family situation" (2012, p. 6).

It is helpful to consider this research programme within the context of the researcher's professional role within the local authority and role in a wider national context. At a national level, the researcher had been invited by Education Scotland (https://education.gov.scot) to write the section introducing attachment theory in the 'National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare: Building the Ambition'(2014), the document mentioned earlier in this chapter.

The researcher had also been involved in a multi-agency scoping exercise organised by a leading children's services charity. The aim of this exercise was to undertake a professional discussion on the value that an attachment-informed approach could bring to the assessment and intervention strategies with vulnerable young people. This group became an established professional committee (Grant & King, 2011), with a particular focus on attachment theory in relation to the childcare system (Emond et al., 2016; Fahlberg, 2012; Taylor, 2010). The researcher remained a member of this group throughout the research programme (from 2015 to date).

Furthermore, as part of the Scottish Government's 'Early Years Collaborative', referred to previously in this chapter, the researcher led an early years collaborative inquiry exploring home to school transition, 'How Early Attachment Relationships support Transition' (HEART) (South Lanarkshire Council, 2014).

The growing attention being paid to attachment theory, led to discussions between the researcher, the Director of Education and the associated extended management team (EMT). These discussions led to an agreement that the researcher would promote attachment theory awareness-raising sessions for education practitioners. However, it seemed apparent that there was a lack of reliable information as to current understandings of the theory within education practitioners and their children's services partners. It was also agreed that insufficient evidence was available to plan any further formal action regarding more in-depth staff training and development. This research programme was formulated to investigate current understandings of the theory and explore whether attachment theory and practice would make a positive difference to practice and outcomes. The EMT acted as a reference group to which the researcher reported. In agreement with the EMT, the researcher established a multi-agency strategy group as a forum for exploring if and how attachment theory could be applied broadly within children's services. This established a further reference group to provide support and challenge for the researcher.

It should be noted that attachment theory was a new concept to many members of the EMT and some members of the strategy group. For those to whom the theory was new, questions as to the relevance and possible impact of attachment theory and practice arose. This provided the researcher with further appropriate levels of challenge.

These presenting challenges highlighted the complexity of the field of enquiry, informing the researcher's decisions regarding methodology and methods. The decision was made to adopt an integrative research approach (Stark & Mandl, 2007).

In exploring the most appropriate paradigm to govern the study, the researcher was informed by the view that an objective reality does exist but that it cannot be perfectly detected. The researcher acknowledged that her values, perspectives and biases would influence the interpretation of reality and knowledge. The researcher at this point deemed the positivist paradigm, with its assumption that an independent reality exists which can be perceived and measured, as inappropriate for the area under investigation. Neither was the interpretivist paradigm considered appropriate by the researcher, given the assumptions of this paradigm that no independent reality exists, and that the researcher stands apart from the research activity. The researcher was informed by a critical realist ontology, which promotes that knowledge can be uncovered and deduced, but not directly, due to the conscious and unconscious influences of the researcher. The reflexivity of the researcher would therefore be crucial in the analysis of research findings. The critical realist paradigm governed the epistemological and methodological decisions on the methods identified to explore and explain the impact and outcomes of attachment theory and practice within an education setting (Zotzmann & Vassilev, 2020).

Research questions to address the main field of enquiry were developed:

- What is the current level of knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice within children's services in a Scottish local authority?

- What understandings do education practitioners have of the implications of attachment theory and practice in their work settings?
- What is the impact of training in attachment theory and practice?
- What are the impacts and outcomes of training, coaching and mentoring in attachment theory and attachment-informed practice on the support provided by a primary school?

The focus of the research programme is on the education sector and education practitioners in nursery and primary school. As explained previously in this chapter, while it is out with the scope of this thesis to fully explore the impact of attachment theory on partner practitioners within the children's services agencies in Scotland, i.e., social work, health, Police, and the voluntary sector, plans included an initial gathering of baseline data. This would enable an exploration of the level of knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice within children's services. Useful data would be gathered and analysed for future researchers aiming to explore how attachment theory can inform collaborative planning and practice with children and families in the various agencies. The analysis could also be beneficial in research into the impact of attachment-informed practice within a children's services agency other than education.

It is also outside the scope of this research to investigate how understandings from attachment theory can inform collaboration between education practitioners and parents in the support of vulnerable children and families. It is acknowledged that these partnerships are of vital importance in a child's health and wellbeing, and it is hoped that the findings from this research study may encourage and inform future exploration of these working relationships.

Parker et al. (2016) highlighted the ongoing need to extend the body of empirical research "on the effectiveness of attachment-based school strategies for meeting children's attachment needs" (p. 477). This research includes a small-scale study into the outcomes for children of attachment-informed practice within education

establishments and it is hoped that the findings may provide a basis for future researchers on a larger scale study on outcomes.

The sequence of the thesis is as follows: after this Introduction, Chapter 2 focuses on the research on attachment theory, relevant to education practitioners and policy makers. The available research evidence is reviewed, and its application and its limitations considered. Literature on adult learning is also included, given that the study involved developing a training programme on attachment theory.

In Chapter 3, consideration is given to the methodological challenges of identifying the understandings, beliefs and values of practitioners, with regard to attachment theory. Having reviewed and evaluated the key methodological options available, a research plan is formulated to gather supporting data from within authentic workplace contexts.

Commencing with Study 1, an audit of the knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice in the children's services workforce, Chapter 4 outlines the method, results and analysis.

In Chapter 5, the focus moves to the education workforce. An exploration is made in Study 2 of education practitioners' understandings and views of attachment theory, involving individual semi-structured interviews with 20 education practitioners, which include teachers, support assistants and community education officers.

Study 3, in Chapter 6, discusses the theoretical underpinnings of adult learning, and outlines the development of a training programme for education practitioners on attachment theory and practice, set within the context of current research knowledge of trauma and resilience. Insight into the initial impact of the training is considered.

In Chapters 7, 8 and 9, Study 4 investigates the impact and outcomes of training, coaching and mentoring in attachment theory and attachment-informed practice, within the context of a collaborative inquiry.

Figure 1 below outlines the four research studies and how they are linked.

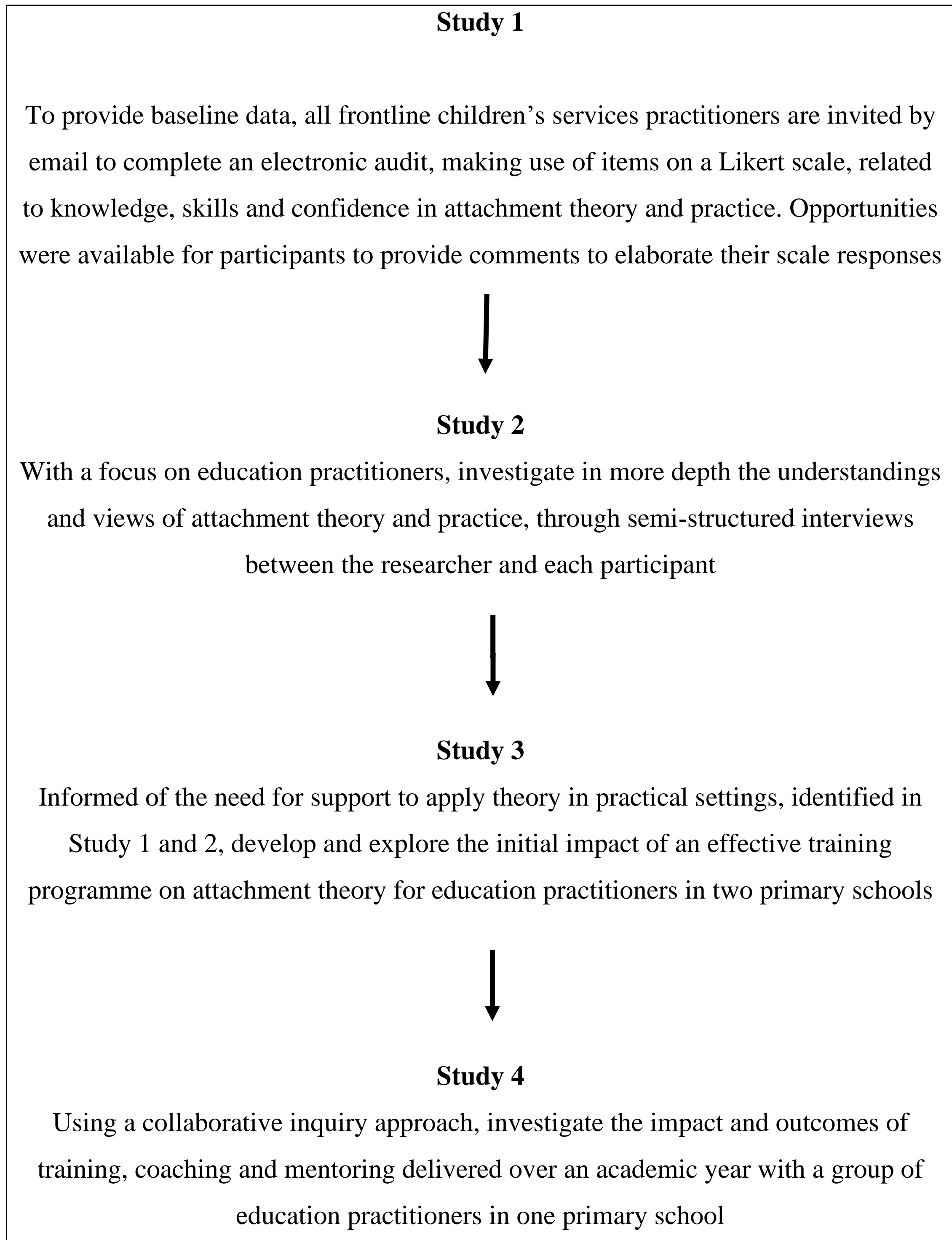


Figure 1: Outline of research studies.

It should be noted that the collaborative inquiry approach, a form of action research, influenced not only the methods in Study 4, but can also be seen to have influenced the overall research programme. Lieberman and Miller (2004) highlight the importance of learning in practice and argue that the importance “rests on the idea that learning is more social, collaborative, and context-dependent than was previously thought” (p. 21). Donohoo (2013) stresses the association between collaborative inquiry and action research and describes collaborative inquiry as “a process in which educators come together to examine their educational practices systematically using techniques of research” and goes on to conclude it is “primarily a process to support professional learning” (p. 1). The author describes learning communities who “work together to ask questions, develop theories of action, determine action steps, and gather and analyse evidence to assess the impact of their actions” (p. 1). It can be seen how the collaborative inquiry approach underpinned the liaison between the researcher and the various reference groups described earlier.

Chapter 10 provides tentative evidence of the impact of the research programme. Suggestions are highlighted for future research and concluding comments are provided.

Chapter 2 now reviews the research literature relevant to the planned studies.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In her account of how to use qualitative research methods to address psychological questions, Willig (2013) refers to a researcher's object of study as the "phenomenon of interest", and the "phenomenon under investigation" (p. 104). In this research programme the phenomenon of interest which is under investigation concerns the implications and applications of attachment theory for education practitioners.

The aim of the literature review was to inform the research journey by highlighting the relevant issues, understandings, and debates arising from the academic literature as well as considering any gaps in the research on attachment theory as it relates to nursery and school age education.

A wealth of studies, or what Simpson and Rholes (2015) refer to as a "flood of research" across cultures (Ainsworth, 1967; Goossens & van Ijzendoorn, 1990; van Ijzendoorn & Sagi-Schwartz, 2008), has tested, challenged, refined and advanced Bowlby's theory (Bowlby, 1958, 1961a, 1961b). The researcher identified the need to develop search criteria to guide the inclusion or exclusion of material for the review, due to this extensive literature.

2.2 PROCEDURE

A wide range of books and articles, including Bowlby's original papers, were read prior to refining the search. The search was informed by the research questions and the national and local context outlined in Chapter 1.

The APA PsycInfo indexing database was used to focus the search. Highly regarded across the scholarly and professional fields, PsycInfo supports the identification of relevant psychological and behavioural science research.

The following search terms were identified by the researcher: attachment theory and nursery education; attachment theory and school education; attachment theory and school readiness; attachment theory and teachers; attachment theory and child development; and attachment theory and parenting.

The review was undertaken with consideration of relevant developments in disciplines other than education, such as psychotherapy, which could inform the application of the theory in an education context.

The main thrust of the research programme was to explore the understandings held by education practitioners with regard to attachment theory and practice. However, two of the research questions related to training, coaching and mentoring, and the researcher also undertook a literature search on adult learning and training.

The following literature review is organised into two sections: one considering attachment theory and the implications of the theory for education practitioners, and one on adult learning.

2.3 SECTION 1: ATTACHMENT THEORY

The main peer reviewed articles and books for section one are outlined in Tables 1 and 2 below.

Table 1: Key books and peer reviewed articles on attachment theory.

Source	**Title**
Bergin, C., & Bergin, D. (2009)	Attachment in the Classroom
Commodari, E. (2013)	Preschool teacher attachment, school readiness and risk of learning difficulties
Dingwall, N. & Sebba, J. (2018)	Evaluation of the attachment aware schools programme: Final Report
Geddes, H. (2006)	Attachment in the classroom
Gus, L. et al. (2015)	Emotion coaching: A universal strategy

	for supporting and promoting sustainable emotional and behavioural well-being
Hamre, B. K. & Pianta, R. C. (2006)	Student-Teacher Relationships
Kesner, J. E. (2000)	Teacher characteristics and the quality of child–teacher relationships
Riley, P. (2011)	Attachment theory and the teacher-student relationship: a practical guide for teachers, teacher educators and school leaders
Rose et al. (2016)	Impact evaluation of the Attachment Aware Schools Project for Stoke and B&NES Virtual Schools: A Pilot Study
Sroufe, L. A. (2005)	Attachment and Development: a prospective, longitudinal study from birth to adulthood
Sroufe, L. A., et al. (2010)	Conceptualizing the role of early experience: Lessons from the Minnesota longitudinal study
Sroufe, A. and Siegel, D. (2011)	The Verdict Is In: The case for Attachment theory
Verschueren, K., & Koomen, H. M.Y. (2012)	Teacher–child relationships from an attachment perspective

Table 2: Key literature on Neuroscience, with a focus on relevance for education

Source	**Title**
Howard-Jones, P. A. (2014)	Neuroscience and education: myths and messages
Cozolino, L. (2013)	The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment and Learning in the Classroom
Shonkoff, et al. (2011)	Building the Brain's "Air Traffic

	Control” System: How Early Experiences Shape the Development of Executive Function Center on the Developing Child
Wastell, D., & White, S. (2012)	Blinded by neuroscience: Social policy, the family and the infant brain

2.3.1 Overview of Attachment Theory

Attachment theory is one of the most prominent psychological theories, influencing clinical interventions with children and adults, childcare policies and teaching approaches (Bretherton, 1992; Ezquerro, 2016; Hazan & Shaver, 1994) and Rholes (2015) propose in their edited collection of papers on new directions and emerging themes in attachment theory, that the major principles of the theory, refined by decades of research, “rank among the most important intellectual achievements in the psychological sciences today” (p. 1). Of relevance to school and nursery education, Duschinsky et al. (2015) propose that attachment theory “has been among the most significant discourses in shaping perceptions of child development and parenting across and beyond Anglophone countries” (p. 174). Attachment can be considered “perhaps the most important developmental construct ever investigated” (Sroufe et al., 2005, p. 51).

The British psychiatrist and psychoanalyst John Bowlby (1969), who originally developed the theory, defined attachment as being a “lasting psychological connectedness between human beings” (p. 194). Bretherton (1992) talks of attachment theory being "the joint work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth” (p. 759) and Ainsworth (1973), a key member of Bowlby’s research team, defined attachment as “an affectional tie that one person forms to another specific person, binding them together in space and enduring over time” (p. 1). A further key definition is located in the writings of Rudolf Schaffer (2004) who proposed that “the biological function of attachment is survival; the psychological function is to gain security” (p. 101).

Van Dijken (1999) notes that from the earliest stages of Bowlby's writings in the 1930s, he was interested in the powerful negative impact which even minor periods of separation from the mother, or main carer, could have on child development (p. 100). Van Dijken (p. 160) disagrees with Rutter (1995, p. 549) that Bowlby's interests in maternal deprivation developed following two of Bowlby's key publications: his study of forty-four juvenile thieves (1944) and the publication of the Maternal Care and Mental Health monograph commissioned by the World Health Organisation (WHO) (1952), on the welfare of children who were homeless as a result of World War II. The WHO report explored the mental health aspects of homeless children – either orphaned, fostered, or placed in institutions. However, Van Dijken argues earlier understandings of the impact of disrupted care were derived from Bowlby's observations of children and young people in institutional care. Bowlby worked for a short period in 1928 in Dunhurst, the junior school of Bedales, a progressive co-educational school, and moved from there to work from 1928-29 in Priory Gate, a school for 'maladjusted' boys aged 3-18 years. Van Dijken refers to Bowlby's reflection that "it was the most valuable six months of my life" (p. 48). Dr Arturo Ezquerro, a consultant psychiatrist who was supervised by Bowlby in the Tavistock Clinic, highlights Bowlby's work in Priory Gate in particular. Ezquerro (2016) comments on Bowlby's unconventional decision to delay his training in medicine in order to gain more insight into child development. Ezquerro contends this was as a result of the experience and the questions about child development raised by what Bowlby observed in the residential setting (p. 18).

There is evidence that Bowlby had an interest in teachers and education early in his career and Van Dijken (1999, p. 91) cites two articles in educational magazines published in the late 1930s where Bowlby provided advice for school teachers and parents on how to respond to issues such as aggression and jealousy. Ezquerro (2016) talks of how Bowlby "firmly believed in the positive developmental influence of helpful teachers" (p. 103), and that Bowlby was committed to work with schools as part of the child's wider community (p. 64). This view of Bowlby's interest in schools is supported by a reading of the three volumes of Bowlby's Attachment and Loss trilogy (1969, 1973, 1980). In detailed case studies reported throughout the

three volumes there is reference to teachers' assessment, teacher ratings and teacher observations.

In developing the theory, Bowlby rejected the dominant interpretations of children's behaviour, held strongly by his psychoanalytic colleagues. Van Dijken (1999) quotes Parkes (1995), "The current Kleinian wisdom of that time was that unconscious phantasies were the origin of psychopathology rather than real life events" (p. 78). In highlighting the emerging differences in theoretical approaches which divided Bowlby and his colleagues, Sroufe and Siegel (2011) describe how Bowlby began to reject the Freudian view of child development as it had too narrow a focus on the inner world of the child "without taking into account the actual relational environment that shapes the earliest stages of human consciousness" (p. 1). Although Bowlby had begun challenging these established views, he went on to become a qualified psychoanalyst for adults in 1937. However, in Priory Gate, Bowlby began to form the view that there was a causal link between early deprivation and loss and the emerging personality. This view distanced him from his psychoanalytic colleagues in the British Psychoanalytic Institute and eventually Bowlby's theoretical conclusions led to him being completely ostracized by them.

As well as these early influences from psychoanalysis, Bowlby was very influenced by ethology. Duschinsky et al. (2015) comment that "attachment theory not only can be viewed in ethological perspective but, more than this, it in fact emerged in dialogue with the work of ethologists" (p. 182). Throughout his long career he acknowledged the significant influence, which began around 1951, both with the gosling imprinting research of the celebrated ethologist Konrad Lorenz (1935, 1937), and in Bowlby's collaboration with the ethologist Robert Hinde. In this way Bowlby's original formulation of attachment theory involved an ethological model derived primarily from work on non-human subjects (Mercer, 2011, p. 28).

Although the terms 'bonding' and 'attachment' are at times used interchangeably in popular literature to describe parental love and affection, attachment theory as it was developed by Bowlby and Ainsworth describes 'attachment' as the quality of the

relationship from the child's perspective i.e., the enduring relationship which develops between a child and their caregiver prenatally and during the first two years of life (Ainsworth et al., 1978; Bowlby, 1953). According to the theory, attachment is a tie based on the need for safety, security and protection and therefore does not mean the same as love and affection. It is the strong, affectionate tie individuals have with significant people. Interaction with these significant figures can lead the individual to experience pleasure and joy, as well as feeling comfort by their nearness in times of distress. Sroufe and Siegel (2011) report that it was during the research project in Uganda where "Ainsworth first developed the hypothesis that 'attunement', the sensitive responsiveness to the infant's cues, was the critical factor in determining the type and quality of an infant's attachment, and not simply a generalized trait like 'warmth'" (p. 2).

Bowlby (1973) proposed that the attachment relationship with the main carer, and other key adults, can become a type of template or map, what Bowlby refers to as an Internal Working Model (IWM) for the child on how to relate with others. He proposed that this template remains influential throughout the life span. In this proposal, those early attachment relationships between the child and their carer can affect the dynamic of the adult relationships which are made in later life. The concept of the IWM would seem a helpful concept for education practitioners in that it can support a better and perhaps less judgmental understanding of a child and young person's behaviour in the classroom.

Bowlby (1980) had introduced the concept of an Attachment Behavioural System (ABS) which helped in the understanding of one particular aspect of how the IWM forms. The ABS acted to achieve or maintain proximity to the principal attachment figure and was activated by fear and lack of proximity**.** Bowlby proposed that the attachment behavioural system is terminated when the child or adult experiences a sufficient reduction in fear, anxiety, or distress, a process described as the achievement of "felt security" (Sroufe & Waters, 1977).

Another key element of attachment theory is closely linked to the concept of the IWM, i.e., patterns of secure and insecure attachment. These were influenced by the research of Ainsworth and her colleagues in Uganda and Baltimore, which led to the development of the Strange Situation Procedure (SSP). The SSP measures attachment security and insecurity. Three anxieties were measured in relation to: separation; a stranger; and a strange situation. Secure, insecure avoidant and insecure ambivalent attachment patterns were identified (Ainsworth et al., 1978).

It is helpful to view this outline of the development of the original theory and related concepts within the context of refinements and revisions relevant to education.

2.3.2 Revisions, Refinements, and Criticisms

An early and sustained criticism of Bowlby`s theory concerns the accusation of monotropy. Holmes (1993) talks of how Bowlby's views on the impact of separation from the principal care giver became distorted as the messages were relayed in the popular press, and states that "extreme prescriptions attributing apocalyptic consequences to every separation flooded mothers with guilt-feelings and remorse every time they left their children". Eventually, Bowlby came to be identified by some members of the feminist movement "as one of their worst enemies"(pp. 45-48). It is worthy of note in this context that, in contrast to most current critical theorists and sociological and feminist critiques of attachment theory, Duschinsky et al. (2015) accept attachment as a vital process (p. 175) and they "discern the difference between the demands of the attachment system and the health, social and political resources required by a child–caregiver dyad" (p. 176). These understandings were a pivotal influence for the researcher in the development of a training programme on attachment theory (see Chapter 6).

The earlier criticism of Bowlby has echoes of Barbara Tizard's comment in the British Psychological Society (BPS) 'Psychologist' magazine (2009), when she talked of Bowlby's openness to revise and refine his theory – he was a committed empiricist – but that "unfortunately, it is his original crude theory that has stuck in

the public mind" (p. 903). Sroufe (2005) also commented that as attachment theory became popular, it was misinterpreted, and surface applications were made.

Similar misunderstandings of attachment theory characterised a debate on attachment theory, which appeared in the Psychologist magazine, in 2017, where Meins' apparently critical comments on attachment theory received vigorous rebuttal from academic peers. However, it would seem that what Meins was predominantly criticising were "caricatures of attachment research" and how people, in particular policy makers, misuse the scientific evidence.

There would seem to be evidence that Bowlby was open to challenge. From the time of the WHO report (1952) Bowlby talked of a child being maternally deprived if, although living at home, "his mother (or permanent mother-substitute), is unable to give him the loving care small children need" (p. 11). However, Bowlby was strongly influenced by the writings of Michael Rutter, and perhaps the earlier findings of Schaffer and Emerson (1964) who had found from their sample of 60 families in Glasgow, that there was a hierarchy of attachment figures. Key attachments could be with a range of figures such as fathers, grandparents and older siblings and not only the mother. Rutter et al. (2001) argued for the significance of a child's relationship with people other than his mother and, more importantly, that repeated findings showed many children were not damaged emotionally by maternal deprivation. By the last years of Bowlby's life, he abandoned his original insistence on the irreversible consequences of maternal separation and deprivation.

Further examples of Bowlby's willingness to respond to challenge and to new evidence include his views on the ABS system. Bowlby (1969) originally saw the ABS as a stop/start mechanism (p. 258). However, it became generally accepted by researchers such as Ainsworth and Bretherton that the system is continually active. Bowlby accepted that if the ABS was highly activated, the set goal would be close proximity, but if it was low, Bowlby accepted that just a view of the attachment figure would be sufficient.

2.3.3 Current Research Directions

Two key emerging themes in the research literature would appear to have relevance for education practitioners. One new direction, led by the researchers Mikulincer and Shaver, is highlighted by Simpson and Rholes (2015) in their overview of new and emerging themes for attachment theory research. Simpson and Rholes describe how Mikulincer and Shaver view attachment security as a "resilience resource" and "a building block of good mental health and social adjustment" (p. 3). The researchers highlight significant research studies exploring how to strengthen attachment security through experimentally induced security and outline the impact this can have on "emotion regulation, self and other appraisals, mental health and prosocial behaviour". Informed by the findings of the International Resilience Project, Grotberg (1995) was one of the first researchers to identify the link between resilience in children and young people and their commitment to educational achievement, and especially their enjoyment in reading for pleasure. Research which explores methods to generate security would seem a crucial area for investigation, not only in adults, but children and young people.

A second emerging research area, what Simpson and Rholes (2015) refer to as "another major new theme" (p. 5), involves an exploration of how the elements of attachment theory can inform understandings of work organisations and environments. Paetzold (2015) indicates that attachment research in organisations is over 20 years old, focusing primarily on productivity issues. There would currently seem to be an increased focus on how organisations can improve the well-being of their employees applying the understandings from attachment theory and practice. Bowlby (1973) is often quoted as arguing that attachment theory is applicable "from the cradle to the grave" (p. 203) and this research strand would seem very relevant to the workforce in school and early years environments. An interesting exploration in this research programme would be to be alert to any associations practitioners make between attachment theory and issues for them as employees.

2.3.4 Implication and Applications of Attachment Theory to Education Practitioners

Patterns of Insecure Attachment

Prior & Glaser (2006, p. 10) argue that the formation of attachment patterns has been empirically tested and richly researched. The authors discuss disorganised attachment and reactive attachment disorder as descriptions of behaviour which have been identified in more recent decades. However, it is the secure, insecure avoidant and insecure ambivalent attachment patterns (Ainsworth et al., 1978) which have been most thoroughly researched over time and which would seem to have implications for learning in the everyday classroom setting. Riley (2011, p. 16) highlights how insecurely attached children undertake less exploratory play and show less curiosity to new information, with insecure avoidant patterns leading children to appear to their teacher as either hostile or independent and reluctant to seek help with learning tasks. Ambivalent patterns of behaviour within the classroom are associated with children and young people who can be very interested in the teacher as an attachment type figure, and become so fearful of separation from the teacher, that the learning task seems less important.

Consideration of how far these patterns can change with attuned and sensitive care has challenged researchers. Talking of insecurely attached children, May (2005) reflects on how even though some children had an opportunity for a new beginning with loving, responsible parents, “these children seemed forever imprisoned in a maladaptive past” (p. 223).

A related theme in the literature of insecure attachment patterns, concerns how effective support and intervention can be provided for parents whose own attachment patterns lead to a difficulty providing attuned and sensitive care for their children. This was first considered by Bowlby, when he published the second volume of his trilogy 'Attachment and Loss: Separation: Anxiety and Anger′ (1973) and the third volume 'Attachment and Loss: Sadness and Depression' (1980). In both volumes Bowlby explored the intergenerational transmission of attachment patterns. Many researchers have continued and extended Bowlby`s findings. Sroufe et al. (2009), in

his seminal longitudinal study of risk and adaptation from birth to adulthood in Minnesota, was keen not to judge parents, and to investigate how to promote secure relationships between parent and child. Bakermans-Kranenburg et al. (2003), in randomised controlled experiments, found that interventions that improve parental sensitivity also improve attachment. Hrdy (2007) has highlighted that across many cultures researchers have found that quality of care provided by parents is closely linked to the resources available to the parent. The work of researchers like Dozier et al. (2017) who developed the 'attachment and biochemical catch-up' (ABC) method, where coaches use 'in the moment commenting' (p. 28), encourages hope that informed interventions can lead to improved caregiving. Sir Richard Bowlby (2004) in his lecture on 'Fifty Years of Attachment Theory' talks of how the understandings from the theory has led to "innovative, community-based projects designed to help young parents and their families develop secure relationships with each other" (p. vii). Granqvist et al. (2017) also make a strong case for the value of attachment theory for supportive work with parents and families. There would seem implications and imperatives for schools and partner agencies to collaborate in evidence-based parenting programmes informed by attachment theory.

School Readiness and Cognitive Development

Sroufe et al. (1983) reported findings that children with a history of insecure attachment had troubled relationships with both peers and adults in the preschool setting, and had difficulty in learning. The research findings of Pianta and Steinberg (1992) linked attachment security and positive outcomes in school. The attachment relationship with the parent or main carer is linked with relationships with peers, problem solving, and school adjustment. Further studies indicate the importance of attachment patterns and relationships in the social and learning processes, which is linked to successful early school adjustment (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Commodari, 2013). According to Bergin and Bergin (2009) "secure attachment is associated with higher grades and standardized test scores compared to insecure attachment. Secure attachment is also associated with greater emotional regulation, social competence, and willingness to take on challenges, and with lower levels of ADHD and delinquency, each of which in turn is associated with higher achievement" (p. 141).

School Policy and Procedures

What Silver (2013) refers to as "managing behaviour with attachment in mind" (p. 13), raises questions about the impact of attachment theory on behaviour management and policy. Geddes (2006) talks of how schools can make a significant contribution to the well-being of children and young people, but that is more likely to happen if "all staff share a common language for understanding and responding to the meaning of pupil behaviour" (p. 114). In their 2016 pilot project findings on Attachment Aware Schools, Rose et al highlight that knowledge and understanding of attachment theory "provides a clear structure for behaviour management" (p. 8). As part of the Attachment Aware Schools initiative, in the document "What is an attachment aware school?" Bomber (Attachment Aware Schools.pdf (attachmentleadnetwork.net)) has produced a clear outline that includes a description of whole staff responsibilities, and the specific support that should be provided for children with developmental vulnerabilities in executive functioning, regulation and psychological development.

To support a common language and to challenge the dominance of behaviour management school policies, Emotion Coaching is of relevance here. Gus et al (2015) refer to Emotion Coaching as both a technique and an approach, and the authors provide a convincing argument for its use as an addition to existing behaviour management approaches in schools.

Relationships

The literature would seem to evidence the strong impact of positive attachment relationships. Rutter et al. (2001, pp. 291-324) argue that development of strong attachment relationships can divert the developmental trajectory often associated with violence. Perry (1994, 1997; Szalavitz & Perry, 2010) argues relational poverty can lead to abnormalities in the core regulatory networks, and that healing happens in the child's social milieu. In 'The Ones we Remember' (Urdan & Pajares, 2008) the authors describe the impact of caring, sensitive teachers who changed their lives.

Kesner (2000, p. 134) talks of how Bowlby highlighted the close relationship that a child can have with their teacher. However, Kesner argues that while all attachment relationships are close, not all close relationships are attachment relationships**.** Verschueren & Koomen (2012) support this view that although the teacher may provide a secure base and safe haven function, the relationship is most likely not to be an attachment relationship. Nevertheless, the research literature would clearly indicate that in the setting of the school and nursery, positive and attuned education practitioners who are able to relate positively to their pupils, can buffer the impact of adversity (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Hamre & Pianta, 2006).

More recent research findings on the crucial significance of relationships between education practitioners and pupils are very relevant here. Rose et al (2016) found a positive impact on relationships in schools involved in the project, following a core training which "incorporated an understanding and insight into attachment theory, the neuroscientific evidence which appears to support the research on the attachment process and an outline of the impact of trauma on the developing brain" (p. 2). Findings included improved relationships between staff and pupils, between staff members, and between staff and parents (p. 9). In the Oxford University, Rees Centre final report of the evaluation of the Attachment Aware Schools Programme, a powerful statement from a pupil describing their teacher, is recorded: "Miss… is basically like all of us are like planets, right, and she's like the sun because like without her we could not be in this school" (Dingwall & Sebba, 2018, p. 1).

Practitioners' Attachment Profile

Riley (2011) has undertaken significant and valuable research into what he refers to as teachers' "relational history" (p. 64). Similar to the Scottish Government's Common Core (Chapter 1: 1.1), Riley (2011) argues for teachers to be aware of their attachment or relational history. However, unlike the Common Core, Riley provides a detailed account of a support and supervision method using Contextual Insight-Navigated Discussion (CIND) (p. 93) as a mentoring tool to support teachers through the process. Extending the research exploring impact and outcomes of this approach with teachers could prove beneficial.

Contribution of Neuroscience

In his 2013 book 'The Social Neuroscience of Education', American psychologist Louis Cozolino argues that neuroscience information needs "to be integrated into our pedagogy, teacher training and curricula" to help teachers and education policy makers understand how positive relationships between teachers and pupils "stimulate the brain to absorb experience" and "shape neural connections" (p. 14). Cozolino goes on to state that "from a neurological perspective the position of the teacher is very similar to that of the parent in building a child's brain" (p. 18). In his introduction to Cozolino's book, the prominent American psychiatrist, Dan Siegel, promotes these key message from Cozolino, and expresses the view that "education is an art built upon the social relationship between teacher and student that harnesses the neural mechanisms of learning" (p. xi). Cozolino proposes that in initial training teachers should be taught more about how the brain functions and laments the "myopathy of educationalists who focus only on curriculum and test performance" (p. 3). Riley (2011) also urges neuroscience findings to be brought in to "the educational discourse and practice" (p. 47).

From these comments it would appear that the relevance of neuroscience to education practitioners would be significant. This view is supported by the work of Bruce Perry who argues the cortex is formed postnatally via social interactions with parents, carers and other key adults such as teachers. Perry talks of the "state dependent functioning" of children affected by traumatic abuse (1994, 1997; Perry & Szalavitz, 2007; Szalavitz & Perry, 2010), where children are characterised by poor self-regulation. The challenges some children experience to self-regulate have clear implications for classroom behaviour and learning. Siegel (2012) also suggests that chronic stress may actually damage the hippocampus leading to memory impairment. This also has implications for school learning.

However, Tharner et al. (2011) raise significant concern and urge caution in interpreting neuroscience findings. They point out that "research in the domain of attachment neuroscience is relatively young" (p. 54). Howard-Jones (2014) warns of

"neuromyths" which have emerged from "studies which are protected from scrutiny" and which "originate from uninformed interpretations of genuine scientific facts" (p. 4). Howard-Jones crusades for a "field of inquiry that is dedicated to bridging neuroscience and education" and for neuroscience to be included in teacher training, as otherwise teachers would be "ill-prepared to be critical of ideas and educational programmes that claim a neuroscientific basis" (p. 1). Nevertheless, these concerns are not in conflict with the findings of Siegel and Cozolino. Cozolino (2013) also warns of the danger of research results being taken out of context, and argues that "knowledge must be well understood, and integrated with what we know about social and emotional development" (p. xxi).

The imperative for teachers to apply caution interpreting neuroscience findings is highlighted by the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study. Since Felitti et al.'s (1998) seminal study was published, describing outcomes from a questionnaire completed by a sample of white, middle class adult Americans, findings were generalised to the school aged population. The study had found that those adults with a higher number of ACEs were more likely to engage in unhealthy risk-taking behaviours, more likely to develop physical and mental ill health, and have lower self-reports of wellbeing, compared with those with a lower number of ACEs. Edwards et al.'s (2017) submission to the House of Commons Science and Technology Select Committee Inquiry into the evidence-base for early years intervention, highlights the gap between those who develop policy, and the scholars "alert to questionable scientific-sounding claims and with a knowledge of the global origins of new policy agendas". The paper refers to concerns, among others, about statistical power and transferability, and talks of studies with "small sample sizes that cannot support generalisation, and no application of corrective statistical tests" (2017, p. 4). The authors of the submission argue that

> the campaign encouraging teachers, health and social care professionals to be 'ACEs-aware' (p. 7), should be subject to serious questioning. While, of course, they should be looking out sympathetically and proactively for the children in their care, this is very different from performing amateur diagnoses of children as having high or low ACE scores.

Barrett, a Scottish Principal Educational Psychologist had expressed significant concern with "reports now saying that those children with four or more ACEs are more likely than their peers to experience a range of negative outcomes both in the short and longer term" (Barrett, 2018), and concludes "the measured application of neuroscience approaches to helping our development of trauma-informed approaches is key, but needs to go beyond the trite application of the 'biology of ACEs'".

As Howard-Jones (2014) reflected, "if we wish education to be enriched rather than misled by neuroscience" (p. 6), more debate and communication between education and neuroscience is needed.

2.3.5 Summary and Conclusions

The literature review of attachment theory provided invaluable insights and influenced this research programme. Recent research which focused on the importance of nurturing relationships between education practitioners and pupils was particularly influential. Furthermore, the research which explored training programmes on attachment theory and included understandings on developmental trauma and emerging evidence from neuroscience provided significant learning for this research programme.

However, caution would seem to be legitimate in the implications of neuroscience for education practitioners and policy makers. The example of policy decisions based on neuroscience studies in the early years stage of child development is quoted by Wastell and White (2012). They refer to how a simplistic interpretation of a "now or never imperative to intervene before irreparable damage is done to the developing infant brain" (p. 397) dominated policy decisions. Yet the authors argue there is equally relevant findings that the infant brain "is not readily susceptible to permanent and irreversible damage from psychosocial deprivation" (p. 397). The authors point to the value of promoting resilience and supporting brain plasticity through informed interventions. This is an encouragement to education practitioners and should be considered along with the neurobiological findings of researchers such as Siegel,

Schore and Harvard University researchers at the Center on the Developing Child. The Harvard researchers argue that executive function skills in vulnerable children can be promoted with trained practitioners using evidence-informed resources. They refer to the use of "scaffolding, responsive caregiving, predictability and freedom from sustained threats" as aspects of a school or nursery environment which could be seen to support healthy progress of executive functioning skills (Shonkoff et al., 2011, p. 7).

This literature review would seem to support the arguments for training education practitioners in the understanding of the power of secure attachment, positive relationships and the promotion of safety and security in school and early years environments. Bowlby and Ainsworth's concepts of secure base and safe haven are of relevance here in terms of supporting repair and recovery in troubled children and young people.

2.4 SECTION 2: ADULT LEARNING

In addition to 'adult learning', search terms for exploring the academic literature through the use of PyscInfo, included 'professional learning and development for teachers' and 'effective training implementation'. Key peer reviewed articles, books and websites for section two are outlined in Tables 3, 4 and 5 below.

Table 3: Key peer reviewed papers on adult learning.

Source	**Title**
Ingvarson, L. et al. (2005)	Factors affecting the impact of professional development programs on teachers' knowledge, practice, student outcomes & efficacy
Showers, B. (1987)	Synthesis of research in staff-development: A framework for future study and a state-of-the-art analysis
Wagonhurst, C. (2002)	Developing effective training programs (Educational Update)

Table 4: Key reference books on adult learning.

Source	**Title**
Illeris, K. (2009)	Contemporary Theories of Learning
Kelly, B. & Perkins, D. (2012)	Handbook of Implementation Science for Psychology in Education
Knowles, M. (1970)	The Modern Practice of Adult Education; Andragogy versus Pedagogy

Table 5: Key websites on adult learning.

General Teaching Council for Scotland	www.gtsc.org.uk
National Implementation Research Network	https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu

Wagonhurst in her 2002 study on developing effective training programs, points to Knowles (1970) as one of first to analyse "the unique aspects that characterize adult learners" (p. 79). Knowles recommended that activities which encourage participants to be involved directly in the learning process either individually or, ideally, in the form of a collaborative group exercise, leads to improved learning. The more a participant's sensory and intellectual faculties are part of the learning process, the greater the probability that effective learning will take place in a training situation.

Three sets of research studies are of particular help. Wagonhurst (2002), Ingvarson et al. (2005), and Showers et al. (1987) undertook to identify features of effective professional learning. A common element in the findings of the above investigations, first described by Knowles (1970), was the positive benefits of active involvement and engagement of participants in training exercises. The overall key findings for the consideration of training programme planners are summarised below:

- Undertake a comprehensive and specific needs assessment before planning the detail of the training programme, and reflect if it is feasible to collect objective and subjective data
- Design training content to take account of changing organisational policy and procedures

- Develop measurable objectives for the training and explore how objectives can be produced in collaboration or in consultation with trainees
- Consider carefully, and in detail, the nature, scale and complexity of what the training objectives aim to achieve
- Plan training programme content within the context of the performance goals of the training participants
- Set acquisition of knowledge within the context of practice application
- Be alert to the fact that there will be a range of personal characteristics which staff will bring to the training activity and expect differential responses to any training option
- Be aware that the venue and timing of the training event is less important than the training design
- Explore opportunities to incorporate coaching to support a change in practice

The last point of the summary concerns coaching, an area that is explored in the adult learning research literature. The views of Joyce and Showers are representative of the research literature in terms of the role coaching plays in embedding knowledge and skills from training. Joyce & Showers refer (2002, p.3) to "how coaching facilitated the transfer of training and the development of organisational norms of collegiality and experimentation". However, Joyce & Showers (2002, p.2) particularly advocate for 'peer coaching' which they describe as "the collaborative work of teachers in planning and developing the lessons and materials to implement the training effectively".

Coaching and mentoring are often referred to interchangeably. Blasé et al., (2012, p. 24) refer to the findings of McCormick & Brennan (2001) regarding the qualities of effective coaches. However, McCormick & Brennan talk in their article of effective 'mentors'. The 2001 study reports "good mentors are encouraging, supportive, committed, sensitive, flexible, respectful, enthusiastic, diplomatic, patient, and willing to share information, credit, and recognition" (p. 133).

The implementation science literature which explores the how, when and in what contexts interventions work or fail, was also considered as relevant to the understandings of effective adult learning. In his foreword to the seminal publication edited by Kelly and Perkins (2012), Robert Slavin (2012, p. xv) commented “we are learning not only about ‘what works’ but also about why various programs do or do not work, for whom and under what conditions they work, what is needed to scale up proven programs, and what policy supports are needed to scale them up without losing their effectiveness”. The National Implementation Research Network (https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu) talk of ‘real world transformation’ and ‘real world contexts’. With echoes of Slaven’s comments, NIRN clearly explain their rationale on the NIRN website: “Pilots and initiatives come and go. Islands of excellence rise and sink. The immediate results may be excellent, but the end results are unsustainable pockets of innovation. Efforts to ‘train everyone’ result in little lasting change” (The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2022). Researchers associated with the network have consolidated research findings from a range of disciplines in order to determine the key phases in successful systems and practice change, such as policy development and implementation of programmes and interventions (Bertram et al., 2015; Blase et al., 2012; Meyers et al., 2012).

Recommended first steps in successful implementation include clarifying who the stakeholders are in the drive to implement change, and then a follow up to obtain a specific ‘buy in’ from the identified stakeholders. Meyers et al (2012, p. 477) talk of how important it is in this early phase of implementation to “maintain positive relationships” within the systems involved, and to foster a supportive organisational climate would seem to be key.

In common with Wagonhurst, Showers, and Ingvarson et al., a needs assessment is also viewed in implementation science as part of the first phase of any implementation to support change. Topping (2012) (2012) highlights that the needs assessment process “creates an understanding of strengths and weaknesses” in the system (p. 240), and Meyers et al (2012) argue the process can illuminate “how the

innovation fits with the setting, and whether the organisation/community is ready to implement" (p. 477).

Exploration of potential barriers to successful implementation also is recommended during this first phase. Kelly (2012) states that "exploration of the nature of barriers to effectiveness and their impact on the delivery of effective evidence-based programmes in the real world is the major focus of implementation science" (p. 4). Implementation science researchers recommend that trainers and implementers consult with stakeholders on what they view as barriers and challenges to successful implementation of change in practice, and also highlight that "responding to and overcoming systemic barriers to implementation require attention by leadership at all levels" (Blase et al., 2012, p. 26).

Recommendations for phase two include the creation of an implementation team(s) and an implementation plan, with a built-in feedback mechanism to implementation teams. The research literature recommends a minimum of three people in implementation teams, with four or more preferred. Higgins et al., (2012, p.9) recommend 5-14. It is suggested that turnover should be accepted and tolerated (Higgins et al., 2012, p.2). Blase et al., (2012), describe such a group as "individuals who are well qualified and representative of the stakeholders " and who "are charged with guiding the overall implementation of the intervention from exploration through to full implementation" (p.16).

Recommendations for phase three include exploring available implementation supports such as coaching and supervision. The implementation science literature talks of implementation drivers and describe drivers as programme and organisational support needed to implement and scale up effective practice . Drivers are divided into three groups: competency drivers, organisation drivers, and leadership drivers (Bertram et al., 2015, p.479). Coaching is one of the three competency drivers, along with 'training' and 'selection'. The implementation science literature support the findings of Joyce and Showers (2002) on coaching. Blase et al., (2012), note how Joyce and Showers "after decades of research on the

impact of teacher training, began to consider training and coaching as a continuous set of operations needed to produce changes in the classroom behaviour of teachers" (p.24). Coaching is seen as pivotal in supporting effective training outcomes.

2.4.1 Summary and Conclusions

The implementation science literature proved invaluable to the researcher in terms of how the research programme was undertaken. Implementation science research findings provided a framework to follow. This was particularly notable with regard to establishing a regular liaison with education management, the multi-agency reference group, the management teams in the two schools involved in Study 4, and the education attachment strategy group established by the researcher. The links between the researcher and these groups were informed by the 'implementation teams' approach recommended in the implementation science literature. The researcher viewed the groups as similar in some aspects to the 'implementation teams' described in the literature. The groups were representative of the practitioners and the system in which they operated. They provided an enabling context for the research i.e., the groups understood the purpose of the research; the groups engaged key leaders in the authority; they promoted a commitment to learning and intentional improvement: the liaison with the groups ensured an alignment in the research to local and national policy and procedures.

Along with the implementation science research, the adult learning academic research significantly informed the development and administration of the semi-structured interviews in Study 2 (Chapter 5), the development of the training programme in Study 3 (Chapter 6), and the establishment of an intervention group and collaborative inquiry in Study 4 (Chapter 9).

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 Context

This research study is undertaken within a large, diverse local authority in Scotland. Within the authority, the geographical organisational structure for children's services is based on a locality model, with 4 localities, three urban and one rural.

3.1.2 Research Paradigm

Ontological and epistemological assumptions from critical realism (Bhaskar, 1989; Robson, 2011, p. 30; Woolfson, 2011, pp. 20-21) influenced the decisions on research design and methodology. In the theoretical understandings of critical realism, an assumption is made of the existence of an ultimate reality, but the way reality can be accessed and analysed is influenced by language, cultural forces and social and political agendas.

Understandings from a critical realist paradigm influenced the decision to explore the research questions by seeking real-life contextual understandings from participants. The decision was made to take an ethological perspective and undertake the majority of the research activity in naturally occurring contexts. Willig (2013, p. 40) talks of how the researcher in a critical realist paradigm is interrogating the data to inform the researcher about the social and psychological processes that take place in a particular situation. Referring to critical realist assumptions, Willig (2013) comments that the "world is a complex place where even general laws or common patterns of experience or behaviour are never expressed in predictable or uniform ways" (p. 110). Kelly et al., (2016) talk of the usefulness of critical realism in an educational context in "analysing and acting in the complexity of social and educational contexts" (p. 21). The authors go on to argue "critical realism guides and facilitates highly reasoned, reflective and coherent actions in bringing about positive change" (p. 22).

The qualitative methodology was strongly influenced by an emic perspective, where data was gathered in a subjective way from within the social context of the participants i.e., an insider's view of reality.

An overview of the research programme is outlined in Figure 1 below and the research design which was informed by the critical realist paradigm is outlined in Figure 2.

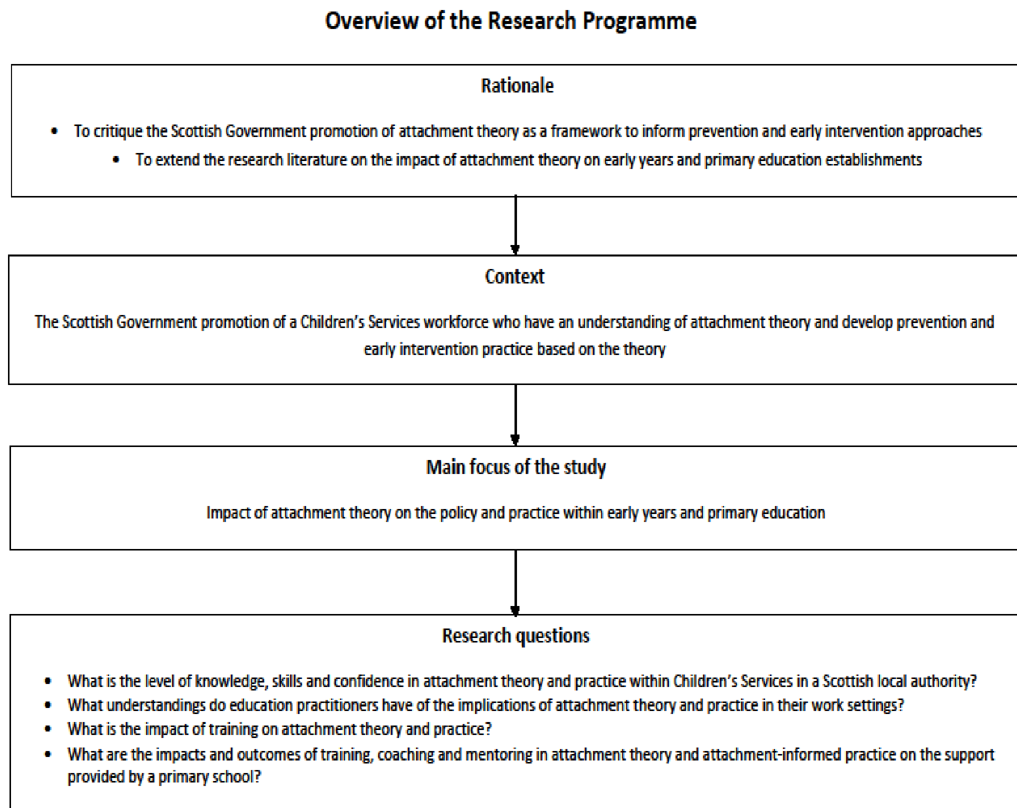


Figure 2: Overview of research programme.

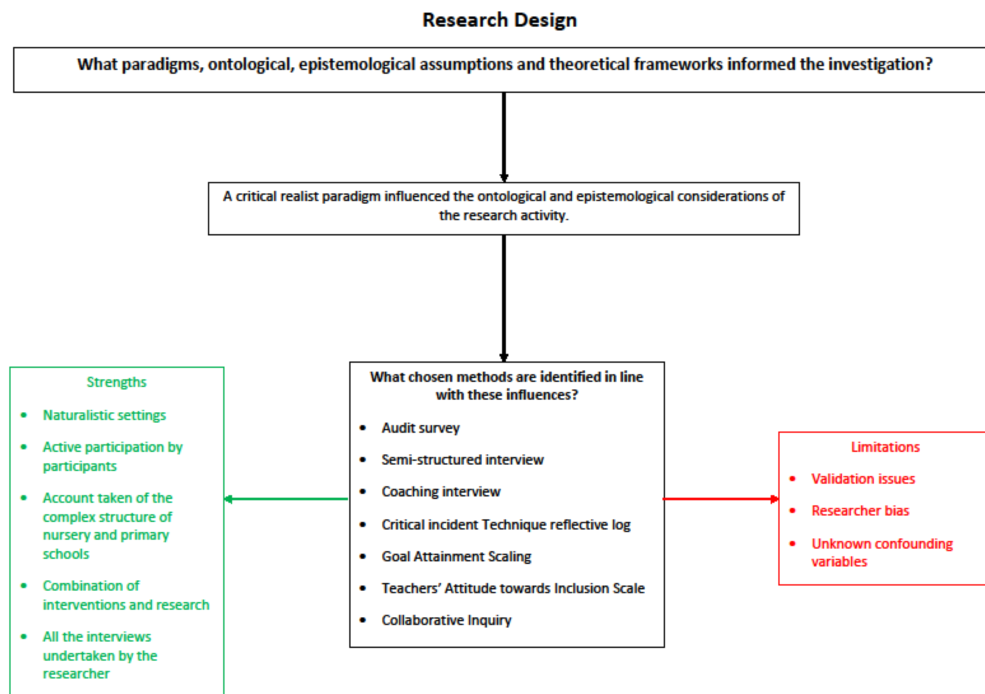


Figure 3: Research design.

3.1.3 Methods of Gathering and Analysing Data

A decision to undertake a mixed methods approach of quantitative and qualitative methods was seen as appropriate by the researcher. Caruth (2013) proposes that "mixing the methods can complement each other, offer richer insights, and result in more questions of interest for future studies" (p. 113). Furthermore, opportunities become available through mixed methods for triangulation of data. The research literature would indicate that mixing quantitative and qualitative methods (Greenwood & Terry, 2012; Venkatesh et al., 2013) maximises the strengths in both approaches while minimising weaknesses. Tashakkori & Teddlie (2009) promote the use of mixed methods to answer research questions "in the most effective manner" (p. 3).

The volume of data, and wide range of settings from which data would be generated in this research programme, was taken into account in exploring the most appropriate research design and the method to analyse the qualitative data. A range of qualitative approaches were considered including Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2006),

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Smith, 1996; Smith et al., 2009) and Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun & Clarke, 2006). All had elements which were underpinned by the chosen epistemological approach, such as the active role of the researcher, the interactive method of data collection, and the ability for the research journey to be recursive rather than linear. However, after consideration, the Braun and Clarke approach to thematic analysis was identified as the most helpful tool for this research programme given there was no aim to produce a theory from the data unlike grounded theory (Pidgeon & Henwood, 1997), and due to:

- its flexibility in managing a vast amount of data
- its usefulness in identifying patterns of meaning across a wide data set
- its use in an analysis which informs policy development
- its selection of participants representing a population rather than a perspective (Malhotra, 2015)

The possible advantages of Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) are acknowledged by the researcher, especially for a large data set. However, after initially exploring NVivo, the researcher on this occasion decided not to use computer software, partly due to the time needed to master using it effectively, and due to the risk of distancing the researcher from the process, a point also made by Braun and Clarke (2013, p. 219).

The following summary is provided to illustrate the detail of the research design outlined above, in the context of the research questions.

Research question 1: What is the current level of knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice within children's services in a Scottish local authority?

To answer this research question, a decision was made to undertake an exploratory audit and use a questionnaire as the instrument to complete the audit. The research question, available resources, and the target population informed the development of the audit. The aim was to view the subject area "comprehensively and in detail" (Denscombe, 2017, p. 472) and capture a "panoramic view" (p. 476) by collecting

reliable and valid data from a representative sample of children's services practitioners. This facilitated the gathering of multi-agency participants' self-report on their views and experiences. As Ho (2017) notes, "participants are generally familiar with this survey format and do not require substantial assistance when the questions are written at an appropriate reading level" (p. 677). A questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale was developed, and in Study 1 (Chapter 4), following Byrne (2010, p. 148), the data are treated as an equal interval scale.

The audit was designed in a way that enabled opportunities for descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of Likert scale responses, based on hypothesis testing of predicted outcomes. This method was time-efficient given the high numbers of practitioners who could potentially complete the questionnaire (Gillham, 2007; Robson, 2011). After the researcher drafted the questionnaire, consultation with a reference group of children's services operational managers (Chapter 1: 1.2) informed the final choice of items, taking into account the need for face, content, internal and external validity (Robson, 2011).

Gillham (2007) highlights the need to explore what lies behind the responses. To address this need, opportunities for additional comment were included in the questionnaire which allowed children's services practitioners to elaborate on the reasons for their audit responses. This provided data which could be used to explore whether there was evidence of shared views of attachment theory in the children's services practitioners. The audit also provided the opportunity to gather qualitative data which could be used to inform the questions used in Study 2 of semi-structured interviews with education practitioners.

Research question 2: What understandings do education practitioners have of the implications of attachment theory and practice in their work settings?

To answer this research question, the semi-structured interview method (Gillham, 2000; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003) was identified as an effective method to gather rich data and gain deeper insight than understandings generated by the researcher in the audit responses from Study 1. As with the qualitative data from Study 1, analysis was

informed by the approach by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013). After initial coding and ongoing refinement of codes, themes were generated by the researcher as analytic outputs.

Research question 3: What is the impact of training on attachment theory and practice?

The literature on adult learning informed the development and content of the training programme which was developed for Study 3. The researcher's own experience of developing and delivering training also informed the training programme. Further influences included the researcher's collaboration with the Service Development Consultancy Lead in the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS), as well as the training slides from Bath Spa University which were available at the time of the researcher's development of the training programme (www.bathspa.ac.uk/projects/attachment-aware-schools/).

Research question 4: What are the impacts and outcomes of training, coaching and mentoring in attachment theory and attachment-informed practice on the support provided by a primary school?

In exploring impact and outcomes, the definitions used by Education Scotland are instructive (2007). The term 'outcome' in this research programme refers to results which are measurable and mostly statistical. It is helpful to note that "significant changes in measurable outcomes … may take longer to become apparent" (p. 11) even when improvements are reported, e.g. by staff or young people. 'Impact' in this research is used to describe both direct and indirect results and are mostly qualitative. Evidence of impact can include direct observation, case studies, document analysis, and feedback from participants.

Given the critical realist paradigm influencing methodological decisions, to answer this research question, an exploration was undertaken within a natural setting, where participants would have an active role in the research activity. In dialogue with the Director of Education within the authority, a primary school with a nursery class was identified (school A) which had included the target of exploring attachment theory in

their school improvement plan. In order to have the opportunity to investigate the impact of coaching and mentoring following training, a second primary school (school B) was identified which would receive training only. The school was identified given the previous and current head teachers of school B had been exploring how to access attachment awareness raising training for their staff. School B was located in the same geographical locality as school A, also had a nursery class and was situated in a catchment area with similar indicators of deprivation, based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) (Scottish Government, 2006). The Scottish Government uses SIMD to identify areas of multiple deprivation in Scotland and the findings from this research study could provide learning to schools in Scotland with similar SIMD. However, all schools face similar challenges in the implementation of the curriculum whilst supporting children with additional support needs, and consideration would be given when exploring conclusions whether the key elements of this study could be generalised to all schools.

Educational practitioners in schools A and B received training in attachment theory and practice. Thereafter, the researcher worked with a group of staff from school A (named the intervention group) over the course of a school year, using approaches informed by case study methodology. Denscombe (2017) comments on the case study approach that, “the aim is to illuminate the general by looking at the particular.” (p. 73). The researcher also made use of the understandings of the collaborative enquiry approach (Donohoo, 2013).

Coaching and mentoring was provided by the researcher, informed by the adult learning framework developed by Joyce and Showers (2002) and the solution focused coaching model developed by Iveson, George and Ratner (2012). The literature on Implementation Science recommends the use of coaching to improve practice. They talk of coaching as grounded in inquiry, sustained, connected to and derived from teachers’ work with their students, and tied explicitly to improving Practice (Kelly & Perkins, 2012, p. 375).

Video recordings and audio transcripts were made of the intervention group meetings, and thematic analysis used to identity patterns of meaning. Thematic analysis was also used to identity patterns of meaning in the 1:1 meetings which were audio transcribed.

The Critical Incident Technique (CIT) was used to inform the development of a critical incident log completed by each member of the intervention group. With roots in industrial and organisational psychology, the CIT originally developed by Flanagan (1954), has been used as a qualitative tool in a diverse range of settings. It has been useful for exploring events or behaviours and eliciting the successful and unsuccessful aspects of a situation, and the contributing factors leading to success or failure. Butterfield et al. (2005) highlight the wide use of CIT across communications (Query Jr & Wright, 2003), nursing (Kemppainen et al., 1998), job analysis (Stitt-Gohdes et al., 2000), counselling (McCormick, 1997), education (Le Mare & Sohbat, 2002), medicine (Humphery & Nazareth, 2001), marketing (Derbaix & Vanhamme, 2003), organizational learning (Ellinger & Bostrom, 2002), performance appraisal (Evans, 1994), psychology (Cerna, 2000) and social work (Mills & Vine, 1990).

Flanagan (1954) described five major steps in the use of CIT: (a) defining the aims of the activity being studied; (b) planning and setting specifications; (c) data collection; (d) data analysis; and (e) data interpretation. However, he stressed that it "does not consist of a single rigid set of rules governing such data collection. Rather it should be thought of as a flexible set of principles that must be modified and adapted to meet the specific situation at hand" (p. 335). This flexibility explains the description of the tool as having an "ubiquitous presence" in qualitative research, as an "effective, exploratory and investigative tool" (Butterfield et al., 2005, p. 475). The flexibility extends to who observes and records. According to Flanagan (1954), this can be experts in the field, supervisors, consumers of the product or service, or individuals performing the activity.

As use of the CIT has developed over the decades, research has expanded the types of critical incident typically used and this has included opinions, beliefs, thoughts

and feelings that contributed to a critical incident (Cheek et al., 1997; Ellinger & Bostrom, 2002).

Andreou et al., (2015) used the CIT in an education setting to examine support for behavioural interventions through semi-structured interviews with various employees in an American school. The authors also cite several papers that have used the CIT in education settings, examining support for behavioural interventions (McIntosh et al., 2015), teacher collaboration (Kain, 1997) and teacher job satisfaction (Engelking, 1986).

The two key questions from Flanagan's original approach (1954) were discussed with the intervention group i.e., (1) what is the objective of the activity; and (2) what is the practitioner who engages in the activity expected to accomplish? A format for the critical incident reflective log was developed collaboratively in the intervention group meetings with the researcher, making use of the format already drafted by the researcher to explore change in practitioner behaviour following the training programme. Flanagan proposed four ways of obtaining data from critical incidents: (1) individual interviews; (2) group interviews; (3) questionnaires; and (4) record forms. The use of record forms completed by practitioners in the intervention group was chosen by the researcher as a cost-effective method to gather data. Furthermore, this also had the aim of promoting meaningful practitioner self-reflection.

Using the data collected, the researcher was able to undertake an analysis and critique of change in the reported practice of the intervention group, with opportunities for clarification with participants during 1:1 coaching discussions with the researcher.

The head teacher in school B identified volunteers to complete CIT reflective logs during the academic year following the training, during the time when coaching and mentoring was being provided to school A. This provided opportunities for comparison, and the exploration of differences which could be attributable to the impact of coaching and mentoring.

A multi-method approach was taken to triangulate the data on outcomes. Following the identification of three case studies, chosen by the intervention group in collaboration with the researcher, qualitative data was gathered during the intervention group meetings. The progress of these children was discussed during the meetings from the perspective of applying attachment-informed practice and reflecting on outcomes.

A quantitative method was also adopted to explore outcomes which could be linked to attachment-informed practice. A small-scale study using Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) was chosen because of its use as a measurement of the effectiveness of an intervention at the level of the individual. Standardised measures to assess outcomes were rejected in favour of comprehensive assessment at the individual level, especially where the needs of the children were challenging and where interventions were tailored specifically to each individual (Ruble et al., 2012). GAS was first introduced by Kiresuk and Sherman (1968) for assessing outcomes in mental health settings. It has since been modified and applied to numerous areas, in particular clinical rehabilitation Services (Krasny-Pacini et al., 2013; Turner-Stokes & Williams, 2010), and for children with highly complex needs in conductive education settings (MacKay & Lundie, 1998; MacKay et al., 1993) and neuropediatric units (Vroland-Nordstrand et al., 2016). From 2000, there has been an increase in exploring its usefulness in mainstream and special education settings (Kiresuk et al., 1994; Stobie et al., 2005). This is especially in regard to emotional and behavioural issues, where Coffee and Ray-Subramanian (2009) argue GAS offers “the specificity and sensitivity necessary for monitoring individual students’ behavioural goals”.

The research literature indicates that the benefits of weighting the goals are inconclusive, and Turner-Stokes (2009) highlights weighting can “in some circumstances, lead to a perverse bias” and that “it is simpler for many purposes, to use unweighted scores in the calculation” (p. 367).

No young people were involved as direct participants in this study. However, they were to be involved in GAS, led by their class teacher. To address the issues:

- of agreement between the school and parent or carer for the pupils to take part in GAS
- of making sure the pupil's voice was heard

the following was undertaken:

- the class teacher discussed with the parent or carer about the intervention which was being piloted by the school to support the pupil, and agreement was sought for the pupil to be involved
- each class teacher of the pupils involved in GAS gave an explanation to the pupil about setting goals and monitoring progress, and explained it was a method the school was using to find out if it could help the pupils in the school. Agreement was sought by the class teacher from the pupil to try this method and an emphasis was put on the collaboration of the pupil and teacher in setting the goals and in meeting regularly to discuss progress.

To address research question 4, a further quantitative method was used. Views of inclusion was considered a relevant area to explore with regard to any differences which could be attributed to the understanding of children's services behavior gained from training, coaching and mentoring in attachment-informed practice. The decision to focus on views of inclusion was influenced by the public and professional dialogue on the inclusion of vulnerable children. The national and international prominence of inclusion (Boyle, 2009; Boyle & Topping, 2012) was acknowledged as well as the promotion of inclusion in Scottish education legislation and policy; Standards in Scotland's Schools, etc. Act 2000; The Equality Act 2010; Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004. Avramidis et al. (2000) talk of the importance of professional attitudes in successful inclusion and they locate the inclusion discussion "in a social-ethical, discourse which is strongly focused on values" (p. 191).

The instrument used to explore the views of education practitioners was the revised Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusion Scale (TAIS) (Monsen, Ewing, & Boyle, 2014)

based on Larrivee and Cook's Opinions Relative to Mainstreaming Scale (ORMS) (1979). Monsen et al., describe TAIS as a "robust and easily administered measure of teacher attitude to inclusion" (p. 70). The authors further report moderate to good reliability for the four components of the scale: (i) problems of inclusion of additional support needs (ASN) children in mainstream classes; (ii) social benefits for all of the inclusion of ASN pupils in mainstream classes; (iii) implications of inclusion for teaching practice; and (iv) implications for addressing the needs of children with ASN.

The TAIS was distributed to all staff in school A and school B, which allowed statistical analysis and inferences by comparing the responses from:

- the intervention group in school A
- the non-intervention group staff in school A
- the staff in school B

To explore impact on policy and procedure, an analysis was undertaken by the researcher of relevant school documents such as the school handbook and the school policy on behaviour management, comparing policy and procedural documents pre-training, coaching and mentoring with any changes following the collaborative inquiry.

3.2 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations were paramount throughout the research (British Educational Research Association, 2011) and University of Strathclyde ethical approval was granted for the research programme (Appendix 1).

Willig (2013) talks of the ethical challenges of a critical realist approach and highlights the example of interviews with participants which "may draw attention to beliefs and values whose precise content and implications the participant had been largely unaware of" (p. 109). The researcher therefore was alert and sensitive to these concerns.

Participants involved in all four research studies were provided with written information on the aims of the research programme and all were asked to complete a consent form. The consent form included a clear message that they could withdraw from the research programme at any point. All participants also received an assurance in writing that their data would be anonymised and that only the researcher would have access to the data.

3.3 RESEARCHER REFLECTION AND REFLEXIVITY

From the start of this research study a commitment was made by the researcher to adopt a reflective and reflexive attitude and to critically reflect on the impact of both the researcher's current role in the local authority, and past experience in the field of applied psychology. A wide range of experience as a case psychologist and principal psychologist provided the researcher with opportunity to develop interviewing and listening skills, including the ability to create a safe setting, to enable clients and team members to reflect and talk openly (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), and to utilise effective ways to keep the discussion going. These key skills importantly "avoid questioning which dampens the discourse" (Qu & Dumay, 2011, p. 248), and as Miles and Huberman (1994) describe it, the skill "to draw people out and the ability to ward off premature closure" (p. 38).

Having been involved at a senior level of children's services planning and development in the local authority, whilst continuing to carry a caseload, also helped to establish the researcher's credibility. Furthermore, the researcher's current and historical professional experience in the local authority contributed to knowledge and a shared understanding, with participants, of the legislative and practical environment in which the education practitioners worked. It was hoped this would help avoid misunderstandings and inaccurate assumptions.

Within the local authority, the researcher was linked with a wide range of developments and resources used across early years and primary schools. This included an early years framework to promote attachment and resilience, and a programme for parents and carers to promote attachment-informed care. In addition,

the researcher had led on the development of a bereavement and loss programme for 8-14 year olds. An associated training programme for group facilitators was also developed to extend their knowledge and skill base. This programme included an introductory video shown regularly across early years and primary establishments at training sessions and continuing professional developments seminars, where the researcher described the development of the programme and how it could be used to support children and young people. It can be argued therefore that participants viewed the researcher as an experienced psychologist and researcher, not just as a senior manager. The researcher hoped this would mitigate any power imbalance and minimise fears in practitioners that their practice was being assessed.

However, the researcher was aware of the need to carefully consider any potential coercion of participants to provide consent to be part of the research programme. The researcher ensured clarity on the purpose of the research and that there were no rewards associated with taking part. The researcher provided reassurance in writing within the research information and consent forms that participants could withdraw consent at any point after the research commenced, without providing a reason.

Furthermore, to directly address any hesitancy on the part of the participants to talk openly with someone at a senior level within the authority, the researcher planned to encourage a sense of the interview as a collaborative discussion, or what Newton (2010) calls “a natural exploratory conversation” (p. 7).

However, there were significant challenges in terms of unconscious bias which were recognised by the researcher (Gillham, 2000; Ritchie et al., 2013; Silverman, 2017; Willig, 2012). Bolton (2014) talks of the need in reflexive practice to find “strategies to question our own attitudes, theories-in-use, values, assumptions, prejudices and habitual actions; to understand our complex roles in relation to others” (p. 7). As Bolton comments, “this is complex artistry, working out how our presence influences knowledge and actions” (p. 7).

CHAPTER 4: AN AUDIT OF THE KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND CONFIDENCE IN ATTACHMENT THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES WORKFORCE IN LOCAL AUTHORITY A *(STUDY 1)*

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses the first research question of the thesis: What is the current level of knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice within children's services in a Scottish local authority? Ethical approval was granted for this study by the University of Strathclyde ethics committee.

In previous chapters, relevant aspects of the United Kingdom and Scottish Government policy context for children's services have been highlighted. Scottish government documents are now promoting attachment theory and skilled attachment-informed practice as important in informing effective prevention and early intervention approaches with vulnerable children and families.

The high profile policy 'Getting it right for every child' policy (GIRFEC) (Scottish Executive, 2006), discussed in Chapter 1, continues to govern the practices of all agencies working with children and young people. For vulnerable children in Scotland, GIRFEC requires the establishment of a multi-agency team around the child who are tasked to work collaboratively to intervene appropriately and timeously with vulnerable children and families.

In considering hypotheses, the researcher referred to the findings of the group of professionals from Scottish Attachment in Action who in collaboration with the Centre for Excellence for looked after children in Scotland (CELCIS), were commissioned by the Scottish Government (chapter 1, p.23), to "map attachment training and attachment-focused practice in Scotland" (Furnivall et al., 2012, p. 7). As part of the mapping exercise, an investigation was undertaken of qualifying courses in Scotland across children's services. There were examples of good

practice. Findings indicated that attachment theory underpinned teaching in nursing courses with a child development focus and that attachment theory was likely to have an increasing focus on early years education and childcare training. However, the authors of the report at that time found that "with the exception of social work, there was little evidence of a systematic focus on attachment" (p. 2).

At the same time as this exercise was commissioned, the Scottish Government also launched the Early Years Collaborative (Chapter 1: 1.1) and in seeking information on hypotheses on which to deliberate, the researcher investigated available Scottish government literature on this multi-agency improvement programme aimed at providing the best support for children and families. Evidence indicated attachment theory was being promoted to the early years workforce through the work of this collaborative. Indications were also available on the impact of the collaborative on the development of resources and continuing professional development for health practitioners https://www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/media/x4lmfskd/final_imh_interactive_pdf__3_.pdf.

In respect of education practitioners (i.e., early years practitioners, early years teachers, primary teachers and secondary teachers), the findings provided the researcher with an indication that in general, attachment theory and practice was:

- an element in the initial training and continuing professional development of early years practitioners
- an optional module for primary teachers
- not included in the core course materials for secondary teachers

In the Scottish education system, teachers who work within additional support needs (ASN) establishments, are either primary or secondary trained and many, but not all, have attended further professional training to understand the needs of children with additional support needs. Such courses often include an awareness of attachment theory, and this research gave an opportunity to explore whether ASN practitioners had more understanding of the subject than colleagues who had not undertaken such training.

Community learning and development (CLD) officers were employed within the authority's education resources to work directly with children and young people, based within a service entitled 'Youth Learning'. Some CLD officers, also referred to as youth workers, are based in schools and have a range of job and service titles across the UK (Smith, 2003; YouthLink Scotland, 2021). The researcher found that there were many routes to the Youth Learning posts within the local authority where this research programme was based, and it was not possible to establish a clear view of opportunities for this group to gain awareness or training in attachment theory within an initial training setting.

4.2 AIMS AND RATIONALE

The researcher identified that the usefulness of obtaining base-line data on the knowledge skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice from a wide range of the children's services workforce would:

- provide insight into the impact of initial professional training on attachment theory and practice
- provide context for inferences of the knowledge, skills and confidence of education practitioners in the multi-agency forum
- enable comparisons to be made between the organisations for whom the Scottish government expect a common vision and practice
- identify gaps which could be addressed by the development of a training programme for education practitioners
- address the lack of existing published data relating to the use of attachment theory within the multi-agency context

4.3 METHOD

4.3.1 Development of an Audit Questionnaire

The challenges and limitations of questionnaire methods (Gillham, 2007; Robson, 2011) were considered, such as:

- the challenge of motivating respondents

- low response rates
- the difficulty of correcting misunderstandings
- the problems of data quality

However, a well-designed audit questionnaire, which provides opportunities for both self-report and written comment, was thought to be a useful tool to gather relevant data to address the research question (Gillham, 2007). To minimise socially desirable responses, the audit was anonymous (Paulhus, 1984), although questions relating to gender, length of experience and professional workforce were included.

To avoid 'response fatigue' (Egleston et al., 2011), the audit was divided into three main sections. Furthermore, an explanation of the research was included at the start of the questionnaire to avoid participants having to leave the questionnaire site in order to double check the purpose of the research programme (Gillham, 2007).

Development of audit items began with an exploration of the Scottish Government context and in particular the 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' (2012b) which promotes an understanding of attachment theory. This influenced the choice of items which explored the importance practitioners gave to attachment theory and practice, and their views on its relevance when working with vulnerable children and families.

The findings of adult learning theorists such as Joyce and Showers (2002) also influenced items, in particular ensuring the difference between theory and practice was highlighted.

To test the relevance of the items to workplace agendas, such as GIRFEC, aimed at supporting vulnerable children and families, the researcher established a multi-agency reference group, with representatives from managers in education, social work, and health. Constructive feedback from the consultation with the reference group led to improvement in the final wording of items.

4.3.2 Development of Items and Sections

In another attempt to avoid 'response fatigue' (Egleston et al., 2011), but also to highlight the difference between knowledge and practice, audit items were organised into 4 sections. The organisation of sections also made analysis using SPSS more straightforward.

Section 1 included items to gather demographic information.

Section 2 explored participants' views of the importance for practitioners to have: an understanding of attachment theory when supporting children and families (item 2.1); skills in attachment-informed practice to work effectively with children and families (item 2.2); opportunities to reflect on their attachment history and attachment style (item 2.3).

Section 3 provided opportunities to gather data on what training and support opportunities had been available to participants on attachment theory (item 3.1) and attachment-informed practice (item 3.2) and including opportunities to reflect on their attachment history and attachment style (item 3.3). Participants could indicate from a range of options which included:

- on their initial training course
- continuing professional development (CPD) awareness-raising
- in supervision in the workplace
- in depth CPD in their organisation
- personal reading/professional membership of groups

An option was included for participants to indicate if they had not had the opportunity to learn about attachment theory or attachment-informed practice.

Section 4 focused on items related to the views of practitioners on the practical applications of the theory to their work and explored their self-reported views on whether they had: knowledge of attachment-informed practice (item 4.1);

opportunities to develop their skills (item 4.2); confidence in applying the theory (item 4.3); and confidence in using attachment-informed practice (item 4.4). Participants were also asked to consider whether the multi-agency group around the child had: a shared understanding on the importance of attachment when planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families (item 4.5(i)); and a shared language when planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families (item 4.5(ii)). Participants were also asked how much they regarded their own organisation actively promoted: an understanding of attachment theory in the day-to-day work with children and families (item 4.6) and attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day work with children and families (item 4.7).

Figure 3 below highlights the key influences which affected the development of the audit questionnaire, summarises the organisational elements of the items, and outlines the consultation and pilot phases. Tables 6 and 7 thereafter provide detail on what informed the items within each section.

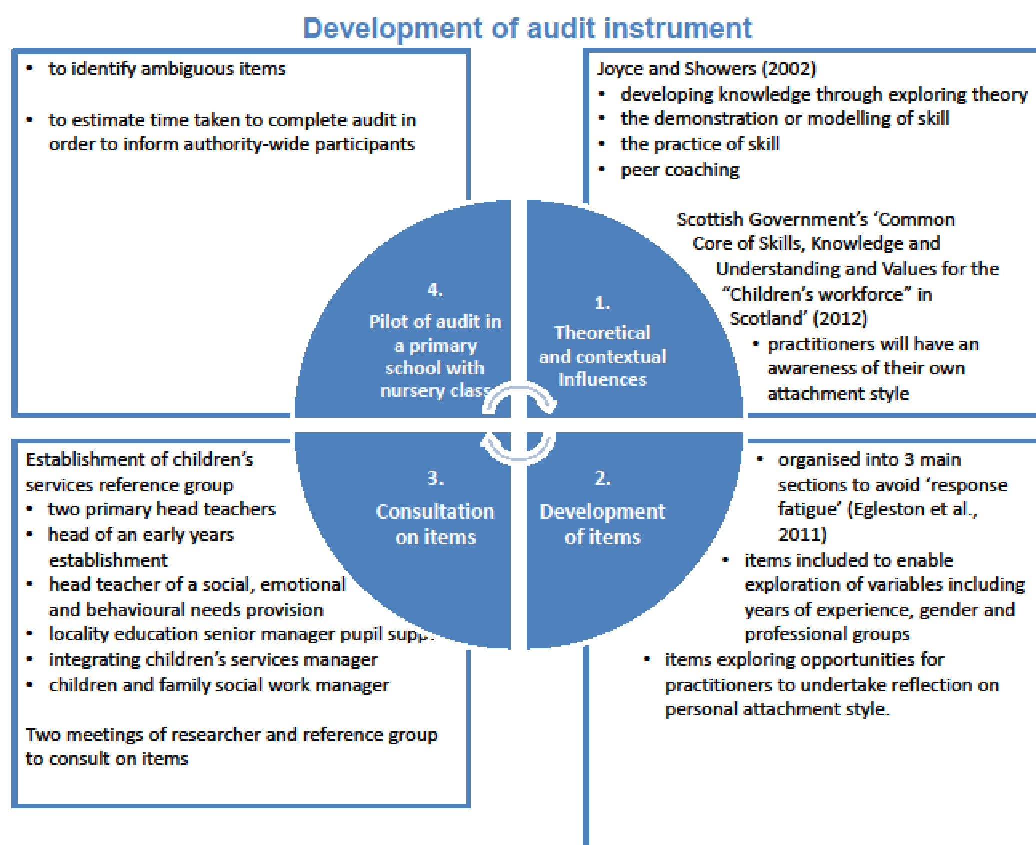


Figure 4: Development of audit questionnaire.

Table 6: Development of sections 2, 3 and 4.

Section	Informed by
• Attachment Theory • Training • Practice: application in your work	• Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Kearsley (2009) 'Explorations in Learning and Instruction: The Theory Into Practice' • Knowles (1984) 'Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult education' • Knowles et al. (2011) 'The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic In Adult Education And Human Resource Development' 7th Edition

Table 7: Development of items.

Item	Description	Informed by
2.1	Important for practitioners to have an understanding of attachment theory when supporting children and families	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2012) 'Attachment Matters for All: An Attachment Mapping Exercise for Children's Services' • Scottish Government (2012d) 'Early Years Collaborative'
2.2	Important for practitioners to have skills in attachment-informed practice to work effectively with children and families	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2012) 'Attachment Matters for All: An Attachment Mapping Exercise for Children's services' • Scottish Government (2012d) 'Early Years Collaborative'
2.3	Important for practitioners to have reflected on their own attachment history and attachment style	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2014a) 'Building

		the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare'
3.1	How/where practitioners learned about attachment theory?	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2012) 'Attachment Matters for All: An Attachment Mapping Exercise for Children's Services' • Scottish Government (2012d) 'Early Years Collaborative' • Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Knowles (1984)'Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult education'
3.2	How/where practitioners learned about attachment-informed practice?	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2012) 'Attachment Matters for All: An Attachment Mapping Exercise for Children's Services' • Scottish Government (2012d) 'Early Years Collaborative' • Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Knowles (1984) 'Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult education'
3.3	How/where practitioners had opportunities to reflect on their own attachment history and attachment style	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2014a) 'Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare' • Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Knowles (1984) 'Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult education'
4.1	Participants' self-reported knowledge of	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and

	attachment-informed practice	Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Knowles (1984) 'Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult education' • Kearsley (2009) 'Explorations in Learning and Instruction: The Theory Into Practice'
4.2	Participants' self-reported opportunities to develop their skills	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Knowles (1984) 'Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult education' • Kearsley (2009) 'Explorations in Learning and Instruction: The Theory Into Practice'
4.3	Participants' self-reported confidence in applying the theory	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2012d) 'Early Years Collaborative' • Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Kearsley (2009) 'Explorations in Learning and Instruction: The Theory Into Practice'
4.4	Participants' self-reported confidence in using attachment-informed practice	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2012d) 'Early Years Collaborative' • Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Kearsley (2009) 'Explorations in Learning and Instruction: The Theory Into Practice'

4.5(i)	Participants' views of shared understanding in the multi-agency group planning	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland'
4.5(ii)	Participants' views of shared language in the multi-agency group planning	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland'
4.6	Participants' organisation actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory	• Scottish Government (2012b) 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' • Scottish Government (2012) 'Attachment Matters for All: An Attachment Mapping Exercise for Children's Services' • Scottish Government (2014a) 'Building the Ambition: National Practice Guidance on Early Learning and Childcare'
4.7	Participants' organisation actively promotes attachment-informed practice	• Joyce and Showers (2002) 'Student achievement through staff development' • Knowles (1984) 'Andragogy in action: Applying modern principles of adult education' • Kearsley (2009) 'Explorations in Learning and Instruction: The Theory Into Practice' • Knowles et al. (2011) 'The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic In Adult Education And Human Resource Development' 7th Edition

Participants were asked to rate each question in sections 2 and 4 on a 5-point Likert scale from strongly agree; agree; undecided; disagree; to strongly disagree.

Throughout the audit, options were given to participants to add comments and elaborate on their responses which would provide data for the researcher to analyse. Triangulation with the quantitative data findings would be explored as well as a search for understandings and explanations of the Likert scale responses.

4.3.4 Procedure

The researcher sought an opportunity to outline the research proposals to the local authority Children's Services Strategy Group, attended by education, NHS, social work, voluntary sector and Police Scotland management representatives. It was agreed that research exploring the knowledge base of children's services practitioners was of significant importance, given that the children's services plan included the aim of embedding attachment-informed practice (South Lanarkshire Council, 2012-18). The researcher highlighted the main focus of the research programme would be on education practitioners for pragmatic reasons, but that the initial exploration would include children's services practitioners, in order to provide context and meaning to the research study.

Following a similar meeting with the Director of Education and the education management team (EMT), permission was given for the research to be undertaken within education resources.

After a meeting with the head of service in social work, a similar agreement was reached.

For permission to be granted to involve health visitors in the audit study, application had to be made to NHS Lanark research department. This proved a lengthy process, but permission was granted.

The representative of the voluntary sector on the Children's Services Strategy Group agreed to voluntary sector practitioners participating in the research. The representative from Police Scotland on the group agreed to take the research request to a more senior officer. The role of community police in early intervention with children and young people, and their collaboration with social work practitioners and schools, had influenced the researcher in this choice.

4.3.5 Sampling and Recruitment of Participants

As the focus of the research is on attachment theory and praxis (Boyle & King, 2021), the researcher made the decision that the recruitment selection would involve children's services practitioners who work predominantly with children and families directly. It was acknowledged however that managers and heads of establishments have a significant role with regards to policy and implementation, and the researcher planned to be alert to involvement of heads of establishments, as appropriate, in a future study within the research programme (Chapters 7, 8 and 9).

Child and family social workers were identified by the researcher as practitioners to be included. Within education, teachers, support assistants and members of the education Youth Learning service were also identified to be invited to participate. Within the GIRFEC context (Scottish Executive, 2006), the NHS practitioner most commonly involved in joint assessment and planning work with education practitioners is the health visitor. For this reason, health visitors were identified as the NHS participants to be included. A range of practitioners from the voluntary sector, (e.g., Barnardo's Scotland and Women's Aid), work directly with children within the local authority, and they were considered as relevant practitioners.

The aims of the research programme and the purpose of the audit were outlined by the researcher in various management meetings which included meetings of NHS health visitor team leaders, social work fieldwork managers, and at termly locality meetings of head teachers.

In all meetings the researcher received a positive response to the relevance of the research programme to their organisation, but it was noticeable that health visitor team leaders expressed considerable concern about time issues within their teams. Health visitor team leaders highlighted that the role and workload of health visitors was under review at the time of the discussion, with a consideration being made to a return of the 27-30-month assessment (Scottish Government, 2012e). They reported that staff were currently being asked via email, both from the government and NHS, to provide data relating to this agenda. This was within the context of staff also

expressing concern to their team leaders about the number of questionnaires they had been asked to complete previously as part of Scottish Government initiatives which included Best Possible Start Programme (2012) and Family Nurse Partnerships (2015).

However, health visitor team leaders also indicated during the meeting that they viewed attachment theory and practice as highly relevant to the work of health visitors and they were still keen to distribute the invitation to complete the audit. They stressed however that given the context it would be inappropriate for them to instruct staff teams to do so. The researcher discussed with health visitor team leaders at the meeting as to whether a focus group could be considered. Health visitor team leaders recommended that the audit would be the best vehicle as releasing staff to attend a focus group would be even more of challenge given current time constraints for health visitors.

In the meeting with social work managers, a similar theme was raised about staff complaining that they had insufficient time to read emails relating to case work. Managers however expressed the view that there seemed no common language or common understandings of attachment theory and practice among children's services workforce, and that social work resources would benefit from the analysis of the audit data given this context. Managers indicated that they would strongly encourage the social work practitioners to complete the online questionnaire.

In the four locality meetings with head teachers, the researcher received a similar view of the usefulness of the research programme to that of social work, viewing the understandings that could emerge from the analysis as helping to inform decisions on training.

There was no occasion when voluntary sector leads came together as a group and no opportunity for the researcher to speak face to face with key managers within the voluntary organisations. The researcher had a useful meeting with the voluntary sector representative on the strategy group to explain the research programme. The

representative reported that attachment theory was rarely mentioned in any voluntary sector reports and that the opportunity to highlight the theory to colleagues within the sector was welcomed.

With regards to Police Scotland, no progress was made within the researcher's time scale on the issue of permission from a senior officer. The dialogue with the Police Scotland representative on the strategy group indicated there was interest in the audit questionnaire, but it was highlighted that Police Scotland would need considerably more time for such a request to be processed through relevant structures within the organisation.

As an encouragement to education practitioners to complete the audit, the education resources operations manager included an alert in the personnel/employee news section of the weekly Education Newsletter. Practitioners were notified to expect the email invitation from the researcher to participate in the audit and that emerging learning from the research would be shared across the authority and nationally.

4.3.6 Administration of Audit

The local authority regularly used the Survey Needs Analysis Programme (SNAP) (2010-2018) to collect data via questionnaires, and this method proved a no cost tool for the administration of the audit. Practitioners would access the audit via the SNAP weblink, which was included in the email invitation.

In order to identify ambiguous items and also to estimate time taken to complete the audit, a pilot of the audit was undertaken by all staff in school B. It was administered electronically and completed by management and frontline practitioners. Participants reported no concerns about ambiguous items or difficulties understanding instructions. Participants took on average 20 minutes to complete the audit.

For the full administration stage of the audit, a lack of available global email address lists meant that a personal invitation from the researcher could not be made directly to children's services practitioners. The invitation was instead sent directly to

managers and heads of establishment to be forwarded to the frontline practitioners within education resources, social work resources and NHS Lanarkshire to distribute to their teams. The voluntary sector representative who was best placed to distribute the invitation to complete the audit, did not have access to a total number of the workforce and had no managerial role with the range of voluntary organisations within the authority. However, email addresses for the organisations were available and the representative agreed to distribute the email invitation from the researcher.

4.4 HYPOTHESES

Based on the research question of this study, and to guide data collection, the researcher formulated a number of hypotheses.

4.4.1 Children's Services

Hypotheses were developed for children's services practitioners in health, social work and education based on considerations of the findings outlined above.

- If initial professional training on attachment theory and practice was effective, a higher percentage of the total number of health and social work practitioners would respond to the invitation to complete the audit than education practitioners, as they were more aware of the relevance of the theory to their daily work
- If initial professional training on attachment theory and practice was effective, health and social work practitioners would rate the importance of attachment theory and practice more highly than education practitioners
- Health and social work practitioners would report a wider skill base than education practitioners in regard to attachment theory and practice as a function of their training, both initial and continuing professional development, in this area.

There was no hypothesis formulated regarding practitioners understanding of their own attachment history as there was no relevant and reliable information available. Nevertheless, the literature on professional training for social work residential staff indicates a focus on examining personal attachment history (Furnivall, 2011).

Therefore, social work practitioners may be aware of this professional dialogue. However, as no social work residential staff were involved in this research programme, it was difficult to predict any influence on local authority children and family social work practitioners.

4.4.2 Education Resources

The hypotheses were formulated for education resources on the basis of the available information on initial training in attachment theory and practice. As outlined earlier in this chapter, the researcher also considered that the focus on attachment theory within the Scottish Government's Early Years Collaborative (2012d) (Chapter 1: 1.1), would have a positive impact on the early years practitioners' understandings of attachment theory. Hypotheses were formulated that:

- a higher percentage of early years practitioners would respond to the invitation to complete the audit compared to other sectors within education, given the emphasis on attachment theory in their initial training
- a higher percentage of early years practitioners would rate attachment theory and practice as important to their work, and report more knowledge and confidence in application of the theory compared to primary, ASN, secondary or youth learning, again as a function of their initial training and Scottish government initiatives.

4.5 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Self-report measures using the Likert scale questionnaire format in sections 1, 2 and 4, allowed the use of descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. One-way ANOVAs were used for comparisons between social work, health and education (coded as 'children's services' for the purposes of reporting results) and between ASN, early years, primary, secondary and youth learning practitioners (coded as 'education resources'). Section 3 'Training' collected categorical data. The analytical strategy taken to interrogate the data from the training items made use of the Pearson's Chi-Square, non-parametric two-tailed test, in order to explore any statistically significant differences between the groups within 'children's services' and within 'education resources'. A Fisher's Exact Test was undertaken where 33%

of expected counts in the cells were below 5 and thus failing to satisfy the criterion for a Pearson's Chi-Square test (Field, 2013; Robson, 2011).

Due to the volume of the data , the responses to the audit were downloaded from the SNAP weblink into Microsoft Excel. Thereafter the data was uploaded into the 'Statistical Package for the Social Sciences' (SPSS, version 27) (IBM, 2009-2018) to enable analysis of quantitative data (Brace et al., 2016).

Due to multiple testing and the risk of Type 1 errors (Field, 2013), the researcher made the decision to explore findings at the .01 significance level when analysing the results.

One-way ANOVAs were undertaken to explore whether there were significant differences between the groups in regard to their views on the importance and practical applications of the theory.

A Welch's ANOVA was undertaken where unequal variances were identified (Welch, 1951) and where the Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated (Levene, 1960). Welch's ANOVA typically gives greater statistical power and greater Type 1 error control when compared to other alternative tests used under conditions where homogeneity of variances have been violated (Tomarken & Serlin, 1986).

Where data was non-normally distributed, bootstrapping was used. The bootstrapping technique estimates "the properties of the sampling distribution from the sample data. In effect, the sample data are treated as a population from which smaller samples (called bootstrap samples) are taken (putting the data back before a new sample is drawn)" (Field, 2013, p. 165).

Following the administration of the one-way ANOVAs, an appropriate post hoc test assessed discrepancies between groups. When the homogeneity of variance was not violated, the Hochberg post hoc test was used. This allowed maintenance of

statistical power, whilst dealing with unequal sample sizes. However, in conditions where the homogeneity of variances was violated, a Games-Howell post hoc test was used, as this maintains accuracy when sample sizes are unequal (Field, 2013).

Effect sizes were reported when the Levene's test indicated that the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated. However, there is no generally accepted effect size available using the Welch's ANOVA Test (Field, 2013).

4.5.1 Reporting Format

The following reporting is in 6 parts.

a) Part 1 reports on response rates and provides the demographic information.
b) Part 2 explores any significant difference in how the three children's services agencies learnt about attachment theory and attachment-informed practice.
c) Part 3 explores the differences in the self-report of the three children's services agencies, i.e., health, education and social work in their views of the importance and practical applications of attachment theory.
d) Part 4 focuses on education resources, and explores the differences in how practitioners in ASN, early years, primary, secondary and youth learning learned about attachment theory and practice.
e) Part 5 focuses on education resources and explores the differences in the views of the importance, and practical applications, of attachment theory and practice of ASN, early years, primary, secondary and youth learning practitioners.
f) Part 6 makes use of the qualitative data provided in the audit to explore views and experiences in more depth and identify any patterns and relationships between the three children's services agencies

4.6 RESULTS

4.6.1 Part 1 – Response Rates and Demographic Information

Children's Services

An estimated total workforce population for each of the groups invited to complete the audit was accessed by the researcher, apart from the voluntary sector (for reasons mentioned in section 4.3.5) :- education practitioners (N = 4,227), social work practitioners (N = 70), NHS practitioners (N = 45).

A high number responded. In total there were 443 respondents, of which

- 399 were from education resources, translating to 91% of the respondents and 9.44% of the estimated total number who could have responded.
- 20 were from social work resources, translating to 5% of the respondents and 29% of the estimated total number who could have responded.
- 14 were from health, translating to 3% of the respondents and 31% of the estimated total number who could have responded.
- 6 were from the voluntary sector, translating to 1% of the respondents.

Figure 4 below illustrates the pattern of responses.

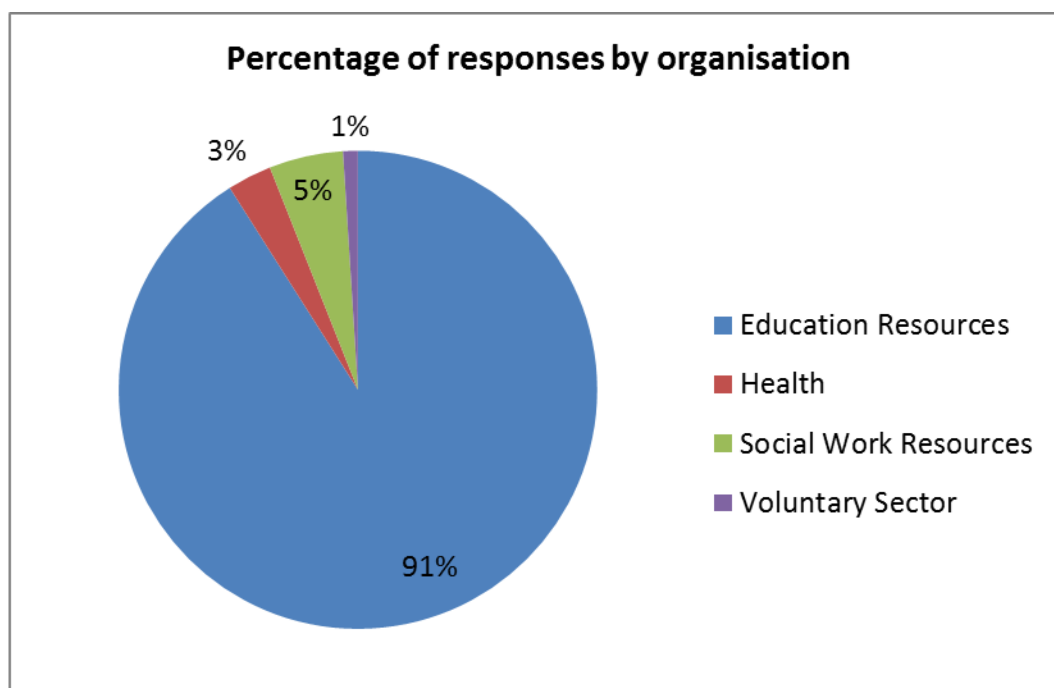


Figure 5: Percentage of children's services practitioners who responded to the audit.

Education Resources

Exploring in more depth the number of responses from the five sectors within education resources, it was apparent that from the 399 responses:

- 31 were from ASN, translating to 8% of the respondents and 20% of the estimated total number who could have responded.
- 55 were from early years, translating to 14% of the respondents and 5% of the estimated total number who could have responded.
- 246 were from primary, translating to 62% of the respondents and 16% of the estimated total number who could have responded.
- 51 were from secondary, translating to 13% of the respondents and 3.5% of the estimated total number who could have responded.
- 16 were from youth learning, translating to 4% of the respondents and 25% of the estimated total number who could have responded.

Figure 5 below illustrates the pattern of responses.

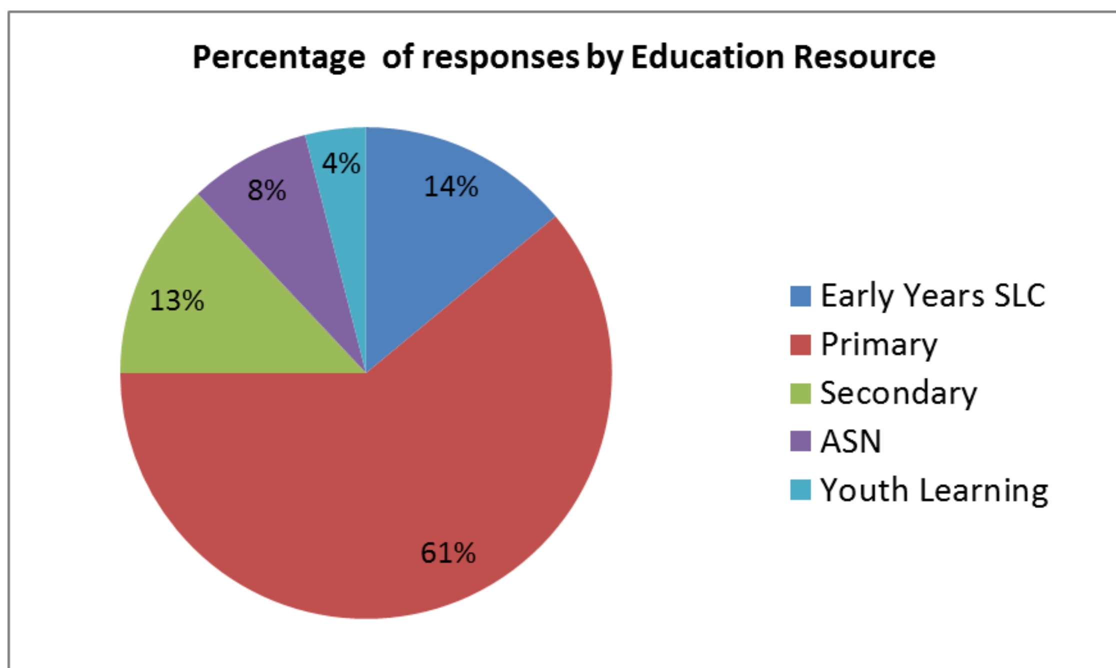


Figure 6: Percentage of education practitioners who responded to the audit.

Given the very low sample size from the voluntary sector (n=6) and the resulting low statistical power (Robson, 2011), a decision was made by the researcher to omit their numbers from the statistical comparison of children's services responses.

Demographic Information

Participants were asked to indicate their gender, identify which age range to which they belonged, and how many years of experience they had worked with children, young people and families.

The significantly higher number of females in the education, health and social work professions in both the local authority and NHS, as represented in this sample, is in line with national information and so would seem to be a representative sample (Department of Education, 2017; General Teaching Council for Scotland, 2018a; ISD Scotland; Matheson, 2008; Scottish Social Services Council, 2016). Tables 8, 9 and 10 illustrate the demographic detail.

Table 8: Gender.

Female	393	89%
Male	43	10%
not indicated	7	1%

The sample was balanced with regard to age (Table 9).

Table 9: Age Range.

20-29	20%
30-39	26%
40-49	25%
50-59	25%
60 years or more	4%

Experience within education resources ranged from 0 to 40 years; from 2 to 37 years within health; and from 0 to 32 years in social work (Table 10).

Table 10: Years of experience.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	95% C.I.
Years of experience	11.93	9.28	11.05; 12.81

Missing data

All missing data were demographic. No patterns that could affect results were discovered therefore cases with missing data were retained for all analyses.

4.6.2 Part 2 – Children's Services' Initial and Ongoing Training Experiences

To adjust for multiple testing, the significance level of .01 was adopted. Table 11 below illustrates the Chi-Square results exploring the method of learning.

Table 11: How children's services participants learned about attachment theory and practice.

Options:	**on a qualifying course for current post**	**during professional supervision/ consultation**	**through awareness-raising**	**through in-depth CPD**	**through other means**	**no opportunity**
Results for attachment theory	*Fisher's* = 33.48, $p < .001$ **	*Fisher's* = 8.76, $p = .009$ **	$X^2(2, N = 435) = 3.01, p = .223$, n.s.	*Fisher's* = 11.62, $p = .002$ *	*Fisher's* = 3.81, $p = .410$, n.s.	$X^2(2, N = 435) = 12.88, p = .002$ *
Results for attachment -informed practice	*Fisher's* = 41.83, $p < .001$ **	*Fisher's* = 17.09, $p < .001$ **	$X^2(2, N = 435) = 5.80, p = .056$, n.s.	*Fisher's* = 11.33, $p = .003$ *	*Fisher's* = 3.69, $p = .776$, n.s.	$X^2(2, N = 435) = 9.62, p = .008$ *

*Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)
**Significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Table 12 below illustrates the Chi-Square results exploring the opportunities to reflect on how their early childhood experiences affected their adult attachment style.

Table 12: Children's services opportunities to reflect on adult attachment style.

Options	**on a qualifying course for current post**	**through in-depth CPD**	**during professional supervision /consultation**	**through personal experience**	**through personal reading**	**no opportunity**

Results	*Fisher's* = 34.86, $p < .001$ **	*Fisher's* = 2.60, $p = .268$, n.s.	*Fisher's* = 0.57, $p = .711$, n.s.	$X^2(2, N = 435) = 2.66$, $p = .264$, n.s.	*Fisher's* = 14.31, $p = .001$ *	$X^2(4, N = 435) = 11.22$, $p = .004$ *

*Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)
**Significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

4.6.3 Part 3 – Children's Services' Views of the Importance and Practical Application of Attachment

Item: *An understanding of attachment theory is very important for those who work with and support children and families.*

A one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "An understanding of attachment theory is very important for those who work with and support children and families".

The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(2, 431) = 18.88$, $p < .001$. Accordingly, a Welch's ANOVA test was conducted, which found a significant main effect of children's services, $F(2, 23.92) = 12.65$, $p < .001$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was undertaken with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference was found ($p < .01$) between education ($M = 4.40$, $SD = 0.77$) and social work ($M = 4.85$, $SD = 0.37$). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p < .01$) (see Figure 6).

Table 13: An understanding of attachment theory is very important for those who work with and support children and families.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	4.40	.765	4.30; 4.50
Health	4.07	1.542	2.83; 5.31
Social Work	4.85	.366	4.62; 5.08

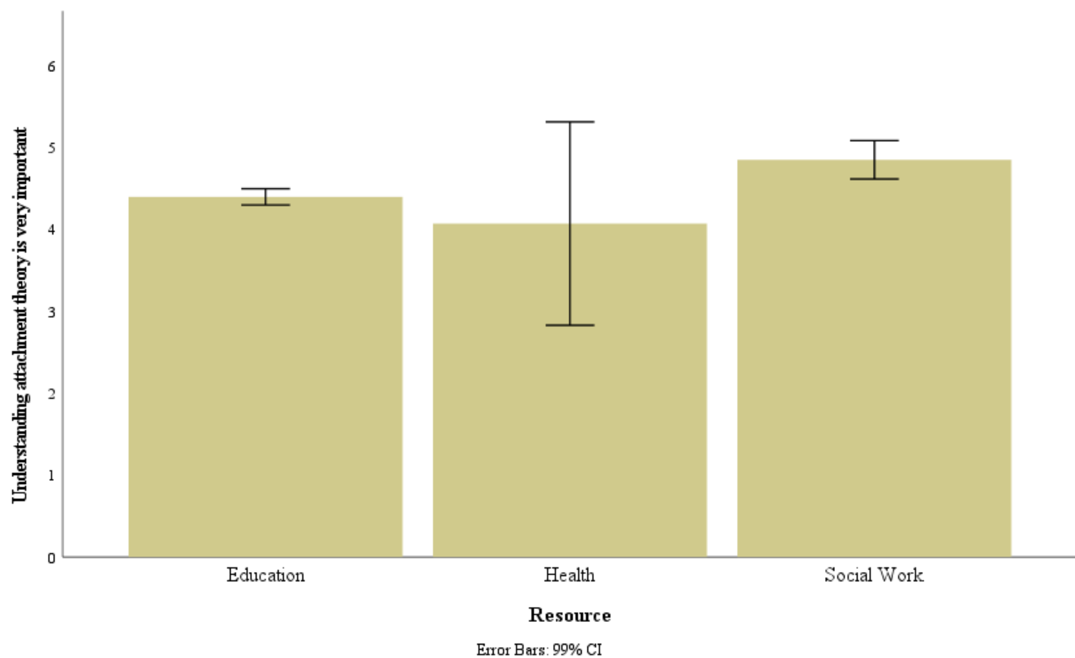


Figure 7: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: An understanding of attachment theory is very important for those who work with and support children and families.

Item: *It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families.*

There was a similar finding for the statement “It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families”. The Levene’s test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(2, 427) = 4.95$, $p = .007$. Accordingly, a Welch’s ANOVA test was conducted, which found a significant main effect of children’s services, $F(2, 23.34) = 13.76$, $p < .001$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was undertaken with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference was found ($p < .01$) between education ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.81$) and social work ($M = 4.75$, $SD = 0.44$). No significant difference was found ($p > .01$) between health ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 1.55$) and social work or between health and education (see Figure 7).

Table 14: It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	4.18	.806	4.08; 4.29
Health	4.07	1.385	2.96; 5.19
Social Work	4.75	.444	4.47; 5.03

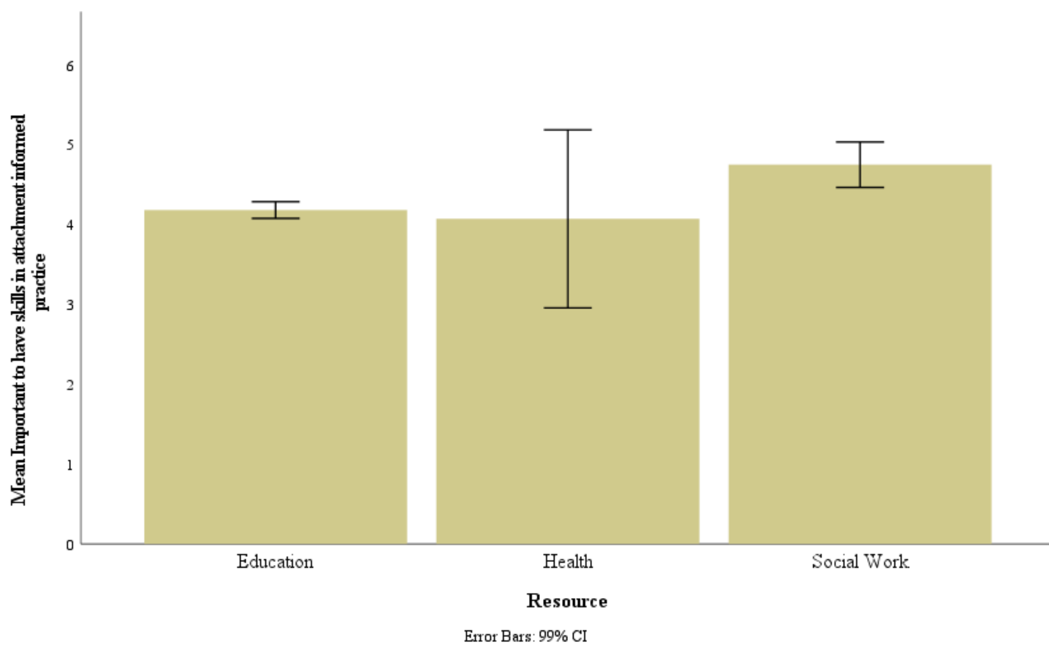


Figure 8: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families.

Item: *It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style.*

To explore views on adult attachment, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, *F*(2,

429) = 2.91, p = .056. The results indicated a significant main effect of children's services, $F(2, 429) = 6.75$, $p < .01$, $\eta p2 = 0.031$.

Due to the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test was undertaken with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) between education (M = 3.96, SD = 0.80) and Social Work (M = 4.50, SD = 0.61) was found and between health (M = 4.07, SD = 1.39) and social work (M = 4.50, SD = 0.61). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 8).

Table 15: It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	3.96	.803	3.85; 4.06
Health	3.50	1.092	2.62; 4.38
Social Work	4.50	.607	4.11; 4.89

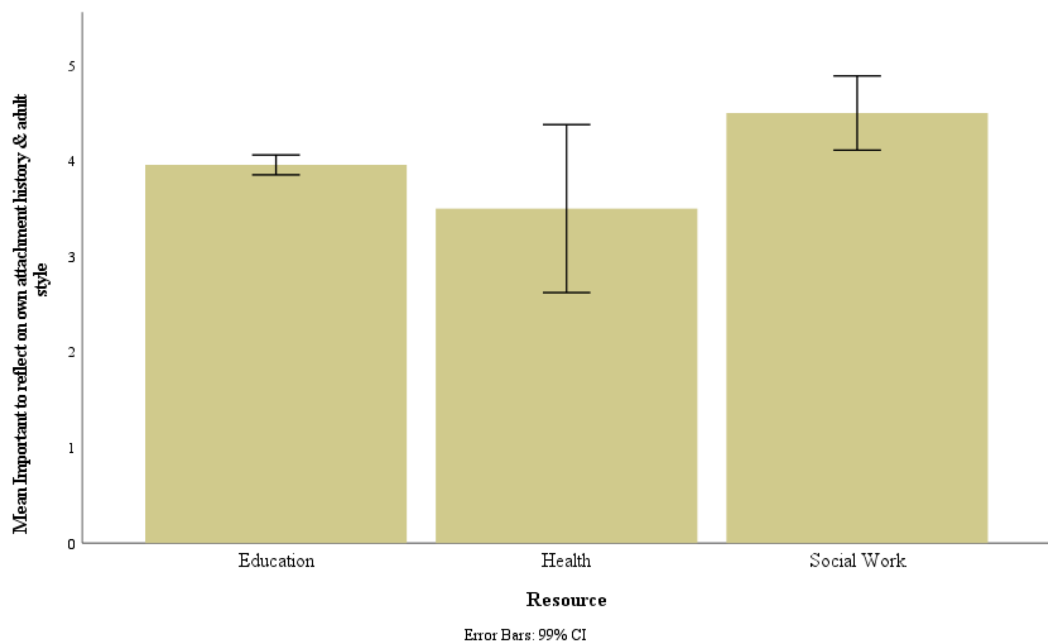


Figure 9: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style.

Item: *I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice.*

A one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(2, 428) = 1.02$, $p = .361$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated no significant main effect of children's services, $F(2, 428) = 4.05$, $p = .018$, $\eta p2 = 0.02$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. No significant differences ($p > .01$) between education ($M = 2.68$, $SD = 0.98$), social work ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.89$) and health ($M = 2.57$, $SD = 0.76$) were found.

Table 16: I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% Confidence Level
Education	2.68	.982	2.55; 2.80
Health	2.57	.756	1.96; 3.18
Social Work	3.32	.885	2.73; 3.90

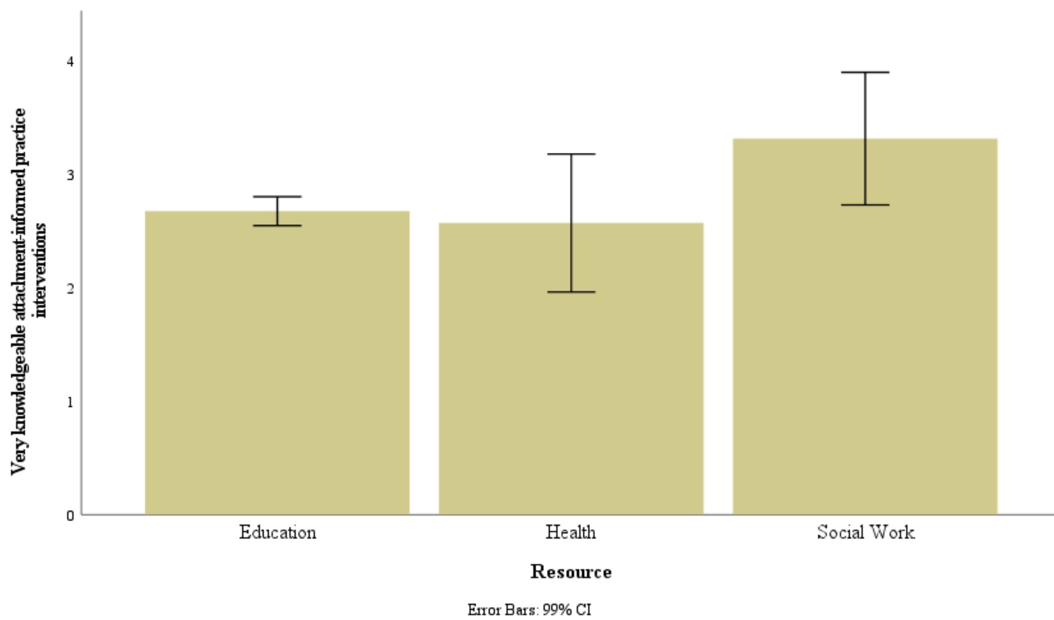


Figure 10: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice.

Item: *I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in attachment-informed practice and interventions.*
A one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in attachment-informed practice and interventions". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(2, 432) = 2.82$, $p = .06$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated no significant main effect of Children's services, $F(2, 432) = 2.55$, $p = .079$, $\eta p2 = .12$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap resamples was undertaken. No significant differences ($p > .01$) between education ($M = 2.93$, $SD = 0.90$), social work ($M = 3.35$, $SD = 0.99$) and health ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.12$) were found (see Figure 10).

Table 17: I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in attachment-informed practice and interventions.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	2.93	.902	2.82; 3.05
Health	3.21	1.122	2.31; 4.12
Social Work	3.35	.988	2.72; 3.98

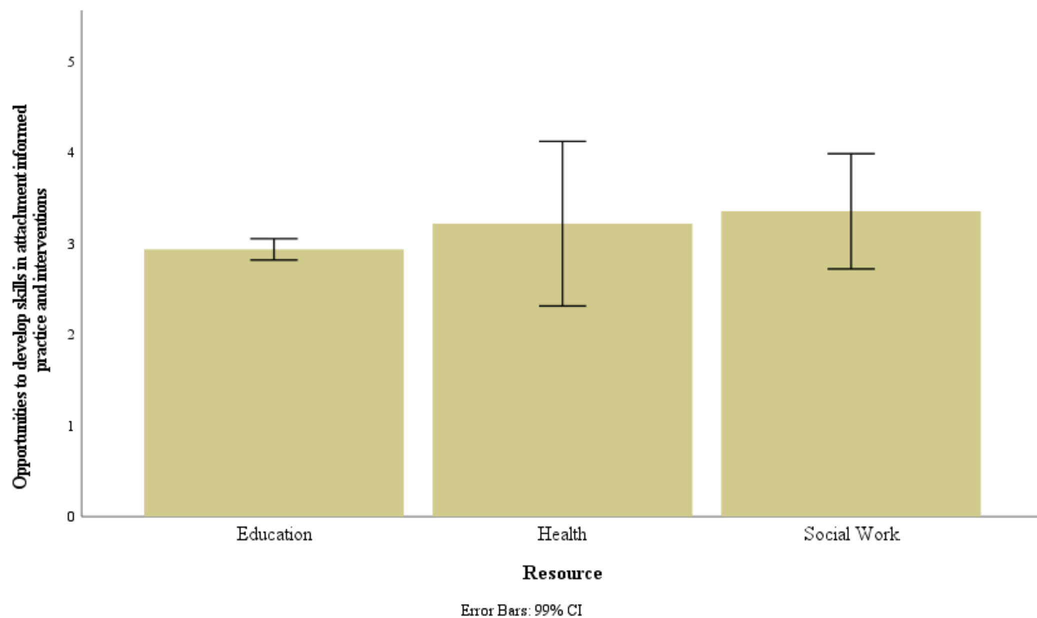


Figure 11: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in attachment-informed practice and interventions.

Item: *I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning.*

A one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, *F*(2,

426) = 1.03, $p = .356$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated a significant main effect of Children's services, $F(2, 426) = 11.09$, $p < .001$, $\eta p2 = .049$.

As before, the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap resamples was conducted. A significant difference ($p < .01$) between education ($M = 2.65$, $SD = 0.99$) and social work ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.75$) was found. All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 11).

Table 18: I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	2.65	.985	2.52; 2.77
Health	3.07	.997	2.27; 3.87
Social Work	3.65	.745	3.17; 4.13

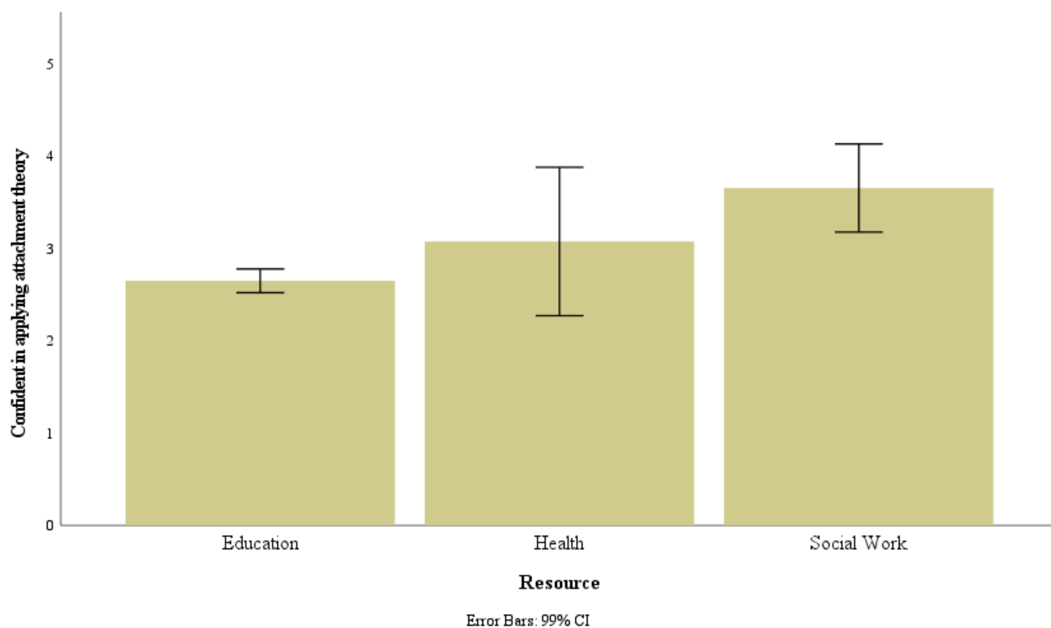


Figure 12: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable

children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning.

Item: *I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice.*

Further exploring the relationship between theory and practice, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(2, 419) = 1.55$, $p = .214$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated a significant main effect of children's services, $F(2, 419) = 8.31$, $p < .001$, $\eta p2 = .038$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap resamples was conducted. A significant difference ($p < .01$) between education ($M = 2.72$, $SD = 0.99$) and social work ($M = 3.60$, $SD = 0.75$) was found. All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 12).

Table 19: I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	2.72	.988	2.59; 2.85
Health	3.07	.917	2.33; 3.81
Social Work	3.60	.754	3.12; 4.08

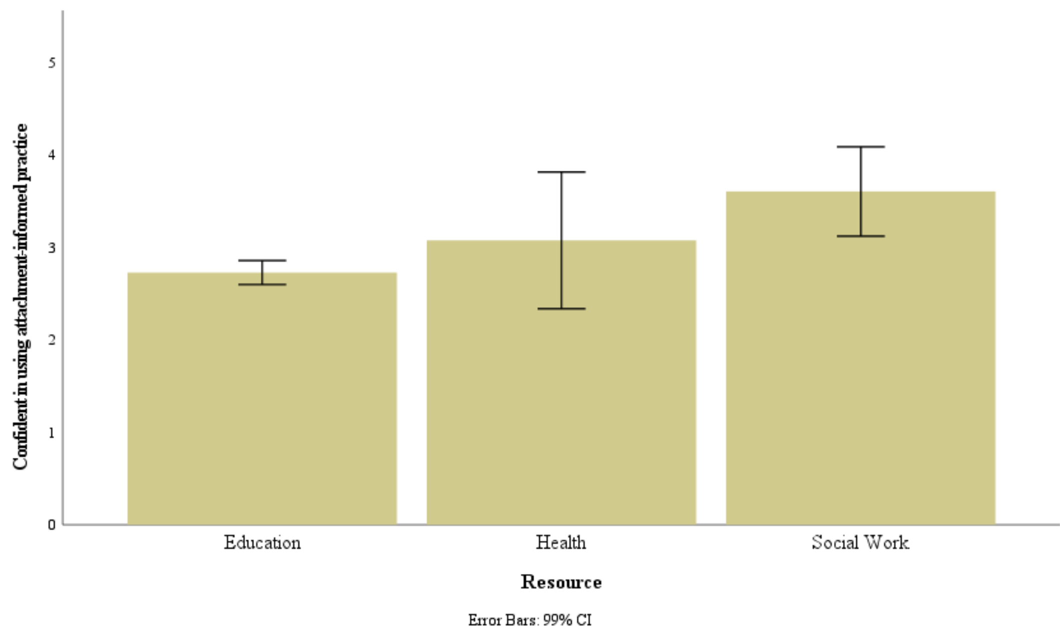


Figure 13: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice.

Item: *There is a shared understanding in the multi–agency group planning for the well-being of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment.*

Items then gave the opportunity for participants to report their observations of attachment theory within a multi-agency context.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "There is a shared understanding in the multi–agency group planning for the well-being of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(2, 209) = 0.37$, $p = .689$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated no main effect of children's services, $F(2, 209) = 1.01$, $p = .366$, $\eta p2 = .01$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap resamples was conducted. No significant differences ($p > .01$) between education ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.86$), social work ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.90$) and *h*ealth ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 0.93$) were found (see Figure 13).

Table 20: There is a shared understanding in the multi–agency group planning for the well-being of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	3.72	.856	3.55; 3.88
Health	3.64	.929	2.90; 4.39
Social Work	3.42	.902	2.83; 4.02

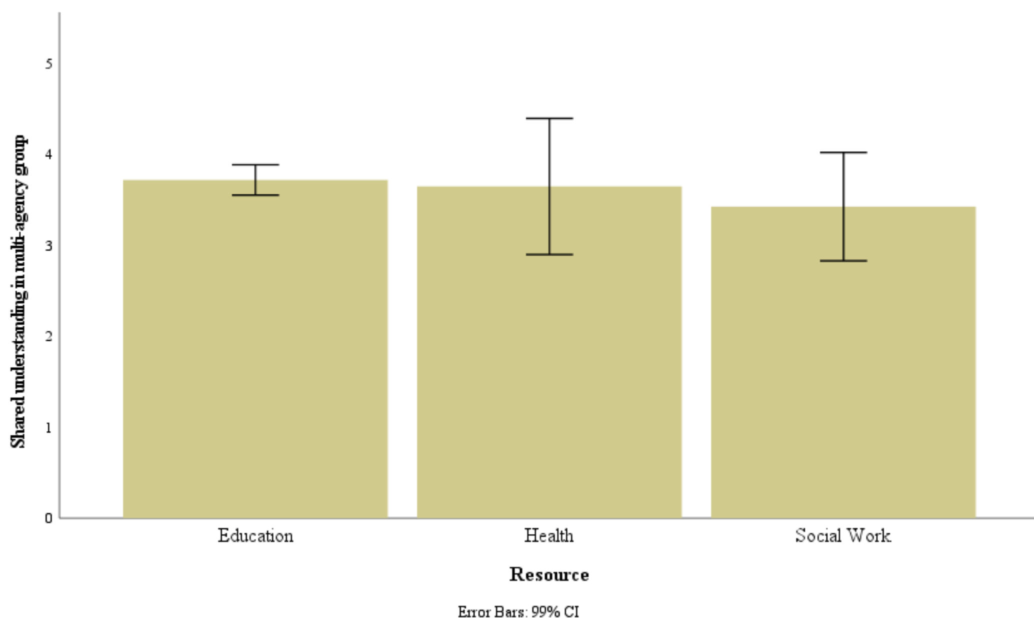


Figure 14: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: There is a shared understanding in the multi–agency group planning for the well-being of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment.

Item: *There is a shared language in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regard to discussions on attachment.*

Views of a shared language when talking about attachment theory and practice were explored. A one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "There is a shared language in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regard to discussions on attachment" as the dependant variable. The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(2, 204) = 0.63$, $p = .532$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated no main effect of children's services, $F(2, 204) = 0.57$, $p = .566$, $\eta p2 = .006$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap resamples was conducted. No significant differences ($p > .01$) between education ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.84$), social work ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 0.77$) and health ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 0.73$) were found (see Figure 14).

Table 21: There is a shared language in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regard to discussions on attachment.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	3.49	.843	3.32; 3.65
Health	3.23	.725	2.62; 3.84
Social Work	3.47	.745	2.96; 3.98

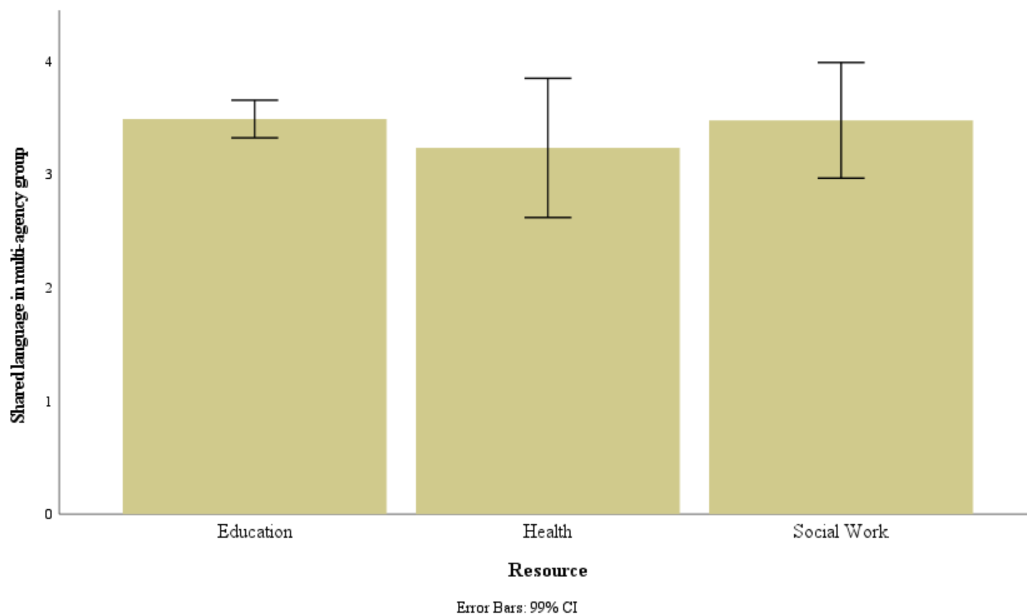


Figure 15: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: There is a shared language in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regard to discussions on attachment.

Item: *The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory.*
Items then focused on participant's views of the promotion of attachment theory and practice within their organisation.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(2, 429) = 1.67$, $p = .190$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated no main effect of children's services, $F(2, 429) = 1.66$, $p = .191$, $\eta p2 = .008$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap resamples was conducted. No significant differences ($p > .01$) between education ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 1.03$). social work ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.75$) and health ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 1.01$) were found (see Figure 15).

Table 22: The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	3.32	1.026	3.18; 3.45
Health	3.64	1.008	2.83; 4.45
Social Work	3.65	.745	3.17; 4.13

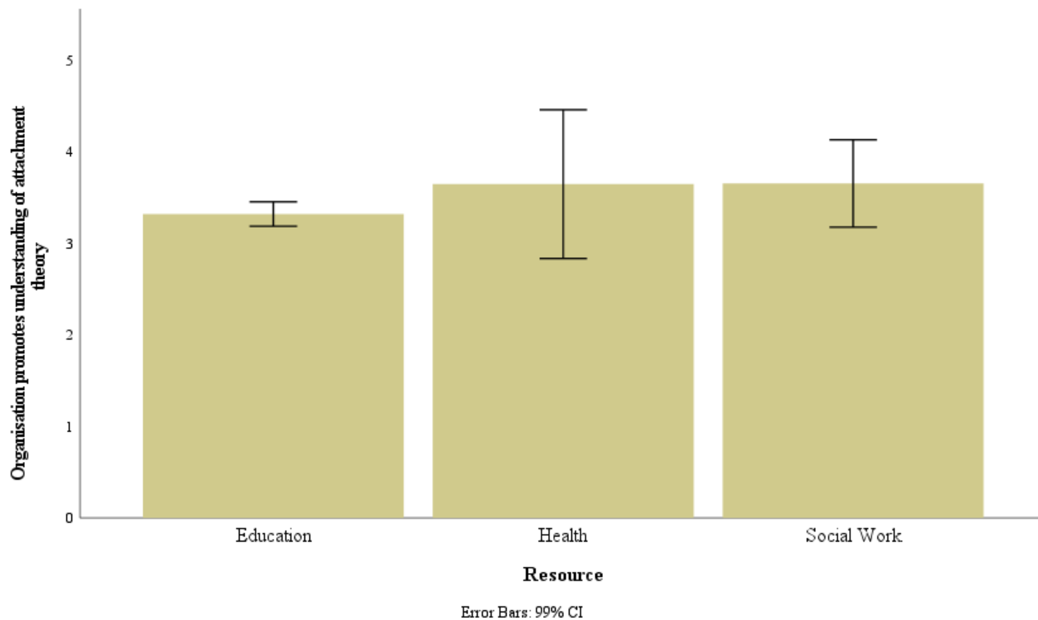


Figure 16: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory.

Item: *The organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day business with children and families.*

A one-way ANOVA was conducted with children's services as the independent variable and responses to the statement "The organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day business with children and families". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(2, 419) = 0.30$, $p = .970$. As with self-report of promotion of the theory within their organisations, the results of the one-way ANOVA indicated

no significant main effect of children's services, $F(2, 419) = 0.60$, $p = .547$, $\eta p2 = .003$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap resamples was conducted. No significant differences ($p > .01$) between education ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.93$), social work ($M = 3.55$, $SD = 0.89$) and health ($M = 3.36$, $SD = 0.93$) were found (see Figure 16).

Table 23: The organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day business with children and families.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
Education	3.32	.932	3.19; 3.44
Health	3.36	.929	2.61; 4.10
Social Work	3.55	.887	2.98; 4.12

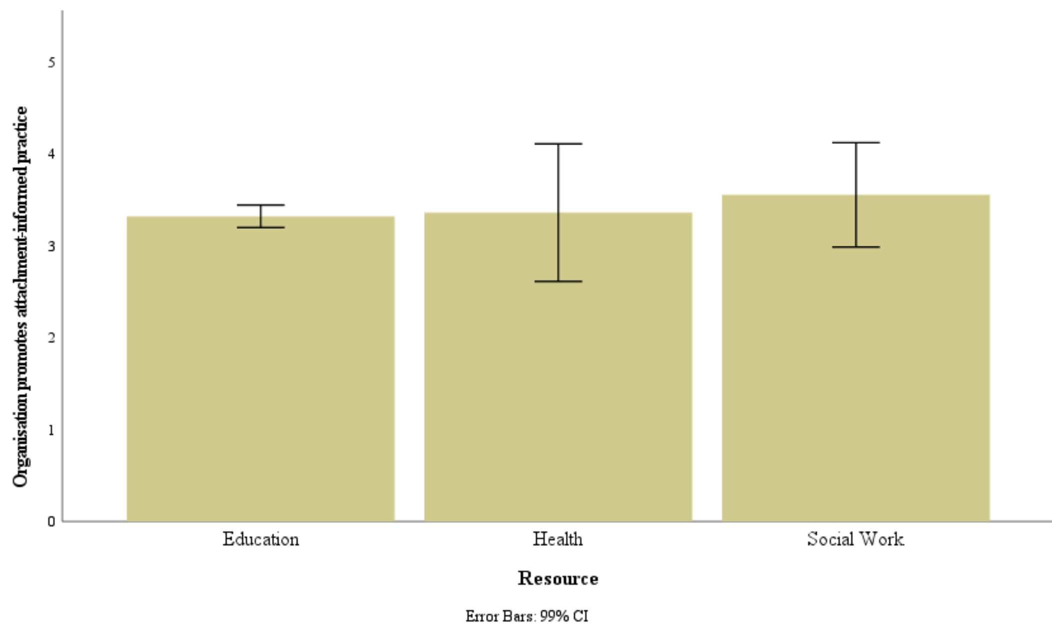


Figure 17: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: The organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day business with children and families.

Discussion – Children's Services

As discussed earlier, managers had identified factors which may have been a barrier to a higher response rate from health, social work resources, and the voluntary sector, although the response rate from all groups apart from the voluntary sector was encouraging.

Despite the barriers for health visitors and social work practitioners to respond to the audit, the hypothesis was upheld that a higher percentage of the total number of practitioners from health and social work resources completed the audit, compared to education resources.

Regarding social work resources, the audit was distributed at a point when three of the four locality children and families social work teams had high numbers of absences and vacancies and it is likely that this affected response rates.

As already reported, the researcher was not able to talk directly to heads of voluntary sector organisations. It is possible that this contributed to the low response rate. It also proved difficult to evidence the total number of voluntary sector practitioners who received the email invitation.

The largest number of responses was from the primary sector but given that primary teachers form the highest number of education staff, the figure of 62% of the total number of audit responses from the primary sector, needs to be interpreted within the context of the 16% response rate from the total population number.

Analysis of the data from the three children's services would seem to indicate a noteworthy difference between social work and education practitioners in their self-reported views of attachment theory and practice in the context of their work, with few differences found between health and social work or between health and education. Although sample sizes of the three children's services are disparate, some differences would not seem to be accounted for by chance.

Findings do not support the hypothesis that there would be similarities in the views of health and social work with regard to the importance of attachment theory and practice for their work with children and families. Given attachment theory is covered in the qualifying courses for both social work and health practitioners, and especially given the focus on attachment theory in a number of high-profile government led NHS agendas such as 'Best Possible Start' and 'Family Nurse Partnerships', the findings were not as expected. It must be considered that the small sample size in health may have made it difficult to find out where the true mean lay but there is a notably wide range of responses within the sample from health (SD = 1.55) compared to social work (SD = 0.37) and education (SD = 0.77). However, from the exploration of how many practitioners learned about the theory and practice on their qualifying course, only with social work were the numbers significantly more than expected. Furthermore, significantly more social workers than expected learned about the theory and practice either during in depth CPD or through supervision and consultation in their current post.

It would seem that in terms of opportunities to learn about attachment theory and practice, and in regard to how important it is rated, that there are significant differences between social work and education practitioners. However, the differences in the opportunities to develop attachment-informed skills within the day-to-day work of practitioners in the three children's services agencies should be interpreted with caution, with practitioners in the three children's services agencies reporting challenges in practical work settings. One practitioner wrote that they were "undecided about my confidence in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children."

This difference may be linked to the opportunity for social work practitioners to learn about the theory during their qualifying course, though there was no observable difference between the three children's services agencies and the opportunity to learn about attachment-informed practice during qualifying courses. More social work practitioners than expected indicated learning on their qualifying course, with notably less than expected indicating no opportunity. It was predicted that social

workers would experience more learning of attachment theory and practice through workplace supervision sessions than education and health colleagues within children's services, but there was no evidence of any notable difference, nor any significant difference found between the practitioners in the three children's services agencies with regard to in-depth CPD or other routes taken to find out about the theory and practice (e.g., personal reading).

However, a significant difference was found between social work and education, and between social work and health, in terms of the importance given to practitioners reflecting on their own attachment style, with significantly more social workers indicating that it is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style.

Furthermore, a significant difference was found between social work and education in terms of their self-reported knowledge of attachment-informed practice, though no notable difference was found in terms of the three children's services agencies having a wide range of opportunities within their organisation to develop skills in attachment-informed practice in their current post.

There was also no observable difference in how the participants from the three children's services agencies rated how much their organisation actively promoted an understanding of the theory and the practice 'in the day-to-day business with children and families'.

An indication of further differences in the populations of education and social work was found in the results of self-report in applying the theory in assessment and planning to meet the needs of vulnerable children, and report of using attachment-informed practice in intervening to support vulnerable children. Significantly more social work practitioners indicated confidence than education practitioners in both areas. However, it should be noted that although the effect size was medium for 'confidence in applying the theory' and could be interpreted with some assurance, the effect size for using attachment-informed practice in relation to 'how I intervene

and support vulnerable children', is small to medium and requires caution when interpreting differences.

4.6.4 Part 4 – Education Resources' Initial and Ongoing Training Experiences

Table 13 below illustrates the Chi-Square results exploring the method of learning.

Table 24: How education resources participants learned about attachment theory and practice.

Options:	**on a qualifying course for current post**	**during professional supervision/ consultation**	**through awareness-raising**	**through in-depth CPD**	**through other means**	**no opportunity**
Results for attachment theory	$X^2(4, N = 400^2) = 26.85, p < .001$ **	*Fisher's* = 8.52, $p = .06$, n.s.	$X^2(4, N = 400) = 4.33, p = .364$, n.s.	*Fisher's* = 3.81, $p = .410$, n.s.	$X^2(4, N = 400) = 9.32, p = .054$, n.s.	$X^2(4, N = 400) = 13.76, p = .008$
Results for attachment -informed practice	*Fisher's* = 32.33, $p < .001$ **	*Fisher's* = 8.69, $p <= .049$, n.s.	$X^2(4, N = 400) = 8.02, p = .090$, n.s.	*Fisher's* = 3.79, $p = .405$, n.s.	*Fisher's* = 2.63, $p = .627$, n.s.	$X^2(4, N = 400) = 26.20, p < .001$ **

*Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)
**Significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

Table 14 below illustrates the Chi-Square results exploring the opportunities to reflect on how their early childhood experiences affected their adult attachment style.

Table 25: Education Resources opportunities to reflect on adult attachment style.

Options	**on a qualifying course for current post**	**through in-depth CPD**	**during professional supervision/ consultation**	**through personal experience**	**through personal reading**	**no opportunity**
Results	*Fisher's* = 38.99, $p < .001$ **	$X^2(4, N = 398) = 17.00, p =$	*Fisher's* = 1.87, $p = .697$, n.s.	$X^2(4, N = 400) = 2.53, p =$	$X^2(4, N = 400) = 2.69, p =$	$X^2(4, N = 400) = 20.58, p <$

[2] One education practitioner did not indicate the sector in which they worked.

	.002, n.s.		.639, n.s.	.611, n.s.	.001 **

*Significant at the .05 level (2-tailed)
**Significant at the .01 level (2-tailed)

4.6.5 Part 5 – Education Resources' Views of the Importance and Practical Application of Attachment

Item: *An understanding of attachment theory is very important for those who work with and support children and families.*

With regard to exploring participants' views of the importance of the theory, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement "An understanding of attachment theory is very important for those who work with and support children and families". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(4, 394) = 2.52$, $p = .041$. Accordingly, a Welch test was conducted, which found a significant main effect of education resources, $F(4, 67.59) = 5.24$, $p = .001$.

Due to the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years (M = 4.67. SD = 0.51) and secondary (M = 4.06, SD = 0.99). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 17).

Table 26: An understanding of attachment theory is very important for those who work with and support children and families.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% CI
ASN	4.45	.810	4.05; 4.85
Early Years	4.67	.511	4.49; 4.86
Primary	4.41	.739	4.29; 4.54
Secondary	4.06	.988	3.69; 4.43
Youth Learning	4.19	.655	3.70; 4.67

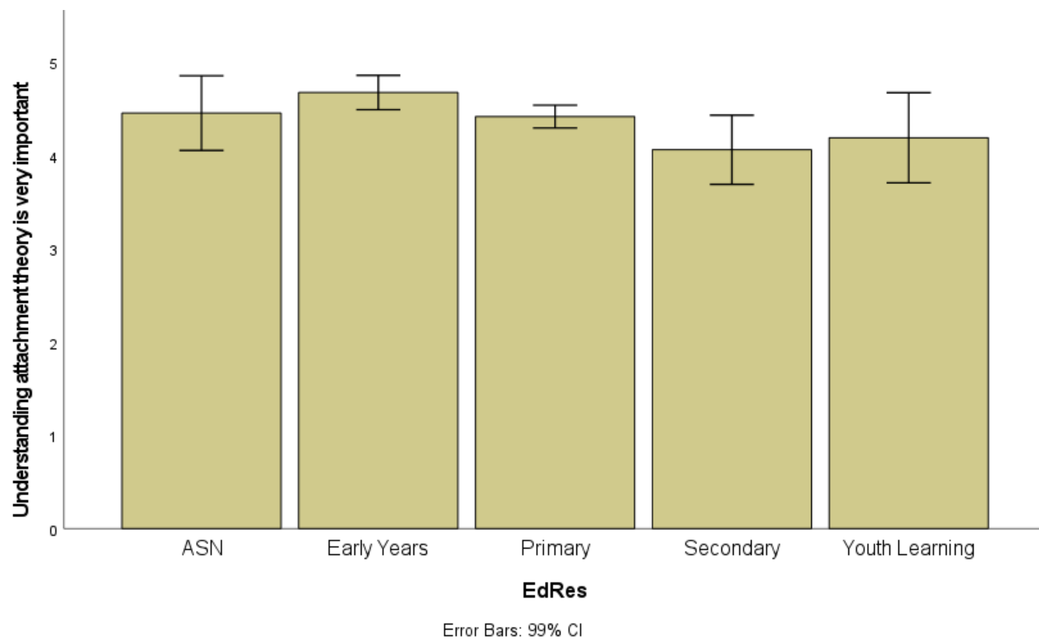


Figure 18: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: An understanding of attachment theory is very important for those who work with and support children and families.

Item: *It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families.*

A one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement "It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(4, 390) = 1.01$, $p = .402$. The one-way ANOVA indicated a main effect of education resources, $F(4, 390) = 5.74$, $p < .001$, $\eta p2 = .056$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years ($M = 4.48$, $SD = 0.67$) and secondary ($M = 3.88$, $SD = 0.97$), and early years and youth learning ($M = 3.69$, $SD = 0.70$). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 18).

Table 27: It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	4.35	.877	3.92; 4.79
Early Years	4.48	.666	4.24; 4.72
Primary	4.19	.764	4.06; 4.32
Secondary	3.88	.973	3.52; 4.25
Youth Learning	3.69	.704	3.17; 4.21

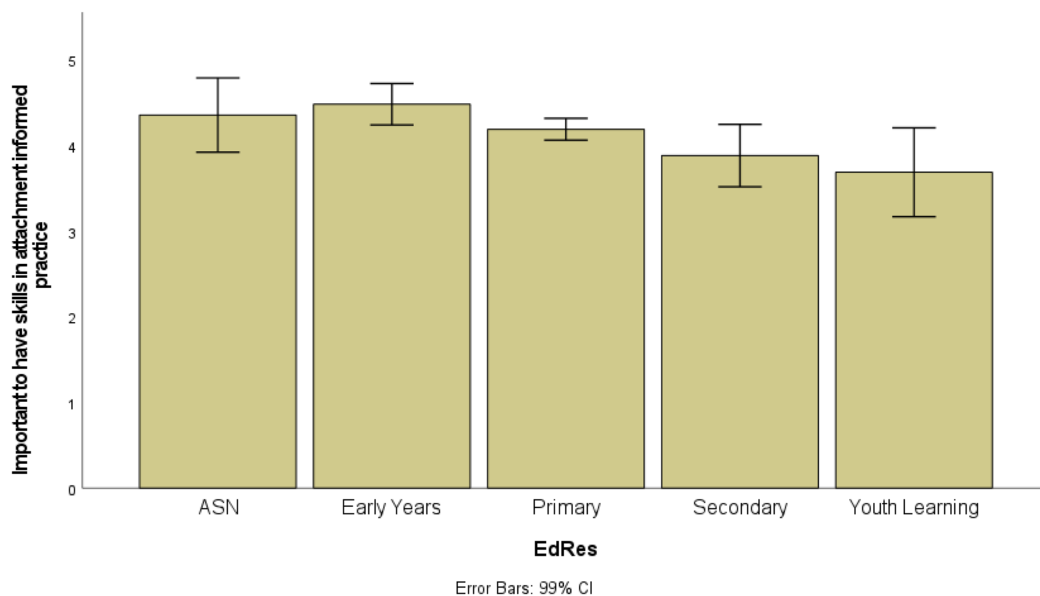


Figure 19: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families.

Item: *It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style.*

To explore the views on reflection on adult attachment, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement "It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been

violated, $F(4, 392) = 1.95$, $p = .102$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated a significant main effect of education resources, $F(4, 392) = 5.70$, $p < .001$, $\eta p2 = 0.06$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years ($M = 4.37$; $SD = 0.56$) and primary ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 0.82$), and early years and secondary ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 0.88$). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 19).

Table 28: It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	4.13	.718	3.37; 4.48
Early Years	4.37	.560	4.17; 4.57
Primary	3.89	.823	3.75; 4.03
Secondary	3.72	.882	3.39; 4.05
Youth Learning	4.00	.632	3.53; 4.47

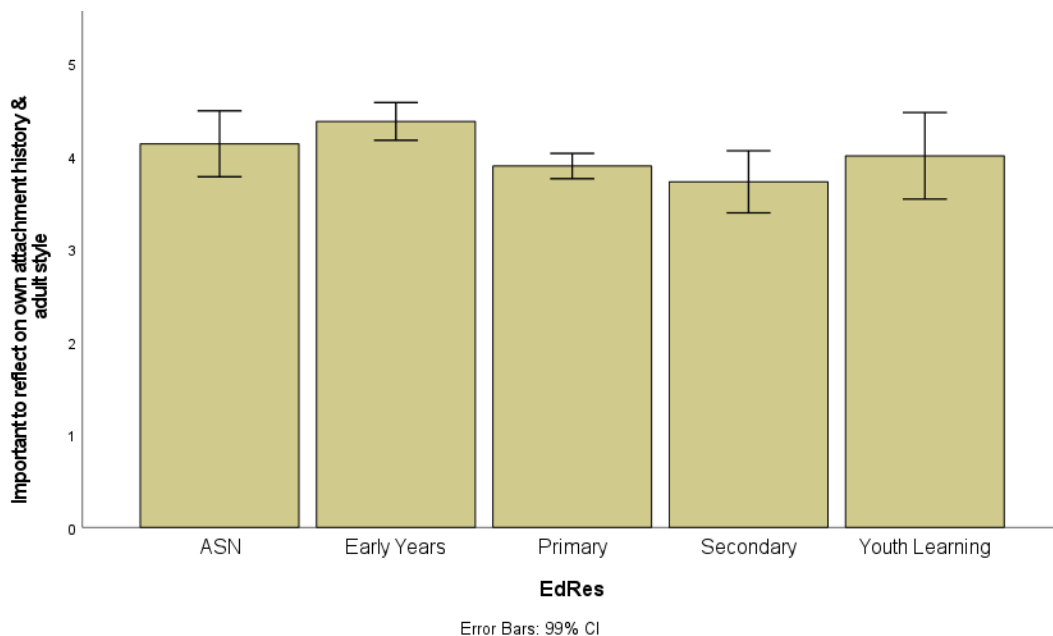


Figure 20: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their own attachment history and their adult attachment style.

Item: *I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice.*

The audit items then focused on self-report of knowledge. A one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement "I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(4, 392) = 1.34$, $p = .255$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated a significant main effect of education resources, $F(4, 392) = 12.44$, $p < .001$, $\eta p2 = 0.113$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.94$) and ASN ($M = 2.55$, $SD = 0.96$); early years and primary ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 0.90$); early years and secondary ($M = 2.50$, $SD = 1.09$); early years and youth learning ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 0.80$). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 20).

Table 29: I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	2.55	.961	2.07; 3.02
Early Years	3.49	.940	3.15; 3.83
Primary	2.56	.897	2.41; 2.71
Secondary	2.50	1.093	2.09; 2.91
Youth Learning	2.38	.806	1.78; 2.96

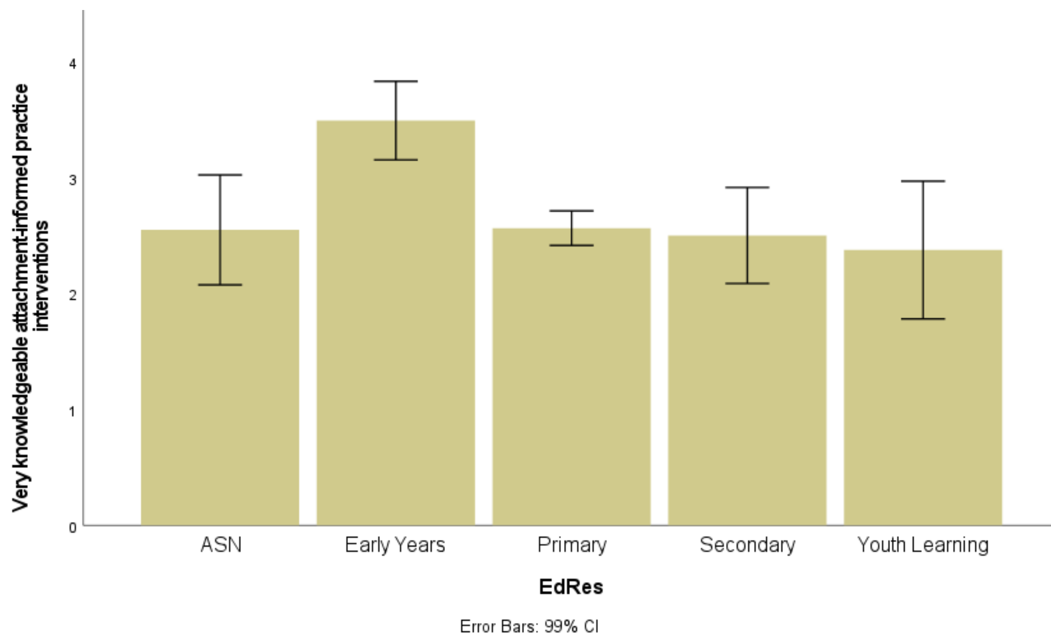


Figure 21: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice.

Item: *I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in attachment-informed practice and interventions.*
Moving from knowledge to practice, items explored the development of skills. A one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement "I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in attachment-informed practice and interventions". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(4, 395) = 5.45$, $p < .001$. Accordingly, a Welch ANOVA was undertaken. The results indicated a significant main effect of education resources, $F(4, 65.16) = 12.97$, $p < .001$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference was found ($p < .01$) between early years ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.84$) and ASN ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.86$); early years and primary ($M = 2.82$,

SD = 0.78); early years and secondary (*M* = 3.00, *SD* = 0.86). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 21).

Table 30: I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in attachment-informed practice and interventions.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	3.00	.856	2.58; 3.42
Early Years	3.65	.844	3.35; 3.96
Primary	2.82	.781	2.69; 2.95
Secondary	2.55	1.101	2.14; 2.96
Youth Learning	3.25	.931	2.56; 3.94

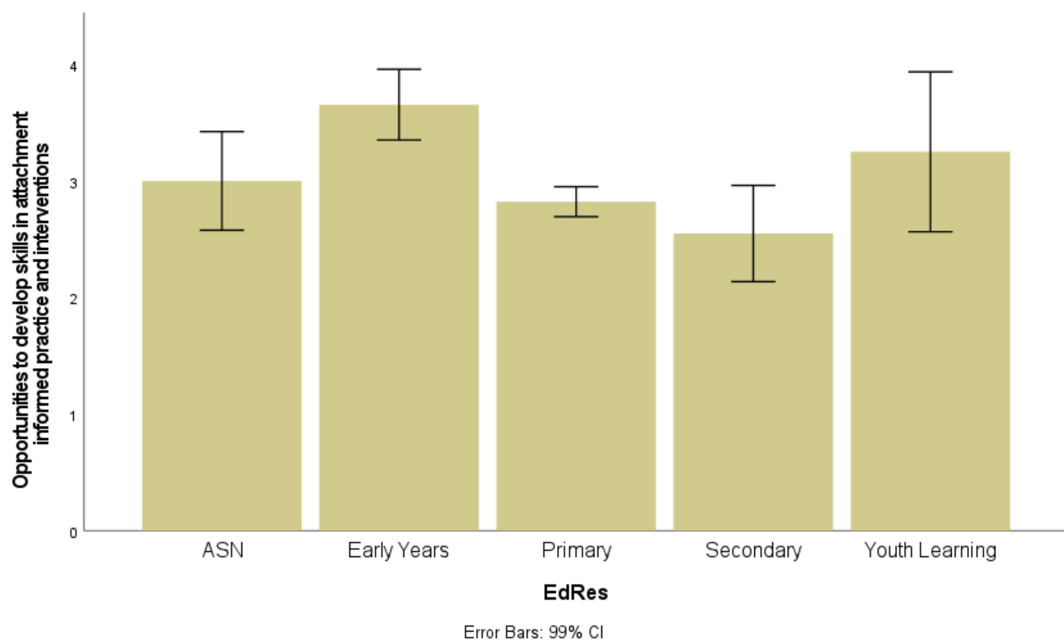


Figure 22: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in attachment-informed practice and interventions.

Item: *I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning.*

Confidence was then explored in using these skills. A one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement “I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning”. The Levene’s test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(4, 389) = 2.71$, $p = .030$. Given the violation of the Levene’s test, a Welch ANOVA was undertaken. Results indicated a significant main effect of education resources, $F(4, 66.50) = 9.71$, $p < .001$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years (M = 3.36, SD = 0.97) and primary (M = 2.54, SD = 0.88); early years and secondary (M = 2.38, SD = 1.18); early years and youth learning (M = 2.31, SD = 0.79). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 22).

Table 31: I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	2.81	.980	2.32; 3.29
Early Years	3.36	.969	3.01; 3.71
Primary	2.54	.884	2.39; 2.68
Secondary	2.38	1.176	1.93; 2.83
Youth Learning	2.31	.793	1.73; 2.90

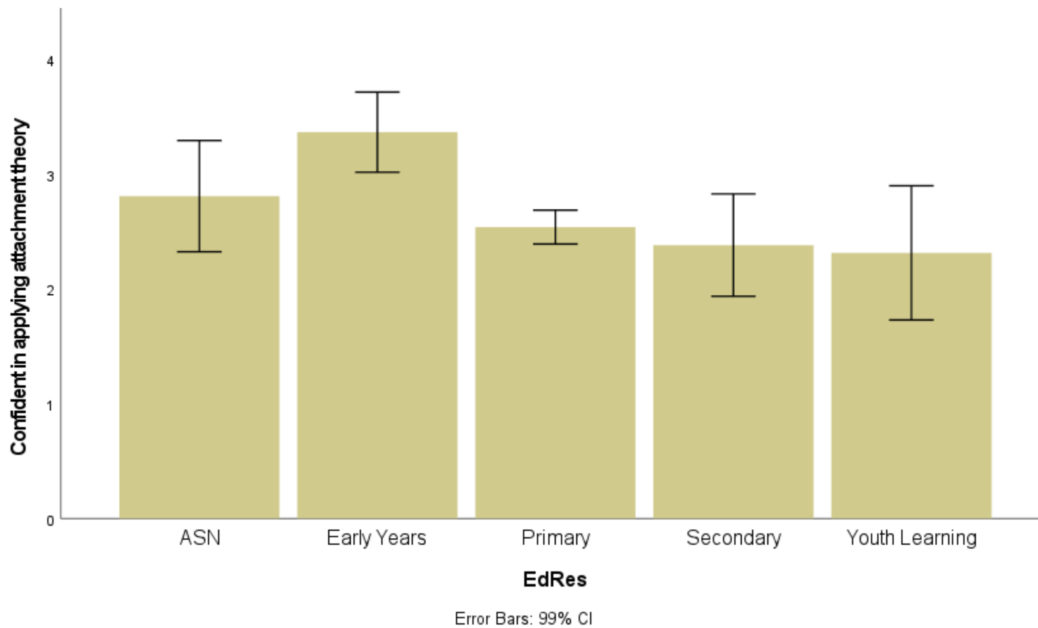


Figure 23: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning.

Item: *I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice.*

Further exploring the relationship between theory and practice, a one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement “I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice”. The Levene’s test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(4, 383) = 5.24$, $p < .001$. The Welch ANOVA indicates a significant main effect of education resources, $F(4, 66.10) = 11.05$, $p < .001$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years ($M =$

3.47, *SD* = 0.86) and ASN (*M* = 2.77, *SD* = 0.88); early years and primary (*M* = 2.65, *SD* = 0.89); early years and secondary (*M* = 2.37, *SD* = 1.25); early years and youth learning (*M* = 2.44, *SD* = 0.89). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 23).

Table 32: I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	2.77	.884	2.34; 3.21
Early Years	3.47	.857	3.15; 3.79
Primary	2.65	.894	2.50; 2.80
Secondary	2.37	1.248	1.90; 2.84
Youth Learning	2.44	.892	1.78; 3.09

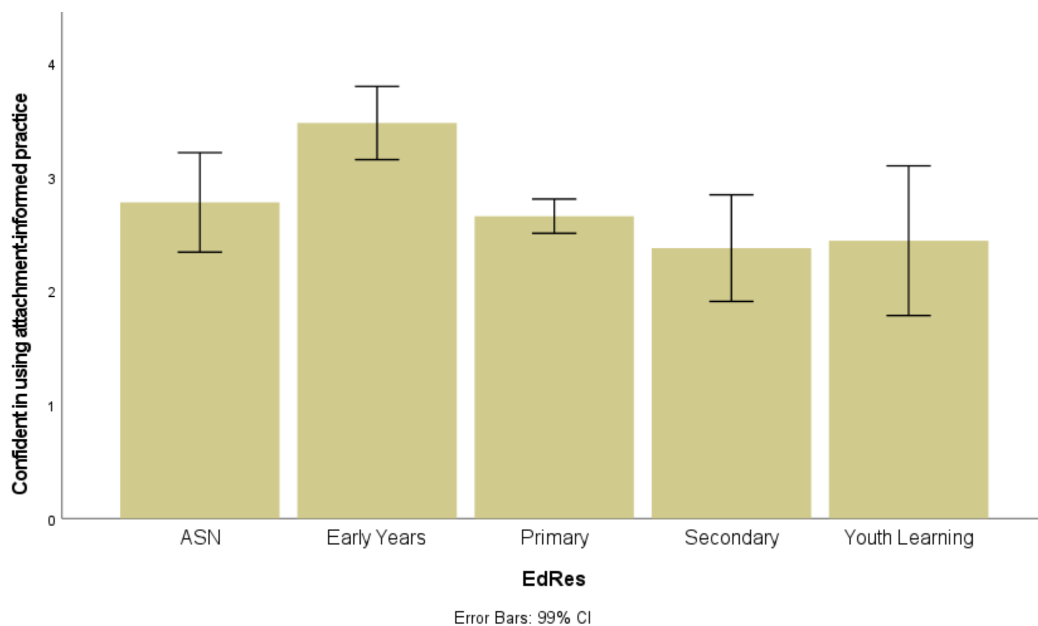


Figure 24: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice.

Item: *There is a shared understanding in the multi–agency group planning for the well-being of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment.*
Items then gave the opportunity for participants to report their observations of attachment theory within a multi-agency context.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement “There is a shared understanding in the multi–agency group planning for the well-being of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment”. The Levene’s test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had not been violated, $F(4, 174) = 1.53$, $p = .197$. The results of the one-way ANOVA indicated a main effect of education resources, $F(4, 174) = 4.71$, $p = .001$, $\eta p2 = .098$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Hochberg post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years and primary ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.81$) and early years and youth learning ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.79$). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 24).

Table 33: There is a shared understanding in the multi–agency group planning for the well-being of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	3.47	.943	2.80; 4.14
Early Years	4.28	.702	3.92; 4.64
Primary	3.65	.805	3.45; 3.86
Secondary	3.69	1.014	2.94; 4.43
Youth Learning	3.27	.786	2.52; 4.02

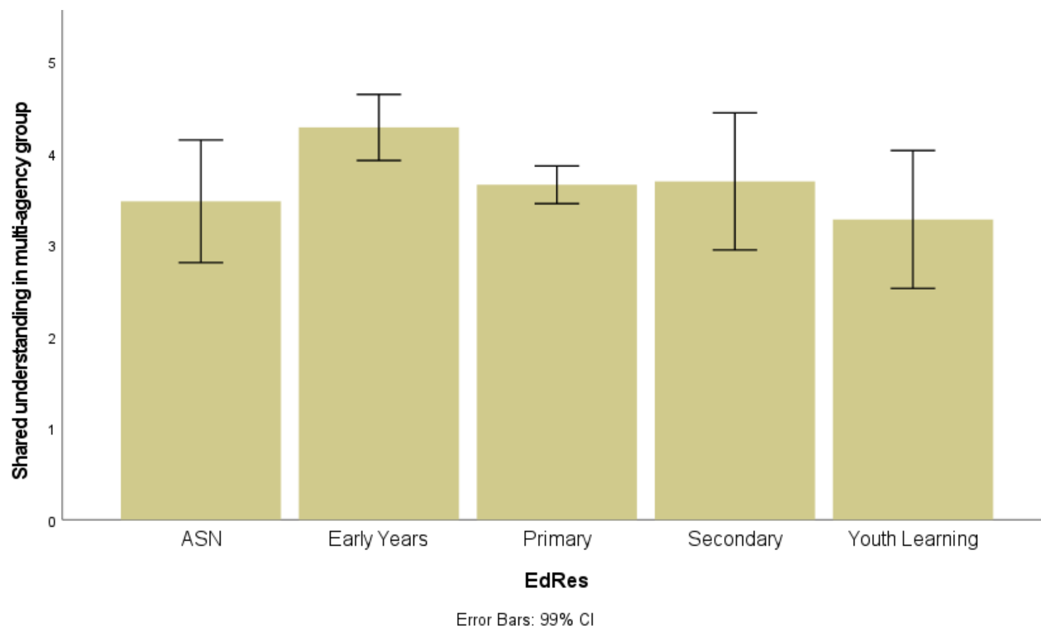


Figure 25: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: There is a shared understanding in the multi–agency group planning for the well-being of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment.

Item: *There is a shared language in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regard to discussions on attachment.*

Views of a shared language when talking about attachment theory and practice were explored. A one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement "There is a shared language in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regards to the importance of attachment". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(4, 170) = 2.86$, $p = .025$. Accordingly, a Welch ANOVA was undertaken which indicated a significant main effect of Education Resources, $F(4, 36.13) = 4.66$, $p = .004$.

Due the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years and

youth learning (M = 3.00, SD = 0.63). All other comparisons were non-significant (p > .01) (see Figure 25).

Table 34: There is a shared language in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regards to the importance of attachment.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	3.26	.686	2.81; 3.78
Early Years	3.96	.744	3.57; 4.35
Primary	3.44	.865	3.22; 3.66
Secondary	3.50	.855	2.81; 4.19
Youth Learning	3.00	.632	2.40; 3.60

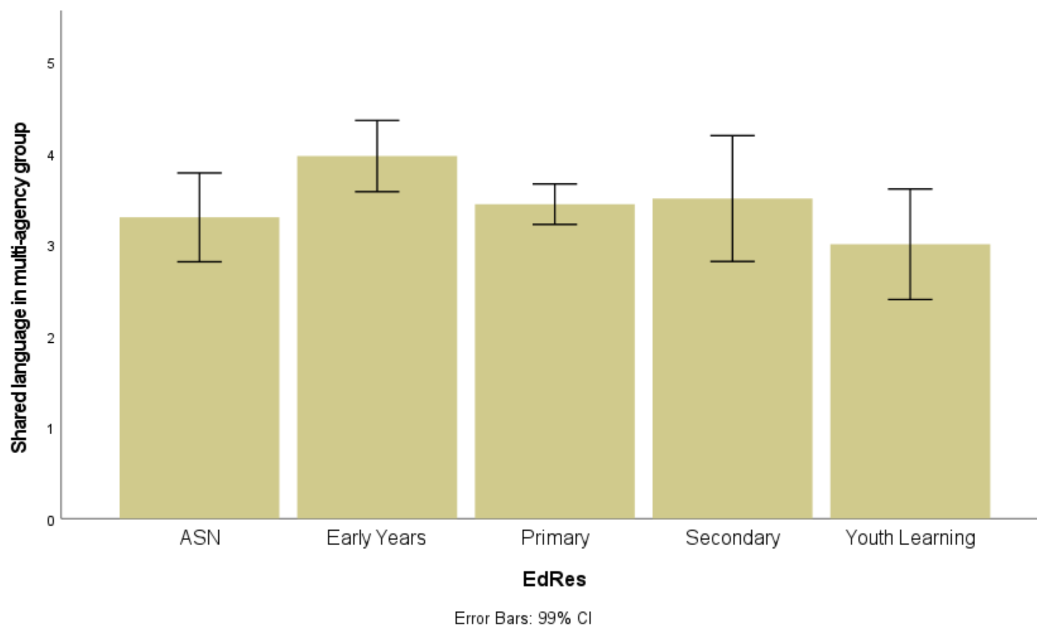


Figure 26: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: There is a shared language in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regards to the importance of attachment.

Item: *The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory.*

Items then focused on participants' views of the promotion of attachment theory and practice within their organisation.

The findings were similar for the promotion of both. A one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement "The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(4, 392) = 2.88$, $p = .023$. Accordingly, a Welch ANOVA was undertaken which indicated a significant main effect of education resources, $F(4, 36.13) = 4.63$, $p = .004$.

Due to the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years (M = 4.04, SD = 0.87) and ASN (M = 3.23, SD = 0.90); early years and youth learning (M = 2.44, SD = 1.03); early years and primary (M = 3.30, SD = 0.95); early years and secondary (M = 2.98, SD = 1.21). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p >$ .01) (see Figure 26).

Table 35: The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	3.23	.898	2.78; 3.69
Early Years	4.02	.868	3.72; 4.35
Primary	3.30	.946	3.14; 3.45
Secondary	2.98	1.208	2.53; 3.43
Youth Learning	2.44	1.031	1.68; 3.20

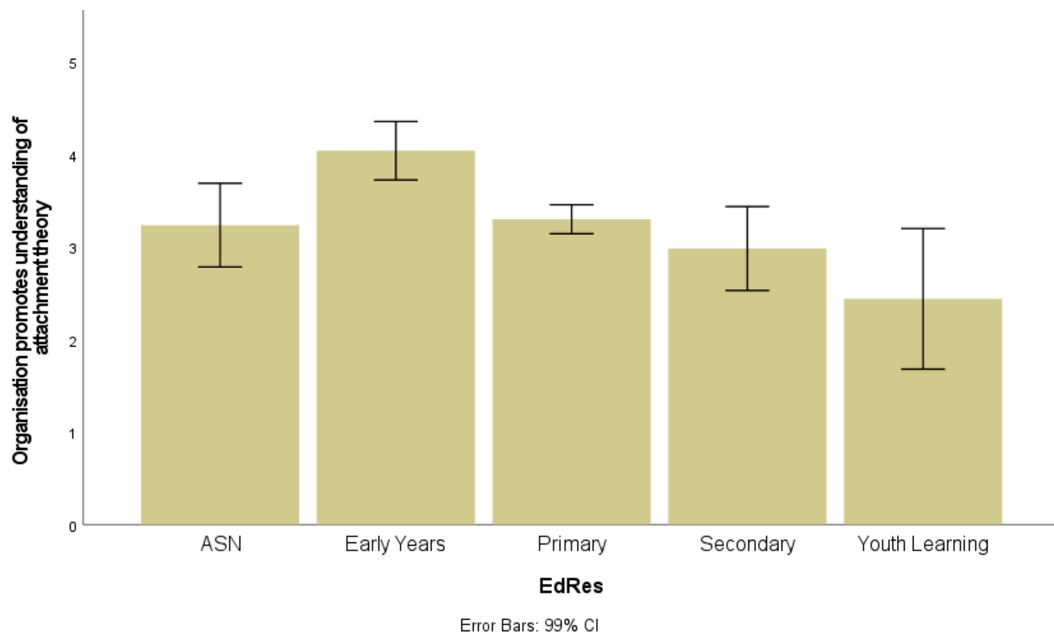


Figure 27: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of attachment theory.

Item: *The organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day business with children and families.*
A one-way ANOVA was conducted with education resources as the independent variable and responses to the statement "The organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day business with children and families". The Levene's test indicated the assumption of homogeneity of variances had been violated, $F(4, 382) = 5.03$, $p = .001$. Accordingly, a Welch ANOVA was undertaken. The results indicated a highly significant main effect of education resources, $F(4, 66.65) = 12.81$, $p < .001$.

Due to the disparate sample sizes and because the homogeneity of variance test was not satisfied, a Games-Howell post hoc test was conducted with 5000 bootstrap resamples. A significant difference ($p < .01$) was found between early years (M = 4.02, SD = 0.78) and ASN (M = 3.23, SD = 0.57); early years and primary (M = 3.30, SD = 0.86); early years and secondary (M = 2.85, SD = 1.19); early years and youth

learning ($M = 2.88$, $SD = 0.96$). All other comparisons were non-significant ($p > .01$) (see Figure 27).

Table 36: The organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day business with children and families.

	Mean	Standard Deviation	99% C.I.
ASN	3.23	.568	2.95; 3.52
Early Years	4.02	.779	3.73; 4.31
Primary	3.30	.858	3.16; 3.44
Secondary	2.85	1.185	2.40; 3.31
Youth Learning	2.88	.957	2.17; 3.58

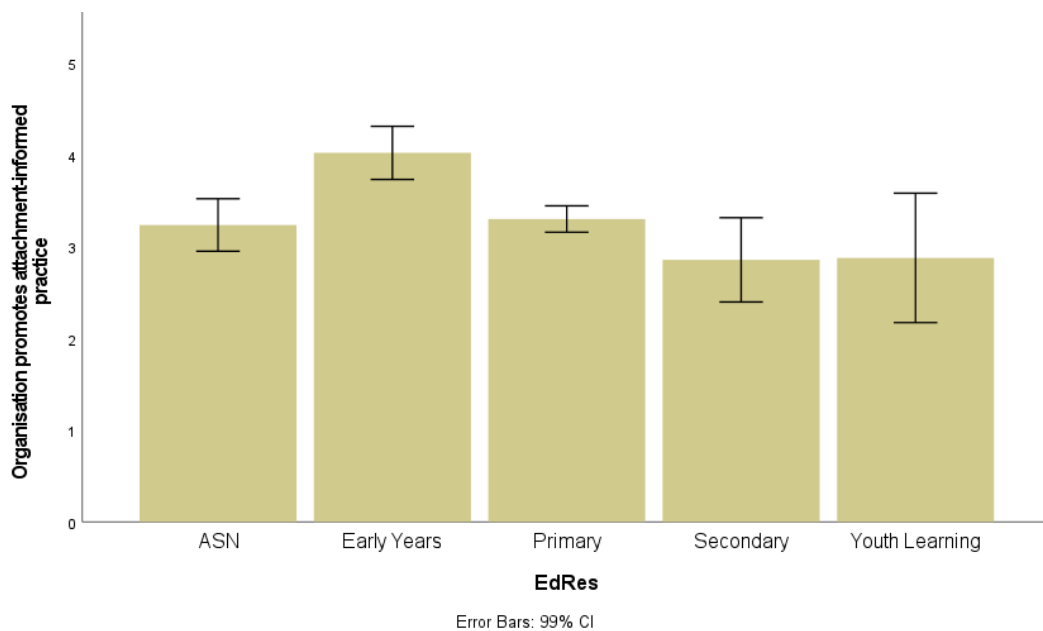


Figure 28: Bootstrapped mean scores (and 99% CI) for responses to the question: The organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day-to-day business with children and families.

Discussion – Education Resources

The hypothesis that the high profile of the theory given by government early years initiatives would lead to a significant difference in the response rate of early years practitioners completing the audit was not supported by the data. However, at the

time the audit was distributed, the researcher was aware of an increase in the time allocated for early years practitioners to work directly with children, leading to less time for team discussions, responding to emails etc. This was in response to Scottish Government's Early Years policy to increase nursery places (2014c). Several head teachers with nursery classes contacted the researcher to say that early years practitioners now found it difficult to access emails due to the decrease in non–contact time.

Nevertheless, the hypothesis that early years practitioners would report significantly more positive views on the importance and application of attachment theory and attachment-informed practice compared to other sectors within education, would seem to have been fulfilled. Significantly more early years practitioners agreed with the statement 'It is important to have skills in attachment-informed practice in order to work effectively with children and families' compared to their colleagues in secondary and the youth learning service, and with regard to the statement 'I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as attachment-informed practice', highly significant differences were found between early years and each of the other four sectors in education, i.e. primary, secondary, ASN and youth learning. This finding was supported by the responses to the statement 'I am confident in using attachment-informed practice in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice', where highly significant differences were also found between early years and their colleagues in the other four sectors. Analysis of responses to 'I am confident in applying attachment theory in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning', supported further inferences of the differences between the sectors, where early years were found to have reported significantly more confidence in the application of the theory in assessment and planning for children, compared to primary, secondary and youth learning. There would seem to be evidence that these views of early years practitioners may be influenced by promotion of attachment theory during their qualifying course. Significantly more early years practitioners indicated they had learned about the

theory during a qualifying course, compared to other sectors. Furthermore, significantly more early years practitioners reported positively to the statement 'the organisation in which I work actively promotes attachment-informed practice in the day to day business with children and families', compared to ASN, primary, secondary and youth learning colleagues. Early years practitioners also reported significantly higher number of opportunities in their response to 'what kind of opportunities have you had to reflect on how your early childhood experiences have affected your own adult attachment style?' than their colleagues in primary and secondary.

4.6.7 Part 6 – Qualitative Data Analysis

Options were provided throughout the audit for participants to elaborate on their response on the Likert scale. There were 15 opportunities throughout the audit for a respondent to elaborate on their response. Tables 37 and 38 below outlines the number of written responses. Looking to gain insight and understandings into the perspective of the participants being studied, the comments provided by participants completing the audit were analysed using Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2018; 2017). Categories, patterns, differences, shared meanings, and concepts were all explored. Furthermore, any influences which had given practitioners specific insight were highlighted. During the analysis, the researcher explored any triangulation between qualitative and quantitative data.

Table 37: Children's services: number of written responses.

Sector	Total number of comments
Education (n = 399)	1015
Health (n = 14)	50
Social Work (n = 20)	79

Table 38: Education resources: number of written responses.

Sector	Total number of comments
ASN (n = 31)	95

Early Years (n = 55)	157
Primary (n = 246)	530
Secondary (n = 51)	158
Youth Learning (n = 16)	75

The researcher followed Braun and Clarke's (2013) recommended 6 step process in analysing qualitative data.

- Familiarisation
- Coding
- Theme searching
- Defining themes
- Reviewing themes
- Report writing

What Braun and Clarke (2013) refer to as a 'complete coding process' was followed by the researcher, where "anything and everything of interest or relevance" to the research question is considered (p. 206). The researcher marked the codes on hard copies of the data and in order to refine the codes, they were revised over three readings. Revision included merging codes into a more expansive code when the subtle differences were not useful to the analysis. Semantic codes, describing the language and concepts in the responses, were identified as well as researcher derived or latent codes. Meaning, in the context of the research question, informed the decision to establish codes and not the frequency of when an issue was mentioned, although frequency was also influential. The researcher generated three themes from the finalised codes.

Figure 28 below illustrates the three themes and Table 39 outlines the link between identified codes and the three themes.

Table 40 provides illustrative comments for each of the three themes. Each theme has a central organising concept (Braun & Clarke, 2013, 2019) and they represent the significant patterns in the data set in relation to the research question.

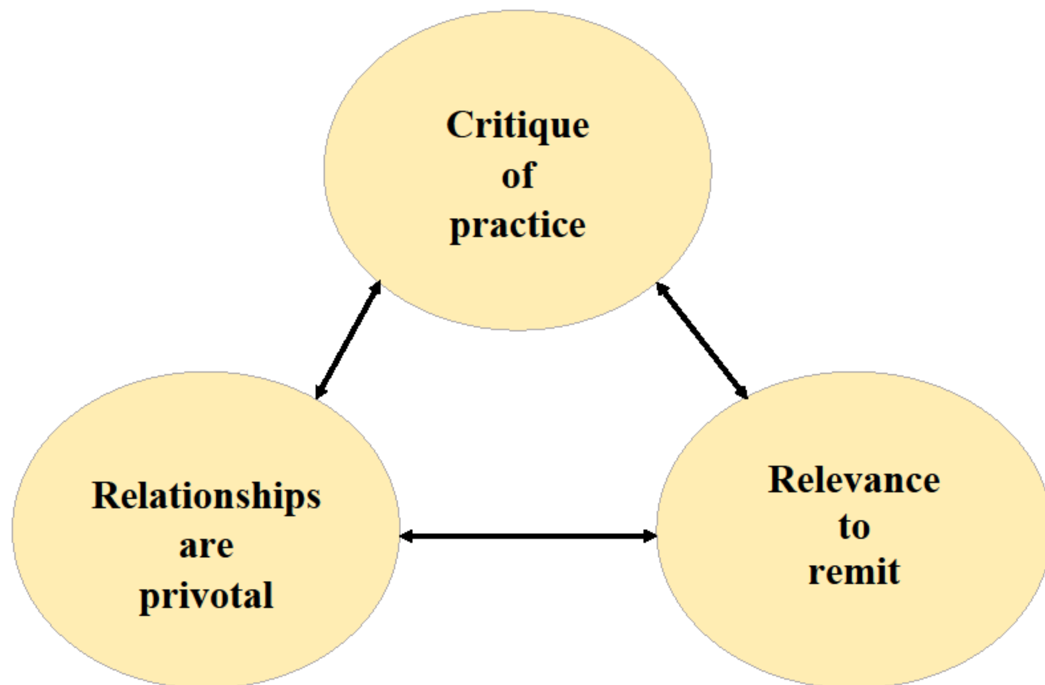


Figure 29: Themes identified from qualitative data.

Table 39: Codes and themes identified from the qualitative data.

Code number	Code name	Theme
1	Impact of insecure attachment on life trajectories	Relationships are pivotal
2	Best possible start	Relationships are pivotal
3	Link between attachment and positive relationships	Relationships are pivotal
4	Impact of relationships on health and wellbeing	Relationships are pivotal
5	Children as social beings	Relationships are pivotal
6	Nurture in schools	Relationships are pivotal

7	Assessment and intervention	Relevance to remit
8	Decision making about children	Relevance to remit
9	Attachment theory informs intervention	Relevance to remit
10	Universal v targeted application	Relevance to remit
11	Understanding children’s services behaviour	Relevance to remit
12	How insecure attachment effects learning in the classroom	Relevance to remit
13	Key to supporting Looked After and Accommodated Children	Relevance to remit
14	Responding to Child Protection	Relevance to remit
15	Working with parents and carers	Relevance to remit
16	Attachment to teachers	Relevance to remit
17	National drivers	Relevance to remit
18	Awareness of personal attachment history	Critique of practice
19	‘Normal’ attachment history	Critique of practice
20	Professional opportunities to explore impact of personal attachment history on practice and relationships	Critique of practice
21	Challenge for newly qualified teachers	Critique of practice
22	Impact of social changes in parenting	Critique of practice
23	Values underpinning practice	Critique of practice
24	Barriers to effective practice	Critique of practice
25	Translating theory into practice	Critique of practice

Table 40: Illustrative comments in relation to the identified themes.

Theme	Illustrative comments
Relationships are pivotal	“I think this theory is very important in helping young people build trust and then increase confidence and raise aspirations”
	“Secure attachment is fundamental to giving the child the best possible start in life with regards to emotional and health development”
Relevance to remit	“I feel that staff without this knowledge of theory and practice often have difficulty truly understanding the child’s issues and often find it difficult to separate the behaviour from the child”
	“It is important to understand attachment in order to recognise and assist children with any barriers to learning”
Critique of practice	“High caseloads and crisis management style of much of the work done does not always allow for planning and reflection necessary for attachment-informed evidence-based practice”
	“I have heard about children having ‘attachment issues’ and am aware that this exists. However, I have limited formal knowledge of what it actually means, how it can manifest or how I can deal with it. I would relish the opportunity to learn more, especially relating to my own nurturing style”

The qualitative dataset comprised of short comments provided by participants, and although the brevity of some of the comments poses a challenge in identifying patterns of meaning, analysis did provide the understandings needed to make tentative conclusions and inform next steps in the research programme. The data provided useful information in exploring the research question What is the current level of knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice within children’s services? It allowed some inference into how practitioners from the three

agencies viewed the importance of attachment theory, as well as permitting cautious inferences into their understanding of the theory for children as well as themselves, and their self-reported skills and confidence in applying the theory.

The central organising concept (Braun & Clarke, 2013, 2019, 2021) of the 'Critique of practice' theme, was that practitioners indicated a range of challenges in relation to attachment-informed practice in their day-to-day work. Aspects included the extent to which the theory was included in initial training, the availability of supervision and support to discuss, reflect and promote the transfer of a professional knowledge base in to practice. One comment from a Social Work practitioner highlights this issue: "I am a newly qualified Social Worker. As such I think that the application of theory into practice is a continuing challenge. As a student, you are well supported to think of your theories but within actual practice it does feel that the theories are not openly used. So far, I rarely hear anyone speak of the theories behind what they are actually doing in the workplace."

The organizing concept of 'Relationships are pivotal' was the understanding conveyed in the responses that positive relationships are viewed by respondents as key to health and well-being outcomes. Aspects related to how insecure relationships with parents and carers at an early age can have a lifelong impact and therefore early intervention to support parents and carers should be promoted.

The theme of 'Relevance to remit' had an organizing concept around the importance of attachment theory in assessments, planning and interventions in all areas of the work of children's services practitioners.

Including quantitative and qualitative data collection methods provided opportunities for triangulation. The exploration of the qualitative data is consistent with the findings from the statistical analysis. Social work practitioners rated the importance of the theory and practice in their work significantly higher than education practitioners. This was reflected in the frequent comments from social work on how fundamental the theory and practice is to their role and remit. One participant stated,

"I feel that attachment theory is at the very core of all work and support with children and their families". Another social work participant wrote "If you do not have a sound knowledge base of attachment theory then you cannot effectively argue that you are completing evidence-based practice".

The hypothesis that, along with social work, health practitioners would view attachment theory and practice as being significantly more important than education practitioners, was not fulfilled in the statistical analysis. The qualitative data, to some extent, supports that finding, with one health practitioner commenting, "I think it would be helpful but not 'very' important". In contrast, another health practitioner commented that they believed that "health staff working with children require further in-depth training in observation of attachment", which would indicate an acknowledgement of the importance of theory and practice. Comments from education practitioners provided evidence that supports a view that it is a useful theory in relation to their role. However, there were clear indications that many education practitioners had not received the initial or ongoing CPD training opportunities to fully consider the relevance and impact of the theory on their work. One primary school teacher commented, "I have only just been introduced to attachment theory through this survey" and an education practitioner within youth learning wrote "I feel I would benefit within my job if I was given information on this theory."

4.7 DISCUSSION

The findings from the quantitative and qualitative data analysis in this study would seem to indicate a discrepancy between the vision of the Scottish Government's Common Core (2012b) and the apparent levels of practitioners' knowledge, skills and confidence in application of attachment theory and practice. The Common Core would seem to indicate explicit expectations not only of practitioners' understanding of the attachment needs of the children and young people with whom they are working and supporting, but also awareness of their own attachment history.

4.8 LIMITATIONS

It should be noted that employment history was not requested in the audit. It may have been that some social work practitioners, prior to their current post, had worked in a residential setting, where there is an emphasis on self-reflection on the practitioners' childhood and attachment history. This may have affected responses to the items on personal attachment style.

It should also be highlighted that there were notable differences in sample sizes which may have affected reliability. However, appropriate measures were taken to address this with bootstrapping, and informed choice of post hoc test. It is also acknowledged that multiple testing can lead to Type 1 and Type 2 errors. Applying an alpha level of .01 took this risk into account.

4.9 NEXT STEPS

The understandings gained from the analysis of the audit data highlighted differences across the three practitioner groups within children's services. The findings were shared with the Children's Services Strategy Group and the researcher was available for advice and consultation on how to respond to the need for shared knowledge, understanding and a common language to discuss attachment.

Study 1 proved very useful in providing initial insight into the main field of the research programme (i.e., how education practitioners make sense of attachment theory). Gaps in education practitioners' self-reported knowledge of attachment theory and practice were identified within the context of their children's services colleagues. However, broader, and more in-depth insight was needed to inform further steps in the research journey.

The next step planned was for the researcher to interview a sample of education participants in a one-to-one setting. Given the critical realist assumptions of the researcher, interview methods would be an appropriate approach to reveal valid knowledge "beyond itself, of the social world within which the interview event has occurred" (Newton, 2010, p. 1).

CHAPTER 5: AN EXPLORATION OF EDUCATION PRACTITIONERS' UNDERSTANDINGS AND VIEWS OF ATTACHMENT THEORY AND PRACTICE *(STUDY 2)*

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Study 1 provided a limited insight into the understandings of education practitioners in respect of attachment theory and practice. This study provided an opportunity to gather more in-depth data which could address the research question: What understandings do education practitioners have of the implications of attachment theory and practice in their work settings?

Ethical approval was granted for this study by the University of Strathclyde ethics committee.

5.2 AIMS AND RATIONALE

As outlined in Chapter 3: 1.3, the aim of Study 2 was to use semi-structured interview methods to gather sufficient data to confidently generate meaningful and useful themes. These themes illuminated the particular understandings, perspectives and views of education practitioners on attachment theory and practice. The researcher's reflective and reflexive considerations (Chapter 3: 3.3) were taken into account in the planning and analysis of this study.

5.3 METHOD

5.3.1 Participants

The sample of participants was determined by education practitioners who in Study 1 indicated willingness to take part in a 1:1 discussion with the researcher to talk about their experience and views of attachment theory in practice within their work environment.

A stratified sampling and screening process was implemented to identify 20 participants, ensuring a balance of designation, sector, years of experience, age and

gender (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 85). Table 41 below provides the demographic information on participants.

Table 41: Participant information.

Designation	Sector	Years of experience	Age	Gender
Class Teacher (n = 10)	ASN (n = 4)	0 (n = 1)	20 – 29	Female
Community Learning	Early Years	4 (n = 2)	(n = 2)	(n = 12)
and Development	(n = 3)	5 (n = 1)	30 – 39	Male
Officer (n = 2)	Primary (n = 7)	7 (n = 1)	(n = 7)	(n = 8)
Depute Head Teacher	Secondary	8 (n = 1)	40 – 49	
(n = 1)	(n = 4)	9 (n = 1)	(n = 5)	
Early Years Worker	Youth Learning	11 (n = 2)	50 – 59	
(n = 2)	(n = 2)	14 (n = 1)	(n = 6)	
Nursery Teacher (n=1)		15 (n = 3)		
Principal Teacher		16 (n = 2)		
(n=2)		17 (n = 3)		
School Support		18 (n = 1)		
Assistant (n=2)		25 (n = 1)		

Years of experience (M = 11.45, SD = 6.5)

Following the sampling and screening process, an email invitation from the researcher was sent to participants, who were free to decide whether to participate, or without needing to provide reason, withdraw from the study. Those who chose to participate were to be offered a copy of the transcript of the interview.

5.3.2 Process of Developing Questions for Semi-Structured Interviews

The analysis of the audit qualitative data in Study 1 (Chapter 4) informed the process. The semi-structured interviews followed the principles outlined by Spradley (1979; *c.f.,* Willig, 2012). Spradley (1979) emphasises descriptive, structural and evaluative types of questions. Descriptive questions invite general accounts and

information; structural questions provide insight into how the participants ascribe meaning to the events around them; evaluative questions prompt thoughts and feelings about a topic or event.

To check items for meaning and ambiguity (Willig, 2012), the researcher consulted with the members of the reference group on the draft set of questions. Thereafter, interviews were piloted with two members of the reference group to check the language of the items further and ascertain an approximate time to complete the interview. The approximate time scale for the interview from the two pilot interviews with members of the reference group was 55 minutes.

The researcher also attended a meeting with the Director of Education and the extended management team to consult on the draft interview items thus providing further opportunity for reflection. Permission had been granted by the education management team for this study at the beginning of the research programme, and the discussion allowed for an update on the progress of the programme.

5.3.3 Formation of Questions

The audit qualitative data in Study 1 highlighted education practitioners' self-reported lack of skills and confidence in attachment informed practice. There were also comments made about lack of knowledge of the theory itself. The first question therefore had both descriptive and structural elements and was aimed at putting participants at ease as much as possible and giving them the opportunity to share how much or how little they felt they knew. Whilst these participants had volunteered to take part, it was thought that it would be helpful to construct the first question in such a way as to establish a positive and collaborative tone to encourage meaningful dialogue and critical reflection (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Together with questions two, three and four, which were structural and evaluative questions, there was a focus on practice within the context of practitioners' past and current work. It was hoped that the data would provide rich insights into the

understandings of education practitioners. The questions were constructed in such a way so as to help determine whether there were examples of practice across the school establishments and education services which could be identified as attachment-informed. This was aimed to help participants who might not have had the language to describe practice as attachment-informed prior to the opportunity of reflection provided by the interview.

Given the theme of 'relevance to remit' generated by the researcher from the Study 1, and the number of audit practitioners who referred to Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) (Scottish Executive, 2006; Scottish Government, 2012a) (the main legislation in Scotland governing the practice of all practitioners supporting vulnerable children) in response to Section 3 Practice: Application in your work, a decision was made to draft an evaluative question to explore assumptions and views on the link between attachment theory and GIRFEC (question 5).

An evaluative question was then drafted to give participants an opportunity to reflect on what organisational culture and processes would be in place if attachment theory influenced all practice in children's services (question 6).

Question 7 was drafted to encourage critical thinking and a focus on the implementation barriers to attachment theory underpinning practice.

A final question was drafted to encourage participants to consider the interview experience and to share any outstanding reflections or views on attachment theory and practice (question 8).

Before finalising the wording of the questions, the warning from Miles and Huberman (1994) was considered. Researchers need to be alert to questions lacking sufficient focus, without which "superfluous information will be collected" (p. 35).

The final interview items are provided in Table 42 below and in Appendix 5 .

Table 42: Semi-structured interview questions.

	Question	Type
1.	How helpful did you find the information provided on attachment theory?	Descriptive/Structural
2.	What opportunities have you had to hear about attachment-informed practice, both in terms of initial professional training and CPD?	Descriptive/Structural
3.	Can you provide some examples of attachment-informed practice?	Structural
4.	Are you aware of anything within your establishment which promotes attachment theory? These examples can be in terms of existing practice or your experience as an employee.	Structural
5.	To what extent do you consider attachment theory fits with GIRFEC?	Evaluative
6.	How would you evidence whether attachment theory was an underpinning influence in children's services?	Evaluative
7.	Do you consider there to be any barriers in South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources to embedding attachment-informed practice? (This is a target within the Children's Services Plan)	Evaluative
8.	Any other comments/reflections you would like to make?	Descriptive/Evaluative

5.3.4 Tools for Recording Responses

There was only one meeting planned between the researcher and participants to undertake the semi-structured interview. This could prove insufficient time to fully build up trust to video record the interview. The researcher was of the view that to introduce the idea of video recording could make participants uncomfortable (Willig, 2013, p. 21) and so could hinder the process. Furthermore, the main interest of the researcher was in the verbal content of the interviewee responses (Kvale &

Brinkmann, 2009, p. 179) and not in terms of any other aspect of the interaction. After consideration, the decision was made not to video record the interviews.

A mobile tablet device was identified as one of the most reliable and user-friendly tools for the researcher to use, and a software application was identified to provide high quality audio recordings. Time was identified for the researcher to practice efficient use of the tablet and identify the best positioning for effective recording.

5.3.5 Prompts and Probes

The academic literature highlights the importance of taking time to consider when to probe and prompt (Gillham, 2000) in order to support a consistent experience for each participant. Willig (2012) recommends the same wording for a prompt or probe for each interview and recommends taking time to reflect on this before each interview. The researcher adopted Denscombe's (2017) useful good practice guidance for prompts to encourage the participant to "pursue their thoughts" by repeating the interviewees' recent words and remaining silent and implicitly inviting them to continue; and probes to seek more detail or elaboration i.e., "Can you tell me more about that?" (p. 233).

5.3.6 Procedure

An invitation to participate in Study 2, was sent by email to each participant selected. This email included the information on attachment theory which had previously been sent with the invitation to complete the audit. The invitation had explained the interview would be audio recorded and full written consent was required. An excerpt from the Scottish Government's 'Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland' and an excerpt from the Scottish Government's 'Attachment Matters for All' were included as additional information. Participants were invited to contact the researcher with any concerns prior to the interview.

As indicated would be the case in the email invitation, the researcher contacted the participants by telephone to finalise the date, time, and venue of the interview.

During this telephone call, participants were given the option of where they would like the interview to take place. The majority chose a location within their place of work where they hoped they would be able to book a room which would ensure privacy and lack of interruptions. These phone calls were time consuming but considered worthwhile by the researcher to establish initial rapport and to convey an implicit message that this was a collaborative discussion and not in any way a test or assessment.

However, being audio recorded during a semi-structured interview was novel for many participants. To address this consideration, and any potential anxieties for participants, the researcher ensured a few minutes were spent putting the participant at ease before the recording commenced, and participants were given an opportunity to say what the interview meant to them. Furthermore, the researcher explained that the transcription would be typed by a skilled transcriber who would not have access to the participant’s name or the establishment in which they worked. It was hoped that the anonymity would be helpful and reassuring.

As highlighted earlier in this chapter, the researcher was alert to provide opportunities for participants to elaborate, providing richer and more detailed responses. The researcher checked with participants at various points during the interview to monitor understandings of the questions.

Although an approximate time for the interview had been estimated during the pilot interviews, the researcher ensured an extended allocation of time in case of unexpected interruptions or any upset or disclosure from participants (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

The audio recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim by a skilled transcriber and included laughter, pause, repetition etc. The researcher and transcriber had discussed the process using elements of the guidance on transcribing from various sources in the literature (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Huberman & Miles, 2002).

Whilst listening to the recording, the researcher checked the transcriptions. This took a significant amount of time and enabled the researcher to respond to question marks from the transcriber. Willig (2012) has commented that “an interview transcript can never be the mirror image of the interview” (p. 32), but reading the transcript while listening to the recording was a worthwhile process to become familiar with the data from this study at the start of the analysis. Throughout all readings of the data, and whilst listening to the recorded interviews, the researcher focused on the research question, ‘What understandings do education practitioners have of the implications of attachment theory and practice in their work settings?’

After all the codes and themes were generated and refined, a process Braun and Clarke (2013) refer to as “recursive rather than linear” (p. 16), the researcher made the decision to listen to the original recorded interviews a final time to critically reflect on the identified themes.

5.4 RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The mean time of the interviews was 46 minutes (*SD* = 8.6). The 20 participants who had received an email invitation and follow-up telephone call from the researcher all took part, with no-one withdrawing. All interviews went very smoothly in terms of organisation, and no interviews had to be rescheduled or rushed due of lack of time. Given the routine use of mobile tablets in schools to audio or video record classroom practice, participants seemed more familiar and at ease with this method than the researcher had predicted.

During two interviews in school establishments, there were interruptions from a member of staff who was unaware of the room having been booked and who left immediately when they realised a confidential discussion was taking place.

Two participants became tearful during their discussions. One participant revealed a childhood history of local authority care. The participant became distressed recalling the memory of being taken from the family home as a very young child and the significant challenges experienced in primary and secondary school. The interview

was paused for 20 minutes and the researcher gave the participant the option to stop the interview for that day and either rearrange or withdraw. However, the participant expressed a desire that their experiences would contribute to the research and lead to better understanding of the impact on the care experiences of children and young people. The interview restarted and time was taken at the end of the interview for the participant to have time to rest and talk with the researcher before returning to school duties. The researcher gave advice on routes for support.

A second participant, an experienced teacher, became tearful during the research interview while reflecting on past pupils with disrupted early care. Understanding more about the impact of insecure attachment, the participant felt the help that had been provided to many pupils had been inadequate. The interview was paused for 15 minutes and an offer was made by the researcher to rearrange the interview. However, the participant wanted to continue and during the last question where an opportunity was given to reflect on any further issues, a strong interest was expressed in learning more about attachment theory, and in particular developing skills in implementing effective strategies. At the end of the interview, the researcher supplied the practitioner with literature and information on attachment training.

The data analysis undertaken by the researcher was influenced by Braun and Clarke's (2013) Thematic Analysis approach. After coding the data into aspects that relate to the research question – aspects which can be actions, activities, concepts, differences, opinions, processes – clusters of codes were used to generate themes. In Braun and Clarke's approach (2013), themes occur at three main levels: themes which are distinctive and have a central organizing concept; overarching themes which organize and structure the analysis and "capture an idea encapsulated in a number of themes"; and subthemes which "capture and develop notable specific aspects of the central organizing concept of one theme" (p. 231). In the analysis undertaken by the researcher, three overarching themes were identified, nine themes related to the three overarching themes and two subthemes were generated.

Figure 29 below illustrates the overarching themes and the related themes. Table 43 outlines how the codes refined by the researcher were organized into themes.

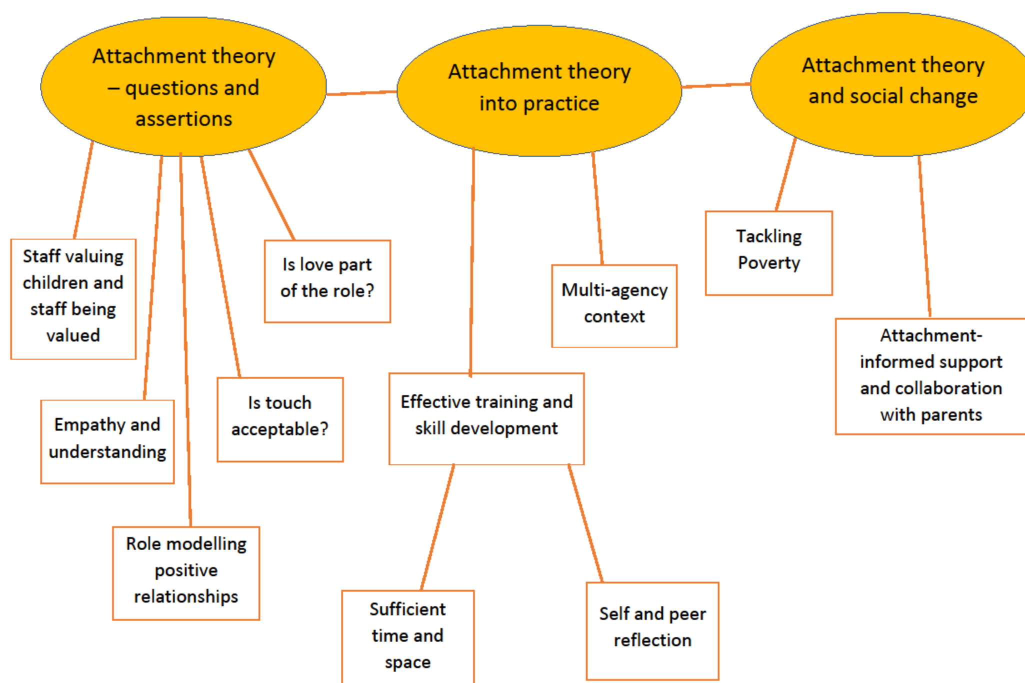


Figure 30: Themes generated from the semi-structured interview data.

Table 43: Codes and themes generated from the semi-structured interview data.

Code Number	Code	Theme	Overarching Theme
1	Parents' understanding of attachment theory	Attachment-informed support and collaboration with parents	Attachment theory and social change
2	Not blaming parents	Attachment-informed support and collaboration with parents	Attachment theory and social change
3	Early intervention		Attachment theory and social change
4	Experience attachment theory on initial professional	Effective training and skill development	Attachment theory into practice

	training		
5	Needs of Looked After children	Effective training and skill development	Attachment theory into practice
6	Attachment-informed resources	Sufficient time and space	Attachment theory into practice
7	Workload and new initiatives like attachment theory	Sufficient time and space	Attachment theory into practice
8	What does attachment-informed practice look like?	Effective training and skill development	Attachment theory into practice
9	Learning about attachment theory from attendance at case reviews	Effective training and skill development	Attachment theory into practice
10	Insufficient background information on vulnerable children	Multi-agency context	Attachment theory into practice
11	Understanding behaviour through an understanding of attachment theory	Effective training and skill development	Attachment theory into practice
12	Impact of the semi-structured interview questions	Self and peer reflection	Attachment theory into practice
13	Exploring your attachment history	Self and peer reflection	Attachment theory into practice
14	Children's services – all in this together	Multi-agency context	Attachment theory into practice
15	Available budget	Sufficient time and space	Attachment theory into practice
16	Need to debrief after stressful situations	Self and peer reflection	Attachment theory into practice
17	Effective information sharing between agencies	Multi-agency context	Attachment theory into practice
18	Understanding impact of insecure attachment	Empathy and understanding	Attachment theory – questions and

			assertions
19	Focus on getting children through qualifications	Staff valuing children	Attachment theory – questions and assertions
20	Resenting colleagues who can't show empathy	Empathy and understanding	Attachment theory – questions and assertions
21	The best teachers	Empathy and understanding	Attachment theory – questions and assertions
22	Using touch to comfort and reassure	Is touch acceptable?	Attachment theory – questions and assertions
23	Staff interactions in front of pupils	Role modelling positive relationships	Attachment theory – questions and assertions
24	Nurturing and caring for children	Is love part of the role?	Attachment theory – questions and assertions
25	The role of building and fostering positive relationships	Staff valuing children	Attachment theory – questions and assertions

An overarching theme of ‘attachment theory and social change’ captures the views and assumptions identified by the researcher in the responses to question 4: ‘What would you predict would happen in Scotland if attachment theory was an underpinning influence in children’s services, not only in all professional practice with children and young people, but also in terms of the culture within organisations?’ and question 5: ‘Are there any further comments which you would like to raise?’.

Many participants made reference to the intergenerational aspects of parenting, “so you’re not only dealing with the attachment issues of the children, you have the attachment issues of the parents that have attachment issues from their parents before them.” Comments such as this reflected that understandings of attachment theory could be used to inform early intervention. Attachment-informed support could be

provided for parents who themselves may have had insecure attachments in childhood and were experiencing difficulties attuning to the needs of their children and keeping them safe and secure. One participant commented, "you would think that the people just didn't listen to you, didn't care and weren't really interested in their kids, when they are, but a lot of them are just not equipped to do it*"*. Many participants saw school as needing to do much more to welcome parents and work collaboratively, without blaming or judging them. The phrase "stop blaming parents" was used more than the researcher had predicted.

There was an emphasis in some of the responses on the importance of education practitioners establishing positive, non-judgmental relationships with parents and carers. One participant shared their reflections from a multi-agency case discussion, "I've been in meetings, Joint Assessment Team meetings etc and meetings with parents and I have said to the parents 'you know, nobody's blaming you,' because if you don't know then how do you know you are not getting it wrong. You don't know you're in this cycle that you're in and you don't know how to break out it. So we have to start off and say 'no, there's no blame attached, let's learn together'*"*. Another participant highlighted the importance of that positive relationship in terms of parents feeling confident to share information,

> things do happen outside of school that have a massive impact on what the children bring into school … we do have that open communication and I think it makes the parents feel we can speak openly. They shouldn't feel like 'we're being judged', and I think having that relationship with the parent and the child encourages them both to feel that they can share how they're both feeling. I think with any individual whether it's a child or a parent, anyone at all when they feel judged or when they feel that they're being blamed it's only going to make them take a step back and be shut off towards it and that is really not what we want to achieve because if we have that relationship with anyone we're not really going to get the true essence of what maybe the issue is … being blamed for something, it immediately makes me think 'oh what have I done wrong?' rather than 'what is it I need to do now?' and 'how can we move forward?' and we don't want to have that relationship with our parents when really they could be giving us vital information about a child that spends a lot of time with us. We need our relationship with parents to be good.

There was evidence in the responses that participants identified the positive impact of effective parental support provided by practitioners who had a sound knowledge

of attachment theory and practice and knew how it could inform intervention strategies. The theme of ‘attachment-informed support and collaboration with parents’ was generated by the researcher from the concepts identified in the responses.

Participants referred to long term changes and improvements in society being possible if early intervention was attachment-informed. One comment indicated that many existing interventions were “sticking plasters after the young person reached adolescence”, whereas effective early intervention could lead to “crime rates falling and mental health improving”.

Success in school was seen by some practitioners as a major influence in positive life chances, and a way to break the cycle of deprivation. Views were expressed that education practitioners who were skilled in attachment-informed practice could more effectively support children with sub optimal attachment experiences, “You need knowledge of what it means to have a child in your class who has attachment issues, and knowledge of what you can say and do to make it better”. Some participants perceived a link between secure attachment and positive long-term outcomes and these understandings were generated by the researcher within the theme of ‘Tackling Poverty’.

The challenge of ‘attachment theory into practice’ was identified by the researcher as an overarching theme which captured the concepts and ideas behind a number of themes. Every participant indicated either directly or indirectly that they saw a challenge in translating attachment theory into day-to-day practice, whether with regard to responding to the behaviour of an individual child or developing school policy. Themes generated included ‘effective training and skill development’ which stressed the importance not only of knowledge and theory but skill development, and the ‘multi-agency context’ theme related to the need apparent in some responses for the common vision in GIRFEC to extend to joint training and effective information sharing. Two subthemes elaborated the central concept of the ‘effective training and skill development’ theme. ‘Sufficient time and space’ reflected the

amount of time that practitioners considered was needed to implement and practice strategies and ensure ongoing improvement in practice. The second subtheme was 'self and peer reflection'. This theme encompassed views of the importance of practitioners having opportunity to reflect on their practice. It also raised the importance of sharing elements of effective attachment-informed strategies with their peers in school. Furthermore, this subtheme highlighted the need for time to be allocated for collaborative discussions with peers within the continuing professional development timetable. Lack of sufficient time allocated to these activities was viewed by some practitioners as a barrier to effective skill development.

A third overarching theme of 'attachment theory – questions and assertions' was generated by the researcher. This brought together a number of themes where respondents would seem to be posing important and sensitive questions for education practitioners. Two related themes arose were, 'Is love part of the role?' of education practitioners, and 'Is touch acceptable?' between practitioners and children. These issues were raised in particular by those working with early years and developmentally young children. Participants indicated that more open dialogue was needed to discuss issues such as comforting a crying and distressed child by physical reassurance e.g., putting an arm around a child or providing a hug.

The themes of 'staff valuing children and staff being valued', 'empathy and understanding' and 'role modelling positive relationships' provides some illumination of what attachment theory meant for practitioners and what they thought it should also mean to their peers. Comments were made about what could be done to support colleagues who "clearly do not seem to be able to offer empathy to vulnerable children." Again, comments were made about the need for open dialogue on these sensitive issues and the need within education, to address what one participant referred to as "the elephant in the room."

Participants unexpectedly made a strong link between the concepts of secure base and safe haven and the levels of their job satisfaction and performance as employees and members of staff teams.

5.5 DISCUSSION

The iPad and Supernote application proved very efficient and effective tools in this study and there seemed little need for the researcher to double check that the device was operating correctly during the interview. This aided the process and avoided disruption to the flow of the participant's responses.

There were note-worthy comments made about existing practice within the work environment being attachment-informed without the practitioner either having known about attachment theory or attachment-informed practice prior to the opportunity for reflection provided by the interview. One participant voiced the comment that, "many professionals are already intuitively aware of the factors which the theory addresses, even although they may be unaware of 'attachment theory." Another commented, "I feel I have a basic knowledge of attachment theory but often the most diligent and dedicated people working in education have the natural tendency to be nurturing and create attachments with the children in their care." However another reflected, "It's like if you're playing an instrument and you do something maybe by mistake, and somebody says 'see what you just did there, do more of that, that was brilliant, that was really, really good' and you hardly knew what you were doing, and if you then understand what you were doing and why it made a difference, you'd do more of it". This last observation would seem to highlight the importance of education practitioners having the opportunity to reflect on both the nature of their practice and the theoretical underpinnings.

5.6 CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

The study would seem to have provided valuable insight into the research question: What understandings do education practitioners have of the implications of attachment theory and practice in their work settings*?*

All of the above themes would seem to be key elements for education practitioners in how they interpret and understand attachment theory in their role and remit. The analysis highlights a number of significant questions which even a brief introduction

to attachment theory raised for practitioners. The challenge of translating theory into classroom and early years practice was a key theme from the analysis of the data and informed the next studies in the research programme.

Some themes generated, such as 'Is love part of the role?' of an education practitioner, and 'Is touch acceptable?', were sensitive. In order to cope with what Shaughnessy (2012) refers to as "a moral maze" for education practitioners, it would appear that more transparent dialogue regarding sensitive themes, in both initial training and continuing professional development contexts, would be a beneficial and appreciated support to education practitioners.

In this way Study 2 "captured some aspect of the social or psychological world" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 20). The analysis illuminated some of the social and cultural challenges and debates within the world of education practitioners which has implications for the teaching profession and the early years workforce.

Another theme encompassed how a theoretical understanding of attachment theory can impact on school collaboration with parents. It could be inferred by the understandings generated by the researcher that practitioners were of the view that schools and nurseries have a significant role to play in supporting parents, and that attachment-informed approaches could improve the effectiveness of existing strategies.

Furthermore, it was apparent that participants drew links between Bowlby and Ainsworth's concepts of a secure base and safe haven, with them as adults and as employees. The analysis would appear to suggest that education practitioners, including support assistants, would benefit from further opportunities for discussion and reflection with peers and school management on emotional safety and security. In both Study 1 and 2, there was parity between teachers and support assistants in respect of the invitation to complete the audit and the opportunity to be represented in the sample of participants taking part in semi-structured interviews. Further

research into how much parity exists in terms of support and supervision for school support assistants who work directly with vulnerable children would be of benefit.

5.7 LIMITATIONS

An improvement in any future use of the interview schedule developed by the researcher in this study, would be to combine questions three and four:-

1. Can you provide some examples of attachment-informed practice? (question 3)
2. Are you aware of anything within your establishment/service which promotes attachment theory? These examples can be in terms of existing practice or your experience as an employee. (question 4)

There was no apparent confusion voiced by participants, but there did appear to be a tendency for responses to question 3 to involve information relevant to question 4, and it may be helpful to restructure 3 and 4 into one question.

The researcher acknowledges the limitations of semi-structured interviews raised by Huberman and Miles (2002), namely that participants may elaborate more in a different situation and may respond differently in another settings. However, the wide range of participants, and what was put in place by the researcher to encourage a collaborative and safe environment, would lead to some confidence in using the data for infer meaning and understandings of education practitioners. The findings informed next steps in this research programme.

CHAPTER 6: TRAINING PROGRAMME: DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION *(STUDY 3)*

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The findings from Study 1 (Chapter 4) and Study 2 (Chapter 5) highlighted gaps in education practitioners' knowledge and skill-base of attachment theory and practice. Two related research questions were formulated to explore the impact on education practitioners of training, coaching and mentoring, (1) "What is the impact of training on attachment theory and practice?" and (2) "What are the key concepts construed by education practitioners in their understanding of attachment theory and practice following training, coaching, and mentoring and what changes in policy and practice could be identified?" This chapter addresses the first of these research questions.

6.2 AIMS AND RATIONALE

The main purpose of the study was to develop and evaluate the impact of an effective training programme for education practitioners which would increase the understanding of children's development and behaviour using the lens of attachment theory.

Understandings to inform the research journey came from the researcher's recent direct experience of delivering training as part of the core functions of an educational psychologist. The researcher delivered training on how to promote resilience within education settings. Furthermore, as outlined in Chapter 1: 1.2, the researcher was already involved in delivering attachment theory awareness-raising to groups of education practitioners within the local authority and also to newly qualified social workers. The need for this awareness-raising for education practitioners would seem to have been reinforced by the gaps in knowledge illuminated by comments from education participants in Study 1 (Chapter 4) ". . . in my experience it is not widely spoken about in schools", "I have never heard of attachment theory", "Am unaware as to the details of attachment theory and have not received training." Joyce and Showers (2002) had written of how awareness-raising can raise the profile of a topic

or issue and transmit knowledge and information. Feedback on the awareness-raising training was positive with regard to highlighting an area of child development of which some practitioners indicated they knew very little. However, there was little available evidence of impact on practice from these sessions, although it is helpful to acknowledge that "a basic level of knowledge . . . in a new approach is necessary before teachers can buy into it" (Showers et al., 1987, p. 79). Wagonhurst (2002) also highlights that "knowledge has to be gained before skills can be applied" (p. 79). Awareness-raising would seem similar to what Wagonhurst refers to in the literature as "education" which "focuses on acquisition of knowledge, whereas training focuses on acquisition of skills" (p. 79).

The awareness-raising sessions delivered by the researcher were of two hours duration and this mapped onto the continuing professional development time sessions available within schools. The amount of time did not allow for any in-depth discussion on how knowledge gained translated into practice, a process Showers et al. (1987) describe in their influential research paper as "how skills are incorporated into the active repertoire" of a teacher's classroom behaviour (p. 78). In a meta-analysis of what they reported as just under 200 studies into training opportunities for teachers, Joyce and Showers (2002; Showers et al., 1987) reported that training which transmitted theory and knowledge only, had a 5% impact on skill development and 0-5% impact on accurate transfer into day-to-day practice in the classroom.

Responses from participants in Study 1 (Chapter 4) would seem to support these findings, "Have yet to receive the strategies to enable to further develop skills in attachment-informed practice"; "I am still unsure about the skills needed as I only have a basic understanding of attachment theory. To develop my understanding, I believe I need to engage in professional learning in order to develop the skills needed." To address the research question on impact of training, the researcher therefore identified the need for a format of training which covered more than an awareness-raising session on attachment theory.

An element of the rationale was the decision to be informed by the implementation science literature referred to in Chapter 2, in order to inform the process of training development (Kelly & Perkins, 2012; Meyers et al., 2012). The focus on the processes which improve effectiveness were relevant here, as was the need to be alert to barriers to effective implementation of training. Kelly (2012) describes the central aims of implementation science as, "to support the understanding of relevant, contextual processes and improve the quality and effectiveness of what is delivered as psychological intervention in applied contexts" (p. 4). The reasons for failed efforts have been outlined by Foster-Fishman and Watson (2012): design failures; implementation failures; sustainability failures. Fixsen et al. (2005) talked of the importance of addressing the 'implementation gap' between research and practice.

This study was designed to plan a training intervention and remain alert to possible design failures such as a disconnect between desired results and methods used, and implementation failures such as lack of coordination and ineffective collaboration (Fixsen et al., 2005). Ethical approval was granted for this study by the University of Strathclyde ethics committee.

From their meta-analysis and from the review they undertook of the non-academic literature, Showers et al had found that "it doesn't matter where or when the training is held" (p. 79) and the researcher did not find any evidence to the contrary in more recent literature. The researcher decided to discuss venue and timings with the head teachers on behalf of the staff teams.

The researcher considered that training on attachment theory should be delivered with a focus on the wider social context. This is supported by the implementation science literature (Chapter 2) which stresses consideration of national 'drivers' and local experience (Fixsen et al., 2009). Furthermore the researcher was influenced by the developments and emerging research from Bath Spa University on the importance of attachment for education (www.bathspa.ac.uk/projects/attachment-aware-schools/) where attachment issues were seen in the context of developmental trauma. A number of researchers have explored the long-term impact of

developmental trauma on a wide range of life outcomes, including physical wellbeing and social and emotional development (Perry, 1994, 1997, 2006; Perry & Szalavitz, 2007; Szalavitz & Perry, 2010). McCrory et al (2017) have argued that "childhood maltreatment, including physical, sexual emotional abuse and neglect, arguably represents the most potent predictor of poor mental health across the lifespan" (p. 338). A decision was therefore made to include an account of the impact of developmental trauma in the training programme.

Bowlby himself set attachment theory within a broad context. In his early 1944 study, 'Forty-four juvenile thieves: their characters and home-life', he notes that juvenile delinquency is also a problem of sociology and economics, ". . . juvenile crime is not just a psychological problem, it is a social and economic problem as well. Poverty, bad housing, lack of recreational facilities and other socio-economic factors are very important, and young criminal behaviour is the outcome of many complex factors which should be studied together in order to ascertain the weight of each" (p. 8).

From its earliest stages, Bowlby clearly positioned attachment theory within childcare policies. This is evident in his report for the World Health Organisation (1952), though the dominant themes for researchers in the following decades were more focused on researching aspects of Ainsworth's Strange Situation Test (Belsky & Rovine, 1987; Main & Solomon, 1990) and exploring connections between attachment theory and psychoanalytic theory and practice (Fonagy, 2001; Holmes, 2000). However, the work of Michael Rutter and Tom O'Connor is an example of a renewed research focus in recent decades on how attachment theory can inform childcare policies. By way of example, twenty years ago the editors of a key academic publication (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999) included the paper by Rutter and O'Connor in a section entitled "Emerging Topics and Perspectives", an indication that these issues had previously received little attention. However, since then, there has been a resurgence in research into state policy and clinical and professional practice in areas such as child abuse and neglect (Berlin et al., 2008; Howe, 2005; Zeanah & Humphreys, 2018; Zeanah & Zeanah, 1989) and fostering and adoption

(Dozier et al., 2001; Fahlberg, 2012; Granqvist et al., 2017; Lewis-Morrarty et al., 2012; Stovall & Dozier, 1998)

Developing a training programme on attachment theory in this way, within a wider social context, is mandated by the Scottish Government's GIRFEC policy, and the 'Common Core' multi-agency workforce framework for education practitioners highlighted in Chapter 1. The social context includes not only national government agendas but also how local authorities and their education resources planning supports these drivers and policies.

Another key element of the rationale behind this study was the researcher's decision to develop a training programme which could be delivered in a whole school setting. The effectiveness of whole school training on attachment theory has been acknowledged by Riley (2013). Riley had a justifiable focus on head teachers and class teachers. However, the researcher planned to use this opportunity to invite facility staff to join aspects of the training which included an overview of the theory. Facility personnel included janitors and catering staff who worked in the schools. In the researcher's experience and in discussions with the head teachers of the schools to whom the training would be delivered, it would seem that such members of the school community can establish a beneficial positive relationship with children and young people in the informal settings of the playground and dining hall (Cozolino, 2013). There was no recorded history in the local authority of facility staff joining education practitioners in training.

Further influenced by the implementation science literature, with an emphasis on networking, an element of the rationale established by the researcher included collaboration with the researcher's existing and established academic networks. These included the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS), a leading improvement and innovation centre (http://www.celcis.org/). Following a meeting with the CELCIS sector engagement lead, the researcher was given permission to link with the nationally regarded consultancy development lead who had wide academic and practical expertise in child trauma and an academic

interest in the impact of attachment theory on residential childcare. The literature supports such a collaboration. Wagonhurst (2002) highlights how "guest presenters can supplement program credibility, add additional expertise beyond that of the primary facilitator, and offer variety to the style of an individual trainer" (p. 80).

With regard to what constitutes attachment-informed within the training, the researcher planned to follow Holmes & Farnfield's (2014) definition that "attachment-informed means working in a way in which existing therapeutic modalities or social interventions incorporate concepts and knowledge from attachment theory and research" (p. xiii).

6.3 METHOD

6.3.1 Development of the Training Programme

Training needs analysis

Following the rationale outlined in Chapter 3, the head teachers of the two schools participating in this study undertook a training needs analysis on attachment theory and practice during a full staff meeting, taking into account their school development plan and the national and local policy and planning context. The researcher had spoken to the staff groups in both schools previously to outline the place of the training study in the overall research programme. The researcher asked the two head teachers to use the staff meeting not only for the purpose of the needs analysis, but also as a consultation with the staff on their involvement in the research programme (Meyers et al., 2012).

Understanding attachment theory and practice was included in the school development plan in school A and the head teacher in school B had been exploring how to access attachment training for the staff. Both schools were now at a stage of exploring the detail of how to gain that understanding, and the needs analysis discussion was part of that exploration. Abouelenein (2016) refers to the work of Haesner et al. (2015) who argued that "identifying professional needs is essential for any successful training programme" (p. 1182). Wagonhurst (2002) warns that

"inadequate needs assessment can result in inappropriate and ineffectual interventions" (p. 78). Hegarty in his chapter 'Issues for Staff Development' (Florian & Hegarty, 2004) highlights the importance of staff identifying training needs to enable programme planners to "design effective programmes that will help achieve realistic and well-defined objectives" (p. 128). The inclusion of a training needs analysis discussion in the research programme was further influenced by the seminal studies of Knox (1980, 1987) who highlighted the importance in "intentional adult learning" (1980, p. 378) of the adults taking the responsibility for decisions about learning content and procedures.

In organising needs analysis discussions Wagonhurst (2002) suggests that "a combination of approaches that include gathering both objective and subjective data usually yield the most successful results" (p. 78) and the researcher made the decision not to be present in order to encourage open and frank discussion. However, to support the discussion in both schools, questions were developed by the researcher to facilitate the needs analysis. The questions are provided in Table 44 below.

Table 44: Questions to inform needs analysis discussion.

Considering the current knowledge base of attachment theory within the staff team, is further training needed?
If yes, what key elements of training should be included?
What is the rationale for including these elements in the training?

Verbal feedback from both staff meetings was presented to the researcher during a school visit to each school, from the head teacher and depute head teacher in school A, and by the head teacher in school B. The researcher took detailed field notes which were analysed and coded using Braun and Clarke's model of Thematic Analysis (2006, 2013). More complex use had been made of Braun and Clarke's Reflexive Thematic Analysis with both the qualitative data from Study 1, and the significant amount of data from Study 2. Content analysis (Krippendorff, 2018) using numerical coding was considered as a tool due to the much smaller amount of data in this exercise. However, although "more interpretative forms" of Content Analysis

have been developed (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 5; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Mayring, 2004), the active decision for Thematic Analysis was made as the researcher engaged in interpretation of the data and there was subjectivity involved (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The use of this methodology and method was more sensitive to the critical realist theoretical assumptions underpinning the research journey.

The researcher consulted with both head teachers on the analysis of the staff discussion. An outline of the identified needs is found in Table 45 below.

Table 45: Outline of identified areas of need from school A and school B.

Areas identified	**Rationale**
To learn more about aspects of attachment theory relevant to educational practice	Some members of staff knew very little about the theory and the link with child development or what insecure attachment meant. Most staff reported the theory had not been covered in their initial training course
To learn more about relevant Scottish Government agendas for children and young people	To help staff reflect on where the theory is relevant to their day-to-day classroom and nursery practice and how and if it supports key government drivers for education
To learn more about the research findings from neuroscience	Staff reported they had read articles in newspapers, magazines and social media, and a need was identified to help clarify what were reliable research findings and what were unsubstantiated claims The General Teaching Council for Scotland (General Teaching Council for Scotland) believes that the teaching profession should be both research engaged and research informed
To learn more about childhood trauma, resilience, and attachment	Staff reported noticing increasing mention of the three concepts in education bulletins and magazines and they were keen to understand if and how the three were linked regarding children and young people

Aims and Objectives of the Training Programme.

Using understandings from the academic literature and the findings from the needs analysis, the researcher drafted aims and objectives for the training. These were then refined in discussion with the reference group and with the head teachers of school A and school B. The aims and objectives were used by the researcher to influence the content of the training programme. In Figure 30 below the long term purpose of the training is outlined under 'Aims' and observable outcomes are detailed in the 'Objectives' (https://www.imperial.ac.uk/staff/educational-development/teaching-toolkit/intended-learning-outcomes/).

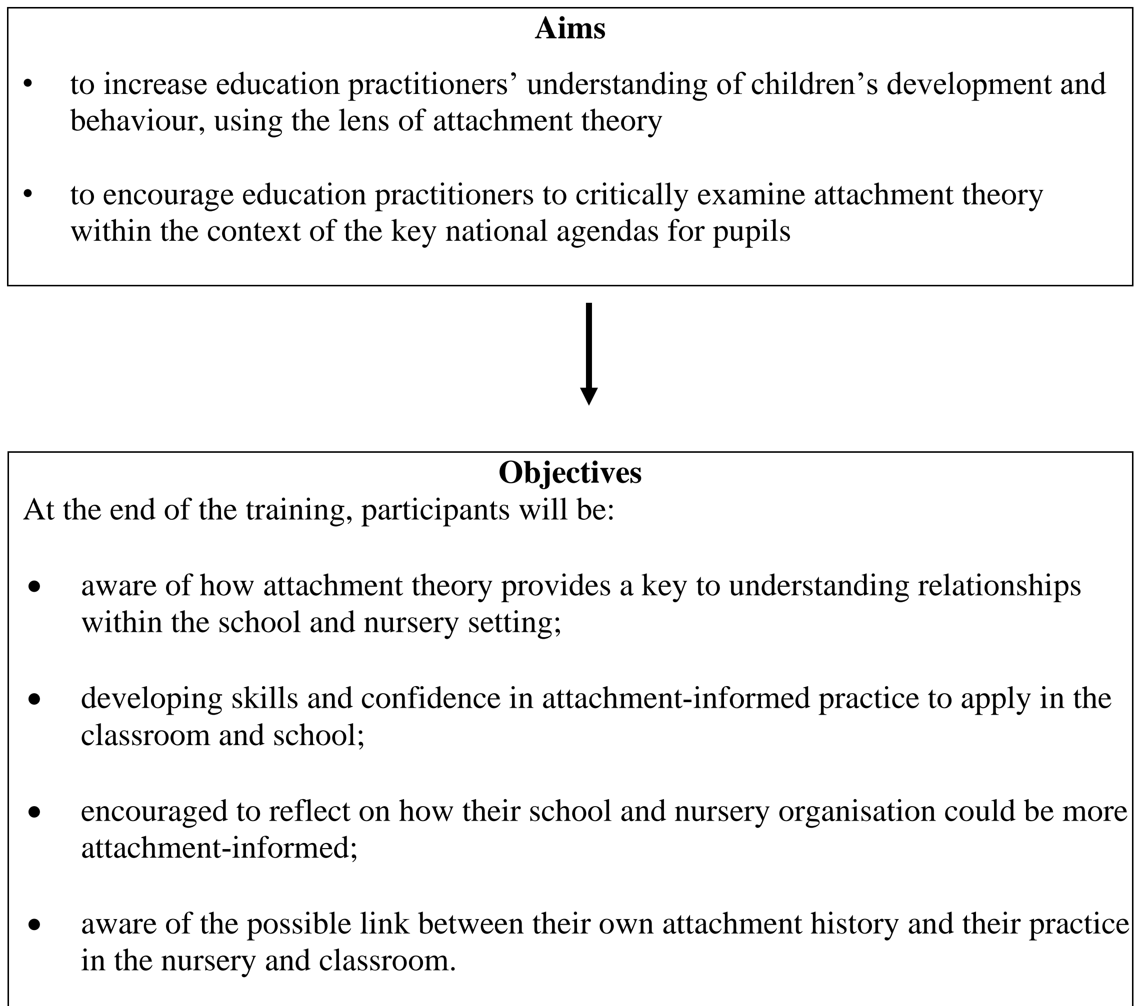


Figure 31: Aims and objectives.

Content of the Training Programme.

The science and practice of implementation promotes the use of a relevant evidence-base, and the research on adult learning was appropriate here in exploring the development of a training programme for education practitioners. The adult learning literature had been explored in the development of the audit items in Study 1 (Joyce & Showers, 2002; Kearsley, 2009; Knowles et al., 2011), and was revisited and extended for the purpose of this study. The findings of the Ingvarson et al. (2005) study proved informative. The researchers explored the impact of "structural and process features of professional development programs on teachers' knowledge, practice and efficacy" (p. 2). The meta-analysis of 4 evaluation programmes, involving a total of 80 continuing professional development activities, highlighted the importance of programmes which involve active learning and practice reflection. Across all four programmes studied, the relationship between active learning and impact on practice was found to be significant. It would seem that the most effective training programmes should provide opportunities for participants to reflect on current processes and practice in their school and what would need to happen to support a change in practice.

Implementation Science research (Chapter 2) supports a similar approach and asks who is doing what differently to achieve the desired changes? Fixsen and Blasé (2012) (https://nirn.fpg.unc.edu/national-implementation-research-network) talk of 'competency drivers' where help is provided to practitioners to develop, improve, and sustain competence and confidence to implement effective practices.

Consultation took place at the content development stage of the training programme with the two head teachers, the CELCIS Consultancy Lead and the local authority reference group outlined in Chapter 4: 4.3.1, which comprised of children's services operational managers. Discussion with the reference group provided a regular check on the relevance of the content to education practitioners.

Key Scottish Government legislation and policy papers, examined by the researcher, provided the context for the decisions on content. These are outlined in Table 46.

Table 46: Legislative and policy focus.

Getting it right for every child (Scottish Government, 2010)
Early Years Framework (Scottish Government, 2009)
Curriculum for Excellence (Education Scotland, 2010-11)
Early Years Collaborative (Scottish Government, 2012d, 2013a, 2013b)
Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's services Workforce" in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2012b)
Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014 (Scottish Government, 2014b)
Building the Ambition (Scottish Government, 2014a)

To inform the content, consideration was given to the policy drivers and agendas for Scotland's children's services (Chapter 1) and which were very relevant to education:

- promoting secure attachment
- promoting resilience
- closing the poverty related attainment gap
- responding effectively to complex childhood trauma
- interpreting neuroscience research about childhood brain development

A further influence on content came from academic references identified by the researcher as outlined in Table 47.

Table 47: Key references used in the preparation of the training programme.

Topics	**Focus**	**References**
Attachment theory	• Attachment theory and child and adolescent development • Attachment theory in	• Ainsworth (1967, 1969; 1978) • Bergin and Bergin (2009) • (Bowlby, 1944, 1953, 1958, 1960a, 1960b, 1961a, 1961b, 1969, 1973, 1980; Bowlby &

	the school environment	World Health Organization, 1952) • Rutter (Dozier & Rutter, 2008; Rutter, 1972, 1998; Rutter et al., 1999; Rutter & O'Connor, 1999) • Pianta and Steinberg (1992) • Riley (2009, 2011)
Brain development	Key neuroscience findings on child and adolescent brain development	• Cozolino (2013) • Schore (2001) • Siegel (2012)
Developmental trauma	• Trauma and neglect • The impact of toxic stress on classroom behaviour	• Blaustein and Kinniburgh (2010) • Perry (1994, 1997, 2006; Perry & Szalavitz, 2007; Szalavitz & Perry, 2010)
Promoting resilience	Strategies and resources for use within school	• Daniels (2010) • Grotberg (2003) • Weare (2003)

The researcher’s literature review in Chapter 2 informed the content of the section on attachment theory. As noted in the literature review, the research field of attachment theory is extensive, and the researcher used ‘direct relevance to education practitioners’ as an inclusion criterion in the selection of information for the explanation of attachment theory. The schools’ needs analysis, the researcher’s considerable experience in supporting and working alongside education practitioners, and involvement at a strategic planning level for children’s services, all informed the focus of the section on attachment theory, outlined below in Table 48.

Table 48: Attachment theory section.

The impact of early attachment experiences on child development
An outline of insecure attachment profiles, including Ainsworth's Strange Situation procedure and the concepts of safe haven and secure base
The link between attachment experiences and readiness to learn in nursery and primary school

The researcher considered findings from Study 2, in particular comments from participants who reflected that there was relevance in attachment theory's concepts of safe haven and secure base for them as employees. The researcher made the decision that due to time constraints the adult attachment research literature would not be covered in any depth in the training. However, the application of the secure base and safe haven concepts to adult employees would be highlighted during the explanation of attachment theory. The themes of 'touch' and 'love' were also identified from participants' responses in Study 2 and content planning included an opportunity for participants to reflect on these issues.

Another consideration in presenting the information in the section about attachment theory was the need to recommend caution in assumptions of the predictive impact of insecure attachment. Chapter 2 refers to the debate instigated by Meins in the Psychologist (2017).

Collaboration and discussion on the academic evidence base for complex trauma took place between the researcher and the CELCIS Consultancy Lead. The information included in the section on childhood trauma was selected according to this discussion. It was also informed by the researcher's literature review regarding brain development, in particular the work of Bruce Perry (1994, 1997, 2006; Perry & Szalavitz, 2007). Direct contact was made by the researcher with Bruce Perry (2018) to gain permission to reproduce figures from his published work. The findings highlighted in Chapter 2 from the brain development and neuroscience literature drew attention to the need for extreme caution in interpreting popular media articles

and some published research (Howard-Jones, 2014), and this cautionary note was included in the programme planning.

The training was finalised by the researcher, and consultation took place with the CELCIS Consultancy Lead and the education resources reference groups outlined in Chapter 1: 1.2. Film clips and animations, made publicly available by the Center on the Developing Child in Harvard University (2011), were selected to encourage ongoing engagement in the training and to reinforce key information.

The theme of reflection was also dominant in the research literature as well as the benefit of relevant activities that

- are interactive and collaborative
- enhance knowledge and understandings

(Boyle & King, 2021; Illeris, 2009; Knowles, 1984; Lieb, 1991).

Informed therefore by the importance placed in the academic and professional literature on active and reflective learning activities, opportunities were included throughout the training programme aimed at putting the child at the centre of all reflections and discussions. In terms of providing knowledge translation and reflective opportunities (Fixsen et al., 2009) the researcher examined professional best practice guidelines in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as promoted by the General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTC) (2018a) (https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/professional-learning/). GTC guidance promotes training that

- is relevant to the needs of individual teachers and the specific students they teach
- involves collaboration between staff
- is interactive, reflective and involves learning with and from others
- is informed by evidence and supported by experts (whether external or internal)
- ensures dialogue and reflection throughout, regarding impact on student outcomes

A written activity was planned for the end of day 1 and the end of day 2 to encourage reflection on what had been learned over the course of the training. Blank postcards with a space for the participant to write their name, date, and name of establishment were distributed and 30 minutes was allocated for both activities to give participants sufficient time to carefully consider learning from all the sections in the programme. Tables 49 and 50 provides details of the activities.

Table 49: Activity to be completed at the end of day 1 of training.

1. What have you learned most today? 2. What would you like to change with how you relate to children, each other? 3. As a school, what themes are emerging for you as a school organisation that you might do differently?

Table 50: Activity completed at the end of day 2 of training.

1. What have you learned most over the course of training? 2. What would you like to change with how you relate to (1) children (2) each other 3. What themes have emerged for you as a school organisation for future discussion/reflection?

A follow up activity was also developed by the researcher for each school to undertake in their first full staff meeting after the training. The exercise design was influenced by Flanagan's (1954) original research and development of the Critical Incident Technique (CIT), which was developed to define effective behaviour and solve practical problems. The purpose in including this activity was to produce rich and relevant data and to encourage professional reflection and critical self-evaluation of the impact of the training upon professional practice. What were practitioners doing differently? and what were the understandings they had gained from the training that had led to this change in practice? This would provide a valuable opportunity for practitioners "to develop and enhance their professional knowledge and practice, in order to progress the quality of learning" (https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/professional-learning/)

Table 51: Activity to be completed at the next scheduled staff meeting after the training.

Think about the child you used in day 1 of the training, using the ideas from all the sessions, together the child's needs and:
(1) Think about their early experiences and the likely impact on their development
(2) Focus on possible strengths as well as problems
(3) Record three ways that you already have started to improve planning and practice

Use what you have learned about: attachment, emotional development, child trauma and resilience in your discussions

The data collected would not only be used by the researcher for analysis to inform next steps in the research programme but would also be used by the local authority and each school to consider implications for future CPD activity or school improvement planning.

A range of other short 10–15 minute activities were planned to encourage focus on children, engagement, reflection and collaboration.

The researcher decided to plan a short discussion at the end of the training to invite feedback from participants on content and organisational matters. In discussion with both head teachers, it was planned that a flipchart would be used to record feedback. Both head teachers were of the view that in a group setting, use of audio or video recording would inhibit some members of staff.

Length of training programme

In terms of the time needed to be allocated for the training programme, a number of factors informed the decision. This included the researcher's considerable experience in delivering training in various aspects of child development, and the understanding gained through feedback from attendees.

Of particular relevance was the researcher's experience mentioned earlier in the chapter in presenting awareness-raising sessions on attachment theory to staff in schools and nurseries, probationer teachers and newly qualified social workers. Constructive collaboration also took place with the CELCIS Consultancy Lead on the amount of time needed to explain trauma-informed practice. Taking all the information into account, the final decision was made to offer the training over two

days in order to allow time for presentation of the theory and knowledge base and include activity-based reflection opportunities.

6.3.2 Participants

All the education practitioners in school A and school B were included in the training i.e., 21 members of staff from school A and 25 staff from school B. As already highlighted, the researcher extended the range of participants beyond teachers to include more of the community of education practitioners who worked in the school. These numbers therefore included early years practitioners and support assistants (who worked either in the classroom, playground, or the school office) as well as teaching staff. At the request of the head teacher of school A, and with the agreement of the researcher, a peripatetic teacher for behaviour support, based in school A, joined the staff training, increasing the total number to receive training in school A to 22. Also, with the agreement of the researcher, members of staff from a school for hearing impaired children based within the same building as school B, joined the training for school B, increasing the total number to be included in school B's training to 29. All participants completed a research consent form to take part in the training programme.

Demographics of participants

All participants were female and the mean and standard deviation of years of experience for school A were (M = 15.20, SD = 12.2, n = 22). and for school B (M = 13.30, SD = 9.4, n = 29).

Participants had a range of roles within the school and Table 52 below outlines the designation of participants.

Table 52: Designation of participants.

Designation	Number School A	Number School B
Head teacher	1	1
Depute head teacher	1	2

Class teachers (mixture of full time and part time)	11	14
Early years practitioners	4	6
Peripatetic behaviour support teacher	1	0
Support assistants	4	6

Liaison took place between the researcher and the strategic manager of facility staff within the authority regarding whether the invitation could be open to facility staff to join the introductory section of the training where attachment theory was outlined. This suggestion was viewed positively and led to a commitment from the strategic manager to explore the opportunity further with operational managers at a locality level.

Delivery of the training programme

The demands on schools for in-service days, planned over a year in advance by the education authority, led to a challenge to identify two full consecutive days for the delivery of the training. In consultation with the school and the education management team, the decision was made to deliver the training on one full day and two half days, for each school. At the recommendation of the head teachers, the venue for training would be in each school to avoid unnecessary travel for staff.

In areas normally used for school assemblies, participants' chairs were organised into small groups with sufficient distance apart to allow group sharing without being easily overheard. Themes of safety and security associated with attachment theory were introduced within the first minutes of the training and a range of soft toys were left on each table. Participants were invited to initially reflect in a small group on how soft toys can soothe children when they are afraid or uncomfortable and then to share what toy they would choose from those which were presented on the table, and to explain why they would choose it as an adult and why. The toy would then remain on their table for the duration of the two-day training, and they could manipulate and play with it at any point.

Participants were asked after this introductory activity to reflect on pupils they were currently teaching or had taught in the past and for whom they had experienced a challenge in supporting them. Participants were asked to choose one and time was allocated to share details with one other person in the room. The wording used to explain the purpose of this exercise was 'bringing the child in to the room'. This phrase was repeated at various points throughout the training when a new section of the training was introduced, or a new activity undertaken.

6.4 RESULTS

6.4.1 Attendance

There was full attendance at both training events from education practitioners in both schools.

6.4.2 Engagement with Activities

All participants appeared to respond well and engaged with the short activities, usually organised within groups of 4 or 5. The activity "Exploring the Senses: What is soothing for you?" engendered a lot of discussion and a related activity, aimed at supporting participants to undertake a short sensory audit of their nursery and school environment led to many spontaneous comments indicating that this was the first time some participants had considered this issue.

The postcards from the activities completed by each participant at the end of day 1 and day 2 were collected by the researcher as they left the training event and typed and analysed by the researcher. Reflexive Thematic Analysis, as developed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013, 2019), and used by the researcher in Studies 1 and 2, was utilised. Further to the reasons outlined in Chapter 3 and earlier in this chapter, it was chosen due to its flexibility and usefulness in producing an analysis which could be used to inform policy development (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The data was coded, and themes identified by the researcher. For the purposes of reliability, the themes were checked with the head teacher and depute head teacher from school A and with the

head teacher from school B. The following table 53 provides a synthesis of the themes identified by the researcher from the final training activity responses from both schools.

Table 53: Participant responses to the final activity of the two-day training programme.

1) What have you learned most over the course of the training?

Themes from responses	Illustrative quotes
Importance of attachment-informed practice in school	"That these understandings about attachment are vital to what we do and what we're about" Class teacher
Impact of insecure attachment and readiness to learn	"How attachment and trauma can have a dramatic effect on the child's overall development and their learning journey" Depute head teacher
Awareness of the importance of reflective practice	"To be very aware of how my teaching strategies can actually have a negative effect on certain children in my class" Class teacher
Importance of sustained support for children	"Our practice should be about a responsive approach and not expecting a 'quick fix'" Class teacher
Significance of precipitating and perpetuating behavioural triggers	"Some children are already at a heightened state of arousal and may appear to fly of the handle easily because of something that seems harmless but is a trigger for them" Class teacher
Possibilities of making a positive difference	"Aware of how many children have had experiences that negatively impact on their education and behaviour and how our way of connecting with them can have a positive impact on their lives" Early years practitioner
Importance of early intervention	"Looking and being aware of children at risk and how we can begin to foster positive attachments" Early years practitioner
Significance of behaviour as communication	"To be more aware of children's backgrounds relating to their behaviour" Class teacher

2a) What would you like to change with how you relate to children?

Themes from responses	Illustrative quotes

A more mindful response to challenging behaviour	"When I feel I have established a good strong relationship with an individual child, not to feel let down if they act out. Instead see it as part of recovery and feeling safe" Class teacher
Acknowledgement of the difference between chronological and developmental ages	"Ensure my responses are appropriate and understand where they are in terms of their development" Early years practitioner
A greater focus on social and emotional needs	"Try to be much more aware of the emotional state of each of the children in my class" Class teacher
More sensitive use of language in behaviour management	"Never ask a child 'why' they have done something but use 'what' has happened" Head teacher
More respect for children	"Be more aware and avoid shaming children" Support assistant
A greater focus on nurture strategies	"Providing more places in the school where children are able to go to calm down and regulate their feelings" Class teacher

2b) What would you like to change with how you relate to each other?

Themes from responses	Illustrative quotes
Provide more emotional support	"Always show empathy and always there to listen" Class teacher
Undertake more collaborative practice	"Share strategies and understanding of children in crisis" Class teacher
Promote safety and trust	"More open, honest discussion of experiences and expressing guilt" Class teacher
Adopt a non-judgemental approach	"Not assigning blame for pupils' behaviour" Head teacher
Promote a team approach	"We are resources for each other" Early years practitioner

3) What themes have emerged for you as a school organisation for future discussion/reflection?

Themes from responses	Illustrative quotes

Shared vision	“How do we share the message and put it in policy and procedure?” Head teacher
Theory into practice	“How do we move forward from here to support children with attachment issues, and nurture them long term? This is an urgent issue for us” Class teacher
Access to advice and consultation	“We will need time to talk about our challenges with individual pupils with people who know a lot about attachment” Class teacher
Parental involvement	“Discussion needed with parents to develop understanding of attachment” Early years practitioner
Behaviour support policy	“How do we respond to children with attachment/trauma issues in terms of consequences? What sanctions?” Class teacher
Physical environment of the school	“We need a sensory audit of the whole school environment” Class teacher
Transitions	“How can we better support Looked After kids moving on to a new school or foster parents?” Depute head teacher
Curricular challenges	“Balancing academic learning with Health and Wellbeing” Class teacher
Adults as role models	“How do we model, teach and develop resilience in young people?” Class teacher
Solution focused thinking	“How can we break away from the blame culture (who is to blame for this child’s behaviour) and focus more on how we can help?” Depute head teacher
Provide a safe haven and secure base for staff	“If staff don’t feel safe and noticed, how can we do our best for our pupils?” Class teacher

6.4.3 Feedback on the Organisation of the Training

At the end the two-day training, a closing 15 minutes was allocated to a whole school discussion, chaired by the researcher, where verbal feedback was invited from participants on the practical organisation and delivery of the two-day training.

As explained earlier in the chapter, responses were recorded by the researcher on a flip chart. The responses were very similar for each school. The researcher

introduced the discussion with a solution focused approach, inviting reflections on 'what worked well?' and 'what could have been done better?' and 'what could we do differently in a future training course?'. The researcher analysed the comments and identified the following categories

- presentation of materials
- general learning experience
- engagement of participants
- length of training
- organisation of training days

Table 54: Summary of comments from both schools.

What worked well?	What could have been done better?	What could we do differently in a future training course?
"The pace was about right" School A and school B	"Would have been better to have been presented over two consecutive days" (Conflicting responses on this point. View of some staff in both schools)	"Allow more time to share with each other about the child we were asked to identify and to keep in mind as we undertook the training" School A and school B
"Felt comfortable asking for elaboration or posing questions" School A and school B	"Would have liked to reflect what I had learned after each session in the training not just at the end of day 1 and day 2" School A	"Provide even more information on attachment-informed strategies – how to translate theory to practice" School A and school B
"Two days the right overall length" School A and school B		"Allocate more time to reflect and talk with peers re how the theory relates not only to children but also to staff within school and how they are supported" School A
"The days between the training were useful to		

reflect on what had been learned and try out changes in practice”

Conflicting responses on this point. View of some staff in both schools

“The activities and animated video clips provided variety/helped concentration”

School A and school B

“Information presented in the context of real-life classroom challenges”

School A and school B

6.4.4 Outcome of Follow-up Activity

Following the completion of the training, both schools used part of their next staff meeting to discuss at least three ways they had started to improve planning and practice on supporting individual pupils. This exercise, to be led by the head teacher, was introduced by the researcher verbally before the final feedback session of the two-day training. It aimed to further facilitate and promote self-reflection. Written feedback on the outcome of the exercise was provided by the head teacher of school A. Verbal feedback was provided via a telephone discussion from the head teacher of school B. Notes were taken by the researcher.

Braun and Clarke’s (2013) Thematic Analysis approach was used to inform the analysis of the feedback. The themes are outlined in table 55 below.

Table 55: Changes in practice - a synthesis of the themes from both schools.

Theme	**Illustrative Quote**
Positive regard	“Identifying something positive about each child each day”

	Early years practitioner, school A
Empathy	"More tolerant and understanding of his needs due to greater understanding of his early experience and the negative impact this has had" Class teacher, school A
Child at the centre	"Individual programme to meet specific needs for P4 child. Previously I have adapted practice and suggested strategies but never made such a dramatic change to a weekly timetable for one pupil" Class teacher, school A
Behaviour support	"No longer insist on eye contact when speaking to a child" Class teacher, school A
Sharing practice	"We are now talking and sharing more as a staff group about effective ways to support pupils" Class teacher, school A

6.5 DISCUSSION

The findings of this study would seem to provide helpful insight into the research question on the impact of training. One participant stated in the written exercise at the end of day 2 that there was an "urgent need" to support education practitioners to translate the theory into everyday classroom practice. Similar comments were made during the verbal feedback at the end of the training.

Opportunities to share and reflect with peers was also highlighted and the need to receive professional guidance from experts in the field. One practitioner mentioned that "experts" did not always need to be external to the school. They argued that they could be members of staff who had received further training on attachment theory and practice and had experienced access to advice and consultation on pupils e.g.,

from an educational or clinical psychologist. Such members of teaching staff could thereafter support colleagues.

It would seem that the two-day training did not allow time to actively practice attachment-informed strategies during the programme but the follow up activity, informed by Flanagan's (1954) Critical Incident Technique, provided some data on the impact on practice. Ingvarson et al. (2005) talk of how "effective professional development programs draw teachers into an analysis of their current practice in relation to professional standards for good practice" (p. 8) and there was some evidence that the training facilitated such reflection.

There appeared to be a strong message from both school groups in the final written activity of the training, on how aspects of attachment theory, in particular the secure base and safe haven, were relevant to how the local authority and the education department related to their staff, as well as how staff treated each other. There had been a prompt to reflect on this issue in the final written activity in the wording 'What would you like to change with how you relate to each other', but the idea of attachment theory being relevant to the relationship of employees with the authority and management in general was clearly something the participants raised themselves. This supported the unexpected finding in Study 2 where more than half of the participants linked attachment theory to themselves as adult employees.

The feedback in the final written activity of the training course included many general comments related to supporting and valuing each other as a staff, "We are resources for each other." There was also mention of the importance of being supported by management, but there was no detail provided in the responses about what the support would look like. There were a small number of support assistants from both schools who did not respond to the second half of the section on 'What would you like to change with how you relate to children and each other?', even although there was a separate section to include comments on both. It may have been the first time some of the support assistants were given the opportunity to reflect on

these types of issues and more time and discussion may have been needed than the training course provided.

The responses to the written activity reported in Table 54 were very similar for both schools, as was the feedback on the organisation of the training course. Attendance at the training was excellent from both schools as was engagement in tasks and activities throughout the two days. No significant differences were identified by the researcher and there was some disappointment expressed by staff in school B that the plan was for an intervention group to be led by the researcher in school A which would involve coaching and mentoring sessions from the researcher. That had been explained to the staff at the time of the training needs analysis discussion, but the experience of the two-day training had raised hopes and expectations of active support for staff to address the theory in to practice issue. The researcher did raise the issue with the school psychologist who agreed to provide general advice to the school. It had also been agreed that a group of staff from school B would be invited to populate CIT reflective logs developed by the researcher, as informed by Flanagan's (1954) work. The plan was that the researcher would meet with the group from school B and introduce the concept of the CIT reflective logs and explain how it would be completed. The researcher had drafted a format for the CIT reflective log (Appendix 7) which would be discussed by the intervention group and the format finalised. This final format would be shared for use with the staff in school B. Findings will be reported in the next study.

6.6 LIMITATIONS

Although there were informal peer support opportunities within each school, there was no formal, active support provided to practitioners to allow discussion and reflection between the training and the follow-up activity.

A more robust recording of the training needs analysis discussion in both schools could have provided the researcher with details on the range of the staff views, rather than the final decisions of what was recorded by the head teachers. The researcher had a significant level of discussion with the head teachers in preparation for the

training needs analysis. Agreement had been made that the researcher would not be present at the staff meetings in order to avoid socially desirable responses and to avoid what may be a reluctance to disclose areas of uncertainty about attachment theory in the presence of the researcher. However, a more detailed recording template provided by the researcher could have captured more of the dialogue.

The 15-minute planned discussion at the end of the training on the organisation of the programme, recorded on a flip chart, was free flowing and staff led, and at times moved from comments on the delivery of the training back to the final written activity, 'Following the two-day training, what would you like to change with how you relate to (1) children and (2) each other? In school A, the discussion went on for 20 minutes before the researcher drew it to a close to adhere to the accommodation booking. School A used the open discussion opportunity to highlight the need for expert advice on attachment-informed strategies and to express concerns about the availability of external resources.

The researcher recorded feedback from the discussions on a flip chart but at points was also involved in the dialogue, and an identified scribe would be preferred if the study were to be replicated.

The guiding principles of collaborative inquiry for teachers as found in the research literature (Donohoo, 2013; Reeves, 2007) influenced the researcher's decision to encourage an open sharing of views on the training course and how it could be improved, and this was very successful in terms of the engagement of participants. However, on reflection, a written short evaluation form should have been used in addition to the open discussion and more time built in for a general discussion and sharing of views from the final written activity. This may also have implications for allocating more than two days to the training course.

With regard to the follow-up activity during the first staff meeting following the training, the researcher had provided both head teachers with written instructions for the exercise. The head teacher of school A provided a written record of the staff

meeting discussion for the researcher using three headings: ‘Name’; ‘Designation’ (i.e. class teacher, support assistant, early years worker, manager): and ‘Difference in practice’. The head teacher of school B provided detailed verbal feedback by telephone. The researcher took field notes and then typed them in a similar format to the written summary submitted by school A. On reflection, it would be beneficial in any replication of the study if a standard template were provided for the school to record the outcomes of the discussion.

The involvement of facility staff in each school i.e., janitor and catering staff was agreed positively by both head teachers and the strategic manager with responsibility for facility staff. However, on the days of the training the local operational manager diverted those staff to schools which were understaffed.

To address the issue of facility staff in this Scottish local authority having the opportunity to hear about attachment theory, the researcher invited the strategic manager to join an attachment strategy implementation group, established and chaired by the researcher, after the research studies were completed. The manager joined the group and made a commitment that facility staff would be given the opportunity to join a part of whole school attachment training in future.

If this current study were to be replicated, a formal invitation and written commitment to release facilities staff to attend training alongside the education practitioners in their school base, should be sought and communicated to operational management.

6.7 FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH AND NEXT STEPS

The challenge of how to effectively translate attachment theory into attachment-informed practice in a real-life context within a school, and how to build capacity within school organisations, informed the core elements of the intervention study elaborated in the following chapter. Implementation science would influence the procedures and the use of CIT reflective logs would support the detailed exploration of practice change in individual practitioners. This further study would also allow the

exploration of what a secure base and safe haven would mean for staff. It would provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on how education practitioners viewed their role with regard to colleagues and management, as raised in this study and in Study 2.

CHAPTER 7: ATTACHMENT THEORY IN PRACTICE: THE IMPACT OF COACHING AND MENTORING ON ATTACHMENT-INFORMED PRACTICE IN AN EARLY EDUCATION SETTING - *A CASE STUDY IN A PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH A NURSERY CLASS: AIMS, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY (STUDY 4)*

7.1 INTRODUCTION

To summarise the research journey so far, making use of audit methodology (Gillham, 2007; Robson, 2011), Study 1 (Chapter 4) considered the research question *"*What is the current level of knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice within Children's services?". The findings highlighted social work practitioners reported significantly greater opportunities than education practitioners to learn about attachment theory in both their initial training as well as in their professional post, and that significantly more social workers than education practitioners viewed it as very important to understand the theory and have the skills to apply it.

Qualitative research methodology and methods in Study 2 (Chapter 5) provided an opportunity for the researcher to more deeply explore the views, assumptions and meanings attributed by education practitioners to attachment theory. This addressed the research question *"*What understandings do education practitioners have of the implications of attachment theory and practice in their work settings?". One of the main themes, identified by the researcher from the data, concerned the challenge participants expressed about applying the theory into practice.

Study 3 (Chapter 6) provided the opportunity to address the research question *"*What is the impact on education practitioners of training on attachment theory and practice?" by developing, delivering, and evaluating a training course aimed at extending the knowledge base of attachment theory, and informing application in practice.

Feedback on the training course from participants was positive in terms of extending knowledge and understandings about attachment theory. However, a key theme identified by the researcher from participant responses to training activities, indicated more practical support was needed to translate theory into practice.

This current study was planned to address the research question *"*What are the impact and outcomes of training, coaching and mentoring in attachment theory and attachment-informed practice on the support provided by a primary school?". This study could make more extensive use of the CIT tool and other methods to investigate change, impact, and outcomes.

A case study approach was chosen, which provided an opportunity for the researcher to work alongside a group of education practitioners over a period of time, thus introducing a useful longitudinal element to the research programme. The plan was for the research study to take place over an academic year. As with the preceding elements of this research journey, the researcher based the choice of methodology and methods on critical realist assumptions that "the world is a complex place where even general laws or common patterns of experience or behaviour are never expressed in predictable or uniform ways" (Willig, 2013, p. 110). The qualitative research approach adopted, outlined in more detail in Chapter 3: 3.1.3, allowed the researcher "to get under the skin of a group or organisation, to find out what really happens – the informal reality which can only be perceived from the inside" (Gillham, 2000, p. 11). An "in-depth, intensive and sharply focused" case study was planned (Willig, 2013, p. 100), where the researcher provided coaching and mentoring over the academic year to a group of practitioners in one of the two schools from Study 3, (Chapter 6) who had received the training in attachment theory and practice. The study would also provide limited opportunity to explore comparisons between the practitioners who received coaching and mentoring, and those who did not.

So far this research programme has found evidence of the challenge for education practitioners of translating attachment theory into practice. This final study in the

research programme set out to produce findings that are grounded in the data gathered from education practitioners and are useful and relevant to this challenge of theory into practice. It is hoped the findings of this case study “can give rise to theoretical formulations and hypotheses” (Willig, 2013, p. 101) and have an application to other early school settings.

7.2 AIMS AND RATIONALE

The aim of Study 4 was to explore the impact of coaching and mentoring on attachment-informed practice, and thus add to the existing literature on the application of attachment theory in school and nursery settings. The focus of interest was practice with pupils identified as having had disrupted care and early and/or ongoing childhood trauma.

Published research on attachment theory and pre-school and school-aged education provides insight into many aspects of the application of the theory (Bergin & Bergin, 2009; Commodari, 2013; Geddes, 2006; Pianta & Steinberg, 1992; Rose et al., 2014; Sroufe, 1988; Verschueren & Koomen, 2012). Riley’s research (2009, 2011, 2013) into the impact of a teacher’s adult attachment profile on their capacity to form and maintain effective professional relationships is one example of invaluable new insights in the area of applied attachment theory. However, there are gaps in the research literature in terms of in-depth exploration of effective methods to build understanding and capacity in education staff. This study investigates the impact of the support provided to education practitioners in one primary school, with a nursery class, and allows extrapolation of findings to illuminate and inform the development of future professional practice. In this study ‘education practitioner’ is used by the researcher to include early years workers, both teacher-trained and those with college qualifications in early years and child-care; class teachers and head and depute head teachers.

To organise data collection into a meaningful structure for commencing effective analysis, the researcher was informed by a sample of the research literature on the teaching profession, (Alexander, 2004; Babad, 2009; Earl & Timperley, 2009;

Hattie, 2009; Nuthall, 2007; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968; Schön, 1987; Weinstein, 2009). The researcher was also informed by the General Teaching Council for Scotland, (2018a), Education Scotland, the Curriculum for Excellence policy (Education Scotland, 2010-11) and legislation linked to early intervention and closing the attainment gap, in particular the 'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) Scottish legislation.

Since Schön's (1987) landmark volume on reflective practice in the teaching profession, critical reflection has remained a dominant theme in both initial teacher training and continuing professional development. Canning (2011) refers to reflective practice as "one of the most influential professional development theories within teacher education" (p. 609). Two key governing bodies of professional practice in education highlight the importance of reflective practice. The General Teaching Council for Scotland (2018b) refer to the need for reflection to support the consideration and plan for professional learning, development and practice related to the professional standards of the profession. Education Scotland (2014) talk of the need for teachers to be "reflective professionals who can better respond to the wide-ranging and demanding learning and social needs of children and young people" (p. 5). Reflection is also a prevailing theme in the professional partners with whom teachers collaborate in children's services, what Shaw (2013) refers to as "other 'people' professions." McArdle and Briggs (2020) confirm that "many of the social professions build their models of continuing professional development on reflective practice" (p. 58). Reflexivity is also being used increasingly as a term to describe how practitioners in various professions examine their practice. Rooted in social constructionist thinking, Fook (2002) argues it is potentially more complex than reflection, "in that the potential for understanding the myriad ways in which one's own presence and perspective influence the knowledge and actions which are created, is potentially more problematic than the simple searching for implicit theory" (p. 43). Bolton (2014) describes it as "the process of looking back over what one has done, of gathering evidence to see how one's own values, beliefs, opinions and activities have affected what has been done." Shaw's (2013) study of what she terms "the transformative journey to reflexivity" of a sample group (n = 16) of

community learning and development students in the final year of a three-year degree programme, is helpful here. Using semi-structured interviews and focus group meetings, the students were given the opportunity to deepen their levels of reflection to a more critical stance where they became more aware of the assumptions which underpinned their reflections, "as well as society's and those of others." The study found students began to profoundly question their own practice and those of their peers, with Shaw concluding "thus becoming reflexive" (p. 332).

Another key organising element for the data would be an exploration of any impact and outcomes which could be linked to attachment-informed practice. The researcher also identified policy and procedures as areas to explore in terms of triangulating evidence of any impact.

Table 56 below summarises the structure which the researcher identified as relevant from the research literature and professional guidelines to prepare the large amount of data for Thematic Analysis coding and generation of themes.

Table 56: Key categories for case study exploration.

1. Reflection and reflexivity of education practitioners
2. School and classroom practice, in particular with children identified by the school as vulnerable through experiencing disrupted family backgrounds and barriers to learning in school
3. Outcomes for children identified by the school as vulnerable due to emotional and social background issues
4. School policy and procedures

7.3 METHODOLGY AND METHODS

As explained in the introduction to this study, and the research design outlined in Chapter 3: 3.1.3, the researcher had a clear epistemological stance, and this informed the choices of method made for data collection of the key elements outlined in Figure 31. The critical realist assumptions that accessing the participant's interpretations "will yield different types of understanding" (Ritchie et al., 2013, p. 21), lead to a

choice of methods that not only aimed to capture the perceptions of the research participants, but also attempted to triangulate two or more data sources to reach "a fuller or multi-faceted understanding" of the topic (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 419). The case study is not a method in itself and allows for a wide array of different methods of data collection, what Gillham (2000) refers to as "the multi-method approach" (p. 13).

As illustrated by Study 1, (Chapter 4) 'An Audit of the knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice in the children's services workforce', the researcher made the decision to use 'mixed methods' to address the research question. i.e., combine qualitative and quantitative methods within the same study. Riley (2011) talks of using this "as an enhancement to understanding" (p. 4) in his studies on adult attachment theory and the teaching profession. Case studies can use both quantitative and qualitative research methods (Willig, 2013, p. 100) and the researcher identified two quantitative tools to be used: Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) (Kiresuk & Sherman, 1968) and the Revised Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusion Scale (TAIS), (Monsen, Ewing, & Kwoka, 2014). However, as with Study 1, the choice of methods to investigate the research questions from this current study was informed by a "qualitative sensibility" (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 9), and as with many qualitative case studies, Study 4 took place in the naturally occurring context of a real-life setting (Ritchie et al., 2013; Silverman, 2017). These approaches will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, with a rationale for their use.

Figure 31 summarises the quantitative and qualitative methods chosen by the researcher.

What are the impact and rationale of coaching and mentoring in attachment theory and attachment-informed practice on the support provided by one primary school and nursery class to vulnerable pupils?

Case study research, informed by Critical Realism

Methods chosen to gather data as part of the case study

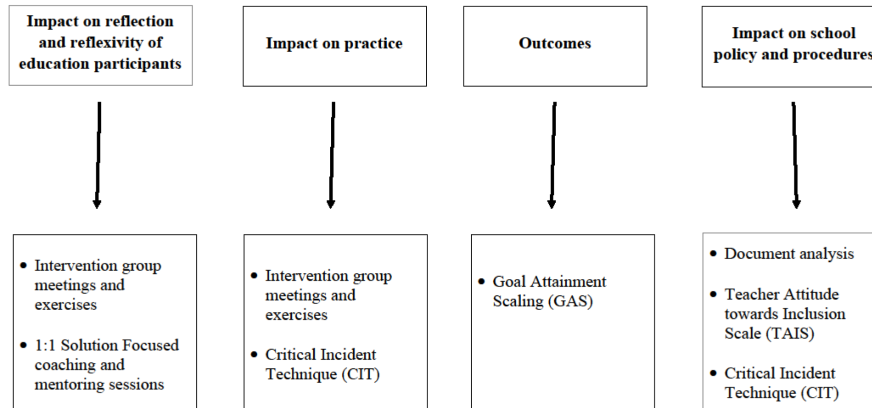


Figure 32: Methods planned for case study.

The range of methods, outlined in Figure 31, allowed the researcher to explore triangulation of data (Gillham, 2000; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Silverman, 2017) needed to "do justice" to complex processes (Willig, 2013, p. 105). In this research programme that would mean exploring and analysing data informed by Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis (2006, 2013, 2018) which was collected from intervention group meetings, 1:1 solution focused coaching and mentoring meetings, CIT reflective logs, and document analysis. The plan was to administer TAIS with staff from both schools and also undertake a pilot of GAS using a small number of children as case studies in school A. The researcher had extensive experience of case discussions in both school and multi-agency settings and proposed to recommend that three case studies would be identified by group members. As Howitt (2010) argues, this mixed method approach "increases our understanding over and above what the methods achieve in isolation" (p. 371).

7.3.1 Collaborative Inquiry

The methods outlined in Figure 31 were to be undertaken within the framework of a collaborative inquiry, a form of action research

(Aguinis, 1993). The General Teaching Council for Scotland promotes practitioner and collaborative inquiry with the primary aim of facilitating professional learning, and ultimately improving pupil experiences and outcomes (General Teaching Council for Scotland) (https://www.gtcs.org.uk/professional-update/research/). A wide range of evidence supports the positive impact of education practitioners working collaboratively (Ainscow et al., 2012; Chapman et al., 2015; Donohoo, 2013; DuFour & DuFour, 2010; Fullan, 2011; Fullan & Langworthy, 2013). This research evidence informed the researcher's choice of a collaborative inquiry approach for the work undertaken with the intervention group, in order to explore the learning which took place when the identified group of staff worked together. All of the group had attended the training delivered as part of the research programme and each group member was able to bring their past personal and professional experiences and their understandings of the school, the nursery and their pupils to the group discussions.

7.3.2 Solution Focused Coaching and Mentoring

As outlined in Chapter 3: 3.1, both the intervention group meetings and the 1:1 coaching and mentoring sessions were informed by solution focused approaches. Iveson et al (2012) outline that the essence of solution focused therapy is "to look for resources rather than deficits; to explore possible and preferred futures; to explore what is already contributing to those futures; and to treat clients as the experts in all aspects of their lives" (p. 3). They go on to argue that in their solution focused coaching model, there is no distinction between the therapeutic model and the coaching model, "work or life, the conversational process is the same" (p. 3). This coaching model is seen as aiming to:

- "help the client 'grow' rather than solve their problems" (p. 5)
- "help the client see more possibilities and choices" (p. 8)
- make "sense of what is keeping the client stuck and what might therefore need to change" (p. 9).

In this solution focused coaching model, clients are supported to notice and describe what they are currently doing which contributes to their progress towards their

preferred future or agreed purpose. Iveson et al (2012) argue this “noticing on the part of the client will then lead to a greater sense of person agency” (p. 18).

In common with many coaching models, the need for an agreed purpose is paramount and at the start of the intervention group meetings ‘developing skills and confidence in attachment-informed practice’ was the purpose which was identified and agreed.

Another common solution focused question which is embedded in the Brief Coaching model, concerns the ‘best hopes’ of clients for the collaboration (Berg & Szabo, 2005; Iveson et al., 2012) and the researcher developed a Best Hopes exercise, outlined in Table 57, to be completed by each member of the intervention group before the first intervention group meeting.

Table 57: Best hopes exercise.

Question 1 - What are your best hopes around your involvement in this learning process, both for you, your pupils and also the school in general?
Question 2 - When we reflect at the end of the collaborative research journey, how would you know if your best hopes have been realised? What would be happening, for you, your pupils and also the school in general?

The plan was that the first of the three 1:1 meetings with the researcher would start with confirmation of the agreed group purpose and the individual’s responses to the best hopes exercise. Thereafter, ‘noticing’ and ‘describing’ questions provided the structure to the sessions and allowed the participant to talk about what their ‘preferred future’ (Iveson et al., 2012) practice would look like and how could they achieve it. The researcher used the following questions:

- What is currently working well in the development of your attachment-informed practice and what do you notice you are doing when you feel it is working well?
- What areas of your attachment-informed practice would you like to do differently and further develop?

- What would be of help and what would support you to achieve this?

Towards the end of each 1:1 session, the participant was given the opportunity to raise any issue that they wanted to talk about and which had not been covered during the session.

The researcher planned that the final 1:1 session would be semi-structured, and Table 58 below outlines five general questions to be emailed to the participants in advance of the meeting.

Table 58: Questions for final 1:1 meeting.

1) Looking at your 'Best Hopes' for the learning process we have been on together, what are your reflections on the journey so far?

2) Thinking of the issues/topics of discussion which have emerged over the course of the intervention group meetings, 1:1 meetings, the group exercises and any discussion which has taken place with your colleagues, can you share what you think are the top three themes from all these discussions?

3) If you had to pick one incident where you feel you have used the knowledge you have gained from the learning process in attachment-informed practice, what would it be?

4) Reflecting back, what elements of the 2-day training last year worked best and is there anything you would recommend either to be presented differently or any area you feel wasn't covered?

5) What are your best hopes now, both for you as an individual, and for your establishment, for next steps in the journey?

7.3.3 Participants

Participants who took part in this stage of the research programme comprised of two groups:

- those who became members of the intervention group in school A
- all staff in both schools A and B who agreed to complete the Revised Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusion Scale

The researcher identified the need for a representative range of staff in the intervention group and a number which would allow fruitful exchange of ideas and sharing of experiences. The researcher asked the school management team to consider 7 to 9 staff (Mebane & Galassi, 2003). For pragmatic reasons, the school could not release support assistants to be part of the group but there was agreement in terms of releasing early years practitioners, class teachers and school management to be part of the group. The researcher requested a range of teachers from primary 1 to the later part of primary and with a wide range of teaching experience. The head teacher liaised with staff in terms of existing professional development review plans and invited expressions of interest to be a research participant.

The final composition of the group included

- head teacher
- depute head teacher
- P1 teacher
- P2 teacher
- P4 teacher
- P5 teacher
- 1 early years practitioner, teacher trained
- 1 early years practitioner, early years and childcare qualified
- 1 peripatetic primary behaviour support teacher (based within school A)

All 9 participants were female. There were no male education practitioners working in either school A or B at the time of the research programme. The average years of experience was 16 years (*SD* = 10.68).

Gillham (2000, p. 78) warns of 'high status' participants in a case study group either dominating proceedings or inhibiting other group members. However, the Implementation Science research literature also highlights the importance of management involvement and strategic support in the successful implementation of learning from collaborative inquiries. Furthermore, Dingwall & Sebba (2018) in their evaluation of the Attachment Aware Schools Programme, recommended

involvement of a senior manager in the training, to support long term sustainability of action plans (p. 24). The researcher and the management team fully discussed these issues, and the decision was made to include the head teacher in the group in order to actively contribute to and support the research inquiry. However, it was also agreed there was a need to remain alert to the importance of group members feeling confident to speak freely. Given the plan for each group member to meet on a 1:1 basis with the researcher, and that those discussions would be confidential, it provided the researcher the opportunity to observe and note any differences in how group members expressed their views in both settings.

In consultation with the researcher, the head teacher from school B planned to ask for volunteers from school staff to use the CIT reflective logs over the period following the attachment training programme until the end of the academic session, which was the same timescale that the intervention group in school A would be completing them. It was explained to staff in school B that the researcher planned to meet with the volunteers along with staff from school A intervention group and explain how to use the tool. The plan was to involve the intervention group in refining the format of the CIT reflective log drafted by the researcher. It was also emphasised that the researcher would be available for advice and consultation as school B practitioners made use of the CIT reflective logs. It was also agreed in advance that the researcher would visit school B on two occasions during the academic year in order to meet with the staff who completed the CIT reflective logs and once again during the first session of the new academic year in order to give participants more time to reflect on the experience on using this method.

7.3.4 Ethical considerations

Questions of ethics centred around confidentiality and anonymity issues both with regard to staff and the children discussed. There were also ethical considerations related to the possible impact on participants of the group discussions and 1:1 meetings. Ethical approval was granted for this study by the University of Strathclyde ethics committee, and the confidentiality issues were addressed by ensuring no names or identifiers of staff and pupils would be used in the reporting of

research findings. Riley (2011) raises the limitations in what can be reported in published findings, which can be the result of justified actions to protect the anonymity of pupils. The actual details of the young person may be what helps education practitioners make the link between the impact of insecure attachment and barriers to learning, but although no pupils were participants in the research programme, participants did talk and reflect on their pupils. The privacy and respect of these pupils was acknowledged, and the researcher made the written commitment not only for anonymity but also for the exclusion of identifiers.

It was planned that group rules would be co-produced by the researcher and the intervention group members and that they would include an agreement not to share confidential details on any pupil discussed with any member of staff out with the group. Regarding support for the participants, as already mentioned in Chapter 3 (Chapter 3: 3.1.3). Willig (2013) highlights that the discussions and interview methods used in qualitative research "may draw attention to beliefs and values whose precise content and implications the participant had been largely unaware of" and participants may be left with "feelings of resentment and regret" (p. 109). The research literature on professionals, and on adoptive and foster parents who support children with troubled early life experience, also highlights what can be a profound psychological impact on the adults involved from learning about and responding to life histories of these young people. This is variously referred to as secondary traumatic stress (Cairns & Cairns, 2002; Caringi et al., 2015; Salloum et al., 2015), vicarious trauma (McCann & Pearlman, 1990; Newell & MacNeil, 2010) or compassion fatigue (Abraham-Cook, 2012; Hoffman et al., 2007). It was important to be alert and prepared for any signs of distress in participants. A route for support was identified in the event of any of the discussions in the intervention group or 1:1 meetings causing distress. The contact details of the local authority counselling service would be provided, and the researcher would also be available to support nursery and teaching staff, and management.

All participants in both primary schools had already completed a consent form agreeing to take part in the research programme, which would involve the training

(Study 3, Chapter 6) and ongoing explorations on the impact of the training. However, to give participants another opportunity to consider their involvement on an ongoing basis, an information session was planned to take place with the school staff in both schools where the researcher would outline the aims of this stage of the research and give participants an opportunity to ask questions.

The results of the research in this study will be reported in the following two chapters, with Chapter 8 providing details and discussion of the findings from the quantitative data analysis, and Chapter 9 outlining the findings from the qualitative data analysis.

CHAPTER 8: ATTACHMENT THEORY IN PRACTICE: THE IMPACT OF COACHING AND MENTORING ON ATTACHMENT-INFORMED PRACTICE IN AN EARLY EDUCATION SETTING - *QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS (STUDY 4)*

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The main data collection methods in Study 4 are qualitative, but as outlined in the previous chapter (Chapter 7), two quantitative measures were also selected by the researcher to address the research questions regarding impact and outcomes. Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS), described by Turner-Stokes (2009) as a "mathematical technique for quantifying the achievement of goals set" (p. 362), was developed by Kiresuk and Sherman in 1968 (Chapter 3: 3.1.3). It was identified by the researcher as a useful outccome measurement tool to be used alongside qualitative data on outcomes. The hypothesis formed by the researcher was that attachment-informed practice would lead to improved outcomes for children, where the outcome goals were achievable in the teacher's professional view and where the goals were co-constructed by the teacher and the child.

The second quantitative method chosen was the Revised Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusion Scale (TAIS), (Monsen, Ewing, & Boyle, 2014). This tool provided a means to explore the impact of coaching and mentoring in attachment-informed practice on the attitudes of education practitioners to the inclusion of pupils with additional support needs. This provided an opportunity to test the hypothesis proposed by the researcher that coaching and mentoring on attachment-informed practice would lead to a more positive view of inclusion from the intervention group compared with the education practitioners in their own school and in school B, who did not receive coaching and mentoring over an academic year. Following the mixed method design of this study (Chapter 3: 3.1.3), the findings from GAS and the TAIS, reported in this chapter, will be triangulated with qualitative findings (Caruth, 2013; Robson, 2011) and a synthesis of the findings discussed in Chapter 9.

8.2 GOAL ATTAINMENT SCALING (GAS)

The original research plan was for three case studies (A, B and C) identified by the intervention group (Chapter 7: 7.3) to be used for gathering impact and outcome data and also to explore the usefulness of GAS as a method for evaluating outcomes of attachment-informed practice. The class teachers sought permission from the parents and carers to pilot the use of GAS as an evaluation tool over a 7-week period. The teachers also sought the agreement of the pupils.

An outline of GAS was provided by the researcher for all intervention group members and a more detailed discussion took place with the intervention group meetings between the researcher and the class teachers involved in directly using and scoring the tool (Appendix 9). During the next intervention group meeting, the head teacher suggested involvement in the GAS process with a fourth pupil who had been raised in the intervention group and 1:1 meetings. The pupil's class teacher was also a member of the intervention group. The head teacher had talked through concerns about this pupil during the sharing and reflection time at the beginning of intervention group meetings. The involvement of the head teacher meant there would be understanding gained by school management into the resources needed to make use of this tool.

There were therefore four case studies involved in the pilot of the use of GAS. None of the four education practitioners were probationers and all had > 8 years of experience in teaching. Planning and practice discussions in the use of GAS took place with the researcher before the commencement of the pilot. By adding a comments box to the recording paperwork, the researcher ensured there was an opportunity to gather relevant written comments from the teachers, to allow the opportunity for qualitative data to be used to set the context for the outcome scores.

Two weeks before the commencement of the pilot, the researcher received the report from the head teacher and class teacher that Child A had been involved in an incident causing serious harm to another pupil and to a member of staff. Due to the concerns for this young person, and after a risk assessment exercise and careful planning in the

local authority education system, a decision was made that, for safety reasons, the pupil was best placed in a smaller education unit. Meanwhile planning proceeded regarding an appropriate placement longer term. The researcher and intervention group were of the view that Child A was no longer in a position to take part in the GAS exercise. The solution discussed and agreed upon was that the teacher of Child A, in collaboration with the intervention group, would identify another pupil in the same class who was causing concern due to emotional or behavioural challenges and who also had experienced early trauma and disrupted care. The class teacher of Child A had already asked for advice from the intervention group and from the researcher in the 1:1 meetings, and there was a consensus in the intervention group regarding another case study. Permission was sought by the school from the carer for the pupil to be involved. However, Child A continued to be discussed during reflections both in the intervention group, and in the 1:1 meetings with the researcher.

The goals were worded in accordance with GAS principles (Kiresuk et al., 1994; Stobie et al., 2005), and the outcomes for each goal were defined for all of the possible five score. Statements were created for each goal to represent

- much less than expected (-2)
- less than expected (-1)
- expected (0)
- more than expected (+1)
- much more than expected (+2) outcomes

Scores for each goal and for each pupil were identified through discussion and negotiation between the pupil and teacher, and the final scores were discussed with the researcher and then analysed. The analysis provided an outcome score, which represents the extent to which the young person progressed towards their goals. The procedure recommended by Kiresuk and Sherman (1968) was followed, where the scores on the last week of the GAS programme are converted into an overall outcome T-score, with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 10. The T-scores were interpreted as

- <50 = less than expected outcome following support and intervention

- 50 = the expected outcome after following and intervention
- >50 = more than expected outcome following support and intervention

8.2.1 Results

The four pupils who took part in this GAS study therefore did not include Child A from the original case studies. Child D was the pupil who was identified from the same class as Child A. Child B and Child C were from the original three case studies, and Child E was the pupil where the head teacher led the GAS study process, while collaborating closely with the child's class teacher. All of these pupils were considered by the researcher and intervention group members to appear to have an insecure attachment profile and to have experienced family disruption from a very early age. The needs and behaviour of each pupil were considered collaboratively by the lead teacher involved in the exercise, the researcher and intervention group colleagues. After talking to the pupil about areas they wanted to work on, goals were drafted which staff considered beneficial to the pupil. Two goals were finalised for each of the four pupils. Each teacher met with the researcher twice over the course of the 7 weeks to discuss and reflect how attachment theory and practice could inform strategies to support the pupil to achieve their goals.

Each pupil's individual goals and progress are discussed below in terms of the calculated T-scores. Table 59 below provides a summary of the GAS statistical outcomes for the four pupils.

Table 59: GAS Final Scores.

	T-score (Goal 1)	**Outcome**	**T-score (Goal 2)**	**Outcome**
Child B	30	Less than expected	30	Less than expected
Child C	40	Less than expected	60	More than expected
Child D	30	Less than expected	30	Less than expected
Child E	N/A		60	More than expected

8.2.3 Child B

Goals:

1. Putting my hand up in class only when I have an answer to a question or when I have information to share.
2. To give my teacher factual reports only and not 'tell tales.'

Child B's scores are shown in Table 60 below.

Table 60: Child B's T score.

T score = 25.2

	Goal 1	**Goal 2**
Week 1	-1	-2
Week 2	-1	-1
Week 3	-1	-1
Week 4	-2	-2
Week 5	-2	-2
Week 6	0	0
Week 7	-2	-2

Outcome:

Child B achieved an overall T score of 25.2, representing less than expected outcomes.

Child B's final score for each goal represented a much less than expected outcome, as did the majority of the individual scores over the period of the 7 weeks. Week 6 was the only week in which Child B achieved what was expected for both goals. The context for week 6 is worthy of consideration. The class teacher was rarely in class over the 7 weeks due to leading the preparation for a school show and there was class cover from a range of staff for most of the 7 weeks apart from week 6, when it was noteworthy that the class teacher was present in class for the whole of that week. The

class teacher’s comment for that week was that Child B had reported finding it easier to work towards the goals when the class teacher was in the class. It would seem possible that the presence of a range of teachers, who perhaps had different teaching styles, adversely effected the child’s ability to work towards the goals. In addition, the absence of the class teacher with whom Child B had formed a close relationship could be a major contributing factor in the outcomes.

8.2.4 Child C

Goals:

1. Increased attention and eye contact with the class teacher during Maths lessons.
2. To recognise personal strengths.

Child C’s scores are shown in Table 61 below.

Table 61: Child C's T Score.

T score = 50

	Goal 1	Goal 2
Week 1	0	-1
Week 2	-1	-1
Week 3	0	0
Week 4	-1	0
Week 5	-1	0
Week 6	-2	-1
Week 7	-1	+1

Outcome:

Child C achieved an overall T-score of 50, representing expected outcomes.

Looking at the scores for goal 1, Child C appears to have begun at the level expected, scoring 0 at Week 1 and Week 3, with a decline thereafter. Taking into account the written comments from the class teacher, it was apparent that class routines for that particular class were regularly disrupted due to rehearsals for the school show. Child C was taking part in the show and the class teacher commented that the pupil easily became restless and distracted on the day of a rehearsal. Part of Child C's challenges, discussed in the intervention group meetings, was to regulate emotions, both when distressed and also when eager and excited. It may have been that Child C would have made more progress with regard to this goal, out with the annual school show preparations.

For goal 2, Child C's final score suggests more than expected achievement towards the goal. Scores for this goal did fluctuate over time, but again, the low scores in some weeks may have been affected by the school show preparations, as the measurement process was dependent on discussions between the class teacher and the pupil around strengths the teacher was noticing in the pupil and looking for the pupil to also recognise. With Child C out of class frequently for rehearsals, the opportunity for this teacher/pupil dialogue was reduced.

8.2.5 Child D

Goals:

1. To join letters in 3 sentences.
2. To stay in class and not ask to go to the toilet when upset about something.

Child D's scores are shown in Table 62 below.

Table 62: Child D's T Score.

T score = 25.2

	Goal 1	**Goal 2**
Week 1	+2	-2
Week 2	-2	-2

Week 3	-2	+1
Week 4	+2	+2
Week 5	-2	-2
Week 6	-2	-2

Outcome:

Child D received an overall T-score of 25.2 representing a less than expected outcome across the two goals.

For goal 1, on weeks 1 and 4, Child D exceeded the goal. However, on other weeks achievement was much less than expected. Child D's class teacher provided a written comment that

> there was not much opportunity to do handwriting practice due to unexpected classroom changes in routine. In general, Child D has tried to improve writing skills, and on reflection the wording of the goal would maybe have been better to have been expressed as 'shows effort to improve handwriting by joining letters'. Child D has responded well to conversations with me and the head teacher about confidence and not giving up when the written tasks seem hard. However, I did not find the time I hoped for to work with Child D individually.

The individual scores for goal 1 indicate that at times Child D displayed effort and capabilities which were beyond staff expectations. It would seem that lack of staff time and attention to provide support and encouragement, may have adversely effected progress in goal 1.

With regards to goal 2, over weeks 3 and 4, Child D was able to exceed the expected target. However, in the other weeks achievement was much less than expected. Exploring the qualitative data surrounding this, the class teacher commented

> Child D has become more upset as the end of term approaches and is telling me and other staff that they do not want to stop coming to school during the school holidays. At times this had led to tearful outbursts.

This may have affected progress in achieving goals 1 and 2. The issue of anxiety over imminent change is particularly important when considering the adverse effects endings such as being away from school for the summer holiday period or leaving a class teacher for a new class after summer, can have on a young person such as Child D with a history of disrupted care.

It should also be noted, that due to external factors, Child D's GAS process started one week later than planned, meaning scores were only obtained for 6 weeks. This missing score was taken into account when the results of the GAS pilot was discussed at the intervention group meetings.

8.2.6 Child E

Goals:

1. To go and seek help from an adult when something goes wrong at lunch times and I get upset.
2. To be able to explain to the head teacher the reason for the good news stories I provide in class.

Child E's scores are shown in Table 63 below.

Table 63: Child E's T Score.

T score = 60

	Goal 1	**Goal 2**
Week 1	/	0
Week 2	/	0
Week 3	Pupil absent all week	Pupil absent all week

Week 4	/	+1
Week 5	/	+1
Week 6	/	+1
Week 7	/	+1

Outcome:

Child E received a T-score of 60 on Goal 2, a more than expected achievement towards the goal.

Child E's levels of distress following an incident with peers during the lunchbreak, especially in the dinner hall, as had been happening frequently for a number of months, was used to measure the behaviour in goal 1. However, such behaviour did not apparently happen at all over the period of the GAS pilot, despite regular difficult incidents taking place involving Child E and peers during lunchtime, which prior to the GAS pilot would have led to outbursts of distress. As a result, in the context of this particular goal, Child E could not be scored on the ability to seek help from an adult but there was learning which could be taken from the change in behaviour.

Goal 2 referred to Child E's ability to explain to the head teacher the reason(s) for good news at class 'news' time, and the final score represented a greater improvement than was expected. The class teacher reported that Child E was proud of their achievement and had been able to say, "I have gone to see the head teacher about my good news and when she asked me a question why it was good, I was able to give my reason." The class teacher also noted that Child E was now more willing to discuss classwork and explain what tasks were difficult. With regard to goal 1, the head teacher, who was leading the setting and monitoring of the goals, commented that Child E was "overall more engaged in conversations with me and more focused." The head teacher quoted Child E as saying "I didn't need any help. Everything was good at lunchtimes" and told the class teacher and head teacher that although help had been required in Primary 1, the pupil was growing up and did not need help from adults in the dinner hall or playground now. There was some debate

in the intervention group about why this improved so unexpectedly, and one group member was of the view that the attention and conversation about setting the goal increased Child E's sense of being "remembered and understood" and this gave Child E the motivation and strength to change behaviour.

8.2.7 Discussion

Of the four pupils who took part, one progressed more than expected, one as expected and two less than expected. The hypothesis that attachment-informed practice would lead to improved outcomes for children was upheld in two of the four case studies, but there were clear factors which negatively affected progress towards the goals for two of the case studies. One main factor would seem to have affected the progress of Child B and Child C, namely the disruption to class routines caused by the preparations for the school show. Child B would seem to have been unsettled for most of the 7-week period by the absence of the class teacher during most of the school day, which given the stage of school, Primary 2, could have affected any pupil at that stage. The class teacher did arrange to meet with the pupil daily to talk about progress on the goals and provide encouragement and try to show the pupil was not forgotten, although other duties linked to the school show meant being out of class. However, this was a child who had twice experienced traumatic maternal separation, with the most recent occasion apparently permanent. Despite the efforts by the class teacher, which included leaving a special item on the pupil's desk as a reminder of their close relationship, Child B could have been experiencing separation anxiety over the absence of the class teacher.

Furthermore, the imminent prospect of term ending and the long summer holiday without the safe and secure pattern of school life would seem to have been a barrier to the progress of Child D.

Discussion and reflection at the intervention group meeting supported the importance highlighted in the research literature on peer review of outcomes (Krasny-Pacini et al., 2013). The group would seem to have found the raw scores more helpful than the T-scores in their discussion of change linked to attachment-informed practice. This

supports procedure mentioned in the literature where only the raw GAS scores were recorded. Marson et al. (2009b) comment that practitioners can "employ GAS to assess process, while concurrently producing data for outcome assessment and accountability, often of more interest to researchers and funders" (p. 205), and Krasny-Pacini et al. (2013) report that in the literature they found examples of goal attainment scaling results expressed in raw scores "which is easily understood . . . and easy to use" (p. 215). One member of the intervention group, who was not one of the four teachers leading the process, commented that the use of 0 to describe the intended outcome and -1, -2, +1 and +2 "made complete sense and made the measurement more meaningful". The discussions on outcomes in the intervention group led to all members concluding that there seemed evidence of some positive change in the behaviour of the four case studies from applying attachment-informed practice. This supports the view of Coffee and Ray-Subramanian (2009) that GAS "can be used effectively for behavioral progress monitoring" (p. 1). One group member commented that "spending time talking and listening to what the pupils think are important goals for them, is a great example of promoting attachment – we all need to do more of that in general and not just when we use GAS".

All staff involved provided positive comments both during their 1:1 meetings with the researcher and in the intervention group regarding the benefits of schools using GAS to evaluate attachment-informed practice, though three members of the group who had been leads in the pilot, commented that more practice was needed to develop the wording of the five levels of the goals. One commented that to produce the five levels of the goals took a lot of time and suggested the development of a bank of goals worded around certain areas, which could help start the process of finalising the wording with the pupil. The concept of goal menus, goal banks or "illustrated examples" (Tennant, 2007) is mentioned in the literature (Tennant, 2007; Turner-Stokes, 2009).

8.2.8 Limitations

It was agreed in the intervention group that the timing of such an evaluative process during preparations for the school show was not helpful. As already indicated, class

teachers were withdrawn from class, sometimes for a week at a time. They were replaced either by staff on the local authority teachers' supply list, or by a mixture of members of the management team and supply teachers. In any future study, forward planning should ensure the GAS process was not taking place at a time of disruption to routines, all be it for a very positive reason.

Another limitation to note was the small sample size (n=4). This number was appropriate within the wide range of planned activity and allocated time for the research study. To further explore the usefulness of GAS as an evaluative tool to measure the outcomes of attachment-informed practice in an early school setting, a larger sample size would be recommended.

It was unfortunate that the GAS pilot did not include Child A, but exploration of Child A's needs and methods to provide support, continued in the remainder of the intervention group meetings.

However, from an ethical perspective, in any replication of this study, it would be important to have a clear record of the views of the pupil when they are given an opportunity to consider whether they would want to be involved in the study. It is also important that a record is kept of the discussion where the purpose of piloting GAS is shared with parents and carers and a record made of whether permission has been provided.

8.2.9 Conclusions on the use of GAS in this study

From the use of GAS with the four case studies, in terms of attachment theory and practice, there was clear learning about insecurely attached children

- To be aware of the challenge of transitions and prepare pupils well in advance of changes
- To acknowledge the need for supporting pupils to regulate not just fearful emotions but also excitement and joy
- To be alert to the possibility of separation anxiety for pupils when a member of staff with whom there is a close bond is not present

- To provide support when separation protest behaviours seem apparent, by talking and listening to how the pupil feels and exploring what actions would help repair the relationship, or "ameliorate their internal working model through more positive relational experiences" (Kennedy, 2008), or what Riley describes as "a corrective or confirmatory emotional experience" (2011).

Despite the limitations, this study would seem to have produced findings that indicate GAS can be a useful tool to evaluate the outcomes of attachment-informed practice. As highlighted by Stobie et al, (2005), the method could be supported by the school educational psychologist. This could involve a role similar to the researcher in this study i.e., supporting staff development in attachment theory and practice and providing training in the use of GAS, as well as analysing outcome data. As mentioned in the introduction (Chapter 1:1.2), Parker et al. (2016) highlighted the ongoing need to extend the body of empirical research "on the effectiveness of attachment-based school strategies" (p. 477) and GAS could prove an effective tool to gather and consider such evidence.

8.3 REVISED TEACHERS' ATTITUDE TOWARDS INCLUSION SCALE (TAIS)

The Principal Components Analysis of Section 4 of the TAIS, undertaken by Monsen et al. (2014), generated four dimensions:

1. Problems of inclusion of SEN pupils in mainstream classes (7 items, Cronbach's alpha .86)
2. Social benefits of inclusion of SEN pupils in mainstream classes (5 items, Cronbach's alpha .80)
3. Implications of inclusion for teaching practice (4 items, Cronbach's alpha .76)
4. Implications for teachers addressing the needs of children with SEN (4 items, Cronbach's alpha .76)

The hypothesis formed by the researcher was that the responses of the intervention group members would be positively influenced by the skills and insights of the needs for security of vulnerable pupils, gained during the coaching and mentoring sessions. The researcher hypothesised that attitudes as measured by the responses would be significantly more positive than the non-intervention group in particular with regard to 'Problems of inclusion of SEN pupils in mainstream classes', 'Implications of inclusion for teaching practice' and 'Implications for teachers addressing the needs of children with SEN'.

8.3.1 Procedure

As outlined in Chapter 7, page 242, all education practitioners in schools A and B were invited to complete the items in TAIS during the next academic year following

- the delivery of the training programme to both schools
- the collaborative inquiry, coaching and mentoring with the intervention group in school A

The head teachers of both schools facilitated completion of the questionnaire by allocating time during an in-service day.

Mindful of the modest number of participants in the intervention group (n = 9) and also of the directional hypothesis, the researcher decided against undertaking an analysis of variance. Planned one-tailed t-tests were thus used to test the hypotheses regarding whether the intervention group responded more positively to the composite scores for each of the four dimensions of the TAIS scale compared to the non-intervention group. Composite scores for each of the four dimensions were calculated following the details provided by Monsen et al. (2014, pp. 5, Table 1). In making inferences from the data, effect sizes were calculated and confidence levels considered at .05 level of significance.

8.3.2 Results

Thirty-five participants in total started the questionnaire, but the responses for two education practitioners in school B were incomplete and were not included in the

analysis. All members of the intervention group (n = 9) in school A, staff from school A who were not in the intervention group (n = 6) and practitioners in school B, (n = 18) all completed the questionnaire. For the purpose of analysing the responses, two groups were coded i.e., 'the intervention group' (n = 9) and the 'non-intervention group' (n = 24).

Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 64 below, where SEN is replaced by ASN, Additional Support Needs, which is the term used in Scottish legislation and would seem equivalent to the terminology of Special Educational Needs.

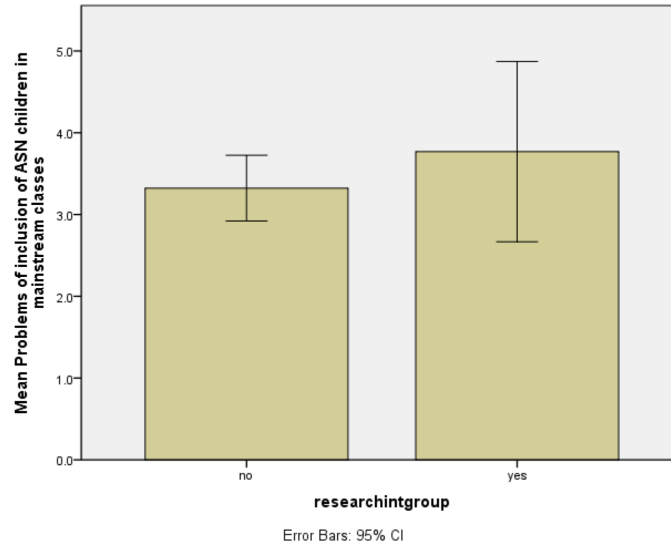
Table 64: Descriptive Statistics for the Composite Scores from the TAIS.

Descriptive Statistics				
	Intervention	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Problems of inclusion of ASN children in mainstream classes	No	3.32	0.95	24
	Yes	3.77	1.43	9
Social benefits for all of the inclusion of ASN pupils in mainstream classes	No	5.59	0.79	24
	Yes	6.13	1.32	9
Implications of inclusion for teaching practice	No	4.24	0.89	24
	Yes	5.29	1.40	9
Implications for addressing the needs of children with ASN	No	3.91	1.24	24
	Yes	4.97	1.56	9

For all four of the planned t-tests exploring responses to the scale items, Levene's tests were non-significant (all p-values > .07), and therefore equal variances were assumed.

8.3.3 Problems of Inclusion of ASN children in mainstream classes

Applying an alpha level of .05, a one-way independent samples t-test did not reveal a significant difference between the composite scores for this dimension for the intervention group (M = 3.77, SD = 1.43) and the non-intervention group (M = 3.32, SD = 0.95); $t(31) = 1.04$, one-tailed p = .154. Figure 32 below outlines the composite scores and error bars from the statistical analysis of the TAIS responses.

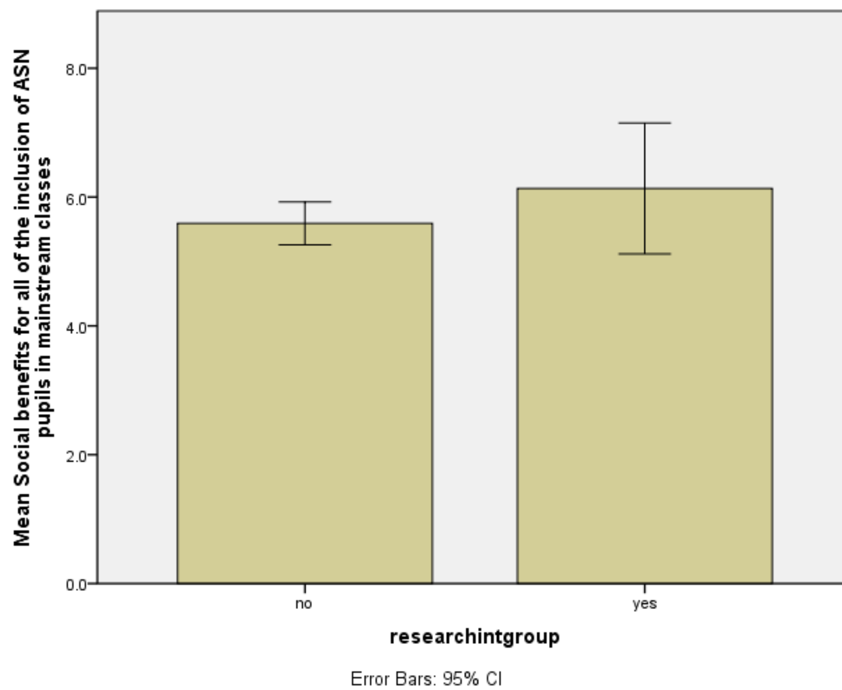


NB: yes = a member of the Research Intervention Group; no = not a member of the Research Intervention Group

Figure 33: Problems of Inclusion of ASN children in mainstream classes - Composite Scores and error bars from the TAIS.

8.3.4 Social benefits for all of the inclusion of ASN pupils in mainstream classes

Applying an alpha level of .05, an independent samples t-test on this measure also did not find a significant difference between the composite scores for this dimension for the intervention group (*M* = 6.13, *SD* = 1.32) and the non-intervention group (*M* = 5.59, *SD* = 0.79); *t*(31) = 1.45, one-tailed *p* = .079. Figure 33 below outlines the composite scores and error bars from the statistical analysis of the TAIS responses.



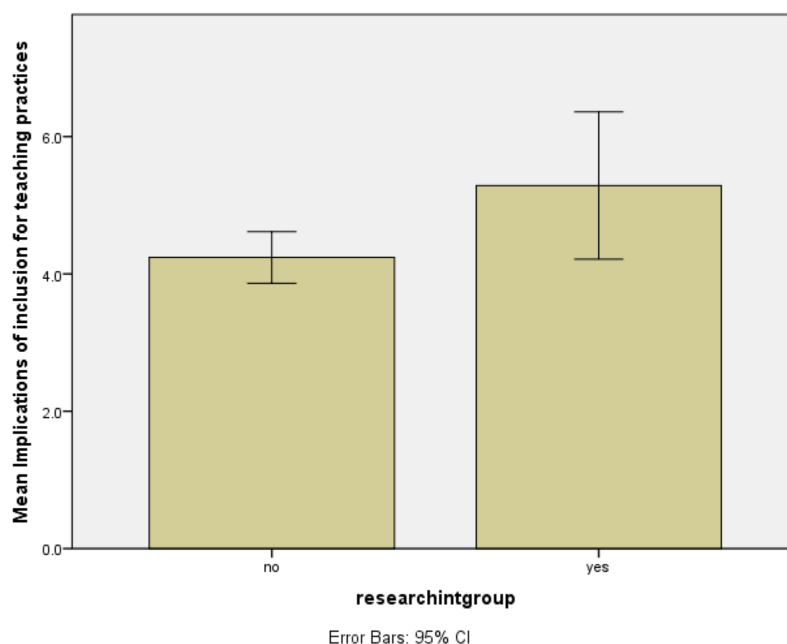
NB: yes = a member of the Research Intervention Group; no = not a member of the Research Intervention Group

Figure 34: Social benefits for all of the inclusion of ASN pupils in mainstream classes - Composite Scores and error bars from the TAIS

8.3.5 Implications of inclusion for teaching practices

Applying an alpha level of .05, the independent samples t-test on this measure did find a highly significant difference between the composite scores for this dimension for the intervention group (M = 5.29, SD = 1.40) compared to the non-intervention group (M = 4.24, SD = 0.89); $t(31) = 2.57$, one-tailed $p = .008$, Cohen's d standardised effect size 1.00 95% CI [.191, 1.802].

Figure 34 below outlines the composite scores and error bars from the statistical analysis of the TAIS responses.

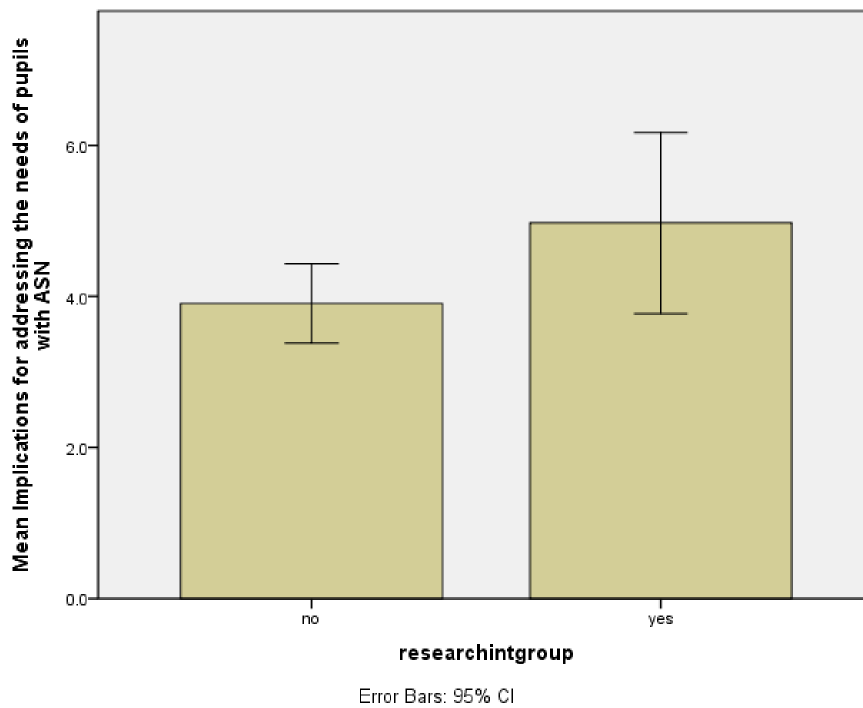


NB: yes = a member of the Research Intervention Group; no = not a member of the Research Intervention Group

Figure 35: Implications of inclusion for teaching practices - Composite Scores and error bars from the TAIS

8.3.6 Implications for addressing the needs of children with ASN

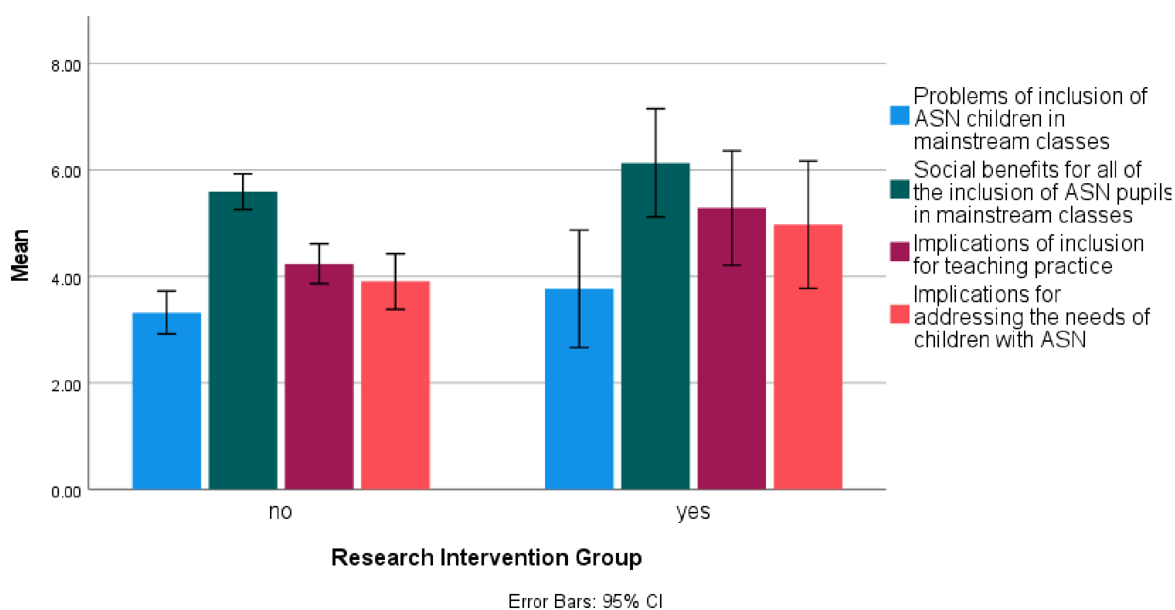
Applying an alpha level of .05, an independent samples t-test on this measure did find a significant difference between the composite scores for this dimension for the intervention group (M = 4.97, SD = 1.56) and the scores of the non-intervention group (M = 3.91, SD = 1.24); $t(31) = 2.05$, one-tailed $p = .025$. Cohen's d standardised effect size 0.80 95% CI [.004, 1.587]. Figure 35 below outlines the composite scores and error bars from the statistical analysis of the TAIS responses.



NB: yes = a member of the Research Intervention Group; no = not a member of the Research Intervention Group

Figure 36: Implications for addressing the needs of children with ASN – Composite Scores and error bars from the TAIS

Figure 36 below illustrates the comparison between the intervention group and the non-intervention group with component scores and provides a summary of the findings reported above. The error bars are useful in providing a visual representation of the variability in the samples. In the two independent samples t-tests which found that the composite scores for the intervention group were significantly greater than the scores for the non-intervention group (Implications of inclusion for teaching practices and Implications for addressing the needs of children with ASN), the error bars are longer for the intervention group, which would indicate the values are more spread out than for the non-intervention group, and less reliable. There is also some overlap in the error bars for these dimension. Given the unequal sample size, this does not mean that there is no difference in the data, but it would indicate the need for caution in inferring these two groups are different on these dimensions.



NB: yes = a member of the Research Intervention Group; no = not a member of the Research Intervention Group

Figure 37: Comparison between intervention group and non-intervention group - component scores and error bars from TAIS

8.3.7 Discussion

Monsen et al. (2014) highlight that research indicates teachers view children with certain difficulties to be more difficult to include within mainstream classrooms than others. Teachers can be particularly reluctant to include children and young people who present emotional and behavioural challenges, both due to perceptions of lack of expertise and also potential harm to the reputation of the school (Rouse, 2008; Visser & Stokes, 2003).

However, participants in this study were aware that completion of the TAIS was part of the research programme on attachment theory and practice, and it is worth considering that when they read the statement at the start of the scale, “the following questionnaire is interested in your **attitudes** towards inclusion of Special Educational Needs Pupils into regular classrooms”, they may have been thinking predominantly about the inclusion of young people with attachment difficulties when providing their

responses. Monsen et al. (2014) also refer to research which found that attitudes to inclusion can be affected by how teachers view their knowledge base and expertise with children with additional support needs (Goodman & Burton, 2010). It had been predicted by the researcher that the intervention group would have more positive views of inclusion than the non-intervention group due to the insight gained about the impact of insecure attachment on behaviour and the need for security. The results did not indicate any significant difference between the two groups on 'Problems of Inclusion of ASN children in mainstream classes', or 'Social benefits for all of the inclusion of ASN pupils in mainstream classes'. However, there were significant differences with regard to 'Implications of inclusion for teaching practice' and 'Implications for addressing the needs of children with ASN'. Given Cohen defined a d-score of >.80 as 'large' (1988), the Cohen's d effect sizes for both dimensions was large.

8.3.8 Limitations

Administration of TAIS by the researcher to collect pre-test data proved challenging to organise due to existing local authority education demands on one of the schools. This lack of pre-test data limits the inferences concerning the impact of coaching and mentoring, and the between-group differences may not have had anything to do with the intervention. A further limitation concerns the sample imbalance between the intervention group (n=9) and the non-intervention group (n=24) which reduces statistical power and the sensitivity of the t-tests to detect a real effect.

8.3.9 Conclusions on the use of TAIS in this study.

As explained above, there are no pre-test results with which to compare, and only limited conclusions can be made about the impact of coaching and mentoring in attachment-informed practice. Nevertheless, despite the qualifications of caution noted earlier in this chapter, the findings of the TAIS analysis would merit cautious inferences of more understanding in the intervention group of the implications of inclusion for teaching practices and have more insight into the implications of meeting the needs of children with ASN, compared to the non-intervention group.

8.4 CONCLUSIONS ON THE QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Despite the limitations highlighted in the use of both quantitative methods in this study, there are tentative insights to be gained from the use of TAIS in terms of the exploration of the impact of coaching and mentoring in attachment-informed practice on views of inclusion. Furthermore, it would seem that GAS provided an opportunity to explore how attachment-informed practice effects pupil outcomes. The qualitative data, which is reported in the next chapter, provides the opportunity for triangulation with these quantitative findings. Considering commonalities and differences in the data facilitates further illumination of the impact and outcomes of coaching and mentoring in attachment-informed practice.

CHAPTER 9: ATTACHMENT THEORY IN PRACTICE: THE IMPACT OF COACHING AND MENTORING ON ATTACHMENT-INFORMED PRACTICE IN AN EARLY EDUCATION SETTING - *QUALITATIVE FINDINGS (STUDY 4)*

9.1 INTRODUCTION

As highlighted in the previous chapter, the main data collection methods chosen to explore the impact of coaching and mentoring on attachment-informed practice were qualitative. Chapter 7 outlined the choice of a case study approach of one primary school with a nursery class. Two primary schools, A and B, had received a two-day training in attachment theory and attachment-informed practice (Chapter 6) and although the case study is based in one school, school A, all of the staff in school B participated in the completion of the Revised Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusion Scales (TAIS) (Chapter 8: 8.3). A small number of staff in school B contributed to the qualitative elements of this study by completing the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) reflective logs (Flanagan, 1954), thus permitting some degree of insight into the impact of training only, without coaching and mentoring.

Chapter 7: 7.3 provided an outline of the methodology, methods and procedures planned, in addition to details of the research participants from school A who formed the membership of the 'intervention group' of nine education practitioners.

9.2 PROCEDURE OF INTERVENTION GROUP STUDY

At the beginning of the academic year, an introductory meeting took place between the researcher and the intervention group, at which the date for the first collaborative inquiry meeting was set. The researcher outlined the aims of the research programme and explained where Study 4 fitted into the previous research studies in this research programme. All members of the intervention group had taken part in Study 3, which explored the impact of a training programme on attachment theory and practice, and therefore had existing understanding of the research programme. Key elements which would inform Study 4 were outlined by the researcher and discussed, including the collaborative inquiry process, solution focused approaches, the

researcher's coaching and mentoring role, and the use of individual case studies of children in the school as part of the collaborative inquiry. The researcher outlined CIT and indicated that the group members would be given the opportunity to consider a draft format drawn up by the researcher and adapt as appropriate for effective use during the collaborative inquiry. This collaboration in the final format of the CIT reflective log was planned to encourage ownership and commitment to the process of recording impact and reflections.

Discussion took place as to what was an acceptable and feasible number of 2-hour intervention group meetings, and 1:1 meetings with the researcher, over the academic year, taking into account availability of staff time. The researcher had considerable experience in working with schools using a collaborative inquiry approach and this informed the discussion on time allocation needed. A consensus was reached between the researcher and the intervention group to hold eight group meetings and three 1:1 meetings over the course of the study. The researcher suggested the last of the 1:1 meetings should take place at the start of the following academic year to allow a period of time to pass for a further reflection on the impact of the research study.

At the conclusion of this introductory meeting, a blank 'Best Hopes' exercise for the collaborative inquiry into the impact of attachment theory and practice was distributed to each group member (Chapter 7: 7.3.2) to be completed and returned to the researcher electronically before the first intervention group meeting.

Over the course of Study 4, one further exercise was completed individually by group members out with the intervention group meetings. Group members were given a blank template on the three case studies of pupils and participants were asked to share their reflections of the attachment profiles of the three children. The completed templates were returned to the researcher electronically and the responses were part of the discussion in both the intervention group and 1:1 meetings.

To support thematic analysis, the intervention group meetings were video recorded and transcribed by a local authority administrative officer who had extensive experience in audio transcription. Reliability checks were undertaken by the researcher. As had been explained to group participants, the purpose of video recording was to provide a check that all participant contributions were noted, especially when more than one person was speaking at once and there was a problem capturing it with audio only. There was no other purpose, and the video material itself was not analysed, e.g., for nonverbal communication. Participants had been assured that no video clips from the recording would be shown in any presentation and that only the researcher would view the video recordings to check all dialogue had been transcribed. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) comment that "video recordings offer a unique opportunity for analysing the interpersonal interaction in an interview" but that "where the main interest is the content of what is said, video recordings maybe too cumbersome for the analysis of the interview content" (p. 179).

The twenty-seven 1:1 solution focused, coaching and mentoring meetings were audio recorded and transcribed for analysis by the administrative officer who had transcribed the intervention group meetings. The researcher undertook reliability checks. A copy of the transcript of the 1:1 meetings was given to each participant to check for accuracy and a signature was required for the statement "I agree that this is an accurate summary of this 1:1 meeting".

9.3 QUALITATIVE DATA: FINDINGS

The researcher gathered an extensive range of qualitative data from the eight intervention group meetings, twenty-seven 1:1 coaching and mentoring sessions, seventy-two CIT reflective logs, and finally from the participant responses to four written activities, three completed individually by the nine participants and one undertaken on a group basis. The findings are organized into a series of sections in the following order:

- the responses and analysis from the 'Best Hopes' exercise completed before the first meeting of the group
- detail on the three case studies identified

- the responses to the exercise on the attachment profile of the case studies
- schedule and items from the group meetings, including the format of the CIT reflective logs
- the secure base and safe haven exercise completed as part of the intervention group meetings
- reflections on the training course (Chapter 6)
- themes identified from the transcribed data from CIT reflective logs, group meetings and coaching and mentoring sessions, illustrated under the categories of 'reflection and reflexivity' and 'theory into practice'
- experiences and outcomes for children in school
- changes in policy and procedure
- participants' concluding reflections in the final 1:1 meeting on their key themes from the collaborative inquiry

9.3.1 The 'Best Hopes' Exercise

This exercise gave participants the opportunity to use their learning from the training course (Chapter 6) to reflect on their 'best hopes' (Iveson et al., 2012), for knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment-informed practice after a year of participation in the intervention group. This included what their 'best hopes' were for the school in general, and the pupils. The researcher used thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013, 2019) to code the responses and then identify the key themes from the responses which are outlined in Table 65 below.

Table 65: Participants' best hopes for the collaborative inquiry.

Question 1a - What are your best hopes around your involvement in this learning process for **you**?	
Main themes from responses	Illustrative quotes
Practice that is informed by attachment theory	"To be able to reflect and adjust my practice to offer more support"
Alert and responsive to need	"For myself I would like to be able to notice children with attachment issues especially those who are not obvious

	and do not have challenging behaviour problems and have strategies in place both for the obvious need and the non-obvious”
The reasons behind behaviour	“I hope to have a better awareness of the possible reasons for challenging behaviour shown by some pupils … to have a better understanding of the contributory factors that can influence and have a life-changing impact on a child’s wellbeing”
Dealing with challenging behaviour	“I hope to learn some strategies to deal with challenging behaviour - knowing how to interact with pupils in a positive manner, knowing things to say/not say, etc. and I hope to have a better understanding of possible triggers that could heighten a child’s state of arousal, and try to avoid these triggers and where possible respond to this in a different, more appropriate way than I perhaps did previously”

Question 2a - When we reflect at the end of the collaborative research journey, how would you know if your best hopes for **you** have been realised? What would be happening?

Main themes from responses	Illustrative quotes
Dealing with challenging behaviour	“A change in my practice/approach would be evident especially when meeting the needs of the most challenging children”
Reflective practice	“As a professional I will be reflecting in more detail and with more direct purpose on my experiences of children in my care. Will be aiming to do this through asking more questions, challenging my thinking and identifying ways to change actions to improve outcomes”
Confident in attachment-informed practice	“I would feel more skilled and confident to continue to develop and implement attachment-informed practice in

	different stages and with different children as we venture to new challenges in the new academic year”

Question 1b - What are your best hopes around your involvement in this learning process for **your pupils**?

Main themes from responses	Illustrative quotes
Ready to learn	“To be able to provide a caring environment where the children can feel safe, able to learn and have fun”
Valued	“I hope to learn how to ensure I am a teacher where all children within my direct care and those I interact with indirectly, feel that they are listened to, understood and truly valued as an important member of the class and the wider school community”

Question 2b - When we reflect at the end of the collaborative research journey, how would you know if your best hopes for **your pupils** have been realised? What would be happening?

Main themes from responses	Illustrative quotes
Emotional intelligence	“I hope that pupils will be more able to talk confidently about their feelings and emotions and talk about what helps them to feel safe and secure and learn in a positive environment”

Question 1c - What are your best hopes around your involvement in this learning process for **the school**?

Main themes from responses	Illustrative quotes
Dealing with challenging behaviour	“For the school I particularly hope that we may be able to find a more effective way of dealing with the most challenging of behavioural issues which can cause huge disruptions in classrooms, making it difficult for teachers to do their job properly and which prevent other pupils from learning”

Importance of physical environment	"We hope to carry out a sensory audit of the school, incorporating the pupils' ideas, to identify positives and places where the children feel safe and secure, and identify things we need to work on, e.g., perhaps more quiet areas"

Question 2c - When we reflect at the end of the collaborative research journey, how would you know if your best hopes for **the school** have been realised? What would be happening?

Main themes from responses	Illustrative quotes
Cultural change	"I hope that when we reflect, that all staff are regularly reflecting on their interactions with pupils and their own practice and have made/are continuing to make positive changes - in their interactions with pupils, in their classroom set-up, in their approaches to dealing with challenging behaviour. I don't think there is a checklist that we will be able to sit and tick off at the end of the year, I feel it will be more just a general culture within the school, amongst all staff"
Positive relationships	"My best hopes would be to experience and witness positive changes in relationships throughout the school"
Effective behaviour policy	"I would hope to see a significant change to our behaviour policy to take account of attachment issues"
Safe and secure school environment	"We would have a change to certain areas in the school with respite/chill out areas for pupils when they become distressed"
Knowledge sharing	"Staff would feel capable and enthusiastic about sharing our learning experiences with other professionals within and out with our immediate school environment"

9.3.2 Three Identified Case Studies

The group spent time with the researcher during the intervention group meetings to establish three case studies of children with identified risk factors in their background, and current situation, which could predict attachment difficulties. Table 66 below outlines the key risk factors linked to the three children, Child A primary 4, Child B primary 6, and Child C primary 2.

Table 66: Background risk factors in the three case studies.

Case study	Background
A (P4)	Private nursery placement 8am-6pm from age 6 months; no contact with birth father; change of surname three times; evidence of self-harm; living at home with mother and stepfather
B (P6)	Historical and current maternal mental health issues; social work involvement in relation to Child Protection concerns; patterns of late coming and poor attendance; living at home with mother
C (P2)	Traumatic maternal exit from family home, once in preschool and again in P1 and no contact with mother; habit of 'rocking' in seat when distressed; living with father who is struggling to cope with Child C's behaviour; social work involvement and counselling has been accessed to support Child C to cope with the loss of contact with mother

9.3.3 Exercise to Discuss the Attachment Profile of the Case Studies

This exercise gave participants the opportunity to reflect and make use of their learning from the training course, personal reading, reflections from their CIT reflective logs and discussions in the intervention group. It provided the opportunity to consider the attachment profiles of the three identified case studies and consider appropriate attachment-informed strategies.

A summary of the attachment patterns associated with secure, insecure avoidant, insecure ambivalent and insecure disorganised had been discussed in the training programme. An emphasis was made by the researcher on the benefit of noticing these patterns in order to inform effective strategies. The understanding could also

help the education practitioner to avoid unhelpful triggers for the child. The training delivered about attachment patterns also highlighted the need to be aware that there is a continuum of behaviour which may seem to indicate one type of insecure attachment, while at other times the child's behaviour may be more typical of another insecure profile. The aim of this exercise was therefore not to diagnose a particular insecure attachment profile, but to notice patterns of behaviour, and to develop an understanding of triggers, risks, and helpful interventions. The group completed the exercise out with the group meetings. They were given the option to complete it on their own or with a small group of colleagues from the intervention group. As well as indicating if they thought the child's behaviour seemed to match one of the insecure descriptions, group members were asked to express their reflections on how they came to their decision. Table 67 below outlines the findings. All group members completed the exercise, and all indicated they had done so individually rather than in a small group and that this had been due to pressure of time.

Table 67: Case study profiles.

Case study	Secure	Insecure ambivalent	Insecure avoidant	Disorganised insecure	Illustrative quotes
A (P4)	0	0	0	9	"Child A has told me he does not trust anyone, including his mum and dad" "I don't think child A feels emotionally safe with anyone. It is also difficult for adults to trust Child A as it is hard to make any meaningful connection with him" "Child A can present with behaviour which seems totally

					inappropriate and apparently unrelated to the situation”
B (P6)	0	2	7	0	“Child B can’t cope with too much physical proximity and likes to be independent” “Child B appears to be self-reliant in the relationship with mum and in fact takes on the role of the parent, and mum the child” “In a large school Child B could go unnoticed as Child B does not cause any trouble or difficultly but there is a high level of need and is very reluctant to talk about feelings”
C (P2)	0	8	1	0	“Child C wants more of my attention in the classroom than I can give and finds it very difficult to cope with me giving attention to other children” “Child C craves attention. Having experienced trauma when mum left the family home on two occasions, the second time permanently, and child C appears very confused and affected by this

situation"

"Child C seeks a lot of attention from adults. Child C has shown high levels of anxiety and appears overanxious about how viewed by others"

Findings show predominantly accurate responses and a high degree of agreement among the intervention group. Evidence of how safe participants felt within the group was apparent when, during feedback on the exercise within the intervention group, the participant who had attributed Child C as 'insecure avoidant', was able to understand 'insecure ambivalent' as a more helpful way was to describe Child C's pattern of behaviour and inform how to provide support. Another group member found the discussion on Child B helpful in understanding how the "fierce independence", which the class teacher used to describe Child B, was linked to the adult, caring behaviour of Child B to the parent, observed during school meetings. The group member reflected that this type of behaviour was more typical of the 'insecure avoidant' pattern. It was evident in the group and 1:1 discussions that participants understood that the training course was not presented to equip education practitioners to label insecurely attached children, but to guide appropriate support and intervention. One participant commented in a 1:1 session that

> I know we're not here to diagnose and to slot children in – that is not what all this is about for me – but up until then a lot of people had maybe just been thinking generally that all children with attachment difficulties will behave in one way, so I think it was really useful to look at the different types of insecure attachment and see how that can manifest itself.

There was evidence in the group discussion that insecure ambivalent or insecure avoidant did not mean there was no attachment relationship, but that the pattern of relationship was maladaptive. One practitioner commented in the case study discussion on Child B's situation that when mum stops taking her medication

“everything goes wrong, and you would love to just press pause and somebody help mum and get her life sorted. There is a real bond between them you know, there is love and there is a type of attachment . . . you can see that.”

9.3.4 Schedule and Items from the Intervention Group meetings

Establishment of the group culture

At the first meeting of the intervention group, group rules, procedural and value based, were developed collaboratively, informed by research findings which the researcher shared with the group (Donohoo & Velasco, 2016, p. 28). There was a particular focus on confidentiality (Bolton, 2014, p. 28; Wilkinson, 2007, p. 192; Willig, 2013, p. 227). The group rules included:

- Listen and respect each other’s views
- Respect the confidential nature of any personal information that is shared about young people in the school
- Respect the confidential nature of any personal information that group members disclose about themselves
- Commit to being at the meetings on time unless unavoidable events occur such as the nursery timetable for the two colleagues from early years who are unable to join the meetings until 20 minutes after the start
- Allocate a timekeeper and support the timekeeper by responding to prompts

Venue for the intervention group and the coaching and mentoring meetings

The members of the intervention group requested meeting within their own primary school for pragmatic reasons, to avoid time lost travelling to another venue. This was also the choice of the researcher, to gather data in the “everyday settings” of participants (Silverman, 2017, p. 151). A commitment was made by the head teacher that a quiet and private room would be identified in the school for the intervention group and 1:1 meetings.

Schedule of meetings

Figure 37 below provides a summary of the group meetings, and the aspects and application of attachment theory and practice explored during the intervention group meetings.

Meeting 1

- Discussion and reflections on the outcomes of the two-day training course and how the collaborative inquiry will explore the impact of coaching and mentoring on the knowledge, skills, and confidence of the group
- General sharing of reflections on practice and policy
- Discussion and decision made on the choice of three case studies to focus and inform the collaborative inquiry
- Discussion to finalise the format of the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) reflective logs

Meeting 2

- General sharing of reflections on practice and policy since last meeting
- Update and group discussion on the three case studies
- Sharing experiences of using the CIT reflective logs
- Group discussion and decision to spend one of the planned group meetings exploring what secure base and safe haven means for staff and for pupils and to use another of the meetings on well-being strategies for education practitioners

Meeting 3

- General sharing of reflections on practice and policy since last meeting
- Update and group discussion on the three case studies and other children group members wanted to discuss
- Sharing experiences of using the CIT reflective logs
- In response to between-meeting emails from group participants to the researcher with questions about the UK context of research and development of attachment theory in schools, information

Meeting 4

- Brief sharing of reflections on practice and policy since last meeting
- Brief sharing of experiences and impact of using the CIT reflective logs
- Secure base and safe haven exercise completed as a group, with responses recorded on a flip chart

was provided on emerging practice and academic papers about Attachment Aware Schools in England, the researcher's links with John Timpson's support for virtual school headteachers in England, membership of Scottish Attachment in Action and conference links with Louise Bombèr. A list of resources was provided by the researcher for professional and personal reading (Appendix 10)

- Agreement made regarding completion of attachment profile exercise out with the group meeting

Meeting 5

CPD session on Mindfulness, delivered by an accredited trainer and attended by the Intervention Group and all school staff in school A

Meeting 6

- Sharing of reflections on the Mindfulness session and general discussion on staff wellbeing within an attachment-informed organisation
- Update and group discussion on the three case studies
- Sharing experiences and impact of CIT reflective logs
- Sharing experiences of 1:1 meetings
- Reflections on Best Hopes exercise
- Reflections on Secure Base and Safe Haven exercise
- Consider date to administer Teachers' Attitudes towards Inclusion Scales (TAIS)
- Future of Intervention group

Meeting 7

- General sharing of reflections on learning over the Intervention

Group meetings, in particular with regard to the usefulness of the CIT reflective logs, coaching and mentoring and reflections on usefulness of Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) • Discussion on next steps on policy changes • Dates set for meetings during next school term where participants and researcher will meet for the third and final 1:1 session and a group meeting for researcher to share feedback on the initial themes identified from the analysis of data. All school staff in school A to be invited

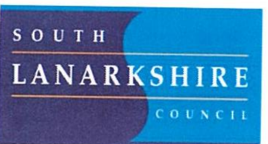
Figure 38: Summary of the Intervention Group meetings.

9.3.5 Critical Incident Technique (CIT) reflective logs

Working with the researcher, the intervention group adapted the format of the CIT reflective log to more closely serve the purpose of the collaborative inquiry. The group particularly wanted to create a space at the back of the A4 sheet to record their own reflections from any discussions about incidents recorded in their CIT reflective logs which they shared at the intervention group meetings. One participant commented that when completing the reflective log, "it's good to connect the group discussion to what you've reflected on yourself, and whereas if you write it maybe in something or some notebook, then you lose the connection." The researcher recommended a question to be included that encouraged reflection on how much they considered their reactions to be informed by attachment theory and practice, using a scale of 1 to 10, 'little' to 'strongly'. This was influenced by solution focused approaches where scaling questions are common (Grant & Cavanagh, 2014; Visser, 2013). However, the researcher did not plan to use the scaling as a quantitative method. As Iveson et al. (2012) argue, the scale points are not "mathematical realities" (p. 90) and are instead used to promote solution focused discussion and thinking. Participants had been introduced to solution focused principles not only by

the researcher, but the local authority promoted training for education practitioners in the applications of solution focused approaches in schools.

Figure 38 shows the final format of the CIT reflective logs used by the group members and Table 68 provides insight into the number of CIT reflective logs completed by the intervention group and by the staff in school B who had agreed to use the CIT reflective logs over the same time scale as the intervention group met for the collaborative inquiry. The researcher made two visits over the course of the academic year to meet with the staff in school B who completed the CIT reflective logs in order to give them an opportunity to share experiences of using them, receive feedback from the researcher, and ask questions. The head teacher of school B fully supported these meetings and arranged for the nursery and primary school staff to have class cover while meeting with the researcher.



Attachment-Informed Practice Research

Reflective Log

Your name:

Date of completion:

Date and description of a concern	What was your response to the concern? Please include your thoughts, feelings and actions	How much was your response informed by attachment theory and practice? Please indicate using a scale of 1-10, 1 being 'very little' and 10 being `strongly`) and explain your response.	Reflecting on your knowledge of attachment theory and practice, is there anything you would do differently next time with a similar concern?	Considerations/implications for school policy and procedures.

Notes from Intervention Group

Figure 39: Format of CIT reflective logs adapted by the group.

Table 68: Number of CIT reflective logs completed by the groups of staff in schools A and B.

School A CIT reflective logs - how many	School B CIT reflective logs - how many
12	**4**
12	**4**
10	**2**
1	**3**
3	**6**
2	
9	
1	
3	
N = 53, Mean = 5.89, Standard Deviation = 4.755	N = 19, Mean = 3.80, Standard deviation = 1.483

9.3.6 Secure Base and Safe Haven Exercise.

The intervention group identified a need to gain a better understanding of the practical implications of the concepts of safe haven and secure base which had been raised in the training course. The researcher provided an outline of both concepts as they are explored in the literature, in particular informed by the writings of Mary Ainsworth, who first used the term 'safe haven' (Ainsworth et al., 1978). Before commencing the exercise, the researcher, informed by Ainsworth's work, advised the group that the term 'secure base' is used sometimes in the literature to mean both the concept of a secure base and a safe haven. Indeed, in his early writings Bowlby talked of a secure base only, and after Mary Ainsworth referred to the concept, Bowlby then later referred to both. The researcher's recommendation to the participants was that it is useful to understand how both are very closely linked but have some separate elements. It would seem constructive to consider both concepts. when planning how to provide an attachment-informed environment for all children, and in particular vulnerable children. Given the link made by participants in Studies

2 and 3, between both concepts and issues for adult employees, it was also viewed as relevant to explore implications from an employee perspective.

Table 69 below outlines the definitions prepared by the researcher, and a summary of the responses and group discussion, recorded on a flip chart during the group activity. The summary was informed by Braun and Clarke's Thematic Analysis guidelines (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013, 2019).

Table 69: Secure base and safe haven.

Secure Base
What are helpful definitions of the concepts of 'secure base' and 'safe haven'? A secure base for a child is provided through a relationship with one or more sensitive, responsive, and attuned adults and to whom the child can turn to when upset or anxious i.e., the provision of a safe haven. The concept of a secure base links attachment and exploration of the world around. A securely attached child does not only seek comfort from attachment figures but feels safe enough to explore and learn about the world around and so can develop confidence, competence, a sense of mastery and resilience. A safe haven is provided for the child by caring adults who are attuned to the child's fears and insecurities and provide timely and appropriate reassurance and comfort when the child is fearful and feels diminished by something that has happened in the world around them. As we move through the lifespan, attachment theory would highlight that adults also need a secure base and safe haven. Adult relationships can provide us with the confidence to 'be all we can be' as we contribute to the various spheres of life in which we operate, including work. These relationships can also help us recover from disappointment and perceived rejection or failure by providing comfort, encouragement and hope. An interesting exploration is how attachment theory, and the concepts of a secure base and safe haven can help us understand how organisations work and support all members of the organisation. How can the school be a secure base for children? Staff actively promote positive relationship with pupils All children are valued and respected by staff Staff are committed to consistency in relationships

Staff need to show by their actions over time that the pupils can trust them

Ecological perspective taken on the ‘whole child’

Staff convey by their actions that children are ‘kept in mind’

The child’s voice and story are heard

Quiet children are not overlooked

School celebrates pupils’ achievements

School aims for consistency in routines and school structures

Staff encourage and reflect on the best way to motivate and inspire each child to be ‘all they can be’

Staff respond to child’s difficulties with tasks , in a way which builds hope and resilience

Staff share with pupils, when appropriate, their own challenges and how they have overcome them

Realistic and achievable targets set for children

Carefully planned and enhanced transitions

<u>How can a school (and overall education organisation) be a secure base for its staff?</u>

Each member of staff is noticed as an individual with unique talents and with a unique story

School management take a personal interest in the ‘whole person’

Staff are included in key discussions and consultations, no matter role or position

Effort, even for an apparently minor task, is noticed and applauded by management and peers

Management conveys their belief in staff and provide encouragement and freedom to achieve ‘all you can do’

<u>How can a school be a safe haven for its pupils?</u>

School staff are committed to reflect on an ongoing basis on how well they and the school achieve the following:

The school promotes a caring and nurturing ethos e.g., a buddy system which helps the child who is to be supported, and builds empathy in the child who is providing support

A school ethos where it is safe to show distress and other painful feelings

Staff are alert to changes and developments in a child's home and care setting, and are aware of risks the child may be experiencing

Staff are able to regulate their own feelings during difficult disclosures from children

Staff are committed to developing excellent listening skills with their pupils, and avoid minimizing the emotional upset the child is expressing

The school should establish a physical place within the school where pupils can retreat, recover and receive support

The school should provide plenty of opportunities to support and develop the emotional intelligence and resilience of their pupils, including recovery from failing a task

How can a school (and wider education organisation) be a safe haven for its staff?

A school and organizational culture which engenders trust through evidence of a caring environment

Management can be trusted to listen fully when a challenging issue arises for a member of staff and not be judgmental

Peers and management who treat staff as individuals with different support needs

Sensitive, caring, respectful response from peers and management when a member of staff has experienced challenge or failure in their professional life

9.3.7 Reflection on the Training Course

With the benefit of the experience of the collaborative inquiry, intervention group meetings and the coaching and mentoring sessions, participants were asked in their final 1:1 meeting to reflect and provide feedback regarding the training programme (Chapter 6).

Table 70 below outlines the feedback and recommendations from the nine group members. The summary of issues was informed by Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis guidelines.

Table 70: Training course reflections from collaborative inquiry participants.

Issue	Suggested action
Too much time spent providing detailed information on neuroscience	Provide overview only on brain function and the link with learning, leaving more time for developing skills on practical strategies in the classroom
Two consecutive days of training or split up?	No-one recommended two consecutive days but opinion was divided on the amount of time between full day or half day sessions, with some recommending a few weeks between sessions to allow opportunity to explore strategies, and others expressing a view that understanding and focus could be lost with more than one or two days between sessions
Critical Incident Technique (CIT) reflective logs	Recommendation to introduce the CIT format at the beginning of the training as a useful prompt to reflect between training sessions
Who should attend the training?	Strong support of the training being delivered to primary teachers, nursery staff and support staff together and that facility staff should be involved in the early part of the training where an outline of attachment theory is provided
Use of video clips	Strong, unanimous recommendation to include the video clips used in the training from Harvard University and Louise Bombèr
The voice of the practitioner	Recommendation made to include a witness statement from a practitioner who had received training in attachment theory and practice and who shares their experience with attendees of the impact of the training

Practical strategies for the school	Recommendation made to include more input on practical strategies, perhaps using some of the time dedicated to neuroscience (above)

Themes identified within the over-arching themes of 'Reflection and Reflexivity' and 'Theory into Practice'

After a thorough reading of the whole dataset, two overarching themes were generated as the researcher strove to "develop understandings of the phenomena under study, based as much as possible on the perspective of those being studied" (Elliott et al., 1999, p. 216). These overarching themes were 'Reflection and Reflexivity' and 'Theory into Practice'.

Figure 39 below provides an outline of the key themes from the data generated by the researcher under the first of these two overarching themes, applying the guidance from Braun and Clarke's approach to thematic analysis (2006, 2013, 2019).

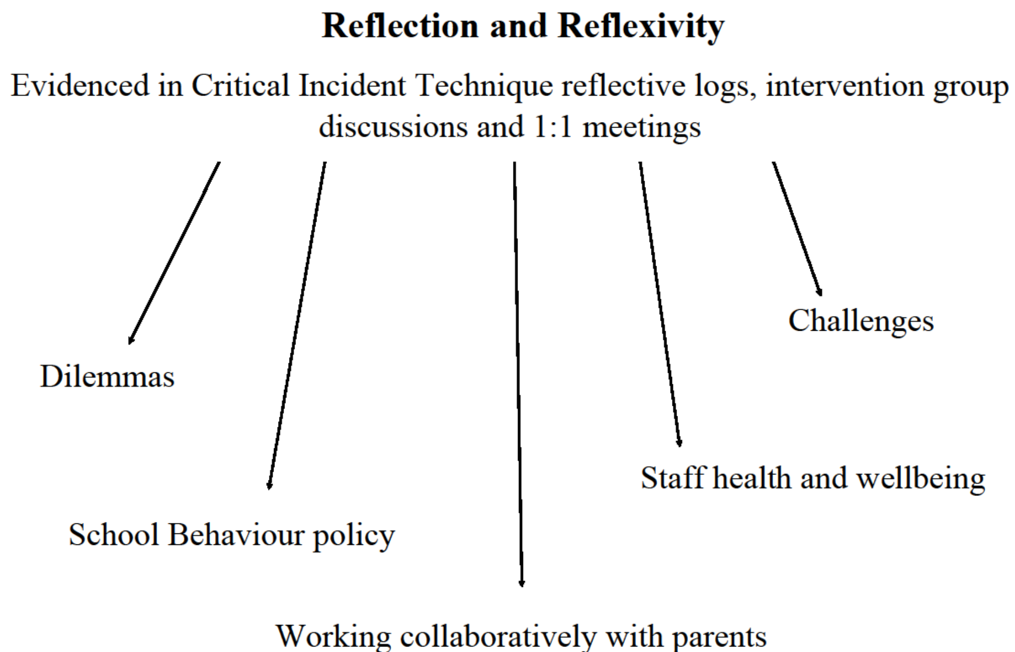


Figure 40: Evidence of Reflection and Reflexivity.

There were a number of dilemmas which were identified in the data by the researcher. A recurring theme was the conflict between supporting a child with challenging behaviour using an attachment-informed approach, and the negative impact some group members viewed this could have on other members of the class. Comments included, “now I understand the needs of children with insecure attachment, I feel they need more than I can give” and “if I do what they need, the other children in my class will suffer”. It is interesting that findings on the revised Teachers’ Attitude towards Inclusion Scale (TAIS) found a significant difference in the ratings of the intervention group and other members of school A and school B on the two dimensions of ‘Impact of inclusion for teaching practice’ and ‘Implications for addressing the needs of children with ASN’. As the researcher had deliberated in Chapter 8, respondents may have completed the scale with a focus on attachment difficulties, given the exercise was completed as part of a research programme on attachment theory and practice. Learning from the collaborative inquiry may have increased their understanding of the complex needs of some insecurely attached children and led to an increased awareness of the need to provide effective support. Nevertheless, one participant commented during an intervention group discussion where the views above were being voiced strongly, that for Child C’s class, she noticed of the other P2 class members that “it has made them more tolerant. I would say that their tolerance level is down to learning to accept Child C”. There were however no significant findings in TAIS between the intervention group and the non-intervention group on the dimension ‘Social benefits for all of the inclusion of ASN pupils in mainstream classes.’ Group members became reflexive in these discussions on the impact of including a child such as Child A in mainstream school, reflecting on the impact on the pupils, school staff and on the future life trajectory of Child A. Overall, discussions indicated the group were in favour of Child A being included in mainstream as much as possible, but they considered that more resources were needed to make this happen successfully. The decision by the local authority to remove Child A from mainstream near the end of the collaborative inquiry highlighted the dilemmas in inclusion.

Another dilemma regarded access to background information on children. When this was raised, there was an acknowledgement that legislation about confidentiality meant other agencies may not be free to share background information on a child's home background, or school management may not have permission to share information with class teachers or school assistants. One participant raised the issue in a CIT reflective log in the section on 'what would you do differently next time?', arguing that she could act in a more effective attachment-informed way if she had more information on the child's background experiences,

> there is a frustration that I know that there is further information out there in other places and we don't have access to it and if we did, I believe that our school could provide a better care to the children we have.

Another participant argued that it was knowledge of a child's past and current home environment that could explain the child's behaviour and inform appropriate interventions. One participant spoke in a 1:1 session on how knowledge and understanding of what a child has lived through can help a teacher or support assistant be attuned to the child's emotional needs. Another spoke in her 1:1 session that

> for me it is kind of being more aware of just where these kids are coming from and how hard it is for some of them even just to come into the class and learn and be there for a day and switch off from everything that's going on. I don't know if I could do it to be honest. I don't know if I could do it. What some of them go through.

There was evidence of reflection and reflexivity in this dialogue as group members considered how their own biases could affect their views of parents and family environments. One participant commented that the training course had made her less judgemental when she heard about intergenerational patterns of parental care.

These reflective practice discussions were linked to the theme of staff wellbeing, where participants talked in the group setting of how the dilemmas outlined above led to high stress levels. The decision by the group to include a mindfulness session

as part of the collaborative inquiry engendered further reflection and reflexivity during 1:1 sessions, as participants considered how their own health and wellbeing affected their relationships with pupils, and how they could promote self and peer support. One participant commented in the group that *"*I think looking after yourself is something that many people forget to do and it's certainly nothing that I've been aware of in my teacher training".

The theme of challenges is also closely linked to dilemmas and health and wellbeing of staff. An element of the 'challenge' theme was related to time and resources to adequately support vulnerable children. A number of participants mentioned feelings of guilt in their 1:1 meetings where they shared that the training course and collaborative inquiry caused reflections on how they had responded to needy children in the past, and the 1:1 meetings were used to explore how to process and deal with these feelings. These reflections echoed the experience of one practitioner who took part in Study 2 and who also experienced feelings of guilt about past pupils after gaining insight into the impact of childhood trauma and insecure attachment. One intervention group member began to sob during a session as she recounted finding out much later the trauma one of her pupils had experienced as a toddler. Incidents such as this highlight the complex emotions practitioners experience and the need for adequate support structures. The class teacher of Child C consistently made use of the 1:1 sessions to process self-reported feelings of guilt and anxiety at having insufficient time to spend with Child C and to listen to what was causing her pupil distress. Intervention group meetings showed the healing power of peer support as group members provided encouragement and showed respect to the class teacher of Child A for her efforts. The class teacher used one of the 1:1 sessions to reflect on how much this encouragement and show of respect from peers meant and how it provided "sustenance" through difficult times with Child A.

The school behaviour policy was a frequent theme in all of the collaborative inquiry forums. Reflexivity was evident in dialogue in 1:1 sessions where some group members shared the values and philosophy which had informed how they managed challenging behaviour prior to the training, coaching and mentoring.

Having the dialogue with parents and carers about what attachment theory means was another theme generated in the data. The intergenerational aspects of insecure attachment were frequently raised in the group discussions, with the expressed hope that the school could start this dialogue in a meaningful way.

The themes generated by the researcher organised within the second of the two overarching themes are outlined in Figure 40 below.

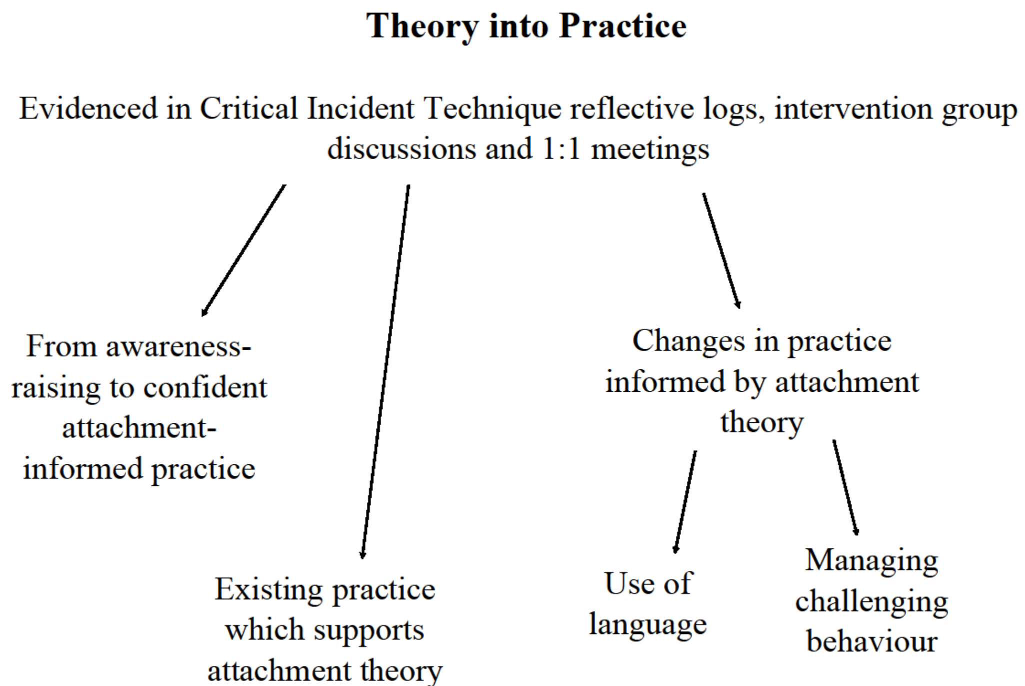


Figure 41: Evidence of application of Theory into Practice.

The theme of the professional journey of awareness to knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment-informed practice was identified in the data. Various group members referred to the benefits of the opportunity to reflect and learn together over a significant time period. One group member commented,

> I think when you have some training, when it's finished you think that's interesting, I'd like to try that and then you are back to your normal job and then it's all forgotten about, and I think the action needs to be taken right then, you know, the change needs to happen then with the Head Teacher.

> Then you need to work together as a school at that stage. There has to be some follow up to that. Our intervention group meetings keep it fresh in my mind. It makes me think it's something ongoing.

However, frequent comments were still voiced midway through the collaborative inquiry process about the challenge of applying the theory in the practical everyday events of the classroom. A number of group members expressed that talking about the application of the theory with a focus on the three case studies whom they all knew to some extent, supported theory into practice. All group members attended and made use of the three individual coaching sessions. Group members indicated that completing the CIT reflective logs and then discussing them in the 1:1 meetings was a significant support for them to develop their understanding and confidence in applying the theory in a practical setting.

There were two subthemes linked to the theme 'changes in practice' following the training course and the collaborative inquiry. One involved the role of management in responding to class teachers' requests for help with challenging behaviour. Prior to the collaborative inquiry, management personnel would take the child out of class to talk to them, but the change in practice involved the head teacher or depute head teacher taking the class and allowing the class teacher to have time to talk to the young person and so have an opportunity to build a relationship of trust.

The use of language was a second subtheme. The difference in how practitioners spoke to pupils was linked with increased awareness of attachment-informed practice.

> I think for me one of the biggest changes is the use of language that we are using with the children. I am not saying the way I talked before was completely wrong, but it is that kind of awareness I have now and I've also heard it around the school when people are speaking to children.

9.3.8 Experiences and Outcomes for Children in School.

The data gathered on the experiences for children supported by attachment-informed practice came from CIT reflective logs, intervention group meetings and 1:1 meetings. A range of children causing concern to practitioners were raised by the participants, but discussion in the majority of group meetings centered on the three main case studies, Child A, Child B and Child C. This continued even after Child A was placed in an alternative education placement. One participant talked of children, "some of them are more shall I say visible than others" and there seemed a clear wish expressed in the group that children with very challenging behaviour "do not dominate our discussions." It was noted by one group member in a 1:1 session that "this year it's not those children that are obvious, but I think it's the ones that aren't obvious that we're picking up on if you like, which is really good."

However, the case study of Child A was discussed frequently in intervention group meetings and was the focus in many of the CIT reflective logs completed by the class teacher, the head teacher, and the peripatetic teacher. Child A was also discussed at length in the 1:1 coaching and mentoring sessions for these three members of the intervention group. Practice in supporting Child A did appear to change and develop over the course of the collaborative inquiry, influenced by attachment theory. Two aspects of practice of most significance was that Child A was no longer excluded from positive or fun experiences as a punishment for bad behaviour. Other consequences were identified. Furthermore, it was evident in the class teacher's CIT reflective logs that there was a determined effort to stay calm during an aggressive outburst by Child A and an attempt to help co-regulate the child's emotional reaction.

The CIT reflective logs also evidenced an increased awareness of causing confusion and distress in Child A by lack of thought given to the language used by the adults in the school during a critical incident. However, the reflections were not just about the unintentional impact from what a teacher has said, but a more subtle issue, how much is said. One group member described her reflections on her use of language after the training course and the collaborative inquiry as,

> sometimes as a teacher you always want to ‘fix’ things and if a child comes to you with a problem, you always feel that you need to have all the answers and come up with some concrete solution. Now I realise that sometimes it’s enough just to say I am listening. That I now know can be extremely important for a child, just to know that you are there and care about them. So, with language, sometimes less is more.

The CIT reflective logs from the class teacher, head teacher, depute head teacher and peripatetic teacher, also showed a focused attempt to be aware of the body language of the teacher e.g., standing behind or too close, something Child A may have found threatening. An area was identified in the school where Child A could go to with a school assistant, not as a punishment, but to be supported in completing tasks, which provided the opportunity for co-regulation to take place.

The CIT reflective logs of all the intervention group provided evidence that these strategies were being used with other children who were causing concern in the school, and that practitioners were being more reflective on how their choice of words had either calmed and diffused a situation or exacerbated it.

Related to this was evidence in the CIT reflective logs of practitioners reflecting on the developmental age and stage of the child and not their chronological age. This meant choosing their words more thoughtfully, whether in terms of comforting a distressed child or intervening after a violent incident. One member of the group talked in her 1:1 session of sharing these reflections on developmental age with peers in the staffroom, who had heard this discussed in the training course,

> there’s a couple of teachers that I’ve spoken to, and that ‘light bulb’ moment has happened for them as well which is really nice, and being able to say, do you know what, before you get frustrated, think of them at this age and then how they are behaving makes much more sense to you.

Making a determined attempt to listen to what the child was saying and limiting the number of staff talking to Child A after an aggressive incident, was also evident in

CIT reflective logs. There was evidence in CIT reflective logs of this being put in practice with other children in the school who were maybe not exhibiting aggression but were becoming upset and demanding of attention for no apparent reason. The outcome for Child E in the GAS exercise would seem to support the positive impact of such strategies, where arranging for a small, identified number of staff to take time to listen and talk to Child E at times of distress, seemed to break what had been an almost entrenched cycle of emotional upsets during the lunchbreak. Furthermore, the peripatetic teacher in the intervention group who provided extra support to Child A, noticed some improvements in behaviour in the small group setting in which she worked with Child A, and observed some caring behaviours emerging in Child A towards peers.

The strategies which were being implemented were linked to another significant aspect of adult behaviour, influenced by learning of attachment-informed practice, i.e., practitioners not shouting or raising their voice to children who exhibited aggressive behaviour. This latter point was the focus of a number of CIT reflective logs and Child A's class teacher commented in an intervention group meeting that "I'm now being very deliberate not to raise my voice with Child A since the training".

Feedback not only from the CIT reflective logs, but also in the intervention group meetings and I:1 sessions, provided examples of where these changes in practice had led to a conflict situation being repaired more quickly than had been the pattern previously, and children resuming learning tasks and collaborating positively with peers.

Another significant development affecting the experience of children in the school which would seem to have started after the training course, and was extended during the collaborative inquiry, was the focus on helping children understand and talk about emotions. Resources and literature on discussing emotions with children was provided to the group, for consideration across the school. One group member reflected in the last of her 1:1 meetings, "I'd say we're spending more time in not

being afraid to spend the time on discussions with children on how they feel". Child C and Child E may also have benefitted from this as staff admitted that before the training, they had found the children's behaviour irritating, and, to quote one member of the group, "very frustrating at times" but that they realised that the behaviour was communicating a need in the child. This opportunity to learn how to describe feelings may have helped Child C to communicate the impact of the class teacher being out of class so often during the GAS exercise, and the teacher who led on the GAS for Child E commented on the improvement in Child E's ability to communicate with her (Chapter 8: 8.2.6).

9.3.9 Impact on School Policy and Procedures: Evidence of Organisational Change

Various changes to policy and procedures were proposed by the intervention group following reflections from the CIT reflective logs and from the discussion of the three main case studies. It would appear that these changes outlined in Tables 71 and 72 below, are associated with the outcomes of the collaborative inquiry process. It was not the sole aim of the research to transform procedures but to evaluate and explore outcomes. The work of Agunis (1993) on action research is helpful here. This study aimed to evaluate the intervention, "not to change the system" (Aguinis, 1993, p. 420). One example of changed procedures related to transitions. It is evident that learning took place from the intervention group discussions, and from reflections on the outcomes of Goal Attainment Scaling, about the importance of enhanced transition. This applies to within school transitions e.g., transferring from nursery to primary 1, moving to a new primary class at the end of the school year, moving to a new school, perhaps outwith the local authority, or to secondary school. School procedures were put in place to improve practice in transitions.

However, the most significant change, informed by attachment theory, was the school behaviour policy, with the impetus for change being traced to the impact of the training course (Chapter 6), the intervention group and 1:1 reflections and discussions and CIT reflective logs. The behaviour policy within the school at the start of the collaborative inquiry involved each classroom having a chart on the wall

with a colour code for how each child was rated on their behaviour, going from green (doing well), to amber (alert concerning behaviour) to red (behaving badly and in serious trouble). Parents were informed when a child was rated red by their teacher, and all pupils in the class could see who was 'on red'. In one of the intervention group meetings, the class teacher of Child C explained,

> you're saying, come on …. and Child C gets to the amber and then gets to the red warning and knows what's coming …. knows there's going to be a consequence and when it hits that red, Child C is so disappointed in himself, you can see it.

As a result of the training course and collaborative inquiry, that system was removed and in particular children were no longer "shamed and publicly humiliated" as one member of the group wrote in a CIT reflective log.

Tables 71 and 72 below provide an outline of changes in policy and procedure and new initiatives following the collaborative inquiry into the impact of attachment theory and practice.

Table 71: Impact on school policy and procedures: evidence of organisational change.

Area of change	**Date of evidence demonstrating change**
Promoting Positive Behaviour Policy	2018/19/20
Vision and Values statement of the school highlighting the importance of promoting secure attachment	2018/19/20
Staff Handbook	2018, 2019, 2020
Student Handbook	2018, 2019, 2020

Table 72: Additional evidence of change: new initiatives and practice following the collaborative inquiry.

Evidence	Date
Induction programme on Attachment-informed School for new members of staff to the school or nursery	Introduced August 2016
Class feelings chart	Introduced August 2016
Staff attendance at training on establishing nurture classes	2017-2018
Establishment of infant nurture group for P1-4	Introduced 2017
Establishment of infant nurture group for P5-7	Introduced 2017
Introduction of Nursery Class Vision and Values highlighting the importance of promoting secure attachment	Established August 2017
Enhanced transition planning paperwork for one child for use with future looked after young people	Developed and introduced 2017 and 2018
Blether Station Lunch Club	Introduced 2018
Lego Lunch	Introduced
Theraplay Group	Introduced 2018
Nurturing Schools Award	May 2019

9.3.10 Three key themes identified by participants in the final 1:1 meeting

In preparation for this meeting, participants had been emailed by the researcher in advance, with a request to prepare for the meeting by reflecting on the research journey and collaborative inquiry over the previous academic year, and to

- identify your three key themes from the collaborative inquiry and 1:1 meetings

- describe one incident which best highlighted how you have used the knowledge gained of attachment-informed practice
- provide reflections on the training course from your current theoretical and practical understanding of attachment theory
- identify your best hopes for next steps in developing attachment-informed practice.

Making use of the thematic analysis guidelines produced by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013, 2019), the researcher has summarised the key themes in Table 73 below.

Table 73: Three key themes from the collaborative inquiry, identified by participants.

1st theme	**2nd theme**	**3rd theme**
1. Power of positive relationships to aid recovery 2. Need to explore and reflect on reasons behind behaviour 3. Attachment theory into practice supported by collaborative inquiry 4. Reflective and compassionate responses to pupils 5. Attachment-informed school behaviour policy	1. School policy and procedures reviewed through an attachment lens 2. Common language on attachment in the multi-agency setting 3. Conflict between confidentiality and the need for background information 4. Reflective and compassionate responses to pupils 5. Power of positive relationships to aid recovery 6. The power of language in policies and procedures that can be a barrier to implementing attachment-informed practice 7. Reflective and compassionate responses to pupil 8. Negative consequences of unexamined use of language	1. Attachment theory brings increased responsibility 2. Reflective and compassionate responses to pupils 3. School policy and procedures reviewed through an attachment lens 4. Attachment theory into practice supported by collaborative inquiry 5. Power of positive relationships to aid recovery 6. Negative impact of sub-optimal attachment history 7. All parents and carers engaged in a conversation on attachment theory 8. Time as a barrier to effective attachment-informed practice 9. Conflict between confidentiality and the need for background information

9.4 DISCUSSION

Attendance at the intervention group meetings and 1:1 sessions was excellent and all of the nine members of the intervention group completed the ‘best hopes’ and the case studies attachment profile exercises. Each group member came to the final 1:1 session with a written note of their three key themes and related reflections. Three group members brought very detailed prepared notes on all the planned agenda points for the final 1:1 meeting.

The findings of the collaborative inquiry were shared with the education attachment strategy group. The key themes identified by intervention group members, the attributes of a secure base and safe haven for children and adults within education, the development of attachment-informed practice, policies and procedures all informed the development of the education attachment strategy document.

The completed CIT reflective logs from school B, shared with the researcher, showed evidence of the impact of the training course. The reflective logs articulated the impact of attachment theory on how staff responded to challenging and concerning incidents. Furthermore, practitioners’ confidence in using the CIT reflective logs in school A and B, highlights the benefits of introducing the CIT reflective log method as part of an attachment theory training.

However, there was less evidence in the CIT reflective logs in school B of increasing insight and application of attachment-informed practice over the academic year, which would seem to provide some evidence of the impact of coaching and mentoring on reflective practice. Nevertheless, there was rich discussion between the practitioners in school B and the researcher on the two planned school visits.

To address the challenge of how school B could benefit from the learning from the collaborative inquiry in school A, the head teacher of school B became a member of the education attachment strategy group with whom the learning from the collaborative inquiry was shared, and which in turn informed the attachment strategy document for all education employees.

9.5 LIMITATIONS

The two members of the intervention group who worked in the nursery class were not able to join the group meeting until 20 minutes after the start. This was caused by staffing shortages in the nursery, which could not have been anticipated in the planning stages of the collaborative inquiry. The researcher met with the two members of staff at the end of each group meeting, in order to recap on the discussion which they missed, and to provide an opportunity to ask questions. In the last 1:1 meeting, one of the nursery staff commented on the impact of joining the meeting late,

> I mean I feel I'm kind of walking in, in the middle of it, but that's unavoidable, there's nothing we could do about that but having the 1:1 has given a backup and given me the bits that I've missed and that's really helped.

This situation affected the decision made by the group not to include a nursery child in the three case studies. It would have been beneficial for a nursery child to have been one of the case studies.

Another limitation to be noted was that Child A was moved to a specialist provision two-thirds of the way through the collaborative inquiry. For practical reasons thereafter, Child A was not involved in the Goal Attainment Scaling (GAS) (Kiresuk & Sherman, 1968) exercise. Child A had complex and challenging behaviours, and the GAS study exploring the impact of attachment-informed practice would have provided useful learning, as well as supporting the pupil, through attachment-informed strategies. However, information sharing took place between both provisions, in particular reflections on what effective attachment-informed strategies

had already been applied and were working. The child identified thereafter to have the opportunity to take part in the GAS exercise with their class teacher, was not a new case to the researcher or the intervention group.The pupil had frequently been raised by the class teacher to seek advice from peers and the researcher during intervention group meetings, and in 1:1 meetings. The fact that the profile of the pupil was not new to the group mitigated the situation to some extent.

A further limitation is linked to technical procedures. Overall, the technical aspects of this study proved very successful. However, there was one coaching and mentoring meeting where after the end of the discussion, the researcher discovered that although the recording indicator was flashing, the researcher was unaware that iPad battery had to be at a certain level before recording would be saved. This meant that the third 1:1 meeting of one group member was not audio recorded. The participant in question was a very committed and thoughtful member of the intervention group and came to the meeting with detailed, typed responses to refer to during the meeting on all of the agenda points. The participant agreed to the researcher taking a copy of the responses, which the participant signed and dated, allowing the researcher to use the responses for analysis. This unexpected technical problem had therefore less of a negative impact given the detailed, prepared written responses. Nevertheless, it highlights the importance of being fully aware of the checks required before a recording session commences. Gillham (2000, p. 40) suggests double-checking that play back as well as recording is working prior to the start of the session. This should avoid what Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) refer to as "painful memories of an exceptional interview where nothing got on the recording due to technical defects or, most often, human error" (p. 179).

9.6 CONCLUSIONS

The collaborative inquiry approach taken in this study appears to have been successful and extends the existing literature on collaborative inquiry as a professional learning activity to support the practical application of theory. (Duncombe & Armour, 2004).

GAS was found by the intervention group to be very useful, and further research, with a larger sample, would be benefical in extending the research literature on the application of this tool in education settings.

Furthermore, CIT reflective logs proved a pivotal method of encouraging reflection and reflexivity. A group member stated,

> I found the reflective logs really useful and there's been probably more that I haven't filled in yet, but the same kind of thought process has been there which I think is really important because that's ultimately what you are wanting to go on in your brain every time …. when you know that it's really informed or possibly informed by attachment theory, I think this is the kind of thought process that you want to be there while you are making the decisions or before you make them.

There would not appear to be extensive use of CIT reflective logs in early years and primary settings, and future research with a larger sample of education practitioners, could prove beneficial to explore impact, and consider evidence for extending CIT reflective logs to the existing range of professional development tools.

There was evidence that research participants in school A found relevance in attachment theory for themselves as adults as well as for their pupils. To quote one member of the intervention group, "It's for everyone. It's for the adults making secure attachments with each other and not simply promoting security in children." Further research exploring the implications of attachment theory for education practitioners as peers and employees would be valuable and could encourage a common language to discuss leadership and workplace personnel issues.

CHAPTER 10: ATTACHMENT THEORY IN PRACTICE: IMPACT AND CONCLUSIONS

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 1 outlined the context for this research in the emerging references to attachment theory in Scottish Government improvement agendas for children and young people. The research programme was established from the ‘real world’ challenge to explore whether education practitioners would benefit from learning about attachment theory and practice through professional development opportunities, and what difference it would make both to practitioners and to children and young people.

The first study in the research programme (Chapter 4) made use of audit methodology (Gillham, 2007), to explore the levels of knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice within children’s services. Findings indicated that social work practitioners reported significantly greater opportunities to learn about attachment theory than education practitioners, and significantly more social work than education practitioners considered understanding the theory as very important to their role. Significant differences were found between early years practitioners and their colleagues in the other education sectors in terms of knowledge and application of attachment theory. Significantly more early years practitioners reported knowledge and confidence in applying the theory to the assessment and planning processes for vulnerable children.

These findings informed Study 2 which explored in more depth what understandings education practitioners have of the implications of attachment theory and practice in their work setting. Guided by the rationale outlined in Chapter 5: 5.2, the researcher used semi-structured interview methods (Gillham, 2000; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009) to investigate the understandings of a stratified sample of education practitioners (Huberman & Miles, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994; Robson, 2011). The semi-structured nature of the interview schedules avoided the danger highlighted by Miles and Huberman (1994) of collecting too much “superfluous information” (p. 35), and

a wide range of rich and relevant data was collected for analysis. The findings confirmed and elaborated on insights gained from Study 1. Some education practitioners had not received training on attachment theory in their initial training course and reported a very limited knowledge of the theory. Analysis of the interview responses did however indicate that participants viewed attachment theory as relevant to their role in supporting all children and young people, but especially those identified by the school as vulnerable and at risk.

Unexpected themes from Study 2 included the link which practitioners made between attachment theory and social change, such as tackling poverty and the intergenerational parenting practices to which poverty and lack of opportunity can lead. Non-judgemental and collaborative support for parents was a related theme.

There were a number of significant and sensitive themes generated from the data which provide insight into the meanings and understandings which education practitioners in this research programme gained from learning about attachment theory. These understandings led to assertions that all education practitioners should be able to empathise with their pupils, and also led to reflections on whether love is part of the role of those who work with children in education. The concepts underpinning these themes were about the adults in nurseries and schools being 'attuned' to the needs of their pupils and showing care, kindness and nurture. It is interesting to note here the theme of 'empathy and understanding'. It could be inferred that practitioners had insight that care was not enough. Understanding of a vulnerable child's past experiences was needed, not only to truly empathise, but to inform 'how' to help, and how to promote healing and repair. These findings support the research of Rose et al (2016) who found that following the Attachment Aware Schools programme, staff had "increased empathy and understanding" (p. 9). Dingwall & Sebba (2018) also noted staff reporting the school as more nurturing following the training.

Practitioners linked the theme of valuing children to whether those adults themselves felt valued within the workplace, either by management within their own establishment, or within the wider local authority education structure.

The importance of applying theory in a practical setting, and receiving effective training, influenced the plan for Study 3, which explored the impact of training for education practitioners on attachment theory and practice. There was benefit from the researcher's decision to collaborate on the development of the training programme with CELCIS, bringing together the researcher's experience of delivering training on attachment theory to schools and nurseries, with a centre of expertise for research and development for children and young people in or on the 'edges of care' (www.gov.scot/publications/secure-care-pathway-standards-scotland/).

The training programme which was developed was influenced by the Attachment Aware Schools programme and was also informed by the responses from education participants in Studies 1 and 2 as well as the theme identified in Study 2 for the need for effective training to involve the transfer of knowledge into practice.

An exploration of the impact of the training, indicated some success in extending participants' knowledge of the theory and their understanding of the negative impact of insecure attachment and early childhood trauma. Feedback on delivery of the training was also positive in terms of the interactive activities during the two-day training. Chapters 6 and 9 contain more detailed feedback from participants.

In Study 4, (Chapters 7, 8 and 9), a 'collaborative action research model' (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 47) was chosen to explore the impacts and outcomes of training, coaching and mentoring in attachment theory and attachment-informed practice. The collaborative inquiry model (Donohoo & Velasco, 2016) is commonly used and valued as a method of continuing professional development in education. Meaningful learning would seem to have taken place using this method in Study 4, evidenced in

the self-reflection recorded by practitioners in the CIT reflective logs and in the 1:1 coaching and mentoring sessions with the researcher.

Key learning included an understanding that insecure attachment patterns are not innate in children, but as Silver (2013) points out, they are a "normal response to abnormal circumstances" (p. 26). Another key learning point was that the role of the education practitioner is not to diagnose but to promote secure attachments, especially through positive relationships.

The researcher's analysis of the data from qualitative and quantitative methods used in Study 4 highlighted recurring patterns of shared meaning and experiences (Braun & Clarke, 2013). 'Dilemmas' were evident, including whether applying attachment-informed practice with a child with challenging behaviour resulted in a negative impact on the rest of the class and school. This dilemma for practitioners would seem to be supported by the responses of the intervention group to the Revised Teachers' Attitude towards Inclusion Scale (TAIS). Findings indicated that the intervention group were significantly more aware of the implications of inclusion for teaching practices and the implications of addressing the needs of children with ASN (Chapter 8: 8.3.5).

Another key theme which was evident across the data set for Study 4 posed the question of how schools can positively collaborate with parents to promote secure attachment experiences for children and do so without attributing blame. The central concept of education practitioners collaborating with parents without judging them had also been apparent in Study 2.

Another recurring theme, apparent in Study 2 and Study 4, related to the implications of attachment theory for the practitioners themselves as employees, and encompassed reflections on feelings of safety and security as employees.

A wide range of policy and practice changes were planned by school A as an outcome of the collaborative inquiry. In particular the need was identified by the

intervention group to change the current school behaviour policy to one which was attachment-informed and which no longer 'shamed children', a powerfully expressed reflection from all members of the intervention group. The new behaviour policy was entitled 'Promoting Positive Behaviour' and the word punishment does not appear in the policy. There is an emphasis on building relationships and an understanding that all behaviour is a form of communication. It is acknowledged that challenging behaviour may have specific triggers and that staff are trained to identify these triggers and put appropriate strategies in place to help the child.

10.2 IMPACT

Chapter 9 highlights the impact of the research at a practitioner level and establishment level. Changes in policy and practice were linked to an improved understanding of the impact of trauma and insecure attachment, and inferences can be made that this was the result of the insights and understandings gained from training, coaching and mentoring in attachment theory and practice.

Table 74 below outlines practical learning identified by practitioners from the collaborative inquiry with supporting quotes from participants. The table illustrates the pragmatic value of the research.

Table 74: Summary of attachment-informed practical applications of attachment theory.

Regularly reflect on your use of language and how what you say maybe confusing and think about how certain phrases you use may be 'heard' by the child as a threat, a rejection or a judgement.	"Sometimes, as a teacher, you always want to 'fix' things and if a child comes to you with a problem, you always feel like you need to have all the answers…now I think that it is sometimes enough just to say, 'I'm listening'…so with language sometimes less is more."
Consider a behaviour management response that does not shame the child and that both takes into account what the	"In the past I have been guilty of dealing with the child's behaviour by giving an immediate consequence for what they have done. Now I try to take time to listen before responding, to try and understand why a child is behaving in a certain way. I still however find challenging

child is telling you and keeps in mind any risk factors you know of in the child's home and community environment.	behaviour difficult at times but now talk and share my concerns more with peers- we are always learning. This group we have been on is not the end of the story, this is only the beginning of the story." "I feel we as teachers and support assistants need to look closer at behaviour with compassion and attempt to understand."
Regularly reflect on the impact the physical school environment may be having on anxious or traumatised pupils.	"We have now introduced the use of a 'safe spot' or 'quiet area' and it has worked well. This gives the child time for their state of arousal to lower. It is important that the child does not see this as a punishment or a consequence of bad behaviour but as a way we are trying to support them."
Be aware of the possible impact on some pupils of your body language in class	"I now avoid standing too close behind pupils looking at their work as I realise this can alarm some pupils who have maybe witnessed violence, and my body language may make them anxious. I also think this issue is linked to what I ask pupils to do in terms of their body language. I have stopped telling children 'Look at me when I am talking to you' and this is for the same reason – it may make them scared and escalate the situation."
Reach out to parents whose children have challenging behaviour in school, even though the parents or carers seem hard to engage – we need to work collaboratively with the child at the centre.	"Learning about attachment theory and the impact of trauma has made me aware of the possibility that the parents themselves may have difficulties with attachment, and they also need support." "Schools need help from other agencies who work to support parents who are struggling. Let's all start talking about how we can talk about attachment with parents and carers – but not judging them – we learned in the intervention group attachment theory is relevant to us all."
Reflect on our adult wellbeing and look for ways staff groups can learn how to support each other to regulate our emotions.	"I found the mindfulness session on one of our group meetings really helpful. That could work for me but I would appreciate more time to learn and practice but there is just not the time in a school day."

The above table provides a rich summary of learning points identified by practitioners from the intervention group activities.

It would seem appropriate at this point to raise the question of generalising from the study. Ritchie et al. (2013) highlight that the generalisability of qualitative data is a "contested and often wrongly conceived issue" (p. 23). Indeed, qualitative research and case study approaches do not claim to produce data analysis that is replicable (Gillham, 2000). In line with critical realist assumptions, the researcher acknowledges the insights generated from this study are partial and that different researchers may bring different assumptions and values to the analysis, leading to variations in interpretation of data (Braun & Clarke, 2013, p. 64). However, Willig (2013) argues that "we can use 'extrapolate' rather than generalise" and that case study research "can give rise to explanations that potentially apply to new cases" (p. 112). It could be argued that the findings from this research programme provide useful learning to other primary and early years establishments.

Furthermore, the impact of the research extends to the systemic level of the local authority and to the researcher's professional activities in wider national forums. Studies 1, 2, 3 and 4 included support assistants as participants, and the researcher was able to ensure local authority personnel, who managed support assistants, were aware of the research programme and were represented on the education attachment strategy group. The research literature supports the inclusion of support staff in understanding attachment theory (Cozolino, 2013; Dingwall & Sebba, 2018), and although the researcher was not successful in securing the attendance of staff with catering and janitorial roles, as part of the training programme, the researcher was thereafter able to involve a facility services manager as a member of the education attachment strategy group.

As part of the Scottish Government's Early Years Collaborative (Chapter 1: 1.2), the researcher led on an early years collaborative inquiry exploring home to school transition, 'How Early Attachment Relationships support Transition' (HEART) (South Lanarkshire Council, 2014). The ongoing data analysis from the research programme, in particular the theme of 'attachment-informed support and collaboration with parents', influenced the work of HEART, specifically the

introduction of home visits by nursery staff before the point of home to school transition.

The learning from the research programme was shared with EMT, in particular the evidence that education practitioners viewed attachment theory as relevant to their remit and that they considered it a theory which could inform improved outcomes for children and families. As a result of the dialogue between the researcher and EMT, a decision was made by the Director of Education to introduce attachment theory as the main theme over the next year within the education resources learning and development board, chaired by the director. In this way, the findings from the research impacted on training and development plans for education resources. These included the introduction of an attachment awareness raising seminar as part of the induction programme for probationer teachers, which continues to the present time. Such training for new entrants to the teaching professions may help to sustain positive change in practice (Bertram et al., 2015). During discussions with the Children's Services Strategy Group, a request was made to the researcher to also provide awareness raising of attachment theory to newly qualified social workers.

Sharing of the research findings with EMT, the Education Attachment Strategy Group and the Children's Services Strategy Group, led to support for the researcher to formulate an education attachment strategy, based on the research findings and developed collaboratively with the attachment strategy group. Reflections within EMT on the link practitioners had made between attachment theory and their experience as employees, led to the education strategy document acknowledging the importance of secure attachment for employees.

The attachment strategy paper (2020) was successfully produced in consultation with EMT (http://www.carstairs-pri.s-lanark.sch.uk/cps_aboutus_232_4237235141.pdf). On the completion of the written strategy, the Education Attachment Strategy Group was renamed the Education Attachment Strategy Implementation Group. The group has a key role in planning and monitoring the ongoing roll-out of the training on the strategy across the authority. In December 2021, a 12-month seconded post of

Attachment Strategy Development Officer was advertised. This post further strengthens the impact and sustainability of the research findings and recommendations. An appointment was made to this post in March 2022 and the successful candidate commenced work in April 2022.

At a national level, due to the attachment research programme, the researcher was invited to take part during 2017-2018 in a Scottish Universities Insight Institute (SUII) programme, 'Changing the Narrative: Responding to the developmental needs of looked after children and those who care for them' (Flynn et al., 2018). The programme group was multi-disciplinary, and the researcher represented education in the planning and the work of the group. Research findings on the key meanings and understandings attributed by education practitioners to attachment theory and practice, and key features of attachment-informed policy and procedures, were shared with delegates who attended national events as part of the SUII programme. Key themes from Study 4 of the research programme were highlighted. This included the power of positive relationships in schools to promote secure and 'earned' attachment, and how schools can promote learning by being a secure base and safe haven for all children and young people.

The research programme findings on the importance of positive relationships which were apparent from the four case studies, the 'Best Hopes' exercise, and the themes from the 1:1 coaching and mentoring meetings (Chapter 9), led to the researcher being commissioned in 2019 by the local authority's Children's Services Strategy Group to research and evaluate over a two year period a community learning and development initiative in schools, with a particular focus on effective relationship building (see Appendix 11).

Table 75 below provides a summary of key strategic and systemic developments from the research programme

Table 75: Key strategic and systemic developments.

• Development of the home to nursery transition programme 'How Early

Attachment Relationships support Transition' (HEART); information on HEART shared in national publications

- Establishment of 'attachment theory' as the main theme within the local authority education learning and development board
- Introduction of an attachment awareness raising seminar as part of the induction programme for probationer teachers and newly qualified social workers
- Inclusion of support staff in attachment theory and practice training
- Establishment of a multi-disciplinary Attachment Strategy Group
- Establishment of Education Attachment Strategy Implementation Group
- Development and launch of Education Attachment Strategy publication
- Acknowledgement in attachment strategy that attachment theory has implications for supporting the wellbeing of employees
- Appointment of Education Attachment Strategy Development Officer
- Contribution of research findings to Scottish Universities Insight Institute (SUII) programme, 'Changing the Narrative: Responding to the developmental needs of looked after children and those who care for them'
- Evaluation of relationship-based Community Learning and Development Initiative

10.3 STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH PROGRAMME

Gillham (2000) warns of biases that can "blind us and close our minds" (p. 18). Willig (2013) also points to the need to be alert to contradictory evidence being discounted (p. 51). The researcher's experience in schools and nurseries may have posed a risk of familiarity, but it could also be argued it was a strength in that the context was understood by the researcher and that this understanding supported the credibility of the research. Furthermore, the researcher's dialogue with various reference groups, what the researcher termed as 'research implementation support teams', can be viewed as a particular strength in the research programme. It is also hoped that the rigorous, systematic scientific approach taken in this research further mitigated potential bias and prejudice in the researcher.

Research participants in schools A and B were aware that the research findings from the analysis of their responses were being shared with the education attachment strategy group. It could be argued that this resulted in 'socially desirable' responses. However, there would seem to have been coherence across the data, collected in the various group and individual exercises, CIT reflective logs, intervention group discussions, and the 1:1 coaching and mentoring meetings. Furthermore, participants knew that the views they shared in the 1:1 meetings were not attributable to them individually. It therefore could be argued that the responses were not adversely biased by social desirability, and instead that there was increased motivation to use their voice to make a difference and inform policy for all of the local authority education provision.

A further strength of the research was the promotion of reflexivity in education participants. Reflection and reflexivity in education practitioners is seen as key practice by the General Teaching Council for Scotland, and in the research literature (Boyle & King, 2021). The practice of completing the CIT reflective logs supported reflective thinking. Furthermore, the discussion in the intervention group meetings on how a practitioner's attachment style and relational history can impact on practice, and in turn affect pupil outcomes, led to valuable in-depth self-reflection during the 1:1 coaching and mentoring sessions. Some participants commented during coaching sessions that previously they had not examined how their past experiences, views and values could affect how they responded in the classroom, and it is hoped that these opportunities lead to an increase in reflexive thinking.

The impact of coaching and mentoring extends the existing research literature on coaching (Chapter 3). Positive impact of coaching was evidenced not only by change in practice and policy, but also in the development of peer coaching during the intervention group meetings. In all intervention group meetings, there was evidence of peers seeking and receiving support and advice from each other on the application of attachment-informed practice.

There were a number of limitations to Study 4, in that the researcher did not undertake observation of practice within nursery or classrooms. However, the use of CIT reflective logs encouraged a more formal reflective stance in participants than semi-structured interviews may have produced on their own.

It is a limitation that the full details of the case studies could not be shared in the thesis, due to possible identifiers. Riley (2011, p.xiv) notes this challenge for qualitative researchers in how they report their findings.

10.4 FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The challenge to sustain and upscale attachment-informed practice in the local authority is the role of the development officer mentioned earlier in this chapter, and useful research could be undertaken to explore outcomes linked to attachment-informed practice using a larger sample of children and young people than was explored using GAS. Parker et al. (2016) have highlighted that more research is needed to ascertain the positive effect secure attachments between pupils and teachers might have. This study has contributed in a small part to this recommendation and the attachment strategy in this local authority would seem an ideal opportunity to explore the effect further.

A key theme identified in the data set was effective ways for nurseries and schools to collaborate in a non-judgemental way with parents in the promotion of secure attachments. However, more extensive research is needed to explore effective methods for schools to acquire the language and skills to introduce the concept of attachment to parents, and young people, and thereafter to engage in dialogue and discussion on how to promote secure attachment relationships. One practitioner commented during the collaborative inquiry that they had tried to explain to their friends and family the personal and professional impact which learning about attachment theory was having on them:

> I tried to explain it and I know it sounded like you just need to be nice to children and not lose your temper with them. How I can put into words that it is about something much, much deeper?

This is an example of how training is needed to increase skills and confidence in understanding and articulating attachment theory and attachment-informed practice. Research exploring effective methods to support schools and nurseries to enter into meaningful and supportive dialogue with parents on attachment and security, would be a valuable addition to the research literature.

The research highlights many themes related to the shared meanings of this sample of practitioners. It was apparent that there are a number of sensitive issues which would benefit from further transparent exploration. Themes such as ‘is love part of the role?’ and ‘is touch appropriate to reassure a child?’ would seem key issues in terms of preparing probationer teachers at the initial training stage, something Cozolino (2013) argues needs to be reassessed in terms of how well training prepares teachers for the challenges they are likely to face (p. 225). However, this further exploration is also appropriate for experienced practitioners through continuing professional development.

This findings from Studies 2, 3 and 4 highlighted the clear link made by practitioners between the concepts of secure base and safe haven and their experience as employees. The application of the core elements of attachment theory in organisational settings is evident in the research literature (Paetzold, 2015). Kohlreiser et al. (2012) talk of bonding which develops trust between a ‘secure base leader’ and an employee, by actions that show empathy, honesty, and reliability. This encourages employee behaviour “to explore, take risks and stretch”. Kohlreiser et al. (2012) build on the theory developed by Bowlby and Ainsworth, and define a secure base for adults as “a person, place, goal or object that provides a sense of protection, safety and caring, and offers a source of inspiration and energy for daring, exploration, risk taking and seeking challenge”. Further research into the features and impact of secure base leadership within education would seem a valuable direction for future studies.

Furthermore, an exploration of the most effective methods to provide coaching support and supervision to education practitioners is relevant here. In terms of formal supervision, Riley (2011) has developed what he refers to as 'Contextual Insight-Navigated Discussions' (CIND) methodology. Riley argues that through CIND, "the investigator gains understanding of the issues for the teacher . . . while the individual teachers gain a deeper understanding of their own intersubjective process in dealings with students, colleagues and superordinates" (p. 75). Research using this methodology in a UK setting would seem worthy of consideration.

With reference to coaching and mentoring provided within Study 4, recommendations for future application would be useful in terms of cost-effective methods in providing coaching for education practitioners in attachment-informed and trauma-informed practice. The academic literature highlights the application of Video Enhanced Reflective Practice (VERP) (Landor et al., 2015) for a wide range of professional practice. VERP is rooted in Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) (Kennedy et al., 2011) a method where practitioners select video clips of their interventions with parents and carers to collaboratively discuss and reflect on progress. In VERP, practitioners select video clips of their own practice for review with a VIG guider, "thus facilitating active involvement in the planning of their professional development" (Strong & Soni, 2021, p. 13). In her introduction to VERP, Landor (2015) describes how the review of the individual practitioner`s practice often takes place in small groups and that "through 'reflective practice', people can take ownership of their own development in their work environment by reviewing and reflecting on their own professional actions" (p. 19). This has some similarities to the sharing of practice within the intervention group meetings in Study 4. Bolton talks of the videos as "retrospective mirrors" and how "Hard questions are asked, helping practitioners develop greater understanding, trust in, and respect for, themselves and their clients" (Landor et al., 2015, p. 1). These observations would seem to support the reflexivity of practitioners encouraged in Study 4 and merits the use of VERP as a coaching method for future training.

10.5 CONCLUSIONS

Reasonable claims could be made that the research has advanced knowledge of the impact on education practitioners of training, coaching and mentoring in attachment theory and practice. The findings from this study on the meanings teachers give to attachment theory furthers Riley's invaluable research (2009, 2011) on aspects of motivation to join the teaching profession.

Findings would indicate that praxis, the ongoing reflection on the relationship between theory and practice (McArdle & Briggs, 2020), was promoted by the methods used in Study 4, i.e. the completion of the CIT reflective logs and individual coaching and mentoring provision, occurring alongside the collaborative inquiry. The research would seem therefore to have relevant applications to the nature and provision of professional development in attachment-informed practice in early years and primary school settings. As one participant commented *"*CPD is not all about attending a course. You need advice and support to apply what you have found out about". The nature of the support provided in Study 4, which encouraged reflection on what has been tried and the outcome achieved, was enthusiastically adopted by practitioners. However, participants knew they had a forum to share and discuss their reflections in the intervention group meetings and 1:1 meetings. Participants expressed a concern for peers who did not have these opportunities. Howe (2005) highlights how the established cognitive and behavioural interventions which teachers learn of in initial training, can be ineffective with insecurely attached children, and highlights the importance of ensuring referral pathways for advice are open to consult with psychologists, social workers and mental health practitioners.

Another key conclusion from this research concerns the need for support when the practitioner becomes overwhelmed from working with a very challenging child. As Kohlreiser et al. (2012) has outlined, the language of attachment is helpful here. It is beneficial for education managers to reflect on whether the organisation provides a secure base and safe haven for their employees, something that is encouraged in the education resources attachment strategy, referred to in the section on 'Impact', earlier in this chapter.

This need for support however is common to all the children's services workforce. The findings of the Independent Care Review in Scotland, articulated in 'The Promise' (Scottish Government, 2020), includes the recommendation that "supervision and reflective practice is essential for all practitioners, regardless of their professional discipline or role, who are working with children" (p. 100). It continues, "without proper supervision and support, the workforce is more likely to feel isolated, vulnerable and risk averse. Scotland must recognise the secondary effects of working with and caring for children who have and continue to experience trauma". There would seem a benefit that as well as education exploring their specific requirements for support and supervision, children's services leaders facilitate opportunities for the multi-agency workforce to meet, discuss and share support and supervision needs.

However, it would seem important for education practitioners not to use the knowledge gained in training to be tempted to 'diagnose' children as insecurely attached. Nevertheless, learning about the three main insecure attachment profiles may understandably lead to practitioners labelling children, and it is challenging to clearly articulate what the expectations are for teachers and other education practitioners. Training courses need to stress the dangers of labelling and to argue that only accredited assessors can diagnose insecure attachment. This would help avoid what Meins (2017) refers to as a "simplistic deterministic view of the predictive power of attachment". It provides a challenge for education practitioners to avoid assuming the child's pattern of behaviour is inexorable. Furthermore, it calls into question what Ecclestone (2012), in her critique of 'therapeutic education', describes as the portrayal of "individuals as vulnerable, passive recipients of whatever life throws at them" (p. 1).

This would also seem to be an issue within social work. Professor David Shemmings (2018) has gone as far as suggesting social workers do not use the word attachment in their reports and instead use 'relationships'. However, the phrase 'promote secure attachments' does now seem to be commonly used in education training courses, and

perhaps broadening the remit of schools to include 'promote positive relationships and secure attachments' may be worth considering.

The research would seem to have highlighted a number of challenges for trainers providing input to education practitioners. It is helpful to ascertain as far as possible the current knowledge base of the attendees. One participant, a teacher with over 30 years' experience, indicated in the first 1:1 coaching session "I still feel unclear as to exactly what a school would look like that is attachment informed". It was encouraging to observe the same teacher in the final intervention group meeting making suggestions on how to make the behaviour policy more attachment-informed, but there had been considerable input over that time span in terms of advice and consultation in 1:1 meetings.

Based on the feedback from participants in this research programme, it would seem helpful to consider in advance how much information is appropriate to provide during training, on the functions of the brain and neuroscience. Cozolino (2013) argues persuasively for detailed training on neuroscience both in initial training and ongoing professional development (Chapter 2). He points out that the availability of supportive relationships in school can help moderate the stress response, which in turn can have significant consequences for the development of brain functioning. It would seem important for education practitioners to understand these issues. However, as highlighted in Chapter 2, caution is recommended in terms of promoting some neuroscience findings.

The research from Studies 1 and 2 does seem to have found evidence that participants view attachment theory and practice as relevant to their role and remit, and that training in attachment theory and practice supports them to make a difference to the life trajectories of the children in their care (Study 4). However, the themes of non-judgemental collaboration with parents and the link between attachment-informed practice and tackling poverty would indicate an understanding of the other forces within the environment that impact on the life chances of children, such as unemployment, housing and lack of resources available to parents, all

referred to in the dataset. This would address some of the concerns of critical psychologists and critical theorists who argue that there is a cultural narrative associated with established, traditional child and personality theories which encourage stigmatising and pathologizing.

The establishment and publication of an attachment strategy with the commitment to compassionate attachment-informed care and nurture of all pupils, and drive to embed informed strategies to support vulnerable children and young people, is for **all** the education workforce. The strategy acknowledges employees also have needs for security and safety. However, it is the appointment of a development officer post to establish a coherent action plan to fulfil the aims of the strategy that deserves celebrating. It has the potential to contribute greatly to a positive ethos, where children, young people, families are valued and included.

Children need to feel secure enough in school to learn and maximise future life opportunities. When talking about the barriers to learning experienced by insecurely attached children, Fosha (2003) has said “whereas fear constricts, safety expands the range of exploration”. When children feel valued, safe and secure in school, they are more ready to learn, contribute and achieve. When employees feel valued, safe and secure in their workplace, they have the potential to continue to grow, change and transform. This ‘real life’ research programme provides valuable insight into how emotional safety and security can be promoted at the level of the individual classroom, the school and nursery establishment, and at the strategic level.

To once again quote the member of the collaborative inquiry group, “this is not the end of the story, this is only the beginning of the story.”

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APPENDIX LIST

APPENDIX 1

Ethics Application Form

Please answer all questions

1. Title of the investigation
The impact of attachment theory on early years policy and the practice of education professionals and managers in a Scottish local authority in regard to children's well-being.
Please state the title on the PIS and Consent Form, if different: **Attachment-Informed Practice Research.**

2. Chief Investigator (must be at least a Grade 7 member of staff or equivalent)
Name: James Boyle √ Professor ☐ Reader ☐ Senior Lecturer ☐ Lecturer ☐ Senior Teaching Fellow ☐ Teaching Fellow Department: School of Psychological Sciences and Health Telephone: 0141 548 2584 E-mail: j.boyle@strath.ac.uk

3. Other Strathclyde investigator(s)
Name: Elizabeth N King Status (e.g. lecturer, post-/undergraduate): Post-graduate Department: School of Psychological Sciences and Health Telephone: 01698 455800 E-mail: elizabeth.king@strath.ac.uk

4. Non-Strathclyde collaborating investigator(s) (where applicable)
Name: Status (e.g. lecturer, post-/undergraduate): Department/Institution: If student(s), name of supervisor: Telephone: E-mail: Please provide details for all investigators involved in the study:
5. Overseas Supervisor(s) (where applicable)
Name(s): Status: Department/Institution: Telephone: Email: I can confirm that the local supervisor has obtained a copy of the Code of Practice: Yes ☐ No ☐ Please provide details for all supervisors involved in the study:

6. Location of the investigation

At what place(s) will the investigation be conducted
All investigations will be conducted within South Lanarkshire. The electronic audit survey questionnaire will be completed by the Children's Service workforce in their place of work; the focus group meeting will be held in Hamilton Psychological Services, 23 Beckford Street, Hamilton (the researcher's workplace); and the semi-structured interviews will take place in various South Lanarkshire Council establishments as the researcher intends to offer to go to the participant's workplace or meet in Hamilton Psychological Services. The learning group will be carried out within one South Lanarkshire Council primary school which has yet to be identified and the coaching and mentoring components of the intervention will be implemented by the researcher.

If this is not on University of Strathclyde premises, how have you satisfied yourself that adequate Health and Safety arrangements are in place to prevent injury or harm?

Participants will be employees of South Lanarkshire Council, NHS Lanarkshire, the Voluntary Sector and Police Scotland. All data will be collected in their workplace. Scrutiny confirms that these organisations' existing health and safety policies and procedures are adequate to prevent injury or harm.

7. Duration of the investigation

Duration(years/months) : 3 yrs 6 months to 4 years

Start date (expected): 19 / 01 / 2015 Completion date (expected): 01 / 05 / 2018

8. Sponsor

Please note that this is not the funder; refer to Section C and Annexes 1 and 3 of the Code of Practice for a definition and the key responsibilities of the sponsor.

Will the sponsor be the University of Strathclyde: Yes √ No ☐

If not, please specify who is the sponsor:

9. Funding body or proposed funding body (if applicable)

Name of funding body:

Status of proposal – if seeking funding (please click appropriate box):

☐ In preparation

☐ Submitted

☐ Accepted

Date of submission of proposal: / / Date of start of funding: / /

10. Ethical issues

Describe the main ethical issues and how you propose to address them:

During the semi-structured interviews, focus group or learning group, employees may be critical about their manager or director. If this happens, the information will be kept confidential as it would be the employee's decision and not that of the researcher to take any concerns further.

Information sheets for the participants of the focus group and learning group will include an explanation of the importance of respecting the confidentiality of what was discussed. Participants will be asked in the consent forms to agree to respect the confidentiality of discussions which take place.

The research will also comply with the British Psychological Society (2009) Code of Ethics and Conduct and the Health and Care Professions Council (2010) Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.

11. Objectives of investigation (including the academic rationale and justification for the investigation)

Please use plain English.

The aim of this PhD study is to explore the impact of attachment theory on the practice of educational professionals and managers in regard to children's well-being and to investigate related changes within the organisation of the school and its policies and procedures.

The relationship between early attachment experiences and life outcomes is complex. However, research studies

indicate that attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969; Bretherton, 1992) can account for the observed association between poor life outcomes and the experience of harsh parenting or neglect in the early years (Dozier et al, 2008). A key tenet of Scottish Government policy is the importance of tackling inequality in outcomes for Scotland's children as outlined in the common vision and practice relating to Children's Services in 'Getting it right for every child' (GIRFEC) (Scottish Executive, 2006). The Government's interest in how attachment theory might inform professional practice to achieve these aspirations underpins multi-agency Children's Services policies such as the 'Early Years Collaborative' (Scottish Government, 2012). However, there are still unresolved questions. For example,
(1) What difference might an understanding of attachment theory and practice make to the delivery of universal services by education professionals to support vulnerable children?
(2) How might an understanding of attachment theory impact upon the attitudes and decision-making of educational professionals?
(3) How might attachment theory integrate with key principles of teaching practice?
(4) Is there a relationship between skilled attachment-informed practice and better outcomes for children?
(5) What policy and procedures would develop in schools if attachment theory underpinned approaches to dealing with learning and behaviour problems?

This study seeks to address these questions and also to explore the impact of training and coaching in attachment theory upon the schools as organisations, the practice of teachers and managers and the services delivered to children. The hypothesis is that enhancing attachment-informed practice is associated with better outcomes for children. The research findings would add to the existing literature on attachment theory and illuminate the impact of attachment-informed practice within an educational context on outcomes for children.

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12. Participants

Please detail the nature of the participants:

The research will involve 5 studies and will focus on the professional practice of education staff, within the context of multi-agency working around children identified as vulnerable by Getting it Right for Every Child multi agency processes due to high risk factors such as parental substance abuse and child poverty.

Summarise the number and age (range) of each group of participants:

1. Study 1: A pilot audit will be undertaken of the current reported knowledge, skills and confidence in relation to attachment theory and practice. The audit will be administered electronically and completed by management and front line practitioners in Glenlee Primary school and Nursery Class in Hamilton, South Lanarkshire Council.

   Numbers planned: 32 Minimum age: 20 years

2. Study 2: An authority-wide audit of current reported knowledge, skills and confidence of education professionals and other Children's Services practitioners in South Lanarkshire in relation to attachment theory and practice. The audit will be administered electronically for completion by a range of multi-agency Children's Services practitioners in South Lanarkshire including early years teachers (N=77), primary teachers (N=1,496), secondary teachers (N=1,471), Additional Support Needs personnel (N=153), social work personnel (N=60-80), NHS personnel (N=40-50), voluntary sector personnel (N=27), and police officers (N=3).

   Minimum age: 20 years

3. Study 3: Semi-structured interviews. The sample will be identified by ensuring a balance of age range, gender and length of experience in South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources.

Number: The final number will be determined by the South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources participants of the audit who indicated a willingness to take part in a semi-structured interview. The aim is for a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 20 semi-structured interviews to take place.

Minimum age: 20 years

4. Study 4: Focus group of strategic leaders and operational managers within South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources.

   Number: a minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 Minimum age: 20 years

5. Study 5: Learning group – a group of staff comprising school management and front line practitioners in one primary school in South Lanarkshire Council which has an attached nursery class. The school has yet to be identified and the coaching and mentoring components of the intervention will be implemented by the researcher.
   Number: a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 Minimum age: 20 years

Please detail any inclusion/exclusion criteria and any further screening procedures to be used:

Study 1 – pilot audit – there are no exclusion criteria and the invitation to complete the audit will be given to all school teaching staff, including probationer teachers, school support assistants and the school management team which comprises the head teacher and two depute head teachers. Access to workplace email facilities will be an inclusion criterion.
Study 2 - authority-wide audit – exclusion criteria here limit participants to the Children's Services workforce who have direct involvement with children and families which excludes operational managers and the strategic leaders in Children's Services who manage operational managers. Exclusion criteria also apply to specialist services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, Fostering and Adoption Services and Educational Psychological Services. The invitation to complete the audit will be given to all early years, primary and secondary teachers and school support assistants; all social workers and social work assistants working in Social Work Resources Children and Family teams; all NHS Lanarkshire health visitors and school nurses in the South Lanarkshire area; all voluntary sector workers who work with children and families in the South Lanarkshire area; all police officers who work in the Female and Child Units within Police Scotland South Lanarkshire area. Access to workplace email facilities will be an inclusion criterion.
Study 3 – semi-structured interviews – the sample here will be determined by the South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources participants of the audit who indicated a willingness to take part. A stratified sampling and screening process will be implemented to identify a balance of age range, gender and length of experience in South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources. Access to workplace email facilities will be an inclusion criterion.
Study 4 – focus group – front line practitioners will be excluded. Strategic leaders in South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources will be included as well as the operational managers whom they manage. These participants are likely to know each other through their membership of local authority planning groups. A stratified sampling and screening process will be implemented to identify a balance of age range, gender and length of experience in South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources. Access to workplace email facilities will be an inclusion criterion.
Study 5 – learning group – participants must be a member of the school management or front line practitioners in the identified school. There would need to be a minimum of 5 participants making a commitment to the learning group for the group to be established. Supply teachers who are unlikely to be in the school for the academic year will be excluded. Remote geographical location and schools with shared headships will be excluded. Access to workplace email facilities will be an inclusion criterion.

13. Nature of the participants

Please note that investigations governed by the Code of Practice that involve any of the types of participants listed in B1(b) must be submitted to the University Ethics Committee (UEC) rather than DEC/SEC for approval.

Do any of the participants fall into a category listed in Section B1(b) (participant considerations) applicable in this investigation?: Yes ☐ No √

If yes, please detail which category (and submit this application to the UEC):

14. Method of recruitment

Describe the method of recruitment (see section B4 of the Code of Practice), providing information on any payments, expenses or other incentives.

Study 1: Pilot audit – The Head Teacher of a Hamilton Primary School with a Nursery Class has agreed for her staff to be invited to participate in this pilot audit. An email invitation from the researcher will be sent to members of staff in the establishment to complete the electronically-administered audit. All staff invited will be free to decide whether to participate, and to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

Study 2: Authority-wide audit – Following an analysis of the pilot and any necessary changes made to the audit, information on the research study will be highlighted in the South Lanarkshire Council Education Newsletter, the Social Work Resources bulletin and the NHS Pulse bulletin. Participants, as described in Section 12 above, will be recruited via email, which will include the electronic link to the audit. All South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources personnel who complete the audit will be asked as part of the audit if they are willing to take part in a one to one discussion to talk about their experience and views of attachment theory in more detail. Strategic leaders in Education Resources, Social Work Resources, NHS Lanarkshire, the Voluntary Sector and Police Scotland will be asked by the researcher to alert practitioners within their agencies to the authority-wide audit. All will be free to decide whether to participate, and to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. A reminder will be sent to those who do not respond to the first email invitation. Anyone who has indicated to the first invitation that they decline the offer will not be sent a reminder.

Study 3: Semi-structured interviews – Following the stratified sampling and screening process outlined in section 12, an email invitation from the researcher will be sent to a sample of the South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources audit participants who had indicated a willingness to be interviewed. All will be free to decide whether to participate, and to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. A reminder will be sent to those who do not respond to the first email invitation.

Study 4: Focus group – Following the stratified sampling and screening process outlined in section 12, an email invitation from the researcher will be sent to strategic leaders and operational managers within South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources. All will be free to decide whether to participate, and to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. A reminder will be sent to those who do not respond to the first email invitation.

Study 5: Learning group – An invitation will be extended to a primary school which has an attached nursery class. The school will be identified through discussion between the researcher and Education Resources management and the group learning will be implemented by the researcher. A minimum of 5 and a maximum of 10 members of staff will be involved in the learning group. If the number of staff who agrees to be involved in the identified school is under 5, another school which has expressed an interest will be approached. All staff will be free to decide whether to participate, and to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason.

15. Participant consent

Please state the groups from whom consent/assent will be sought (please refer to the Guidance Document). The PIS and Consent Form(s) to be used should be attached to this application form.

- Agreement for the proposed research has been granted by South Lanarkshire Council's Education Resources with the proviso that there is agreement from the relevant Ethics Committee at Strathclyde University. Agreement has also been given by the South Lanarkshire Council Children's Services Strategy Group for the multi-agency audit in study 2.

- The information sheet relating to the audit will be emailed to the appropriate Children's Services participants. The consent form for the audit is included in the electronic audit. Information sheets and consent forms relating to the semi-structured interviews, focus group and learning group will be emailed to the South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources participants. All will be free to decide whether to participate, and to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason. Appendices 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 and 11 contain the relevant information sheets and consent forms for each of the planned studies.

16. Methodology

Investigations governed by the Code of Practice which involve any of the types of projects listed in B1(a) must be submitted to the University Ethics Committee rather than DEC/SEC for approval.

Are any of the categories mentioned in the Code of Practice Section B1(a) (project considerations) applicable in this investigation? ☐ Yes √ No

If 'yes' please detail:

Describe the research methodology and procedure, providing a timeline of activities where possible. Please use plain English.

This research will be carried out in naturally-occurring contexts by means of multi-method approaches which combine quantitative and qualitative approaches (Robson, 2011; Huberman and Miles, 2002).

Study 1: Online questionnaire survey methodology will be used in January 2015 and analysis will be carried out by use of the Survey Needs Analysis Programme (SNAP). The audit questionnaire has been developed by the researcher. There will be no standardised measures used in the audit questionnaire. Appendix 3 contains the content of the questionnaire.

Study 2: Online questionnaire survey methodology will be used in February 2015 and analysis will again be carried out by use of SNAP. The audit questionnaire has been developed by the researcher. There will be no

standardised measures used in the audit questionnaire. Appendix 3 contains the content of the questionnaire.

Study 3: Interview methodology involving semi-structured interviews will be used between March and June 2015. It is planned that the semi-structured interviews will be conducted within a timeslot of 1½ hours. Appendix 6 contains the questions which will be addressed. The semi-structured interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed. The data will be analysed as each of the semi-structured interviews are completed which may suggest further participants to be sampled.

Study 4: A 1½ hour focus group, with data analysed using template analysis approaches (Robson, 2011), will be undertaken in May 2015. Appendix 9 contains the focus group exercise. The researcher will take notes and there will be an Administrative Assistant present who will also take notes. The focus group will be audio recorded and transcribed.

Study 5: A 2 day training programme will be developed between January and June 2015 by the researcher in collaboration with the Service Development Consultancy Lead in the Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS). It is expected that the training will be delivered in the first two months of the 2015-16 academic year.

A learning group will meet with the researcher over the 2015-16 academic year. The school staff will receive the training in attachment theory and practice and this will be delivered by CELCIS. The researcher will provide coaching and mentoring informed by the framework developed by Joyce and Showers (2002) and the solution focused coaching model developed by Iveson, George and Ratner (2011).

Analysis: the feasibility, outcomes and impact of the training programme will be explored using the online audit developed by the researcher, pre and post training. An inductive approach will be followed in the research with the learning group. Data collection and analysis will be informed by Personal Construct Theory and repertory grid methodology (Fransella et al, 2004). South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources have launched a 'Promoting positive relationships and behaviour' policy in December 2014. The researcher plans to develop outcome measures based on this policy, in collaboration with the Lead Officer for the policy. These outcome measures will be used to explore organisational change in the school using appreciative inquiry (Hammond and Royal, 1998).

Quantitative analysis of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) assessment and planning documents on children will be undertaken which will involve exploring changes in the ratings of child level outcome measures related to the Scottish Government GIRFEC Well-being indicators – Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included. Under the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014, when a child or young person needs extra support, which is specialist (e.g. mental health services or respite care), the law stipulates that the professionals working with the child will need to prepare and co-ordinate support through a Single Child's Plan. The framework for this plan is currently being developed within South Lanarkshire and will be underpinned by the above well-being indicators. The researcher will liaise with those developing the framework for the Child's Plan to ensure the outcome measures used by the researcher map onto the framework of the Child's Plan.

What specific techniques will be employed and what exactly is asked of the participants? Please identify any non-validated scale or measure and include any scale and measures charts as an Appendix to this application. Please include questionnaires, interview schedules or any other non-standardised method of data collection as appendices to this application.

- Survey, focus group and semi-structured interview methodology (Robson, 2011; Huberman and Miles, 2002). Please see Appendices 3, 6 and 9 as indicated above.
- Personal Construct Theory and repertory grid methodology (Fransella et al, 2004). Rep-Grid methodology is an established and validated approach, with constructs proposed by the participants following elicitation procedures outlined in Fransella et al (2004).

Where an independent reviewer is not used, then the UEC, DEC or SEC reserves the right to scrutinise the methodology. Has this methodology been subject to independent scrutiny? Yes √ No ☐

If yes, please provide the name and contact details of the independent reviewer:

Dr Graham Connelly, Senior Lecturer, Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland, University of Strathclyde – email: g.connelly@strath.ac.uk

17. Previous experience of the investigator(s) with the procedures involved. Experience should demonstrate an ability to carry out the proposed research in accordance with the written methodology.

The use of audit and semi-structured interviews has been used by the researcher

- as part of the M.Ed and M. App. Sc. Degrees

- as part of research into the implementation of Getting it right for every child (GIRFEC) in Lanarkshire (see http://www.girfecinlanarkshire.co.uk/girfec-resources/Reports/Final_Evaluation_Report.pdf for information)
- as part of an investigation into what is working well and what are barriers to Inclusion in South Lanarkshire schools (see Children in Scotland publication dated January 2013).

Supervisor has experience of using qualitative and mixed method designs and has publications in this area.

Supervisor has experience of using Personal Construct Theory and repertory grid methodology.

18. Data collection, storage and security

How and where are data handled? Please specify whether it will be fully anonymous (i.e. the identity unknown even to the researchers) or pseudo-anonymised (i.e. the raw data is anonymised and given a code name, with the key for code names being stored in a separate location from the raw data) - if neither please justify.

- The information from the electronic audits will be confidential in terms of the name of the participant but the agency in which they work will be identified. Participants' names will be replaced by code numbers to ensure confidentiality. Professionals who agree to take part will be emailed a link to the online audit survey questionnaire. The confidential data will be up-loaded to Excel and analysis will be carried out by use of the Survey Needs Analysis Programme (SNAP). SNAP's security information is provided on the following website - https://www.snapsurveys.com/survey-software/. SNAP have been independently audited and certified by Bureau Veritas as being compliant with ISO 27001, the internationally recognised gold standard for information security systems.

- In the reports produced by the researcher after analysing the data from the semi-structured interviews and the focus group, no comment will be attributed to any individual.

Explain how and where it will be stored, who has access to it, how long it will be stored and whether it will be securely destroyed after use:

All electronic data will be stored within a secure area on the South Lanarkshire Council network. An encrypted pen drive will be used by the researcher to store the data for analysis out with the South Lanarkshire Council network. The researcher will be the only person who has access to this secure area and encrypted pen drive. The supervisor will also maintain back-up copies on an encrypted hard disk drive on a University PC. The researcher, university supervisor and any future research assistant involved in the project will be the only people who will have sight of the data. All data will be stored for 1 year after the research is completed and published.

Will anyone other than the named investigators have access to the data? Yes ☐ No √

If 'yes' please explain:

19. Potential risks or hazards

Describe the potential risks and hazards associated with the investigation:

One potential risk is that participants are not given sufficient time from their line manager to take part in the investigation. To address this, the researcher is in dialogue with the strategic leaders in Education Resources and with members of the South Lanarkshire Council Children's Services Strategy Group to highlight the time implications of all aspects of the study.

There is a potential risk that participants in the learning group will experience distress due to their own personal attachment history. The information sheet will signpost staff to the 'elament' website (eLanarkshire Mental Health Resources) which provides information on self help resources and also details of NHS and Community Counselling Services.

Has a specific Risk Assessment been completed for the research in accordance with the University's Risk Management Framework (Risk Management Framework)? Yes √ No ☐

If yes, please attach risk form (S20) to your ethics application. If 'no', please explain why not:

20. What method will you use to communicate the outcomes and any additional relevant details of the study to the participants?

- A solution focused coaching/mentoring approach will be used to guide the learners who are involved in the learning groups and regular feedback will be provided by both email communication and direct face to face feedback.
- At the end of the research, large group presentation(s) will be arranged in the authority to which participants

will be invited.

21. How will the outcomes of the study be disseminated (e.g. will you seek to publish the results and, if relevant, how will you protect the identities of your participants in said dissemination)?

- Progress information on the research will be disseminated within South Lanarkshire Council over each year of the research, given the relevance to the target 'to embed attachment-informed practice' within the 'Getting It Right For South Lanarkshire's Children and Families Plan 2012-18'.
- The data will be written up for a PhD.
- The Scottish Government's 'Children in Scotland' March 2014 edition included an article from the researcher on the proposed research. On completion of the research a further article is envisaged for this publication.
- The researcher plans to submit papers to peer reviewed journals such as the Journal of Educational and Child Psychology when the research is completed.

Checklist	Enclosed	N/A
Information sheet for participants of audit questionnaire (Appendix 1)	√	
Consent form for participants of audit questionnaire (Appendix 2)	√	
Audit questionnaire (Appendix 3)	√	
Information sheet for participants in semi-structured interviews (Appendix 4)	√	
Consent form for participants of semi-structured interviews (Appendix 5)	√	
Questions in semi-structured interviews (Appendix 6)	√	
Information sheet for participants of focus group (Appendix 7)	√	
Consent form for participants of focus group (Appendix 8)	√	
Exercise for focus group (Appendix 9)	√	
Information sheet for participants who undertake group learning (Appendix 10)	√	
Consent forum for participants who undertake group learning (Appendix 11)	√	

22. Chief Investigator and Head of Department Declaration
Please note that unsigned applications will not be accepted and both signatures are required

I have read the University's Code of Practice on Investigations involving Human Beings and have completed this application accordingly. By signing below, I acknowledge that I am aware of and accept my responsibilities as Chief Investigator under Clauses 3.11 – 3.13 of the Research Governance Framework and that this investigation cannot proceed before all approvals required have been obtained.

Signature of Chief Investigator: James M E Boyle

Please also type name here: James M E Boyle

I confirm I have read this application, I am happy that the study is consistent with departmental strategy, that the staff and/or students involved have the appropriate expertise to undertake the study and that adequate

arrangements are in place to supervise any students that might be acting as investigators, that the study has access to the resources needed to conduct the proposed research successfully, and that there are no other departmental-specific issues relating to the study of which I am aware.

Signature of Head of Department

Please also type name here

Date: / /

23. Only for University sponsored projects under the remit of the DEC/SEC, with no external funding and no NHS involvement

Head of Department statement on Sponsorship
This application requires the University to sponsor the investigation. This is done by the Head of Department for all DEC applications with exception of those that are externally funded and those which are connected to the NHS (those exceptions should be submitted to R&KES). I am aware of the implications of University sponsorship of the investigation and have assessed this investigation with respect to sponsorship and management risk. As this particular investigation is within the remit of the DEC and has no external funding and no NHS involvement, I agree on behalf of the University that the University is the appropriate sponsor of the investigation and there are no management risks posed by the investigation.

If not applicable, tick here ☐

Signature of Head of Department

Please also type name here

Date: / /

For applications to the University Ethics Committee, the completed form should be sent to ethics@strath.ac.uk with the relevant electronic signatures.

24. Insurance
The questionnaire below must be completed and included in your submission to the UEC/DEC/SEC:

Is the proposed research an investigation or series of investigations conducted on any person for a Medicinal Purpose? Medicinal Purpose means: ▪ treating or preventing disease or diagnosing disease or ▪ ascertaining the existence degree of or extent of a physiological condition or ▪ assisting with or altering in any way the process of conception or ▪ investigating or participating in methods of contraception or ▪ inducing anaesthesia or ▪ otherwise preventing or interfering with the normal operation of a physiological function or ▪ altering the administration of prescribed medication.	~~Yes~~ / **No**

If "**Yes**" please go to **Section A (Clinical Trials)** – all questions must be completed
If "**No**" please go to **Section B (Public Liability)** – all questions must be completed

Section A (Clinical Trials)

Does the proposed research involve subjects who are either: i. under the age of 5 years at the time of the trial; ii. known to be pregnant at the time of the trial	Yes / No

*If "**Yes**" the UEC should refer to Finance*

Is the proposed research limited to: iii. Questionnaires, interviews, psychological activity including CBT; iv. Venepuncture (withdrawal of blood); v. Muscle biopsy; vi. Measurements or monitoring of physiological processes including scanning; vii. Collections of body secretions by non-invasive methods; viii. Intake of foods or nutrients or variation of diet (excluding administration of drugs).	Yes / No

*If "**No**" the UEC should refer to Finance*

Will the proposed research take place within the UK?	Yes / No

*If "**No**" the UEC should refer to Finance*

Title of Research	
Chief Investigator	
Sponsoring Organisation	

Does the proposed research involve:

a)	investigating or participating in methods of contraception?	Yes / No
b)	assisting with or altering the process of conception?	Yes / No
c)	the use of drugs?	Yes / No
d)	the use of surgery (other than biopsy)?	Yes / No
e)	genetic engineering?	Yes / No
f)	participants under 5 years of age(other than activities i-vi above)?	Yes / No
g)	participants known to be pregnant (other than activities i-vi above)?	Yes / No
h)	pharmaceutical product/appliance designed or manufactured by the institution?	Yes / No
i)	work outside the United Kingdom?	Yes / No

If **"YES"** to **any** of the questions a-i please also complete the **Employee Activity Form** (attached).
If **"YES"** to **any** of the questions a-i, and this is a follow-on phase, please provide details of SUSARs on a separate sheet.
*If "**Yes**" to any of the questions a-i then the UEC/DEC/SEC should refer to Finance (aileen.stevenson@strath.ac.uk).*

Section B (Public Liability)

Does the proposed research involve :

a)	aircraft or any aerial device	~~Yes~~ / No
b)	hovercraft or any water borne craft	~~Yes~~ / No
c)	ionising radiation	~~Yes~~ / No
d)	asbestos	~~Yes~~ / No
e)	participants under 5 years of age	~~Yes~~ / No
f)	participants known to be pregnant	~~Yes~~ / No
g)	pharmaceutical product/appliance designed or manufactured by the institution?	~~Yes~~ / No
h)	work outside the United Kingdom?	~~Yes~~ / No

*If **"YES"** to any of the questions the UEC/DEC/SEC should refer to Finance(aileen.stevenson@strath.ac.uk).*

For NHS applications only - Employee Activity Form

Has NHS Indemnity been provided?	Yes / No
Are Medical Practitioners involved in the project?	Yes / No
If YES, will Medical Practitioners be covered by the MDU or other body?	Yes / No

This section aims to identify the staff involved, their employment contract and the extent of their involvement in the research (in some cases it may be more appropriate to refer to a group of persons rather than individuals).

Chief Investigator		
Name	**Employer**	**NHS Honorary Contract?**
		Yes / No
Others		
Name	**Employer**	**NHS Honorary Contract?**
		Yes / No
		Yes / No
		Yes / No
		Yes / No

Please provide any further relevant information here:

Approval from University of Strathclyde

From: James Baxter <j.baxter@strath.ac.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, January 21, 2015 9:39 AM
To: E. King; James Boyle; HaSS Research and Knowledge Exchange
Subject: Resubmission of Ethics form

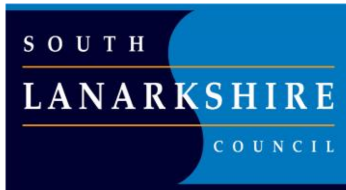
Dear Elizabeth,

The SEC approves your application. I'm passing it on for sponsorship approval. Please wait for notice of that before beginning the work.

Best

Jim Baxter

The University of Strathclyde is a charitable body, registered in Scotland, number SC015263



APPENDIX 2

Education Resources

Psychological Services

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES & HEALTH

Attachment-Informed Practice Research

Information sheet for participants of audit questionnaire

Introduction

Attachment theory influences how we support vulnerable children and the social childcare policies which govern practice. Derived from John Bowlby's observations in the 1950s of children in institutional care, attachment theory is concerned with the attachment which forms as a result of the caregiving experience. Children who experience sensitive and responsive caregiving are likely to develop a secure attachment to their caregiver which in turn helps to build up self-confidence, a sense of trust in the world, a curiosity to explore and learn, and the ability to understand the minds of others. However, children who have experienced maltreatment are significantly more likely to have disorganised attachments which negatively affect life chances. Such children may be potentially more vulnerable with respect to coping with future relationships and life events although positive relationships throughout life can buffer the adverse effects of early experience.

As a PhD researcher and Principal Psychologist in South Lanarkshire Council, I am exploring what difference an understanding of attachment theory and practice would make to the delivery of universal services by education professionals to support vulnerable children.

What is the reason for this research?

Attachment-informed practice is receiving increasing interest at a national and international level, from the Government, academics, social, education and health services and economists. The Scottish Government has identified attachment as a key strategy to address inequality in outcomes for Scotland's children.

The aim of this PhD study is to explore the impact of attachment theory on the practice of educational professionals and managers in regard to children's well-being and to investigate related changes within the organisation of the school and its policies and procedures. The research aims to illuminate the impact of attachment-informed practice within an educational context on outcomes for children.

Why have I been invited to take part in the research?
South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources work within a multi-agency context. An exploration of the views of the Children's Services workforce, who have direct involvement with children and families, would provide an overview of the knowledge, skills and confidence of education practitioners on attachment theory within the context of their Children's Services partners. Strategic leaders, operational managers and specialist services have not been included in the invitation.
.

What will be involved?
You will be invited to complete an electronic audit which will explore your knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment theory and practice. You can complete the audit during working hours in your place of work. You will be able to save the audit during the process of completion before finally submitting it.

Do I have to take part in the research?
No, participation is voluntary. You can withdraw your agreement to participate at any time without giving a reason and you can request your data is withdrawn. Data cannot be withdrawn after August 2015.

What are the possible advantages and benefits of taking part?
There will be an option to be included in a mailing list and to receive information related to emerging learning from the research; updates on the national developments with regards to attachment theory; information on new national and international research findings; information on conferences and seminars on attachment.

Your views and experiences of learning about attachment theory and practice will contribute to the investigation of the impact of one of the most prominent theories influencing policies and practice on children and young people.

Your views and experience can inform planning to achieve the target 'to embed attachment-informed practice' within 'Getting It Right For South Lanarkshire's Children and Families Plan 2012-18' and provide valuable benchmarking information to measure future progress.

Are there any disadvantages and risks in taking part?
There are no identified disadvantages.

A potential risk is that participants are not given sufficient time from their line manager to complete the audit. A further potential risk is that participants will experience distress due to their own personal attachment history. Should this happen, the researcher will signpost the member of staff to an appropriate service.

What will happen to the information collected?
The information from this research will be confidential in terms of the name of the participants. The name of the organisation in which they work will be recorded.

All electronic data will be stored within a secure area on the South Lanarkshire Council network. An encrypted pen drive will be used by the researcher when analysing the data outwith the South Lanarkshire Council network. The researcher will be the only person who has access to this secure area and encrypted pen drive. The supervisor will also maintain back-up copies on an encrypted hard disk drive on a University PC. The researcher, university supervisor and any future research assistant involved in the project will be the only people who will have sight of the data. All data will be stored for 1 year after the research is completed and published.

What will happen with the research findings?
Embedding attachment-informed practice is a target in the 'Getting It Right For South Lanarkshire's Children and Families Plan 2012-18'. Information will be disseminated from this research within South Lanarkshire Council over each year of the research and at the completion. The research will be reported in a PhD thesis and articles for publication are also planned. No individual data will be used in any written publications.

.

What if there is a problem?
The research has been approved by the School of Psychological Sciences Ethics Committee and South Lanarkshire Council. If you have any concerns or worries, please do not hesitate to contact me, my supervisor, Professor James Boyle, School of Psychological Sciences and Health or the Chair of School of Psychological Sciences Ethics Committee. We will do our best to answer your questions.

Researcher contact details

Elizabeth N King
PhD Researcher
School of Psychological Sciences and Health
Graham Hills Building
40 George Street
GLASGOW
G1 1QE
Tel 01698 455800
Email - elizabeth.king@strath.ac.uk

Elizabeth N King
Principal Psychologist
South Lanarkshire Council
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Supervisor details
Professor Jim Boyle
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G1 1QE
Tel. 0141 548 2584
Email: j.boyle@strath.ac.uk

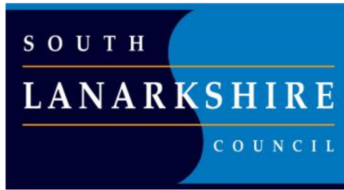
School of Psychological Sciences Ethics Committee details

Dr James Baxter
Chair
School of Psychological Sciences Ethics Committee
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 George Street
Glasgow
G1 1QE
Tel. 0141 548 2242
Email j.baxter@strath.ac.uk

What happens next?

If you are happy to take part in this research, please fill out the consent form provided and return it to me via email. If you have any questions, please contact me at elizabeth.king@strath.ac.uk.

At key points throughout the lifetime of the research programme and at the completion, a feedback session will be provided to those participants who took part.



Education Resources

Psychological Services

APPENDIX 3

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES & HEALTH

Attachment-Informed Practice Research

Consent Form for participants of audit questionnaire

- I have read the information sheet, and understand the aims and nature of the research. The researcher has answered any questions to my satisfaction.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without any consequences. I understand that my data cannot be withdrawn after August 2015.
- I understand that any information recorded will be held securely and used for analysis/evaluation purposes only and my name will not be included in any reports.
- I understand that any information recorded will remain confidential and no information that identifies me will be shared with anyone else.
- I wish to be added to the mailing list and to receive information related to emerging learning from the research; updates on the national developments with regards to attachment theory; information on new national and international research findings; information on conferences and seminars on attachment.

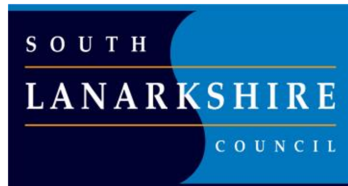
  Please indicate yes or no: Yes/No

I hereby agree to take part in the above research project.

Name: (please print) ....

Signature of participant: ....

Date: ....



Education Resources

Psychological Services

APPENDIX 4

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES & HEALTH

Attachment-Informed Practice Research

Children who experience sensitive and responsive caregiving are likely to develop a secure attachment to their caregiver which in turn helps to build up self confidence, a sense of trust in the world, a curiosity to explore and learn, and the ability to understand and predict how others may behave. In contrast, children who have experienced maltreatment are significantly more likely to have disorganised attachments which negatively affect life chances. Such children may potentially be more vulnerable with respect to coping with future relationships and life events.

Derived from the work of John Bowlby in the 1950s, 'attachment theory' was originally focused upon attachment with the caregiver from the child's perspective. However, emerging evidence would seem to indicate the importance of subsequent relationships with key adults other than the caregiver in promoting more optimal growth and development in vulnerable children.

The hypothesis that relationship health may be able to buffer early adversity would be of relevance to the Children's Services workforce, as is the more recent research on adult attachment which aims to understand the differences in the way adults think/feel/behave in their relationships.

The available evidence base for attachment theory sheds light on key aspects of the human condition, in particular helping us to understand the '*attachment behaviours*' which develop when a child or adult feels unsafe. The following audit will be the start of an investigation within South Lanarkshire Council with regard to the impact of attachment-informed practice and the outcomes for children.

Many thanks for taking the time to complete this audit. To ensure the data collected reflects practitioners' views and experiences please take the opportunity to offer any additional comments throughout the audit.

Audit Questionnaire

Guidance to complete this audit

Please refer to the 'information sheet for participants of audit questionnaire' provided and complete the consent form before completing the questionnaire

Section 1 will ask you for general information which will help with the analysis of the data provided by this questionnaire.

Section 2 onwards will ask you to rate statements on a scale of 1-5 from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

Section 1 – general information

Organisation

- ☐ Education Resources (select all that apply)
  - ☐ Early Years – South Lanarkshire Council
  - ☐ Early Years - partnership
  - ☐ Primary
  - ☐ Secondary
  - ☐ ASN
  - ☐ ICS
  - ☐ Youth Learning

Are you a probationer teacher? **Yes** ☐ **No** ☐

- ☐ Social Work Resources
- ☐ Health
- ☐ Voluntary Sector
- ☐ Police
- ☐ Other please specify ______________________________

Please specify job title: ______________________________

Please specify the number of years you have been working within services/resources for children and families ____________

What are your professional qualifications?	**Date qualified**
______________________________	____________
______________________________	____________

Please indicate your gender **Male** ☐ **Female** ☐

Age Range: under 20 ☐ 20-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60 and over ☐

Section 2 – Attachment Theory

1. Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

   An understanding of **attachment theory** is very important for those who work with and support children and families.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
Comment				

2. Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

   It is important to have skills in **attachment-informed practice** in order to work effectively with children and families.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
Comment				

3. The introduction to the questionnaire refers to 'attachment behaviours' in adults and children, which have developed as a result of their caregiving experience. Often those who support and care for children unconsciously provide the support and care in a way which is influenced by their own experience of caregiving. Every adult therefore has their own attachment 'story' and attachment 'style'. Given this, please respond to the following statement.

   Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

   It is important for those who work with and support children and families to reflect on their **own attachment history and their adult attachment style**.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly agree
Comment				

Section 3 – Training

This section seeks to explore whether you have already found out about attachment theory and if you have, how you have learned about it.

The following three questions differentiate
- **understanding the details of the theory**
- **learning about what the theory looks like in practice**
- **the opportunity to consider your practice in the light of your own attachment style.**

1. How/where have you learned about **attachment theory**? Please indicate as appropriate (more than one box can be ticked).

☐ on a qualifying course for your current post

☐ during professional supervision/consultation

☐ continuing professional development awareness raising session in your current or previous post(s)

If you have ticked this box please indicate if it was single agency or multi-agency

☐ single agency ☐ multi-agency

☐ in-depth continuing professional development in your current post or previous post(s)

If you have ticked this box please indicate if it was single agency or multi-agency

☐ single agency ☐ multi-agency

☐ other, e.g. personal reading/membership of groups such as Scottish Attachment in Action

(please specify) ____

☐ I have not had the opportunity to learn about attachment theory

Please add any comments with regard to your experience of training

2. How/where have you learned about **attachment-informed practice**? Please indicate as appropriate (more than one box can be ticked).

☐ on a qualifying course for your current post

☐ during professional supervision/consultation

☐ continuing professional development awareness raising session in your current or previous post(s)

If you have ticked this box please indicate if it was single agency or multi-agency

☐ single agency ☐ multi-agency

☐ in-depth continuing professional development in your current post or previous post(s)

If you have ticked this box please indicate if it was single agency or multi-agency

☐ single agency ☐ multi-agency

☐ other, e.g. personal reading/membership of groups such as Scottish Attachment in Action

(please specify) ____

Please add any comments with regard to your experience of training

3. What kind of opportunities have you had to reflect on how your early childhood experiences have affected your **own adult attachment style**?

☐ on a qualifying course

☐ in continuing professional development in your current post or previous post(s)

- [ ] during professional supervision/consultation
- [ ] personal experience
- [ ] personal reading
- [ ] no opportunity
- [ ] other (please specify) ____

Please add any comments with regard to your views on this issue.

Section 3 – Practice: Application in your work

The following items are separated to acknowledge the difference between

- **knowing about a theory**
- **having the skill base to put that theory in to practice**
- **being confident in that practice.**

1. Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

   I am very knowledgeable about the types of interventions and strategies which would be described as **attachment-informed practice**.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
Comment				

2. Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

   I have a wide range of opportunities in my current post to develop skills in **attachment-informed practice and interventions**.

1	2	3	4	5

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
If you have indicated 'strongly agree' or 'agree', it would be helpful if you could describe these opportunities				

3. Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

   I am confident in applying **attachment theory** in assessing and planning for vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my assessment and planning

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
If you have indicated 'strongly agree' or 'agree', it would be helpful if you could explain how that level of confidence has developed.				

4. Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

   I am confident in using **attachment-informed practice** in relation to how I intervene and support vulnerable children and I am able to articulate how the theory has informed my practice.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
If you have indicated 'strongly agree' or 'agree', it would be very helpful if you could explain how that level of confidence has developed.				

5. Have you had the opportunity in your current or recent post(s) to work collaboratively with a multi-agency group to support vulnerable children, e.g. a child protection meeting; an early years multi-agency planning meeting?

☐ yes ☐ no

If you indicated `yes`, please respond to (i) and (ii) below.

(i) Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

There is a **shared understanding** in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regard to the importance of attachment.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
If you indicated 1, 2, 4 or 5, it would be helpful if you could explain what you have noticed in your experience of multi-agency work which has lead to your view.				

(ii) Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

There is a **shared language** in the multi-agency group planning for the wellbeing of vulnerable children and families with regard to discussions on attachment.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
If you indicated 1, 2, 4 or 5, it would be helpful if you could explain what you have noticed in your experience of multi-agency work which has lead to your view.				

6. Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

The organisation in which I work actively promotes an understanding of **attachment theory**.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree

If you have indicated 1, 2, 4 or 5, it would be helpful if you could explain what you have noticed about your organisation which has lead to your view.				

7. Please use the 1-5 scale below to respond to the following statement.

   The organisation in which I work actively promotes **attachment-informed practice** in the day to day business with children and families.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree
If you have indicated 1, 2, 4 or 5, it would be helpful if you could explain what you have noticed about your organisation which has lead to your view.				

Reflections/questions?

The data from this audit will hopefully produce valuable feedback to inform training and support for practitioners in the various Children's Services in South Lanarkshire Council. To enrich the feedback and themes which emerge from the audit responses, it would be very helpful if you share reflections or raise questions about the theory, either in terms of policy or practice. Feedback from this audit will also be used to inform the work of a multi-agency steering group currently involved in developing an attachment strategy.

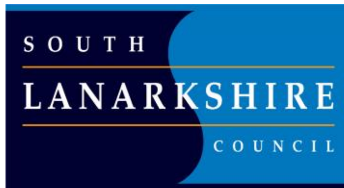
For South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources only

Would you be willing to take part in a one to one discussion to talk about your experience and views of attachment theory in more detail?

☐ yes ☐ no

If you have indicated 'yes' please include your details below.

Name	
Email address	



APPENDIX 5

Education Resources

Psychological Services

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES & HEALTH

Attachment-Informed Practice Research
Semi-Structured Interview

Developing an attachment-informed approach ***for all professionals working with children, including those within the universal services,*** *offers the best prospect for effective early intervention for children whatever their age and family situation (page 6).*

Attachment theory should form a core underpinning framework ***for all work with children in universal services*** *as well as specialist provision (page 54).*

Attachment Matters For All - An Attachment Mapping Exercise for Children's Services in Scotland commissioned by the Scottish Government, 2012

As an employee or volunteer you will be aware of how early childhood experiences will have affected the way in which children have grown and are able to understand the world around them and will be able to empathise and communicate with children in a way they are able to understand and respond to, informed by your understanding of the significance of your own attachment relationships.

Common Core of Skills, Knowledge and Understanding and Values for the "Children's Workforce" in Scotland Scottish Government, 2012

Questions for participants of semi-structured interviews

1. How helpful did you find the information sheets on attachment theory?

Notes

2. What opportunities have you had to hear about attachment-informed practice, both in terms of initial professional training as well as CPD?

Notes

3. Can you provide some examples of attachment-informed practice?

Notes:

4. Are you aware of anything within your establishment/service which promotes attachment theory? These examples can be in terms of existing practice or your experience as an employee.

Notes

5. To what extent do you feel attachment theory fits with Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)?

Notes

6. How would we evidence whether attachment theory was an underpinning influence in Children's Services?

Notes

7. Do you feel there are any barriers in South Lanarkshire Council Education Resources to embedding attachment-informed practice? (this is a target within the Children's Services Plan)

8. Do you have any other comments/reflections you would like to make?

APPENDIX 6

TRAINING PROGRAMME AGENDA ON ATTACHMENT, TRAUMA AND RESILIENCE IN EDUCATION AND SAMPLE SLIDES

Agenda – Day 1

(full day presentation)

- Welcome and introductions
- Activity – Soft Toys
- Introduction to the 2-day training
- What is attachment theory? – part 1
- Activity
- COFFEE
- What is attachment theory? – part 2
- LUNCH
- Activity
- Understanding brain development
- Using brain science to inform practice
- Activity

Agenda – Day 2

(2 x half day presentations)

- Welcome
- What is trauma?
- Working with traumatised children
- Activity
- Activity
- What is resilience?
- Activity

For further information on the training programme please contact the researcher at elizabeth.king@strath.ac.uk

Sample Slides

Aims and Objectives of the 2 day training on Attachment Trauma and Resilience in education

Aims
Participants will be provided with ...

- an explanation of attachment theory and practice.
- an outline of brain development and functioning.
- an account of the impact of child trauma.

Objectives

- By the end of the 2 day training participants will be...
  - convinced that we are relational beings and that attachment theory is key.
  - keen to develop knowledge, skills and confidence in attachment informed practice.
  - reflecting on your own attachment style.
  - considering how your organisation can be more attachment informed.

Educational establishments are encouraged to promote health and wellbeing by taking into account each child and young person's

- development, so far
- maturity, so far
- social and community context

as well as ....

... supporting children and young people to

- meet challenges, manage change and build relationships.
- experience personal achievement, build resilience and confidence.
- understand and develop physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing and social skills.
- access and manage risk and understand the impact of risk-taking behaviour.
- understand that adults in their school community have a responsibility to look after them, listen to their concerns and involve others where necessary (adapted from Curriculum for Excellence).

Educational establishments are also encouraged to promote outcomes which mean that every child in Scotland is

Safe
Healthy
Achieving
Nurtured
Active
Respected
Responsible
Included
(Getting It Right For Every Child)

How does an understanding of attachment theory and practice help education establishments to achieve these improved social and learning outcomes?

Let's explore the theory ....

What is attachment theory?

Attachment is a special kind of relationship. All through our lives we turn to others whom we feel safe with to comfort and protect us. For babies and small children this special relationship helps them to develop a whole range of emotional and behavioural skills. If children's attachments have been poor they are likely to struggle in school.

Activity 2

Bringing children into the room

Think of a child in the school just now that you are all worried about. Share in the small group

- *Is it how they relate to you and others?*
- *Is it about their learning?*
- *Is it about their behaviour?*
- *Is it all of the above?*
- *What is it you really like about them?*
- *What are the good things you see about this child?*
- *What are they good at?*

APPENDIX 7

CIT REFLECTIVE LOG (DRAFT)

Name:

General questions/reflections relating to Attachment Informed practice	Description of an incident, including date	How I responded to the incident (thoughts and actions)	Record of discussion at Intervention Group meeting (including date of meeting)	What would I be doing differently next time?

SOUTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

APPENDIX 8 – ADAPTED CIT REFLECTIVE LOG

University of Strathclyde
Humanities & Social Sciences

Education Resources

Psychological Services

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES & HEALTH

Attachment-Informed Practice Research

Reflective Log

Your name: **Date of completion:**

Date and description of a concern	What was your response to the concern? Please include your thoughts, feelings and actions	How much was your response informed by attachment theory and practice? Please indicate using a scale of 1-10, 1 being 'very little' and 10 being `strongly`) and explain your response.	Reflecting on your knowledge of attachment theory and practice, is there anything you would do differently next time with a similar concern?	Considerations/implications for school policy and procedures.

Notes from Intervention Group

APPENDIX 9

Instructions for scoring goal attainment scaling

The key formula from Kiresuk and Sherman (1968) is:-

T = 50 + (C *x* (Xi + Xii))

We decided weighting would not be helpful in case work with younger children and please note the equation above is only to be used when weightings are NOT being used.

T = is the final outcome score which will range from 0 to 100.

- <50 = less than expected outcome
- 50 = the expected outcome
- >50 = more than expected outcome

C = is a constant number you use when there are a certain number of goals.
When there is:
1 Goal = 10
2 Goals = 6.2
3 Goals = 4.56

X = the outcome scores (scores given on the final week of measurement) .
ie. -2, -1, 0, +1, +2
i = Goal 1
ii = Goal 2

We need to remember that

- The final score should always equal between 1 and 100, so if it isn't, we have made a mistake!
- The value C changes depending on how many goals you measured.

Here are some examples:

After being measured on 2 Goals, Linda scored -1 (goal 1) and +1 (goal 2) on the last week of measurement.

1. Select the formula:
   T = 50 + (C *x* (Xi + Xii))
2. Complete the missing values:
   T = 50 + (6.2 *x* ((-1) + 1))
3. Calculate within the brackets first:
   T = 50 + (6.2 *x* (0))
   T = 50 + (0)
4. Then add on the 50:
   T = 50

After being measured on 1 Goal, David scored +1 on the final week of measurement.

1. Select the formula:

   T = 50 + (C *x* (Xi + Xii))
2. Complete the missing values:

   T = 50 + (10 *x* 1)
3. Calculate within the brackets first:

   T = 50 + (10)
4. Then add on the 50:
5. **<u>T = 60</u>**

After being measured on 2 goals Rick scored -2 (goal 1) and -2 (goal 2).

1. Select the formula:

   T = 50 + (C *x* (Xi + Xii))
2. Complete the missing values:

   T = 50 + (6.2 *x* ((-2) + (-2))
3. Calculate within the brackets first:

   T = 50 + (6.2 *x* (-4))

   T = 50 + (-24.8)
4. Then add on the 50:

   <u>T = 25.2</u>

If reporting on more than one goal, put the composite T-score at the top and then a table underneath showing the scores for each week.

Elizabeth N King
Phd Researcher

APPENDIX 10

Reference list of literature and resources provided for the intervention group.

General Resources

Bombèr, L. M. (2007). *Inside I'm hurting: practical strategies for supporting children with attachment difficulties in schools.*
Bombèr, L. M. (2011). *What About Me?: Inclusive Strategies to Support Pupils with Attachment Difficulties Make it Through the School Day.*
Bombèr, L. M., & Hughes, D. A. (2013). *Settling Troubled Pupils to Learn: Why Relationships Matter in School.*
Bombèr, L. M. (2015a). *The Attachment Aware School Series: Bridging the Gap for Troubled Pupils. Book 1: The Key Adult in School.*
Bombèr, L. M. (2015b). *The Attachment Aware School Series: Bridging the Gap for Troubled Pupils. Book 2: Getting Started - The Senior Manager - INCO/SENCO/Assistant Head.*
Bombèr, L. M. (2015c). *The Attachment Aware School Series: Bridging the Gap for Troubled Pupils. Book 3: The Key Teacher in School.*
Bombèr, L. M. (2016a). *The Attachment Aware School Series: Bridging the Gap for Troubled Pupils. Book 4: Team Pupil in School.*
Bombèr, L. M. (2016b). *The Attachment Aware School Series: Bridging the Gap for Troubled Pupils. Book 5 The Parent and Carer in School.*
Gus, et al. (2015). *Emotion coaching: A universal strategy for supporting and promoting sustainable emotional and behavioural well-being.*
Rose, et al. (2015). *Emotion Coaching-a strategy for promoting behavioural self-regulation in children/young people in schools: A pilot study.*
South Lanarkshire Council Psychological Service. (2007). *The Framework of Assessment and Intervention for Resilience (FAIR)*
South Lanarkshire Council Psychological Service. (2014a). *The A-Z of Attachment and Resilience.*
South Lanarkshire Council Psychological Service. (2014b). *The Early Years Framework of Assessment and Intervention for Attachment and Resilience (Early Years FAIAR).*
Solihull Approach Parenting. (2015). *The Solihull Approach.*

Timpson, J. (2009). *A guide to Attachment and how it can affect people's lives*.

Looked After and kinship care

Fursland, et al. (2013). Ten Top Tips for Supporting Education.
Golding, K. S. (2008). Nurturing attachments: Supporting children who are fostered or adopted.
Silver, M. (2013). Attachment in Common Sense and Doodles: A Practical Guide.
Taylor, C. (2010). *A Practical Guide to Caring for Children and Teenagers with Attachment Difficulties.*
Timpson, J. (2011). *Looking After Looked After Children.*