EXPLORING PARTICIPATORY INQUIRY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE TO INFORM COMMUNITY-BASED OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY PRACTICE

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Abstract

This dual-layered qualitative study was borne from my perceived concerns regarding a lack of occupation-based group interventions within occupational therapy and my desire to understand the complexities inherent in being truly person-centred when facilitating group participation. The tenets of participatory inquiry seemed to offer potential as an occupational therapy approach that could enhance person-centredness. Using occupation as a vehicle for community health promotion, I collaborated with fourteen deaf young people attending varying local secondary education. This population is reportedly often under supported in their mental and emotional needs. With support from community partners, two cohorts of young people and I became co-participants and co-inquirers; developing the "See Yourself" project as an occupation-based group inquiry and sharing activities over a school year. Each group chose to produce a short film that presented aspects of their lives.

I generated a reflexive research log as the main data set and adopted a postcritical ethnographic approach to interpreting the data. An immersion and crystallization process of analysis was applied, generating research findings that I related to existing occupational therapy and social science theory through cycles of action and reflection. "Relationality" emerged as embodying the intra-personal, social, cultural and physical connectedness felt between project participants as we engaged through collaborative occupation. Two approaches were found to be particularly significant in recognising power differentials and supporting a non-dominating facilitatory style. "Scaffolding" emerged as a key collaborative approach to building a responsive project structure while fostering the young people's spontaneity. "Defence" emerged as my facilitative approach to scaffolding the project; balancing the young people's motivations with the need to guide the project towards constructive outcomes. The collaborative development of products through activities was found to influence participants' engagement.

The thesis demonstrates how the conjoining of occupation-based intervention and truly person-centred engagement led to the development of relationships between participants and effective relational approaches that seemed to enhance human flourishing. Occupational therapists in other practice settings, including health promotion, may enhance benefits for people with whom they work through the use of these participatory facilitative approaches.
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Declaration

I declare that the research contained in this thesis, unless otherwise formally indicated within the text, is the original work of the author. The thesis has not been previously submitted to this or any other university for a degree, and does not incorporate any material already submitted for a degree.

Signed:

Dated:
1. Introduction

In this initial chapter I begin by outlining my personal journey towards the decision to develop and undertake the research reported in this thesis. I briefly describe key points within a personal, professional and political landscape that form the wider context for this research and set out a rationale for the study. Secondly, I outline the subsequent structure of the thesis and its contents.

1.1 My personal journey towards undertaking research

1.1.1 Initial Disturbance

This thesis stemmed from an initial disturbance borne out of my role as an occupational therapist within the National Health Service (NHS) during the years prior to my enrolment upon a professional doctorate in occupational therapy. Throughout this time, I developed a prevailing sense corroborated by other voices within the profession, that occupational therapists appear not to be focusing upon activity and occupation within their practice to the degree to which the ideologies underpinning occupational therapy theory most certainly do. I would count myself amongst those practitioners for whom it feels that the constraints of time and the pressure for throughput within community based mental health services leaves little time to meaningfully engage and explore with clients, occupations that hold meaning for them, but prove difficult to carry out for reasons specific to their context. Conversations and assessments are more often than not undertaken in rooms, be it clinical rooms or home visits, talking about activities and occupations within a broader context rather than practically engaging in them. A way of practical knowing, revealed through embodied engagement, often remains untapped.

By considering this issue more deeply, my doctoral studies led me to other contemporary ideologies currently venerated within the wider health and social care practice and research context, where I detected a high degree of synergy between the participatory and client centred ideologies espoused by occupational therapy theory and those found within methods of participatory inquiry. For example, the action and reflection cycles embedded within cooperative inquiry, echoed the focus upon reflexive occupational engagement implemented within occupational therapy
practice. However there remains a distinct gap in the exploration of such synergy within both occupational therapy research and practice. Participatory inquiry held several models of collaborative working that I did not see applied within my own practice field. This fuelled my desire to explore the relationship between these two models and to consider, as an occupational therapist, what occupational therapy practice might learn from methods of participatory inquiry.

Furthermore, in my pursuit for authenticity when approaching research, I have been convinced of the need to develop any inquiry with which I am involved through methods that themselves encapsulate the participatory, client centred spirit of occupational therapy and demonstrate a level of therapeutic integrity to which we are mandated to uphold through our registration as allied health professionals. Therefore, in line with the ideologies of both occupational therapy and participatory inquiry, in which action and practical knowing are given primacy, I maintain from the start of this thesis that an exploration of my disturbance must occur within context; an environment where therapeutic inquiry can be implemented and reflected upon, for the benefit of others as well as the initiating researcher. So quite naturally, participatory inquiry method is implemented as an occupational therapy intervention.

1.1.2 Deaf and hearing impaired young people: A Research Context

Through a personal journey upon which I will expand in due course, a context for research was found within the local deaf community where I have undertaken a form of participatory inquiry with two small groups of hearing impaired young people attending schools within the City of Brighton & Hove, using their own lived experiences as a starting point. There is a recognised paucity of mental health and emotional well-being support for young people with hearing impairment (DH, 2005; NDCS, 2008) which will be discussed in the next chapter in relation to their occupational needs. Thus, focusing an inquiry upon an exploration of their needs from an occupational therapy viewpoint would seem both timely and appropriate; providing a suitable context to explore my own research question whilst also promoting the health and well-being of deaf young people.

1.1.3 An Inquirer's Dilemma

The collaborative project that subsequently evolved underwent numerous developments throughout its progression, leading to the emergence of a
phenomenon that encompassed a considerably wider sphere of human experience than had originally been envisioned; developing collaborative partnerships with third parties across both academic and statutory settings, expanding the initial project over two sites and managing a complex dissemination strategy in partnership with members of the wider Deaf community. So, in turn, this thesis sets out my reflexive account of my participatory engagement with this group to, on the one hand, offer valued support to the young people themselves and potentially influence wider support provision, and on the other, use this fieldwork as a context within which to explore my initial disturbance in the field of mental health promotion.

This places me in a seemingly dichotomous situation from the outset of this thesis, when I consider my approach to producing key chapters that encompass two clearly distinct areas; ways of working within occupational therapy, and the needs of the chosen inquiry population. Although I recognise that it is well within the remit of a thesis to cover several issues simultaneously from the outset, these areas must be finely balanced and fairly represented. For example, when drawing upon the literature to paint a background to the study, I need to explore my initial disturbance from a theoretical perspective; discussing the perceived paucity of activity focused occupational therapy practice and expanding upon components of occupational theory that appear to resonate with participatory inquiry. However in addition, there needs to be a focus upon the context; elaborating upon Deaf\(^1\) culture (Woodward, 1972), its political implications and the mental health needs of deaf young people.

I have attempted to cross-fertilise these parallel concerns by developing a methodological approach to the study that both encapsulates my situatedness within the inquiry context and my engagement with the issues found therein, and my need to attend to the critique and development of the theoretical bases covered by the inquiry’s broad sweep. I recognise that my framing of participatory inquiry method as

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\(^1\) This thesis follows the tradition of referring to culturally Deaf people with an upper case ‘D’, and to the audiological condition and those not identifying with the Deaf community with a lower case ‘d’ (Woodward, 1972). The capital ‘D’ represents the view that ‘deafness’ is not a statement of impairment or loss, but a label identifying what is gained in terms of language, culture and community (Ladd, 2003).
a therapeutic intervention has led to what may be described as an unconventional thesis structure and I attend to this towards the end of this chapter.

Before I delve further into the two main areas outlined above, I will begin by describing a chronology that captures the progression from inception of my interest in deaf issues to the decision to initiate an inquiry with a cohort of deaf young people.

1.1.4 The Back-story

In 1999, I began a job as a support worker in a private residential home in East Sussex for young people with profound learning disabilities, where I was first exposed to, and began to learn some basic components of sign language using Makaton signs and symbols (Walker, 1978; Sheehy and Duffy, 2009). The experience impacted me greatly and I decided to pursue this interest further. Over the next two years, I passed British Sign Language (BSL) Level 1 and 2 through local evening classes and continued to develop my interest in Deaf culture. Level 1 and level 2 have since been reclassified and are now equivalent to levels A2 and B1 respectively, in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) (Council of Europe, 2011).

These two years also coincided with my undertaking the MSc in Health through Occupation at the University of Brighton leading to my professional registration as an Occupational Therapist. Towards the end of the course, I arranged my elective final student placement with a senior occupational therapist working at the United Kingdom's (UK) only National Health Service (NHS) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) Inpatient facility for deaf children and young people experiencing mental and emotional issues. The decision to pursue this placement was borne from a desire to link my increasing interest in working within mental health settings (specifically CAMHS), and my continued engagement with deaf issues. The facility formed part of the National Deaf Service, a specialist service which was then predominantly based in London but operating across England to support the mental health needs of culturally Deaf people. The service has since expanded across multiple regions.

The challenging but positive experience I gained within this predominantly signed environment alongside both Deaf and hearing staff, further developed: my skills in communicating with BSL; my awareness of Deaf culture and the political milieu that
surrounded this social construct; an increased understanding of the specific needs of deaf young people; and a deeper sense of what occupational therapy theory and practice could offer to facilitate steps toward greater mental and emotional well-being for this minority population.

1.1.5 A Personal Empathy

At the time, I recognised the degree to which I felt a personal empathy regarding the social challenges faced by these deaf young people within the wider non-Deaf, logocentric culture (Hindley et al, 1994) where effective verbal skills are highly valued. Having lived with a moderate to severe stammer from an early age myself, I felt I had experienced considerable and sustained barriers to communication which impacted detrimentally upon my confidence and self-image from a young age, particularly within school settings where I found that both intentional or unintentional discrimination and cruelty from peers and adults can be severe, and pressures to conform to ‘social norms’ can lead to intense frustration and isolation. The sense of social isolation I can testify to having felt at times, was to my mind, echoed to some degree in the experiences that both the Deaf clients and staff also described.

Over the next five years, my involvement with the Deaf community was characterised by personal friendships and social encounters outside my professional sphere. These relationships continued to develop my skills in BSL and increase my understanding of Deaf cultural issues and the challenges that deaf people face within a predominantly hearing oriented society, reported by friends within the Deaf community. Furthermore, I was gaining competence in a language in which I felt remarkably free from the physical limitations and emotional frustrations that talking in most social settings presented for me. My initial conceptualisation of deafness as a disability was being challenged continually as I was exposed to an alternative discourse, framing Deafness outside both the pathogenic sphere and the disability model (Oliver, 1996; Shakespeare, 2006); being characterised instead as a linguistic minority (Ladd, 2003), a cultural identity for which the struggle for recognition was perceived as an issue of basic human rights and equality (UK Parliament, 2010). The recognition of BSL as an official British language by the UK government’s Department of Work and Pension (DWP) on 16th March 2003 indicated that the cultural model termed ‘Deafhood’ (Ladd, 2003; 2008) was gaining wider support. Although no parliamentary bill was drawn up, the ripple effect of this landmark decision continues to be felt. In
the Scottish parliament, a BSL Bill giving BSL equal status to English and Gaelic, has been drafted and was undergoing consultation up until the last general elections.

1.1.6 Deaf Political Developments

The move to recognise BSL in England also ushered in a phase of political development regarding Deaf health and well-being. A consultation document regarding mental health and deafness, ‘Sign of the Times’, was published by the Department of Health (DH, 2003), seeking the best way to improve mental health services for Deaf people based upon the seven standards outlined within the National Service Framework for Mental Health (DH, 1999).

In 2005, the Department of Health published ‘Mental Health and Deafness: Towards Equity and Access’ (DH, 2005), a ‘best practice guidance’ report outlining recommendations drawn up following the Sign of the Times consultation process. Within West Sussex where I was employed as an occupational therapist, the County Council, Primary Care Trust and Royal Deaf Association responded to the guidance by jointly commissioning the West Sussex TEA (Towards Equity and Access) Project to act upon the guidance recommendations which had advocated localised Needs Assessments regarding the mental health of Deaf people and the delivery of deaf awareness within the statutory services’ training curriculum. The project culminated in a conference in May 2008 entitled ‘Deaf Access to Mental Health Services in West Sussex’ to disseminate the work of the project and consult further with the Deaf community regarding the future of local mental health services.

By this time, I was in the second year of the Professional Doctorate in Occupational Therapy which I had commenced in September 2006 and working within the West Sussex Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) as a primary mental health worker. In response to recommendations from The NHS Health Advisory Service’s (HAS) report entitled ‘Together We Stand’ (NHS HAS, 1995), the CAMHS primary mental health role was developed to support the mental and emotional well-being of children and young people through consultation within the primary care arena in contexts such as schools, medical practices and multi-agency forums and direct work with children, young people and families (Hickey et al, 2008; Williams, 2011).
I had initially applied for a place on the professional doctorate in occupational therapy with the intention of focusing my research upon the recovery model within adult mental health. However, having successfully transitioned to CAMHS, my preferred field, it was clear that my research focus would also need to shift towards young people. As I considered how to approach the third assignment in the taught component of the doctoral course, I felt strongly that the doctorate held potential as a highly engaging platform to redirect my research towards deaf young people, combining my professional field with my strong personal affiliations with the deaf community and the concerns I had developed regarding the mental well-being of deaf young people based upon literature that suggested that the Deaf community could benefit from an improved public health programme.

My concerns for deaf children in mainstream school settings were also increasingly shaped by my professional work within schools where I witnessed the logistical dilemmas surrounding the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs. I was also aware of anecdotal evidence through my connections with the Deaf community, suggesting that the educational inclusion agenda was problematic for many deaf young people; leading to their social exclusion and an increased risk to their mental health.

It is with this set of presuppositions that I attended the West Sussex TEA project conference. During a time for questions at the end of the day, I publicly asked the primary care trust service commissioner what provision there was for young people within the project and for the future. The response I received explained how the project had primarily focused upon adult services although there was recognition of the mental and emotional needs of deaf young people. No indication was given however, for plans to meet this need. The reply emboldened in me a desire to explore further what type of support these young people had available to them and galvanised my resolve to focus upon this population in a way that would value the young people within an inquiry process, and amplify their voice through the research and potentially impact the services that supported them.

The research that emerged is therefore situated towards the primary end of the mental health service spectrum, and falls outside the boundaries of NHS statutory service provision. Although greatly influencing my professional role and the therapeutic techniques I use, the research was not undertaken within my professional setting.
1.2 Overview of Thesis Structure

The body of the thesis starts by giving a contextual background in chapter 2, exploring the literature pertaining to the suppositions I held in relation to my disturbance – the need for occupational therapy to be more strongly underpinned by the use of activity and the overlap that this creates between occupational therapy practice and the methods used within participatory inquiry. I also set out a case for this inquiry and introduce a question from which the research has developed. In conclusion, I address the inquiry participants’ context in relation to issues regarding culture, mental health needs and service provision.

In chapter three, I explore my methodological approach to this endeavour. I give my philosophical basis for the participatory approach I have chosen, giving justification for my participatory methodology of choice - cooperative inquiry. I outline my methodological design and approach to data collection and analysis from a postcritical ethnographic position.

Chapter four addresses the applied method undertaken in the course of this inquiry, giving a narrative account of the complex methodical processes that have been used in both conducting the initial co-operative inquiry – the 'See Yourself' collaborative youth project, and the critical analysis of data generated from the inquiry. The chapter includes a description of the project's content, which, within a more conventional thesis structure might be found within the Findings. However, since this thesis frames the participatory inquiry methodological approach as an intervention, I believe that a description of that intervention is most appropriate within the method chapter.

In chapter five, I present the summation of findings drawn from my research process. The findings are expanded with a degree of critical discussion and supported by excerpts from the data set. I present a framework of relationality, developed as a sense-making tool with which further meaning has been drawn from the data. This serves as a lens through which determinants of relationality are suggested for consideration when guiding a contextually-based approach to occupational therapy practice.
Chapter six draws upon the wider literature to further discuss the most significant determinants as key findings, in greater depth. I engage in detailed critical discussion and synthesis of these findings in relation to literature from occupational therapy and wider relevant fields in response to the initial research question. Furthermore, I explore the limitations of the research, potential implications for future practice and describe authenticity and rigour as criteria for the research's trustworthiness.

Chapter seven concludes the thesis with some closing remarks; briefly summarizing the research and giving my own final brief reflections regarding the process and its outcomes.

Figure 1.1 below visually represents an overview of the main processes, threads and themes that progress through chapters 2 to 6 of the thesis.
Figure 1.1 Visual overview of thesis
2. Background Chapter

The scope of any background chapter is to give a critical overview of what has gone before within the public domain in terms of research and policy directives that offer an evidence base that supports or counters the need for continued inquiry within a specific field.

This chapter consists of three parts that reflect the multi-layered focus represented in this thesis. The first section focuses upon ways of working within the occupational therapy profession. This is followed by my outlining of a case for this thesis in relation to my initial disturbance, and proposes a question as a starting point for this inquiry. Having made clear the premise for this research, I conclude by discussing the cultural and political context of the cohort I have identified as my inquiry co-participants.

2.1 Ways of Working

This section focuses first upon literature related to occupational therapy's therapeutic use of occupation as an intervention predominantly in relation to mental health and secondly, community-based practice and the field of mental health promotion (given the upstream positioning of this thesis in terms of its exploration of occupational therapy intervention). The section explores the literature pertaining to what I see as occupational therapy's correlation to participatory inquiry and the degree of mutual focus upon notions of person centredness, knowledge co-creation and action oriented engagement. The above issues are discussed in relation to working with children and young people specifically.

2.1.1 Health through Occupation

Within mental health services, occupational therapy is differentiated from other allied health professions such as arts-based therapists, speech and language therapists and dieticians, by its core belief in the relationship between health and occupation and consequently, its belief in health through occupation. Occupation has been defined as "...what people do minute by minute, hour by hour, day by day, week by week and year by year." (p.412 Wilcock, 2001) and "all that people need, want, and
are obliged to do” (p.9 Wilcock, 2006, cited in Park Lala & Kinsella, 2011). Paradoxically, the simplicity of such definitions, reflect the complexity underpinning occupation as a human construct, and in turn, the complexity of therapeutic interventions that engage with occupation's myriad forms of representation (Creek, 2003; Creek et al 2005). The intentional nature of human occupation is summed up by Gray (1997; 1998) who views it as necessarily goal oriented, meaningful, repeatable and a form of action that is perceived by the participant as 'doing'.

In an overview of the profession's history, both Serrett (1985) and Turner (2011) suggest that occupational therapy practice turned away from its primary focus on occupation in the 1970’s and 1980’s in search of a stronger identity through an (uneasy) association with the dominant medical model. From her contemporary perspective, Turner describes the profession regaining a clearer understanding of its strengths in the 1990’s. More recently, as the profession moves into “late adolescence” (p.318, Turner, 2011), practice guidance asserts that occupational therapy's core philosophy (now gradually being supported through occupational science) that health itself is achieved through occupation, provides occupational therapy its unique quality and an apparent added value to the multi-disciplinary services within health and social care settings (COT, 2003; 2008a). Gaining greater currency, the phrase ‘added value of occupational therapy’ has been used by the College of Occupational Therapists (COT) as one of five themes that inform and shape its strategy for occupational therapy within mental health services from 2007 to 2017 (COT, 2006a; COT, 2006b). The college's ‘added value’ theme characterises occupational therapists as “…experts in doing; helping people to develop skills and overcome barriers in order to engage in activities that support the development and maintenance of good mental health and that promote social inclusion...by focusing on skills and opportunities for occupational engagement…” (p.12). The focus upon engagement in activities within this characterisation and the implication that such a focus will develop good mental health, reflects an assertion that underpins all contemporary occupational therapy theoretical models of practice used within mental health both nationally (Creek, 2008) and globally such as the Canadian model of occupational performance and engagement (Law et al, 1997; Townsend and Polatajko, 2007) and the Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner, 2008) as well as echoing the sentiments found within the origins of the profession both in the United Kingdom and North America (Henderson, 1925; Meyer, 1922; 1977).
Additionally, the academic discipline of occupational science explores the relationship between daily occupations, health and well-being (Wilcock, 2005); perceiving humans first and foremost as occupational beings (Jackson, 1998). The discipline’s relationship with occupational therapy has gained greater coherence through the application of the emerging occupational science discourse to the field of practice theory (Molineux, 2004), offering a predominantly qualitative evidence base for the health benefits of occupational engagement and, conversely, the health risks of occupational deprivation (Whiteford, 1997). Indeed, terms such as occupational deprivation and occupational justice (Wilcock, 1998) frame occupational engagement as a basic human right with profound implications for prohibitive contexts where such ‘occupational rights’ are negatively affected. Occupational deprivation refers to “...a state in which people are precluded from opportunities to engage in occupations of meaning due to factors outside their control.” (p.200, Whiteford, 2000). Occupational justice is envisioned as a conceptual vehicle for the promotion of activism against occupational injustices such as occupational deprivation, but also occupational alienation, occupational marginalization, and occupational imbalance (Townsend & Wilcock, 2004). The political hue that this position adopts has been widely used to argue a stronger case for the need to both increase and protect occupational therapy provision within services in order to uphold the occupational rights of clients (Frank et al, 2008).

2.1.2 Occupationally Focused Practice

Despite this broad theoretical acceptance of, and increasing evidence base for the belief that, health increases can potentially occur through meaningful occupation, there is also a small body of literature reflecting my disquiet at practice level, that modes of activity and occupation have not been consistently utilised by occupational therapists as a core component of therapeutic intervention within the field of mental health to the degree that espoused theory suggests it should (Dickie, 2008 cited in LeClair, 2010). Using Turner’s analogy (2011), it would seem that certain practice settings continue to be playing out the profession’s early adolescence, kowtowing to a persisting medical hegemony that permeates many mental health services. In the United Kingdom the cause of this dilemma is most commonly laid at the feet of both national and local health policy directives that have in recent times, called for health professions to work collaboratively towards shared goals and often shared practice (DH, 2007; DH, 2011). This trend towards performing predominantly generic roles within multi-disciplinary mental health teams (Pettican & Bryant, 2007), and its lack of
emphasis upon occupationally driven therapy, is suggested to place at risk the profession’s core skills and professional identity (Reeves & Summerfield Mann, 2004). Measures have been introduced through the reconceptualising of occupational therapy theory and policy to address this perceived imbalance, emphasising the need for occupations to be embedded within interventions (Parnell and Wilding, 2010). However, the gap between policy/theory and practice is reported to remain (Kielhofner, 2008).

2.1.3 Client-Centred Practice

A causal link is also suggested between the lack of occupationally-based practice and a potential loss of genuine client-centred focus within the profession (Ikuigu, 2004), the implication being that an occupational therapist’s methods of intervention may not truly represent client oriented values if the occupations inherently meaningful to any given client are not being adequately explored or utilised in therapy. There is a sense therefore, that addressing the client-centredness of practice will in turn strengthen therapists’ focus upon occupation in practice also (Townsend and Wilcock, 2004; Restall and Ripat, 2008). This has emboldened a family of predominantly Canadian theorists from both practice and academic backgrounds to recapitulate the centrality of person centred approaches through revisiting and modifying practice guidance models. Drawing more explicitly from the field of occupational science, the Canadian Model of Occupational Performance and Engagement, one strand of a ‘triple model’ set of guidelines (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007), has been internationally recognised as a key model for occupational therapy, developing from a clearly defined occupational perspective (McColl et al, 2003) and purporting to place client centred practice at its core (Polatajko et al, 2007); emphasising enabling as a key function of occupational therapy intervention within the domain of occupation (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007). The Canadian Model of Client-Centred Enablement, another strand within the triple model guidance, encapsulates this client-centred focus through outlining the relationship between the therapist and the client, which in this context may refer to individuals, families, groups, communities, organisations or populations. The model defines a rather extensive array of enablement skills that are said to be used within the therapeutic relationship as actions: adapt; advocate; coach; collaborate; consult; coordinate; design/build; educate; engage and specialise. A significant number of these defined skills clearly reflect facets of the client-centred relationship and imbue a sense of enablement through partnership, re-visioning the ‘doing with not for’ adage that has
remained pervasive almost to the point of cliché throughout the profession’s history. From a wider perspective, the shift in focus from working with individuals to the acknowledgement of working through therapeutic relationships with communities, organisations and even populations is notable, for it heralds a greater steer towards the socio-political potentialities of the profession (Kronenburg et al, 2005; Sakellariou et al, 2008; Pollard et al, 2008) and a recognition of the role that occupational therapy has the potential to play within the broader public health agenda (Jones-Phipps & Craik, 2008).

2.1.4 Focusing Upstream: Mental Health Promotion

Over the last 30 years, the international public health agenda has been transitioning from a solely illness prevention perspective towards the inclusion of health promotion (Raeburn & Rootman, 1998) through the early identification and challenging of potential health risks. Subsequently, theories and initiatives that attempt to advance healthy communities as a whole are increasing.

Antonovsky’s ‘salutogenesis’, (1987; 1996) a sociological concept that focuses upon factors that support health and well-being, is presented in the literature as a model with which to guide the field of health promotion (Lindström et al, 2005; Lindström and Eriksson, 2006). The concept’s concern with the relationship between health, stress and coping would appear highly relevance to mental health promotion. Furthermore, the theory’s strengths-based approach chimes with the tenets of occupational therapy. Salutogenesis is purportedly borne from disquiet within the field regarding the historically predominant use of pathogenic approaches towards health research. The salutogenic model provides a critique of such disease oriented approaches and instead presents both ‘dis-ease’ and ‘health-ease’ as poles on the same spectrum.

2.1.5 Community Development

Within a service provision context, health promotion is framed as an adjunct to the occupational therapist’s role (COT, 2004; COT, 2008b; COT, 2012; AOTA, 2008; Jones-Phipps & Craik, 2008). Beyond the localised agenda for mental health promotion within occupational therapy, where it is potentially seen as a supplement to existing practice, there is a wider socio-political perspective being adopted at a theoretical level that highlights the connection between a salutogenic approach to
promoting mental health as opposed to focusing upon mental illness through diagnosed conditions, and working in a less-individualistic mode by viewing the wider community as the client (Krupa & Clark, 2004; Letts, 2003). Within much of the occupationally-focussed community development literature, the reader is left to assume that the definition of community is predominantly geographically based (LeClair, 2010; Lauckner, 2010).

In contrast, a broader reading of the term 'community' and its use in disability literature, for example, reveals a more social-political definition referring to a group of persons self-categorised as such by virtue of a perceived commonality (Israel et al, 2010; Radermacher, 2010). However, it seems astonishing that in a special issue of the American Journal of Occupational Therapy (AJOT, 2005) devoted to informing the relationship between occupational therapy and disability studies, only one article (Gillow & Flecky, 2005) used the term 'community', and with no clear definition of its meaning. Rather, it is inferred as a descriptor for a geographical locale in all instances bar one, where it refers to the “disability community” (p. 548). From such ambiguity, one might conclude that the profession's theory base and literature could benefit from richer discussions that explore the construct of 'community' through a multi-faceted philosophical and political discourse.

At a micro level, efforts to engage the 'community as client' raise questions regarding the methods that can be utilised by occupational therapists to transfer therapeutic skills and tools to broader contexts (Lauckner et al, 2007). Given the emphasis that the Canadian model places upon working within this broader community context, it is no surprise to find a deeper consideration of the role of occupational therapists within the field of community development emerging from the Canadian literature (Lauckner, 2010; Lauckner et al, 2007; Banks & Head, 2004; Labonte et al, 2002; Trentham, 2007; Lauckner et al, 2006).

Community development refers to a style of practice closely aligned to the tenets of health promotion, that supports communities to identify their own priorities, developing strategies themselves to gain sufficient control and decision-making power to affect social change (Boutilier et al, 2000; Windley, 2011) and is recognised as a key health promotion strategy (WHO, 1986). However, within the occupational therapy literature, community development is delineated from the notion of community-based practice on the grounds that the latter does not uphold the values of participation to the same extent as the client-centred community engagement
characterised by community development per se (Lauckner, 2010; Labonte, 1993). Indeed, participation has become increasingly recognised as a marker for healthy functioning as its inclusion in section D (paired with activity) of the International Classification of Functioning (ICF) would suggest (WHO, 2001); steering away from a deficit focus towards a social model that considers problems as participation restrictions. In occupational therapy terms, such a community development approach towards the client can be framed within the systematic process of needs assessment carried out routinely by therapists (Finlayson, 2006) but with a broader socio-political awareness whereby an appraisal of community participation, as involvement, choice-making and ownership, is seen as integral to the assessment and treatment processes.

2.1.6 Occupational Therapy and Disability Studies

Briefly touched upon in the last section, there is a symbiotic relationship between occupational therapy and disability studies that warrants further elaboration in this chapter, in light of the profession’s development from a community development perspective. Stemming from a social model of disability (Shakespeare, 2006), disability studies draw increasingly from critical theorist and feminist perspectives of disability (Phelan, 2011) that call for a recognition of the entrenched nature of power relations that construct cultural hegemonies and perpetuate ablest attitudes, reinforcing the ongoing oppression experienced by disabled people (Taylor, 2005; Radermacher, 2006). In response, the discipline pursues the advancement of “the social and political rights of disabled people” (p11, Hammell, 2006) to counter such social oppression.

In terms of rehabilitation professions, disability theorists raise important questions about a number of issues central to occupational therapy theory and practice (Kleinhofner, 2005), critiquing the profession’s collusion with professional power and privilege (Hammell, 2007), such as undertaking disability research with minimal involvement from the disabled community itself (Thomas, 1999). These claims appear shamefully contradictory to the client-centred ideologies purportedly upheld by the profession, as described in an earlier section.

McCormack and Collins (2010) make the point that occupational therapy’s continued individualisation of disability through singular interventions, occlude a broader societal awareness which, they assert, would enhance enablement and social
inclusion. In an attempt to address this failing, they suggest pursuing an intentional relationship between five core elements of client-centred practice delineated by Sumfison and Law (2006): power; listening and communication; partnership; choice; and hope, and five theoretical concepts found within disability studies, respectively: ‘nothing about us without us’; social model of disability; emancipatory research; independence; affirmation model of disability.

Similarly, Hammell (2007) sketches a disability methodology for occupational therapy that falls in line with participatory principles in terms of its commitment to: respect; service-user priorities and involvement; knowledge production that is practicable and outcomes based; a critically cognisant stance towards inequalities; and a focus upon contextual person/environment interactions. Such a methodology goes some way in uniting practice with the salutogenic principles of health promotion described above, focusing upon health as opposed to disease (Antonovsky, 1990, 1996; Lundman et al, 2010), and community interventions that focus upon strengths-based approaches; moving away from a diagnostic or deficit-focused model.

It is felt that disability studies can support occupational therapy as a profession in recognising hegemonic discourses within their practice that subjugate the potentialities within disabled people’s lives. Using deafness as a related example of how hegemony is challenged, the constructs of Deafhood (Ladd, 2003) and Deafnicity, (Eckert, 2006) reframe the debate as necessarily separate from issues pertaining to disability, offering instead a recasting of deafness as cultural identity. Paradoxically however, the notion of identity persists as a key issue within the disability discourse (Wendell, 1996 cited in Phelan, 2011) and is especially pertinent within occupational therapy theoretical frameworks in which the relationship between disability and occupational capacity is inexplicably intertwined with individual and cultural identity (Phelan, 2011).

2.1.7 Participative Inquiry

There exist an increasing number of labels for “participative action-oriented research methods” (Dick, 2011) and across the wider literature, the terms participative inquiry and participatory action research (PAR) are often used synonymously. Collaborative inquiry has also been used interchangeably by some authors (Koch & Kralik, 2006). Broadly speaking, these terms form a typology for common characteristics found in research approaches that seek to affect social change by collaborative, egalitarian
and democratic means through emancipatory action within geographically, diagnostically or culturally defined communities (Kirkwood, 2011a). The use of approaches these terms seek to describe are reported in the literature bases for a broad range of practice contexts such as education, health, social care and international development; and seem strongly aligned with concepts found within the philosophical underpinnings of human science disciplines including sociology; anthropology; community psychology and disability studies.

Although the terminology and methods surrounding PAR, for instance, vary from context to context, as a collective term, it has been suggested as an expression of new paradigm science (Reason and Rowan, 1981; Reason, 1988; Reason and Torbert, 2001) that refers to a branch of inquiry originating from a critical theorist position, famously utilised by educationalists such as Paulo Freire (1970) and sociologists such as Orlando Fals Borda (Fals Borda, 2006; Fals Borda & Rahman, 1991) to counter historical majority world approaches to researching disenfranchised people by placing capabilities into the hands of the community (Koch & Kralik, 2005); focusing upon empowerment at both an individual and community level.

Within the “family of approaches” (p. xxii, Reason & Bradbury, 2006) that constitute action research (Brydon-Miller et al, 2003), there are some distinct methodologies that have developed such as appreciative inquiry (Ludema et al, 2006) and cooperative inquiry (Heron and Reason, 2006). Both approaches resemble the core characteristics of action research but travel along slightly different philosophical paths. For example, appreciative inquiry appears governed by its fundamental opposition to deficit-based inquiry patterns whereas co-operative inquiry counters a foundationalist standpoint by building upon the concept of ‘many ways of knowing’ (Heron, 1996) to facilitate the co-construction of practical knowledge through cycles of action and reflection, drawn from transpersonal psychologies and behavioural sciences. On the whole PAR methodologies seem to have distinct conceptual links with the notion of person-centredness.

2.1.8 Occupational Therapy and participative Inquiry

There is growing literature to suggest strong commonalities between concepts underpinning occupationally based and client centred occupational therapy practice, and models that lend themselves to mental health promotion such as community
development and participatory approaches (Taylor et al., 2006; Letts, 2003; Kronenburg et al., 2005).

However, although there is some evidence for action research having been applied intra-professionally within occupational therapy (de Toit et al., 2010), there is negligible empirical literature, as opposed to theory-based literature, describing the application of methodologies that sit within the field of participative inquiry such as participatory action research, across the therapist-client interface and from an occupational perspective. To highlight some exceptions, Taylor (2003) describes the use of participatory action research methods to develop an empowerment-based project focused upon chronic fatigue syndrome that revolved around client-centred goal setting and utilised peer counselling groups. Taylor et al. (2004) use case examples to discuss how concepts and strategies from PAR can support occupational therapy service development and evaluation by combining PAR sensibilities with more traditional outcomes studies. Cockburn and Trentham (2002) offer a basic introduction to PAR also by discussing two examples of their personal involvement “...to highlight the conceptual links between PAR and community-based, client-centred occupational therapy” (p. 21). However, little if any context is given to therapists’ specific interventions intentionally employed within a participatory inquiry process from an occupational perspective. Rempfer and Knott (2001) cite their example of adopting PAR to evaluate a shopping skills training program within an occupational therapy mental health service, using their conclusions to discuss the relationship between PAR and models of mental health recovery (Deegan, 1997; Young & Ensing, 1999). They conclude that the therapeutic use of PAR is consistent with both the ethos that governs their practice setting and the recovery model; increases their standards of accountability as practitioners; and eases problem-solving through engaging stakeholders in the decision-making process.

In all cases, the initiating inquirers can be described as ‘outsider’ researchers (Heron, 1996; Brydon-Miller et al., 2003) in as much as they remain external to the lived experience of those with whom they engaged in the PAR process. To this extent, as well as the inherent risks of returning to a default position of perceived authority, it might also be argued that despite being rhetorically based upon health promotion principles, all studies were initially borne from a well intentioned, but potentially paternalistic, deficit-oriented trigger, where issues worthy of research were identified by the practitioners themselves – a paradoxical dilemma to which I have found no reference, or attempts to address, within the wider literature.
2.1.9 Specific Commonalities and Subtle Differences

Based upon a review of the scarce but valuable empirical literature exploring occupational therapy and participatory research, and supported by the profession's theoretical base, three distinct but interrelated themes common to both these areas have already been implicitly touched up in this section: person centredness, knowledge co-creation and action-oriented engagement. As well as focusing upon the commonalities apparent across these themes, it is useful to also outline differences inherent in the comparison in order to better understand occupational therapy's perception of participatory approaches.

2.1.9.1 Person-centredness

For semantic clarity, it must also be added that, in the same way the term 'client-centred' is employed to describe both individuals and groups or communities in the Canadian occupational therapy literature (as described above), so the term 'person-centred' is inferred with the same singular or corporate quality, dependent upon the context. Where Raeburn and Rootman (1998), for example, make this distinction between individual and group recipients by using the term 'people-centred health promotion', I have chosen to use only the term 'person-centred' for simplicity.

Although presenting as very similar, use of the word person as opposed to client in the term 'person-centred' reframes the more pervasive service-oriented perspective of the client-centred position in a way that seems to denote a greater degree of mutuality within the participative relationship between both parties. On the other hand, use of the word client denotes the degree of responsibility that a service-provider has to a service user, potentially at a contractual or regulatory level if not merely on a moral basis. Implications of this dynamic upon practice settings highlight the need to strike a balance between being person-focused in terms of respecting one another's personhood and each person's individuality that stems from this, and being client focused in terms of recognising that the recipients are entitled to receiving a service that the service-givers' expertise can provide.
2.1.9.2 Knowledge Co-creation

Similarly, a balance is called for when considering the theme of knowledge co-creation. Into the therapeutic relationship, the client brings with them expertise of their own experience channelled through their unique worldview. The service-provider brings a level of clinical expertise pertaining to the issues being explored from a perspective governed by their own professional training and personal experience and values. The true valuing of both sides occurs through a process of exploration within which the capacity of all participants to engage with the inquiry process is recognised (Taylor et al, 2006). These issues inherent in knowledge co-creation correspond to similar issues pertaining to power or control which are well documented within the PAR literature (Dworski-Riggs and Langhout, 2010; Dick, 2011), as PAR stems from an empowerment model (Taylor et al, 2004). An epistemological basis for both occupational therapy and PAR that privileges a subjective position, embracing multiple perspectives (Cockburn & Trentham 2002), challenges a priori knowledge claims and in so doing, opens up the potential for power and control to be more equitably addressed through collaborative sense-making (Gaventa and Cornwall, 2006; Gaventa, 2006). In reality, the levels of power and control vary throughout the therapeutic/inquiry process, governed by the needs being addressed and strengths required at any one time. Subsequently, continued attention can be paid to potential power imbalances through shared responsibility, voice and decision-making. However, the logistical and bureaucratic constraints of service-provision can prove problematic for authentic sharing in this way.

2.1.9.3 Action-oriented engagement

The ways in which both occupational therapy and PAR interpret action-oriented engagement may be construed as subtly different from each other. For occupational therapy, the literature indicates that the notion of action-oriented engagement implies a principle focus upon the occupational components of daily living, and efforts to re-engage clients within contexts of occupational deprivation (Whiteford, 2000, 2011). However, within participative inquiry, action-oriented engagement is principally conveyed as the construction of new activities/occupations outside of participants’ habitual routines, such as engaging in inquiry activities as a group/project member.

This difference between what has been termed occupational reablement (COT, 2010) and activity creation, mirrors a similar contrast between the therapeutic use of activities of daily living (ADLs) and creative arts or craft groups for example, within many occupational therapy mental health services. Both forms of intervention have
historically been the staple of OT practice in different contexts and both share a mutual concern for the elimination of environmental and contextual barriers to occupational performance (Cockburn & Trentham 2002; Wilcock 1998). However, within both of these staple intervention examples, the therapist is predominantly perceived as determining the process, which in the first instance may lead to authorising a return home following an in-patient admission, for example; in the second instance may result is creation of artefacts under the direction of an experienced facilitator; and in both cases is hoped to lead to a degree of skill acquisition and sense of enablement for the client.

2.1.10 Participatory Facilitation

The participatory component of any given therapeutic intervention, be it within an individual or group context, lives in symbiosis with the facilitative style that guides the intervention process (Taylor, 2005). There exists within each established discipline that recognises therapeutic relationships as key to its work, a body of literature exploring differing facilitative styles and their impact upon practice. Where therapeutic practitioners facilitate participatory research methods; they bring skills and knowledge from their own backgrounds.

In the case of cooperative inquiry, where John Heron the primary author draws considerably from his knowledge of the therapeutic mode in explicating the relationships inherent in the facilitator/co-participant relationship within participatory inquiries from a transpersonal perspective (Heron 1996; 2000), a clearer synergy can be drawn between the core therapeutic skills imputed to the occupational therapist and those required of the inquiry facilitator. At a foundational level, Heron bases the cooperative inquiry approach upon the notion of ‘persons in relation’ through which researchers “...will need to be in a mutual relation with [those involved, as]...their equal co-subject.” (p 201). From this position, inquiry skills are intimated as the rightful tenure of every participant. However, the various facilitation roles within an inquiry are most effective when undertaken by specific participants with the appropriate skill match (Reason, 1988). This methodological process blurs the traditional therapist and client relationship boundaries, instead painting a scene whereby all participants can be both researcher and subject to greater or lesser degrees. The unique expertise of the facilitator thus becomes their ability to facilitate groups and steer the inquiry process, rather than necessarily their specialist subject
knowledge. To this end, Heron (1996) emphasises the importance of training participants in the basic principles of the inquiry process.

2.1.11 Participative inquiry with Children and Young People

The absence of any peer reviewed theoretical or research literature discussing examples of participative inquiry involving children or young people from an occupational perspective is woefully apparent. A recent electronic cross-search of all available on-line literature accessible through the University of Brighton library portal, containing the keywords 'participatory'; AND 'occupational therapy'; AND 'young' OR 'child' returned no relevant results. However, this paucity is not the case in the wider literature where examples of young people’s involvement in participative inquiry continue to proliferate as perceptions of this population shift from problem-focused to viewing them as sources for participatory action (O’Kane, 2008; Wong et al, 2010). Within services focused upon young people’s health and well-being, ‘participation’ has become increasingly central to policy directives that attempt to involve young service-users in strategic decisions regarding service design (Involve, 2004; NDCS, 2010). Research approaches have been employed to varying degrees as a tool for enhancing young service-user participation in service and policy design at local levels.

Again, focusing upon cooperative inquiry, there stands out one example in the literature where participatory action research in the form of collaborative inquiry is utilised both effectively and ethically with young people. Gillian Chowns, a practitioner working with children of seriously ill parents, used a collaborative inquiry approach to support a group of nine young people to create a short film capturing their experiences, reflections and story pertaining to their parents’ time-limiting illness (Chowns et al, 2006; Chowns, 2008). Despite the strong participatory focus of the inquiry, the facilitator concedes that the notion to create a video through the cooperative inquiry was decided before recruitment had commenced. In fact, Chowns approached and formed a partnership with a filmmaker who worked in a strong participatory style and the inquiry was advertised as a film-making project. In this sense, Chowns recognises that this was not ‘bottom-up’ research, in which the topic and the method are envisioned and developed as corporately as possible, but rather, adopts a top-down method similarly employed within much research involving young people. However, Chowns suggests that the willingness for the young participants to engage with the project throughout, and their involvement with the project’s
development, indicates how deeply the topic and process resonated with them. Quotes from the young people that amplify the positive impact of the project upon them, reinforce the therapeutic modality evident through the process of the inquiry. The subsequent film created has also served as a valuable tool for use with other young people and their families (Chowns et al, 2006).

2.1.12 Ways of Working: Summary

The above section has explored the concept of occupation from an occupational therapy perspective within a mental health context, focusing upon person-centred practice as a key theme. The wider socio-political perspectives inherent within the fields of mental health promotion and community development have been discussed. Their relation to both occupational therapy practice and the use of participatory inquiry has been highlighted, where both commonalities and differences persist. Finally the use of participatory inquiry with children and young people has been explored, and the paucity of literature in relation to occupational therapy raised as a concern. In the next section, I outline my case for undertaking a participatory inquiry in order to explore person-centredness in occupational therapy.

2.2 Outlining a case for undertaking a participatory inquiry to explore person-centredness

My relatively limited exploration of the literature pertaining to occupational therapy and participatory inquiry, has highlighted a number of issues that can be brought together to form a robust justification for the subsequent line of inquiry I have developed.

The College of Occupational Therapists (2008b) acknowledge a long held belief (Finlayson and Edwards, 1995) that the values of occupational therapy are significantly aligned with more progressive health promoting positions, both sharing an emphasis upon methods that facilitate person-centred and action-based participation within communities. Similarly, the values of participatory action research have also been demonstrated as promoting positive change and the empowering of participants through collective action; raising political awareness within their own communities and beyond (Rempfer and Knott, 2001).
However, no previous empirical research has sought to understand the relationship between occupational therapy practice and participatory inquiry methods within a person-centred context. Specifically, no previous research explores the implications of implementing participatory inquiry with young people as a therapeutic intervention from an occupational therapist’s facilitative perspective. I feel that my perspective as an occupational therapist, my role as a mental health worker positioned, as it is, towards primary care, and a personal association with my local Deaf community, has afforded me greater insight into the connections between these fields. I envisage the potential for significant developments across borders of practice (Kronenberg et al., 2010) through the knowledge exchange between them. An inquiry designed to collaborate with community partners and deaf young people in developing a project based around corporately selected activities and themes that are meaningful to participants, has the potential to promote positive outcomes for those involved, possibly outline facilitative guidelines pertinent to my own therapeutic practice and worthy of consideration by other practitioners and add to the body of documented accounts revealing insights into experiences of deafness which continue to prove of interest to a wider population.

2.2.1 The Question

My attempt to marry the participative nature of the inquiry with the less-participatory nature of the thesis submission has had a direct impact upon my clarification of a research question. I made the decision, during the preliminary inquiry development phase, that my thesis would focus upon a principally epistemological question that relates to the utility of participatory inquiry methods within occupational therapy practice, exploring the intersection shared by the two fields:

**What can occupational therapy practice assimilate from participatory inquiry methods?**

This question is not asked of the inquiry co-researchers, whose engagement is focused upon their own situation. Rather, mine is a meta-question regarding the process that has been undertaken through a valid community-based project, within which I have played a significant role. That which the young participants have gained from the project will, I hope, be carried with them both experientially and in the artefacts they have produced. The thesis however, is my artefact; an academic exercise that draws from my own experiential context to develop constructs that act
as sense-making tools, shaping meaning from the phenomena and explicating a utility for such propositional knowledge to be tried and tested in other contexts.

In the next section I lay out my justification for choosing to address my research question through collaboration with young people from the wider deaf community.

2.3 The Inquiry Participants' context

In this section I explore the issues regarding mental health and well-being that face deaf young people, the inquiry's main co-researchers, providing a clear justification for situating this research within a deaf community context as well as giving a deeper understanding of key cultural and political issues that deaf young people may encounter.

I believe that the deaf community holds particular significance for occupational therapy research. There are clear similarities between the ethos underpinning the person-centred, community based occupational therapy practice models described above, and the Deaf community's questioning of the diagnostic focus of individualised assessment and treatment models propagated within most health service provision. Increasingly, the deaf community has rejected a deficit-based model of deafness, instead, inscribing deafness as a commonality with a rich cultural heritage from which deaf persons may construct a shared identity. This strengths-based perspective also resonates with the salutogenic principles described earlier in this chapter.

2.3.1 Deafness and Mental Health

In the United Kingdom's predominantly logocentric culture, significant hearing loss is legislated as a sensory disability and so, deaf people are categorised as a vulnerable group (DH, 2003). There are a number of significant factors determining the impact of deafness upon an individual and the construction of that person's identity including: age at onset of deafness; the degree of hearing loss and whether it is unilateral or bilateral; gradual or sudden onset; whether a person's primary means of communication is oral or signed language; the dominant communicative method and attitude of the person's family and wider community (Hindley, 2000). In the UK, a
paper by Hindley et al (1994) reporting a prevalence study of psychiatric disorder in deaf and hearing impaired children and young people, is a commonly cited text with regard to suggesting a causal link between deafness and increased risk of mental or emotional difficulties. It reports that such difficulties lead to a broad range of mental health problems prevalent within 40% of deaf children compared with a prevalence of 25% within the general child population (Hindley et al. 1994; Hindley, 2005; Hindley and van Gent, 2002). Since Hindley et al’s paper, further research reported within the literature in this field continues to corroborate the link between deafness and increased risk of mental and emotional difficulties (van Eldik, 2004; Hindley and Kitson, 2000; Austen and Crocker, 2004; NDCS, 2010). Predominantly based upon this small body of research, the issue that is more widely debated, pertains to finding effective methods in understanding and building resilience in deaf children and young people against these challenges (Young et al, 2008; Zand and Pierce, 2011).

In the UK, policy work regarding mental health and deafness has been developed for the deaf population as a whole, such as 'A Sign of the Times: Modernising Mental Health services for people who are Deaf' (DH, 2003) and 'Mental Health and Deafness: Towards Equity and Access' (DH, 2005). Although the Government reports give clear recommendations regarding the improvement of access to specialist mental health services for deaf young people, even drawing upon the importance of health promotion, there is no explicit reference to the multi sector partnership working that promotes better mental and emotional well being within schools that can be found in much of the other historical governmental inclusion literature (DfES, 2001). Considering the wider cross-party governmental agenda concerning children and young people, the blurring of public sector concerns, and notably the shared language used for all sectors within Every Child Matters (ECM) is clearly apparent. Throughout policy development for example, the notion of inclusion is asserted as mutually relevant to all public service spheres. A common discourse between health promotion and inclusion is also evident, with broadly similar themes and language resonating throughout the background literature supporting both developments. It is a positive sign that increased mental and emotional health is stated as a distinct aim within the ‘Being Healthy’ outcome of ECM outcome framework. Additionally, in the previous government's paper 'Improvement, Expansion and Reform: The Next 3 Years' (DH, 2002), health and social care priorities include 'mental health' and 'improving life chances for children'. Most recently, the current coalition government’s white paper ‘No Health Without Mental Health’ (HM Government, 2011) sets out a re-visioning of mental health services
across all ages and builds upon the ECM strands from a continued recognition of the essential link between general well-being and mental health across all populations including children and adolescents. The paper describes plans for increased early intervention and health promotion initiatives to support young people’s well-being and recognises the link between physical difficulties and increased risk of mental health problems. Also, there is mention of the need for increased specialist services for BSL users. Since the Coalition Government in 2010 there has been a degree of movement away from the terminology set out in ECM and funding to progress the ECM agenda. Subsequently, these changes have been felt within children’s services (Barker, 2009; 2011).

2.3.2 Deaf Young People in Schools

Despite a raised awareness of the needs of deaf young people within the UK that has been tied into recent national policy, there appears to be a gap in strategic and practical health service provision from both statutory and non-statutory services, nationally and locally, to support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of young people with hearing loss in mainstream schools. It is suggested that deaf young people’s resilience against emotional and mental health problems, may be eroded by feelings of social exclusion, paradoxically sustained through the Inclusion agenda privileged within mainstream schools (Powers, 2002; Jarvis, 2002; Angelides & Aravi, 2007; Dixon, 2006; Hung and Paul, 2006; Cambra, 2002; Jarvis, 2003; Iantaffi et al, 2003; Wauters & Knoors, 2007) following the Warnock Report (DES, 1978) and subsequent Education Acts in the UK.

2.3.3 Deafness as Cultural Identity

The relationship between deafness, identity and labelism is recognised as complex and multi-faceted (Leigh, 2009; Rhoades, 2010). The classification of deafness as a pathogenic condition within the medical field (Senghas and Monaghan, 2002) as reflected in the International classification of functioning, disability and health (ICF) (WHO, 2001), and its relationship to disability within the social care agenda, stands in contrast to a reframing of deafness as a cultural commonality that has formed the basis for a community identity. Historically, a distinction is continually drawn between the concept of deafness and that of Deafhood (Ladd, 2003). This difference is characterised by the widely held perception of fundamental cultural differences
between those with varying degrees of hearing loss who have a primary reliance upon oral forms of communication and those who experience more profound, commonly earlier onset deafness, and identify themselves culturally with a Deaf community for whom the primary form of communication is manually signed language. Symbolic representation of the latter's cultural identity within the literature is most commonly indicated by the convention of employing a capital 'D' for Deaf, in contrast to the use of a lower case 'd' to represent the deaf population as a whole (Padden & Humphries, 1988). Increasingly, Deaf identity has become a political driver for the promotion of deaf equality, human rights and empowerment, holding many similarities with the narratives of other oppressed people groups' rights movements in modern cultural history (Freire, 2001). Purportedly, sustained pressure upon the British government from the Deaf community and its supporters led to the recognition of British Sign Language as a distinct language by the Department of Work and Pensions on 18th March 2003.

Predominantly, a key value within Deafhood is its conceptualisation as a positive cultural identity (Kent, 2003; Ladd, 2005), rejecting a majority perspective that frames deafness within the deficit model of diagnostic conditions, often characterised by disempowerment and stigmatisation (Nikolarazi and Hadjikakou, 2006). Deaf culture often refuses to recognise deafness as a health problem or in some cases even a disability, and in so doing, resonates profoundly with the ideologies behind the broader human rights movement (Corker, 1998).

### 2.3.4 Social Exclusion and Deaf Identity

Within any population, construction of a personal and community identity is significant in determining the levels of risk regarding social exclusion (Social Exclusion Unit, 2004). In particular, I would suggest that identity may be experienced as how we think others perceive us. For young persons experiencing deafness, communicative expression and interaction plays a particularly crucial role in the construction and development of identity (Kent, 2003), since the effects of communicative difficulties appear to constitute a major barrier to effectively achieving life goals (Bain et al, 2004). Notably, levels of hearing loss and therefore methods of communication vary considerably within the deaf population and attitudes towards different communication methods are divided (Lynas, 2005). Sign language is arguably the most easily recognisable symbol of Deaf culture.
However, for those with partial hearing loss, those brought up by hearing parents or those in environments with sceptical attitudes towards signing, oral communication may well be privileged (Napier et al. 2007). Some in this group may not comfortably identify themselves with either the Deaf or hearing community, due to the communication difficulties experienced when attempting to engage with both. Similarly, some with a later onset of deafness may sense that attempts to reconstruct their identity as Deaf, through their pursuit of sign language, for example, can be met with opposition. They may perceive themselves as being excluded from the Deaf community in subtle ways due to others' attitudes towards their possible lack of fluency or understanding of the culture. From a review of available literature regarding the social competence of deaf students in general education classrooms, Antia et al (2011) use three case studies to suggest how such young people are arguably at higher risk of developing mental health issues than those with a stronger community-based, or community-supported, Deaf identity. Such young people with lesser degrees of hearing loss, no signing skills and attending mainstream schools, may not hold the cultural currency that affords a Deaf identity. Instead, this group may be more likely to adopt the mantle of disability inferred upon them, however unintentionally, by the predominantly hearing-centric communities to which they belong, such as mainstream schools. Given this characteristically subaltern position, I suggest that educationalists such as Freire would corroborate that this sub-population’s need for strength-focused interventions to support their mental and emotional resilience, is even more acute.

These are just some of the complexities that face people experiencing deafness, and I duly recognise that the social subtleties described above are considerably more complex in reality than can be expressed within this limited problem contextualisation. However, it is evident that for deaf young people accessing education within both a mainstream and specialist setting, significant support is likely to be needed in nurturing their emotional and mental wellbeing and building their capacity for resilience against potential risk ‘processes’ (Hart et al, 2007; Aumann and Hart, 2009; NDCS, 2005). Deafness, in and of itself, is not a risk factor, but rather, “...in a range of familial, social and institutional contexts [deafness] may interact with variables and processes that render its disadvantaging effects more likely” (p.5, Young et al, 2008). In this context, deafness can be framed as a risk indicator rather than a risk mechanism.
2.3.5 Special Education Needs Provision for Deaf Pupils

Provision of services for deaf children within schools, has been managed within the remit of SEN policies since before the Warnock Report and in the main, continues to receive educational rights within SEN legislation (DfES, 2004). For a deaf child and adolescent, the political transition from integration to inclusion has direct implications, because the differing models used for the inclusion of deaf pupils within educational settings continues to cause much controversy (Foster et al., 2003). There are a number of discourses in the literature debating the benefits of education delivered in various educational settings through differing forms of communication such as oralism, total communication (a formalised mixture of the speech and signing) or a bilingual approach (Kluwin, 1999; Bain et al., 2004; Fortnum et al., 2002). The previous government’s primary model of inclusion, inherited from their predecessors, privileges the integration of SEN pupils (including deaf) through somewhat patchy specialist provision within mainstream settings (Jarvis, 2003). However, non-maintained schools for the deaf continue to operate. One example of governmental pressure to pursue the mainstreaming of pupils with disabilities, directly related to this inquiry, was the closure of Ovingdean Hall School (OHS) in July 2010 following a steady decline in pupil numbers over several years. The attrition of pupils, many of whom were placed at OHS from different counties, was felt by many at the school to characterise the Local Education Authorities’ (LEA) alleged reluctance to shoulder the considerable expense of ‘out of county’ placements. In another example, Camden Council’s attempts in 2007 to close the flagship school Frank Barnes School for Deaf Children, a bilingual school and the first in the UK to develop and implement a BSL and Deaf Studies curriculum for Deaf pupils, were met with strong objection from campaigners within the Deaf and wider community leading to a back down from the council.

Within Brighton and Hove, there were until recently, two non-maintained schools for the deaf, one emphasising a ‘child centred communication’ approach, a mix of English and BSL, the other emphasising oralism. As mentioned above, the latter has been forced to close due in part to the mainstreaming agenda. According to recent anecdotal verbal accounts given by the Brighton and Hove County Council Sensory Needs Service over the course of this research (captured in the data set), there is continued concern with the apparent gap in professional provision supporting the emotional and mental health needs of deaf young people in their catchments. The Sensory Needs Service, made up of two teams that cover visual and hearing loss
respectively, offer a range of interventions including staff training, school consultation and direct work with pupils such as assessment and teaching. Following my initial approach in October 2008, the hearing loss team responded enthusiastically to plans for this research inquiry which focused upon the emotional and mental health issues of deaf pupils. Their positive response was in recognition of the fact that their service was not commissioned to provide mental and emotional health intervention and there was no other service currently meeting that need within the area.

2.3.6 Statutory Mental Health Provision for Young People

A 4-tiered structure of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), proposed within the NHS Health Advisory Service’s (HAS) report entitled ‘Together We Stand’ (NHS Health Advisory Service, 1995), and subsequently implemented nationwide through the Every Child Matters agenda, also seeks to create clear partnerships between primary, secondary and tertiary care sectors across all services. The strategy behind a tiered CAMHS attempts to support health promotion and early intervention initiatives through creating a model whereby all children’s services are seen as having a mandate to support child and adolescent mental health, not merely the specialist services, conceptualised as tier 3.

Figure 2.1 Integrated CAMHS Service model (Nixon, 2010)
The National CAMHS Review (DCSF, 2008), initiated by government's Children's Plan (DCSF, 2007) highlights a more recent move away from the 4-tiered model of CAMHS, towards the framing of services as universal, targeted and specialist to reflect a greater integration between wider services for children that has been promoted in recent years. Figure 1.1, above reproduced from CAMHS in Context from the National CAMHS Workforce Programme (Nixon, 2010), merges the well known CAMHS tier-based pyramid with the universal, targeted and specialist service categories.

2.3.7 Mental Health Services for Deaf Young People

The Deaf Children and Family Service is a nationally commissioned specialist CAMH service for deaf and hearing impaired children with a range of emotional, behavioural and developmental problems where the level of hearing loss is classed as either severe or profound, where BSL is their first language or where there is a significant language impairment related to moderate to profound hearing loss. Hearing children with a parent who has severe or profound hearing loss are also considered for assessment and therapeutic support. The service operates from four centres to enable national coverage: York, Dudley, London and Taunton offering targeted tier 3 provision, with targeted specialist tier 4 provision based in London. In recent years, the Deaf Children and Family Service has responded to the recognised need for early intervention by establishing regional outreach hubs that include both occupational therapists as well as primary mental health workers as part of the multi-disciplinary teams offering a blend of tier 2 and tier 3 provision. The teams assess and treat for mental health conditions as well as offering consultations to schools. However, recent discussions with the team that covers Kent, Surrey and Sussex, who have been exploring opportunities with myself for partnership working within the locality, highlight the high levels of need that are still not being met by the limited service resources available.

2.3.8 Initiatives Promoting Well-being for Deaf Young People

Despite the emergence of a peer reviewed journal specifically addressing advances in school mental health promotion (Weist & Murray, 2007), highlighting the growing interest in this field, there remains a lack of research evidence into ways of developing best practice for supporting deaf young people's mental health and resilience (Young et al, 2008), as opposed to their holistic educational inclusion in
mainstream school communities (Powers, 2002). Most of the literature pertaining to Deaf young people’s coping mechanisms is written from an educational stance. This does not focus upon specific psychosocial risk indicators regarding the emotional mental well-being of deaf pupils that research from a health and social care perspective may have highlighted. Similarly, despite the increasing mental and emotional well-being literature focusing upon resilience and young people (Masten, 2001; Rutter, 1999; Cameron et al, 2007; Hart et al, 2007), Young et al (2008) state there to be minimal published work on this subject with regard to the deaf population, although a contemporary edited volume on this subject has recently been published (Zand and Pierce, 2011).

Within the UK’s third sector, deaf youth focused organisations such as the National Deaf Children’s Society (NDCS) have developed initiatives with deaf young people over the years to robustly challenge issues such as discrimination or self-esteem whilst also serving as a platform for young people’s views. One project example ‘Who am I?’ conducted in Scotland over the course of three years, aimed to support deaf young people, their parents and siblings in their transition through adolescence (NDCS, 2011). In the summer of 2010, thirty deaf young people from across Scotland took part in creative writing and photography events and produced booklets and DVDs in which they share their stories. This project built upon the success of the Healthy Minds project, developed by the NDCS to support the mental health of deaf children through resources and training to young people, families and professionals. In a similar vein, young members of the Oxfordshire Deaf Children’s Society (affiliated to the NDCS) have produced two DVD’s; Deafness Matters (2006) and To Hear or not to Hear (2009) both exploring how deaf young people cope with their deafness.

2.3.9 The Inquiry Participants’ context: Summary

This section has situated itself within the contexts of deafness, Deaf culture and deaf young people. It has focussed upon the latter population’s suggested mental health and emotional well-being needs and mental health provision that is currently commissioned for them.

The literature demonstrates a clear need to continue offering effective support for deaf young people to promote and sustain their mental and emotional well-being.
given the increased risk of developing mental or emotional health issues that the literature suggests. The cultural sensitivities related to perceiving deafness as a disability to those with a Deaf identity suggest that, where mental health issues are socially driven, deficit based models may not be the best way to address mental health needs in this population and that much can be done to challenge negative societal attitudes that lead to isolation and exclusion.

2.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have given a limited background to occupational therapy theory and practice in relation to: occupation; client-centred practice; mental health promotion; and community development initiatives, in relation to participative inquiry. I have set out a case for this inquiry and presented a question from which the research has developed. I have concluded by addressing the inquiry participants' context in relation to issues regarding culture, mental health needs and service provision. In the next chapter, my methodological approach is explored.
3. Methodology

Having outlined a case for this study, I now lay out my philosophical approach towards the research described. The ontological and epistemological position that I believe underpins my worldview will be discussed in relation to my approach to arriving at and implementing a research methodology. The chapter describes my choice to use a qualitative research approach and the symbiotic relationship between the participatory and action based epistemology employed to develop a cooperative inquiry with hearing impaired young people, and the postcritical ethnography principles implemented to develop an academic thesis that, by framing the cooperative inquiry as an intervention, describes, analyses and draws conclusions from my experience of participation within it.

3.1 My Philosophical Basis for a Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research methods have proliferated within the social sciences through a myriad of paradigmatic formulations that have been critical of traditional social science research methodologies (Crotty, 2003; Denzin and Lincoln, 2005a) that seek to build upon a foundation of perceived objective and generalisable knowledge claims based upon empirically limited inquiry. The language within the qualitative research community is characterised fundamentally by a critical interpretivist stance that in its very nature asserts the limitations of positivist, post-positivist, reductionist, structuralist and realist positions. In this chapter, my own rationale for adopting a qualitative research approach is interlaced with an account of my journey towards a philosophical position regarding the field of inquiry in which I have situated my research.

3.1.1 Defining Ontology and Epistemology

Ontology and epistemology are related concepts that form a paradigmatic basis for the philosophical and sociological perspective of the world that we hold, influencing our thoughts and actions within the social structure in which we live. However, from Kuhn’s first introduction of the term ‘paradigm’ (Kuhn, 1962), succinct definitions of paradigmatic concepts have failed to fully convey the subtleties and nuances found within the discourses that make up an expanding spectrum of worldviews. Such is
the nature of interpretation, that vocabulary has been manipulated within philosophical debate as well as in the qualitative research community itself to such a degree that much ambiguity has arisen regarding a clear consensus of definitions (Groisy, 2003). My own current understanding of the terms ontology and epistemology are as follows:

- The field of **ontology** deals with metaphysical questions that explore the nature of reality, embodying a spectrum of positions pertaining to these questions, framed within a number of paradigms. For health and social care researchers, this broadly calls for a critical examination of our approach regarding the nature of truth and the implications this has upon our areas of study.

- **Epistemology** pertains to questions regarding human knowledge, the construct through which we seek to understand or challenge reality as we see it. Fundamental epistemological questions such as ‘what can we know?’ and ‘what counts as knowledge?’ seek to illuminate our position in relation to whether we perceive knowledge as transmuted to us from an external source, individually constructed from within or socially and culturally co-constructed.

### 3.1.2 My Ontological and Epistemological Position

I find I am most persuaded by a position that opines the need for resonance between one’s personal ontological perspective and the ontological basis for one’s chosen path of research. As Lotz states, “Ontology is truly itself only when it is personal and persons are truly themselves only as ontological” (1963, p.297). In my case, the reflexive process of back-chaining from a comparatively recent interest in cooperative inquiry as a methodology has led to a deeper excavation of my own assumptions and beliefs. By questioning why my interpretation of this particular methodology should resonate with many of my own core values so strongly, a clearer comprehension of my ontological position regarding the nature of truth and reality has emerged. I recognise that some within the occupational therapy field dispute this approach towards methodology asserting that, “The choice of paradigm should...reflect the question and not the preordained beliefs of the researcher” (p.454, Duncan and Nicol, 2004). However, although applicable to more foundationally grounded research, I feel this view cannot be justified within participatory and co-constructed approaches to qualitative inquiry, where knowledge emerges experientially through
the interactional processes themselves, within which our beliefs subjectively govern our intentions and subsequent actions. I also take the position that one's ontological position stretches far beyond the constraints of one's professional persona.

So it would seem, my cultural life experiences have led me to an ontological position that, in the course of my studying, I initially situated within the social constructivist paradigm; a relativist ontology that perceives reality as both locally and socially co-constructed from a subjectivist epistemological position (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005b). This challenges the positivist and post-positivist perspectives that take a naïve or critical realist stance from an elevated, objectivist position. In contrast, the postmodern interpretivist discourse (Lyotard, 1984), from which social constructivist theory stems, seeks to generate individual or collective dialectical reconstructions of experiential knowledge that tend to be authenticated (as opposed to validated) by the degree to which there is consensus regarding the emerging normative claims and the extent to which these serve as a catalyst for change (Reason, 2006). The interpretivist discourse assumes a subjective social reality constructed and interpreted by persons contextualised by language and culture. Monti and Tingen (1999) suggest that interpretivism is based upon the ontological assumptions that reality is both complex and holistic regarding the human experience, and is context specific.

3.1.3 Limitations of Language

Despite my stance becoming largely commensurate with constructivist, critical and emancipatory approaches, a disturbance has developed regarding the limitations of any symbolic system such as language to embody absolute meaning in the fullest sense. This post-structuralist assertion regarding language’s embodiment of meaning has been assumed implicitly by a great many, it would seem, within the constructivist fold. Assumptions and claims regarding language’s symbolic capacity to encapsulate meaning, knowledge or power have served as key points for debate in most philosophical conversations over recent decades (Kincheloe and McLaren, 2005). In turn, I have been left unconvinced by the associated critical theorist claim that posits reality as a human construction communicated uniquely through the symbols and signifiers of language. This claim is reluctant to acknowledge other forms of experiential and presentational knowledge that constitute fully formed expressions of knowing solely through their lived embodiment or felt presence (Roberts, 2008).
3.1.4 The Action Turn

My disturbance regarding the relationship between reality, knowledge and language, widely referred to as the 'linguistic turn' (Rorty, 1992), has led me to engage with other epistemological perspectives from which methodologies have emerged that allow for "a more direct link between intellectual knowledge and moment-to-moment personal and social action, so that inquiry contributes directly to the flourishing of human persons, their communities, and the ecosystems of which they are part" (p.4, Reason & Torbert, 2001). Reason and Torbert characterise this shift in inquiry emphasis as a 'turn to action' that supplements rather than disputes the former linguistic turn. Likewise, my intent has not been to circumnavigate the utility of language and its symbols, but to envision a broader framing of both what it means to 'know', and the ways this can be communicated. This extends the nature of reality beyond the social sphere, to include the inter-relational, objective world or ecosystem.

3.1.5 An Extended Epistemology

The authors Heron and Reason (1997) reformulate this transactional and interactive worldview as a participatory paradigm, reunifying the Kantian differentiation between the world per se, and the phenomenon – our interpreted experience of the world (Reason and Bradbury, 2000). Therefore, my own reading of this literature has progressed my philosophical worldview to a point that can no longer be described as purely social constructivist. Such an objective-subjective relationship moves beyond the boundaries of constructivism and could be likened to the critical realist position most commonly associated with Roy Bhaskar (Collier, 1994) in which a 'real' world as other is acknowledged, yet is accessible only through our own contingent, relativist and interpretivist (critical) standpoint. Similarly, subtle realism (Hammersley, 1992; Banfield, 2004; Duncan and Nicol, 2004) asserts a pragmatic need to acknowledge an objective 'real' world from a critical subjectivist position. However, the critical and subtle realist positions maintain a linguistic basis which the participatory paradigm seeks to move beyond. In contrast, Heron and Reason propose an 'extended epistemology' (Heron 1981; Heron, 1996; Heron and Reason, 1997). This encapsulates a fourfold model of knowing extending beyond the limits of language: whereby practical knowing (knowledge experienced in and through action) is seen as the consummation of the other three forms of knowing described in their model: experiential knowing – direct encounters with persons, places or things;
presentational knowing – the spatio-temporal representation of experiential knowing; and propositional knowing – conceptually constructed knowledge. This model of knowing resonates with my own approach to knowledge and that which I perceive within my experience of occupational therapy.

From a participatory paradigm perspective the primacy of the practical as a methodological aim, is seen as the fulfillment of the ideologies that drive the various forms of action based practice and research: action science (Argyris et al., 1985); action learning (Revans, 1998); developmental action inquiry (Torbert, 2004); appreciative inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2003); and co-operative inquiry (Heron, 1996). Reason and Torbert (2001) make the point that within participatory and action based research, methodology is envisioned as merely a tool rather than an overly dominating force. The pragmatic tenor of this utilitarian view of the relationship between inquiry and practice seems to point to the assertion proliferated widely within the literature, that any action research is inherently a political act (Fals Borda, 2006); participation is seen as a political process (Kirby et al., 2003). The imperative for a participatory action research inquiry to privilege the instigation of social change, frames the pursuit for deeper comprehension as a by-product of action focused participatory engagement, not its sole aim.

3.1.6 Pragmatism and Occupational Therapy

The early genealogy of pragmatism, of which Dewey’s criticism of the traditional separation of knowledge and action (Dewey, 1929; Reason 1994) is a key shaping factor, is interwoven with the development of occupational therapy through the profession’s early pioneers such as Adolf Meyer (Meyer, 1977; Cutchin, 2004; Diasio-Serrell, 1985; Hooper & Wood, 2002) who assert a holistic framing of humans and their environment and highlight the adaptation of this holistic system through instrumental action (Cutchin, 2004). It is noteworthy that both John Dewey and the sociologist philosopher and pragmatist George Herbert Mead were, for certain periods, collaborating colleagues of Meyer (Breines, 1987). In examining the historical relationship between pragmatism and occupational therapy, Breines (1987) goes as far as to suggest that occupational therapy was seen as the quintessence of pragmatic principles in the health field of the time (Ikiugu and Schultz, 2006). To date, there appears to remain within the values of the profession a tacit pursuance of an experiential construction of knowledge through praxis that is representative of occupational therapy’s pragmatist beginnings (Hooper and Wood, 2002) and is not
as consistently articulated within accounts of constructivism. Pragmatist assertions persist in the privileging of co-constructed meaning explored through the client centred therapeutic relationship (COT 2006a; COT 2006b; Law et al., 1998), and the profession’s historic emphasis upon client empowerment through supported choice (Yerxa, 1967). Likewise, the holistic view of personhood and the agentic nature of people are principle tenets of both occupational therapy and pragmatism (Ilkugu and Schultz, 2006; Hooper and Wood, 2002), and serve as good foundations for the value placed upon social integration and interaction, common to each.

3.1.7 Reflexivity and Praxis

Reflexivity embodies the process of reflecting both in action, and upon action, whilst also incorporating a critical dimension that allows a level of self-reflection that considers one’s own socio-political and cultural positioning within any given context in which knowledge is constructed (Kinsella & Whiteford, 2009). As McNay (1999) asserts, reflexivity “...is not an evenly generalized capacity of subjects living in a de-traditionalized era but arises unevenly from their embeddedness within different sets of power relations.” (p. 110). Building upon the need to recognise this subjectively embodied position, Simon (2013) coins relational reflexivity as a dialogue between internal and external voices, allowing for a mindful connection between the self and other. The call for an active critique of the potentially unexamined power of the researcher manifested through one’s own contextualised knowledge creation, and knowledge claims, also speaks to the power issues highlighted in practice and discourses about practice.

Emerging from a discourse of reflexivity seemingly steered from a post-structural perspective, Finlay (2002) suggests five variants of reflexivity: introspection; intersubjective reflection; mutual collaboration; social critique; discursive deconstruction. Finlay describes these as ranging from singular to collaborative concerns whilst also acknowledging the overlap between them. My own emergent reflexive style appears to touch upon all five of Finlay’s variants: I have learnt introspectively about my own lived experience through engaging in the implementation and analysis of this research; I have explored the mutual meanings that emerge within the research relationship, I have sought to co-operatively co-construct reflexive accounts of the inquiry with participants, I have concerned myself with the social critique of power imbalances between myself and other participants, and I have recognised and reflected upon the limits to my use of language to embody
meaning. However, from an occupational therapy perspective, Phelan states that "Critical reflexivity not only asks one to question current ideology, it also encourages one to enact change." (p.165; Phelan, 2011), echoing the sentiments of participatory inquiry and the action turn as a whole. Similarly, Rofe (2006) articulates a reflexive model of evidence-based practice that is underpinned by cycles of action and evaluation that draw upon experiential practice. This call for action-oriented reflexivity offers a pragmatic balance that goes some way to overcome two major criticisms of reflexivity that Finlay (1999) highlights; rhetorically overstating the utility of reflexivity in a way that may mask innate bias, and the loss of meaning through endless subjective regressive deconstruction. Reflection through practical and co-operative engagement thus becomes a conduit through which reflexively created knowledge, may be grounded and ultimately authenticated, through the value of its practical implications.

So in turn, praxis represents "...a reflexive relationship in which both action and reflection build on one another." (Hills and Mullett, 2000). Hills and Mullett re-describe this process in participatory terms, suggesting that praxis is created when experiential and propositional knowing are considered in relation to practical knowing. The educationalist Schön, whose early work is rooted in Deweyan philosophy, applies the foundations of praxis to professional roles, developing the notion of the reflective practitioner (Schön, 1983). Schön’s concept of the reflective practitioner and his work with Argyris on congruence and learning (Argyris and Schön, 1974; 1978), within which the principles of praxis underpinning their reflection-in-action model are evident, have been applied far beyond the educational sphere, giving further theoretical support to the Lewinian action-reflection cycles within the field of action research (Reason, 1999) and also within the theory base underpinning the therapeutic practice of occupational therapists (Finlay, 2004). To this end, praxis serves as a significant interlocutory concept between participatory action research and occupational therapy.

3.1.8 Power and Knowledge

Axiomatic to the action turn’s rejection of the privileging of linguistic representations of knowing, is an inherent concern with power, and specifically, the control of knowledge (Park, 2006; Pettit, 2012). In turn, occupational therapy’s affiliation with a pragmatic epistemology (shared by participatory research) is bound up with a pursuit of democratic methods of practice that underpins the profession’s long held client-
centred ethos. The reaction against inherent imbalances of power that perpetuate societal inequalities is instrumental in the call for a radical democratisation of social processes such as those present within human inquiry (Gaventa and Cornwall, 2006). When the use of power within dominant discourses is viewed as oppressive, focus is placed upon countering the oppression through raising the awareness, consciousness and knowledge of those affected.

Within such contexts, methodologies such as participatory action research have been applied as tools to generate experientially based knowledge which is used as a resource; informing decision-making, resetting agendas, or recalibrating the social attitudes by which agendas are set. When it is recognised that power shapes discourses, then understanding how discourses are formed and how they in turn influence action, becomes central to changing power relations. This echoes Foucault's notion of "...a new economy of power relations..." (p.779, Foucault, 1982) embedded in society through language and discourse, where power is seen as a driver for social relationships, existing through action and "...immanent in all spheres, rather than being exerted by one individual or group over another" (p.73, Gaventa and Cornwall, 2006). Within this relational context, knowledge is power, and no human relationship is exempt from a power component.

3.2 Parallel Methodological Strands

I have characterised my own research experience as encompassing two parallel strands, diverging from a single epistemological point. The first methodological strand is principally collaborative in nature whilst the second is a primarily singular endeavour. The first represents the collaborative development and attempted implementation of a co-operative inquiry with deaf young people. In the second methodological strand I assume a broadly critical ethnographic (Carspecken, 1996; Vandenberg and Hall, 2011) position, framing the first parallel strand as essentially an intervention. I analyse and critique data generated from the phenomena as any occupational therapy researcher may analyse research data generated from an intervention to better understand it. I shall present the parallel methodologies in chronological order; the collaborative strand first, followed by my singular analytic methodology.
3.3 A Participatory Methodology

From my consideration of which research approaches I feel resonate with the principles described above, I have settled upon that of cooperative inquiry, a form of participatory inquiry underpinned by a participatory worldview. This approach is distinctive in its explicit consideration of a fourth question when defining a research paradigm. In addition to the ontological, epistemological and methodological questions asserted by Guba and Lincoln (1994) as required to define truth, Heron and Reason (1997) argue that a fourth axiological question, pertaining to values of being, asks “...what is intrinsically worthwhile, what is it about the human condition that is valuable as an end in itself?” (p.429, Reason, 1998). Reason (1998) states that this question is answered in terms of human flourishing, as an end in itself — a practical knowing that is privileged above and beyond the quest for propositional truth, epitomised by academic pursuit.

3.3.1 Overview of Cooperative Inquiry

The characterising principles of a co-operative inquiry (Heron, 1996; Heron & Reason 2006) can be seen as just one articulation of action research (Reason, 2003b). Cycles of action and reflection are evidenced within innumerable accounts of inquiries pertaining to action research and participatory inquiry methods. Consequently, this cyclic process is central to the participatory processes described as cooperative or collaborative inquiry. This methodology is borne, in the main, from Heron and Reason’s (Heron, 1981; Heron and Reason, 1981; Reason, 1988b; Heron 1996; Reason, 2003a; Heron and Reason, 2006) commitment to developing a practical application for the principles consummated within their formulation of a participatory paradigm (Heron and Reason, 1997).

Cooperative inquiry is founded upon the principles of equality, transparency and democracy (Tee & Lathlean, 2004), and seeks to ask what sort of knowledge is intrinsically valuable by democratically engaging persons as both co-researchers (whose thinking and decision-making contributes to generating ideas) and co-subjects (participating in the subject which is being researched), leading inquirers to the point of action as opposed to reflectivity about action (Heron, 1996). An inquiry group systematically develops understanding through cycles of action and reflection from which further ideas are generated and tested in subsequent cycles (Reason,
1999). The collaborative cyclic process towards a deepening contextual understanding, by way of regular forums for discussion, "...avoids the premature foreclosure on data..." (Hope and Waterman, 2003) and develops an ability to articulate relationships within emergent knowledge progressing towards a deeper understanding of the collective disturbance and steps towards a desired outcome. This opening of communicative space (Kemmis and McTaggart, 2005) within participatory inquiry as a collaborative method is authentic to the emphasis placed within this methodology research upon the empowerment of disadvantaged groups (Finlay, 2000). Echoing Habermas’s (1987) notion of communicative action, co-operative inquiry embraces a critical acknowledgement of power potentials in an effort to appropriately harness them for positive outcomes.

3.3.1.1 Phases within Inquiry Cycles

Theoretically, each cycle within an inquiry moves through four phases of action and reflection. Simplistically, woven into the four phases are the four distinct epistemic articulations described earlier: experiential knowing, gained through empathic face-to-face encounters; presentational knowing, the subjective expression of experiential knowing through any preferred or experimental media; propositional knowing, drawing upon concepts and ideas to develop meaning; practical knowing, effectuating the other epistemic forms through action in and upon the participants’ world (Reason, 2003a). Figure 3.1 describes the four cognitive modes and stages of a theoretical co-operative inquiry cycle.

Figure 3.1 Four cognitive modes and stages of the inquiry cycle (reproduced from Heron, 1996: p.56)
In phase one, the co-researchers agree upon a focus of inquiry, agree the initial actions to launch the inquiry and the process by which they would like to capture their experiences. This phase utilises propositional knowledge brought by group members and presentational knowledge in the way it is shared. In phase two, co-researchers become co-subjects, utilising practical knowing through engaging in the agreed actions whilst capturing data about the experience in a way that minimises the influence of their propositional knowledge. Phase three sees the participants enmeshed in their experiential knowing, but with an openness hitherto seldom experienced because of the limiting sets of assumptions that previous experiences have been governed by. During this phase, the experiential knowing may well be enhanced by presentational endeavours. Phase four characterises the reflective process where, as a group, the participants return to their original questions and propositional knowledge; reflecting, challenging and rebuilding as is felt necessary. With one cycle complete, the process can be repeated, now based upon the group’s new learning and enhanced propositional knowledge. Through several cycles, confidence is gained individually and as a group with using the processes.

3.3.1.2 Forms of Inquiry

Heron (1996) clearly describes three forms of co-operative inquiry: full form co-operative inquiry; partial form co-operative inquiry; supported action inquiry. The central factor in determining which type is being conducted, is the role of the inquiry initiator and the nature of both the epistemic (grounded experience as co-subjects) and political (empowerment through participation in decisions) participation that the initiator’s inherent situatedness will afford.

Heron’s ‘partial form co-operative inquiry’ best describes the approach of the research method presented in this thesis. As initiator and facilitator, I have a degree of established propositional knowledge regarding young people through my professional role, but minimal current experiential knowledge other than memories of my own adolescence and secondary school. Within the partial form of what Heron also terms as an “externally initiated inquiry” (p. 41, Heron, 1996), the initiating researcher is external to the culture of the participants, but possesses evidence of an interest in the concerns prompting the inquiry. Once the external initiator has completed initiating and educating the participants to become full co-researchers, a more subdued role is adopted, continuing to participate in the reflective cycles, but engaging only partially in the action phases, and only on an advisory, facilitatory basis, as a partial co-subject.
Although Heron's descriptions of initiator role types are insightful, both Heron and Reason acknowledge that the complexities inherent within the inquiry process are unique to each group of participants and this notion is axiomatic to the ontological position that underpins co-operative inquiry. Ultimately, supporting participants' sustained commitment over time to a co-operative inquiry is recognised as a key to success in this method of participatory action research (Baldwin, 2002; Maguire, 2002).

3.3.2 Cooperative Inquiry with Young People

There would appear to be a disparity between the ethical issues regarding the direct involvement of children within qualitative research informed by a risk agenda on the one hand (Clavel, 2004), and political drives for increased participation of young people within research in order to better reflect their voice and needs within decision making (Kirby et al, 2003; DH, 2004; DfES, 2004). The increasing proliferation of youth participation within academic research would suggest that the ethical challenges outlined within this debate are not insurmountable, but that rigorously constructed approaches to methodology hold an integral key to the reduction in risk regarding the possible negative effects upon the young participants, and an increase to the quality of authenticity evident within the process and its subsequent outcomes. Indeed, drawing from research conducted with young D/deaf people, Skelton and Valentine (2003) suggest that a redefinition of what constitutes 'the political' is required if young people's political participation is to be understood. This affirms my own view that a sustained focus upon the needs of the participant is fundamental to the tenets of participatory practice.

3.3.2.1 Controlling the Reins

In a frequently cited paper, Thomas and O'Kane (1998) state the importance of augmenting research involving children with "...an approach that gives children control over the research process and methods which are in tune with children's ways of seeing and relating to their world." (p. 336). The authors outline an ostensibly participatory approach, emphasising choice given to the children regarding their participation and over the research's direction and dissemination. However, the authors fall short of challenging the researcher/subject dichotomy with the same philosophical rigour meted out by Heron and Reason as described above. This said, Thomas and O'Kane take into account the inherent societal power imbalance apparent between adults and youth in a way that Heron (1996) or Reason (1999) do.
not, due to the predominantly adult focus of the latter authors' application of cooperative inquiries.

3.3.2.2 Theory of Mind
From a child developmental perspective, principle theories used in occupational therapy suggest that as children move towards adolescence, they increasingly engage in control and mastery activities, as an essential part of their identity formation (Lougher, 2001) as they develop a cohesive theory of mind (Brice and Adams, 2011). Prior to this stage, children are reportedly more passively accepting of the child-adult relationship and hold less capacity to construct their identity outside this social paternalism; although participation may be achieved, genuine equity of power is less likely (Piaget, 1953; Meadows, 2006). This is not to say that younger children do not hold the capacity to participate meaningfully and ethically in research, merely that for a young person to engage productively in deep reflective activities with peers, the mental and emotional capacity to hold, consider and apply abstractions needs to be more advanced. Interestingly, there are differences between hearing and deaf children highlighted in the literature (Brice and Adams, 2011) suggesting that the acquisition of theory of mind for deaf children born to hearing parents (as is predominantly the case) is more problematic due in part to language delay, poor parental boundary setting, isolation and a lack of appropriate deaf adult role models (Austen, 2010; Courtin & Melot, 1998).

3.3.2.3 Authority and Balance of Power
The subject of authority within the relationship between a young person and an adult in a role that holds any degree of responsibility is the axis point upon which measures of power are balanced (Clavierole, 2004). A degree of authority is already meted out to the adult within this pairing before any consideration of power balances has begun, since it is most commonly accepted as the adult's responsibility to be cognisant of and responsible for addressing such balances of power where necessary. This is amplified through adherence to justified statutory measures such as Criminal Records Bureau checks, professional codes of conduct and the law in general as it relates to the duties of a responsible adult. One philosophical point for consideration is the distinction between being in authority and being an authority. We can acceptably acknowledge one's own acquisition of knowledge and experience which can be beneficial for sharing with co-inquirers, without using this to assume a position of greater authority over them.
Discussing inequalities more broadly, Preston-Shoot (1995; sourced from Hart et al., 2003) describes a model of anti-oppressive practice that presents "...a radical challenge to existing structures of power" (p. 484, Hart et al., 2003) through its focus upon equality of outcome and an emphasis upon 'rights' rather than mere 'needs'. Hart et al continue, "...there is a clear recognition in this model that individuals must be empowered to contribute to changing the very structures that disadvantage them" (p. 484). This description resonates deeply with Heron and Reason's (1997) participatory paradigm and informs my methodological approach to potential power inequalities between the young people and adults in this inquiry.

3.3.2.4 From Macro to Micro facilitation

Having discussed issues related to the use of power at a societal level, it is fair to assume within the facilitation of a co-operative inquiry with young people that these macro issues will exist similarly in the micro context; at the interface between co-inquirers. This is especially pertinent within the dynamics between adults and young people, living in a culture where educational institutions, for example, operate from a position of influential control in determining what is deemed as useful knowledge for their students. In contrast, the role of the inquiry initiator and facilitator, conducting a cooperative inquiry with young people, is to be cognisant of the potential for authority that such a position holds and the attitude with which the young people are relating to that role - the perceived 'professionalism' of a practitioner such as myself, that can unwittingly lead to elitist attitudes and divisive intent (Jenkins, 1998). The therapeutic use of self (Schwartzberg, 1993), underpinning my group facilitation skills and developed through my training and practice, offers support to reflect upon potential power imbalances through reflexive reasoning and construct appropriate and respectful responses to the participants.

3.3.3 Ethics and Governance Considerations in Participatory Methodologies

Mishler (2004) draws "...three primary principles..." from the literature "...that constitute the requirements for acceptable ethical conduct of research involving human subjects" (p. 101) characterised as: a person’s right to choice and the respecting of that choice; beneficence and non-maleficence when conducting the research; and justice through the proportional equity of research benefits to participants. All research must consider the risk of potential harm caused by participation that contraindicates any of these three primary principles of ethical research.
The increasing recognition of the fundamental right of every child and young person to participate in decisions, actions and policy developments that affect them, has had an increasing impact upon local and national statutory and non-statutory policy and legislation, predominantly since its clear articulation within the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; opened in 1989 and signed by the United Kingdom in 1990 (HM Government, 2007). The participation agenda has reshaped public service provision concerning children and young people and has subsequently had a marked effect upon research ethics and governance. Veale (2005) asserts "...children and young people have traditionally been positioned passively in research and have lacked the opportunity to analyse and represent their positions." (p.253). Setting out a case for the inclusion of participatory principles in research involving children and young people, Veale suggests that knowledge is generated rather than extracted; research methods are rooted in the principles of social justice; and the research process should facilitate "...reflection, debate, argument, dissent and consensus, to stimulate the articulation of multiple voices and positions, and, through the process, to lay the foundations for empowerment" (p. 254).

What follows is the presentation and discussion of issues pertinent to a child protection strategy, in step with the principles of good research governance outlined in the second edition of the Department of Health’s Research Governance Framework for Health and Social Care (DH, 2005) which stipulates, "The dignity, rights, safety and well-being of participants must be the primary consideration of any research study...Informed consent is at the heart of ethical research." (p. 7).

3.3.3.1 Safeguarding

The child protection agenda (UK Parliament, 1999), based upon the human rights of all children and young people, serves as a necessary starting point for constructing a sound ethical basis for this research. Despite some assertions within the literature such as Alderson and Goodey (1996), that parity of ethical considerations should be maintained across all age groups, it is broadly recognised that children and young people can be susceptible to certain vulnerabilities, associated historically with their formative position within western culture; an issue that arguably, most adults face to a lesser degree. There are additional vulnerabilities linked with risk indicators associated with the communication challenges faced by deaf and hearing impaired young people that amplify the need for a comprehensive research governance plan that incorporates a child protection strategy relevant to the process. In the spirit of participation, such a plan must be re-visited, revised and approved by the young co-
researchers in the preliminary stages of the inquiry and subsequently on an ongoing basis throughout the inquiry.

In line with child protection procedures, any adults that may come into contact with the participants in a one to one capacity through the course of the project, such as co-facilitators or arts facilitators contracted in to run sessions, are obliged to provide an Enhanced Criminal Record Certificate (UK Parliament, 1997) awarded by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

3.3.3.2 Informed Consent
Informed consent forms the corner stone for all subsequent issues discussed in this section of ethics and governance. For all potential participants under the age of 18, it is deemed good practice for consent to be gained from a parent or guardian as well as from the young participant (Kirby, 2004). The key issue behind this is that the consent is informed. This places a responsibility upon the facilitator in two key ways, firstly that a reliable judgement has been made as to whether all parties from whom consent is being sought have the mental and emotional capacity to give informed consent in the first place. Secondly, that information is communicated and verified in a way that ensures its meaning and implications are explicit and clearly understood by all relevant parties. The aims, objectives, outcomes, possible participant benefits and dissemination strategies, should all be conveyed and discussed openly with young people and significant adults. This gives an opportunity for a considered response from the participants, both to increase their understanding and to determine their competence to participate in the decision making processes of the inquiry.

Tee and Lathlean (2004) make the point that, through the course of a co-operative inquiry, although initial consent from the participants may be gained, as the inquiry follows co-constructed agendas into new areas, a form of ‘process consent’ is required through “…the continual information-giving and permission-seeking that maintains trust between researcher and participant and ultimately reduces the likelihood of…abuse” (p. 539). This also highlights the need for the co-researcher participants to undergo satisfactory education themselves regarding the gaining of informed consent from others, should there be a likelihood or even an intent for statements or actions of people outside the inquiry to be captured by the co-researchers for the purposes of the inquiry.
The inquiry initiator must also continually ensure that the participants are fully aware of their right and freedom to refuse to participate in the inquiry from the outset and at any time thereafter. The initiator must make continual provision for this right to be upheld throughout the inquiry process and dissemination strategies. This is essential to counter any sense of obligation, borne out of perceived group or peer pressures that are at risk of developing as the inquiry progresses. The initiator must use their own clinical and therapeutic judgement at all times in being attentive to the, often covert, needs of the participants; bearing in mind the limited range of coping strategies a young person may have developed, and their varying levels of adeptness at drawing upon them in difficult situations. Regarding the deaf young person, there is negligible international literature available exploring or identifying their coping mechanisms used in their everyday life (Jambor & Elliott, 2005), although research regarding deaf young people and resilience is increasing (Young et al, 2008; Zand and Pierce, 2011).

3.3.3.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

The parameters of confidentiality within the inquiry form a significant part of the process towards informed consent from participants. A clear discussion around how the data and information gathered will be used by the group, and for what purpose, must form a key part of developing the participants’ competencies as co-researchers. Their primary role in the ultimate decisions regarding the use of data remains paramount. Regarding the storage of audio, visual, electronic or hardcopy data, guidelines set out in the Data Protection Act (UK Parliament, 1998) stipulate that all such data will be secured in a locked environment when not being used for the purposes of the inquiry and destroyed thereafter. This includes the storage of audiotapes and videotapes, hard disc formats such as ‘flash-drives’ containing digital audio or visual data, notes and transcripts. The responsibility for securely storing and appropriately using the gathered data extends to all co-researchers.

Crucially, situations when confidentiality will not be maintained, for instance, following a disclosure by any participant that highlights harmful or illegal activities, whether by or towards themselves, needs to be considered within the consent process, paying particular attention to signs, or the disclosure of any forms of physical or sexual abuse.

3.3.3.4 Use of Incentives to Participate

Regarding the beneficence of the inquiry, the potentially salutogenic benefits for the young participants have been described above. Additionally, the appropriate use of
non-monetary rewards for engagement in research are deemed to be ethically sound, providing they are not overtly advertised or used as bargaining tools by facilitators (Anderson and Morrow, 2004).

3.3.3.5 Academic Ethics and Governance
Finally, from an academic perspective, the ethics protocols established through most higher education institutions including my awarding body, the University of Brighton, have in place an ethics process whereby my research proposal has been scrutinised by the Faculty Research Ethics and Governance Committee (FREGC). Successfully graduating through these steps signals that the awarding university faculty are satisfied, in their professional capacity, that the proposal meets the ethical requirements needed to ensure the safety of all parties involved, as far as is practicably possible.

3.4 Data Collection & Analysis

In this section I attend to the second methodological strand (the principle methodology underpinning the findings of this thesis) and its intersection with the participatory paradigm, describing in further detail my principle methodological approach to data collection and analysis.

3.4.1 Approaching the Data

The primary intent of the participatory action research conducted as part of this research journey has been to create a process that enables democratic decision making and leads to human flourishing (Heron, 1996; Reason, 1998). However, cited by de Toit et al (2010), Kielhofner (2007) warns that there still exists "...a wide divide between our theories and our practice..." (pp. 481-482) and he encourages the development of occupational therapy knowledge in the context of practice and in partnership with practitioners and consumers. In accord with this appeal, my primary intention has carried with it an equal desire to make sense of the process in order that effective methods may be assimilated into the lives of participants, including myself as a practitioner, and therefore into future practice. Subsequently, the academic journey towards a thesis focuses upon findings emerging from my own sense making process, based upon an analysis of data that I have captured over the
course of the cooperative inquiry within my own research journal; my personal reflexive research log written between September 2009 and July 2010.

This analysis has sought to explore the relationship between the complex ideological theories that constitute what is known as occupational therapy and the ideological tenets of research approaches stemming from the participatory paradigm. Specifically, both ideologies have been woven together within the context of a cooperative inquiry with myself as the principle facilitator and two groups of deaf young people as co-inquirers and co-participants. My significant role in the outworking of this relationship and my reluctance to interpret the experiences of my co-participants, has led to an analytical innovation: the use of immersion/crystallization (Borkan, 1999) as the methodological approach to both generation and analysis of the data, infused with a postcritical ethnographic epistemology (Hyttten, 2004) that gives a critical framework to my analysis of my own written text. Such a combination is characteristic of what Reason and Torbert (2001) describe as first-person research/practice, in contrast to the co-operative inquiry which can be seen as second-person research/practice.

3.4.2 First, Second and Third Person Perspectives

It seems to be an ironic quality of transformational research and practice that, through the process, tools are discovered that may have served one well from the outset, had they been found sooner. So it is with what Reason and Torbert (2001) describe as ‘first-, second- and third-person dimensions of inquiry’. When revisiting the wider literature during my analysis, I found Reason and Torbert’s quotation of Marshall and Reason (1987) most compelling: “All good research is for me, for us, and for them: it speaks to three audiences...” (p. 112).

In this context, the first-person researcher is described as fostering “an inquiring approach to his or her own life, to act awerely and choicefully, and to assess effects in the outside world while acting.” (p.11, Reason and Torbert, 2001). It is likened to what Reason (1994) has termed critical subjectivity, involving self-reflexive attention. Second-person research describes interpersonal contexts, such as a cooperative inquiry, that inform our first-person positions. Third-person research speaks of a wider community of inquiry, and an intent to awaken within this wider community, the qualities of first- and second-person research and practice.
These descriptors have resonated with what I felt was a potential organising pattern emerging from my text, corroborated by my experiential knowledge of developing the project with community partners. The research was for and about me, in terms of exploring my initial disturbance regarding the relationship between occupational therapy practice and the participatory paradigm, brought together in and through my facilitative agency; it was for and about us in terms of conducting a cooperative inquiry with co-participants through which it was hoped that human flourishing would occur; and it was for and about them in terms of engaging, and sharing presentational and propositional knowledge with the local community stakeholders and with an academic audience that may initiate further collaborative inquiry.

3.4.3 Creating a Reflexive Log

During the cooperative inquiry, my reflexive log has served to capture my first-person critical moment-to-moment reflections of the process and subsequent reconsiderations of these reflections in light of new occurrences and developing ideas. The reflexive log can be seen as both interpretive and descriptive of the phenomenon, from my own perspective of events through a representational description that also reveals my own evolving preconceptions. Therefore the parallel cycles of interpretation and description constitute a part of the analysis process, 'growing into' a deeper understanding of the phenomena and understanding my relationship to it. This is not a distinct phase commencing once all data collection has finished. Thus, given the relationship between interpretation and description, the act of writing the reflexive log is seen as a method of inquiry in and of itself (Richardson and St. Pierre, 2005). Richardson and St. Pierre (2005) assert that from this perspective, "the product cannot be separated from the producer, the mode of production or the method of knowing" (p. 960). Similarly, Jasper (2005) states that "any presentation is a construction of [that] reality according to the writer" (p. 249), and he suggests that reflective writing within the research process "makes visible the vision and stance of the researcher, which might otherwise be hidden." (p. 249). Indeed, from such a view of the writing/inquiry process, the production of this thesis might be perceived as merely an organized extension of my reflexive log. Appendix 1 presents an extended excerpt of my reflexive log with annotations added through analytic passes of the data.
3.4.4 Immersion/Crystallization

A key to achieving credibility within the qualitative research process is effectively organising what can be prolific data, in a way that gives room for truthful analysis (Dibley, 2011). When faced with such a large data set that captures to a greater or lesser degree a complex social phenomena spanning approximately ten months (with the experiential knowledge of an additional eighteen month developmental phase serving as a significant backdrop), I have found it crucial to harness organising tools with which to conceptually arrange the data in such a way that sense making can begin to emerge. Figure 3.2 captures pictorially, a comment from my reflexive research log with which I began an account of the first session: “It’s a daunting task trying to capture all the thoughts and ideas that are emerging but let’s have a go. Catching the rain with a bucket springs to mind.”

![Diagram](image)

*Figure 3.2 Catching the rain with a bucket: An ecological metaphor for data collection*

An organising style within the qualitative interpretive process that Borken (1999) terms as immersion/crystallization (I/C), after Miller and Crabtree (1994; 2005) has felt the most appropriate way of allowing an awareness of patterns and connections
within the representational content to develop. I/C is one of three idealised organising styles (which also include styles termed ‘ediling’ and ‘template’) that frame ‘the many traditions and techniques of analysis as a “dance of interpretation” [and] promote the dynamic, creative, iterative, yet disciplined craft of qualitative interpretation.’ (p. 623, Miller & Crabtree, 2005).

This heuristic style of inquiry builds upon the work of Douglass and Moustakas (1985) who state, “Heuristics is concerned with meanings, not measurements; with essence, not appearance; with quality, not quantity; with experience, not behaviour” (p.40). With its execution described as more akin to artistic expression, I/C is less schematic than other formal analysis methods. Rather, the process is characterised by intuition, cognitive and emotional engagement, and ‘...an openness to uncertainty, reflection, and experience.’ (p.181, Borken, 1999), using one’s being as both recorder and filter of our inter-subjective experience with the field in a manner that is more iterative and recursive than linear in order ‘...to progress beyond obvious messages and interpretations’ (p.181).

This process of initial engagement is described, after Moustakas (1990) as “...a process of self-dialogue and discovery of an intense and passionate concern...” (p.183, Borken, 1999). With the additional layer of personal lived experience of the phenomena I have gained through my own sense memory as a participant, and as the principle author and editor of the text itself, I have found a depth of additional insight into the meaning inscribed into the text from which my analysis has drawn.

The processes of I/C described above, fit comfortably within a framework of action and critical reflection cycles through which I sought to understand my facilitative position and its wider context throughout the co-operative inquiry and subsequent continued analysis.

3.4.5 Participatory Inquiry and Postcritical Ethnography

The language of political agency and transformative intent located within the discourses describing critical ethnography, is also found within descriptions of the participatory paradigm (Heron & Reason, 1997), both stemming from transactional and subjectivist epistemologies (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). It is asserted that critical ethnography seeks to make explicit the wider socio-political structures in which local contexts are situated, by developing a critical consciousness that challenges the
formulation of dominant hegemonies in order to expose social oppression and repression (Foley & Valenzuela, 2005). This process resonates with the intentions of much applied participatory action research (PAR) which emerges within community-based micro-contexts and seeks to promote those involved in undertaking a wider macro-analysis of socio-political discourses that affect them at a localised level, with a planned intent to bring about change. However, the use of critical theory within PAR appears even more closely aligned with what Hytten (2004) terms as postcritical ethnography.

Where critical ethnographers risk merely replacing one hegemonic discourse with another - their own view of what is right, Hytten describes postcritical ethnography as adding a critically reflexive element that considers one's own position and disposition in relation to members of the research within their localised contexts. This additional layer of critical thinking about the research process and outcomes gives equal weight to both theory development and material transformation in a way that Hytten feels critical ethnography lacks (Hytten, 2004).

Participatory inquiry methodologies such as cooperative inquiry's emphasis upon the research agents inhabiting both the co-researcher and co-subject position metaphorically call for the 'critical ethnographers' to rise from within their own communities. By doing so, the label of critical ethnographer is no longer required because they are located within, not without. However, it is for this reason that I feel it useful to adopt the term postcritical ethnographer to describe my own positioning. In recognising my separateness from the communities with whom I have engaged in a cooperative inquiry of sorts (as described above) and my singular journey towards a thesis, the position of postcritical ethnographer goes some way to describe my intent to practically engage in both the co-construction and collaborative implementation of an inquiry on the one hand, and critically reflect upon the phenomena at a macro-level from the other. As with both participatory inquiry and postcritical ethnography, my intent remains to assimilate knowledge, generated through the inquiry and subsequent critique, for transformative purposes in both the local and wider Deaf community, and the professional practice arena of occupational therapy.

Figure 3.3 below, demonstrates in illustrative form my position within the inquiry as an equal participant, with as equal potential as any other member to act as a conduit for my interpretation of the phenomena experienced. The figure illustrates my acknowledgement that however collaborative the inquiry has been, any knowledge
each participant gains from the experience, of which I am one, is ultimately their own account.

Figure 3.3 Relationship between collaborative phenomena and singular interpretation

3.5 Salutogenesis: the spirit of the inquiry

Through the inquiry process, it has become increasingly apparent that the principles underpinning Antonovsky's salutogenic model and its operational 'sense of coherence' framework (1987) described in chapter 2, lie at the intersection of the three domains this inquiry inhabits:

2. Participative inquiry and participatory action research – my collaborative research methodology.
3. Person-centred health promotion – the domain within which the research feels most appropriately positioned.

The commonality of salutogenic characteristics within these domains forms a shared axiological basis upon which value driven decisions pivoted throughout my research journey. Figure 3.4 below visualises the depth and nature of their interrelatedness and describes commonalities realised within the peripheral binary relationships between the domains.

![Diagram showing the relationship between different domains]

**Figure 3.4 Positioning of Salutogenesis within Domains**

Viewing the project from a salutogenic perspective has helped to crystallise several epistemological claims upon which the project's methodological framework has developed:

1. Any therapeutic relationship can be perceived as a collaborative process of human inquiry.
2. Within the inquiry process, the promotion of human well-being and flourishing are intrinsically worthwhile and can be valued as legitimate ends in themselves, rather than mere by-products.

3. An inquiry based on a salutogenic approach, starting from an exploration of cultural and social connectedness and personhood (as opposed to focusing upon medical diagnostic criteria or socially constructed labels), holds greater potential than medical or positivist models for realising human flourishing.

3.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have given my philosophical basis for the qualitative approach I have chosen; described and given justification for my participatory methodology of choice - cooperative inquiry; and outlined my methodological design and approach to data collection and analysis from a postcritical ethnographic position which frames the cooperative inquiry undertaken, as an intervention that warrants analysis. In the next chapter I progress my thesis to an explication of the applied method undertaken in the course of this inquiry.
4. Multi-Dimensional Method

The previous chapter set out the ontological and epistemological basis that has underpinned my approach to this piece of research, discussing the various positions considered and ultimately utilised within a social constructivist paradigm. It described the use of participatory and action research principles to construct and facilitate collaborative inquiry and a postcritical ethnographic position, in keeping with critical theory underpinning participatory research approaches.

Here, I present the methods undertaken to conduct the inquiry through a description of both the sequence of unfolding events and the embedded decision trail that steered the inquiry process throughout the project’s journey. Methods that shaped the project’s events emerged through the decisions and actions of both myself as a facilitator, and by the co-inquirers and project partners whose involvement and influence is integral to the fabric of this research’s narrative.

The first section of this chapter critically describes the ethical planning, development and implementation of two collaborative inquiries, each facilitated principally by myself and both consisting of a small cohort of young people as co-inquirers, living with varying degrees of hearing loss. One group beginning in September 2009 and running for 19 sessions approximately every fortnight over a school year; the second project instigated the following February 2010 and running weekly for 10 sessions, finishing in June. The section concludes with a presentation of two project films developed as part of the inquiries. The second section of the chapter focuses upon the data generation, collection and analysis methods used.

4.1 Dual Layered Description

The multi-dimensional conceptualisation of two methodological strands, described in the previous chapter, has influenced my approach to describing the method. Therefore, I present the method as two similarly overlapping layers. A basic visualisation of this concept is shown below in Table 4.1. Both these layers of the method embody several segments.
The first layer represents the development and implementation of a project through which the project partners and participants (including myself) concretely engaged with each other through a spirit of inquiry, negotiation and exploration. The development of this co-operative inquiry, involved seeking out the support of a number of community partners, and in turn, the commitment of participants and, in some cases, their families. The initial segment within this first layer encompasses both access to, and the recruitment of, the participants. The sequential segment is characterised by the ongoing development and steering of the project through the actual project sessions themselves towards the sessions' conclusion.

The second layer of the research method represents my conceptual journey towards a thesis: my progression through Thesis Outline Approval (TOA) and subsequent approval from the Faculty Research and Ethical Governance Committee (FREGC); the analytical, sense making tools that were applied throughout the project development; to the data generation and collection processes during the project itself; and in the final segment to illuminate the decision trail and develop a thesis regarding the nature and implications of the journey and the value of its findings.

This chapter deals with each layer in turn. The collaborative layer is presented as four phases: pre-initiation project development; initiating the 'See Yourself' project; towards the project film; snowballing – a second project site. The second layer is presented in terms of the method that underpins the data collection and ongoing critically-reflexive analysis. However, ethical considerations are outlined in my description of the collaborative layer so as to underscore how my ethical approach to the research shaped the processes of collaborative engagement.

4.2 Layer 1: The Collaborative Layer

This storying of the research journey from inception to shortly after the final project sessions, is based upon the events documented within a data set comprising a log of
email correspondence with a variety of project partners dating back to early 2008, and subsequently, my reflexive research log between September 2009 and July 2010. The log of email correspondence has been compiled from archived messages within a personal email account and one set up specifically for the purposes of the project. These documented emails, cut and pasted into the reflexive log contemporaneously, capture the development of significant relationships and knowledge exchanges that have been instrumental in shaping the participatory phase of the research and its decision-making trail. To reiterate, in occupational terms, the participatory phase described here represents the inception and development of an intervention that this thesis subsequently draws findings and conclusions from through a process of critical analysis.

4.2.1 Phase 1: Pre-initiation Project Development

4.2.1.1 Initial Community Contact & Project Funding

My first research proposal, submitted in June 2008 as assignment 3 towards the end of stage one of the professional doctorate programme, outlined and described the research project I planned to facilitate. This assignment gave an initial theoretical shape to the project and served as a springboard from which to begin discussing and developing the project plans with potential project partners in greater detail. Soon after submission of assignment 3, I began exploratory discussions with the West Sussex County Council Sensory Support Team (SST) regarding the recruitment of young people in that locality. The SST recognised the need for increased mental and emotional support for young people with hearing loss, but suggested it may be problematic recruiting participants for the project from such a large geographical area as West Sussex.

After a further two months, a doctoral programme workshop facilitator suggested I make contact with the convener of ‘Our Space’, a community of practice (Wenger, 2002) being established locally to explore the Deaf community’s access to health services. The Our Space project was initially set up by members of the Deaf community and several academic and third sector partners as a community of practice, following a successful bid for the ‘Disability’ strand of the South East Coastal Communities (SECC) project, developed in order to build the capacity of local communities to meet their health and well-being needs through collaboration with universities. The community of practice was supported locally by the Community and University Partnership Programme (CUPP), and funded for two years by the
Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). ‘Our Space’ was facilitated by the convener of Deaf Studies at the University of Sussex. My proposed involvement was tabled and unanimously agreed by the Our Space steering group at its inaugural project meeting on 7th July 2008. At the same meeting I was invited to submit a proposal to Brighton Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange (BSCKE) to bid for monies from an as yet unallocated separate funding stream available through a third tranche of funding allocated to BSCKE from the original HEFCE budget. BSCKE was an initiative established to support and fund mutually beneficial partnerships between communities and universities in Brighton and Hove and coastal Sussex, addressing diversity and engaging with socially excluded groups. My proposal was felt to be a valuable contribution to this work.

In partnership with the convener of Deaf Studies, a detailed funding proposal was submitted (see Appendix 2) outlining an estimated budget total of £10,030. We subsequently received notification of having been successful in winning the bid (see Appendices 3 and 4).

The main benefits of my inquiry’s affiliation with the ‘Our Space’ project, besides access to funding, were continued support and advice from members of the local Deaf community, a line of accountability regarding the project’s progress and an initial framework for future dissemination. A recognised risk factor however, was the influence the ‘Our Space’ committee may have in applying pressure to assimilate the project into its own potential aims and political agenda.

4.2.1.2 Community Partners
Progress throughout the next twelve months was made in forging stronger links with key community partners that were helping shape the project and forming the basis for a specific advisory panel. Ongoing engagement with members of the ‘Our Space’ project had encouraged me to explore using Brighton & Hove City as the geographical base for recruitment rather than West Sussex. I made contact with Bob Kingsley, a Teacher for the Deaf within the Brighton & Hove Children and Young People’s Trust Sensory Needs Service, a service comprising two sub-teams one for visual and the other hearing impairment, supporting young people attending Local Education Authority (LEA) schools. Two non LEA specialist schools for children and young people with hearing impairment within this locality, are not supported by the service. The service’s remit fitted well with my initial research proposal, which focused upon mainstream education.
4.2.1.3 Developing Access to Participants
Within my own developing conceptualization of the project, the focus upon identity or personhood was becoming a useful presentational point that encapsulated my wish to engage young people within a meaningful process of inquiry that was not primarily deficit centered but rather, based upon their own interpretations and sense-making. From preliminary discussions, Bob appeared enthusiastic about the research project's intention to explore collaboratively with the young people and agreed to act as the main link with the Sensory Needs Service. He felt the service could readily support the recruiting of their service-users. Collaboratively redrafted versions of my introductory letter and information sheet were approved at Bob's team meeting in early January 2009 and the team agreed to support recruitment once ethical approval had been gained from the Faculty Research and Ethics Governance Committee (FREGC). I had gained Thesis Outline Approval (TOA) in December 2008 (see Appendix 5) and was developing a detailed proposal to submit to the FREGC. The TOA panel wryly agreed that their approval could be seen as an 'act of faith' based upon the open ended nature of the inquiry method and the number of variables that the successful progression of the inquiry depended upon. This felt an accurate description on my own experience of developing such a research inquiry that balanced the interests of statutory, academic and third sector community partners.

4.2.1.4 Strengthening Community Partnerships
In this phase of the project, I also recruited an advisory panel, contacting six adults whom I knew and trusted from the deaf community. The six individuals I invited agreed to engage with project updates as and when required. One member of the advisory panel also agreed to be the panel's main point of contact regarding any issues that participants or parents may have about the project that they felt could not be discussed with myself directly. This individual was given her own project mobile phone and personal project email address for contact.

4.2.1.5 FREGC Proposal Submission
In line with the Professional Doctorate programme protocol, the research proposed was submitted to the University of Brighton Faculty Research Ethics and Governance Committee (FREGC) for scrutiny and was approved by FREGC after a second submission following a request for amendments (see Appendices 6 and 7). Approval was subsequently sought from the Brighton & Hove council research governance department and granted in July 2009, with no further amendments requested (see Appendices 8 and 9). Both the development work with project partners and the ethics
and governance approval processes refined the original proposal set out in assignment 3 in a number of ways. The project was now clearer regarding: its timescale; recruitment information being handled solely by the Sensory Needs Service; the giving of £5 high street vouchers to each young person for each session attended; the use of audio recorded focus groups at specific times, with consent, for research analysis; the use of video recording only as a tool within the sessions at the young people’s request for specific activities. Further detail, regarding my approved ethical considerations, are described below.

4.2.2 Detailed Ethics Considerations

4.2.2.1 Potential Risks and Benefits of Participation

Transparency regarding the potential risks and benefits of the project is crucial from the recruitment process through to the end of participant involvement. Through the FREGC approval process the following nine ethical issues regarding the potential risks for the participants were given critical consideration and responded to with risk management solutions. The nine points of potential risk of harm to participants were also highlighted on the information sheet given to participants and their parents (see appendix 10).

1. Leaving the project before it finishes due to other commitment pressures, unexpected events or lack of interest/relevance. This could lead to feelings of disappointment, disillusionment or failure.

The project addressed this by making sure participants were fully informed when initially deciding to commit to the project. The project used age appropriate methods and creative media to engage participants throughout the project. There were opportunities for feedback at each session or via telephone, text and email to the facilitator or an advisory group member. Ultimately the project supported participants in their decisions.

2. Becoming emotionally affected by discussing or revealing potentially personal, sensitive and emotive issues.

The project facilitator made clear in the induction and throughout the project that group members were in no way obliged to discuss or disclose information if they felt uncomfortable doing so. Confidentiality, respect and peer-support within the
group were also continually emphasized. Both the lead facilitator and the named contact project within the project advisory panel was available directly or via telephone/text and email to discuss any sensitive issues arising.

3. Other commitments becoming pressured due to involvement in the project.

The progress of the project was regularly reviewed within the group. It was emphasised that any group member may withdraw from the project at any time without giving a reason.

4. The uncertainty of the project’s progression and outcomes.

The facilitator worked hard to ensure that all group members were involved in the project’s development as equally as possible so that there was shared control of the project’s direction among the young people.

5. The misappropriation of data generation methods during the course of the inquiry leading to the breaking of confidentiality and data protection agreements by co-researcher/participants.

Discussions with participants placing emphasis upon the importance of group values and rules were built into the induction phase. Discussions included the following topics: confidentiality, data protection and fully informed consent when incorporating others in their community into their own data generation methods. Data generation methods were continually monitored and data involving others, where consent could not be evidenced was not used by the project group.

6. Traveling to sessions may prove difficult for participants or their families.

This was countered by the offer of travel expense re-imbursement and the provision of a venue (for the first group) situated in central Brighton and easily accessible by private and public transport.

7. Communication support is not meeting the needs of a group member.

The questionnaire given to those interested in the project effectively captured the needs of individuals. The project also ensured that the venue could provide all
potentially necessary equipment. Communication needs were monitored and reviewed with the groups.

8. Not wanting to be audio-visually recorded in the group.

Parts of the group sessions were videoed for the purposes of team-building exercises and documentation of the project's journey to aid reflection by the group. However, this could have been temporarily stopped if a young person became distressed or did not want what they were about to say or do to be recorded. Video footage of the project sessions was not used outside of the cooperative inquiry process or in the final project films.

9. Participants' or parents' potentially negative experience of the project may adversely affect their engagement with the Sensory Needs Service by association.

The role of the Sensory Needs Service within the project was minimized to the facilitation of accessing the young people and some session co-facilitation. Responsibilities for gate-keeping were also minimised by the agreeing of predetermined inclusion/exclusion criteria which the Sensory Needs Service adhered to.

The potential benefits for the participants and the Sensory Needs Service were also considered and listed as follows:

Potential benefits for the participants:

- The development of creative skills based upon their own interests through the activity sessions.
- The development of reasoning and reflective skills through challenging assumptions in group discussions.
- Opportunities to experience and negotiate positive collaboration with other participants.
- Increasing awareness of personal issues and the issues of others through discussion and reflection.
- Building more effective social interaction skills and coping strategies over time.
• The forming and sustaining of new relationships and friendships.
• A sense of empowerment regarding issues explored regarding coping with a degree of deafness.
• An increase in positive self-image and well-being.

Potential benefits for the Sensory Needs Service and other services/organizations:

• Addressing the mental health needs of deaf young people in mainstream school.
• Informing practice and influencing service provision through the research findings.
• Creating teaching and learning materials regarding the positive inclusion of deaf young people.
• Better outcomes for deaf young people in Brighton & Hove.
• Reducing the impact of problems that may continue into adulthood and require further services.

4.2.2.2 The Complaints Procedure

Issues regarding the management aspects of the cooperative inquiry were dealt with directly by myself as the lead facilitator. However a distinct and separate pathway was set up for formal complaints regarding the research process and the conduct of those involved. Both the participants and their parents/guardians were provided with contact information sheets including details of a clear complaint pathway open to them (see appendix 11). Graham Stew, a senior university staff member separate from the project, agreed to deal with complaints. No complaints were received by Graham Stew over the course of the project. For issues of a less sensitive nature, but where support might have been required outside of the cooperative inquiry process, the named contact for the advisory panel was accessible on a specific project mobile phone number.

4.2.2.3 Responsible Project and Data Management

Ethical management of the project as a whole, and the data that are generated through it, is challenging when data is generated within constructed contexts such as project sessions characterised by a complex milieu of social interaction. Statutory guidance was adhered to in terms of working with vulnerable children such as: evidencing Criminal Records Bureau clearance for all adults potentially engaging the young people on a one to one basis; involving and remaining accountable to gate-
keepers such as professionals and parents/carers; minimal lone-working; addressing issues of informed consent and a heightened acuity to tacit coercion (Leadbeater et al, 2006); Above and beyond this, localised and contextual ethical decisions were ongoing throughout the facilitatory process. These decisions employed therapeutic reasoning skills in determining whether participants were becoming adversely affected through discussions, peer-interactions, activities and such like. Where distress occurred, situations were explored sensitively and gatekeepers informed and involved wherever necessary. For example, when a seemingly long-standing issue involving two participants at Ovingdean Hall School surfaced towards the end of one of our sessions leading to a heated exchange between them, conversations were swiftly held with members of the school pastoral team in order to reflexively consider the project’s impact and an action plan for possible future episodes was agreed and successfully implemented.

Regarding data protection issues, electronic sources of data such as my reflexive log, digitally recorded audio files and digital images captured through the project were held on a password protected, project specific laptop, stored in my office at home. The digital video tapes holding footage shot by the young people were also stored in my office. Tangible artefacts that represented additional data sources including flipchart sheets, post-it notes, my own black sketch book, and other such materials were stored in my office between sessions.

Where the media being used held the potential to indiscriminately capture the identifiable words, presence or actions of others e.g. photos, video and audio recordings, consent from all persons involved was gained verbally before the data was shared with the group in compliance with the Data Protection Act (UK Parliament, 1998). For audio-video data generation, verbal acknowledgement of an informed understanding regarding the purpose of audio-visual recording and verbal consent from all those involved was sought within the sessions. Where members of the cohort potentially felt that certain data was confidential and required protecting, then suggestions would have been sought from the participant deemed most affected; however, this did not occur.

4.2.2.4 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Within transformative research processes such as cooperative inquiry and other action research methods, a debate persists regarding the management and even validity of confidentiality and anonymity (Baez, 2002; Tilley, 2011). Within such
participatory research, confidentiality becomes the responsibility of all those involved. Checks and balances can and were put in place to educate, monitor and review the confidentiality process. However, every participant holds the power and potential to break confidentiality agreements. In some cases, for example if disclosures were made regarding harm or abuse to self or others, breaking confidentiality would be appropriate. As the lead facilitator, I endeavoured to make our confidentiality processes transparent to all involved from the outset, to openly negotiate the boundaries of confidentiality during the earlier sessions and to review with the participants our decisions at regular intervals.

The issue of anonymity is also complex when considering that participants actively wanted their names associated with the creative work they had been involved in producing. Issues of anonymity were negotiated through dialogue with the participants involved and their guardians regarding the consequences of either concealing or revealing their names within a public forum. But in fact, the young people decided to reject their anonymity in this inquiry and their agency became quite apparent in their informed choice, sanctioned by parents, to have their names and physical identities revealed and broadly disseminated within the films they have produced. Arguably, the messages carried within each of the films are not only synonymous with the identity of the young people who present them, but galvanised by the capacity the young people are afforded to emotionally connect with their audience. There are examples of participatory projects with young people where both identity and voice are celebrated in this way (Chowns et al, 2006); examples which call into question the utility of blanket anonymity and secrecy for politically oriented transformatory research.

So, in the spirit of the inquiry, pseudonyms for the participants involved in the project films have not been used in this thesis. It was felt that where a reader’s deductions may link an identity from the film to one disclosed within the text, the use of pseudonyms would be confusing. The names of one girl and one boy from the second project group, who did not ultimately feature in their film, have been replaced with pseudonyms. In all other cases, first names are disclosed respectfully within the text and only when it is felt to be relevant to the context and omitted where there is perceived to be risk of detriment to those concerned. In addition, contact has been made to successfully gain ongoing consent from project partners who have been referred to by name in this thesis (see Appendix 12).
4.2.3 Accessing the Young People

4.2.3.1 Commencing Recruitment
Having received the all necessary approvals, the Sensory Needs Service formally agreed to partnering in the project (see Appendix 13) and sent out recruitment packs including a covering letter from themselves, a project introductory letter, an invitation to an open evening and a questionnaire regarding times and venues (see Appendix 14). Out of a possible 45 young people both known to the service and fitting the demographic criteria, I was informed that packs had been sent to 29. In line with agreed ethical guidelines, no identities of the young people were disclosed to me at any time during the recruitment process. Recruitment decisions were ultimately made by members of the service, based upon who they felt would be appropriate for the project. Due to the breadth of the agreed inclusion criteria, I suspected that recruitment judgments were being made by the team internally based upon who they felt would be able to work most cooperatively within a group setting. Subsequently, I discussed this with Bob who acknowledged that this may have been the case. I was later led to believe by the service administrator that invitations were latterly sent to all 45 service users in a second tranche.

4.2.3.2 Introductory Project Open Evening
Three young people (2 male and 1 female aged 14, 13 and 12 respectively) attended the open evening at a community based venue I had hired. I gave out a further information fact sheet (see Appendix 10) to the young people and parents and described the project using a visual PowerPoint presentation, with interjections from Bob, and followed by a time for questions. Using a flipchart, lists were made of the young people's interests or activities they may want to explore in the project. All three signed up as project members and collaboratively agreed for the project to meet on a Saturday afternoon for three hours between 2pm and 5pm on a fortnightly basis between September 2009 and May 2010. I booked the room we used for the open evening for 3 hours every other Saturday over an initial 8 week period between 12th September and 12th December. The young people subsequently received a project update over the summer (see Appendix 15).
I was disappointed by the low turn out at the open evening. The sensory team staff
intimated that historically, commitment and attendance by young people to service
led events and projects was proportionately low. Bob also made me aware that the
agreed session timings had meant that at least one young person who wanted to
attend, could not due to another regular commitment.

4.2.4 The Next Three Phases

The 10 month period over which project sessions ran, are divided conceptually into 3
further phases. Having discussed ‘Phase 1: pre-initiation development’, the next
phase, ‘Phase 2: Initiating the See Yourself Project’, coincides with the first term of
the academic year leading to a natural break over the Christmas holiday period.
Following this, ‘Phase 3: Towards the project film’, and ‘Phase 4: Snowballing – a
second project site’, ran more or less in tandem but will be described sequentially. A
timeline of these phases are expressed below in Table 4.2. Additionally, appendices
16, 17 and 18 present summary tables of phases two, three and four respectively
with summary of attendance, session content and evaluation comments.

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Table 4.2 Timeline for project phases 2-4
4.2.5 Phase 2: Initiating ‘See Yourself: A collaborative youth project’

Another two young people (one male and one female), both in school year 10 and recruited by the sensory needs team joined our first session on 12 September 2009. The group now consisted of three boys and two girls ranging from 13 to 15 years of age. All bar one, attended mainstream schools in the local area. However, the group included one girl attending a local special school. It had not occurred to me that the service also supported those within a special school setting and I wondered how issues regarding differing levels of mental and emotional capacity would be managed within the project sessions. I found this to be a helpful check and balance against my own potentially prejudiced assumptions as I considered who within the group of young people, I would expect to have more limited capacities than others. Table 4.3 below shows young participants’ attendance for the first eight sessions.

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Table 4.3 First project group participants’ attendance through sessions 1-8

4.2.5.1 Communication Preferences

The young people all used English as their first language and minimal adjustment in communication was required to accommodate levels of hearing loss, supported through the use of hearing aids by some. Both Bob and the young people confirmed that no additional loop system was required within the room. However, the girl attending the special school benefited from Sign Supported English (where most spoken words are supported by their signed equivalent) to help her follow conversations. I was able to provide this, however I found it increasingly challenging to maintain this intensive communication style whilst also maintaining a facilitative role for the group as a whole.
4.2.5.2 Shared Facilitation

Bob agreed to co-facilitate the sessions on a freelance basis. This was a welcome addition, but also added a level of relational complexity to the project development which needed to be acknowledged, as Bob had previous connections with most of the young people within their school settings through his work role. However, his background knowledge regarding most of the young people proved very useful for highlighting shifts in attitudes or behaviours that he recognised and giving the young people a familiar point of reference within the early sessions.

After three sessions, and with the group’s approval, a 19 year old woman, Cat, with experience of youth work was also recruited to support the sessions, dependent upon her availability. I knew Cat socially and felt her rapport with young people was both natural and positive. Cat had assisted at the open evening and was therefore already familiar to three of the young people. Cat proved to be particularly successful in giving communication and engagement support to the girl with special needs when necessary.

During the early sessions, discussions began to emerge between myself and Bob as co-facilitators regarding our differing facilitatory methods. As a teacher, Bob was used to applying a directive, instructional approach and appeared more attuned to the educational levels of the young people. My therapeutic background and participatory focus led me towards an intentionally non-directive style. I found our discussions regarding this difference to be enlightening rather than confrontational and there appeared to be a useful knowledge exchange.

4.2.5.3 Session Content

As the formal project sessions began, I had made a facilitative choice to steer away from my original intention to give formal structure to the first four sessions in terms of formally teaching the participants about the cooperative inquiry method and its theoretical processes. I was struggling with what I then considered a dichotomy between our efforts to facilitate a project in which there was parity between all participants, and the degree to which authority and control was held by the project facilitators and myself in particular, as its main instigator. I had decided that an overly didactic introduction to the project may set it on an unhelpful trajectory that would be difficult to steer away from. I was also concerned the young people would find this approach too boring or too similar to school and withdraw from sessions. So, I endeavoured to structure the earlier sessions with a light touch. Although the first
session held an initial structure devised by myself to support interaction, subsequent sessions gradually shifted to a position that privileged the young people as the principle session planners and decision makers.

Light snacks and drinks were provided at each session throughout the project. I felt that providing food gave the opportunity for a relaxed communal atmosphere. This view was corroborated by the young people through their feedback comments and their enthusiastic consumption of the food provided.

4.2.5.4 Facilitating session 1
The first session did not follow the intended plan verbatim. Three young people attended the session, of whom two had attended the open evening. Bob arrived at roughly the same time as the young people and was drawn into discussions with one of the parents regarding their son’s audiology issues. Once parents had left, I facilitated a brief physical warm up exercise. Following this I put on the wall the sheet of interests dictated by the young people at the open evening. I reiterated the aim of the project, emphasising the importance of the participants’ owning the project and its processes and briefly outlined the concept of the action and reflection cycle. We then reviewed the sheet of interests and added to this with further ideas including those from the young man who did not attend the open evening. I gave out A4 size blank sketch books to each group member, describing them as journals and suggesting they could be used for capturing any ideas the group members may have through words, images/drawings or as a scrap book.

I then suggested we use our journals to express something about ourselves. In response, one young person, for example, drew the emblems of his favourite rock bands. After a short while, I facilitated a ‘show and tell’ of what they had written or drawn. This led to a discussion in which one young person brought up the relationship between adults and teenagers. He described how adults can feel threatened by teenagers when out in the street, but, that actually, teenagers are often misunderstood and are normal people too. Another young person added how he personally could be viewed as threatening. I was greatly encouraged by the two boy’s willingness to engage in discussions. However, the girl with special needs did not engage greatly with the discussions and this made me concerned regarding the capacity of the group as a whole to engage in more theoretical discussions with collective parity. We broke for snacks and refreshment and engaged in conversation. I did not feel confident about introducing the video diary activity at this stage as I felt
it would be somewhat premature and I was aware that session time was progressing more swiftly than I had anticipated.

![Image of a drawing](image)

**Figure 4.2 'Island' exercise completed in first project session**

After the break, I introduced the island exercise - a group drawing activity whereby each participant is allocated a segment of a large piece of paper and draws, within their segment, their own area of an island within which to create whatever they wish. With three young people, I split a large piece of paper into four and took the fourth quarter myself. The young people became very engrossed with this exercise which lasted for an hour and could have continued (Figure 4.2). Towards the end, I facilitated a discussion exploring how we thought our island reflected our own characters.

At the end of the session, I suggested that the young people write on post-it notes, comments about the session by way of an evaluation; how it went and what else could be developed (see Figure 4.3). Following this, the young people left and Bob and I discussed the session, capturing our reflections in my own reflexive log.
Figure 4.3 Post-it notes from evaluation at the end of session 1

4.2.5.5 Sessions 2 - 8

Having given a more detailed description of the first session, what follows is a briefer summary of the next 7 sessions that led up to the end of 2009.

Over the next seven sessions leading up to the Christmas break, the project group undertook numerous activities, the instigation of which varied between facilitators and group members. Initially, I balanced activities that could be used to give structure to the sessions where necessary (such as word exercises to generate creative stories or writing in their journals) with games that fostered group cohesion and relationship building. However, by session four, the group members were being facilitated to organise the structure of the sessions in collaboration with each other by ordering sheets of paper representing activities used in previous sessions or adding new activities on fresh pieces of paper, along a timeline that represented the three hours of the session.

The first four sessions held little sense of continuation between them and it did not feel at the time that any emerging ideas were being carried from week to week. By the fourth session, it felt like the group members, including the facilitators, had gained a familiarity with each other through a range of activities, games and discussions.

Session four held a number of activities that were to shape or influence the future of the group more directly. Firstly, I supported the young people in structuring the session themselves. Secondly, an extended discussion and post-it evaluation of the
sessions up to that point provided the opportunity for all group members present including myself to negotiate a direction for the project up until the Christmas break. Thirdly, a discussion time, led by one of the young people, began to touch upon more sensitive issues for group members. As a facilitator, I felt this was an indicator that we had perhaps co-created a safe enough space within the group for this to begin to occur. Fourthly, 'hide and seek' emerged as a game with which the group became deeply involved. It also offered me an opportunity to promote a sense of inquiry through framing the hide and seek game as a process of inquiry in itself and supporting the young people to weave the asking of questions and subsequent discussion into their playing of the game. Additionally, the young people present agreed they wanted to explore music through playing instruments within future sessions. Finally, I introduced a modified post-it evaluation using a sequence of questions borrowed from appreciative inquiry methods, repeated intermittently at the end of subsequent sessions: What went well?; Even better if...?; See Yourself – why are we here?

Session eight, the last one before Christmas, was envisioned by the group as a party of sorts with the opportunity to invite family and friends. The group agreed to my suggestion of extending the session by one hour. For the first time, all five young people attended along with myself and Cat. Bob attended for approximately half the session, briefly at the start and again at end, leaving in the middle to attend a prior engagement. The session was loosely planned in collaboration with the young people at the beginning and included: playing games including hide and seek; an art activity; a discussion group (audio recorded by myself as part of the agreed data generation); playing music.

Within the audio recorded discussion time, the young people volunteered to discuss issues they faced including their hearing situations. Certain participants were more vocal than others. In a focus group style, I loosely steered the discussion with questions that served more as opening prompts and we allowed space for conversations between young people to develop naturally, refraining from redirecting or cutting short conversational tangents.

Parents began to arrive for the final hour as requested and participated in some of the activities, one parent even instigating an impromptu origami session. Once the session had come to a close, myself, Bob and Cat reflected upon the session. We agreed that a very positive and cohesive atmosphere had been created, one in which
the young people appeared to engage naturally both with each other and with ourselves. This was corroborated by the young people’s post II evaluation feedback.

4.2.5.6 Communications between sessions
Between each of the sessions, I sent emails to the group briefly summarising the plans for the next session and reminding the young people of anything they had agreed to bring or might need. The number of responses to these emails varied from week to week. However, I felt that the emails did add to group cohesion. Additionally, it transpired that the young people would more often text the project mobile phone to let me know whether they were unable to attend or if they were going to be late.

4.2.6 Phase 3: Towards the project film

4.2.6.1 Project Review
A project review meeting with the Sensory Needs Service team was held in early December. I relayed a wish expressed by the young people to recruit more participants to the project and the team agreed to undertake a second recruitment drive. Crucially, it was also agreed that it was ethical to widen the recruitment to include pupils in year 7 (first year of secondary school) given that these pupils would by now have had a term to settle into their new schools. The team also suggested that I contact Ovingdean Hall School (OHS) one of two local non-maintained schools for the deaf, about extending the project there. The OHS development is described within Phase 4 of the project. The session attendance within Phase 3 is summarised in Table 4.4 below.

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Table 4.4 First project group participants’ attendance through sessions 9-19

4.2.6.2 Sessions 9 to 17
In early January 2010, I had received an email from Bob stating it would be very difficult to attend future sessions for personal reasons. However, he did return for 30
minutes during one of the latter sessions to catch up with the project the young people.

Over the course of the next nine sessions, the group focused more consistently upon a plan to devise and produce a short film comprising of a photographic montage sequence overdubbed with dialogue devised and narrated by the young people themselves. This focus led to an approach towards activities in ways that presented the opportunity to capture material for inclusion in the film, such as taking pictures of art work or other activities and recording more discussion times. It also led to a focus upon creating and capturing more music and lyrics for inclusion in the film as well.

The young people and I reviewed the project and focused upon how we could present the project’s work at a Deaf Culture Day, organised by the ‘Our Space’ community of practice to be held in May (see Appendix 19). I shared with the group an example of work from the charity Photovoice that demonstrated how lived experiences can be portrayed. Photovoice (www.photovoice.org) uses participatory photography and digital storytelling methods as tools for self-representation and advocacy within disadvantaged and marginalised communities (website accessed 1/05/2011).

We watched a piece of work from the Photovoice website exploring social inclusion and young people and then discussed different ways we could represent our own thoughts and ideas. I wrote in my reflexive log: ‘Logan suggested that the group could show pictures of their lives and that others who look at that picture might say something that helps you see your own world in a new way.’ Logan expanded his point about using photography as a way to help the group members understand each other’s lives better. Based upon a consensus by those present to follow this direction, the group agreed for a professional photographer to facilitate the next session. I acquired two digital cameras for the project which were used over subsequent weeks both during the sessions and by the young people between sessions to capture scenes from their lives. Any new images were reviewed by the group during the sessions and used as a trigger for further discussion.

By sessions 10 and 11 respectively, two participants Rafique and James had stopped attending the project. Both young people and their parents referred to other commitments such as revision or sports activities as principle reasons for their withdrawal. However, at the start of session 12, a new participant joined. Savannah
was a year 7 pupil with hearing impairment who had responded to the Sensory Needs Service's second recruitment drive. Despite being the youngest in the group, Savannah engaged confidently with the other young people injecting a welcome shot of fresh enthusiasm into the project.

The playing of games such as ‘piggy in the middle’ and ‘hide and seek’ remained a key component of the sessions for the young people. The use of art also persisted as a way of representing their interests. Digital photographs of the artwork were taken and group discussions regarding the art were audio recorded for possible use in the film commentary. The photographs we had accumulated were reviewed with a more critical eye in terms of deciding which to include in the final film.

Sessions 14 and 15 were relocated to a local music rehearsal studio to devise and record music for inclusion within the film. With the young people’s agreement, I invited Dale, a 22 year old man who was a member of the project’s advisory panel, had significant hearing loss and played lead guitar in a band. Dale attended for approximately 90 minutes of both sessions in the studio, during which time he joined in with playing music and also engaged with the discussion time which was audio recorded. I encouraged the young people to ask Dale questions about his own experiences growing up with hearing loss.

In the two sessions before the Deaf Culture Day, I supported the young people through the editorial decision making process to prepare the group’s film for screening. Having pursued the activities required for film production as the group’s principal objective since session 9, I felt an ethical responsibility to support the young people in achieving an end product that they could be proud of. Session 17 was spent at the studio of a media production company, hired to produce the film. During the previous week, I had spent time making some additional editorial decisions to produce a coherent sequence of audio clips for the young people’s spoken dialogue, based upon what the young people had expressed they wanted the dialogue to focus upon in terms of their experience. I spent the morning before the session at the studio with the production engineer organising the digital photo and audio files for ease of use for when the young people arrived. The young people spent the session with the production engineer producing the music and a rap song by digitally sampling and manipulating extracts from their own recorded music sessions using specialist music software.
4.2.6.3 Deaf Culture Day
Only two of the young people attended their film screening scheduled into the programme of the Deaf Culture Day, both with their parents. Bob also managed to attend the screening having been prominently absent from the group since session 8. Bob discussed the project's progress with myself, giving useful comment and insight.

4.2.6.4 Sessions 18 and 19
Following the Deaf Culture Day, there was a space of five weeks before the final two project sessions. However, the film was screened again for the young people and they gave their feedback amidst discussion. Between the last two sessions, I attended a project meeting at the Sensory Needs Service to screen and discuss the group's film and to review the project as a whole. The team were keen to discuss how the work could be continued but also recognised that both time and budget restraints presented very real barriers to their own continuation of the project. I suggested that given the experience the young people had gained, the service might think of ways to support them in facilitating some type of ongoing peer led group and offered my own time in an advisory capacity, pro bono, to this venture. Although positive about the idea, the team felt this to be unrealistic due to service pressures and constraints on their time and resources.

Figure 4.4 Participants' evaluation comments from the end of first project group's final session
The final session comprised of an extended evaluation of the project followed by food and an extended time for games. We placed all flip chart sheets, drawings and other material generated over the 10 months onto the walls. We then systematically explored and discussed the material with the use of post-it notes. Parents returned for the last 30 minutes to look at the material on the wall. There were genuinely fond farewells and the young people left after writing their final comments on an evaluation sheet (Figure 4.4).

4.2.7 Phase 4: Snowballing – a second project site

Following the Christmas break, I emailed the special education needs coordinator (SENCo) for Ovingdean Hall School, with an outline of the project and a suggestion to meet to discuss further. The SENCo called me back within an hour, very interested in the project and we arranged a meeting.

Ovingdean Hall School has historically been based upon the oral tradition, whereby pupils were taught to lip-read and given speech therapy to increase the clarity of their spoken voice. The use of signing by staff or pupils was prohibited. With the recent appointment of a new head teacher, the school was taking a more accepting stance towards 'total communication', a widely employed method referring to the use of both speech and signing. Although the use of signing amongst the pupils at OHS was becoming more accepted, there still remained differing views amongst staff that echoed the ongoing debate between signing and oralism within the deaf education community. Pupil numbers had declined from an original capacity of approximately 150 pupils to 29 attending the school as weekly boarders with over 40 members of staff (educational, administrative and maintenance).

4.2.7.1 Establishing a Relationship with the School

At the meeting, the SENCo and I discussed the remit of the project in terms of supporting the young people to explore their own identity without a pre-prescribed agenda, leaving the content of the sessions open ended. The SENCo voiced her hope that the project would encourage and promote the pupil’s independent thinking, something she felt was stifled by the school’s overly nurturing stance towards the pupils, because of their perceived vulnerability.

Relevant senior staff members agreed that Monday evenings between 18:30 and 20:00 would be the most appropriate time for sessions and we arranged to hold an
open evening for all pupils and staff who wished to attend, on Monday 1st February in
the school's drama studio. The Post-16 Coordinator (Vicky) agreed to act as my main
link with the school regarding the project.

4.2.7.2 The Open Evening
Twenty-two students and a number of staff members attended the open evening
session held at the school. Using sign supported English (SSE) at the pupils' request,
I described the project using the PowerPoint presentation slides I had used for the
first open evening, with some modifications. I asked the pupils to split into small
groups and discuss what change they would like to bring to: the world; their
communities; and to themselves. The groups wrote their thoughts onto flipchart
paper and then shared these with the other groups. I left information sheets and
consent forms with Vicky to discuss with interested pupils. A planning session was
agreed to take place after two weeks for those students who by then, had indicated
to Vicky that they wished to take part.

4.2.7.3 The Planning Session
Eight students attended the planning session with a member of staff also present. I
revisited the outline for project and introduced the Deaf Culture Day, asking whether
this could be a useful focus for the group. The young people agreed it would be. The
remainder of the time was spent focusing upon creating group rules and familiarising
ourselves with each other. The variation on communication styles was marked, with
some demonstrating a high proficiency in sign language and less clear speech, and
others with clearer speech and minimal signing skills. The extent to which members
of the group already knew each other well left me initially feeling very much the
outsider, a feeling that stood in contrast to my experiences within the first project
group. The young people's attendance across all project sessions is represented in
Table 4.5 below.
Table 4.5 Second group participants’ attendance through all sessions

4.2.7.4 Sessions 1 to 6

Over the next six sessions, the group decided to work towards devising and acting out a drama that represented a re-enactment of a sequence of events that had taken place amongst them earlier that same year. This decision had been made following the news (of which I was informed by a group member at the start of the second session) that the school would be closing at the end of the academic year on financial grounds, following a reported failure to agree a merger with the other locally based specialist school for the deaf. This news came as a considerable shock to both young people and staff, resulting in an outpouring of emotion during the early sessions (see Figure 4.5) and a desire to consolidate the friendships and memories they shared within the school. Because most of the young people lived out of the area and returned home at weekends, I suggested that their drama could be filmed professionally and screened at the Deaf Culture Day in their absence, an idea that the group became enthusiastic about. To varying degrees, the drama became a key component of the sessions up to session 6.
4.2.7.5 Session 7 and 8

With only 11 days to go until the film screening at the Deaf Culture Day, session 7 had been agreed as the date for the drama scenes to be filmed. I met with the local two-man media production team I had hired for the filming of the drama in the afternoon to plan the session and eventually meet the young people in the drama studio at 16:30.

At this point, a key group member requested to speak to me and explained that she was withdrawing from the project for personal reasons. The girl had been taking a key role not only in predominantly directing the drama, but also being the lead character in it. However, I affirmed that I respected her decision and thanked her for telling me, offering her further support if she wanted this. Both I and the girl then explained this news to the group who decided not to continue with the planned drama in her absence. However, I asked the group to think how else we could use the costly production team we had hired for the session. Under the leadership of the eldest and seemingly most confident participant, the group focused in a way I had not seen before and within twenty minutes a plan had been devised, mainly by the young
people with some support from myself. The young people agreed to interview each other about their experiences of school in general, their views about their current school context and their hopes for the future.

The filming took place over the course of three hours, throughout which the young people were actively involved in the process, devising questions and interviewing each other for the camera. Once filming was finished, it was agreed that I would bring in the raw footage to screen at the next session for the group to make editorial and production decisions before the film's first screening at the Deaf Culture Day the following weekend.

At the next session, the group watched the various takes and worked together to choose which ones to include, devising section titles as themes under which to order the various cuts (see Figure 4.6 below). The group chose to call the film 'Our Deaf Family @OHS', reflecting their portrayal of the school as one big family, the loss of which was greatly troubling for them. Between that session and the screening, I liaised with the media production team giving them detailed editing instructions based upon the young people's ideas and enlisted the help from a Deaf member of the advisory panel to transcribe subtitles which were then added to the film by the production team.

Figure 4.6 Second group's planning of film structure
4.2.7.6 Deaf Culture Day

The screening of this film ‘Our Deaf Family @OHS’ caused much reaction from the audience, some of whom were ex-pupils themselves and had heard of the closure plans through the deaf community. To my knowledge, none of the pupils from the school attended the day. I understood they did not live locally. However, I gave out an evaluation form based upon questions the young people had developed, to which I received nine responses. The evaluations and conversations I had with community attendees demonstrated the powerful impact the film had upon them and a number of people asked whether the film was for sale.

![Figure 4.7 One of the film screenings at Deaf Culture Day](image)

4.2.7.7 Sessions 9 and 10

At the next session, the group watched the film. The young people stated they were very impressed with the quality of the production and how they had been represented, all bar two minor interpretational errors. Following the screening, I initiated a discussion regarding the future of the project. The group unanimously agreed that, given the closure of the school, creating the film felt enough. One member suggested they screen the film at their whole school assembly and this was agreed by the other participants. The young people themselves presented the film at assembly later that week, reportedly being met with both an enthusiastic and significantly emotional response from pupils and staff. I opted not to attend the
assembly screening myself in order to punctuate the fact that the young people
themselves owned this work and should be credited for it.

Some members of the group requested I return to the school one last time.
Attendance seemed low for this final session with only four young people. As well as
informal chats, the session was used for a final project evaluation. Reactions to the
project were mixed with comments indicating that some of the discussion based
sessions had felt boring whilst the work towards developing the film had been very
engaging. The group agreed for their film to be uploaded onto the newly created
Sussex Deaf History website, maintained by the Our Space community of practice,
as an important pathway for future dissemination.

4.2.7.8 Accountability
Over the course of the project at Ovingdean Hall School, I met briefly with Vicky, the
Post-16 Co-ordinator after each of the ten sessions to review what happened, pass
on any points of note and to discuss plans for future sessions. This process was also
underpinned by email contact with Vicky during the week as required. Across the
project as a whole, I engaged intermittently with members of the advisory panel. The
convener of Deaf Studies at the University of Sussex in particular, was and has
continued to be of great support as a sounding board.

4.2.8 The Project Films

It is at this point that the reader is invited to view the two films. The films are one
component of the young people’s own first person and collaborative narrative. The
absence of an interlocutor between their presentational expression and the audience
can only strengthen their voice and the authenticity of their message. The films stand
as a direct expression of and from the young people, capturing a process and serving
as a presentational way of knowing.

The films can be viewed online at [www.sussexdeafhistory.org.uk](http://www.sussexdeafhistory.org.uk) by following the link
to the ‘See Yourself Project’ page found in the ‘Topics’ section of the website.
Alternatively, type the terms ‘sussex’ ‘deaf’ ‘history’ ‘see’ ‘yourself’ into any search
engine. The text below is merely a supplementary sleeve note to each film describing
the production process, supplementing the method described earlier in this chapter.
4.2.8.1 Everyone is Equal, No one is the Same

All the images used in this film montage have been taken by the young people throughout the cooperative inquiry. The voices represent edited excerpts from group discussions held during the project sessions. The editing processes for deciding what audio and visual material to use or discard was based upon decisions made by the young people. All the music featured in the film was devised and performed by the co-participants. Music performed and recorded during project sessions was sampled and remixed at a music production studio under the direction of some of the young people with the support of a professional engineer.

4.2.8.2 Our Deaf Family @ OHS

This film was shot over the course of three hours during one extended project session by a local two-man media production team. The young people took turns in assuming the roles of off-screen interviewer and on-screen interviewee. All narrative and text within the film including title, section headings, questions, discussion points and end credits were devised and agreed by the young people. Post-filming, once the young people had collaboratively devised themes that formed sections within the film, I clustered the footage under these themes and sought approval from the project participants for my choices. The final production stages, including the adding of subtitles, was completed by the media production team.

4.3 Layer 2: Data Collection and Analysis

The above sections have described the See Yourself project through four phases that map the journey from its inception to its completion. In this final section, I concentrate upon describing the methods that encapsulate ‘the singular layer’ of the research model described earlier: my approach to the research data set; how it is defined; how it was generated; and how it was responsibly managed through the process in line with the protocol agreed by the Faculty Research Ethics and Governance Committee. The processes described herein may be a mix of both collaborative and singular endeavours. However, their representation in this thesis and my critical reflections towards them and are mine alone.
4.3.1 Defining the Data Set

Within exploratory processes such as participatory action research, there seem to be few limits to what can be counted as data (Park, 2006). In a multi-dimensional inquiry such as this, the data generated and utilised by the project co-participants has greatly exceeded the more boundary data set I have generated that captures the phenomena. Therefore, it becomes increasingly important to focus upon the data set I myself have both generated and interrogated in my development of a thesis that examines my relationship to the inquiry process.

The data set initially defined within my approved research proposal to FREGC is twofold: Firstly, a personal reflexive research log, generated throughout the ten months of the project sessions. Secondly, transcripts of focus groups carried out with the group members periodically throughout the course of the project. I shall discuss both these sources in turn.

4.3.2 Generating the Data Set

4.3.2.1 Personal Reflexive Research Log

Between 9th September 2009 and 8th July 2010, I generated a personal reflexive log of the project that included my reflexive accounts of each session as well as other significant meetings, encounters. Certain outputs from the sessions themselves were also captured in the log within my account of sessions, such as evaluation feedback comments, transcripts from the recorded discussions and all email correspondence with the young people themselves and other project partners that occurred between sessions. Additionally, I used the log to capture reflections and ideas I had generated between sessions that I felt to be significant. Towards the end of the log, I also captured the transcripts of the dialogue from both project films that were created. To this end, the reflexive log also holds weight as my account of the decision trail that steered the project throughout the sessions. At its completion, my reflexive research log came to approximately 110,000 words. All the forms of written data within this log have served the analytical process.

The log was generated and kept in electronic form as a Microsoft Word document and only printed out once it was finished, to assist my analysis. The component of the log constituting my own reflexive narrative was not seen by the other project group members at any stage. However, during the course of sessions, ideas that had
been generated by my own process of reflection, were often shared with the group by way of suggestions or comments.

To help me capture events as accurately as possible, I also kept a black sketch book identical to those given to the young people (referred to as journals) which I would use, when opportunity arose, to jot down the sequence of events within sessions and anything else I felt was of significance. I hoped that this modeling of reflective practice would also encourage the young people to use their journals during the sessions.

4.3.2.2 Group Discussions
Group discussions within the sessions served as an opportunity for the young people to share their thoughts and feelings with each other about a range of topics. Additionally, some of the discussions served as an opportunity for me to ask questions pertaining to the project and the young people's reflections on their experiences; questions I inserted when I felt they would not have asked these of each other. Within the first project group, key discussions were consensually audio recorded for two purposes, both of equal importance. Firstly, to capture the young people's thoughts regarding the project for the purposes of analysis as part of my own data set. Secondly, to generate audio footage that could be used for the young people's film. Where I hoped for these discussions to serve a dual purpose, I requested fresh verbal consent from those involved. The video recording of sessions was instigated by the young people themselves once I had made them aware that video equipment was available. For example, in the first group this led to the videoing of their game 'hide and seek' on two occasions, and several extracts from their group music sessions. However, none of the video footage was used within their final film or for my analysis.

Within the second project group, comments from discussions were captured as reflexive notes within my sketch book journal and then transferred verbatim into my reflexive log. Only once was a group discussion recorded using a video recorder rather than audio in order to capture the discussion's signed component. For the purposes of analysis, only my personal reflexive log has been utilised as this includes a transcript of the group discussion that was filmed and a transcript of dialogue from the group's final film.
4.3.3 Dissemination Strategies

Within any authentic participative action research agenda, the decision-making process regarding the dissemination of research outcomes should be owned by all participants. As Tee and Lathlean (2004) note “It is a pillar of the inquiry design that all participants contribute to the decision to disseminate findings.” (p. 541). In the case of co-operative inquiry, the very act of dissemination can be perceived as the embodiment of propositional and presentational knowledge generated through the inquiry by all of its co-researchers/co-subjects.

Having screened the Ovingdean Hall School film internally at a school assembly, and both project films at the Deaf Culture Day, the young people and their parents consented for the films to be disseminated to a wider audience. The Sussex Deaf History website, controlled by the ‘Our Space’ community of practice seemed an appropriate starting place, given their affiliation with the project, and again, unanimous consent was given. The films, having been uploaded to the site have acquired a number of comments on their pages. Additionally, the films were requested by the Sensory Needs Service for use within training packages for schools. Copies have been given to the young people themselves for their own use and sharing strategies.

Academically, my findings from the project have been presented by myself at both national and international peer-reviewed conferences (Kirkwood, 2011b). One book chapter authored by myself has arisen from the project so far (Kirkwood, 2011a) with further articles expected to follow, drawing from this thesis as a predominant source.

4.3.4 Analytical Method

What follows is an account of the critical analytic methods I have employed to connect the micro-context of the cooperative inquiry experience, framed as an occupational intervention, with a macro-context encompassing wider socio-political factors that may further my understanding of occupational therapy practice. This continues in the same spirit of transparency with which I have attempted to present my method so far, mapping my decision trial as an integral contribution to the rigour of this research (Koch, 1994; 2006).
My experience of data analysis has not been that of a distinct phase commencing once data collection has finished. The analytic process commenced from inception of the project and continued throughout the inquiry described in this chapter. As mentioned, my reflexive research log captured a representation of the project as a discrete occupational phenomena and has been counted as the primary data set for my critical analysis. Once the project had drawn to a close, and the reflexive log was no longer being added to, some distance was afforded before I began to re-engage with it as a data set.

Although I recognise that the processes of immersion and crystallization can and have indeed occurred concurrently, I shall attend to their characterisation in my analysis as separate strands.

4.3.4.1 Immersion
Using an analytical approach to the data through immersion/crystallization, described in the last chapter, I read and re-read the reflexive log numerous times, making notes based on new reflections and insights I felt were both emerging from the text, and resonating with ideas and theories I was being exposed to from other sources such as associated literature and conversations, radio broadcasts and happenchance within my social spheres. Throughout, I allowed myself to be open to forming and critiquing connections as part of the sense-making process.

One key innovation in the early stages of analysis, was my adoption and practical application of Reason and Torbert’s (2001) first, second and third person dimensions of inquiry, described in the last chapter. I applied these as a sifting matrix (see appendix 20 for definition of term) for the constructs that were emerging from the text. By drawing three overlapping circles – one representing each dimension, I found I could reflect more critically regarding which dimension each new construct spoke to (see Figure 4.8). This process began to settle my dilemma regarding how to manage the separate inquiry strands; the cooperative inquiry itself, and my position as postcritical ethnographer. Where constructs captured a sense of mutuality between dimensions, these were placed in the spaces ‘between’, where the appropriate dimensions overlapped. Constructs I felt were universally applicable, fell to the middle space where all three circles converged.
This method was held lightly as an organising tool to help manage the sense-making process rather than being seen as a strict theme-categorising system. A number of the constructs were inscribed into more than one dimension and the majority of constructs fell most suitably placed within the first and second person dimensions and the space in which these two domains converged (see Figure 4.9). Although I am aware of my potential for bias, I felt this pattern was corroborative of my contention that I could only legitimately approach the data from a first person perspective, since these were the domains I was most personally engaged with. The fact that my emerging analytical process highlighted patterns I recognised from my own involvement, gave me confidence in the analytic methods I was using.
4.3.4.2 Crystallization

For ease of reference I have divided this section into phases that reflect, in more clearly defined stages than was inevitably the case in practice, my methodical snaking towards emergent findings and their attributed meanings, described in the next chapter.

4.3.4.2.1 Phase 1 - Initial Concepts Emerge

Throughout the emergence and organisation of the constructs, I gave critical consideration of their contextual meaning, drawing from my experiential knowledge reawakened by my engagement with the text. From this position, broader concepts (see appendix 20 for definition of term) arose that, to a greater and lesser degree, represented a common thread of meaning between clusters of constructs (also see Appendix 20). I held these new concepts in mind as I read and re-read the text to be clear of their capacity to imbue the subtleties of meaning I felt were nuanced within the clusters. These initial concepts were as follows: facilitation; relationality; space; capacity. Additionally, I sensed an overarching concept emerging which I termed 'persons in context', language drawn from systems thinking (Flood, 2006) and social constructivist perspectives used in work with children (Russo, 2006). This overarching concept was instinctively felt to build upon the theoretical
notion of ‘environment’ used within occupational therapy theory in order to
encompass more explicitly, a deeper sense of political, spatial and relational
acuity than is inscribed within Creek’s occupational therapy term cluster
‘place for action’, defining the terms setting, environment and context (Creek,
2010).

4.3.4.2.2 Phase 2 – Refining Concepts
Through further critical reflection I refined and redefined the initial concepts
as: participation; relationality; capacity; context, in which a broader
conceptualisation of ‘space’ was shared across ‘capacity’ and ‘context’.

4.3.4.2.3 Phase 3 – Relating Concepts to the ‘Three Person’ Dimensions
These concepts were then applied to the three-person dimensions. A matrix
was drawn up with one column representing each dimensional space
including convergences under each concept title (see Table 4.6). In so doing,
each construct could be simultaneously linked with the dimension into which it
fell, as well as the concept title under which it was clustered. Again, this
matrix was merely created as a sense-making tool to better understand
patterns and relationships within a complex data set as opposed to a means
of theme categorisation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>1&amp;2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2&amp;3</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>3&amp;1</th>
<th>1,2,3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Capacity</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Context</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.6 Conceptual Sitting Matrix: relating initial concepts to the ‘three person’ domains

4.3.4.2.4 Phase 4 – Adding Further Concepts
Through the cross-referencing process, it was felt that existing concept titles
did not capture the sense of causation that was emerging within the text.
Therefore, a fifth concept title ‘Motivations’ was added. Additionally,
constructs giving a sense of a wider reflexive stance within the text were not
falling comfortably into existing concept titles and so sixth concept title ‘Wider
picture/reflexivity/theory’ was added to hold these constructs while further
passes of the text, in relation to the matrices, were undertaken to look for
synergies and disparities between them.
4.3.4.2.5 Phase 5 – Emergence of a Meta-Concept
Following further critical consideration of the emergent concepts in relation to occupational therapy literature, I felt that ‘relationality’ was emerging as a meta-concept (see appendix 20 for definition of term); actualised through context, through participation, within which concepts of capacity and motivation were perceived as influencing factors.

4.3.4.2.6 Phase 6 – Exploring the Story of Relationality
Over time, I felt that my analytic processes were entering potential risk of crossing paradigm boundaries; adopting a more reductionist, compartmentalising approach to my findings. Although these concerns, that may be construed as privileging methodology over other considerations, have been labeled as ‘methodolatry’ by some (Chamberlain, 2000). I am more persuaded by a call for context-sensitive consistency and coherence in the use of research methodologies, and standing by certain epistemological positions (Holloway and Todres, 2003).

I also wanted to maintain openness towards the data to avoid what Borkan (1999) terms ‘premature closure’ of the analysis, and felt that a narrative approach might abate these concerns by maintaining a holistic sense of the inquiry’s story, illuminated through the text, whilst also critically focusing upon the meaning of the narrative rather than seeking objective, generalisable fact (Crabtree and Miller, 1999; Riley & Hawe, 2005). As I exposed myself to narrative fields of research literature, I became reacquainted with the ‘Five W’s (and one H)’ framework, memorialized by Rudyard Kipling in a poem accompanying the tale of “The Elephant’s Child” (p. 83, Kipling, 1983). This is a rudimentary tool of predominantly journalistic origins (also known as the ‘Six W’s’) used to construct and present coherent and cohesive narratives from news stories by applying six rhetorical questions: Who? What? Where? When? Why? How? As I applied these epistemologically systemic questions to my meta-concept of relationality, critically imagined correlations began to emerge connecting the concepts to elements of the relationality narrative within the inquiry’s story, as portrayed in the data.

4.3.4.2.7 Phase 7 – The Dance of Interpretation
I liken my shifting organisational emphasis from concept to question, to a metaphorical changing of partners within what Miller and Crabtree (1999)
describe as 'The Dance of Interpretation'; framed as such to convey the "...many changing rhythms; multiple steps; moments of jubilation, revelation, and exasperation..." involved in the interpretive process (p. 128). Examining relationality through a different conceptual prism brought to light new facets and drew me to its varied conceptualisations within the social science literature, including amongst others (Holloway, 2010; Venn, 2010; Mitchell, 2000; Gergen and Gergen, 2001), the work of Bourdieu (1984; Calhoun et al, 1993), and of Bronfenbrenner, (1979; 1992; 2005; Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, 1994) and subsequent critical commentary of their positions (Bolter, 2009; Endress, 2005; Tudge et al, 2009). My own defining and inscribing of the term 'relationality' shall be explicated in the next chapter.

4.3.4.3 Additional Arts-based Critical Analysis Methods

Although my initial research proposal highlighted the possibility of using such methods, based on much evidence in the literature that the creative arts were an effective means of engaging young people, I attempted to maintain a neutral position regarding their use. On this basis, if the young people chose to use the creative arts themselves, it would be clear that the decision had stemmed from their own intent rather than by coercive means.

However, I also felt convicted of the need to somehow place myself in the shoes of the young participants who I would be calling upon to reflect upon their own situation. In an attempt to do this, I enrolled on a short creative writing course at the University of Brighton and used the opportunity to creatively reflect and write about a fictitious encounter that captured some of my own experiences of having a stammer (see Appendix 21). At the other end of the inquiry, soon after I had finished adding to my reflexive log, I was invited to present at the 8th International Qualitative Research Conference, Bournemouth University with a specific focus upon performative inquiry (Roberts, 2008; Robinson, 2008). Once more my abstract reflected my conviction that, having worked with the young people in the project who wrote music and songs that encapsulated their experiences, I should experience a similar creative process. My abstract outlined plans to write and perform two contemporary-styled songs based upon a preliminary critical analysis of the reflexive blog (see appendix 22 and 23 for song lyrics). The songs were performed at the conference and a segment broadcast two weeks later on BBC national news.
4.4 Summary

In this chapter, I have given an account of a) the complex methodical processes that have been used in both conducting the initial co-operative inquiry – the ‘See Yourself’ collaborative youth project, and b) the critical analysis of data generated from the inquiry. In the next chapter, I shall describe and discuss the principle findings formed through my critical analysis.
5. Findings & Discussion

5.1 Introduction

Here, I present the findings drawn from my research process before discussing, in further depth, their implications with regard to the research question. The findings are presented with a degree of critical comment along the way, serving as a springboard for the deeper discussion in the next chapter within which I engage in detailed critical discussion and synthesis of the findings; their relationship to the relevant literature and potential implications for future occupational therapy practice. I outline the concept of relationality as a meta-finding and present my development of all subsequent findings through this filter. Excerpts from my reflexive research log are used to describe and critically discuss each of my findings in turn, with the use of tables where appropriate. Finally, the determinants of relationality are presented alongside associated key relational constructs in Table 5.7 at the end of the chapter.

5.2 Findings

5.2.1 Re-engaging the Question

Generally, qualitative findings are based upon subjective perception and are ultimately governed by their author as gate-keeper to the knowledge that has been generated. As iterated in previous chapters, research findings presented in this thesis are predominantly constructed through a critical analysis I have singularly undertaken based upon a data set that represents, in the main, my experiential perception of the collaborative inquiry process. This is a distinct process, separate from the participatory action research process in which I collaborated as a co-participant and co-subject with youth people, and through which outcomes, documented in the data set, emerged. On this basis, the analytical process I have undertaken has been governed by the research question I introduced towards the end of the second chapter, and reintroduce here, relating to the potential utility of participatory inquiry methods within occupational therapy practice:
What can occupational therapy practice assimilate from participatory inquiry methods?

The findings that will follow are therefore described in relation to the above question. I begin by presenting my principle finding ‘relationality’ referred to as a meta-concept in the previous chapter. This serves as an overarching concept for all subsequent findings. However, first I consider a semantic issue regarding the meaning of the term ‘finding’.

5.3 Meta-Finding: Relationality

In accordance with the dictionary definition of the prefix ‘meta’, I employ the term meta-finding epistemologically to describe an abstraction from a set of findings; a finding about findings. The meta-finding is not a ‘parent’ finding from which subsequent findings have emerged, but rather a finding that has emerged as appropriate to describe the approach to, and relationship between other findings. My meta-finding stemming from critical analysis of this research can be described as my realisation of ‘relationality’ as an over-arching concept that I have perceived as permeating the research phenomena on several levels and at myriad stages throughout its course; capturing the connectedness inherent in participants’ occupational engagement in the project. The seeds of this finding began to grow as conceptual connections developed through my experience of the participatory inquiry process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>commonality AND diversity</th>
<th>singularity AND collectivism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>researcher AND subject</td>
<td>structured AND unstructured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>directive AND non-directive</td>
<td>process AND product</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 5.1 List of Conceptual Pairings*

For example, Table 5.1 lists six conceptual pairings that emerged through my participation in the project. The word ‘OR’ has been replaced as the connecting word between the pairs with the word ‘AND’ to symbolically represent my own attitudinal
shift from their initial binary positions, towards the relatedness of these concepts. The emergence of 'relationality' as a meta-finding underpinned this transition from my initial epistemologically dualist approach to these pairings to a deeper understanding of how they could be held in balance within the project through relationally-based facilitation.

My subsequent use of the term relationality as an umbrella term also encompasses a systemic and ‘social ecologies’ perspective (Bahns et al, 2011; Ungar, 2012) of participation which resonates more closely with the meaning of participation as defined within the participatory paradigm (Heron and Reason, 1997). Thus relationality, is further inscribed with a definition that does not compartmentalise but globally encompasses all intra-personal, social, cultural and material connectedness that not only represents a breadth of participatory spheres, but also a depth of affective relatedness. As Blackman and Venn (2010) suggest, "...relationality is a term that is produced differently depending upon the particular theoretical position being enacted. It is a starting point for analyses that question the very notion that we can divide the world into homogeneous entities such as the social, the natural, the human, the animal and so on..." (p.10). From a psychoanalytic perspective, the relational turn is a well cultivated field that touches upon relationality with regard to attachment; transference and counter-transference. Cited by Rolef Ben-Shahar (2010), Mitchell (2004) uses the term relationality to describe an understanding of "...the mind as built from relational molds and interactions" (p.42, Rolef Ben-Shahar, 2010).

Throughout these perspectives, there is an axiomatic quality to 'relationality' that all known material or human constructs can be said to 'relate', and are only known because of and through the process of relating. Indeed, as a concept, it was relationality's subtle pervasiveness throughout my lived experience of the research and the generated data set that meant its significance remained unseen by myself for some time, until I gained enough distance from the data to perceive it more holistically.

However, having recognised its distinct characteristics within the data, I initially conceptualised relationality as one of six concepts I had constructed from the data set as sense-making tools. Subsequently, as recognition of its globally pervasive quality throughout the data slowly dawned, I reframed relationality as a meta-concept, and in so doing, realised the acuity with which I could then relate this meta-
concept to the other emergent concepts through a relational lens. Consequently, I feel there would be beneficial gains for practice if ‘relationality’ was more concretely assimilated into the field of occupational therapy, as a conceptual framework relating within the context of Reason and Torbert’s (2001) first-, second- and third-person dimensions; me, us and them (described in chapter 3). This would support a richer definition of participation within the profession, assimilated from the participatory paradigm.

5.3.1 Describing Relationality

Metaphysically, my definition of the nature of this relationality theorises that knowledge is generated and located contingently within a conversation; the ‘conversing’ between oneself and an ‘other’. Specific meaning, although individually perceived, holds no warrant outside the ‘space between’; the shared relational context upon which its construction is dependent. In such a framing, the ‘other’ can be either a reciprocal cognisant force with whom we negotiate the construction of contingent meaning, or a non-cognisant material form (such as an object or artefact) or symbolic form (such as an idea or theory) with which we reflexively engage but still construct meaning that is held contingently in the space between. Within a socio-cultural context, immeasurable complexity is therefore generated when two or more ‘others’ interact; each potentially seeking both to understand and be understood within the relational space produced.

Within the data set, the above view of relationality has emerged from numerous references within my reflections to the views and positions held by myself or others within multiple contexts. Following initial attempts to compartmentalise these, I eventually determined that all positions held were ultimately related to each other within context. Through the analysis process, I have developed a narrative approach towards relationality to help articulate a more nuanced understanding of components within the concept; containing a sense of meaning whilst avoiding compartmentalism.

5.3.2 A Narrative Model of Relationality

As described in the previous chapter, I applied the ‘Five W’s (and one H)’ narrative tool to the concept of relationality, in order to describe with greater coherence the relational components specifically relevant to the research question. In essence, having established the centrality of ‘relationality’ within the research phenomenon,
the realisation of the 'Five W's (and one H)' tool thus helped me attend to the question: 'What can occupational therapy practice assimilate from participatory inquiry methods through the lens of relationality?'

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPLORATORY QUESTIONS</th>
<th>KEY CONSTRUCTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contextual Premise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Who relates / who we are in relation to 'other'</td>
<td>Relating in context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Where we relate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• When we relate</td>
<td>Relating to/through capacities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How we relate</td>
<td>Relating methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• What we relate</td>
<td>Relating tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Why we relate</td>
<td>Relating through identities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performative Realisation</td>
<td>Relating through products / outcomes</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relational learning</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Connecting</td>
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Table 5.2 Exploratory questions and Key Constructs

Table 5.2 above represents the narrative framework within which I have mapped the theoretical constructs stemming from my analysis of 'relationality' using the 'Five W's (and one H)'. In variation to their traditional sequence, I reordered these six questions into a narrative succession that I consider to hold greater utility within this presentation of the findings. From a narrative perspective, I organised the six exploratory questions into two clusters which I felt reflected an epistemological difference between the three questions seeking to explore how relationality is contextualised and the other three questions exploring how relationality is performed. The first cluster, which I have termed 'Contextual Premise' comprises the questions 'who?'; 'where?' and 'when?': who relates / who are we in relation to 'other'; where we relate; when we relate. Given the close relationship between the constructs they illuminate, these questions were attended to simultaneously, as a whole. As the name suggests, this first cluster constitutes a backdrop and platform upon which the second cluster, 'performative realisation' is dramaturgically represented. Attending to relationality's manifestation through the primacy of practical knowing, the second cluster is comprised of the questions 'how?'; 'what?' and 'why?': how we relate; what
we relate, and more reflexively, why we relate. In the second cluster, each question is given separate treatment although there is inevitably overlap between them in terms of their attributed constructs.

This reordering reflects a causal relationship between the *contextual premise for relationality* and my conceptual construction of the *performative realisations of relationality*, drawn from within the data set. Put another way, the performative sensibilities of relationality are inextricably *related* with their temporal-cultural contexts; another example of the multi-layered pervasiveness of relationality. The structure of the second cluster (how, what, why) also echoes the process pattern found within cycles of action (how and what) and reflection (why), applied throughout the project.

5.3.3 Defining the Constructs

The constructs in Table 5.2 above represent layers of contextualised meaning for ‘relationality’. These constructs are drawn from my experiential perception of relationality captured within the data set and reflect meaning I have assigned to them. Below, I outline each construct using excerpts of text from the data set to illuminate and authenticate the meaning I have inscribed into the data through the analytical process, by which the constructs have been defined. Sub-headings under each construct represent the determinants of relationality which are drawn together in Table 5.7 at the end of this chapter on page 172. These determinants characterise the summation of my findings conceptualised through the lens of relationality as described above.

5.3.3.1 Relating in Context

This construct constitutes the first of two within what I have termed the contextual premise. The contextual premise for relationality attends to issues found within the data set regarding: who we relate to; who relates to us; who are in relation to ‘other’; Where we relate; When we relate. Evidence from the data set pertaining to the contextual premise for relationality offers a multi-directional and multi-layered perspective that encompasses the engagement between: myself, the young people, their communities; the project’s statutory and non-statutory community partners; academic institutions; and the wider audiences who engaged in the project’s output.
5.3.3.1.1 Balances of power and authority

Within and between each of these positions, the construct relating in context speaks to the social; cultural; political; economic; and affective layers that influence predispositions to, and engagement in, contextual interaction and the temporal and material environmental settings in which it occurs. Given the socio-political aspect of this milieu, it is no surprise that concerns pertaining to balances of power have surfaced within this construct.

From a first-person perspective, the data captured my own concerns with balances of power when performing context based roles imbued with degrees of authority, be it knowledge-based, in the role of 'responsible adult' or being perceived in the position of project leadership. Following the fourth session with the first project group, I reflected in my reflexive research log:

There is a need to maintain a facilitating authority within the group which helps support the structure and lets the [young people] be free to interact and create, whilst at the same time reiterating and promoting the notion that the [young people] genuinely hold the power for what the project is capable of.

Similar sentiments were expressed in a feedback email I sent to Vicky, the project link-person at Ovingdean Hall School following our first proper project session at the school.

The group seemed quite unfocused a lot of the time, and yet they have a good grasp of the ideas when they do focus. I want to give the group a chance to find it's own level, to self-regulate rather than going up the 'authority' settle down, I'm in charge' route - so we'll see how it goes.

Reflecting upon the dilemma of balancing my self-created role as instigator of the project with the desire for co-participants to direct the project themselves, the above excerpts capture my attempts to come to terms with this by determining that an authoritative stance in terms of organisation and facilitation, but not necessarily content, could support the participants in exploring their own concerns more freely, and that these two positions were not in polar opposition to each other.

The wider social and cultural complexities of this stance were tested from an institutional perspective at a subsequent 'Our Space' Community of Practice.
management meeting which I attended to feedback on the progress of the project (a recurring agenda item at the meeting due to the funding relationship between the project and the ‘Our Space’ community of practice). In my feedback, I described an exchange captured in the excerpt below regarding some ideas that had arisen from a ‘post-it’ discussion time during the fourth session of the first project group. Having first voiced a desire to enlist more young people to the project, the young people then discussed the idea of inviting their friends or others without a hearing impairment.

*The other main issue raised was wanting more young people to attend. This is something they all agree with. I focused on Logan’s original post-it and asked him to explain. He said that it would be good to have other young people — about 10 or just over to share thoughts/ experiences with. Logan initially thought that the other young people would have hearing impairments. However, then Raf explained that he felt that the other young people didn’t need to have hearing impairments but may have other difficulties...*

My description of this exchange, in which I was attempting to demonstrate equality between myself and my co-participants in terms of project control, was met with a mixed response in the management meeting:

*Pam [Chairperson] said that it would fly in the face of the project values not to include other non-HI [hearing impaired participants] if that’s what the young people requested. She also felt it portrayed the [young people] as feeling that their identity did not depend upon their HI. John countered this by saying that I need to ask why the [young people] want to include non-HI. John implied that, being surrounded by a hearing world, their own deaf identity may well have been medicalised in its view and therefore seen as a negative component of their identity that needs to be put to one side in favour of identifying with the hearing community that may dominate around them — particularly through their attendance at a mainstream school.*

This excerpt, and especially the tenor of John’s (a key Deaf community partner and member of the project’s advisory panel) counter-comments, begin to capture the complex cultural and political issues that surround the young people in terms of deaf identity and the stake that other community members feel they hold in terms of protecting, or advocating for, the young people living in what can be perceived as a dominant culture. John’s implied suggestion of how identity is negatively affected by
a hegemonic discourse that places deafness into a medical model and his assertion that this is especially true for those attending the hearing-centric domain of mainstream education (of which John was speaking from firsthand experience), were ideas I had not explicitly considered during that initial 'post-it' discussion time in the session. This subsequently helped me to explore my own position and attitude towards the young people and how we related in context.

5.3.3.1.2 Social complexity: cultural contexts; political context

Once my awareness had been awakened to how we as inquiry participants were relating in context, the degree to which the young people attending mainstream schools were responding to the hegemony described above could be seen in aspects of their attitudes and behaviours captured in the data. Although not expressed by them directly, I felt I could perceive how this hegemonic discourse might be influencing their social and cultural spheres. For example, the young people’s views regarding their experience of school included many references to bullying or prejudices that highlighted reactions to cultural differences. During a recorded discussion in the first project group, one participant recalls their perceived experiences of mainstream primary school:

[1] Didn’t get a [hearing] aid til year 6. My teacher in primary hated me so much she put me in back of the class. I couldn’t hear. I fell asleep so it didn’t matter. When people talked, she blamed me and I was sent out.

Countering perceived prejudices, respecting diversity became a key theme within the film produced by the first project group entitled ‘Everyone is Equal, No one is the Same’. Adding weight to the potential of the arts as an effective therapeutic medium, bullying also emerged as a theme within a number of the projects’ creative exercises. The excerpt below describes part of session 6 with the first project group:

Logan suggested writing a song. I said, bearing in mind the focus of the project, what would the words be about? This is where Logan said that the song should be about a boy who’s bullied and joins a club with other people like him. Me and Bob got very enthusiastic and I asked him to write that down which he did:

Some one is getting Bullied because of their issues
And then find a club which young people can go and
discuss their issues. They then talk about their problems
And they then feel like they fit in and they won’t have to
be scared because there “Different” to everyone else. They will
then get the confidence to stand up and speak out.
Stand out and speak up.

Similar experiences of bullying were expressed by pupils from Ovingdean Hall School (OHS) of their previous experiences of mainstream schooling. Again, when devising a drama, the OHS group considered bullying as a main theme:

Chris came up with the idea of a sad story about bullying.... [Tom] wanted to involve graffiti in some way as part of the story and went on to describe a flashback scene to being bullied the same time each day.

The film that the OHS group eventually produced expresses the young people’s experiences of bullying succinctly, as well as presenting a united front in terms of their espoused fondness for their community at OHS. However, the data also documents evidence of certain inequalities and attitudes of prejudice amongst the group members themselves, highlighting negative attitudes towards difference even in their own relational context.

After the evaluation, as the [young people] were milling around, sticking the post-its on etc., [participant 1: a 13 year old exhibiting challenging behaviour] started kicking off with [participant 2: an 18 year old from Saudi Arabia]. [Participant 1] had come up close and had starting pushing [participant 2] who pushed back. A couple of the other young people and [staff member] became involved, they were separated. The general gist of people’s responses were telling [participant 2] that he should know better at his age. Apparently, [participant 1] was being racist towards him but [participant 2] was retorting by telling [participant 1] he had a small brain.

At one of the latter sessions, following the production of the OHS film, participant 2 from the above excerpt expressed embarrassment at his lack of clarity, due to the fact that, as a foreign national, English is his second language and BSL his third.

At the end of the session, after [participant 2] had seen the film, he was explaining that it was a bit embarrassing watching himself and implied that it
was because he was afraid he wasn’t very clear. I said, that he came across very well and gave him some encouragement and this appeared to instantly brighten him up and he asked ‘really? Was I speaking clearly?’: it must be very hard for him. I observed that [two other participants] were laughing at his signing between themselves when they watched [the film] earlier.

The cultural determinant that proficiency in signing appeared to become at OHS is significant, given the school’s strong oral history. It gave a strong indication of the complex contextual changes the young people and staff were experiencing at the school following the arrival of a new head teacher at the start of the year bringing more liberal views regarding the use of signing. On another occasion, one participant who had only recently begun learning BSL was chided during a session by another participant for not signing.

When [Gina] started to explain herself orally, James became quite animated in a frustrated way and told her to sign saying that she should show him respect and that if she only talked then he and others wouldn’t know what she was saying. James went on to give her what seemed like a mini lecture about how she should embrace her deaf identity and that meant signing. [Gina’s] response was to acknowledge it in a passive way and to use sign supported English.

Conversely, the next excerpt relays a brief conversation I had with a staff member on my open evening at the school (to describe the project and enlist participants) regarding opposing views related to signing held within the staff cohort.

He said he was with a pupil over lunch last week and he was using a bit of sign with them. Another member of staff came over and cautioned that he shouldn’t be using sign, saying that the parents had chosen OHS because of its hearing tradition and so learning oral communication is what the parents wanted for their children at OHS.

The seemingly mixed messages being given within the school, borne from a clash of cultural perspectives, added to the contextual complexity faced by the young people. From a first person perspective, I believe that my own knowledge of BSL gave me a level of acceptability to the young people. This was accentuated by the fact that other staff members were still at a low level of proficiency in the learning process. This
gave me a degree of confidence when interacting with the system at OHS in what was otherwise a daunting contextual prospect; progressing from the first project group facilitated within in a neutral community-based context with which all participants were relating for the first time, into an established community context where I was initially relating, and related to, as an outsider.

However, my own signing ability, although at a moderate level expressively, lacked the receptive skill to fully grasp what some of the participants were conveying to each other at an often excitable speed. My capacity to understand was therefore diminished and feelings of frustration emerged as I felt I was not capturing the meaning the participants were conveying accurately enough. To have my own experiential knowledge of this sense of exclusion and frustration when relating within this context where similar experiences were so relevant to both the participants and the aims of the project, serves as a significant realisation in terms of my own research outcomes.

Clearly, the relating in context construct serves to highlight the degree of social complexity, represented both culturally and politically, that led to hegemonic challenges in maintaining an equitable balance of power and authority. This was manifest both in the relational space between myself (and other adults) and the young people, but also between the young people themselves.

5.3.3.2 Relating to/through Capacities

This is the second construct within the contextual premise for relationality as I have perceived it, captured in the data set. My interpretation of capacity in this context applies to all factors within the relational domain outlined earlier; acknowledging perceived limits and, from a pragmatic sense, the nature and utility of relationality's contexts.

The breadth of capacities that emerge from this interpretation are complex. For example; my capacity as instigator and facilitator of the project and the capacity of my co-participants were governed by the resources available to us: our accumulated experience and knowledge; our cognitive abilities; our emotional resilience; our time availability; our ability to engage with others; our energy levels; the physical spaces we related to and in; and our own physicality and affect when engaging. The capacity of the project's wider stakeholders and community partners were also governed by
these resource parameters. Equally, the wealth of ideas, actions, interactions and communication styles engaged with through the project were also bound by their own limits and representationally governed by the capacities of those engaging with them. Equally, access to financial resources as well as the time participants had available, shaped and governed, to a large extent, the direction and potential remit of the project.

Issues pertaining to how project participants related to and through our capacities are addressed under three determinant headings that focus upon: varied capacities; power and capacity; and utilising others’ capacities.

5.3.3.2.1 Facilitating with and within varied capacities
A key realisation pertaining to capacity captured in the data set, was the difference in a perceived variation in the capacities of all participants including myself and the subsequent process of reflection regarding my expectations for the project which I was forced to reconsider in light of the expectations expressed by the co-participants. Following the second session with the first project group I reflected:

Is it too much to ask project participants to be involved, turning up, doing it etc and to be taking the reflexive meta-perspective of “how am I engaging, what is this doing for the group, where is this journey taking me etc?”... I need to shift my perspective to see things as they evolve with the [young people] and not be shoe-horning a meta-agenda into the proceedings maybe. This is the difficulty of balancing a facilitator’s role with trying to reach co-participation. I guess the group is FORMING at the moment and not too much pressure should be put on it during this stage.

As this excerpt implies, my capacity to develop the wider reflexive perspective that I was motivated to expand through my roles as instigator, facilitator and ultimately researcher, stood in contrast with the collective capacity emerging from a newly formed group. My realisation that I needed to determine what areas to journey with the group, and what areas I should serve the group as a facilitative forerunner, led me to reconsider how to best utilise the capacities I held.

The issue of cognitive capacities also impacted upon engagement in focused activity and is best illustrated in the first project group where there were clearer variations in cognitive capacity between participants. One participant attended nearly all the
project sessions; this was Bethan. Bethan is a girl with Down’s Syndrome which
affected her cognitively as well as having a hearing impairment for which she wore
hearing aids and used Sign Supported English. Bethan benefited greatly in the
sessions from one-to-one support from Cat.

I let mum know that Cat would be keeping an eye out for her. She responded
positively and said that although Bethan liked me and Bob (she thinks we’re
funny) she has a particular affinity with young women and so mum welcomed
Cat’s involvement.

Bethan engaged enthusiastically in art and play activities but needed great
couragement to engage in more discussion-based parts of the sessions and
her contributions were largely self-referential, based upon basic information about
herself, her home-life and her likes and dislikes. After one such discussion time I
reflect in my research log:

I know that genuinely incorporating Bethan into these discussions will be
challenging, but it certainly helped having Cat there to support her in [re-
explaining more simply] the topics etc.

Initially, I was concerned regarding how a group with such a wide range of capacities
would engage with each other. However, over time Bethan engaged with the other
participants in an increasingly confident way, and the group engaged with Bethan
with a sensitivity which I found both surprising and uplifting. At the start of the sixth
session, the group made a clear statement about valuing Bethan as a participant.

We had Sabrina, Raf, James and Bethan in that order. Beth was late so I said
at about 2:15 shall we start but the group said no lets wait for Bethan. So we
did.

From my record of the first group’s eleventh session, I reflect upon interaction
between Bethan and another participant whilst we talked about pictures Bethan had
taken to include in their film.

I had started the bell rolling with commenting on pictures of Bethan’s party,
who’s in the picture? Is that a friend? etc. But it was great, from my
perspective, how James picked up the gist of the inquiry and started to ask
things as well. His demeanour changed as he asked. There was a very subtle yet careful consideration of Bethan's needs, his level of questioning, and how he engaged.

Bethan's involvement helped me realise that there was seemingly no correlation between cognitive levels and the capacity to engage in activities; it was more about finding one's level of engagement. This realisation signalled a significant change in my attitude towards participant engagement as the project progressed. I began to accept that participants were engaging at their own levels, and when this level did not match my perceived expectations for engagement within a rigorous cooperative inquiry, I realised this did not diminish the value of their own experience of engagement within the project.

5.3.3.2.2 Acknowledging the relationship between power and capacity

From a facilitative stance, I determined that using my wider perspective and the social capital I had accumulated through the development phase, in terms of relevant networks, in order to actualise the plans and wishes of the group seemed an entirely appropriate use of the power that my capacity had afforded me. This led me to a deeper realisation that levels of contextual influence or power are directly related to the capacities one is perceived as possessing.

From the early sessions, the first project group found a common interest in music; unsurprising for a group of young people, although there have been surprised reactions from some lay-quarters given the young people's espoused hearing impairments. However, from the fourth session the participants determined to explore this shared commonality with music more concretely by devising and playing music themselves. Given my own longstanding interest in playing and facilitating music, I was able to provide a range of acoustic, percussive and electric instruments at the sixth session as planned. As I engaged with the young people using music, an activity with which I was very familiar and felt I had a high level of competency, I found that my facilitative style became more directive in an instructional sense.

[1] plugged in the bass...Logan played a few riffs he had learnt/played in his band. Riffs from the likes of Metallica. I played along on the bass. Bob had picked up the harmonica I had brought and was playing that. I had worked out that a blues in 'E' would allow Bob to join in on the 'A' harmonica. I started up a blues riff on the bass. Logan was showing novice competence on the guitar
and was playing riffs over the top. I taught him a bar chord and showed him where to play...We played the blues for a bit, with Sabrina picking out tunes on the piano. I helped her find a pad sound and got her to hold a couple of chords. Bethan was happy to strum on her guitar too...

Given the 'nagging anxieties' I had before the session based upon my perceived lack of control over what might happen, I found I fell into a more directive role very comfortably. However, on reflecting back in my reflexive log I write:

This highlights the area of conflict that I have inside. I know I have the musical knowledge that would help Logen for example play better on the guitar, like teaching him a few chords for example, but I get caught up thinking it’s too influencing to teach him that type of thing – I did anyway.

My dilemma over what in hindsight seemed a perfectly natural response within the context, highlights the path of change I was undergoing through the project in terms of learning how to balance levels of authority within what I felt were conflicting roles whilst remaining authentic to an inquiry method I was attempting to implement, as a novice researcher.

Another useful participant-based example of this relationship between power and capacity is captured in the data through my accounts of the role that one young person, James, played within the OHS project group. James was one of the eldest at the school and the second eldest in the group. He was a proficient BSL user with an air of confidence. James had a girlfriend at the school who was also a project participant. James had also acquired a degree of notoriety the previous year representing Great Britain as a member of the Deaflympics table-tennis team in Taiwan 2009. These factors combined seemed to give James a level of authority in relation to the group which he employed to varying degrees throughout the sessions. In my reflexive log I write about James's involvement in the first session, arranged to plan the project with those who had signed up, I write:

So, there we were, set in a circle on the floor. There was plenty of banter amongst the group as it certainly seemed like they knew each other well anyhow. James seemed to take a position of command in terms of focusing the group's attention towards me...
James’s command within the group continued over the weeks he was present. This led me to reflect upon how power was inherently balanced within such a seemingly close knit school community. My concern was whether a strengths-focused inquiry approach that endeavoured to uphold values of equality, would positively influence the group members in a way that affected a change in their attitudes towards their own contexts. However, James was then absent from the first two proper project sessions and my attempts to facilitate these first two sessions stretched my own skills and capacities more than I was expecting. Following the third session, for which James was once again present, I reflect in my reflexive log:

_There was more order this week with the presence of James. I remembered my initial resistance when I started the project here at OHS to the idea that one group member might be too overpowering. I compared that thought to what I was feeling now, sheer relief that he would no doubt keep order when the group became too disorganised. This is what happened, when it was needed, but [it] was less of a problem due to his very presence._

In growing recognition of the notion that contextualised and appropriately placed authority could be reframed as a useful tool, I adapted my facilitative style to make better use of the existing capacities within the group context.

5.3.3.2.3 Utilising others’ capacities
One key example of utilising others’ capacities was during session 5 at OHS held in the drama studio. The studio was normally a controlled space for the participants who only used it with staff and for specific purposes including assembly. The more liberal use of this space during our sessions had led to the young people choosing to play and explore within the space rather than focus upon the group process. I felt this gave an indication of the participants’ limited capacity to self regulate within a less boundaried context. I decided to utilise James’s influential capacity over the group as a facilitative tool and so proceeded to discuss with him the project’s current situation and future options in order that he may relay this to the other participants.

_ James called order and got everyone to seat on the seats – insisting that everyone did so. He explained to the group what he and I had discussed...James led a discussion with the group about what to do in the next sessions._
Similarly, the apparent desire for the participants within the first project group to both explore the space and engage with each other in play led to continual requests to play hide and seek, which, based on my refusal to commandeer the group process, occurred freely.

The resource capacity within the first project group context was limited to items we brought into the space ourselves. This was in contrast to the OHS context in which resource capacity was greatly increased by relatively liberal access to the school facilities including the art room, the common room, the drama studio and the school fields. In both groups, the occasional use of smaller spaces had a containing effect upon the group process. Reflecting upon the first project group’s fourteenth session in which we met for the first of two sessions in a local recording studio to practice the songs we had developed, I write:

*There was a greater sense throughout the session of containment compared with meeting at [the usual venue]. I feel this is due to a mixture of the physical containment of a smaller space and the containment of a focused activity.*

The acknowledgement in the above excerpt of focused activity, a more structured practical and time-based event within the project context, as a containing medium holds with it two further implications regarding capacity issues that have emerged from the data. The first is with regard to my capacity, and specifically the impact of my own skill-set upon my facilitative style. The second is regarding the impact of participants’ cognitive capacities upon engagement in focused activity.

Ultimately, I recognised the tacit belief I held, that capacities could change and that the project held the salutogenic potential to increase participants’ capacities in some way. In his role within the Sensory Needs Service, Bob’s prior knowledge of some of the young people helped to illuminate some changes he felt were being evidenced among them. I captured in my reflexive research log Bob’s remarks to the Deaf Practitioners meeting regarding one participant.

*I had one girl who was so much trouble in school and after 2 hours she skipped out and expressed herself more clearly than I had ever seen in her before. It was because she was asked to be herself...*
The same girl is captured on the group’s film expressing a view about her own progress:

_ I normally get a detention nearly every week, and I haven’t...yeah, I used to be so naughty._

A final example regarding the young people’s capacity to change, and to change their capacities, is captured in the contrast between the OHS participants’ chaotic engagement throughout many of the sessions and their sheer poise and attentiveness towards each other captured in their project film. Following the session when the young people were filmed, I wrote:

_ What struck me here is how a group that had been over the weeks, squabbling and larking around, seemed to be really engaging in some meaningful discussion. Alex was giving his views and the others were listening for example. Annela was listening attentively to Anas, even though his signing is more basic._

From an occupational perspective, it is clear that levels of engagement in singular and shared activity are strongly influenced by the socio-political and physical contexts we co-habit as well as the capacities we possess both individually and corporately. These findings demonstrate the potential of the facilitator’s role in shaping contexts and utilising capacities to positive effect through a better understanding of the determinants that underpin them.

5.3.3.3 Relating Methods

This construct is the first of two that seek to explore _how we relate_. In turn, _how we relate_ is the first of three exploratory rubrics that constitute the cluster I have termed _performative realisation_. As described earlier in this chapter, the seven constructs in this cluster build upon the _contextual premise_ of relationality. Given this causal relationship, the _performative realisation_ of relationality will hold echoes of the narrative strands described in the first cluster.

In this construct, method refers to the style in which the inquiry process was undertaken. In contrast to chapter 4 of this thesis entitled ‘Multi-Dimensional Method’, which outlines essentially what happened over the course of the inquiry, this
construct presents an analysis of what occurred so as to articulate the agency involved in the process in terms of how it did so.

5.3.3.3.1 The emergence of facilitative scaffolding and deference
In broad terms, my initial approach to the inquiry called upon my professional experience within the therapeutic mode; the same mode that had led me to adopt a cooperative inquiry methodology in the first instance. My personal interpretation of this mode coupled with my reading of cooperative inquiry and its emphasis upon equality of power balances, caused me to assume a non-directive position which I felt at the time was in line with the spirit of cooperative inquiry and participatory research.

As I set about developing, and subsequently co-facilitating the project with Bob, it soon became apparent there were key differences between the therapeutic mode within which I was operating, and the pedagogical mode that Bob as a Teacher of the Deaf, was operating in. These differences were characterised by the degree to which each of us felt the sessions should be steered by ourselves as facilitators, and the level of planning and structure that was required to support the participants through the project. In the initial sessions with the first project group, this was particularly pertinent as I reflect following the first session:

I did find it hard to plan but then, I don't feel bad about this and it's not surprising. In the proposal I wrote that it's an unknown quantity until it starts and this has been true for the planning as well. Now I've done one session, I know the landscape a bit better to plan for the forthcoming sessions. It's the struggle between the prescriptive approach of a teacher which Bob has suggested he struggles with and the need for it to be [young person] led.

I'm trying to bring in the 'inquiry element', the 'reflective' strand and Bob is seeing this as too undynamic, as stalling the natural flow of the project. Maybe he's right in these early stages.

This last excerpt above highlights the crux of the challenge from my perspective: how to develop a degree of reflexive practice amongst the participants; a key component within the action and reflection cycles which are characteristic of cooperative inquiry. The following two excerpts highlight a decision on my part to balance reflexivity with a more directive approach that I was exploring in response to discussions with both
Bob, who was offering valuable insight into the capacities of the young people whom he knew, and my doctoral supervisors.

...discussions I've had, particularly with Bill [doctoral supervisor] today has helped me feel [more] confident about leading on the structure of the session and to some degree the content, but not the [young people's] input. The continual balance between guided directing to unlock the [young people's] thoughts/ideas and presuppositions that can be challenged. Leading on the hunt for presuppositions in what they say and opening it up for discussion/deconstruction...

However, my initial attempts to implement this in practice were somewhat more challenging.

Then I started a re-cap of...what happened last week and the meta-aims of the project. Bob started wincing/fidgeting and his eyebrows said – 'stop explaining and start doing'. This epitomises the dilemma regarding Bob wanting to keep things going, (which I recognise as completely valid) and my aim to build in reflectivity...We went straight into the story game each [young person] saying a word to make up a story. Raf’s response was “we did this at school this week” and then looked like he slumped in his chair a bit. That was a bit of a blow for me. I’m still feeling not that confident with judging what exercises to use, even thinking of any at all.

Although the exercise felt ultimately fruitful, I acknowledged that I was attempting to preface it with a theoretical basis that Bob implied was not successfully pitched. I continued to wrestle as a novice participatory action researcher with the use of this more directive style, such as introducing themes to the sessions, and how this should be best managed. I began to recognise, as it emerged over the next few sessions, how the participants’ were in fact developing their own mechanism or method. The young people were using games as a medium through which to relate with each other as a group on their own terms, working towards their own collective inquiry aim: to understand each other better. Once Bob and I had grasped this, the facilitative role became one of containing their process. I felt more comfortable in steering as opposed to leading the sessions and Bob’s trust of the therapeutic mode developed.

From reflections of discussions Bob and I were having at this time, I wrote:
Bob's input to my thesis – as a teacher we are looking for results so we structure things within a workable time limit... [education] means we have to put things in. [In contrast] We have a space here and we discover it.

It's informing my teaching by realising that education goals are very often achieved in the same time span but at a different pacing and that...if you don't set a goal you may end up at the same place. That's what I'm discovering.

My notation of Bob's assertion captured in the second excerpt above, that educational styles are outcome driven and based upon capacity issues such as time limits, is a moot point, but one which he uses to illustrate by contrast, his realisation that non-directive approaches may reach the same outcome through more deferential means.

No doubt influenced by my involvement in discussions regarding the development and meaning of the 'Our Space' community of practice, I began conceptualising more strongly, the project as a space; drawing on definitions of space from the psychotherapeutic mode. Used in the above excerpt in my description of Bob's views, space became a key metaphor for my personal understanding of the project's method and as a descriptor when conveying the method to others. In my reflections upon how such a space may be developed, engaged with by participants and contained, the notion of a scaffold emerged for me as a way of understanding how my facilitative position best related to the space we had created. Within this characterisation, I used the term scaffold to metaphorically describe a flexible approach that pushes facilitative control to the margins in order to hold open a space for participants to inhabit the project, in a spirit of deference to the participants' own process management and knowledge co-construction.

5.3.3.3.2 Context specific and situationally reactive methods
From this position, facilitation became more about relating to the group within their contextual premise (context and capacities) whilst maintaining a meta-perspective of the project from which to foster opportunities for growth in the direction the participants were wishing to take the project. I conceptualised my approach to facilitative scaffolding and deference as a balance between structured/unstructured session plans, and a directive/non-directive facilitative approach. My exploration of how these conceptual pairs related became central in addressing my concerns.
regarding balances of power and authority whilst maintaining an equitably steered project. This led me to my conceiving and subsequent testing of a facilitated ‘session structuring’ exercise with the co-participants (framed as a tool for engagement within Table 5.4 on page 161). The following excerpt describes this exercise with the first group.

So once we were in a circle... I put forward the idea, reiterating the [young people’s] role in steering the project, that they would structure the session... I rolled out the faithful strip of paper to the side of the group and in the circle of chairs I laid out a number of A4 sheets that I had written words on [that] represented things we had done on previous weeks... there was also a pile of blank sheets and a marker to write with to create new ones that they wanted. There was a bit of staring at the floor and each other, but I didn’t flinch, I made sure they understood that this was about them arranging the next 3 hours for themselves and that they could add any new things as they wanted. I waited. Cat took the initiative and supported Bethan who picked up ‘art activity’ and put it in the middle of the strip... Raf wrote out paper planes and put towards the start of the strip. Sab then picked up ‘game’ and put that at the start of the strip. Momentum was starting to pick up now. Logan picked up discussion time and put that in the first half of the strip. Now all the [young people] had put one down... What was interesting was that they then became engaged with it; they looked at it for a bit, and Sab rearranged it so the breaks were evenly spread out.

Table 5.3 below illustrates the differing positions within the facilitative relationship between session structure and facilitative direction. The above exercise transitioned from: box 1 - in terms of my directive introduction of the exercise; through box 2 - in terms of the co-participants freedom to arrange the session how they chose; to box 3 - whereby the young people employed their own structure with minimal direction from myself. Notably, the session also included pockets of more facilitatively non-directive and unstructured time (box 4) such as breaks and games that the young people instigated.
My attempts to transfer my learning from the above developments in facilitative method to the OHS group serves as a case in point regarding the importance of re-establishing ones relatedness to context and capacity in each new setting. A scaffold must be built based upon the contextual premise upon which it is contingent. This is well illustrated through the excerpts below describing the OHS group’s process towards devising a drama; beginning in the third session.

_We were talking about what to do, and [Lisa] said that the group could create a drama of their experiences at the school...James brought up that the drama would need to be planned. I said that they should go to the other side of the room where there was more space and start planning it, on their own, without me. I wanted to see how they would manage this. George was put in charge as it was her idea. I might have suggested this as a way of circumnavigating the inevitable – James taking the leader role...[Lisa] was doing well at getting ideas out, however, there was a lot of ‘larking about’ too and in a short time, [Lisa] threw in the towel and retreated to a separate sofa on her own..._

At the start of the next session, despite her previous reaction Lisa appeared keen to re-engage the group in the process:

_[Lisa] was setting herself up as the leader for this evening which was great from my perspective. [Lisa] positioned herself in front of the group. I just threw_
in one question to kick things off – what is the aim of the drama? James wrote this on the laptop so it came up on the screen. The self-organisation was very evident and showed a level of motivation towards this that I hadn’t been expecting...From my perspective, I feel I needed to let it run.

I asked the group the occasional reflective question:

I also threw in the question ‘what are you wanting to say?’ to get the group to think of what it was they were wanting to get across to the audience. I didn’t push these agendas, but just tried to drop them in there. Quite quickly, the idea emerged that the group would re-enact situations that had happened to them, and that the group should act themselves rather than act as different characters.

At the next session, after an unstructured start in the drama studio, Lisa took the lead again in developing their ethnodrama. After a while we decided to have a break at which point, the young people took full advantage of being unsupervised by staff.

From this point on the structured activity focusing on the drama fell apart, the group members were chasing each other round the hall, hiding under the pull out seats, going back stage, playing with a hula-hoop they’d found. Furtive eyes were returned to me sporadically, to check if I looked like I minded. I guess I did, but I was also tired, with a headache and this probably showed too. Anas, was coming to me commenting that everyone was acting silly and should he get a teacher? I said not to, it was their group and they could self-organise if they wanted to. Anas seemed quite shocked that I didn’t want him to get a teacher.

The above excerpt portrays certain capacity issues that surfaced during the session. The young people lacked the capacity or motivation to maintain focus and my energy levels were evidently low and lacking the ability to steer the situation toward a positive outcome. This highlights the contrast between the first project group where, in the main, I was not the only adult in the session, and the OHS session where it was most frequently just myself, albeit for a shorter time period. With the support of James, the session did resume order and was brought to a coherent closure. However, the intentional deference approach I had been developing as a component of the facilitative method seemed somewhat naïve in a situation where the context
(being unsupervised in the drama studio) and capacities (being unmotivated by the task) were not balanced. I wrote in my reflexive log:

I realised that this must be one of the rare opportunities the [young people] have to be anywhere without a member of staff. I checked this with Vicky later and she said that it was – they hang around outside on their own, but it’s normally supervised. This links in to previous comments Vicky has made that I’ve documented about the staff being reluctant to let them go.

In my absence, the next session was coordinated by Vicky, the project link, but the participants were reluctant to rehearse their drama. The subsequent week was fruitful but with only three participants, the drama was shelved in favour of a group discussion. The following session was the evening the drama was due to be filmed. My reflexive log continues the drama’s story from near the start of the session, when Lisa approached me to discuss an issue.

She said she felt that the project was bringing things up for her and that [she] was not handling the pressure of everyone else looking to her for leading the session. She said she felt sorry for me, that the other group members were not respecting me during the sessions…She used the example of Annela who was her friend but also relied on her hugely for interpreting for her at school. She felt that the others weren’t pulling their own weight as it were and that they [would] be looking to [Lisa] to explain what things meant.

Lisa’s pronouncement left me feeling convicted of a degree of failure in underestimating the impact of the material the group were re-enacting and not recognising her apparent difficulties over recent sessions. My willingness to support her to undertake what I knew from my own experience was a difficult task in terms of facilitating the group left me reflecting upon my own motives and whether I was placing the outcomes I was hoping to achieve through the project, above the therapeutic process. One issue I did not hold myself responsible for but found compelling, since it had not occurred to me, was the degree to which Lisa felt pressured to support her friend with communication; within a specialist environment that should have been addressing this issue.

As context specific and situationally reactive methods, facilitative scaffolding and facilitative deference offer relational approaches to occupational facilitation that allow
for deeper reflexivity regarding the contextual determinants described in the first section; the utility of power and authority within complex cultural and political contexts.

5.3.3.4 Relating Tools

In this construct, the second to explore how we relate, tools are presented that were used to implement the project method described above. Pragmatically, tools are attributed their myriad roles at the point of relationship between their innate utility and the intentions of the agent. Therefore, in this section I attempt to focus upon tangible components of the agentic process that could be said to enable the method. However, I do include more subtle components to the relational process that may be termed more appropriately as relational approaches.

5.3.3.4.1 Identifying tools for: management; engagement; reflection; representation; investment

Table 5.3 overleaf presents five columns that cluster types of relating tools or approaches which evolved through the analytic process. As I attempted to breakdown the inquiry process into occupationally relevant constituent parts, five categorises emerged that served to describe types of tools: management tools; tools for engagement; reflective tools; tools for representation; tools for investment. The categorisations represented in Table 5.3 stand as a finding in their own right. However, I shall give an overview before explicating certain tools and relationships between them captured within the table.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MANAGEMENT</th>
<th>ENGAGEMENT</th>
<th>REFLECTION</th>
<th>REPRESENTATION</th>
<th>INVESTMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Internet / email</td>
<td>Participants' games:</td>
<td>Reflexive research log (F)</td>
<td>Recorded discussions</td>
<td>Vouchers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community partners (F)</td>
<td>• Splat</td>
<td>Project Advisory Panel</td>
<td>Artistic / written work</td>
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<td>Physical spaces:</td>
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<td>Sketch/notebooks</td>
<td>Cameraer footage</td>
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<td>• Clarendon Centre rooms</td>
<td>• Hide &amp; seek</td>
<td>Discussion time</td>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>• Dale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Art &amp; drama rooms @OHS</td>
<td>• Granny's footsteps</td>
<td>Venn diagrams</td>
<td>Films</td>
<td>• James (photographer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Music studio</td>
<td>Facilitated exercises:</td>
<td>Photographs</td>
<td>Events:</td>
<td>• Media production team</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Media studio</td>
<td>• Island game</td>
<td>‘Post-it’ evaluations</td>
<td>• Deaf Culture Day</td>
<td>Music studio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guiding concepts (F):</td>
<td>• Story game</td>
<td>Dale</td>
<td>• OHS assembly</td>
<td>Media studio</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Space</td>
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<td>• Scaffolding</td>
<td>• Session structuring</td>
<td>Evaluations of film</td>
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<td>Films</td>
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<td>• Deference</td>
<td>Refreshments; food</td>
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<td>Evaluations of film</td>
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<td>• Aesthetics</td>
<td>Musical instruments</td>
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<td>Events:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cameras &amp; Camcorders</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Deaf Culture Day</td>
<td>• Deaf Culture Day</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Drama / acting</td>
<td></td>
<td>• OHS assembly</td>
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</table>

External resources:
- Dale
- James (photographer)
- Media production team
- Media studio

Paper and pens – for mark-making; writing; drawing

Use of selves & self-agency – all participants (including Myself, Cat, Bob)

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Table 5.4 Framework for Relational Tools & Approaches
In this framework, project management tools are categorised as those which supported the management of the project from a facilitatory perspective. Tools for engagement constitute those tools used within the sessions to produce concrete interaction. Reflective tools are those perceived as directly enabling the reflective process. Tools for representation comprise those artefacts that present the project processes and outcomes. I have also categorised the opportunities for these representations, such as organised events, as representational tools within themselves since they equally enable representation to occur. Lastly, the tools for investment category represent a realisation that has emerged more recently. I have understood more experientially, the potential for salutogenic gains to occur through sheer investment in others; if that investment is perceived as a demonstration of care. Therefore, these investment tools constitute components of the method that embody a willingness from participants to invest in each other; an act that, when acknowledged by participants themselves, has the potential for an increased sense of coherence and self-worth.

From a project management perspective, both material and abstract tools served to facilitate the project’s process. The framing of physical space as a tool is based upon both the constraining and enabling power that the project’s material environment had upon the participants which I described through the earlier context and capacity constructs.

With regard to the music and media production studios, their specific uses led to a more focused level of activity engagement from the first project group participants who attended those sessions. Therefore the conceptualisation of these spaces as tools for engagement seems natural. Additionally, their value as investment tools is inferred through the not insubstantial financial investment required to make these resources available to the young people. This was equally true of most of the other external resources made available at the young people’s request. The use of these resources sent a message to the project participants that their ideas and endeavours were worth spending the funding on!

From a meta-perspective, emerging concepts were being implemented by myself as tools to guide the facilitatory method. No doubt the other participants were developing conceptual tools, perhaps more tacitly, that underpinned the tools they used for engagement. For instance, the young people appeared to find a common
language in modes of play, utilising games to engage with each other on common ground.

Tools for reflection varied in their origins. However, although the young people were, in the most part, happy to engage in the reflective process, these tools were seldom initiated by the young people themselves. At a midpoint within the project, I introduced a reflective exercise into both groups based on the principle of a Venn diagram in an attempt to harness the tacit exploration of commonality and diversity that I felt was emerging from their discussions. The exercise explored, by way of visual representation, areas of commonality and diversity between participants. I describe its initial use with the OHS group in the following excerpt.

I used the overlapping of circles in a Venn diagram style to describe how although group members were different, there were areas of commonality that could be explored. This would be in order to help the group arrive at a common theme on which to base their initial inquiry from which point ideas could be explored about how this theme is explored and how findings are represented and presented. James, seemed to take hold of the idea and literally took hold of the pen, turning the flipchart paper I was using over and drawing another Venn with two overlapping circles: one marked James and one marked Anas, he used this as an example to explain that he and Anas have different interests but also similar interests.

A more light-hearted example of diversity was highlighted through use of the Venn diagram with the first project group:

I asked where Logan’s love of heavy metal would fit and [it] was unanimously placed into the ‘only Logan’ part of his circle.

In the spirit of cycles of action and reflection, opportunities for reflection with the participants were used, where possible, as springboards for further action. One key component of this further action was the capturing of the reflective content, either by recording the discussions or creative writing or drawing, to include in a final product depending on which way the participants chose to take the project.

In a similar notion to ‘living books’ (www.humanlibrary.org), I utilised Dale, a 23 year old member of the project advisory panel with hearing impairment and a strong
interest in music, as a resource for the first group participants to access during two sessions. Such a tool opened up discussion times, with a degree of facilitation from myself.

The evaluation processes occurred both internally, from participants at the end of sessions, and externally through responses to a film evaluation that participants from the OHS group devised. These opportunities allowed for corporate reflexivity regarding the process and for future planning. Additionally, from my perspective the sessional evaluations acted as a barometer to gauge how the project was being received by the participants.

5.3.3.4.2 Salutogenic use of selves
Underpinning all five of the tool categorisations represented in Table 5.3 is the use of self which speaks to the individuals’ agency that has, in turn, contributed to each corporate group identity. Excerpts have been provided in this chapter that facilitate demonstrate how the affect of all participants impacted both directly and indirectly upon each other and the wider context through the expression of individual personality traits, strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, the use of self has been axiomatic in all modes of participation throughout the project and closely related, from a psychosocial perspective, to the concept of relationality. It is noteworthy that from an occupational therapy perspective, the term use of self has predominantly focused upon the role of the facilitator within professional discourses (Taylor, 2008). I believe the project has illuminated both the utility and agency of all participants, adults and young people alike, to gain health and well-being benefits from experiencing the effect of their own agency upon their surroundings. Adding this relational dimension to the occupational perspective of engagement, broadens the scope of occupational therapy to perceive therapeutic intervention on a more equitable basis. This echoes the tenets of cooperative inquiry in which all participants are perceived equally as research tools – taking on the role of both researcher and subject. Ultimately, my use of self within the facilitative role was adequately matched by the participants’ use of self to engage one another, and I feel their personalities shine out in both project films.

5.3.3.5 Relating through Identities

This construct is the first of two that seek to explore what we relate, the second of three exploratory rubrics within the performative realisation cluster.
The use of the phrase ‘exploring identity’ was instigated by myself during the developmental phase of the project as a descriptor of the inquiry’s aims used within publicity and information material. This was on the premise that the phrase held some utility in focusing upon personhood, steering project stakeholders away from an incorrect assumption that hearing impairment was the main focus of the project. I felt the ambiguity of the word ‘identity’ allowed it to speak to multiple audiences whilst remaining suitably general. For example, I hoped that for young people it might illicit an interpretation pertaining to cultural image, whereas for the Deaf community I felt sure it would speak to the political discourse surrounding deafness. Interestingly, within the school context, I found the term ‘identity’ was connected most strongly to issues regarding self-esteem. Although I became increasingly aware of the complexity surrounding the interpretation of ‘identity’, I believe that it served its purpose within the context of the project – if nothing else, as a springboard for useful debate and discussion.

In the formulation of this construct, I have drawn deductively upon the concepts of representation and affect. These concepts frame identity as what is perceived of us, both by ourselves and by others, a definition I felt strongly resonated with both my own social constructivist approach to the research and my subsequent use of the term identity when developing the purpose of the inquiry with my co-participants.

5.3.3.5.1 Political and cultural nature of identity
To this end, identity as an expression of personhood can be multiple, individual and corporate, context dependent, and remains in continual flux. The balance between identities we choose to express ourselves through and those we are bestowed with, consensually or otherwise, has emerged as a key issue within the project and subsequent analysis.

The project’s premise to ‘explore ourselves’, gave rise to some initial consternation from Bob who felt at first this was too open-ended. After the first session I reflect:

...as Bob has also said, the brief of the project is a strange breed (I haven’t got a handle on whether he’s for it or against). The project invites young people to join to explore ‘being themselves’
Presented with the invitation to explore identities, the first project group began a line of inquiry from their very first session that recurred intermittently throughout the course of the sessions.

James brought up the relationship between adults and teenagers. Mainly, the adult feeling threatened by teenagers when out in the street. But, that actually, teenagers are often misunderstood and are normal people too. Logan agreed with this and saw how he could be viewed as threatening. We practiced our threatening stares at each other which created humour with Bob doing some role-play.

My decision to initially frame the project around identity felt more vindicated by the fact that this first fledgling discussion group focused upon concerns that were not related to hearing.

5.3.3.5.2 Choosing identities and challenging labels
Group discussions towards the latter stages of the project, some of which were edited into the first project group film, similarly focused upon issues of social categorisation and labelism. Additionally, from their own initiative, an exploration of disability and their views about hearing impairment, that challenged perceived stereo-types, also became a part of their message within the film.

Savannah: Well, there’s a girl at my school that’s in a wheelchair, and...she tends to say that a lot of boys tend to, like, really be mean to her. Maybe it’s just because she’s just in a wheelchair and no one else is. In my opinion I think that like, if someone’s in a wheelchair, never think ‘Oh, they’re just really weak, they can’t do anything’.

James: I’ve learnt that having a hearing problem doesn’t have to hinder you in doing what you want to do in life. And, you can still do your hobbies and what you want to do. Like, Logan, he still plays rock and heavy metal and all that kind of stuff despite his hearing problems.

The above two excerpts, taken from the film transcript, demonstrate clearly how an initial open-ended exploration of identity became for the group, a space to explore more complex issues of commonality and diversity.
5.3.3.5.3 Commonality and diversity

The participants explored to surprising depths, cultural attitudes towards appearance and a spirit of distrust that they observed within society around them. In both project groups, identities were expressed to some degree through commonalities and differences. Within the first project group, commonalities were explored as part of the group forming process. This exploration was essentially realised through creating shared experiences, for example through engaging in games such as hide and seek and later, playing music together. Differences were expressed through individual interests, for example, Logan’s passion for ‘metal core’ music or Bethan’s love of drawing. It felt that there was little if any sense of a shared deaf identity within the first group, however there was a strong shared motivation towards meeting others that shared their problem. When responding to the question ‘See Yourself – why are we here?’ during the post-it evaluation at the end of several sessions, a number of responses captured this shared desire:

- ‘I enjoyed interacting with people similar to me in a chilled out environment’
- ‘Because I want to see other people with the same problems as me and how they deal with it’
- ‘To discuss problems and solutions about living with a hearing disability with people of a similar age group; making new friends and having fun!!’
- ‘To discover who we are and find out about ourselves’
- ‘To reflect on ourselves’
- ‘Getting to know each other’
- ‘Exploring what other people’s lives are like’

Similarly, during the first group’s fourth session, one young person felt comfortable enough to respond candidly to a question posed by another participant at the start of a discussion time.

Logan brought the question over to the group and said “This can start the ball rolling…what would you wish for?”. I took the chance to reiterate the rules regarding the confidentiality of the group and respecting what others say. Then [name removed] came out with “I’d wish for more friends”. This felt quite immense although [name removed] said it in [their] matter of fact way…I felt this was an appropriate time to ask the group why they were here, involved in
the project. Raf said it was to make/meet new friends and Logan said it was to meet other people with similar issues.

Another participant felt they could be honest in expressing a more sensitive issue about herself through the reflection, making reference to home on two separate session evaluations.

- ‘fun without your parents, bored; hate home’
- ‘we are bored at home so we come’

I felt concerned with the last two responses. Regarding the first of them, I wrote in my reflexive log:

...this last one seems very telling. It was put there by [name] after I was pursuing [them] to think I bit deeper about why [they] came. [They] put it on the sheet then looked at me as if to say, ‘there, happy now?’ or ‘there you go, what do you think about that?’

I discussed the responses with Bob who offered some insight into the participant’s background and we felt the most appropriate course of action was to monitor the participant and be open to discussing with them any issues if they approached us. This highlighted for me the dilemma of where my own professional identity as a Child and Adolescent Mental Health practitioner fitted within the project. I was comfortable dealing with similar comments from young people when working with them within the boundaries of a designated role, but within the project, I felt I held a very different identity, and consequently a different relationship with the participants. The inquiry was created outside the parameters of an NHS service. From the participants’ perspective, my knowledge regarding child and adolescent mental health was not primarily why I was there, and I had not championed that representation of myself, for fear of being unnecessarily cast as an authority figure, something I was already working to counteract.

5.3.3.6.4 Individual and collective identity

The OHS project group’s expression of identity appeared at times more introspective in terms of its focus upon both Deaf identity and their community identity within the school. These were clear collective identities that the group shared, expressed vividly in their final film. However, individual expressions of this identity varied. For
example, there appeared a strong correlation between espoused Deaf identity and the participants’ signing ability. The differences in styles at OHS ranged from participants who were predominantly signing and had less developed spoken English, to those who had a strong coherence of spoken English but lacked signing ability.

5.3.3.5.5 Expression of affect

My attempts to avoid being unnecessarily cast as an authority figure developed a deeper reliance upon my own affect and sensibilities. This led to some difficult reflection-in-action regarding how to balance my natural affection as a genuine rapport grew with the participants, with maintaining appropriate boundaries. One example of how affect related to perceived identity, this time between participants, occurred with the OHS group during the second session. This was the evening when the group began responding to the news that their school would be closing at the end of the year.

At one point around the table, [young person] began to cry. When the group realised that he was really crying, they gathered around him clucking like hens and showed him affection. Annela scooped him up and cuddled him asking what was wrong. He said it was the impact of the discussion around the school closing. What was interesting about this, was that [young person] was not engaging much in the conversation, and using distracting techniques yet he was obviously taking it all in.

After the session, I reflected upon the incident in an email to the project link, Vicky who replied:

...the group seems a great space to explore feelings around the closure. The students here have always been supportive of each other and it’s really good to hear [young person] feels safe enough to show his emotions within the group.

Amongst staff and pupils, the young person’s identity was reportedly characterised by his often challenging behaviour which regularly led to responses that appeared to leave him feeling reproached and isolated. The young person’s presenting of affect in the way described above created an opportunity for a different response to him to be expressed by other participants.
5.3.3.6 Relating through Products and Outcomes

This construct is the second to explore what we relate within the performative realisation cluster, focusing upon what is related through both the products and the outcomes of the project. In this context, the term ‘product’ is used to indicate more tangible artefacts that have emerged from the project such as the two films or this thesis, for example. In contrast, the term ‘outcome’ offers a broader perspective, encompassing impacts from the research that may be less prominent but no less significant.

My own concerns with finishing the project well were certainly borne out through a degree of focus upon intentional aestheticism; by attempting to produce a product that used aesthetics to engage the viewer with its message. I felt vindicated in this approach by the response the OHS group’s film in particular received from various quarters. The response from the OHS participants’ first viewing (captured in the excerpt below) led to their desire to present the film at their assembly.

So we put [the film] on and they responded very well to it. They got into it, and applauded me at the end when my name came up on the credits. James said it was brilliant; [Lisa] said it really captured the youth feel... I asked them what they wanted to do with the project next [or if] they felt the film was enough. The group that was there said the film was enough and that they were very pleased with it. [Lisa] said that they could screen it at assembly and we agreed that I would arrange this with Vicky.

Feedback I received on my next visit to the school following the film’s screening at assembly was equally positive:

One of first things [Vicky] said was that there wasn’t a dry eye in the house after the screening. She said that the yp themselves introduced it and then at the end asked the audience some questions. Vicky had written out a sheet...

Rob

After the DVD the group asked:
‘what did you think?’
- fantastic
- brilliant
- very good

'what was best bit?'
- everything
- talking about the future
- talking about when they found out they were deaf
- communication good (BSL & speaking)

'what could be improved?'
- nothing!

Not a dry eye in the drama hall Rob!! They loved it!

The school Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator also commented about the film stating:

…it was obvious it had been steer with a ‘light touch’ and that it really reflected the views and work of the young people. She said the comments from staff were very positive and that they all wanted copies. She left asking Claire to write me a formal letter saying thank you and including a summary of reflections and comments from staff.

I subsequently showed the film to two of my doctoral cohort peers at our next study day.

I showed Ralph and Carol the OHS film and Ralph welled up, which I was generally happy with as a response! He said it was truly moving and made his work seem meaningless. Carol commented that before there was always a slight anxiety about ‘where is Rob headed with all this’ and now that was no longer an issue. The video held weight.

5.3.3.6.1 Facilitative balance between process and product
The balance between creating an aesthetically pleasing product whilst also maintaining authentic participation in the process towards its production, was another facilitatory task I grappled with during the project. The OHS film features questions, responses, discussions and section headings that were the work of the young
people. However, the task of then editing the filmed footage into a succinct narrative that held the essence of what I believed to be the young people’s message, was a role I undertook due to sheer time constraints before the Deaf Culture Day screening. Similarly, with the first group’s film, after the young people had chosen the photographs they wanted to use, it was I who compiled them and edited our recorded discussions into a narrative stream.

The main difference with the first project’s film, is that all the material used (visual, dialogue and music) had been created by the participants over the course of the project and therefore captured aspects of the project’s process more clearly. Understandably, the film content therefore appeared less professionally produced and some feedback, including from the participants, focused on comparisons between the films, inferring that the first project film was of a poorer production quality.

From my facilitatory perspective, this highlights a main difference between the two projects in terms of identifiable gains: that the first project seemed more focused upon the impact of the process, and the second, characterised by the impact and legacy of the product. This balance of outcomes between the projects is shown in Table 5.5, presenting examples of how the first project group predominantly related through greater investment in inquiry process components, such as the development of music, and how the second group related more concretely through its final product, the film.
Table 5.5 Groups’ Relationship to Process and Product

5.3.3.6.2 The utility of product to enhance the effect of process

The four OHS participants that attended their final project session corroborated the significance of the final product through honest feedback:

* I asked about the project as a whole and what they thought of it. There seemed to be a bit of reluctance or hesitation. Alex said that he enjoyed it.
Annela said that it was a mix, sometimes good and sometimes boring. I said it was important that they were honest and Gina said that they didn’t want to upset me. I reiterated how important it was to hear their honest views. Chris then said, well sorry, but some of it was crap if I’m honest. He said that creating the DVD was good and writing things down on the big piece of paper was good. Alex said that the 1st week was good, then there was 3 weeks of arguing which wasn’t fun [that’s when they were creating the drama] and then the DVD which was good.

Attempts to reflect on these comments with the young people themselves, was curtailed by their desire to discuss plans for Chris’s leaving party later that evening. I reflected upon this feedback from the OHS project in my reflexive log:

I feel my attempts [to] facilitate a group that became self motivated and self governing had not been so successful in the long term. However, the tasks they enjoyed seemed to be the quick win, instant satisfaction ones such as the writing on the big sheet, the DVD in a night and not the long planning of a drama. They did not hold the capacity to manage a bigger project and so if there was not an adult to hold this process more firmly, it fell into frustration which is what seemed to happen and arguably why [Lisa] left. The [young people] seemed to need the adult ingredient to manage the group dynamics and act as referee when necessary.

The above reflection highlights my difficulties in managing the complex relationship between the methods that steered the process and the resultant outcomes.

5.3.3.6.3 Determining what is left once the scaffold is removed
By drawing upon the scaffold concept as described in the ‘relating methods’ section, outcomes may be usefully described as what is left once the scaffold is taken away. At a collaborative level, a coherent cooperative inquiry group that has developed into a self-sustaining entity, would be described as a positive outcome or product of the research. This was not the case for either of the projects, despite my discussions with the Sensory Needs Service regarding how they may continue to build on the successes of the first project. I captured their reply in my reflexive log; one which echoes a position I have found to be characteristic of statutory services.
The team were keen to be thinking how the work could be continued. They explained that the difficulty was of course time and budget. There was not a central venue they could use and they recognised that planning and running a group was obviously very time consuming. I expressed much empathy and explained I was in the same boat with my own job. They seemed keen on the one hand and pessimistic on the other. I talked about using the [young people] who had been part of this project as leaders or advisors for future projects... But I have a nagging feeling that little may come of it, basically due to time issues and the commitment.

5.3.3.7 Motivations

This construct is the first of three to explore how we relate, the third and final rubric of the performative realisation cluster. Given the reflective tenor of how we relate, these three final constructs are more concise given that there will be further reflective and critical discussion of the findings in the next section. There will be fewer excerpts from the data as much of what is focused upon will refer to situations already described in excerpts that have featured earlier in the chapter. For the purposes of addressing how we relate within the project context, the construct of 'motivations' outlines the reasons that underpinned participants' levels of engagement.

5.3.3.7.1 Discerning commonalities

Responses to the question 'why are we here?' put to the first project group have been presented in an earlier section. These responses demonstrated a clear desire to seek commonalities with peers that broached sensitive issues of potential vulnerability. In the OHS setting where such shared experience was already commonplace, motivation to attend appeared to be based on the desire for the young people to engage with each other within a different kind of space than would normally be afforded them at the school. As news of the school closure emerged, the group also appeared motivated to use this space as a vehicle for peer-support through the exploration and expression of feelings. However, this engagement remained contingent upon my facilitation. Across both, the desire to make sense of experience was a common thread.

Although each participant held their own reasons for engaging with the project, an inescapable truth that overshadowed both groups was the fact that my motivations were principally different in nature, given that I was a researcher undertaking the
project, ultimately to achieve an academic qualification. Given the risk of inequalities that this major difference potentiated, I became increasingly concerned with scrutinising my decisions for any that inferred I may be steering the projects towards self-serving goals. In my reflexive log I reflect how at one point, a participant from the first project group exposed me to my innermost fear through an off-the-cuff comment:

I think I suggested the question “why are we here at See Yourself?” to which Raf casually replied, almost as if to himself, “…to help Rob get his PhD”...

5.3.3.7.2 Motivational links with capacity; identity; process; product
I have mentioned a correlation between the capacity to commit to a task and motivation to do so, in the earlier construct ‘relating through identities’. This relationship characterised my engagement with the project at times when my capacity to invest into the project in terms of time and energy, despite difficulties, setbacks and despondency, was sustained only by my desire to complete the research. The motivations underpinning the participants’ investment in the process and product, to differing degrees, has been described in the previous section.

With regard to payment, the choice to remunerate participants from the first project group with vouchers for their accumulated attendance helped to maintain a level of commitment from some participants. However, there was no evidence that it became a driving factor for them and was seldom mentioned by participants during sessions. Vouchers were not offered at the OHS project given the school-based nature of the sessions, as described in the earlier Method chapter. However, there may well have been a greater level of sustained commitment to the project sessions had they been.

From a conceptual point of view, motivation can be seen as a force, either pulling the participants towards, or pushing them away from either the project or other external contexts. This is represented in Table 5.6 which sets within a framework, determinants captured in the data that were perceived to motivate participants to either attend (top left and bottom right areas) or not attend (top right and bottom left areas).
Table 5.6 *Push and Pull Factors*

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<th>ATTENDING PROJECT</th>
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<td>• School work commitments</td>
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<td>• Shared commonality</td>
<td>• Competing interests / hobbies</td>
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<td>• Interest in activities</td>
<td>• Withdrawn by parents</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Building friendships</td>
<td>• Moving to another school</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sense of obligation</td>
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<td>• Sense of enjoyment</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PULLING TOWARDS</th>
<th>PUSHING AWAY FROM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of structure</td>
<td>• Bored at home</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Bullying</td>
<td>• Made to attend by staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Difficulty coping</td>
<td>• Lack of connectedness elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of interest</td>
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</table>

5.3.3.8 Relational Learning

This construct is the second to explore *how we relate*, focusing upon the patterns of learning embedded within the project. These patterns encompass: the experiential learning embodied by the act of participation within the project; knowledge exchanges and reciprocal learning that occurred both explicitly and tacitly through participant interaction within context; boundary encounters (Wenger, 1999), whereby differing assumptions or approaches to learning came together; and the salutogenic properties of learning – both innate and outcome dependent.

I have already highlighted the first project group participants’ desire to meet peers with similar issues as themselves. However, the methods that most effectively fostered such reciprocal experiential learning were still emerging as the project took shape. In my reflexive log, I reflect upon how my introduction of Photovoice to the group, as an example of visual documentary that the participants could explore, awoke in me a realisation of how I could support the participants to learn about, and from, each other.
I explained the concept [of Photovoice] and we discussed the idea of capturing our lives in pictures and sharing our identity with others in the group. Sharing with others in the group felt like a last minute bend in the road. At first I was looking straight ahead at 'output' - thinking of how to create the exhibition, but then something in my head thankfully reminded me that it's about the process...not necessarily the end product and that actually sharing pictures amongst themselves and letting this be a way of sharing and opening up to each other was more important and more congruent with why they wanted to be part of this group.

This realisation, concerning the relationship between process and product described earlier, guided my subsequent attempts to engender reciprocal learning such as the Venn diagram exercise, discussion times that focused upon sharing experiences and the large communal piece of paper and pens used with the OHS group to collaboratively explore and express their feelings about the school closure.

Despite both being fundamentally based upon the act of learning, the clash of therapeutic and pedagogic facilitation styles, described earlier, represented a significant boundary encounter within the project for myself and Bob through which Bob stated he was learning a lot; a sentiment that I wholeheartedly reciprocated.

The potential use of the groups' ultimate product, their films, as learning tools was consummated by the Sensory Needs Service's desire to use them for training purposes (for both staff and young people) and the positive feedback they garnered from attendees at the Deaf Culture Day, the OHS assembly and subsequent comments posted onto the Sussex Deaf History website pages where the films are now hosted.

5.3.3.8.1 Tacit cycles of action & reflection affecting all participants
Participants' learning through their engagement with more formal cycles of action and reflection within the project's group processes, is harder to evidence. My belief from immersing myself analytically in the data and through firsthand experience of the phenomena which I represented through the data, is that the degree to which each participant underwent these cycles was contingent upon their own capacities and governed by the level at which the participants operated as a collaborative group. The extent to which the groups partook in a co-operative inquiry as opposed to a participatory action research project is debatable. There was little opportunity
afforded within the sessions to engage participants in challenging each other’s assumptions or taking a ‘devil’s advocate’ position as outlined by the authors of the cooperative inquiry methodology (Heron, 1995). However, I feel that examples of participants’ learning and knowledge exchange have been evidenced in this chapter. The first project group were clear on their intentions for the group, to learn from peers with similar issues, and this occurred. The OHS group used their more productive sessions to discuss and reflect upon their positions in the shadow of the pending school closure. Ultimately, both groups created a final product that, to greater or lesser degrees, have sparked further cycles of discussion, action and reflection within their wider communities.

From a personal perspective, it is much easier to demonstrate the cycles of action and reflection that I underwent as I implemented facilitative methods within the project, reflecting upon them and altering my facilitative style accordingly. Subsequent analysis of the data and production of a written text is further testament to this cyclic process.

5.3.3.9 Connecting

This final construct pertaining to why we related serves as a last word regarding the findings, and is offered from a wider reflexive perspective than the other constructs up to this point. This construct builds upon the salutogenic value claim outlined at the beginning of this chapter; that cultural and social connectedness holds potential for well-being and human flourishing. The construct has been borne from an intuitive sense that the relational desire for connection with one’s context, and with those in it, has been a significant force underpinning why the myriad participants and stakeholders related throughout the project.

5.3.3.9.1 Desire to be known

The drive that all project participants exhibited to ‘be known’ – to understand and be understood – appears evident in their willingness to share common space as a group, their desire to express thoughts and feelings with each other, their motivation to affect others through their own agency and to be reciprocally affected. This speaks of an innate need, on the part of participants including myself and others within a facilitative role, to elicit a level of acceptance within specific community settings.
The distinct yet overlapping community contexts within the project included: the first project community; the Ovingdean Hall School community; the Deaf professionals community; the 'Our Space' community of practice; the wider Deaf community; and the academic community. Some of these contexts were directly involved in the project, others were more peripheral. Regarding the community contexts engaged directly with the project, where acceptance was experienced, commitment to these communities occurred, where it was not found, or participants lacked the capacity and subsequent motivation to continue seeking it, attrition occurred. Such acceptance was negotiated between agents and was contingent upon: the contextual premise within which we related; what we related; and how we related it.

5.3.3.9.2 Corporate and individual acceptance (or lack of)

Situations where positive corporate acceptance appeared to be reinforced have been evidenced in some of the excerpts within this chapter such as the OHS group's experience of presenting at their school assembly, or both groups receiving feedback for their films from the Deaf Culture Day. Individual acceptance has also been evidenced through, for example, the first project participants' relationship with Bethan in light of her special needs or through the OHS participants' reaction to the young person who became visibly upset about the school closure.

Situations have also been evidenced where lack of acceptance was perceived, such as: Lisa's disengaging from the OHS project; disparities in participants' levels of communication within the OHS group that were negatively highlighted by co-participants; my own sense of exclusion from the OHS group as an outsider; and the stories of bullying within mainstream settings described by the OHS participants in their film. These stories highlighted the young people's lack of acceptance elsewhere, which led them to seek refuge within a more accepting community such as OHS – one they ultimately chose to describe as their Deaf family. Ultimately, the closure of OHS itself is likely to have been perceived as a lack of acceptance or a rejection at some level by pupils and staff.

5.3.3.9.3 Reconsidering binary perceptions

My own reconsidering of binary perceptions is described earlier in this chapter as I transitioned from a binary perspective of conceptual pairings captured in Table 5.1 towards a clearer sense of their relatedness and the capacity to consider both simultaneously from a facilitative perspective. This chapter has also captured the
attitudes of the co-participants through their demonstration of a deeper, nuanced understanding of issues relating to social and cultural issues.

5.3.3.9.4 Connecting theory with action
Throughout the project, the participants demonstrated how their own ideas and views were played out in action through the ways they related both to each other and to the activities. From my perspective, this thesis represents a cross-fertilisation between theory and action in its own right. My use of both deductive and inductive processes throughout the action and reflection cycles of the project itself and my subsequent analysis of the process as a discrete phenomena, also point to a healthy interface between the theories I reflexively considered most relevant and the actions I sought to undertake.

5.4 Summary of Findings

This chapter has been an attempt to capture the essence of the research and relay the tensions that exist when trying to conjoin the roles of co-researcher, co-facilitator and co-subject. I have striven to blend both strands of the research, the collaborative project and my singular inquiry relating to the research question, whilst also attending to both project sites in equal measure.

I have presented findings and realisations that have emerged from an account of the research process through the lens of relationality. Subsequently, relationality has been presented as a meta-finding, and the process by which it emerged has also been described. I have introduced relationality as a concept that represents a systemic bringing together of intra-personal, inter-personal and person-object processes. Through the critical application of this concept to the data set, I have presented the constructs that have emerged and described them within subdivisions that represent the determinants of relationality. Excerpts from the data set have been used to demonstrate the authenticity of these determinants and have inscribed a deeper meaning to, and further understanding of, my experience and perception of the research encounter which I hope to test further within future practice settings.

Table 5.7 (p.184) presents the resultant determinants of relationality, set against their respective relational constructs, that encapsulate the meaning inferred from the data
set and demonstrated through the data excerpts. Although numerable, these determinants constitute a summary of the key research findings pertaining to relationality that may act as guiding principles for future practice strategies. Based on the experience I have gained in this research context, I would suggest that a greater awareness of all the above determinants of relationality within occupational therapy practice holds the potential to enhance the collaborative therapeutic relationship, both individually and group-based, through a better grasp of the issues being addressed, and richer salutogenic benefits for the therapeutic participants.

However, not all of the determinants presented in Table 5.7 will be discussed in the next chapter, due to the capacity limit of this thesis. Those not covered in this chapter, will need to be explored in future academic papers.

5.4.1 Emergent Key Findings

In particular, I believe that a deeper understanding of how to foster scaffolding and deference as facilitative approaches, would significantly strengthen a person-centred approach to occupational therapy practice. These determinants have emerged as the principle approaches to relating that bridge the contextual premise and the performative realisation of relationality. On the one hand, the facilitative scaffolding of activities and a deferential approach to that scaffolding process, foster an innate sensitivity towards the contexts and capacities that form the contextual premise. On the other hand, these approaches act as a gateway to understanding how we may relate and what we relate, performatively within context.

In the next chapter I shall discuss the key constructs and determinants, in relation to literature pertaining to both occupational therapy and wider spheres. From the discussion, I will seek to draw conclusions that respond directly to the research question.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Constructs</th>
<th>Determinants of Relationality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Relating in context | • Balances of power and authority.  
• Social complexity; cultural contexts; political contexts. |
| Relating to/through capacities | • Facilitating with and within varied capacities.  
• Acknowledging relationship between power and capacity  
• Utilising others’ capacities. |
| Relating methods | • Facilitative scaffolding.  
• Facilitative deference.  
• Context specific and situationally reactive methods. |
| Relating tools | • Co-creating tools.  
• Identifying tools for: management; engagement; reflection; representation; investment.  
• Salutogenic use of selves. |
| Relating through identities | • Political and cultural nature of identity.  
• Choosing identities / challenging labels.  
• Commonality and diversity.  
• Individual and collective identity.  
• Expression of affect. |
| Relating through products / outcomes | • Facilitative balance between process and product.  
• The utility of product to enhance effect of process.  
• Determining what is left once the scaffold is removed. |
| Motivations | • Discerning commonalities.  
• Motivational links with capacity; identity; process; product. |
| Relational learning | • Tacit cycles of action & reflection affecting all participants corporately and individually. |
| Connecting | • Desire to be known.  
• Corporate and individual acceptance (or lack of).  
• Reconsidering binary perceptions.  
• Connecting theory with action. |

Table 5.7: Summary of Key Constructs and Determinants of Relationality described as findings
6. Further Critical Discussion

6.1 Introduction

In the last chapter, I described findings emerging from a salutogenic approach to developing and facilitating a cooperative inquiry with young people. I outlined the emergence of relationality as a meta-finding that served as a lens through which further findings evolved from my analysis of the data set. I suggested that further exploring what I have termed the determinants of relationality could potentially enhance collaborative therapeutic relationships within occupational therapy practice and lead to richer health and well-being benefits for participants.

In this chapter, I explore further deductions developed in relation to the wider literature. Not all of the determinants presented in Table 5.7 (p.184) can be examined here due to the capacity limit of this thesis. Those not covered in this chapter, need to be explored in future academic papers. However, scaffolding and deference, have emerged as two of the most pragmatic determinants of relationality in facilitating a transition from client-centred practice to person-centred practice within the inquiry context and are therefore given prominence in this chapter. Similarly, the determinants that have emerged from the key construct relating through products / outcomes are felt to have been particularly significance in guiding meaningful engagement.

However, these determinants are not merely discussed here in turn, but are instead, embedded in a farther reaching discourse. The key literature that supports a wider contextual understanding of the issues pertaining to fostering scaffolding and deference as facilitative approaches, and their relationship with products and outcomes, is critically examined across two section headings: 'Highlighting Hegemonic Discourses' and 'A Relationship between Process and Product'. These sections represent a further layer of higher order conceptualisation that builds upon my findings in order to support their critical application within practice, of these most prominent determinants. Table 6.1 demonstrates how these two sections relate to the relationality framework presented within the last chapter.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATIONALITY</th>
<th>QUESTIONS</th>
<th>KEY CONSTRUCTS</th>
<th>HIGHER-ORDER CONCEPTUALISATIONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who relates / who we are in relation to ‘other’</td>
<td>Relating in context</td>
<td>Highlighting Hegemonic discourses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Where we relate</td>
<td>Relating to/through capacities</td>
<td>• Experiential and Professional Knowledge in Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• When we relate</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Deafness within hearing-centric contexts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performative Realisation</td>
<td>• How we relate</td>
<td>Relating methods</td>
<td>Relationship between process and product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What we relate</td>
<td>Relating tools</td>
<td>• Activity-based Group Inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Why we relate</td>
<td>Relating through identities</td>
<td>• Occupation as a Means and an End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Relating through products / outcomes</td>
<td>• Scaffolding and Deference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Motivations</td>
<td>• The Product as Artefact</td>
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<td>Relational learning</td>
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</table>
6.2 Parameters of the Question and Subsequent Discussion

This thesis gives a postcritically informed response to the question: What can occupational therapy practice assimilate from participatory inquiry methods? Here 'occupational therapy practice' relates predominantly to my own field of professional practice as an occupational therapist and primary mental health worker within the child and adolescent mental and emotional health and well-being domain. 'Participatory inquiry methods' correspond to the intervention utilised within this inquiry. When asking what can be assimilated from one to the other, I assume a meaning of the term assimilate that infers an absorption of experiential knowledge from one field of knowledge into one's own existing knowledge base, demonstrable through the practical outworking of such knowledge in one's own practice; consummated as practical knowing (Heron, 1996). The pragmatic tenor of this process renders it to be largely contextual and therefore, the extent to which such practical knowledge is generalisable beyond its localised context is debatable.

There is a need for parameters that demarcate the spheres of literature used to develop further deductions from the findings. The spheres of practice theory I have accessed include the following domains: psychosocial occupational therapy; occupational science; educational pedagogy; participatory inquiry; psychotherapy; and wider spheres of social science including anthropology and sociology. However, there is a purposeful steer towards literature from the occupational therapy domain, even in sections where occupational theory or practice may not be directly referred to.

6.3 Describing a Deductive Approach

As a final introductory point, a central premise underpinning how I have approached further critical discussion of the findings has been my choice of certain terms to describe the concepts, constructs and determinants I have sought to develop. Embedded in my own cycles of action and reflection, these initial choice points became key to the deductive strand of my analytic method as I searched for existing theory contexts to which these terms had already been ascribed. For example, my initial decision to appropriate the terms scaffolding and deference, led to the discovery of further theories and models (described later) where different
etymological uses of those terms were employed. This, in turn, uncovered further epistemological meaning ascribed to them, enabling me to undertake a comparative critique and develop greater critical acuity regarding the concepts I was seeking to articulate based upon my own research. This chapter largely reflects the deductive nature of the inquiry cycles that have led me to the literature I shall be discussing.

6.4 Highlighting Hegemonic Discourses

A definition of the term hegemony may be characterised by a dominance of one stance or position that seeks consent, at times unwittingly, to influence, manipulate, suppress, indeed oppress, others’ positions or perspectives through an "...inequitable power matrix" (p.283, Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000) in which controlling social relations are legitimated by their depiction as natural and inevitable. Critical theory recognises that power is a "...basic constituent of human existence..." (p.283, Kincheloe and McLaren, 2000) shaping the oppressive and productive natures of the human condition. The concept of hegemony, is used here from a postcritical stance (giving authentication for my critical analysis of my own written text), to explore balances of power inherent in the inquiry’s contextual premise and their significance in relation to the constructs of context and capacities within the findings.

There is a consensus within political discourses that hegemonies are predominantly negative in their affect upon western civilization and its pursuit of democracy and equality. However, building from her work with Laclau (Laclau and Mouffe, 1985; Mouffe, 2000) which combines a post-Gramscian theory of hegemony with post-structuralist thought, Mouffe has countered that any consensus is, in itself, essentially a hegemonic articulation and that the very idea of a privileged subject needs to be reflected upon (Carpentier and Cammaerts, 2006). Mouffe critiques the perspective that conflict is a wholly negative component within political and democratic systems and creates a counter-balance by acknowledging the crucial role of hegemonic conflict as 'a structuring societal force' (p. 966). Instead of calling for a deconstruction of hegemonies, Mouffe calls for an accountable re-structuring of power relations.
Thus the cluster of constructs that comprised the contextual premise highlight several pre-existing institutionally based hegemonies, such as:

- My own professional and academic knowledge that imbued me with a level of perceived authority from which position I instigated the project.
- The professional knowledge and statutory powers of the Sensory Needs Service who supported the project through giving input into its development, assisting with recruitment and partial co-facilitation of the first group.
- The role of staff at OHS in maintaining the mandated educational approach which included structured, supervised routines and an emphasis on oral communication.

Other hegemonies appeared to be manifested and played out through the project itself, such as the adults’ (whether facilitator or supporting role) relationship to/with the young people, or the peer-relationships amongst the OHS group for example, where communication styles produced a type of counter-institutional hegemony in which the primacy of signing was asserted over oral communication at a cultural-linguistic level.

The above hegemonic discourses reflect both socio-cultural and gendered complexities that are pertinent to issues of occupational engagement, participation, identity and ultimately relationality. The following sub-headings differentiate between the types of hegemony evidenced in the findings; ‘Experiential and professional knowledge in participation’ and ‘Deaf participation within hearing-centric contexts’. The first recognises the potential disturbance when lived-experience meets theory. The second recognises the documented challenges faced by minority groups within majority group settings. Perspectives regarding the adult’s relationship to the young person will be weaved into both these sections.

6.4.1 Experiential and Professional Knowledge in Participation

From a democratic perspective described through the philosophies of Reason (2003b), Rorty (1999) and Laclau and Mouffe (1985) amongst others, there is a narrative strand woven through my research findings that captures my struggle to align my own experiential and professional positions. The latter position granted me a level of perceived authority which I leveraged to instigate the project. The former
position represents my own experiential knowledge, predicated on past lived experience in various fields, and sharing common ground with the young participants, in the project context, as experts of their own experience.

The above facilitative struggle principally stemmed from the coming together of two epistemological bases described in earlier chapters; those of occupational therapy (framing my professional position) and participatory inquiry (underpinning my experiential perspective). Bridging these epistemologies, there persisted an imperative within my own critical analysis to reflect upon issues of power inherent when adults collaborate with young people (Fraser et al, 2004; Jenson and Fraser, 2011). In a political sense, occupational therapy’s democratic credentials are less developed (though by no means absent) than those of participative inquiry (Pollard et al, 2008). However, it is from a democratic standpoint, that I feel the discourse of participation resurfaces to serve most effectively as the central commonality between occupational therapy and participatory inquiry and also the operational factor most influenced by mechanisms of power (McCurtan et al, 2012). Although participation is not visibly represented as a distinct construct within my own final framework of relationality, its tenets are echoed, to a greater or lesser extent, within the framework’s clusters and constructs. Its original emergence as a valued concept through the immersion process, described in Chapter 4, is testament to its significance. However, I would assert that during the analytic process, the term did not ultimately crystallise for me as a satisfactorily discrete synthesis of components within the phenomena, as represented in the data set. Instead, relationality’s emergence as a meta-concept represented more universally the participatory qualities inherent in the data. Subsequently, relationally-based constructs crystallised through the immersive process, capturing the pragmatic tenor with which relationality was performed.

What is more, I could not satisfactorily separate the term participation from the political etymology (Kirby et al, 2003) I felt it had accumulated within this research’s spheres of study, described in chapters 2 and 3, such as its axiomatic use in the term participatory inquiry for example. However, as we now focus upon this political dimension more keenly, the term ‘participation’ gains utility as a conduit for contrasting different participatory perspectives found in the literature pertaining to participatory inquiry and occupational therapy.
Spanning across the above two positions, the definition of participation is broad. Cited by Wilcock & Hocking (2004) from an occupational science perspective, the World Health Organisation’s International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) (WHO, 2001) defines participation as “A person’s actual performance of occupations in his or her current environment, including problems the person experiences due to environmental barriers.” (p. 224). More recently, a consensus definition of participation in the European conceptual framework agreed by the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education (ENOTHE) terminology group, is presented as: “Involvement in life situations through activity within a social context” (p. 26, Creek, 2010). This remains compatible with the ICF definition in its apolitical focus upon material functionality but also bridges the differing structuralist and pragmatist epistemological strands identified within occupational therapy by Mattingly (Mattingly, 1994a; 1994b) as cited by Creek (2010).

On the other hand, the nature of participation within the participatory inquiry literature focuses more firmly upon the right for equitable access to systems of knowledge creation and development, embracing the critical discourses linking power and knowledge. Within his seminal tenets of participatory action research (PAR), McTaggart (1989) states that PAR is contingent upon authentic participation in cycles of action and critical reflection, testing assumptions in order to illicit changes that will in turn affect others. In this sense, the material function of participation that remains central to participatory inquiry is given a much clearer political dimension. Indeed, McTaggart, and later, Reason and Bradbury (2006) refer to PAR as a political process; a notion that few would now dispute. From Arnstein’s (1969) typological Ladder of Citizen Participation (in which therapy sits on the second to bottom rung, only one higher than manipulation!), the politicisation of the word ‘participation’ has become increasingly widespread, with humanitarian values drawn from democratic equality, rights and empowerment discourses being inscribed into its common parlance (Council of Europe, 2003; Kirby et al, 2003). The increasing expectancy for youth participation in policy development and service delivery has even been coined as ‘the new orthodoxy’ (Badham, 2004). However such expectancy can seem disingenuous when youth participation can appear, all too often, to be a carefully choreographed exercise; influencing only the superficial strata of large institutions that are ultimately governed by political and economic forces. In my approach to the inquiry planning and implementation, I attempted to remain
aware of such tokenism, and counteract it where possible through allowing the space for genuine involvement from the participants.

The political dimensions of participation described above have not gone unnoticed within the occupational therapy profession (Pollard et al., 2008). An increased recognition of the need for social and environmental interdependence, over more structuralist independence, can be seen in the community development interventions and the affiliations with disability studies described in Chapter 2. With this has come a further discourse regarding the role of the therapist and his/her use of knowledge, which sits at the heart of my facilitatory dilemma. In a sense, it is the struggle to balance the therapist’s appropriate level and style of participation in any given context based upon issues of individual and corporate capacities, which has emerged as the key facilitatory skill. The question being: when does a facilitator allow learning to develop without support and when does the facilitator intervene? The work of Vygotsky (1978), expanded and modified since its original conception (Yasnitsky, 2011), describes a concept highly relevant to this dilemma. The ‘zone of proximal development’ refers to the difference between a learner’s individual learning threshold and their potential threshold when supported facilitatively, and is discussed briefly later in this chapter.

Epistemologically, Hemmingsson and Jonsson (2005) suggest that occupational therapy literature pertaining to participation has transitioned from a structuralist focus on performance, to a focus upon performance components that emphasize “the person’s subjective experience of participation in daily life” (p. 572). This shift towards subjective meaning has laid the foundations for a deeper consideration of the social and cultural influences upon engagement in occupation and, from a disability studies perspective, potential barriers that limit participation (Barnes, Mercer & Shakespeare, 2010). These capacity issues were highlighted in the findings through my reflections upon the difference between my own perceived capacities and those of the other participants. This led me to reframe my expectations of the participants’ engagement in cycles of action and reflection and consider the character of the young people’s authentic participation in a new light.

Viewed from an ecological model, these examples of participation may be judged by the extent to which the young people were enabled to participate within the inherent power relationship, an issue that is inextricably tied to factors pertaining to both context and capacity. Cited in both Beauvais (2001) and Law et al (2006), Donnelly &
Harvey (1996) model a useful typology of barriers that limit child and youth participation in structured recreation. The three systemic barriers are presented by Law et al (p. 81, 2006) as:

- **Infrastructural** - limits emerging from costs, lack of transportation and time, location and available resources.
- **Superstructural** - limits emerging from the nature of activities, cultural ideas and prejudices.
- **Procedural** - limits emerging from a lack of social support, organisational structure and management arrangements.

Although Donnelly & Harvey seem to perpetuate a deficit oriented model of participation, applying these categories to the project’s context offers a critique of the power relations inherent in its processes and the subsequent barriers the participants may face to occupations embedded in the inquiry process. I recognise that these three systems are not discrete, but more interwoven and overlapping. The project’s infrastructural capacities were limited by the funding made available (accessed through academic bodies as gatekeepers), my time and the time of the young people, and the availability of the venues we used including OHS and its facilities (gate-kept by the staff). Initial decisions reflecting these capacities were taken in the planning phase. However, the co-participants had increasing influence regarding venues, timings, use of funding and access to limited resources throughout the project. In the first group, the young people’s decision regarding the time, frequency and venue stands as testament to this as well as both groups’ subsequent planning of the sessions themselves. This led to decisions arising from the young people that steered the course of the projects’ activities and outcomes.

Superstructurally, our own capacities governed the nature of activities and the attitudes we held towards them, influenced by social and organisational culture and their inherent prejudices. Again, superstructural decisions were made in the planning phase that relied upon professional attitudes, such as mine and the Sensory Needs Service’s initial criteria for recruitment. Similarly, through the early stages of the project the conflict between therapeutic and educational cultural perspectives was played out between the facilitators. As an attitudinal shift emerged at OHS regarding the relaxing of rules prohibiting use of sign language, so a shift in the young people’s
cultural lens appeared to be reflected in their comments, and ultimately their views expressed through their film.

Procedural limitations could be described as the ultimate cause of the closure of OHS, given its unsustainable organisational structure and management. However within the project groups, the engendering of social support that I witnessed, the collaborative development of session structures, and my attempts to present transparent facilitative management decisions, point to strengths gained in the face of such constraints.

From a power relations perspective, it would appear that the superstructural and procedural aspects of the project’s processes hold the more tangible political dynamic and potential for democratic collaboration. For example, a key cultural prejudice held by myself, related to the capacities of the young people to engage at a suitably reflexive level throughout the project to meet the requirements of a cooperative inquiry as I initially perceived it. Such a capacity requirement is asserted in the co-operative inquiry literature pertaining to reflexivity (Heron, 1996). However, my realisation that the young people were in fact co-creating meaning at a relational level that constituted practical knowing, left me with a deeper sense of how such practical knowing might be overlooked through the privileging of theoretical, professional and academic knowledge in this context. My assumptions regarding capacities and knowledge generation, gave way to a primacy of practical knowing and I deferred to the relational agenda the participants were following.

In this way, relationality was manifested by the young people as an alternative conduit for sense-making and meaning and ultimately flourishing. Where this occurred more naturally within the first project group, my attempts to foster similar potentiality at OHS appeared hampered by an authoritarian mantle that was often tacitly inferred upon me by the group, in line with the hegemonic relationship between staff and pupils that pre-existed within the school. My attempts to counter this caused a degree of disorganisation that the group did not always recover from, leaving me to reflect upon my facilitative style and the impact of holding the sessions within the school context.

Overall, the young people’s gravitation towards relational ways of knowing (engaging in mutual exchanges of meaningful experience simply by sharing the same space) affirms the writing of Reason and Bradbury (2006) who assert the importance of
"...sensitivity and attunement in the moment of relationship, and of knowing not just as an academic pursuit but as the everyday practices of acting in relationship and creating meaning in our lives." (p.10). Through their description of a participatory worldview, Reason and Bradbury suggest a 'relational ecological form' that encapsulates relationships with other humans as well as the "...more-than-human world" (p.10). In their case, the term ecological refers to the systemic nature of the material world's ecosystems and a political imperative to reduce ecological devastation.

Although I include the more-than-human world in my own framing of relationality, my perspective appears more aligned with developmental psychologist Bronfenbrenner's bioecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; 1992; 2005) within which the multiple processes of accommodation between children and their environment are recognised (Skellon and Rosenbaum, 2010). The theory outlines a model of concentric systems that radiate from the individual as the central point, representing a wider slice of socio-environmental factors with each layer; from the Microsystems of family and school, to the mesosystems of their interaction, to the macrosystems of core cultural beliefs and ideologies (Gascon-Ramos, 2008). Bronfenbrenner offers the model as a framework within which influences or power-relations, operating as knowledge and beliefs, are transmuted between systems. The political link between changes in policy, for example, at a macro level and the impact upon meso- and micro-levels has been increasingly taken into account within research contexts (Hung and Paul, 2006). Regarding the project, this reflects the trickle down effect upon the young people of political policy changes regarding inclusion and a reduction in 'out of county provision' that led to the attrition of pupils from OHS over recent years and its ultimate closure, for example. These effects upon the young people pertain to issues of occupational injustice (Paul-Ward, 2009, Townsend & Wilcock, 2004) and occupational deprivation (Whiteford, 2000, 2011) that warrant further consideration.

Proponents of participatory research have used the bioecological system theory model to plan for robust and sustainable change in community contexts through attempting to set up ecologically relevant programs that coordinate multiple intervention strategies (Knightbridge et al, 2006). Unbeknownst to myself at the time, the bioecological model also resonated with the exercise I used at the OHS open evening whereby I invited the young people to consider what they may want to change within three ecological systems: themselves; friends and family; and the
wider world. It felt instinctual to invite the young people to consider their situatedness at different levels within a wider ecological context.

There are further models that set out a similarly systemic relationship between humans and their environment which form the bedrock of occupational therapy theory. The Model of Human Occupation (Kielhofner, 2008) develops Mary Reilly's Occupational Behaviour Model (Reilly, 1966), which focuses upon the relationship between body and mind, to include the systemic and interactive nature of the relationship between the person and their environment and the effect of this upon motivation, behaviour and performance (Cole and Tufano, 2008). Likewise, Law and colleagues developed the Canadian Occupational Performance Process Model (Fearing et al, 1997; Clark, 2000) which explores more concretely the notion of clients in context and develops a progressive definition of client that embraces families, caregivers, and groups with social and cultural contexts (Clark, 2000). Similarly, ecological models are being implemented within occupational therapy (Brown, 2008). Skelton and Rosenbaum (2010) apply bioecological systems theory from an occupational therapy perspective to integrate the domains of child development and developmental disabilities in order to expand traditional perspectives of disability beyond the bio-medical model (Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, 1994). The Ecology of Human Performance model (Dunn et al, 1994; 2003) was developed by the occupational therapy faculty at the University of Kansas "...in response to the lack of consideration for the complexities of context." (p. 596; Dunn et al, 1994). Currently experiencing something of a renaissance, the model employs an expanded concept of context-environment, including physical, temporal, social and cultural factors, to allow researchers "...to make explicit those elements that have frequently been left implicit by the environmental psychologists." (p.596).

The organisational culture of statutory institutions such as the National Health Service must be recognised as a highly political context in terms of professional alliances, service agendas, commissioning arrangements, and ultimately financial constraints. Regarding the research context of this thesis, through my decision to undertake the inquiry outside a statutory healthcare service structure, the participants were no longer perceived as 'clients' from my position. From this non-clinical perspective, there was less professionalisation of my role and therefore the focus towards equality in collaboration, as a mandate of participatory inquiry, could arguably be achieved more easily. This shift in perception began to expose for me
the nature of inherent power-relations and increased potential to engender more authentic collaborative participation.

An inference from this position may be that the systems within institutional service structures can serve as obstructions to such open-handed collaboration when agendas become driven at meso- and macro-system levels. This echoes the debates that emerged within the occupational therapy profession in the late 1970’s that led to a shift in terminology from ‘patient’ to ‘client’ which heralded a rejection of the medical model (Cole and Tufano, 2008). Within the inquiry projects, that the young people continued to be related to as ‘clients’ of sorts by the staff of both the Sensory Needs Service and OHS, added to the complexity of my attempts to foster a collaborative approach with both the participants and project partners. Indeed, Bob’s desire to separate his work role from his involvement in the project indicates he too felt the incongruence between these positions. As McCartan et al (2012) assert, although participatory research holds the risk of becoming merely tokenistic, “...by becoming more flexible and considering the fluid nature of the power relations at play, real value can be drawn...” (p.5).

From a salutogenic perspective, Ungar (2012) explicates a distinction between environment and ecology through his framing of resilience – defined as surviving, thriving, hoping and coping (Ungar & Liebenberg, 2005) - as a social ecologically dynamic construct. In doing so, Ungar echoes the apparent shift in the defining of environment as a construct within the occupational therapy literature. Ungar suggests that environmentalism points to a hegemony that emphasises “...causality, hierarchy and disciplined processes of change.”, reflecting “...the values of colonization, extraction, and endless growth.” (Ungar, 2012, p.20). Conversely, Ungar posits that “Ecology is a post-positivist interpretation of the relationship between elements of an ecosystem, where emphasis is placed on the intrinsic worth of each part regardless of its perceived utility...Relationships are complex and...there are no assumptions that one set of outcomes are necessarily better than another...” (p.20).

From this standpoint, a sense of causation-based individualism within an environment is replaced by a complex ecological, mutual space in which agents construct and co-construct meaning from their experience of relationality (their subjective relatedness to their social and material environment in its entirety), through levels of participation that are based upon capacity. Capacity, in turn, is also
determined by opportunities or barriers within a broader ecological domain. That is to say, our contexts shape both our independent and collective capacity including past, present and future potentialities for its development. It therefore follows that recognising the capacity-based nature of participation, or participativity, leads to greater political acuity: the vital ingredient that translates an environment into an ecological system. It is within this system of connectedness, that the notion of relationality can flourish as an overarching framework for understanding the nature of collaborative participation in occupations; adding insight and value to occupational theory and expanding the meaning of environment as an occupational therapy construct. To this end, I assert that participation may be described as relationality in praxis.

6.4.2 Deafness within hearing-centric contexts

Within the project, there evolved for participants the potential for the kinds of occupational injustice and occupational deprivation, described in the last chapter, to occur, precipitated by a difference in perceived cultural norms. The degree with which the young people felt able to participate in collaborative occupations appeared governed, to some extent, by their level of cultural currency, as recognised by their co-participant peers.

The participants within the research project experienced wide ranging levels of hearing, from profound deafness to minor hearing loss. Given this range, their cultural knowledge and attitudes towards deafness also varied. Either placed within mainstream schools or at OHS, where oralism was historically most pervasive and signing viewed as perhaps more of a sub-culture, the young people appeared exposed educationally to a predominantly hearing-centric hegemony. Their access to other discourses pertaining to deafness remained dependent upon their access to and engagement with societal knowledge resources within their wider communities. The potential for each to perceive their hearing somewhere on the spectrum between ‘medical problem’ and ‘cultural identifier’ speaks to the complexity of their developmentally, socially and culturally governed capacities within their ecological contexts (Luft, 2011). While one young person within the first project group identified herself as Deaf despite having minimal signing skills, another girl with similar hearing levels and rudimentary signing skills within the second group was admonished by peers for not using sign language on the grounds that it was disrespectful. In this way, the project participants reflected a degree of heterogeneity in terms of cultural
identity. Even amongst those who identified themselves as Deaf, predominantly from the second group, there remained a heterogeneity that stood in contrast to the homogeneous view of Deaf culture as a cultural-linguistic identifier often assumed within the literature (Ladd, 2003).

This heterogeneity added an additional layer to existing diversities within the groups such as: developmental; gendered; intellectual; ethnic; economic; and regional differences. It is these issues that lie at the heart of the dilemma within participatory inquiry regarding what constitutes a community (Bergold and Thomas, 2012). By attempting to engage in community development projects, researchers or practitioners must consider the potential risk of applying their own definition of community upon groups of people who may well share commonalities but are just as likely to represent aspects of diversity as well. In such a context, participants' desire for acceptance may lead to their complicity and adopting of a subaltern position (Gramsci, 1973; Spivak, 1988) that masks their genuine agency, instead deferring to the tyranny of the group (Malcolm, 1973). This awareness underpinned my attempts to instigate both projects from a non-diagnostic, non-labelist position.

This potential risk is equally applicable to corporate community identities developed by grassroots activists in order to challenge oppressive hegemonies, as has arguably been reflected by trends within western Deaf culture. The cultural-linguistic model (Ladd, 2003), a critical theorist stance increasingly amplified within Deaf studies, supersedes the medical perspective of degrees of hearing loss with a layer of cultural values, rejecting the medical and social models of deafness. From this perspective, Deaf cultural positioning in the project appeared to be steered by factors such as: life-stage of onset; degree of hearing loss; need for assistive equipment; and principally, levels of proficiency in signed language. For many, these elements appeared to become indicators of authentication when determining whether someone was culturally Deaf. What is of interest here, is that from the position of those young people with minor hearing loss attending the first project group or those brought up in the oral tradition, the above perspective, which seemingly pays less attention to other socio-cultural indicators, may be construed as a hegemony that is as equally excluding as hearing-centric discourses. As one's volition towards occupational engagement remains bound by social and cultural contexts (Kielhofner, 2008), it therefore follows that cultural or social exclusion may also limit occupational choice (Whiteford, 2011).
From a resilience perspective, the strong cultural identity and membership of a community that being a Deaf first-language signer within a signing context may offer, helps to deflate proximal risk mechanisms and enable resilience (Young et al., 2011). Thus, those young people with minor hearing loss remain at greater risk of being left betwixt and between both cultural camps – hearing and deaf – truly identifying with neither, largely on the basis of limitations to language acquisition and its role as gatekeeper to social and intellectual skills and knowledge within current societal systems. Resilience must therefore be enabled through other means. The use of collaborative occupation through the development of a cooperative inquiry that started from a participant led interpretation of personhood, rather than focusing upon ‘hearing’ as an assumed commonality, was an attempt to realise empowering and protective mechanisms through a salutogenic approach towards meaningful action and occupation; governed by the principles of both participatory inquiry and occupational therapy.

The debate regarding Deaf identity continues within the Deaf community and extends beyond the scope of this thesis. However, as Trueba (2006) asserts, the young people’s resilience against potential exclusion is determined by the potential ability to switch between multiple identities developed through multi-cultural experiences. Gaining such experiences has been likened metaphorically to the accruing of capital. Bourdieu (1986) has consolidated this metaphor through the concepts of social and cultural capital, set within a framework that resonates with the above ecological account in several ways. Bourdieu’s description of social positioning within a field or social space, that conditions one to develop a way of being in that position known as habitus, recognises the power relations inherent in such an interdependent context. Bourdieu uses the notion of capital to describe how one builds social or cultural meaning that holds value within the field in which one is positioned. Used to explain socio-political relations, this concept supported my critical thinking during the latter stages of the inquiry and subsequent analysis as I sought to understand and articulate the nature of relationality between participants and our collective context.

However, Yosso (2005) feels that even the supposition that all are predisposed to seek to acquire capital, speaks from a hegemonic position held by the privileged groups who have the capacities to acquire capital. Yosso, as described by Listman et al. (2011), uses the term ‘community cultural wealth’ to suggest a more equitable stance, that the capital is already embedded within community, but merely not valued
within hegemonic systems. Consequently, these inherent power relations cause discriminatory barriers when one’s own capital is not valued within a discrete field as highly as the capital of those who have constructed the field itself. Using Yosso’s terms (following Bourdieu), with regard to the project participants, the value of their community cultural wealth within a hearing-centric context was governed by their ability to adapt their habitus to the social and cultural characteristics of their field. A subaltern position, in which individuals or communities become complicit with hegemonic discourses despite their subsequent loss of cultural capital, was arguably adopted by the project participants who, in the case of the second project, deferred to a student-teacher relationship with myself. This speaks of both the social adult-young person division between myself and the participants, and the contextual premise of the project, undertaken within the socio-political dynamics of their school.

From a facilitatory perspective, my ability to use sign language gave me cultural capital that was valued by the young people at OHS. The project may have looked very different if I did not have this skill and the broader deaf awareness that it gave me. Within the first group, my musical abilities also represented a source of cultural capital that was valued by the participants as we worked towards writing songs. More broadly, my professional standing and my ability to effectively communicate the doctoral research proposal to various stakeholders, offered me what Bourdieu terms as *symbolic capital*, a degree of implicitly recognised ‘status’ perceived by one side and bestowed upon the other. From a hearing-centric position, my use of such symbolic capital to manipulate the project participants would be an act of what Bourdieu terms *symbolic* or *structural* violence. My attempt to avoid symbolic violence and instead, develop a reflexivity regarding my field, my habitus and my capital, in order to promote a democratic decision-making process, is at the root of the facilitatory challenges I faced throughout the inquiry and continue to face within occupational therapy practice.

The description of potential barriers faced by those whose cultural capital or wealth is not valued within their contexts, described as symbolic or structural violence, resonates with what is termed in occupational science as occupational injustice (Paul-Ward, 2008; Townsend & Wilcock, 2004) and occupational deprivation (Whiteford, 2000, 2011). Both terms point to "...oppression or systematic limitations to participation in occupation..." (p.15, Braveman and Suarez-Balcazar, 2009) and have also been described as occupational apartheid (Kronenberg and Pollard, 2005) given the impact upon occupation when society deems some people as being of a
different social and economic value than others. The participants’ account of bullying, expressed within both projects, is testament to their personal experience of such widespread social de-valuing. In fact, some of the participants’ accounts on film implied their move to OHS was as a direct result of bullying and experience of high levels of generalised stress in mainstream education.

A degree of the literature pertaining to occupational injustice and occupational deprivation is situated within a disability discourse (Whiteford, 2004, 2011; Sakellariou and Algado, 2006). However, from Ladd’s (2003) Deafhood perspective, such an association between deafness and disability is certainly not welcome in the case of those who claim a cultural-linguistic identity such as the Deaf community. Such an association merely points back to yet another layer of hegemony from within the hearing-centric discourse. For the deaf young people outside of the culturally Deaf community, the hegemonic discourse of a loss orientated medical model that categorises them as disabled, appeared not to be a force they realised they could challenge, or would necessarily know how to should they wished to. It must be added that the choice to adopt the disability label obviously holds benefits in terms of access to support and services. However, the issue remains whether the use of such a label is by choice or through a sense of submission.

It is from this focus upon the political position of deaf young people in mainstream schools that participants were invited to take part in an inquiry that attempted to construct meaning from shared forays into their own lived experience. Despite initial recruitment being undertaken in partnership with a service focused upon hearing impairment, I attempted to steer away from presuppositions regarding the group’s innate homogeneity by wording the promotion literature in a way that did not focus upon hearing. The subsequent project group that evolved in the first instance, demonstrated that the degree to which participants focused upon homogeneity and heterogeneity was indeed their own choice. Although diverse in a number of ways, the group verbalised a relationally based decision to seek shared experience whilst also recognising a diversity of backgrounds and interests.

The second project group represented diversity on a number of indices yet were pulled together in terms of context and subsequent experience. The project harnessed the commonality of the participants’ experience as a starting point to enable further relational exploration of their situation from which there grew a deeper appreciation of diversity within the group. What is crucial to understand is that an emergence of heterogeneity within the project groups did not appear to diminish the
nature of relationality within their contexts. On the contrary, a richer relationality was fostered through the enabling of both choice, and the capacity to choose, to explore commonality and diversity, enmeshed in the stories and experiences of the participants.

Facilitating both commonality and diversity, homogeneity and heterogeneity, within a group inquiry that engages meaningfully with individuals as well as groups, requires careful consideration in terms of agendas such as inclusion; creating a safe space; reflexively managing capacities and power relations. Any collectivist approach will inevitably encounter issues of incompatibility and division. Successful facilitation is based upon the effective management of commonality and diversity. In the next section I discuss these management issues through the relationship between process and product as a vehicle for critically exploring what constituted the performativity between participants, including myself, within their contexts.

6.5 A Relationship between Process and Product

Here, I critically discuss further literature in relation to the inquiry's performative realisation (performed practical knowing embodying how, what and why participants related to each other and their context), captured in the relationship between the project's processes and related outcomes and products.

6.5.1 Activity-based Group Inquiry

The positioning of this research inquiry within the mental health promotion domain lends itself to the above framing of the inquiry context as an ecological space. From an occupational therapy practice perspective, health promotion practice settings place less emphasis upon the functional process elements of individual occupational performance per se, and more emphasis upon collective participation at a community level (Taylor et al, 2004). Such an emphasis upon collective engagement can be said of activity-based group settings as well, where occupational performance is concerned with the occupational processes that constitute participation between group participants based upon individual capacities (Finlay, 1993, 2001). Activity-based group processes, whether therapeutic or inquiry-based, rely upon the consensual use of occupations or activities, chosen and designed for specific utility.
The activities within group settings sit largely outside the context of participants' activities of daily living. Instead, they mostly serve as conduits for psychosocial development and skill acquisition in a relational context. Experiences within collective contexts are therefore created through negotiation between individuals, inferring that group processes are both simultaneously singular and collective in terms of their occupational participation and performance.

Bullock and Bannigan (2011) highlight a lack of rigorous evidence for the effectiveness of activity-based groups in the literature and call for large scale rigorous research in this area. The authors do however cite a number of studies that suggest that activity-based group work is more effective than verbally based group work in improving "...self-perceptions of social interaction skills, improving social behaviour...and increasing levels of community functioning." (p.260). My desire however, has been to explore the collaborative act of inquiry as an intervention; a discrete occupation within activity-based group work. This has been in order to offer not only salutogenic benefits of the experience to participants as an end in itself, but gain insight into future localised use of methods, developed through my engagement with participatory inquiry, as therapeutic approaches within occupational therapy practice. As highlighted in Chapter 2, there is seemingly minimal occupational therapy literature that explores the use of participatory inquiry methods as an occupational intervention within activity-based groups. Even Taylor’s (2003) account of an empowerment based project focused upon chronic fatigue syndrome sufferers, revolving around client-centred goal-setting and utilising peer counselling groups, seems constrained by a diagnostic focus and reads as somewhat prescriptive in its approach.

6.5.2 Occupation as a Means and an End

Hinojosa et al (2003) expand their description of occupation as the key concept at the core of occupational therapy by suggesting that occupation’s characteristics through therapy are both a means and an end; the process of intervention and the product or end goal (Hinojosa et al, 2003: p.4). This relationship iterates the tenets of a constructivist discourse regarding representation, from which two questions have emerged for me, one stemming from the other: 'Is a product an embedded component of an extended process?'; 'Is a product merely a representation of a part of the process?'. The significance of these questions for me as a facilitator has been based upon my concern with the balance between maintaining an engaging process
and a desire for the project to finish well, having co-produced, as far as possible, salutogenic outcomes for the participants.

Consideration of these questions lead me to suggest that activities can be understood simultaneously as both a process and a product or outcome. In this research context, I assert that the products have been an embedded component of an extended process, and that the products have been a representation of a part of the process. For example, although the two project films can clearly be described as products from the group work, their impact upon audiences generated comments that were in turn fed back to participants. On one level this constituted an important part of the groups’ reflective cycle. Similarly, in the case of the first group, the use of recording equipment such as cameras and audio-recorders meant that captured visual and verbal representations of the process could be directly infused into the film – one of their products. However, this also highlights a potential danger in perceiving an end product as a full stop; an end point to the consummation of ideas at which the participants have arrived. In fact, any product is more appropriately perceived as a snapshot within the process. The description and discussion that forms the body of this thesis for example, constitutes another representation of the project from a very different, singular perspective from which further ideas continue to emerge.

Additionally, there were clear examples through the project where a commitment to the end product, on the part of both myself and other participants, increased engagement with the process. For example, both I and the OHS participants demonstrated high levels of motivation and engagement in co-creating and implementing a structure for the film in the early part of the seventh session after plans to film their drama had been abandoned. From a Bourdieusian perspective, I believe the reasons for this corporate motivation were inherently based upon the gaining of personal and social capital in terms of skills testing and mastery, knowledge gained, and relational rewards such as deepening friendships and acclamation from their communities. Such considerations would seem highly relevant to the development of facilitatory skills within occupational therapy practice.

6.5.3 Scaffolding and Deference

The balance between focusing upon the process and the product or outcome, is governed by the nuances of facilitation. My emerging facilitation style guiding the process developed from an initial non-directional approach. However, my reflexive
practice slowly highlighted for me my own tacit processes more clearly and it became apparent that I was employing instinctual approaches based upon guiding concepts I have termed as scaffolding and deference; determinants that characterised the ‘relating methods’ construct of the relationality framework presented in the last chapter. Such a realisation may be seen as a convergence between my ‘espoused theories of action’ and ‘theories-in-use’ (Argyris and Schön, 1974), and symbolises a threshold moment in terms of my own conceptual development. As Friedman et al (2004) point out, such development lends concepts the potential for ‘reflective transfer’ (Schön and Rein, 1994) into future practice situations as a form of theory testing.

As has occurred with a number of terms within this inquiry, my initial seizing of a word to better conceptualise my own sense-making of processes led to an exploration of that term within the wider literature to ascertain whether a relevant etymology pre-existed. In this way, I initially deployed the word scaffold to describe a process of facilitation I recognised in my own approach; one which recognised a degree of technicity in terms of professional operational knowledge, articulated the boundaries of a constructed space and supported the construction of participant led outcomes and products within the ‘space between’. I hoped that an agentic stance in terms of organisation and facilitation, but not necessarily content, could support the participants in exploring their own concerns more freely. The search for a relevant etymology uncovered the work of Vygotsky (1978) who’s theories forged the development of an approach in education and developmental psychology whereby learners are given temporary scaffolded support (from a knowledge provider) which tapers off as the new knowledge is internalised by the learner (Simons and Klein, 2007). The scaffold is provided as both an instructional and motivational tool at a level that mirrors the learner’s zone of proximal development; the developmental distance between a learner’s level of independent competency and their next potential learning threshold.

The concept of a metaphorical scaffold as a temporary structure that can be adapted to suit the participants’ purposes, is one that resonated with my perception of the inquiry’s facilitative style. There are however, differences between the above educational use of scaffolding and my own development of what I term a therapeutic scaffold; a theory-in-use combining my professional knowledge of therapeutic practice with the experiential knowledge I reflexively developed though the project. These differences pertain to the scaffold’s instructional purpose. My notion of a
therapeutic scaffold in the context of participatory inquiry is imagined within the spatial, temporal and relational contexts that form the therapeutic space. Thus the facilitative role becomes one of maintaining the quality of the therapeutic space in order to allow for the participant-led engagement in meaningful activity. This space is negotiated by participants and managed through facilitation. The scaffold becomes an approach to both containing what the group chooses to engage with and protecting against external elements that have not been chosen. This is not at the exclusion of instruction as, for example, the first group’s request for input from a professional photographer would indicate. To this extent, the scaffold incorporates the participants themselves as they mutually support the inquiry, and the space between becomes the protected relational space, where participation occurs and products and outcomes develop.

From the occupational therapy literature, one recent reference to a definition of scaffolding similar to my own has emerged as a finding from a two-year action research inquiry undertaken with a group of UK based mental health assertive outreach service-users (Fieldhouse, 2012). Fieldhouse uses scaffolding as an umbrella term to describe “...a method of environmental adaption: the creation of a flexible, temporary, affirming psychosocial space.” (p. 424) within his research. The author proposes ten components of scaffolding, including four components that resonate with the constructs I have touched upon through my own findings: grading and pacing; therapeutic use of self; creating affirmative environments; harnessing social capital (Fieldhouse, 2012).

However, one finding not echoed by Fieldhouse (2012) was my progression from therapeutic scaffolding to a conceptualisation of the term deference, imagined as a relating style that privileged the views and intentions of the participants above my own agenda as facilitator, set against my broader knowledge of therapeutic risk or management of issues such as disclosures or negative emotional reactions. There is a degree to which this style echoes what Smith (2004), writing from a psychotherapeutic perspective, terms as relational attunement, in which greater emphasis is placed upon relational and bodily knowing in the mutual context between therapist and client. Similarly, the notion of deference appears contingent upon a level of emotional intelligence to guide interaction (McKenna, 2007). Building from the work of Schön (1983), Mattingly and Fleming’s (1994) description of three types of clinical reasoning: procedural reasoning; interactive reasoning; conditional reasoning, drawn from research carried out within the field of occupational therapy,
resonate in part with the relational nature of the facilitative decision-making processes described above. Of particular note, is the explicit and tacit modes of knowledge at work within their description of the practitioner’s interactive reasoning used to relate to the ‘client’s’ perspective; the “…monitoring and interpretation of one’s own and one’s client’s behaviour.” (p. 196; Mattingly and Fleming, 1994). However, Harries and Harries (2001) give a robust critique of Mattingly and Fleming’s account of clinical reasoning and suggest that Intuitive reasoning, based upon judgement analysis, must also be considered.

Despite this, I maintain that there is a participative mutuality captured in the literature I have discussed, which sits outside the field of occupational therapy that is not matched by theories described within it. On this basis, I feel my own findings regarding the collaborative constructing of a facilitative scaffold, to be potentially highly beneficial to the occupational therapy practice and theory base.

Pragmatically, the scaffolding approach symbolised my attempt to settle the facilitative dilemma stemming from my dissatisfaction with ‘non-directive’ as a descriptor for the inquiry process. From an occupational therapy perspective, my definition of deference moves beyond the boundaries of a service constrained client-centred approach and draws upon the democratic underpinnings of participatory inquiry that call for person-centredness and genuine equality between participants and collaborative decision-making (Reason, 2006) leading to “participative knowing” (p. 205, Heron, 1996). This was a call that held greater potential for being achieved through the positioning of the inquiry outside any statutory service responsibility where social constructivist ontologies continue to meet resistance from positivist institutional attitudes (Gergen, 2004). Echoing this resistance, my suggested style of intentional deference being modelled by a facilitator, stands in contrast to a submissive deference associated with responses to the potential hegemonic socio-cultural forces discussed earlier. Where submissive deference infers the act of surrendering one’s own agency to the judgement of another, intentional deference holds one’s own instinctual preferences in abeyance and invests strength into co-participants to further develop their potentialities, without necessarily giving up one’s own agency or right for inclusion in any decision-making process. I felt that such modelling was, to a degree, both instructional and supportive of human flourishing in its own right; reifying Reason’s (1998) assertion that human flourishing is indeed the principle purpose of inquiry.
A similar search of the literature for a pre-existing etymological base uncovered Goffman's use of the term deference. However, in the main, Goffman (1956) focuses his concerns upon the contexts and motivations behind individuals who seek or receive deference from others (Scheff, 2006). This perspective is pursued by Hallett (2007) who attempts to draw connections between Goffman's explication of deference and demeanour, and Bourdieu's work regarding cultural capital and symbolic power, discussed earlier. Hallett concludes that between Goffman's micro-stance and Bourdieu's macro-perspective, regarding aspects of relationality, "...a meso-level account of the interactional-institutional link..." (p.166) can support a more useful perspective regarding power-relations.

In my own reflections, I have found that Goffman's drawing together of deference and demeanour, that to acquire deference one must exhibit the appropriate demeanour towards others, speaks of a similar congruence between 'who you are' and 'how you work' as a therapist, a connection at the heart of Rogerian person centred theory (Rogers, 1951). In both the psychotherapeutic and humanistic tradition, these tenets of attunement incorporate therapist and client within the therapeutic relationship. This therapeutic use of self has developed as a core practice within occupational therapy that utilises the emotional and social intelligence that underpins one's own personality to engender and model relationships of support and integrity. Taylor (2008: 5) cites six occupational therapy based definitions of the therapeutic use of self (Mosey, 1981, 1986; Denton, 1987; Schwartzberg, 1993; Hagedorn, 1995; Cara and MacRae, 2005; Punwar and Peloquin, 2000). However, deference is not highlighted as an attribute in its own right within occupational therapy literature. Rather, traits such as empathy and respect are used to cover similar ground (Peloquin, 1995; 2002; 2003). Neither is the notion, tacitly held within Rogerian theory, that the use of self is a tool to be developed in all participants of a relational context, not merely the facilitator/therapist; all participants relate through their own agency and affect.

Based upon my own research analysis, I suggest that collaborative sense-making, reflexivity and choices regarding how to scaffold the process, and a facilitative approach of intentional deference, have the potential to foster greater empowerment for participants and scaffold an inquiry process more attuned with the intentions and desires of the collective group. To this end, the determinants scaffolding and deference emerged as the most pragmatic approaches in facilitating a conceptual transition from client-centred practice, to person-centred practice within an
occupational therapy context. This articulation of collaborative sense-making constitutes a key finding within my thesis.

Ultimately, the participatory use of both therapeutic scaffolding and deference as facilitative tools guided this inquiry process in such a way that the project outcomes and products were developed in line with the participants’ intentions as closely as possible. The weight of those artefacts, namely the project films, was characterised by the powerful narratives they delivered, the ‘voices’ of the participants who delivered them, and their impact, felt by the wider community. I believe that reflexive consideration of the determinants of relationality, when facilitating group-based activity, may increase the potential for creating a collaborative context within which effective therapeutic scaffolding and intentional deference can be developed; leading to more equitable, democratic participation between participants.

6.5.4 The Product as Artifact

Although impacts felt from the project may be described as outcomes, the packaging of the participants’ representational narratives through the project films for example, are best described as products. Although Hinojosa et al.’s (2003) definition of occupation as both a means and an end is useful, their interpretation of product appears more attuned in meaning with the notion of outcome and is representative of the wider literature in this respect. In contrast, I suggest that, as a specific type of outcome, a product in the form of an aesthetic artefact, can relate both motivationally (as an incentive and a disincentive) and affectively (cognitively and emotionally) with participants and those in wider spheres, transmitted through the product’s representational nature of form (Thomas et al, 2011). This is echoed by what Heron (1996) describes as “...presentational knowing, an intuitive grasp of the significance of patterns expressed in graphic, plastic, moving and verbal art-forms” (p.52).

Although both product and outcome are valid concepts, the value generated from an artefact’s aesthetic qualities, for both its creator/s and its recipients, is distinct in its potential utility from the value generated through other inquiry outcomes such as raised awareness of key issues, for example. The minimal occupational therapy literature pertaining to the use of end-products as a motivational tool (Jacobshagen, 1990; Rocker & Nelson, 1987) suggests that a motivational increase can be found (Murphy et al, 1999). The production of artefacts to represent a process of inquiry is commonplace within participatory inquiry and largely associated with the use of the
creative arts within the research process. Within this context, a product’s innate aestheticism is seen as a communicative tool, holding potential for participants to add layers of representational meaning to a creator’s intent, based on their own interpretation. To this end, the product has the potential to engage with others at a deeper level as they participate in the act of interpretation (Boydell et al., 2012). Although this subjectivity renders the creators’ claims to communicating specific knowledge less foundationalist, from a Rortian stance, the ‘conversation’ opened up between participant and artefact can be shared, explored and engender deeper sense-making. This is certainly felt to have been the case in terms of the two project films developed by the project participants.

The symbiotic relationship between the art of the process, constructed by all participants relationally involved in the project, and the aesthetics of the products that were produced, forms a strong basis for further research. From an occupational therapy practice perspective, useful insights can be drawn from my experience of this relationship that build upon the profession’s existing view which remains predominantly process orientated. Collaboratively designing inquiry or therapeutic processes that steer towards the generation of products that strive for a degree of aesthetic quality, socially and culturally attuned, and leave a legacy beyond a project’s completion, sits well with occupational therapy’s expansion into community development within the mental health promotion domain. Such a design speaks to the pragmatic intentionality upon which, I concur, occupational therapy is fundamentally based.

6.6 What can Occupational Therapy Practice Assimilate from Participatory Inquiry Methods?

I believe that this thesis describes the following broad learning outcomes that may be assimilated from this account of engaging with participatory inquiry methods into wider spheres of future occupational therapy practice across three levels: the macro-, the meso- and the micro-level.

**Macro**
- Conceptualising occupational participation contextually through a lens of relationality.
• Adopting a salutogenic approach to occupational therapy engagement.
• Approaching social and culture factors within therapeutic participation with greater political acuity.

**Meso**

• Applying a relational framework to participative contexts including:
  o Collaboration with relevant community partners.
  o Occupationally-based groups / inquiries.
• A deeper understanding of the relationship between types of process and types of product within occupational therapy practice.
• Situating projects, similar to the example in this study, within existing occupational therapy services as an activity-based group work intervention.

**Micro**

• The use of scaffolding as a collaborative approach to structuring group activity in occupational therapy settings.
• The use of deference as a key relational approach to therapeutic scaffolding
• Balancing the collaborative inquiry process with the potential for developing products.
• Utilising the potential local impact of producing aesthetic artefacts and communicating through them.

These learning outcomes essentially focus upon: building relationships; challenging dominant assumptions; impacting the wider community; and enhancing participatory skills for individuals. I recognise that these outcomes represent a blend of both innovations in occupational therapy practice and a synthesis of the existing practice concepts and models discussed.

The research question has been asked from a clinical position with a view to enhancing occupational therapy practice by gleaning practical knowing from another domain. In so doing, the pragmatist tradition of occupational therapy as a conceptual ‘bricoleur’ (weaving different pedagogies and practices into one cohesive approach) among health related professions is maintained. In the spirit of such bricolage, this inquiry reinforces the assertion, corroborating the literature, that there is a tight coupling between theories and concepts underpinning occupational therapy and participatory inquiry which has demonstrated benefits from combining these two approaches in practice. Salutogenic outcomes as well as challenges for participants,
including myself, through engagement with this inquiry process have been evidenced through the data and its analysis.

My engagement with participatory inquiry methods has served as a vehicle for deeper propositional and experiential knowledge that I believe will serve to enhance my own future practice and well as adding to the occupational therapy theory base through dissemination of this work. However, the processes of action and reflection that I have undertaken have not only deepened my knowledge of participatory inquiry, the research process has also brought me to a deeper understanding of occupational therapy concepts. These relate to the emerging models for community development within practice (Taylor et al., 2004), occupational therapy’s strong affiliations with the field of disability studies (Phelan, 2011) and the related recognition of the profession’s need for political acuity (Pollard et al., 2008); as described in Chapter 2.

Both domains, occupational therapy and participatory inquiry, converge upon guiding themes that promote strengths-based, context-specific, person-centred engagement. Where participatory research predominantly focuses upon increasing well-being through political change, occupational therapy focuses upon similar goals through processes of occupational participation. My hope has been to highlight participatory inquiry’s political acuity within the occupational processes of the inquiry and bring a critical awareness to the practice of occupational therapy in order to, in some way, dismantle the complex architecture that upholds potential inequalities of power relations within institutionally based practice.

The social and cultural contexts in which such potential inequalities are couched requires a practice scope that widens its focus beyond independence. Where occupational therapy practice has, at a service level, remained focused predominantly upon supporting people towards independence, this inquiry has focused upon the promotion of interdependence that is championed by tenets of participatory inquiry and the community development model emerging within Canadian occupational therapy literature, for instance. Through my own development of a framework for relationality, for example, I can perceive more clearly how the actions emerging from the Canadian Model of Client-Centred Enablement—adapt; advocate; coach; collaborate; consult; coordinate; design/build; educate; engage and specialise (Townsend & Polatajko, 2007), can be collaboratively explored within practice settings. However, this research develops a deeper
understanding of facilitative approaches at a micro-level in a way that is not inherently reflected in the seemingly more macro-orientated perspective of the Canadian occupational therapy literature.

The characteristics of a labelist mentality that historically underpinnings health-based diagnostic approaches to human experience has been scrutinised in relation to my own professional identity, within which I have attempted to dismantle hegemonic traps I risk falling into in terms of the valuing of status and the assuming of authority. By focusing upon the two-way nature of the relational zone between participants, or participants and products, I have framed my key constructs, emerging from my findings, as ecological ingredients within a collaborative space. In doing so, I offer an ontological grounding based upon occupational therapy's pragmatist beginnings that marries the macro-position of Winnie Dunn et al.'s Ecology of Human Performance model (1994; 2003) with the micro-position of what Taylor (2008) names the intentional relationship, a one-sided, performative focus upon the therapeutic use of self. Drawn from both the participatory paradigm and psychotherapeutic theory, this relational zone is imbued with a greater appreciation of the mutual and reciprocal nature of engagement between facilitator/therapist and client/co-participant.

These reciprocal forces are characterised by a dynamic process of negotiation, through my experience of which, I have built an understanding of intentional deference as a facilitative approach. My key learning regarding this process of negotiation occurred at the boundary crossing between my expectations for the project inquiry, and the expectations of the co-participants. This experience still leaves me questioning whether we as co-participants and co-subjects undertook a genuine co-operative inquiry, based upon Heron's (1996) description of the methodology. Heron's description of a cooperative inquiry implies a need for participants to corporately engage in clearly identifiable cycles of action and reflection with greater intellectual and critical rigour than I feel our inquiry achieved. However, certainly in the case of the first group, the participants' desire to develop an experiential knowledge of each other, and their efforts to achieve this through engagement in play-based activities, speaks to the practical knowing privileged within co-operative inquiry at a far deeper level than I had initially envisaged we might achieve. Theirs was a quest based upon genuine need, to hear from others who shared similar issues to themselves, and led to tangible human flourishing where relationships were built upon increased understanding of each other. Heron's assertion that human flourishing is indeed an end in itself authenticates the project's inquiry as fulfilling a key mandate of co-operative inquiry. Despite my concerns
regarding how deeply the participants were led to reflect upon their experiences and assumptions, such a relational and occupationally-based process is ripe for assimilation into occupational therapy practice.

6.6.1 Implications for Occupational Therapy Practice

I have given an account of how learning from this inquiry may be assimilated into my own ways of working as an occupational therapist, primarily to counter what I have perceived as a lack of occupational focus within interventions and a lack of genuinely person-centred approaches to participatory practice within services. The relational framework I have developed has afforded me deeper insight into the localised use of participatory methods and will no doubt serve to guide my own practice in challenging these deficits and offering a platform for further participatory governance (Gaventa, 2004).

Where current occupational therapy practice may overlook more tacit salutogenic gains that emerge at a relational level from engagement between clients and therapists or clients and their social-cultural contexts, a relationality-based approach to practice offers a framework to therapists that could potentially increase their awareness of these gains and allow both therapist and client to develop occupational-oriented treatments that reflect more relationally aware ways of being; embedding change in the clients' lives more effectively. In turn, the relational approach re-affirms the therapeutic use of self as a model applicable to both therapist and client, engendering a potentially greater sense of efficacy on the part of the client; focusing upon their agency within the therapeutic process and their equitable control over therapeutic outcomes.

Through the therapist's use of therapeutic scaffolding and intentional deference, I can foresee changes in the approach to facilitation of group activities in practice settings, for example. In particular, I feel that psycho-educational groups, run within a community CAMHS setting, would benefit from a shift in approach, away from a deficit focus and a potentially didactic learning style, toward a model that enables participants to steer their own learning and sense of inquiry through group-based activity that cultivates a corporate identity and leads to the development of a product or outcome of participants' own choosing that reflects a sense of their own individual or shared personhood.
The deferential shift from a power-governed client-centred orientation regarding those accessing services, towards one which more readily acknowledges our shared personhood, signals to clients the intrinsic value of their personal contexts and the contribution this adds, no less empowered than the position of the therapist, leading to a deeper relational space being created between therapist and client. In therapeutic group settings, where a relational space has been created in which clients can draw from each other, each group member’s therapeutic use of self may be exercised, and the very act of relating can be celebrated as a conduit for sense-making in its own right. Clients may feel freer to articulate their needs in a way that is less restricted by a sense of abeyance to the perceived wishes of the therapist; seemingly more pervasive within clinical or medically oriented settings.

The beneficial use of activity-based therapeutic processes that lead to the creation of a product as a therapeutic goal within therapeutic settings, clearly builds upon the tenets of occupational therapy which assert that engaging in activity and occupation has the potential to lead to health and well-being gains. Encouraging therapists to scaffold therapy in a way that privileges the development of a product as well as the process, lends a material focus to engagement that may bring individual clients away from a place of potentially unhelpful introspection, into a space where methods of shared expression and collaborative productivity can be engaged with and reflected upon more directly. For therapists to develop their skills in steering the therapeutic process towards a context-specific, socio-politically sensitive product that may endure once therapeutic engagement has finished is, I would suggest, a crucial component of intervention which is often overlooked both in training and subsequent practice. The potential utility of therapeutic products that can be independently engaged with (such as a film, in the case of the ‘See Yourself’ project among others, posters, text, art work) is far reaching. The potential use by both clients and therapists to aesthetically present characteristics of ‘self’ in a way that requires an empathic response, and to open conversations with future audiences such as others with similar experiences or practitioners wanting to engage with a subject, is demonstrated through the work described in this thesis.

Given that my own facilitation took place in a community settings, including a school, the potential for facilitating this relational occupational therapy practice framework outside of traditional clinical settings is justified as being at least worthy of exploration. Indeed, my own experience has been inextricably linked with the specific context in which it occurred; in this case, with young people living with varying levels
of hearing loss. The resultant social and cultural factors with which the project has engaged are specific to this context. Therefore, the potential success of transferring this way of working into another setting is measured by the level of attention given to the socio-cultural and political factors embedded within any new context. I believe that targeted dissemination of the framework described in this thesis into other occupational therapy practice settings will go a considerable way in equipping other occupational therapists with practical and testable knowledge that they may apply in their own unique contexts.

From a service perspective, Figure 6.1 below returns to the integrated service model introduced in Chapter 2 upon which is overlaid the position I feel the project has occupied strategically. This positioning reflects a service area that is both targeted, in its focus upon deaf young people, specialist in its use of therapeutic and clinical reasoning, and universal in its affiliations with community partners. Although there is evidence of calls for occupational therapy to engage further in the public health arena, the existing CAMHS service pathways or commissioning strategies do not currently accommodate a way of working based upon non-diagnostically designed health promotion orientated activity-based groups, collaboratively developed and steered by participants. Furthermore, I would suggest that there is some way to go before a real move away from deficit-oriented services occurs.

![Figure 6.1 Integrated CAMHS service model overlaid with the project’s strategic position](image-url)
Despite these not insignificant barriers, the learning from this research can still serve assessment and treatment processes as localised guidance for recognising more acutely, the potential power relations inherent when engaging with and participating alongside children and young people, particularly those rendered more vulnerable by their socio-cultural systems. It may also open the horizon for possible future development of commissioned service provision within the zone where this project has been strategically positioned.

6.6.2 Limitations of study and implications for further research

This thesis represents a largely heuristic approach to findings, where experientially-based intuitive judgements have underpinned my conceptual developments. As a novice researcher undertaking a novel research path, I came to the inquiry conscious, only in part, of the task that lay ahead. The journey has been one of exploration and discovery, maintaining a level of reflexivity that has led to continual modifications and corrections in the process. Although on the one hand, this can be potentially freeing, the lack of tried and tested knowledge available to draw from, in terms of co-operative inquiries with young people, has been a limitation to the research's scope. With such knowledge, challenges may have been anticipated and navigated more confidently.

6.6.2.1 Limitations of the project

Firstly, my own status as a hearing adult, limited the extent to which I could genuinely identify with the experiences of the co-participants that I sought to collaborate with, and their capacity to truly empathise with my position. Although I utilised my moderate skills in signing to engage more concretely with the second group for example, I could not claim to be an 'inside researcher' in the way that the young people genuinely could. Although I attempted in numerous ways to soften the potentially negative effects of this divide by maintaining a spirit of openness, there remained an inevitable distance between our positions that would have had some additional effects upon how we related. However, I must add that the second project may have been less willing to engage with the project if I had not demonstrated some ability to engage with them using signing. I felt my signing ability signified to them a level of genuine interest and empathy on my part, regarding their own social and cultural position.
My reluctance to undertake screening assessments of participants before commencing the research was based upon two main factors. Firstly, the position of power I initially felt a screening process would have placed me in, stood at odds with the ethos behind the tenets of co-operative inquiry. However, this left me with no information to construct a baseline for comparison when trying to determine changes through the course of the projects. Instead I was reliant upon participants' self-rating of events through the post-it note evaluations, when they occurred, and anecdotal evidence from project partners which helped to place the participants in some degree of context and supported the management of potential risks. Secondly, the level of uptake from initial recruitment through the Sensory Needs Service for the first group was at such a minimal level that anyone who expressed an interest was enthusiastically received. In a sense, this took away from me, any quandaries I may have had about whether to screen or not. Having seen how well this approach could be successfully accommodated, it therefore felt natural to continue this 'open door' policy with the second project group.

Attrition from the project indicates that either needs of those participants had been met and involvement was no longer serving a purpose, or that the projects were not felt to be of value, or worse, even detrimental to them. Again, without a robust evaluation tool, reasons for attrition could only be surmised. However, a level of openness was evidently built in the case of the second group for Lisa to be able to explain her reasons for withdrawal so clearly and for some co-participants to give such a mixed reaction to the project in the final session.

The limited level at which I felt the participants were engaging in reflective cycles was the cause for my consternation described above. Descriptions of co-operative inquiry in the literature, speak of inquiry cycles through which fourfold ways of knowing are engaged with: experiential; presentational; propositional; and practical knowing. Did I feel the participants were engaging with these fourfold ways of knowing through inquiry cycles? Indeed, was it unrealistic to expect participants to engage in all four ways of knowing through the project? The determining factor regarding whether the project could be deemed as research, put to me in the early stages of the inquiry by a local contact who had completed his PhD using cooperative inquiry with students from his own college student cohort, was the degree to which the young people were prepared to test out their assumptions in action and reflect upon emerging outcomes. As I have discussed, the lack of tangible discussion within our project inquiry that would most easily demonstrate such
reflection, left me to reframe participants’ actions in such a way as to understand their alternative expressions of knowing as part of their reflective cycles. However, because this constituted a midpoint threshold moment for me, the scaffolding we developed did not factor in capturing evidence of these reflective expressions in any concrete way. A key implication for future research, therefore, would be to remain cognisant of these many ways of knowing and build into any inquiry’s scaffold, tools for capturing multi-representational reflexive cycles more robustly.

Furthermore, this thesis does not represent participative knowing, because it is my singular endeavour to conceptualise my own experience of the inquiry. However, it is unlikely that future research I initiate would necessitate the production of a thesis from a singular point of view in this way. Therefore future projects could be steered more easily towards collaborative analysis and representation of the process, its outcomes and products. Such representation thus becomes both a part of the process and a product of the inquiry.

Ultimately, as Reason and Torbert (2001) assert, methodology is a tool rather than an overly-dominant set of rules, and this has characterised my approach to cooperative inquiry. Given my developing skills regarding such a tool, this thesis represents a starting point from which concepts that have been described within it, such as the framework of relationality and the relationship between process and product, may be explored through future practice-based inquiries. It would be my hope that this could occur in equally collaborative contexts, seeking the partnering of other interested parties, and producing an inquiry process that perceives human flourishing as a necessary outcome of the process in its own right, as indeed this inquiry has sought to do.

6.6.2.2 Limitations of the data collection and analysis methods

My self-reflexive position in authoring my own account of the participatory inquiry and my subsequent analysis of that account limits the ability of the thesis itself to truly represent multiple voices. However, I have attempted to be open-handed about this position from the outset. Where possible, the blog contained either the direct words of others through the capturing of correspondence, or snippets of as near verbatim dialogue as I could capture during sessions. However, there remains a significant filtering process that naturally occurs, governed by my own decision-making. Although this thesis falls short of autoethnography, I feel the postcritical ethnographic framework gives enough emphasis to the relationship between wider socio-political
structures and the use of 'self' within the text to justify my creation and subsequent analysis of the reflexive research log.

The enormity of the reflexive log itself, created a significant challenge in successfully implementing and managing a coherent analysis method. The time taken to read and re-read the text until a meaningful crystallisation of findings emerged, may have had an impact upon what findings in fact became apparent. Employing a team approach to analyse the reflexive log and corroborate findings during this phase may have served to authenticate and validate emerging concepts more swiftly. However, as an approach, the immersion and crystallisation technique mirrored my own organic approach to the research as a whole and allowed for the exploratory spirit of the inquiry to continue into the analytic process to what I felt was good effect. Given the participatory nature of the inquiry and the question posed, it is difficult to think of alternative analytical methodologies which would have resonated so strongly with the field of inquiry's underlying tenets while needing to be employed singlehandedly in order to adhere to the strictures of a doctoral degree.

6.6.3 Research Validity through Authenticity

Within this qualitative piece of research describing a participatory inquiry, the terms validity and reliability, applied within quantitative research to describe the usefulness and accuracy of data, are replaced with alternative criteria for establishing whether data is trustworthy (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 2000). These alternative criteria pertain to the rigour of qualitative research's approach to data and the authenticity of the data set itself in genuinely representing the participants' perspectives (Kielhofner and Fossey, 2005). Given this shift, validity is measured by the degree to which knowledge is shared and mutual learning occurs as a democratic process between all participants, leading to social change (Lincoln, 1995).

In terms of this project inquiry, I have maintained throughout that I can only present my interpretation of the cooperative inquiry I engaged with as a co-participant. The views of the young people are most authentically represented through their own words, images and music, captured in the project films that they co-produced. The cooperative inquiry's validity is therefore authenticated through the impact of the young people's films, for example, upon their communities, as well as the direct impact of engagement in the project upon the young people themselves, captured
both subjectively and in their own words, within the data set. That the project films had such an emotional impact upon their varied audiences holds significant weight in terms of the films’ authenticity. There is certainly a strong sense with which the films express something powerful to members of the Deaf community and beyond. Again, I would point to concepts such as ‘cultural capital’ to describe the transaction that seemed to occur between the young people and viewers of the films. I feel this adds trustworthiness to my findings regarding the significance of relationality as a lens through which such powerful connections might be recognised and purposefully incorporated into the collaborative aims of future occupational therapy practice.

In terms of this thesis, the postcritical ethnographic stance from which I have attended to my own research question has focused largely upon symbolic mechanisms that have emerged through rigorous analysis of the data using both inductive and deductive means. The data set itself has been created from contemporaneous correspondence and reflexive writing that captures a trustworthy account of the inquiry processes, acknowledging my intrinsic link to the phenomenon itself. The depth of analysis offered by the immersion and crystallization method described in Chapter 3 demonstrates a suitable level of rigor in drawing trustworthy meaning from iterative engagement with the data.

The autoethnographic slant to the subjective production of the data set and its subsequent analysis must also be acknowledged. Those who use autoethnography suggest that it is more authentic than other approaches “...precisely because of the researcher’s use of self, the voice of the insider being more true than that of the outsider (Reed-Danahay, 1997).” (p.9 Wall, 2006). In responding to the research question is this thesis, my use of self has been central; described as a tool within the inquiry and utilised as the tool that, in turn, produced my reflexive account of the inquiry. Both my own account of the inquiry and my attempts to interrogate this account to develop a deeper understanding of how I engaged with other participants within the context, represent the authentic voice of the insider. Although singular, and set apart from the co-participants, my voice remains set within a social framework of co-constructed meaning that is represented in this thesis. I do not wish to imply this thesis represents in any way, an autoethnography. However, the questions used to judge narrative accounts: “Does this account work for us? Do we find it to be believable and evocative on the basis of our own experiences?” (Garratt & Hodkinson, 1999 cited in Sparkes, 2000: 29), lend my own pragmatic pursuit of meaning, a degree of credibility when applied to this research context.
6.7 Summary

My further critical discussion of the findings has sought to describe the ways of knowing with which I have related back to my experience of initiating, and participating in, the ‘See Yourself’ project. I have drawn heuristically from the theories of related disciplines to broaden my own lexicon when articulating my experience and developing subsequent theoretical propositions in keeping with a postcritical stance. I have explored these theories within an occupational therapy context to develop a deeper sense of coherence within my own practice contexts.

I have discussed the complexity of power relations inherent in working across social and cultural differences and my attempts to develop guidelines for an approach that considers the wider context and applies conceptual and practical tools to find a democratic balance within the participative process. I have highlighted the utility of harnessing the innate relationship between processes and products in the context of activity-based therapeutic inquiry groups to foster greater engagement with and from participants and their wider communities. I have focused upon two primary approaches identified within my findings, namely therapeutic scaffolding and deference. I have suggested that these have emerged intuitively from the practical application of emergent propositional knowledge that focuses upon the human relationship, rather than the therapeutic relationship. From this basis I have asserted that a therapeutic understanding of the project inquiry through a relational lens has been built, outside the statutory service arena, in order to foster genuinely salutogenic outcomes, without the tacit need to be meeting service demands. I have attempted to situate this inquiry within a framework of existing service structures.

Ultimately, I have given deeper meaning to guidelines for person-centred occupational therapy practice that may be assimilated from attributes of participatory inquiry methods at macro, meso and micro-levels. Further inquiries undertaken in different contexts have been suggested to test the transferability and efficacy of these guidelines in other localised contexts, whilst directly contributing to the flourishing of those involved.
7. Closing Remarks

This thesis has presented a postcritical ethnography of a phenomenon framed as an occupational therapy intervention; the development, initiation, processes and outcomes of a participatory inquiry based upon a co-operative inquiry methodology. It has explored how participatory inquiry with young people might inform person-centred occupational therapy practice. From within this context, I as a participant, both co-researcher and co-subject, have explored my own therapeutic group facilitation style and practice, developed within the wider contextual complexity of two activity-based project groups engaging young people experiencing varying degrees of hearing or deafness. In turn, I have explored what occupational therapy practice can glean from an experience that has encompassed the best part of five years (part-time) from initial proposal to these concluding remarks.

The inquiry was designed in such a way so as not to be at the expense of participants, but rather, to offer a positive, meaningful experience as far as possible through their endeavour. My thesis has described a dual-layered approach to the inquiry. The first layer is characterised by a participatory inquiry with young people incorporating the tenets of co-operative inquiry, and supported by community partners. The second layer captures my analysis of my own account of the inquiry process and associated correspondence from a postcritical ethnographic perspective. It seemed that the cooperative inquiry produced potential health enhancing benefits for young people who are deemed as being at greater risk of mental and emotional health difficulties accentuated by their culturally perceived minority status. To a degree, this has perhaps occurred through their own engagement in cycles of action and reflection through which relationships were built, ideas tested and meaningful outcomes produced that continue to affect the wider community.

My own critical analysis and subsequent thesis development presents a pragmatic framework for occupational therapy practice based upon the emerging concept of relationality. This has been developed through deductively drawing existing theories from occupational therapy as well as a wider field of disciplines into a critical analysis of the data. Through this process, a deeper critical consideration of issues pertaining to power and its relation to the notions of context and capacity, has been undertaken. My findings regarding these power relationships, outline how facilitative cognisance
of contextual factors as well as an awareness of individual and corporate capacities has the potential to add fresh debate to the established arena of client-centred occupational therapy practice through promoting effective management of power dynamics, leading to more genuine collaborative participation and the promotion of person-centredness as opposed to client-centredness. This shift in emphasis is embodied in my findings relating to facilitatory approaches; namely the concepts of intentional deference and therapeutic scaffolding. I believe both approaches offer new knowledge to the occupational therapy profession and are worthy of further exploration.

The context of the Deaf community, and its peripheral stakeholders, has proved a complex test-bed upon which this inquiry has developed and has necessitated a robust response to the issues that have arisen. Through my personal engagement with the inquiry, I have wrestled with a number of issues including: the forging of effective links within a community with which I had no previous established links; my attempts to develop a non-diagnostic approach to participants within the inquiry; the integrating of participatory and postcritical ethnographic methodologies; how best to authentically analyse and subsequently represent the findings from a participatory inquiry from a subjectivist stance; and framing the project within the context of established children’s services to support future promotion of community development intervention strategies and enrich the health promotion agenda.

My aim has been to create useful and usable knowledge in the form of heuristic guidelines that support and enhance future occupational therapy practice. However, at the risk of creating a piece of work that is structurally over-determined, I have developed a framework for practice through which relational sensitivities can be identified in different contexts. I maintain a position that intervention approaches are contingent upon localised contexts and therefore would not suggest I have created a generalisable practice model, rather a preliminary conceptual model suitable for further exploration within the current political climate. If the ideas I have developed through this thesis and plan to disseminate are felt to be worthy of further testing by other colleagues and practitioners, I would welcome their involvement.
7.1 Final Brief Reflections

I described in Chapter 3 of this thesis how my methodological direction developed through a search for synergy between the philosophical and ontological positions underpinning methodologies and my own worldview, governed by my capacity to comprehend them. It is this capacity that I feel has grown most through my participation in this research, gaining a clearer sense of self within personal and professional contexts. My experience has been richer than I could have imagined, made so by the people I have met and the conversations, debates and activities we have engaged in. Richard Rorty (1999) suggests that the function of the liberal intellectual is to "...instil doubts in students' minds about their own self-images and about the society to which they belong..." (p.127). The inquiry has been for me that liberal intellectual personified, filling me with doubts and challenging me to make sense with them; not necessarily of them.

Regarding participatory action research’s epistemological mandate for change to occur, this thesis provides an authentic first person narration of my lived experience of the inquiry context and bears testament to the changes that have been realised in my own professional and personal context. Altruistically, change for participants may have been realised most deeply at an individual level, and therefore is more difficult to evidence, since change occurs over time. I would hope that personal experiences gained by each participant would continue to influence his or her perspectives and future choices.

Giving the final word to presentational forms of knowing, Figure 7.1 below sums up a visual articulation of my experience of bridging the two worlds of academic study and community-based inquiry. The cartoon represents the significant effort and associated risks involved in ‘breaking out’ of the academic atmosphere to gain access to ‘another world’ of inquiry methods as an ‘outsider’. This is followed by the lonely journey back to the academic sphere through analytic cycles and the equally intense and risky experience of ‘breaking back in’ through developing propositional knowledge and the subsequent academic critique and scrutiny that goes with it.
Figure 7.1 The journey between academia and community-based inquiry
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Appendix 1:

Excerpt from the reflexive research log
with annotations from analysis
Sav said that she liked making salad and had made one recently for a family do and got compliments for it.

I suggested, in an unpressured way, that one week maybe Bethan could bring in a lasagne that she’d made and Sav could bring in a salad. They seemed to like this idea – so I think I’ll pursue it by way of including something about it in the email.

I led this discussion on to thinking about how our interests overlap with each other. I explained the Venn diagram idea that I had used in the Ovingdean group recently. Logan and Sav said they had heard of them from school but couldn’t remember exactly what they were. I talked about having things in common and making connections with each other. I looked at their eyes and saw that all 3 had blue eyes, so I drew a diagram in my book A4 book on 3 converging circles, one for each of them, and asked where I would write ‘blue eyes’. Logan said it would go in the middle, where all 3 circles overlapped. Well done Logan. I asked where Logan’s love of heavy metal would fit and there was unanimously placed into the only Logan part of his circle. We decided between us to explore our hobbies and create a larger version of the Venn diagram idea. I say, ‘we’ but I suggested the idea of exploring it on bigger paper. I went off to try and find some bigger paper as I’ve run out of flipchart pads. I couldn’t find any. When I returned, Sav and Bethan were playing football together with the little ball that they had played piggy in the middle with. This was great, that they were interacting in their own way (not at their own level of course) – in a way they felt comfortable with. Which happened to be non-verbal. Worth noting, All the games that we play are non-verbal. It’s interesting that they are so popular too...

...This is something that has come in and out of focus for me – how can we explore something with others non-verbally and reach a coherent understanding of conclusions? Can one realistically create non-verbal conclusions that are less open to interpretation? Even language, however waterlight it seems, is open to interpretation. Heron & Reason’s fourfold ways of knowing include a strong recognition to this sensibility-based knowledge, but it’s the decoding, the deciphering, the reaching of agreed, shared meaning that seems difficult to crystallise. More recently, I’ve been thinking that, from what I’ve heard, Denzin & Lincoln’s conceptualisation of moments, and specifically the 7th moment, may give some insight into how to genuinely view and accept non-verbal knowledge exploration as part of the research methodology. But the question remains how to meaningfully present or represent it non-verbally. Performative Social Science explores this as well. The wider academic world of theses and vivae is seemingly not open to it yet...

...anyway. I returned and they were playing football. Logan was still at the food table. I told him I couldn’t find more paper but say the we have A4 paper, also I drop out the island artwork that we did way back in the autumn and suggest we could draw on the back of that? Logan is wanting to use the A4 and says that they could use the A4 to work on their own, representing their interests and then come together with what they’ve done to discuss it. I say that’s great and that Logan is in charge of this as it’s his plan so he should gather the others and get things rolling. Logan shares this with Savannah. Meanwhile, Bethan has stated to hide behind a screen, I tell Bethan that we’re going to be drawing now and she comes out easily and quickly to join in. I then prompt Logan to explain again so that Bethan knows what we’re up to. He does so in his gentle tones. There then ensues quite a prolonged period as all three are engrossed in expressing their interests on a sheet of A4 paper. As 5 o’clock is looming, I give some time announcements – not to stop them, but to make sure they’re making informed decisions to carry on or wind things up. They then all came together to discuss with a bit of prompting. This happened in what seemed a relaxed way. Logan had finished, Bethan was colouring and Sav just needed one more minute to colour something in. They had used the coloured pens and markers that I bring each session. I asked if I could take an audio recording of the discussion. I said that this would help create material for Logan’s idea of creating an auditory commentary for pictures. Consent was given by
all 3 and I set that up. They discussed their pictures for about 15 mins and I have that recorded so I won’t go over it now – although I might listen to it and add comments here:

After that, I realised that it was past 5 and that the parents were probably waiting outside. Sure enough, Bethan’s dad and Sav’s mum were there so I let them in. I went back in the room. Sav was trying to engage Bethan in another bit of football. I asked them to complete the evaluation, gave out the post-its, explaining what I was doing to Sav and her mum.

This is what they wrote:

What went well?

Bethan – cring [maybe this meant colouring?]

Savannah – art; football; chatting; eating

Logan – finding things out about new members

Even better if...

Savannah – Nothing

Bethan – Play

After the session, I wrote in my black book...

Issue - are they allowed to do something?

- what would they do if they were ‘allowed’ to do anything?

I think this alludes to the sense in which the yp’s still seek some kind of ‘permission’ whether this be verbal or social cues, to do something. It’s not the case... well interestingly, I was going to write, it’s not the case that they go into doing something and I have to rein them back in and say ‘hey guys, hang on, slow down, your enthusiasm and creative vivacity is just too much’ – but then, the level of interest has been evident when they’ve self determined as a group to play games. This has just been slightly out of the remit of why I feel we’re all there. I’m happy to go along with it for a while but view it as a ‘break’ or a team building exercise rather than part of the exploratory research. This is an issue that I am continually wrestling with and so I wonder, well if they really felt they weren’t confined to just a group project and all the social or power related markers that holds for them, then what would they chose to do with the time if they really felt they were ‘allowed’ [I speech mark that word cos it’s use implies an intent contrary to the philosophy of my discourse around it, and yet it’s a world that seems to sum up they’re response to the created situation at times] to do anything they wanted?

So that was the end of the session. We did say at the end that the next session would build on what they had drawn by beginning to use the Venn diagram idea to discuss and create a better understanding of things in common.

After the session, I phoned Raf’s home to discuss the camera. I had a brief chat and agreed to go to there’s on Monday evening after the Ovingdean session to pick it up and have a chat. Raf’s mum said that Raf has been experiencing some bullying at school and has moved tutor group.

This is the email I only read after the session from Savannah’s mum which she sent on the Friday...
Sent: 26 February 2010 09:46:22
To: rob.seeyourself@hotmail.com
Hi Rob

My daughter, Savannah (aged 12, year 7), is interested in coming along to the Saturday afternoon session for the first time this Saturday - can you let me know what will be happening this week and does she need to bring anything with her? Also, can you let me have any other information about the group, for instance, how many attend, ages etc.

Many thanks.

Lucille

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Monday 1st March – Ovingdean session #2

Well, oh dear I arrived late for this session, travelling down form Horsham which I was SO annoyed about (it's now 10:38 on Monday 8th March by the way). I had a call from Vicky at about 18:33 so I explained I'd be there soon and arrived at 18:46. I made my way up to the house where Vicky was. Sam was outside as I walked up and he lapped his watch and smiled. Another girl ran by and said hi, do you remember me? – I did remember her vaguely from the open evening. [54,862 words now by the way]. Vicky came out of the house as I walked up, came down the slope and greeted me. She was very sympathetic to the traffic on the road down from Falmer, but it didn’t make me feel any better. We got to the common room where the young people were glued to Hollyoaks. There was Alex, Annela, Chris, Georgie and Gina. One of the teachers, whose name I should remember, had a cheeky smile on her face when I arrived. She said that now they were locked into Hollyoaks that was it. I said I'd go over and have a word with them. I did and they were less than enthusiastic about taking they're eyes off the subtitles. I managed to agree with them that they would watch it until it ended at 7pm and then we'd run the session between 7pm and 8:30. I went back and waited on the seat with teacher. Alex was hanging around the room but was not watching Hollyoaks. Like last week, he seemed a bit disgruntled at the fact the others were absorbed with the telly. He said he was sad because of the news that the school was being shut down in July, at the end of the academic year. I hadn’t heard that. The last I'd heard was about the merger plans with HLS. I was shocked. The teacher verified what Alex had said. Alex then grudgingly went off to find the drinks and snacks for tonight, having been asked to by the staff member. While he was, I had a chat to the staff member about the closure. Apparently, the proposal for a merger had fallen through and it was announced by the Trustees last Thursday that the school would be closed at the end of the school year. All the staff would be made redundant and the kids would be placed elsewhere and this was in the process of being sorted out. But, the kids would be going to a mix of hearing schools and Deaf schools. It strikes me that for LEAs to place the kids at Ovingdean is not a cheap decision and that the parents have had to fight very hard, most probably, to gain a place at the school. We discussed how serendipitous it was that the project had come at a time when it could provide a strand of support to the yo's in expressing their feelings about the closure. She agreed with this and felt it was well timed. So, Hollyoaks ended, Alex came back with some snacks and we went off to find the art room where we had agreed to have the session. I was given a key and walked into the space. So, in the art room, their domain, the young people started to get out their art work to show me or point to their work on the wall. I enthusiastically showed interest and thought that a lot of the work was genuinely very good. Sam showed me a mask he was working on. Annela showed me a picture she was working on. It struck me what a unique educational experience they must be
having, with such small numbers – very sheltered – and how the impact of moving to bigger
schools separately will affect them.

Once we were as sat down as we could be, some of the group who had brought them opened
their black books. I enquired about what they had written. Anella had written some things in
hers in between sessions mainly about the school closing and losing friends. Interestingly,
Anella had ripped out a page she had initially used in the first session to write name tags. Gina
had written in hers as well. The group were talking about where they may go and about the
school’s closure affecting them. They started to write lists in their black books of the people in
their year. This seemed to happen very spontaneously. I think that Anella started this and then
Gina started doing this too.

I gave the group a reflective viewpoint suggesting that they were a community of their own and
that this was being reflected by the way they were talking about the recent news and how they
were reacting. I heard Gina comment “I feel like a family”. Georgie used the phrase “feeling of a
loss of something you’ve loved”. There was a lot of reminiscing and reassuring about their
feelings for each other. Georgie brought up that plans were already underway for times for fun
towards the end of the year including a trip to Thorpe Park and a school Prom.

I talked about how their views could be represented and explained the opportunity for work in the
exhibition on 15th May at HLS. An interesting thing happened. There were negative comments
being uttered about HLS and I heard Georgie imply they shouldn’t say that because I worked for
HLS. I was asked whether I worked there and I said I didn’t and explained that I was
independent of any school and that HLS was only being used as a venue for the event. The
reaction against HLS or staff and what this meant for the group was interesting for me. There
was still apparent distrust between the schools or at least at other ‘threats’ outside OHS.
Whether this is linked with the politics around communication approaches I’m unsure about, but
there would seem to be an element of this in the air.

I suggested the group might like to put their ideas and thoughts onto one piece of paper. So with
Alex’s help, we looked for large sheets in the art room to stick together. We cobbled a few
sheets together and I suggested that the group could use the sheet to write down or draw
anything they wanted, and that, on one sheet, this would mean the group could work
collaboratively, see what each other was writing and respond to each other better. The group got
around the sheet on the floor and started writing things on. There was the inevitable looking at
what others were writing and copying, but generally most of the y’s were adding stuff. Sam was
finding it hard to concentrate and trying to interact with the others who appeared more resolute
in trying to ignore him. The group did write things on. Mainly, Georgie – who was proud at having
written a lot, and Anella, Chris too. Sam wrote a small amount – “I love me in OHS. Shit for me”

As you can see with reference to the paper, the comments are about how sad they are that the
schools is closing, at losing their friends, not being ready to leave, questions about where they
will go next. But also there are many optimistic notes about how good their friends and staff
have been. References to OHS being like a family. This was the main event of the evening. The
group read some of what was written by others.

At one point around the table, Sam began to cry. When the group realized that he was really
crying, they gathered around him clucking like hens and showed him affection. Anella scooped
him up and cuddled him asking what was wrong. He said it was the impact of the discussion
around the school closing. What was interesting about this, was that Sam was not engaging
much in the conversation, and using distracting techniques yet he was obviously taking it all in. I
explain this in my email to Vicky after the session.

I also write down the word resiliency and ask what the group think it means. Anella says its
about being strong. I try and take this into discussing with the group about how they will be
strong in terms of the closure and loss of friends. This is where Georgie explains about the
events they have planned.
The art therapist pops her head in the door a bit early as planned to check everything’s ok and then waits outside for the remainder. Towards the end, Annella takes pictures of the writing on the paper and of the group members in various poses. I take a couple for them. There is lots of laughter and excited running round at the end. I try and get the group to think of ideas for next time. The picture taking seems to be an idea they are interested in. Annella says that she will bring her laptop in with lots of pictures formed the school to reminisce from.

Things begin to escalate a bit and Annella chases Sam jokingly. I ask the art therapist to come in and the group ends. Alex helps me to fold the big paper with the writing. We go back down.

On reflection, I felt that it struck me the different levels of communication there are in the room – both verbally, sign and also written. They are from a range of years and so the hierarchical levels are obviously there, with some holding more sway than others and others wishing they had more and trying to assert this.

I’m still trying to think about how the group can be inspired to think about they’re situation, or issues that confront them in a way that is meaningful to them. There are elements there, and my frustration that I’m not capturing them quick enough, or turning them into something useful which is the facilitators job I guess. It’s like I’m trying to study smoke as it emanates from a fire, continually changing, precarious and intangible, yet here I am trying to understand it.

Visit to Raf’s house

After the session, I went to Raf’s house to pick up the camera and to discuss the issues that Raf is facing – this is Raf’s mum’s agenda. I feel a bit awkward approaching the house, wondering if this is ethically sound, research-wise. I conclude that this depends upon how I play it. Dad opens the door in surprise having forgotten I was coming. They welcome me in and Raf emerges. They apologise for having nabbed the camera. Raf gives it back. I ask if there are any new pics on it. Raf says some. There is a close up picture of a horse and a couple of the Saltdean Hills. Mum explains a bit more about the neuro research that she’s interested in that she thinks will help Raf. She explains about having taken Raf out of the local school due to bullying but that now it has emerged that Raf is being bullied in the local area and by a couple in his tutor group. This has led him to being moved tutor groups within his year. Raf corroborates this. I say that there is no pressure to return to the Sea Yourself project, but that the group holds the capacity to explore these sorts of issues. I felt that, outside of the project sessions, this would be inappropriate. They are accessing the support from school. So I left with the project camera in my hands. I wonder whether he’ll be at the next session…hmmm.

Re: Review of This week & plans for next Monday 8th March

On Thu, 04 Mar, Robert Kirkwood wrote:

Hi Vicky,

Last Monday’s session up in the art room went well it seems. Much of the time was spent reflecting on the news of the school closure. Given the circumstances, it would be wholly appropriate if this emerged as the main focus for the project, giving the group a space to constructively explore what this means for them. Sam continues to appear easily distracted in the group. This week however, the other group members seemed more determined to either ignore his behaviour or get him to focus. Despite, his behaviour, Sam began to cry at one point amidst discussions about the closure, saying it was because the school was closing and he’d lose his friends. The way that the group rallied round him, cuddled and reassured him was very moving! He soon cheered
up, but it just shows that he is being affected by being involved in the
group. I see this as a positive thing.

There was still a little escalation at the end but having a member of staff at
hand was very useful in shepherding them out of the room. No more bites or
broken fingers to my knowledge.

Next week the group want to meet back in the common room. Annalise is wanting to
bring in her laptop with pictures on it. I’ll leave work earlier to make sure
I’m there at 6:45. The snacks are still much appreciated. Annalise didn’t
find me. If he’s around next week at 8pm, I’d be happy to chat with him.

See you next Monday,

Rob

From: **Vicky Ferguson** (vkcfer@ovingdeanhall.org.uk)
Sent: 04 March 2010 21:32:23
To: **Robert Kirkwood** (roblekirkwood@hotmail.com)
Cc: simrog@ovingdeanhall.org.uk

Hi Rob,

I think you’re right... the group seems a great space to explore feelings around
the cottage. The students have always been supportive of each other and
it’s really good to hear Ross feels safe enough to show his emotions within the
group.

Glad Ross coming in at the end stopped any over excited nonsense! We’ll stick
with that plan then!

Will continue with the snacks and ask Annalise to catch you on Monday.

Common room always available so no proba there.

Have a great weekend and see you Monday.

Vicky

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**Email to Savannah’s mum following Savannah’s first session**

**RE: Saturday session**

From: **rob seeyourself** (rob.seeyourself@hotmail.com)
Sent: 02 March 2010 09:37:12
To: lucille.wojcik@ntworld.com
Bcc: Rob hotmail (robkirkwood@hotmail.com)

Hi Lucille,

Good to meet you and Savannah on Saturday. I hope Savannah had a good time, she certainly seemed to
join in very easily.

It was kind of you to offer to share information about the project through your NDCS network. I’ve
attached an electronic version of the flyer that you originally received in the past - I’ve amended it slightly
to reflect new dates etc. If you could forward this on to anyone that may be interested, that would be
great. Also, please feel free to share any of the information on the other information sheets I gave you on
Saturday. If it would be useful to have electronic versions of those too, let me know.

You mentioned that not all young people who may be interested are from the Brighton area. I'm happy to hear from anyone who feels they can make the journey to Brighton for the sessions.

I think Savannah may have mentioned she had a digital camera - if she wants to join in with taking pictures of her life, anything of interest, this has been a good way for members to share and get to know each other in the group. If the camera hold the pics on and SD Card then even better - we can upload those onto the project laptop with the rest.

Many thanks,

Rob

Report additions to John Walker for Our Space Management meeting 4th March

This is the excerpt from the Our Space report that I wrote concerning the 'See Yourself' projects for the management meeting...

See Yourself
The See Yourself project, established in September 2009, continues to develop as a small group of young people with hearing loss attending mainstream schools in Brighton meet fortnightly to explore their own and shared identity through activity and creative media. A recent call for new recruits through the Sensory Needs Service has seen more young people joining the project, which is currently working towards a contribution to the festival day in May.

In addition, the See Yourself project has recently developed a partnership with Ovingdean Hall School where, in collaboration with a group of pupils, 1½ hour evening sessions have been set up once a week. This partnership has occurred at a time of fundamental change for the school. On the week the See Yourself held an initial project-planning meeting with interested pupils from the school, it was announced that the trustees were exploring a merger with Hamilton Lodge School. These schools for the deaf have contrasting histories and philosophies on education in sign bilingualism/child centered communication and education by oral means. However, despite the hopes for this merger, it has been announced this week that Ovingdean Hall School will close at the end of this academic year due to financial reasons.

With both staff and pupils only too aware of the impact of this news will have on the school community, the See Yourself project is well placed to explore the issues that are sure to arise. Already, the sessions have begun to explore these issues and the meaning of community for the young people.

Ovingdean Session 8th March 2010

So, it's Sunday 14th March, this session was just 6 days ago. I've been catching up on finishing the last one if I'm honest. Not being up to date with these sessions and having this new session stream runs the risk of being quite overwhelming. Well, its 'only for a season' as I keep telling friends and family.

I arrived on time this week which helps the sanity and was escorted to the common room by Ruth. There were no yps in there yet. So I started to get my bits together. I had a walkie-talkie and heard that the yps were being rounded up. And they soon came. We had James, Georige, Anas (who explained that he was sorry he wasn't at the last one but wanted to continue to be involved which was interesting because I thought we'd lost him), Chris, Alex, Sam and Anna - that's 7. Gina was apparently sent home sick. Georige explained that one of the students had brought a sick bug to school and that a couple of pupils and one member of staff had got it.
There was more order this week with the presence of James. I remembered my initial resistance when I started the project here at OHS to the idea that one group member might be too overpowering. I compared that thought to what I was feeling now. Sheer relief that he would no doubt keep order when the group became too disorganised. This is what happened, when it was needed, but this was less of a problem due to his very presence. Interestingly enough, I realised that he is a tall and broad lad, and probably holds extra weight through being the only (I think) boy in the school with a girlfriend in the school too (Georgie).

Sam asked me where the rules for the group were. On discussion with Vicky afterwards, this is linked to Simon and other staff, giving him prep talks during the week regarding his behaviour and asking him to stick to the rules. Vicky commented that it was very much like Sam to want the rules there but not necessarily use them. He responds well to the structured environment. My immediate thought was, so do bears in cages. This thought is linked to what Nicky originally said about hoping the project would encourage autonomous thinking amongst the pupils. As it happens, I couldn't find them so they didn't go up.

Next, Georgie asked if they could see the writing from the last session. She was keen to show James all that she had written. I got that out and laid it on the floor. I suggested that Anas and James could add things on and that anyone could add more if they wanted. I suggested that the group read what was on there, which they were doing anyway and write things base on what they felt was brought up and adding comments to what others had written. I gave James, who was already lying on the floor writing, the example of maybe circling a word or comment and writing a response to it. He did this later on, not immediately after my suggestion. Anas added comments too, needing more clarification about what he was allowed to write. For Anas, English is his second language, and signing his third. For him, signing has helped him to understand English better. But imagine that – being deaf, in a country with a new language and learning signing too! I should bug him up more, especially when he can be at the rough end.

While this was happening, I'd brought out the camera I'd retrieved from Ref. Alex leapt at the chance to use it and took in upon himself to take pictures of the group exercise. He soon wanted to know if there was a video on it and navigated himself to it very easily. He then used it to capture some video footage of the session.

Meanwhile, I was writing the list of dates down on a sheet of paper between now and the 15th May in order to explain that we were aiming at this date and give a sense of perspective regarding what could be achieved between now and then. We congregated back to the chairs and I explained the 15th May event as an opportunity for the group to show anything they wanted. There was a lot of discussion, some relevant and some not. James and Georgie were having an interesting conversation which I was trying to follow about school and Georgie's LEA having to pay for OHS which was an expensive option and how maybe they wouldn't pay for a similar school. From further conversations, I wasn't sure whether there was still a hope that OHS would be saved and that maybe the pupils could have some influence in this.

Vicky popped the snacks through the door at this point and they were grabbed. Sam brought them into the group. James readied, saying leave them till break. The group (based on what happened in the art room last week I.e. eat them whenever) defended Sam saying that I had allowed them to be eaten in the group last time. I concurred, adding that I didn't mind, I wasn't in charge, they could eat them whenever they wanted. Snacks were passed around. Sam poured people drinks and behaved well, largely due to the influence of James. Then Sam was happy to sit and listen and give ideas. Alex continued to take some pictures of the group. And then... BINGO.

It took a bit of time to dawn on me, what had happened. We were talking about what to do, and Georgie said that the group could create a drama of their experiences at the school. James liked this idea too. There was discussion about how that would work, where and when it would be.
performed. I added that the drama could be videoed and that the video could be shown at the HLS event. They liked this idea. I added that the videoing would be of a high quality. So there was a bit of discussion about how this would work. James brought up that the drama would need to be planned. I said that they should go to the other side of the room where there was more space and start planning it, on their own, without me. I wanted to see how they would manage this. George was put in charge as it was her idea. I might have suggested this as a way of circumnavigating the inevitable – James taking the leader role. So off they went. I gave Sam a length of paper to take over to put ideas down onto.

Georgie was doing well at getting ideas out; however, there was a lot of ‘talking about’ too and in a short time, Georgie threw in the towel and retreated to a separate sofa on her own where she lay in sulking protest. There was by this time a piece of paper on the wall entitled ‘Main points of this drama’ with the list of their names on it. So, James took up the mantle. Chris came up with the idea of a sad story about bullying. Later, when coming back into the discussion, Georgie said that this idea was a bit obvious and there needed to be something more, about the school. There was discussion about where it would be filmed, in the school? Out of school? Just in the drama studio? James was systematically getting ideas from everyone. Sam wanted to involve graffiti in some way as part of the story and went on to describe a flashback scene to being bullied the same time each day. Alex wanted to include the story of his long journey from Walas each week. Anas added about travelling a long way from Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. James’s comment read: how sad are we about OHS close? how happy we are at OHS?

In fact, here is the list of comments:

Main point of this drama:-

Sam – Graffiti (bad way e.g. bad name, bullying way)
flashback to being bullied, same time each day

Anas – Travelling long way from JEDDAH. He love OHS

Annelia – School (venue)

Chris – Bullying. Sad story

Alex – we can show the child on the train it be I fell on the train and my dad like doing it not. It 200 miles [Alex’s handwriting is very hard to read, due to a neurological condition that he suffers from. They have been the subjects of research about it, as it is such a rare condition according to Vicki].

James – how sad are we about OHS close? how happy we are at OHS?

Georgie – show people that OHS is like a big family and we don’t want to lose them

Gina – [she wasn’t there]

So there were ideas emerging that have real weight behind them it would seem. It would not be wrong for me to ask them challenging questions about this to get them to really consider what they are trying to say. The Devil’s advocate role that Peter from Northbrook used a lot would seem a good tool here.

The session was nearing its end and there was a call for doing some actual drama – mainly from Sam. So I suggested that we end with a bit of drama. Maybe the exercise I led them in a the last session where we acted out an important thing we had learnt. I quickly demonstrated the one I’d done previously: learning to walk, much to their amusement. Then they did their own
Appendix 2:

Brighton Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange
(BSCKE) Funding Proposal
BSCKE Project Proposal Form 2008-2009

These questions should be answered following the project selection criteria on page 3 of the Project Guidance document.

Supporting young people living with deafness and attending mainstream secondary schools to explore how community services for deaf people can support their well-being.

1. The Project

Aims
Disability experienced through hearing loss from an early age can place significant challenges upon a young person. It has been suggested that these difficulties lead to emotional or mental health problems in as many as 40% of young people living with deafness compared with 25% in those hearing. Statutory attempts to address this issue have predominantly come from an education perspective, through the adoption of policy that advocates the inclusion of deaf children into mainstream schools wherever possible. The benefits and risks of the inclusion agenda have been hotly debated within the deaf community for many years.

Deafness is a complex phenomenon, affecting identity, challenging capacity for personal achievements and the socialisation of those whose sensory faculties are affected. The implications this has for the emotional and mental well-being of deaf young people who are integrating within mainstream schools either directly or through special support centres situated within them, are far reaching. However, despite recent governmental papers acknowledging the link between deafness and mental ill-health, there is very little research literature available exploring these consequences for young people living with deafness, attending mainstream schools or in their transition into employment/further education.

There is a clear need to support deaf young people in exploring ways of building and promoting self-determined positive change, social capital and social inclusion. An increased sense of control within the lives of this often disempowered young minority group will be modelled within the project through their status as equal partners. The deaf young people’s thoughts and feelings regarding their resilience against emotional and mental health problems, including the ways in which they can build social capital in the wider community, will serve as the basis for this research project.

The broad aims of this project are threefold:

1. To empower and enhance the well-being of deaf young people through their participation as co-researchers in a co-operative inquiry.
2. To better understand the needs and wishes of deaf young people attending mainstream schools and in their transition into the wider community.

3. To provide for a 'knowledge exchange between those who may wish to access community services for Deaf people and those providing the services, to ultimately improve these services.

The application for funding from BSCKE would allow for strong links to be forged with the "Our Space" Community of Practice, and the requested amount provide the appropriate resource given the size of group, length of engagement and creative processes, and envisaged outcomes.

A co-operative inquiry is a form of participatory action research method that seeks to 'generate' rather than 'extract' knowledge, which is then allowed to positively influence and change perspectives and circumstances surrounding specific issues. All participants are respectfully acknowledged as equal partners within a dynamic process that is designed to promote empowerment and learning through cycles of collaborative action and open reflection with the other group members.

This project will form part of a larger endeavour of co-operative inquiry which will consist of 3 phases. Following the successful and ethical recruitment of approximately 15 young people living with deafness from school years 8 to 10 who have given fully informed consent, the first phase shall begin, orienting the co-researchers to the project.

The Induction Phase
Over 4 creative sessions, the values underpinning participatory action research and the method of a co-operative inquiry will be explored, including issues of ethics. An Inquiry Partnership Agreement (IPA) will then be drawn up representing the decisions of the project group in terms of the specific aims of the project and expectations of its members, possible methods of exploration, cohesive group rules and codes of practice.

The Inquiry Process Phase
Following the induction phase, plans of action that will positively challenge the group's assumptions regarding the inquiry focus, will be agreed upon and implemented between sessions. For example, trying to behave differently in a specific social situation or attempting to do something despite previous avoidance. The group will meet regularly to present the thoughts and reactions generated through these actions in as creative a way as possible. External arts workers will be recruited to facilitate innovative ways of exploring and capturing the participants' ideas. The data generated will then be discussed and reflected upon within the group, leading to new actions being agreed to test new thoughts, feelings or assumptions that have been generated.

The BSCKE funding will support one aspect of the co-operative inquiry and will take the form of a knowledge exchange between the students and members of the community and voluntary sector, and will explore the ways in which the students would wish to access the services offered in the wider community. These services can offer access to information and advice, but also facilitate the acquisition of social capital in relation to social networks, routes to further and higher education, and employment. These in turn can be part of a strategy of resilience for young people in the
transition from school to the wider world. Throughout this time, the IPA will be continually monitored and reviewed to ensure that the young people are steering the decision-making process as fully as possible.

**Mutual Benefit**
The research initiator is currently a part-time Professional Doctorate student in Occupational Therapy and this project proposal is complementary to a research proposal for that course of study. The Professional Doctorate course framework provides a supervisory team for the duration of the project, demands and monitors ethical governance approval and strongly promotes a strategy that supports dissemination of learning to a broad community, both within and outside of the academy. Dissemination of the project findings will inform research practice, and opportunities for young people within the community, voluntary and statutory sectors represented in the ‘Our Space’ CoP.

It is also hoped that new pathways for knowledge, historically situated within universities will open up directly into communities where relationships have been built and sustained. Additionally, it is intended that outcomes from the larger research project will be used to directly influence and shape future primary mental health service provision for the young deaf population.

**Impact & Outcomes**
This research proposal is built around the notion of social inclusion and the recognition that young people living with deafness and attending mainstream schools face significant challenges in terms of social inclusion within their communities. Such challenges call for support in developing social capital and resilience to adverse risk factors within both their internal worlds and the various communities in which they live.

Central to the ontology that underpins action research is the notion of ‘sustained change’ and how this can be facilitated through the challenging of perspectives and attitudes within a supportive space that allows for new insights and knowledge to develop and again be tested through action. A newly found confidence and sense of self that will grow from this process will be supported by the wider community of practice (CoP) within which this research proposal is seeking to situate itself, to impact the community to maximum effect.

**Research question**
This project enables the deaf young people, who are the research partners for this project, to explore how they perceive the Deaf community and third sector organisations as routes for support, and what they envision they need from the community to support them.

2. **Project Management**
The project will be required to meet the ethical code of practice of the University of Sussex, and all research personnel to be CRB approved. In addition, and in line with the Professional Doctorate protocol, the proposed research is being submitted to the Faculty Research Ethics and Governance Committee (FREGC) for scrutiny and approval before the project can commence. Additionally, West Sussex County Council Social Research Unit request a similar approval process before access may be gained to potential participants through collaboration with the West Sussex Sensory Support Team, as is the mutually agreed plan.
Applications for these processes are currently in underway. However, a 13,000 word research proposal submitted to the University of Brighton as a requirement of the Professional Doctorate and comprehensively discussing plans to deal with ethical issues and possible risks, has recently been passed by the examining board.

**Recognised risks and management solutions include:**
Possible withdrawal of participants over the life of the project. Reasons for this may be varied. Other commitments, unexpected events or lack of interest may all play a part. Attempts to reduce this risk include the use of age appropriate creative media to engage participants throughout, a clear information sheet and 1:1 explanation of the project so participants are fully informed when deciding to commit to the project.

Traveling to sessions may prove unmanageable for participants. This will be countered by the provision or travel expense re-imbursement, the recruitment of participants local to each other where possible and the provision of a venue/venues that are as convenient to all as possible.

The role of participant as researcher highlights training needs, helping participants to be familiar with ethical issues themselves such as confidentiality and consent when incorporating others in their community into their own data collection methods. Research training for participants will be given during the induction phase and research practice will be monitored and reviewed throughout the project. Additionally, a member of the CoP will be available for confidential discussions with participants should they feel the need to discuss any issues outside the co-operative inquiry space. The CoP has a range of individuals including professionals in working with deaf people or Deaf people operating in a professional capacity; the management team will ensure that who is asked to participate in confidential discussions is appropriately CRB checked and skilled to take a mentorship role with a young person.

**Dissemination & Sustainability**
The project will fully support the group in fulfilling their plans and ideas as best it can throughout the life of the inquiry. From the outset measures will be taken to nurture the healthy development of safety and inclusion, a healthy approach towards difference and disagreement and authentic collaboration between respected individuals. The development of these interpersonal and emotional skills is key to building social capital and robust resilience and preventative processes against emotional and mental health issues caused by their personal and social circumstances. It is envisaged that the group will take a lead in deciding how, where and when to open their findings to a wider audience. It is hoped that inclusion in the project will have had a positive impact upon the identity, confidence and resilience of the young co-researchers and this personal development is expected to sustain participants’ increased sense of self and confidence beyond the life of the project, and that the project findings will be presented in a range of interesting and creative ways. It is also hoped that relationships formed within the community of the co-operative inquiry will be sustained of their own accord.

**Management structures**
The project will be managed by John Walker, Deaf Studies convener at the University of Sussex. Project progress will be regularly reported to the CoP by the researcher.

The researcher, Robert Kirkwood (Occupational Therapist) who formulated the wider research proposal (to the University of Brighton) will lead the project. He will be supervised in his research by Bill McGowan, Senior Lecturer at the School of Nursing and Midwifery, and supported by John Walker in relation to the specific BSCKE aspects of the project.
Financial monitoring and reporting will be the responsibility of the project administrator and finance office in the Centre for Continuing Education who will report to the BSCKE/CUPP board as required.

3. Partnership Information

Partners
Robert Kirkwood, Occupational Therapist, Professional Doctorate student, project worker
University of Brighton

John Walker, Convenor of Deaf Studies, lead on ‘Our Space’ Community of Practice, project supervisor.
University of Sussex

Bill McGowan, Sr Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery, research supervisor
University of Brighton

Clinical supervisor, tbc

Liz Beatty, Sensory Services Team, Social Services Department, community partner
West Sussex County Council

Simon Hesselberg, Head of Community Development, RAD

Damian Brewer, Community Member, Access Officer, Horsham District and Crawley Borough Councils

Joanna Rowland-Stuart, Community Member, Equality Officer, LSC

Owen Smith, Community Member

Diana Neal, Community Member, Editor for Deaf Sussex

Stephen Dering, Director, Dering Employment Services

Katie Fenwick, Social Work Resource Officer, Social Care

Tricia Mitchell, Manager, Sussex Deaf Association
Josh Cameron, PhD student, Occupational Therapy, University of Brighton

Juliet Millican, CUPP, University of Brighton

Young deaf people residing in West Sussex, ages 11 to 16, community partner

---

**Proposal Title:** Supporting young people living with deafness and attending mainstream secondary schools to explore how community services for deaf people can support their well-being.

**Project start date:** July 2008  
**Project end date:** July 2009

**Milestones**

Please identify the main milestones in the life of the project and put a cross under the relevant month to produce a timeline of activity (we would not expect there to be more than 5 milestones). A milestone is a key point in the project where a section of work is completed and which may trigger a review of the remainder of the project. An example of a milestone might be "recruitment of the project worker/s" whereby failure to recruit would require a review of the project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Months from the start of the project</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Recruiting participants and planning initial phase (incl. venue, booking sessional workers, etc)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Implementing Phase 2 – the inquiry process of action-reflection cycles</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

238
3. Period to review outcomes and plan outputs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task description</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Finish</th>
<th>By whom</th>
<th>Outcome/Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4. Focusing upon dissemination and output production in various media (dissemination continued with Our Space CoP beyond the end date of this project)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task description</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Finish</th>
<th>By whom</th>
<th>Outcome/Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. The writing up of final project report and continued dissemination

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task description</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Finish</th>
<th>By whom</th>
<th>Outcome/Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Tasks

Please identify the major tasks to be undertaken throughout the life of the project indicating when they will be done and who will do them. Please include the following:

- Project evaluation (project partners will be asked to adopt the simple BSCKE self-evaluation framework, which facilitates ongoing evaluation by all project participants throughout the life of the project. An evaluation report will be one of the final project milestones. On the timeline, evaluation will have a start date coinciding with the inception of the project, and an end date at its conclusion).
- Project Management meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Task description</th>
<th>Start</th>
<th>Finish</th>
<th>By whom</th>
<th>Outcome/Product</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Identification REAP evaluation measurements, research questions, outreach to young people with SSD, Meetings with Our Space CoP, supervision with research and project supervisors.</td>
<td>July 2008</td>
<td>Dec 2008</td>
<td>Researcher CUPP SSD Our space CoP</td>
<td>Evaluation framework Establish a group of young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Review of outcomes and development of outputs.</td>
<td>May 2009</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
<td>Researcher Our space CoP</td>
<td>Research conclusions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Dissemination and output production</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
<td>Sept 2009</td>
<td>Researcher Young deaf people</td>
<td>Representative artwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Final project report and REAP evaluation. Explore possible teaching resources from the project outcomes.</td>
<td>June 2009</td>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Proposed presentation at the CUPP conference in September</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Supervision meeting with research supervisor, clinical supervisor and project supervisor</td>
<td>July 2008</td>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td>Supervisors Researcher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Feed information into Our Space CoP</td>
<td>July 2008</td>
<td>July 2009</td>
<td>Researcher Our Space CoP</td>
<td>Young deaf people's experience of space.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Budget**

Please detail the budget for the project. This should include:

- Costs of supervisors and associates detailed individually, including overheads
- All other expenditure that is required to deliver the project regardless of who is expected to fund it
- Where match funding is being provided, clear indication both of how much funding and whether it is assured
- In the "when are funds required" column please refer to the range of months, from the start of the project, when spending is expected to take place. This should be broadly compatible with the milestones document above

The agreed budget will be monitored on a periodic basis once the project commences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budget item</th>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>When are funds required</th>
<th>Match funding secured</th>
<th>Funds required from Knowledge Exchange</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Project officer</td>
<td>£4450</td>
<td>50% when award/50% at 12 months</td>
<td>£1300</td>
<td>£3150</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Supervisor</td>
<td>£430</td>
<td></td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>£230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Clinical supervisor</td>
<td>£200</td>
<td></td>
<td>£200</td>
<td>£0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Assistant</td>
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<td></td>
<td>£450</td>
<td>£0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sessions</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Venue</td>
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<td>100% when award</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£1125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Travel expenses</td>
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<td>- Communication Support</td>
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<td>- Vouchers</td>
<td>£450</td>
<td></td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£450</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Products</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Art workers</td>
<td>£1000</td>
<td>50% when award/50% at 12 months</td>
<td>£0</td>
<td>£1000</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Art product</td>
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<td>£500</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Website</td>
<td>£1200</td>
<td></td>
<td>£1000</td>
<td>£200</td>
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</table>

| Total             | £13680      | £3650                   | £10030                |
Appendix 3:

BSCKE Funding Approval letter with points for clarification
KNOCKWE Exchange

John Walker,
Convener of Deaf Studies,
CCE, Sussex Institute
University of Sussex
Essex House
Brighton
BN1 9QQ

30th July, 2008

Dear John,

Re: Supporting young people living with deafness and attending mainstream secondary schools to explore how community services for deaf people can support their wellbeing, proposal for BSCKE funding support

Thank you for submitting a bid to the Brighton & Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange (BSCKE). Your proposal was considered by the Cupp Steering Group on 23rd July 2008. I'm very pleased to confirm that, from a strong and competitive field of proposals, your proposal was provisionally approved for £10,030 funding.

The steering group were pleased to receive an application that connects so closely to the Our Space Community of Practice (CoP). However, they recommended that a distinction be made between the project team that will drive this project and the wider CoP partners. The steering group also asked that clarification is made between the work of this project and the PhD study of Robert Kirkwood, the project worker. Therefore, you are asked to:-

1. Submit a list of partners on this project, clearly indicating the names and roles of the academic supervisor, the community partner and the community supervisor
2. Provide written clarification of the distinction between the work and the doctoral study of the project worker

As you might expect, because of the nature of BSCKE we think it important that projects commit themselves to the sharing of learning and evaluation. We will be expecting your project to join in with appropriate events and activities that link your work with other projects. We also expect you to undertake a self-evaluation.

In addition to this, we will be expecting that your project group meets with the BSCKE Development Manager over the course of your project delivery. An initial meeting can determine what shape this should take and a framework for self-evaluation will be available prior to this.

We would also like to be informed of any dissemination events that your project engages with and of any reports published on the project's BSCKE supported work.

Please get in touch with me to confirm when you will be able to supply the above documents and contact me on 84 4557 or c.davies@brighton.ac.uk if you would like further clarification of this or support with developing these requirements.
Yours sincerely

Ceri Davies
Development Manager
Brighton and Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange

On behalf of the CUPP Steering Group
cc David Wolff, Stuart Lamp, project partners
Appendix 4:

Letter formally responding to BSCKE Funding Approval letter's points of clarification
Ceri Davies  
Development Manager  
Brighton and Sussex community Knowledge Exchange  

21st October 2008  

Dear Ceri  

Re: Supporting young people living with deafness and attending mainstream secondary schools to explore how community services for deaf people can support their wellbeing.  

We would like to respond formally to the question stated in your letter on 30th July 2009.  

The questions I draw from your letter are twofold:  
1. The partners who support this BSCKE project and their roles.  
2. How is this project distinguished from the Professional Doctorate led by Robert Kirkwood.  

Question 1  
We have identified the following individuals who will have a role in this project:  

- Academic Supervisors - Bill McGowan (Snr Lecturer, School of Nursing and Midwifery) and G. Saldo (Head of OT programme)  
- Community Partner - Liz Beatty (Sensory Services Team, West Sussex Social Care)  
- Community Supervisor - John Walker (Convenor of Deaf Studies, University of Sussex)  

Community members:  
- Damian Brewer - Deaf member of Brighton community (also Sussex Partnership Equity & Diversity Lead)  
- Neil Robinson - Deaf member of Brighton community (also West Sussex Social Services community worker for Deaf & HI)  
- Mitra Hajebi - Parent of Deaf child (also Support worker at Hamilton Lodge)  
- Dale Hards - HI member of Brighton community  
- Leas Knowles - Deaf member of Brighton community
The SECC project, titled Our Space CoP, will also provide another layer of consultation where this Community of Practice can provide a third sector/community/academic engagement perspective as its focus will be on the adult Deaf community. We will ask the project worker, Robert Kirkwood, to contribute to the CoP and gain an insight as to how this work could influence the adult Deaf community, as well as explore opportunities for young deaf people.

**Question 2**
We would like to clearly distinguish between the aims of Robert Kirkwood’s Professional Doctorate and those of this BSCKE project.

The BSCKE project aims to:
Explore young deaf people’s perception of their own health and wellbeing, and how the community space could support their expectations or needs. This perception will be expressed in a variety of ways led by the young people themselves in which to create real resources based on their experiences and facilitate a wider spectrum of change within the Deaf community, or the communities the young people are part of.

The Professional Doctorate aims to:
Explore the effectiveness of a cooperative inquiry as an intervention to improving the mental health in young deaf people.

The BSCKE project is more concerned with the ideas and experiences expressed by the young deaf people while the Professional Doctorate will explore the use of ‘cooperative inquiry’ as a vehicle for expression and empowerment.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to get back to me.

Yours truly,

John Walker  
Convenor of Deaf Studies

cc. Pam Coare, Director for CCE  
Robert Kirkwood, project worker
Appendix 5:

Confirmation of the Thesis Outline Approval (TOA) panel's research approval
Dear Raelon,

Application for the approval of Thesis Outline

I write to confirm that your Thesis Outline has now been approved by your Thesis Panel.

If you have any administrative queries during the course of the project which are not answered by the Handbook, please get in touch with your Research Student Division Administrator, Mrs J Ingles for further information. I hope the project goes well.

Name: Robert Kirkwood
School: School of Health Professions
Research Student Division: Health Professions
Degree: Professional Doctorate in Occupational Therapy (Part time)
Effective start date: 21 Sep 2006
Title of program: Can a cooperative inquiry with deaf young co-researchers attending mainstream secondary schools help to develop their resilience against emotional and mental health issues

Expire date: 20 Sep 2010

Yours sincerely

Wendy Falconer
Administrative Assistant (Research)
Appendix 6:

Faculty Research and Ethical Governance Committee's
(FREGC) Review Form
Faculty of Health and Social Science
Research Ethics & Governance
Proposal Review Form

Date: 16.4.09

Title of project: The effectiveness of cooperative inquiry as a therapeutic tool in exploring the identities of deaf or hearing impaired young people attending mainstream schools

FREGC Application No: 09/17

Name of Principal Investigator/Supervisor: Bill McGowen

Name of All Other Researchers/Students : Rob Kirkwood

Reviewers' Names:

1st Reviewer Prof J Scholes

2nd Reviewer Ms Margaret Cooney

Outcome:

Approved .......................................................... □

Approved with minor changes, the chief investigator or the supervisor should confirm in writing to the administrator of FREGC that the changes have been undertaken .......................................................... □

Return to researchers for major changes and resubmission to FREGC X

Not approved .......................................................... □

NHS Sponsorship Recommended? Yes □ No □ N/A □

Comments:

(please indicate clearly any specific revisions required.)

Thank you for submitting this application to the FREGC. The application is to be commended in terms of engaging with the advisory panel and experts in the field at the design stage of the research. However there are a number of issues that do require further consideration and clarification and these are:

The aims and objectives of the study are rather vague. It is unclear what positive self determined development actually is. The global statement of specific communities of young people could be made much more explicit. Deaf or hearing impaired children between the ages of 8-10.

The use of research as a therapeutic tool is not clarified.

Aim 3: Is this an aim of the research or a consequence of participatory approaches?

The use of video as a method of data collection is not adequately justified. How will the anonymity of individuals within the visual image be protected? Why is this the preferred method of data collection? How will this help the participants – is this solely to help the researcher; if so, there is an inadequate account of how the risks of this approach are to be handled? This is not covered within the section data information protection.

How can you expect a group of 8-10 year olds even as co-researchers to uphold the values of the corporately agreed group?

The sample
The passing on of information from the young people in the CYPT sensory service needs to be cleared at the general manager level and not at the team manager level.

In one section it is said that the lead researcher will view individuals information from the sensory service. What information and how it is being used needs to be made clear.
Asking the contact in the sensory team to screen the young people for inclusion will require agreed inclusion and exclusion criteria. There is no place for the young person to make an independent complaint. As it will require joint consent, the parents will need more information about their role and about whom they can make a compliant to if they feel they need to.

Advisory group
The group does not seem to have any representative from families or young people.

Token payments to the participants requires further explanation

Copyright: This section left me confused and unclear what was happening to various items and when. Will these data be used as artefacts to elaborate or provide evidence within the thesis. If so, will specific permissions to use this data in this way and is to be included in the consent form?

There is no section on data analysis. This is required.
The outputs and likely benefits / risks to participants or the organisation will require further clarification. This is a required section in the abstract that should be attached to the application (notably when being set before the Council’s Governance Committee. Please look at the Areas for review by the Council. We would need confirmation that a recent CRB check has been completed.
The information sheet does not seem to be written in an accessible language for the children to read and understand.
The consent form is quite dense and covers topics and considerations that may not be within the grasp of the participant age group – although it is accessible to the parents who give their consent.
Appendix 7:

Confirmation letter of FREGC research approval
Dear Rob,

Title of Proposal: The effectiveness of cooperative inquiry as a therapeutic tool in exploring the identities of deaf or hearing impaired young people attending mainstream schools.
FREGC Application Number: 09/17

We are writing to confirm that the Faculty Research Ethics and Governance Committee (FREGC, Health and Social Science) has approved the study entitled *The effectiveness of cooperative inquiry as a therapeutic tool in exploring the identities of deaf or hearing impaired young people attending mainstream schools* and this may now be submitted to IRAS/LA for review. However please note that you may NOT start the research until the proposal has been approved by the IRAS/LA.

It is the ultimate responsibility of the researchers to ensure that the work is conducted within the Research Ethics and Governance Framework of the University of Brighton, and those of the Department of Health and any funding body (if applicable).

You are required to notify the FREGC and the IRAS/LA in writing if there are any substantial changes in the research methodology or any serious adverse events or accidents during the conduct of the study. The IRAS/LA will require you to submit annual progress and completion reports to them, and we would be grateful if you could provide a copy of these reports to us.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

Professor Julie Scholes RN DipN DANS MSc Nursing D.Phil
Chair of Faculty of Health Research Ethics & Governance Committee
Appendix 8:

Confirmation of the Brighton & Hove Council Research Governance department's research approval
Project title: Effectiveness of Cooperative Enquiry

This project has been:

☐ Agreed to start with no comments

☒ Agreed (but the following comments should be considered)

☐ Strongly recommended that project does not start until the areas
  below have been addressed

Areas to be addressed before starting the project:

• Young people and their parents need to give consent to their photographs being
taken including any material taken on video. This could be included on the consent form.
Brighton and Hove have a policy about children’s pictures being taken and it would
require their informed consent.

• I suggest using high street vouchers for the payments as that allows a range of
choices for the participants (http://www.highstreetvouchers.com/gift-vouchers/index)

• Introductory Letter: “Rob is not D/Deaf himself”. Having looked up the term, as I was
unaware of it, I think it should be “D/deaf”

• Times & Venue questionnaire: “Please CIRCLE which times of day (during term) are
best, or leave blank:” what happens if you leave it blank? Are you available or
unavailable

• What is the size of the pool of people from which Rob is looking to recruit his study
group – is ten to 15 ambitious? Are most D/deaf people in mainstream schooling
registered and acknowledged as such? Is part of the problem a lack of registration and
acknowledgement of the issues affecting D/deaf within schools?

• In the ‘Inclusion / exclusion criteria’ document – section one final bullet: should read
‘is’ (not ‘id’)?

• There might be data protection issues, but I think this is probably covered by the
consent forms and agreements

Project monitoring arrangements:
Not applicable as you have already confirmed that you have considered the comments
and whether they have been addressed.

Date feedback sent:
29th July 2009
Appendix 9:

My response to the Brighton & Hove Council Research Governance
department’s research approval letter
Hi Loretta,

Thanks for the email.

I shall respond to our points in turn:

1. Young people and their parents need to give consent to their photographs being taken including any material taken on video. This could be included on the consent form. Brighton and Hove have a policy about children’s pictures being taken and it would require their informed consent.

I have attached a new consent form for photo/video capture that will only be used if the young people decide to take pictures or videos for their own reflective and documenting purposes during the project. No images (photo or video) will be used by the researcher for data analysis purposes.

2. I suggest using high street vouchers for the payments as that allows a range of choices for the participants (http://www.highstreetvouchers.com/gift-vouchers/index)

Thank you for the web link. I have amended the word voucher to high street voucher on the Introductory Letter

3. Introductory Letter: “Rob is not d/Deaf himself “. Having looked up the term, as I was unaware of it, I think it should be “D/deaf”

Thanks for this - I have changed this in the attached Introductory letter

4. Times & Venue questionnaire: “Please CIRCLE which times of day (during term) are best, or leave blank.” what happens if you leave it blank? Are you available or unavailable

On the attached amended q’aire, I have changed the wording to "...times of day are most convenient" and omitted "...or leave blank"

5. What is the size of the pool of people from which Rob is looking to recruit his study group – is ten to 15 ambitious? Are most D/deaf people in mainstream schooling registered and acknowledged as such? Is part of the problem a lack of registration and acknowledgement of the issues affecting D/deaf within schools?

All young people with a diagnosed hearing impairment in Brighton and Hove are automatically referred to the Sensory Needs Support (SNS) service who currently have 45 yp’s within schools years 8, 9 and 10 (from Sept). The service are confident that from this number 10 - 15 yp’s fitting the inclusion/exclusion criteria will be recruited for the project. The SNS concur with the literature stating that D/deaf yp’s in mainstream school are at increased risk of experiencing mental health problems due to social exclusion and feelings of isolation

6. In the ‘Inclusion / exclusion criteria’ document – section one final bullet: should read ‘is’ (not ‘id’)?

Thanks, I’ve fixed that
7. There might be data protection issues, but I think this is probably covered by the consent forms and agreements.

I have gone to some detail within the proposal about handling the various data protection issues that such an interaction project is likely to throw up. I have tried to make a distinction between the formal research agenda, analysing therapeutic process and the actual work within the collaborative youth project itself.

Ok - I hope these points clarify your concerns adequately. Please do get back to me if you need to.

On the basis of your last email, I take it I can get on with the recruitment process unless I hear otherwise from yourselves - and look forward to receiving formal confirmation in due course.

Thanks again,

Rob Kirkwood
Appendix 10:

Project fact sheet for participants & parents
PROJECT FACT SHEET: for participants & parents

Receiving this information sheet means that you want to know more about the See Yourself project. You should have already received an 'Invitation' letter briefly explaining the project.

Why is this project useful?

Much research has been carried exploring the best way to educate deaf young people. However, very little research has been carried out with deaf young people exploring their own identities and needs. It is generally felt that deaf or hearing impaired young people are at greater risk of experiencing potential social and emotional difficulties than other young people. This project wants to support a group of 10 to 15 young people like yourself to explore this issue using activities chosen by them.

What is the time commitment?

The group will meet for 3 hours every 2 weeks at a mutually convenient time and place, over 6 to 8 months between September 2009 and May 2010. Drinks and snacks will be provided for all sessions. The sessions themselves will involve the group in creative activities guided by you and others in the group, reflecting your own personal and cultural interests. You will be rewarded for every session you attend by receiving your own choice of retail vouchers worth £5. All travel expenses will be reimbursed.

What will happen in the project?

The project will use an action research method known as cooperative inquiry. You can find out more about this type of research method at... (http://web.uvic.ca/chpc/howwework/cooping.htm).

Over the project, the group will do 4 main things:

1. Think about experiences you have in common and how you can understand them better.
2. Try different activities as a group to understand these experiences better.
3. Chat about the outcomes of these activities in the group then try them at home or school.
4. Come back and chat more as a group about these new personal experiences, reviewing the groups’ original thoughts about their experiences and coming up with new activities that will help you to understand your experiences even more clearly.

The first 4 sessions (held weekly) will be an introduction to get to know each other, have fun and teach the group about important ethical considerations when carrying out any research like: Confidentiality, data protection, informed consent, child protection issues and respecting others.

After those first 4 weeks, we will run creative sessions every fortnight, using different ways to explore the group’s emerging ideas. The material generated will be discussed and reflected upon by the group. All adults directly involved in the project, will have an up-to-date CRB check. Rob will be on-hand for every session as well.

How will project data be managed and stored?

'Data' means anything created in the group or by the group members. Data can be generated using a range of different media including photographs, video footage, art works, dramas, diaries, audio recordings, creative writing or blogs. Media has the potential to identify another person through their words, physical presence or actions e.g. photos, video and audio recordings. So, consent from anyone involved will need to be gained before the data can be shared with the group. How to gain informed and agreed consent from others and how to protect data will be explained in the Introduction sessions. Rob will provide a secure and lockable space at his place of work for any potentially confidential data. The confidentiality and consent process will be continually monitored and reviewed by the group.
How will the project and its outcomes be shared?

As project members, you may want to present your reflections and work to family, friends, schools and the wider community. Examples of these outcomes may be an art exhibition, a play/drama, film screening, poetry/writing, publishing an article, interviews or writing on web-based forums. What the group makes will be up to you. These outcomes are hoped to be useful resources for teaching, building identity and developing your own community.

Rob has developed this project as a research student at the University of Brighton. To meet the requirements of the research course Rob is on, a final dissertation (long essay) will also include a description of the project, as well as examining whether the cooperative inquiry method could be used within occupational therapy (Rob is an occupational therapist).

Rob will be writing a confidential journal of his own experiences of being part of the group and will be asking you your opinions too at set times during the project. Rob hopes to present or publish project findings at conferences or in academic journals. Group members are welcome to collaborate in any of these opportunities.

The young people in the project are welcome to keep anything they make or help create as part of the project sessions. Where several young people have helped to create something, ownership will be negotiated within the group.

Are there any potential risks involved?

This proposed research has been reviewed and approved by staff at the University of Brighton and at Brighton & Hove City Council before the project has been allowed to start. However, participation in this project may carry some potential risks of inconvenience, discomfort or distress including:

10. Leaving the project before it finishes due to other commitment pressures, unexpected events or lack of interest/relevance. This could lead to feelings of disappointment, disillusionment or failure. The project will try to make sure participants are fully informed when agreeing to being involved in the project. There will be opportunities for feedback at each session or via telephone/text and email to Rob or Leas Knowles a project advisory panel member.

11. Becoming emotionally affected by discussing or revealing potentially personal, sensitive and emotive issues. You don’t have to discuss or disclose information you are uncomfortable with. Confidentiality, respect and peer-support within the group is continually emphasised. Both Rob and a project advisory panel member will be available directly or via telephone/text and email to discuss any sensitive matters.

12. Other commitments becoming pressured due to involvement in the project. The progress of the project will be continually reviewed within the group. Any group member may withdraw from the project at any time without giving a reason.

13. The uncertainty of the project’s progression and outcomes. Rob will be working hard to make sure all group members are involved in the project’s development as equally as possible so that there is shared control of the project among the young people.

14. The breaking of group rules such as confidentiality, data protection, respecting each other. Emphasis will be placed upon the importance of group values and rules during the introduction. Teaching sessions on the above subjects that will be periodically reviewed.

15. Communication support is not meeting the needs of a group member. The questionnaire given to people interested in the project will hopefully capture their individual needs. The project will ensure that the venue used will be provided with all necessary equipment.

16. Not wanting to be audio or video recorded in the group. The group sessions may include video recording, but this will be stopped if a young people does not want to be filmed.
Appendix 11:

Contact Information for Inquiries/Complaints
“SEE YOURSELF” A Collaborative Youth Project

Contact Information for Inquiries/Complaints

Rob Kirkwood - Research and Project Lead Facilitator
Rob works as both a Child & Adolescent Primary Mental Health Worker and an Occupational Therapist. Rob can be contacted with any questions about the project.
Email: rob.seeyourself@hotmail.com
Project specific mobile/text: 07762495539

Bob Kingsley – Community Partner & supporting project recruitment
Bob is a Teacher of the Deaf and works for the Brighton & Hove City Council Sensory Needs Service. This service is helping Rob recruit young people to the project.
Email: bob.kingsley@brighton-hove.gov.uk
Office: 01273 293610

Leas Knowles – Community Partner and Project Advisory Panel link person
Leas is a member of the D/deaf community in Brighton and the key contact within the project’s advisory panel. Leas can be contacted by participants or parents if they feel the need to chat about any aspects of the project confidentially, without Rob knowing.
Email: leas.seeyourself@hotmail.com
Project specific mobile/text: 07729181909

Bill McGowan: Research supervisor, University of Brighton
Email: B.Mcgowan@bton.ac.uk
Office: 01273 643544

Professor Gaynor Sadlo: Research supervisor, University of Brighton
Email: G.Sadlo@bton.ac.uk
Office: 01273 643654

Bill and Gaynor are supervising Rob Kirkwood’s research.

Contact Information for Complaints

Dr. Graham Stew: University of Brighton
Email: G.Stew@bton.ac.uk
Office: 01273 643469

Graham is a senior university staff member and the main contact for raising any formal concerns or complaints regarding this research project. These will be treated confidentially.
Appendix 12:

Ongoing consent from project partners named in thesis
Dear John, Bob and Dale

I hope this email finds you all well.

Sorry for the group email - I'm writing to you in response to a request from the examiners at my recent doctoral Viva. Yes, I finally handed in my thesis earlier this year - it described and analysed my account of the See Yourself project which you were all involved in to varying degrees. In the thesis, I have referred to the 3 of you by your names in the chapter that described what happened during the project and the chapter that used direct excerpts from my reflexive research diary.

The examiners asked whether or not I had gained ongoing consent from you to use your names in the thesis. I couldn't remember whether I had explicitly asked or not, so they asked me to contact you to ask whether you still consent to your names being used. Versions of the thesis will be kept at: the University of Brighton; The British Library archive; my house; electronically on a University of Brighton database.

Please respond to this however you want. Here are 3 ways you could respond:

1. You would like me to email you the thesis excerpts that include your name before you make a decision
2. You don't want me to include your name - in which case I shall replace your name with a pseudonym.
3. You don't want me to include your last name, but use of your first name is fine.
4. Email me to say that including your names in the thesis is fine and no further action need be taken.

Thanks for your time and hope to hear from you soon.

Rob

---

From Dale
Sent: 27 May 2013 19:45:44
To: Rob Kirkwood (robkirkwood@hotmail.com)

Hi Rob
You are free to use my name in your thesis in any way, and no further action is required

Dale

---

From Robert
Sent: 28 May 2013 08:13:26
To: Rob Kirkwood (robkirkwood@hotmail.com)
Hi Rob
It's good to hear from you and I hope you and your family are well. Congratulations on completing the thesis. It was a good project and a worthy labour. Yes, you do have ongoing consent to use my name. I assume you are not going to slander me. I am sorry and apologise that I was unable to continue with the project and often feel disappointed in that but it was impossible at the time. I would be interested in reading your conclusion and findings.
I continue to work at Lewes Priory Hearing Facility and am edging my way towards retirement and new projects. I hope all is well and that you are keeping busy and flourishing.

All the best

Bob

From **John**
Sent: 30 May 2013 15:13:40
To: Rob Kirkwood (robkirkwood@hotmail.com)

Dear Rob,

You can use my name in your thesis.

Good luck with it!

John

From **Robert**
Sent: 03 June 2013 08:16:24
To: 'Rob Kirkwood' (robkirkwood@hotmail.com)

Hi Rob
I got this message at work so don't know if you got my other reply. It is fine to use my name in your thesis, even if it is critical. I hope all is well.
All the best

Bob
Appendix 13:

Consent letter from Sensory Needs Service Manager regarding access, recruitment and project partnering
Dear Bill,

Rob Kirkwood has approached us regarding his project with Hearing Impaired Young People in Brighton and Hove. As the Sensory Needs Service supports these pupils we are best placed to contact this group and present them with the opportunity to take part in the research.

Rob has sent us the outline of his project and we have discussed it as a team. We feel it would be a valuable opportunity for the young people with hearing loss to get together and share ideas. These students are in schools spread across the borough and often in isolation from their peers who share similar issues around hearing.

Our team member, Bob Kingsley will be working with Rob, helping to coordinate and organise the project.

We are happy to support this research project and wish Rob and all the young people taking part great fun and success.

Bob Wall
Sensory Needs Service Manager
Appendix 14:

Participant Recruitment Pack:

a. Sensory Needs Service covering letters to:
   i. Young person
   ii. Parents/guardians
b. See Yourself Project introductory letter
c. Times and Venue Questionnaire
09 July 2009

Dear (student name)

We would like to invite you to join a project we are working with.

In September, an 8 month project is starting called "See Yourself" funded by Brighton and Sussex Universities. The project is to help raise the voice of young people in schools years 8, 9 and 10, and give them a chance to express themselves.

The enclosed information letter gives you details of the project. The Sensory Needs Support Service thinks you will find this interesting, fun and useful and hopes you will be able to take part - you'll even be involved in arranging and planning the venue, which will be somewhere in central Brighton.

If you would like to be involved in the project please complete and return the enclosed questionnaire to Rob Kirkwood in the self addressed envelope provided as soon as possible. We have also sent a copy of this letter to your parents so that they know what's happening.

Want to hear more? We are having an information session for young people and their parents

at: The Clarendon Centre, 47 New England Street, Brighton BN1 4GQ

on: Monday 20\textsuperscript{th} July 2009 in the evening from 6.30 p.m. – 8.00 p.m. Refreshments (drinks and light snacks) will be provided.

There is a map of the Clarendon Centre on the back of this letter.

Thanks for your time, we hope to hear from you and see you soon.

Yours sincerely
(signed for an on behalf of)

Bob Kingsley
Teacher of the Hearing Impaired

cc: parent/guardian
Dear Parent/Guardian

This is a copy of a letter we have sent to your child along with further information on the “See Yourself” project. If your child is interested in taking part or would like to hear more, then we’d be delighted to see you both at the information session as detailed below.

09 July 2009

Dear (student name)

We would like to invite you to join a project we are working with.

In September, an 8 month project is starting called “See Yourself” funded by Brighton and Sussex Universities. The project is to help raise the voice of young people in schools years 8, 9 and 10, and give them a chance to express themselves.

The enclosed information letter gives you details of the project. The Sensory Needs Support Service thinks you will find this interesting, fun and useful and hopes you will be able to take part - you’ll even be involved in arranging and planning the venue, which will be somewhere in central Brighton.

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There is a map of the Clarendon Centre on the back of this letter.

Thanks for your time, we hope to hear from you and see you soon.

Yours sincerely

(signed for an on behalf of)

ppBob Kingsley
Teacher of the Hearing Impaired
An Invitation to join...
“SEE YOURSELF”
A Collaborative Youth Project

The Universities of Brighton and Sussex* are funding a local Brighton-based 8 month project exploring identity and difference in the lives of young people. We would like to invite local young people (preferably in school years 7, 8, 9 or 10) attending a mainstream school in Brighton & Hove and experiencing hearing impairment to consider taking part in this project due to run for about 6 to 8 months.

**PROJECT AIM:** For the young people to work with each other through a range of activities that will reflect their identities in a creative way and help to raise understanding of specific life challenges. Young people will hopefully have fun, learn new skills and be rewarded for their time with £5 worth of high street vouchers every session they attend.

Organised in an ‘after school club’ style once every 1 or 2 weeks, the project will use a wide range of creative activities, chosen by the group of 10 to 15 young people, to explore their identities, differences and other issues linked with the group’s shared experience of deafness and attending a mainstream school. Sessions will last about 2 hours at a Brighton venue, with drinks and snacks provided. All travel expenses will be reimbursed and BSL interpreters or other communication support is available if needed.

It is hoped that some of the work from the project may be included in the Brighton Fringe Festival 2010. Examples of an end result for the project might be: an art exhibition; a mural or mosaic; a new website; a film or animation; a sports event; a performance; a book of poetry or creative writing. These ideas are only examples and the outcomes of the project will be led by the young people involved, based on their own ideas.

The main project facilitator, Rob Kirkwood is a qualified Occupational Therapist working with young people locally. Rob is also part of the local Community University Partnership Programme (www.cupp.org.uk) and a research student at the University of Brighton. Rob is not D/deaf himself, but has an interest in deaf issues. Rob is also a BSL Level 2 signer. Parts of the project will be written up in the final year of Rob’s research course.

We would like to start the project with an informal meeting for all young people and parents/family members to meet those involved in the project and ask any questions you may have. If you want to learn more about the project please fill in and return the enclosed ‘Most Suitable Times & Venues Questionnaire’ to the Sensory Needs Service, in the stamped/addressed envelope provided, this will help us arrange the 1st introductory meeting and project sessions at a date, time & place that suits you.

The Sensory Needs Service, Brighton & Hove City Council are sending you this letter because they have agreed to help with recruiting young people for this project and think that you may be interested. Your completed forms will be passed directly to Rob Kirkwood who will then contact you himself. Your reply will not commit you to the project or affect the support you already receive from the Sensory Needs Service in any way.

* The Brighton and Sussex Community Knowledge Exchange (BSCKE) supports a number of partnership projects between the University of Brighton, the University of Sussex and local communities.
Most Suitable Times & Venues Questionnaire

To plan the time & venue of the 1st introduction meeting, and ongoing project dates.

Running the project sessions at suitable times...

1. The project will hope to run 2 hour sessions (incl. refreshments)
   Please CIRCLE which times of day (during term) are most convenient for you:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tues</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thurs</th>
<th>Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
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<td>4-6</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. During term-time, project sessions run:  
   Every week for the first 4 weeks  
   Then every 2 weeks til end of project

3. During school holidays or half-terms would you be happy for any 2 hour sessions or full-day sessions to be arranged?
   (please circle) 2 HOUR / FULL-DAY / BOTH / NEITHER / NOT SURE

Running the project at a convenient venue...

4. Please CIRCLE how you are most likely to get to and from the project sessions:
   CAR   BUS   WALK   BICYCLE   OTHER

   We know it may be difficult to answer this until a venue has been confirmed
   Any travel expenses incurred will be fully reimbursed by the project

5. Do you have any preferred communication requirements for sessions?

6. Do you have any dietary requirements?
   (Snacks and drinks will be provided for each session, including 1st intro meeting)

   NO / YES (please circle)  
   If ‘YES’ please specify

Your contact information:
Please fill in boxes below if you are happy for the project facilitator to contact you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young Person</th>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Age:</th>
<th>School Year:</th>
<th>Home Address:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent/Guardian</td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Tel/mob:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Can the project send young person updates and information by mail? NO / YES
Appendix 15:

Project update #1 August 2009
Hi [...] 

Thanks for agreeing to take part in the “See Yourself” project. This is your project and we hope that as you get more involved, you will shape and develop the project yourself along with the other young people.

PROJECT DATES

To get the ball rolling, the same venue has been booked for the first eight sessions, up until the end of the year. Please show your parents the dates below so they know the plans as well.

2pm – 5pm Saturday 12th September
2pm – 5pm Saturday 19th September
2pm – 5pm Saturday 3rd October
2pm – 5pm Saturday 17th October
2pm – 5pm Saturday 31st October
2pm – 5pm Saturday 14th November
2pm – 5pm Saturday 28th November
2pm – 6pm Saturday 12th December (festive party)

These sessions will be at the Clarendon Centre, New England Street, BN1 4GQ (the same place we had the open evening in July). As you can see, all the sessions are on a Saturday afternoon. This can be reviewed in the future if it causes a problem. Snacks and refreshments will be provided during the sessions and you will get £5 in vouchers (www.highstreetvouchers.com) for every session you attend.

PROJECT WEBSITE

I’ve set up a secure social network ‘See Yourself’ (using a web-based social network platform called ‘Ning’) for project members only to join and use during the project to share ideas, comments, pictures etc. Hopefully this will help you keep in contact with each other between sessions. Joining the network is easy (but you will need your own email address):

1. Go to http://seeyourself1.ning.com and just click ‘Sign Up’
2. Type in your email address and your own password twice (you don’t need to give your birthday if you don’t want to) and click ‘Sign Up’ again.
3. Fill in as much of your profile details as you’re happy to and click ‘Join’
4. Ning will then send me an email asking me to ‘approve’ your membership. This is to make sure the group is secure and that not just anyone can join.

Looking forward to seeing you on Saturday 12th September when we will start to look at what you want the project to look like. If you have any questions then please email me at rob.seeyourself@hotmail.com or call/text me on 07762495539.

Rob Kirkwood, Project Co-ordinator
Appendix 16:

Phase 2: Initiating the See Yourself Project
summary table of sessions 1 - 8
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sess</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Young people’s attendance</th>
<th>Activities (*pre-planned by facilitator *<em>initiated by young person</em>)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 20 July| Open eve | Rob Bob Cat | James Beth Raf | Welcome: Introductions and refreshments  
Bob introduces project using powerpoint presentation  
Bob facilitates discussion re: young people’s interests and ideas for project  
Bob facilitates discussion re: times and dates for the project sessions  
Time for questions  
Close |
| 12 sept | 1 | Rob Bob | James Beth | Rob leads brief physical warm up exercise  
Rob re-introduces the project; concepts of participant ownership & action/reflection cycles  
Group reviews list of interests written on 20th July. Add Logan’s interest: Music  
Discussion time – topic brought by James: Relationship between adults and teenagers: topic brought by Logan: music  
Gave out journals – suggested creative uses for capturing ideas  
Break: refreshments  
Island exercise: drawing group island with amenities and negotiating relationship  
Post-it evaluation of session  
Young people leave  
Feedback session with Bob |
| 19 sept | 2 | Rob Bob | James Beth Raf | Post-it evaluation  
Feedback evaluation not undertaken  
Bob led ‘shake out’ physical warm up; James led ‘Splat’ group warm-up game  
Rob explains ‘Stories’ as session theme  
Story creating group game 1: 1 word each consecutively around the group, repeated  
Story game 2: each 5 word onto separate post-its. All words placed on wall, then yp’s choose any 5 words.  
YP’s decide to express words as actions: create ‘tableaux’ |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Activities and Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 Oct</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Rob</td>
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<td>YP's pair up and create tableaux – shared with group and photos taken</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bob</td>
<td></td>
<td>Break: refreshments</td>
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<td>Discussion re: future use of media – video and still cameras</td>
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<td>Journal time</td>
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<td>YP's leave</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>James</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bob initiates informal catching game as young people arrive</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beth</td>
<td></td>
<td>James suggests catching game 'hot potatoes' to choose who will lead physical warm up</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>sick</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Logan</td>
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<td>Sab</td>
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<td>Post-it evaluation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feedback evaluation not undertaken</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bob leads brief physical warm-up</td>
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<td>Rob introduces group game – 1. taking turns to metaphorically throw something bad from the week into circle and enact destroying it; 2. using something good from week and celebrating it with group</td>
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<td>Rob introduces 'object' activity – each yp find an object hidden (by Bob) in room; express their thoughts about it in their journal</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Break – refreshments</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Informal discussion: James instigates topic – wealth and money; Bob asks what YP's would do with £ million</td>
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<td>Discussion re: objects, reflection upon memories evoked; discuss use of video YP's use video to record objects; Sabrina videos Rob &amp; Bob dancing</td>
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<td>Video group exercise use pillar to create visual effect, changing between people</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rob facilitates summing up and discussing group ideas for next session</td>
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<td></td>
<td>YP's leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Oct</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rob</td>
<td>Dad's party</td>
<td>Introduce Cat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bob</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Group chat – catch up with each other’s weeks etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(1st)</td>
<td>Post-it evaluation (early in session)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What went well?
Bethan – playing games; journal
Raf - Granny’s footsteps
Logan - group discussions and feedback

“Even better if…”
Raf - going out somewhere active e.g. Thorpe Park/ropes course; not just hearing impairment difficulties
Sab - to do some cooking
Logan - if a few more people came; have people come with or without our difficulties

“I want to…”
Beth – Art; singing; farm with animals
Raf – music; go-karting; do a ropes course
Logan - listen to different styles of music; have a trip to Blacklands Farm
Sab - play football; go to Thorpe Park for day

Post-it evaluation (end of session)

What Went Well?
Sab - Playing the game with the video hide and seek game and it was fun when I was the last person that was left and I was the only one who didn’t have the video
Logan – Hide and Seek game
Raf – Hide and seek (video) / filming and hiding

Even Better If… (this was left blank)

Rob facilitates session planning exercise – YP’s arrange pre-written and newly added activities (written on A4 sheets) along a timeline; plan implemented
Sabrina leads group game ‘Splat’
Rob leads Post-it evaluation of project session to date: ‘What went well?’; ‘Even better if…’; ‘I want to…’
Group discussion of evaluation comments – expanding on ideas
Group Discussion re: expanding group membership and remit to include YP’s with other difficulties
Rob initiates discussion re: planning next 4 sessions up to Christmas break
Break - refreshments
Logan leads ‘Discussion Time’ – asks group a question (pre-written by rob for separate exercise) ‘What would you wish for?’ Group discuss friendship and hearing loss
Logan asks Rob to clarify point of the project – Rob gives explanation
Group Game - Raf suggests playing hide and seek; Sab suggests videoing it using camcorder
Rob introduces using questions (pre-written by Rob for separate exercise) within game.
Group playing hide and seek with question & answers captured on video. Each YP takes turn in seeking and holding camera.
Rob brings group together for feedback and finish – The session after next, group agree to focus on music.
Post-it evaluation of session
YP’s leave

31 Oct 5 Rob James Beth Raf At gig Sab

Post-it evaluation (end of session)

Group decide to wait for Bethan who is 15 mins late
Sab and Raf explain last session to James – in particular, Hide & Seek
Cat
What went well?
James – I like the hide and seek game; it was interesting listening to the answers people gave about their questions
Bethan – Hide and Seek (hiding and questions), Art (cartoons), break, granny’s footsteps
Sabrina – everything went well, I was the last to be found again
Raf – hide and seek; the art

Even Better if...
Sabrina – we played more games of hide and seek with the video camera
Beth – more people; more art, painting

See Yourself – why are we here?
Raf – because I want to see other people with the same problems as me and how they deal with it
James – To discuss problems and solutions about living with a hearing disability with people of a similar age group; making new friends and having fun!
Sabrina – fun without your parents, bored; hate home
Bethan – to enjoy myself
Bob – To find out (things that are) new ways of thinking

Rob facilitates session planning exercise – YP’s arrange pre-written and newly added activities (written on A4 sheets) along a timeline; James suggests adding a time frame to the activities.
Group game agreed by group: Grandma’s footsteps
Art Activity – James suggested drawing ‘Manga’ style cartoons; group create a brief cartoon strip in pairs; group describe and discuss their cartoons
Group plan next activity involving hide and seek & video. Group agree to use questions from last session and add some new ones
Sab elects to be camera holder.
Play hide and seek for 45 mins – includes questions and answers captured as video footage
Discussion re: plan for next session; group agree to focus on playing music
Post-it evaluation of session
Young people leave
Rob and Bob – feedback

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>14 nov</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Rob</th>
<th>Homework</th>
<th>Beth</th>
<th>Drap</th>
<th>Logan</th>
<th>Sab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bob</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Post-it evaluation (end of session)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rob sets up some instruments in room before young people arrive – keyboard; bass guitar; acoustic guitar; ukulele; percussion and African drum
No warm up exercises
What went well?
Beth - break/food; this afternoon good
Logan - Song writing; 'Jamming'
Sabrina - song written and play the instruments

Even Better if...
Beth - More people
Logan - Take song to the next level; I bring my own instrument next time
Sabrina - play hide + seek

"S.Y." Why are we all here?
Beth - to have fun
Logan - to discover who we are and find out about ourselves
Sabrina - we are bored at home so we come

Informal experimenting with instruments – Logan chooses acoustic guitar;
Bethan plays her own guitar; Sabrina chooses keyboard; Rob plays bass
Rob facilitates group music making focusing on 'blues in E' Break - refreshments
Logan suggests writing a song. When asked about what, Logan says about a boy who’s bullied and joins a club with other people like him
Rob and Bob facilitate group in thinking of song lyrics
Group agree to continue focus upon music during next session also
Post-it evaluation of session
Young people leave
Rob and Bob - feedback

28 nov 7
Rob
Bob
Cat

x

Bath
Raf
Logan
Sab

Post-it evaluation (end of session)

What went well:
Raf – some music
Sabrina – music went really well
Logan – the jamming
Logan – the lyric creating

Even better if...
Raf – doing something else – music and lyrics got boring
Sabrina – going to Thorpe park
Logan – more time on the music/jamming

See Yourself, why are we all here?
Raf – to reflect on ourselves

Rob sets up some instruments in room before young people arrive – keyboard;
bass guitar; acoustic guitar; ukulele; percussion and African drum
Raf and Logan brings guitars and amplifiers
Rob asks group how they want to use session; Logan suggests playing something to warm-up.
Rob suggests ground rules regarding playing as a group e.g. no playing while someone is talking
Rob suggests Logan explain last session to Raf; Logan describes music and story behind the lyrics
Music exercise: moving clockwise around group sharing a rhythm or tune on their instrument
Playing together based on Raf's blues riff; Rob and Raf facilitate group in playing compatible musical parts
Break – refreshments; informal music discussion
Rob introduces focus upon lyrics
Cat supports Bethan with some art activity separately
Bob takes over lyrics session in more structured way; Sabrina scribes the
Sabrina – To help us to no people that we don’t know but know we no them

Post-it evaluation (end of session)

What went well?
Logan - the music; everything
Raf - everything
Sabrina - everything
James - everything went well and it was interesting and fun

Even Better if...
James - we had more cheese [accompanied by a picture of a piece of cheese]
Sabrina - Nothing, trampoline

group’s lyrics
Group think up and write down their own lyrics individually
Group return to instruments to blend lyrics with music (Bethan remains drawing with Cat – they move out of room due to noise; Bob joins them for chat)
5 mins of group playing music captured on video for record of musical ideas
Post-it evaluation of session
Rob, Bob & Cat feedback: discussion re: over dependence upon listening skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12 dec</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>Rob</th>
<th>James</th>
<th>Beth</th>
<th>Raf</th>
<th>Logan</th>
<th>Sab</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bob</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Post-it evaluation (end of session)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rob prepares room for Christmas party - session extended by 1 hour
Musical instruments set up; stick Island exercise paper on wall
| 1/2 | Cat | What went well?  
Logan - the music; everything  
Raf - everything  
Sabrina - everything  
James - everything went well and it was interesting and fun  

Even Better if...  
James - we had more cheese [accompanied by a picture of a piece of cheese]  
Sabrina - Nothing, trampoline | All 5 young people arrive by 14:10  
Group sit in circle – informal catch up / discussion about Christmas  
Rob gives out cards with £5 vouchers for each session attended  
Group discussion re: plan for the session. Plan tentatively agreed  
Group game – Grandma’s footsteps (Bob arrives and stays for approx 20 mins)  
James leads group art activity – drawing 1. How we are feeling, 2. What Christmas means to us  
Break – refreshments  
Group agrees for Rob to facilitate discussion / focus group (audio recorded)  
Group game – hide and seek (Bob returns towards end)  
Regroup in room; some parents begin to arrive for last hour  
Informal music session (videoed by Bethan with support from her dad)  
James’s dad and Raf made origami Christmas trees  
More parents arrive; Bob talks to Logan’s mum re: audiology issues  
Post-it evaluation of session  
Young people and parents leave |
Appendix 17:

Phase 3: Towards the project film summary table of sessions 9 - 19
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Adult</th>
<th>Young People's attendance</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 Jan 10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Rob Cat</td>
<td>x Beth x Logan Sab</td>
<td>Post-it evaluation (end of session)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>What went well...</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sabrina – everything</td>
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<td>Logan – all the, especially the talking; hide and seek</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Even better if...</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bethan – get more people</td>
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<td>Sabrina – being the last person to be found</td>
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<td>Logan – still try and get more people come</td>
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<td>Young people arrive</td>
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<td>Rob leads brief discussion to plan session – passive response</td>
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<td>Rob suggests warm up game; Cat suggests ‘Simon says’</td>
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<td>Group play ‘Simon says’</td>
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<td>Group discussion: Rob introduces ‘Deaf Culture Day’ – 15th May</td>
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<td>Rob facilitates discussion re: session focus up to 15th May</td>
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<td>Rob explains plans re: second project site; young people decline invitation to be involved</td>
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<td>Rob shows examples of work on Photovoice website</td>
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<td>Group agree to concept of ‘sharing their lives’ with each other through photos and audio commentary</td>
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<td>Group disengages briefly</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rob facilitates brainstorming session re: presentation ideas with 2 young people</td>
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<td>Young people agree for photographer to lead next session</td>
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<td>Cat 1:1 with Bethan who writes letter to deceased granddad</td>
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<td>Group join Cat &amp; Bethan – informal discussion about loss</td>
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<td>Young play request to play hide and seek</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group clarify plan for next session</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Post-it evaluation of session</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Young people leave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 30 Jan 10 | Rob Cat | x Beth Raf Logan x | James, Professional photographer arrives |
|           |         |                   | Rob introduces James and revisits group’s plan for using photos |
|           |         |                   | James gives brief instructional session re: use of camera |
|           |         |                   | Group take photos of interest inside building |
|           |         |                   | Group (except Bethan and Cat) go for walk outside in local area taking pictures |
|           |         |                   | Regroup in room and look at pictures on laptop and commenting |
|           |         |                   | Post-it evaluation of session |
|           |         |                   | Raf and Beth leave with project camera; Logan leaves |

286
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>James</th>
<th>Beth</th>
<th>Logan</th>
<th>Sab</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 13 Feb 11 | Rob | James | Beth | x | x | Sab | Chatting informally with young people waiting for others to arrive  
Rob suggests young people choose and play a warm up game  
Young people play 'piggy-in-the-middle'  
Rob suggests group looks at new photos from Bethan and reviews photos from last week  
Rob discusses 'ways of seeing'  
James in control of flicking through photos on laptop asking questions about the pictures  
Discussion re: photo project; James adds other ideas  
James describes an animation technique using photos  
Rob suggests group try this technique out  
Group take photos of each other with incremental changes in angle to create sense of motion when photos are flicked through  
Break – refreshments  
Group suggest play 'piggy-in-the-middle' again  
Group decide to repeat the photo-motion exercise again; James supports Bethan to use the camera  
Rob suggests group look through photos again and comment  
Rob requests this discussion be audio recorded; group agree  
Post-it evaluation of session  
Young people leave (Sabrina with a project camera) |
| 27 Feb 12 | Rob | x | Beth | x | Logan | x | Sav | Bethan arrives - Rob chats with Bethan’s mum  
New young person arrives with parents - Savannah  
Rob discusses project with parents |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 13 Mar | What went well? | Parents leave
Bethan – colouring
Savannah – art; football; chatting; eating
Logan – finding things out about new members; the Art work and discussions

Even better if...
Savannah – Nothing
Bethan – Play

Parents suggest young people think of a warm up game
Bethan chooses ‘piggy-in-the-middle’; we play this
Logan arrives; Rob introduces Savannah
Logan joins in game
Rob facilitates review of last session; discussion re: sharing lives through photos; Rob asks Logan what’s he’s got from project
Group review photos from last 3 sessions
Break – refreshments
Rob suggests informal chat to get to know each other; group ask each other questions
Rob introduces concept of Venn diagram as way of exploring overlapping interests
Logan and Rob develop a Venn diagram exercise; Logan leads on explaining plan to group
Group draw their interests; group come together to discuss
Rob suggests audio recording discussion for use in photo commentary; group agree
Parents arrive
Post-it evaluation of session
Plan for next session agreed to continue Venn diagram exercise
Young people leave

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>13</th>
<th>Rob</th>
<th>Cat</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>Beth</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>Logan</th>
<th>Sab</th>
<th>Sav</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Post-it evaluation (end of session) | Rob sets up room
Sabrina, Savannah, Bethan and Cat arrive
Rob initiates introduction between Savannah and Sabrina and Cat
Rob re-introduces Venn diagram exercise; group discuss
Rob loads Sabrina’s photos onto laptop
Group play ‘piggy-in-the-middle’
Logan arrives; asks if Rob is coming back – Rob is not sure
Group review Sabrina’s pictures
Beth suggests playing football - others agree
Group return to photos; Rob facilitates group in thinking of photos to include in a video montage
Sav wants to do some more drawing of their interests; group agree

What went well?
Sav – Drawing
Sab – Playing football
Sav – Chatting to each other
Sav – Working as a team
Sav – getting to know each other
Sav – exploring what other people’s lives are like
Sav – if someone’s not having a good life you can help to improve it
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 mar 14</td>
<td>Bob 30 mins</td>
<td>Post-it evaluation (end of session)</td>
<td>No evaluation undertaken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 apr 15</td>
<td>Rob</td>
<td>Post-it evaluation (end of session)</td>
<td>Short walk to music studio; Dale arrives, then Logan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Attendance</td>
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<tr>
<td>24 apr</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Rob</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 may</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>Rob</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Post-li evaluation (end of session)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 May</td>
<td>Deaf Culture Day</td>
<td>Rob, Beth</td>
<td>Rob arrives at Deaf Culture Day, venue: Hamilton Lodge School. Advised 300 people attend. Rob briefly introduces films to audience at one end of main school. Film screened (with no sound as no provision for audio was made). Rob invites audience to fill out evaluations for film. Film screened again, Savannah and Beth engaged with parents. Rob also present for second screening, Rob &amp; Rob discuss project. Rob and John Walker, informal discussion re: film &amp; project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Jun</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rob, Beth</td>
<td>Rob sets up room for watching film with laptop and projector. Young people arrive. Rob is feeling ill - Bethan’s mum offers to stay for session to help. Film screened. Rob initiated feedback discussion re: film; young people engage. Logan asks re: future of project; Rob explains re: end of funding. Rob distributes consent forms for use of film for research. Discussion re: plan for final session; Group agree to invite friends. Group suggest they could bring food. Savannah introduced ‘Rizla game’ – group play game. Young people and parents leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 July</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rob, Beth</td>
<td>Rob and young people arrive. Rob and Bethan’s mum lay out food.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What went well?</td>
<td>Bethan’s friend arrives</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rob initiates brief introductions</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Beth:</td>
<td>Rob suggests sticking all flip chart paper used throughout project on wall to give sense of achievement; group agree and help</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• games</td>
<td>Rob describes a post-it evaluation – sticking them on flip chart that they like/find interesting and write on post-it why</td>
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<tr>
<td>Savannah:</td>
<td>Group agree and carry out post-it exercise</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• playing hide and seek and guess who</td>
<td>Rob facilitates group walking round and discussing comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• all the weeks have been amazing!</td>
<td>Break – refreshments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I love it!</td>
<td>Group play games</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parents return for final 30 mins</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Logan:</td>
<td>Parents and young people look at and discuss work on wall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The music!</td>
<td>Rob facilitates end of session post-it evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The year was amazing and really fun!!</td>
<td>Rob gives out £5 vouchers to young people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Thanks for everything Rob! 😊</td>
<td>Farewell; closing comments</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Even Better If...</td>
<td>Young people and parents leave</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 18:

Phase 4: Snowballing – a second project site summary table
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open evening - 1st February</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 22 pupils – from across year groups + a number of staff | Rob arrives at Ovingdean Hall School, escorted to drama studio  
Rob introduced to pupils by staff  
Rob begins presentation of project; Rob agrees with pupils to communicate using Sign Supported English (SSE)  
Picture based powerpoint presentation used with 2 questions included:  
1. What would you like to do to learn more about yourself and others – pupils discuss their interests and hobbies  
2. If you could change anything about a) the world, b) their local community, and c) themselves, what would it be?  
Pupils split into groups of 3 or 4 to discuss ideas and write on flipchart paper  
Groups discuss their ideas  
Rob finishes presentation, describing project and notion of inquiry  
Information sheet left with staff to share with interested pupils  
Pupils leave studio |
### Planning Session - 8th Feb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUPILS</th>
<th>Post-it session evaluation</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| James   | Y | What went well? Chat for learn: Talk; Sing | Rob arrives at school – accompanied to pupil common room (session venue)  
Staff member stays for session sitting outside group, ‘keeping order’  
Rob introduces himself again to group  
Rob facilitates outlining the session length, times, frequency and duration of project; Group agree with 1.5 hours, weekly until June  
Rob explains Deaf Culture Day and opportunity to showcase work; group agree with using that as a focus  
Rob suggests group introduce themselves, where they lived and their interests  
Rob facilitates group in writing group rules  
Rob uses Venn diagram concept to explore idea of commonalities and differences  
Group agree to pursue this idea next session  
Post-it evaluation of session  
Argument/fix ensues between 2 pupils  
Alex suggests drinks and snacks for next session; school agree to provide  
Young people leave  
Rob feeds back session to staff member link and discuss plans |
| Lisa    | Y | Talking to the group  
Know about people interesting | Everyone talking in turn  
Learn to speak and listen better  
learn to do something  
Respect people and others  
Respect to meet new people  
Getting know each other and more meet up  
Talking  
Everyone was helping each other ☺ |
| Anas    | Y | More people  
Move room  
Have snacks |
| Gina    | Y | Could listen to each other more  
Some people could listen for them self so no one has to repeat  
People need listening more  
Need stop be rude  
Everyone listening more  
Some people need to nagging people  
Help people to improve speech  
Getting know each more |
| Chris   | Y | |
| Annella | Y | |
| Alex    | Y | |
| Tom     | Y | |
### Session 1 – 22nd Feb

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUPILS</th>
<th>Post-it session evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annella</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Y</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### ACTIVITIES

- Rob arrives; staff copy ID and CRB documents and escort to common room
- Group in room, informal chat with Rob
- Rob initiates start of session and group form semi-circle with chairs
- Rob pins up group rules; Gina asks if Rob can remember names
- Annella initiates group discussion about school experiences
- Rob gives out black journals to group and suggests their possible use
- Rob re-introduces Venn diagram idea to discuss with group
- Rob asks group to think of something they have learnt in life
- Rob uses example and acts this learning out so group guess what it is
- Several young people think of something and at it out for group
- Rob facilitation re: planning next session
- Group become increasingly disinhibited
- Group agree to use school art room next session
- Post-it evaluation
- Young people leave
- Rob feeds back session to staff member link and discuss plans

### Session 2 – 1st March

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUPILS</th>
<th>Post-it session evaluation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ACTIVITIES

- Rob arrives late; Young people watching Hollyoaks
- Group agree to start 30 mins later
- Rob hears from pupil and staff that school will close at end of year
| Gina | Y | Group move to art room  
| Chris | Y | Young people spontaneously show Rob their art work  
| Anella | Y | Group settle around table and look at black diaries  
| Alex | Y | Group discussion re: effect of school closure; Tom cries, group respond  
| Tom | Y | Young people write lists of friends in their journals  
| &nbsp; | &nbsp; | Rob re-visited group’s agreement to work towards exhibiting at the Deaf Culture Day  
| &nbsp; | &nbsp; | Rob suggested group write their thoughts and ideas on 1 shared piece of paper in order to work collaboratively and respond to each other – group agree  
| &nbsp; | &nbsp; | Annela takes photos of paper and other young people; Annela says that next session she will bring her laptop with photos on it to reminisce  
| &nbsp; | &nbsp; | Group returns to common room; young people disperse  
| &nbsp; | &nbsp; | Rob feeds back session to staff member link and discuss plans  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 3 – 8th March</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| PUPILS | Post-it session evaluation | Rob arrives at school – accompanied to pupil common room  
| James | Y | Staff gather young people TO COMMON ROOM  
| Lisa | Y | Tom asks where group rules are  
| Anas | Y | Lisa asks to see sheet from last session to show James  
| Gina | N | Rob suggested reflecting on existing comments and adding more in response  
| Chris | Y | Group reflect and add more comments  
| Annela | Y | Alex takes photos and video clips of group activity on digital camera  
| Alex | Y | Rob initiates discussion re: creating group output for Deaf Culture Day  
| Tom | Y | Lisa suggests group creating a drama – group discuss  
| &nbsp; | &nbsp; | Rob suggests the drama could be videoed and screened – group like this idea  

*No evaluation undertaken*
Group begin to plan drama – Lisa takes charge  
Group discuss ideas and write ideas down  
Tom wants to do some acting  
Rob suggests finishing with some roleplay exercise as 2 sessions ago  
Group agree and enact skills they have learnt  
Slight disturbance between Tom and Anas again  
Group agree to meet in Drama studio next session for work on drama  
Rob feeds back session to staff member link and discuss plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 4 – 15th March</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUPILS</td>
<td>Post-it session evaluation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| James  | Y | Rob arrives at school and joins young people in dining room as supper finishes  
Staff gather young people to drama studio  
Tom hides and causes a search by young people and staff; Tom is found  
James sets up laptop projector and screen  
Lisa wipes white board clean ready for use  
Lisa takes leads in organising group to work on drama  
James suggests 5 sections to drama, each depicting an emotion  
Anas turns up and asks to talk to Rob; James sees Anas and persuades him to rejoin group  
James and Rob return to planning drama – Group arrive at theme  
Group begin acting out drama sequences  
Rob instigates discussion re: how to film drama – group discuss  
Session finishes; staff arrive to escort young people away  
Rob feeds back session to staff member link and discuss plans  
Discuss Tom’s request to try spray painting – school to look into this |
<p>| Lisa  | N | No evaluation undertaken |
| Anas  | Y |
| Gina  | Y |
| Chris | Y |
| Annela| Y |
| Alex  | Y |
| Tom  | Y |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUPILS</th>
<th>Post-it session evaluation</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Rob arrives at school – escorted to common room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Young people are watching Hollyoaks and request to watch till end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Rob defers decision back to group however staff member overrules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Staff gather young people to Drama studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Group play with make up left in the studio – girls making up the boys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annela</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Lisa organised the group to refocus on the drama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Rob interjects with question for reflecting upon 1. What are we exploring?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Group discuss briefly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa asks if drama can be videoed today as a record of developments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rob agrees; Lisa sets up camcorder with help from Rob</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Drama is enacted/practiced</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rob suggests group break for refreshments</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lisa reviews some of the video captured; other young people join her</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group becomes overtaken with unstructured play</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>James approaches Rob to explain that group know drama now and do not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>want to continue practicing it; that other activities could be tried in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>James calls group back together to discuss future groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Group consensus for next session to be used for P.E. activities follow Easter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>break. Other session ideas included more art and using computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Session closes – young people leave drama studio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rob feeds back session to staff member link and discuss plans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 6 – 19th April</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PUPILS</td>
<td>Post-it session evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annela</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Y</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tom requests to play game outside – group agree
Rob and group walk outside to play
Young people disband
Rob feeds back session to staff member link and discuss plans

Session 7 – 4th May
ACTIVITIES - shooting film with Media Company
PUPILS | Post-it session evaluation
James | Y | Rob Meets media production team (2 people) at Roedean Café at 15:00
Lisa | Y | Rob describes set up at school, certain protocol and plan for the afternoon
Anas | Y | Technical requirements from production team discussed
Gina | Y | Rob and team arrive at school (team take some establishing shots)
Chris | Y | Rob and team meet link staff member, tour of school
Annela | Y | Agree to gather young people to drama studio for 16:30
Alex | Y | Lisa approaches Rob and asks for private chat
Tom | N | Lisa states she can no longer be part for the project for personal reasons
Rob and Lisa return to studio; Rob explains situation to others
Group reasess drama idea and explore other ways for using production team
Rob suggests using interviews, group like this idea and agree
Group agree to interview each other re: experiences and school
Group discussion - James writes emerging themes down on whiteboard
Group move outside onto school field to begin filming
Young people captured on film introducing themselves and asking each other questions
Group break for supper
Film last two young people individually; filming of group discussion outside
Rob writes down themes suggested by young people as prompts
Filming finishes
Rob agrees to bring the raw footage next week for young people to see
Group disperses; production team leave; Rob leaves

Session 8 – 10th May
ACTIVITIES
PUPILS | Post-it session evaluation
Rob arrives at school
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>James</th>
<th>Y</th>
<th>No evaluation undertaken</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annal</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>N</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Young people gathered to drama studio
Rob reminds group film to be screened at Deaf Cultural Day at weekend
Raw filming footage screened on projector screen
Rob facilitated discussion re: final film, editing and themes
James takes initiative writing ideas onto whiteboard
Group agree order of footage and titles for sections
Group agree for production team to produce film using groups structure and ideas
Young people disperse
Rob leaves

Deaf Culture Day – 15th May

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUPILS</th>
<th>Film evaluation responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>What did you think of our film?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- It was good and informative. It made me very sad to find out the school is closing
- I like good film this Ovingdean DVD video ok
- Brilliant – I enjoyed watching it throughout
- I liked the mix of monologues and discussion – it was powerful to see the effects on the young people who go to school
- Loved it! It was a fantastic insight into mainstream vs specialist school
- Inspiring – good to see that young people are happy and thinking positively about their future.
- Superb
- I thought is was interesting to hear the different opinions + quite moving.

What did you like in particular?

ACTIVITIES
Rob arrives at Deaf Culture Day, venue: Hamilton Lodge School
Approx 300 people attend the day
No staff or pupils from OHS attend
Rob briefly introduces films to audience at one end of main school
Film screened twice over afternoon (with no sound as no provision for audio was made)
Rob invites audience to fill out evaluations for film using questions designed by OHS group
Much interest in OHS film, especially from ex-pupils
Bob also present for second screening, Rob & Bob discuss project
Rob and John Walker, informal discussion re: film & project and communication styles amongst the young people at OHS
• To see how happy and confident the children were in their deaf identity
• Good to see opinions/views signed by young people themselves not via interpreters
• I liked seeing young people from different countries – Saudi Arabia, Venezuela

What could we have done better?
• Some young people signed with back to camera so we couldn’t see their face/hands clearly. Had to rely on subtitles then
• I would have been interested to see the young people actually in learning situations in the school
• Nothing
• Nothing
• I thought it was well put together. You will have to do a sequel to say what happened to the young people.

What do you think of our school?
• It really seems like a nurturing community – what a shame it is being closed
• What a wonderful community of bright students. It’s a terrible shame it is closing. I wish all the students and teachers all the best for the future.
• Ovingdean seems to be inspirational. It’s a pity its closing.
• Obviously well loved by these kids in the film.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 9 – 17th May</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PUPILS</strong></td>
<td>Rob arrives at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-it session evaluation</td>
<td>Informal chat with group members outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Y/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annela</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>Y</td>
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**Screening at school assembly – 21st May**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUPILS</th>
<th>evaluation notes taken by staff link</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>‘what did you think?’</td>
<td>Rob absent from screening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa</td>
<td>‘fantastic’</td>
<td>Young people present the film themselves to whole school assembly (pupils and staff)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘brilliant’</td>
<td>Film screened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas</td>
<td>‘very good’</td>
<td>Group ask the audience evaluation questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annela</td>
<td>‘what was best bit?’</td>
<td>Several staff members state that there ‘wasn’t a dry eye in the house’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>‘everything’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘talking about the future’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘talking about when they found out they</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>were deaf’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘communication good (BSL &amp; speaking)’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom</td>
<td>‘what could be improved?’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘nothing!’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other general comments and questions include
“very interesting”
“who cut the film?”
“How long did it take?”
“Who will you show it to?”

Session 10 - 24th May CANCELLED DUE TO VIRUS OUTBREAK AT SCHOOL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PUPILS</th>
<th>ACTIVITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James N</td>
<td>Rob arrives at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lisa N</td>
<td>Rob meets staff link at pupil residential annex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anas N</td>
<td>Group and Rob make way to common room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gina Y</td>
<td>Informal chat about planned leaving party for Chris following session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris Y</td>
<td>Rob asks whether film can be uploaded onto Sussex Deaf History website - group agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annela Y</td>
<td>Rob asks for feedback regarding the film.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex Y</td>
<td>Group highlight two minor errors with subtitles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tom N</td>
<td>Rob asks how film can help others - group discuss</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| | |</p>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alex said he enjoyed it</td>
<td>Rob asks for feedback regarding project as a whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annela said that it was a mix, sometimes good and sometimes boring</td>
<td>Further informal chat amongst young people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris said, well sorry, but some of it was crap if I'm honest.</td>
<td>Session draws to a close</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chris said that creating the DVD was good and writing things down on the big piece of paper was good.</td>
<td>Young people leave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex said that the 1st week was good, then there was 3 weeks of arguing which wasn't fun [that's when they were creating the drama] and then the DVD which was good.</td>
<td>Rob feeds back session to staff member link and says farewells before leaving</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 19:

Deaf Culture Day promotional poster
DEAF CULTURE DAY
15th MAY 2010

At Hamilton Lodge School,
Walpole Road, Brighton, BN2 0LS
Doors Open at 10am

FREE ENTRY!

Come and share in the celebrations of our beautiful culture, unique art and history!

Events include:

- Shows & workshops by Deaf poets, actors, dancers, musicians & more!
- Exhibitions by artists, painters, photographers, textile experts!
- Talks and group chats with Historians and Researchers!
- Witness the unveiling of a Blue Plaque at the old Deaf School!
- Delicious refreshments for sale!

For more Info, email: Gavin Lilley - gavvo81@yahoo.co.uk
Simon Hesselberg – simon.hesselberg@royaldeaf.org.uk

© DCD 2010

Poster design by Competition Winner James March, Year 12 pupil, Hamilton Lodge School.
Appendix 20:

Glossary of terms describing conceptual groupings
Glossary of Terms

The first five terms are seen to build upon the next in a way that reflects a development of thought over time through the analytic process.

1. Constructs
   Descriptive noun for my objectification of perceived meaning construed from the research's data set.

2. Cluster of Constructs
   A grouping of constructs that are connected by a shared significance that defines a concept.

3. Concepts
   Articulations of the significance that underpins the connectedness between constructs that made up a cluster.

4. Meta-concept
   An epistemological term I employ to describe an abstraction from initial concepts; a concept that describes a connection between other concepts.

5. Meta-finding
   An term I employ epistemologically to describe an abstraction from a set of findings; a finding about findings. The meta-finding is not a ‘parent’ finding from which subsequent findings have emerged, but rather a finding that has emerged as appropriate to describe the approach to, and relationship between other findings.

Below I seek to clarify my intentional use of the following two terms:

- **Approaches**
  A style of engaging with or facilitating a process or interaction. In chapters 5 and 6, I employ the term ‘approach’ more formally to describe my application of *scaffolding* and *deference*, hoping to convey a meaning similar to the use of the term ‘tool’ whilst highlighting that an approach may be intangible, being more subtle and responsive than the use of a tool.

- **Sifting Matrix**
  An analytical organising tool I employed to capture meaning emerging at the intersection between different conceptual models.
Appendix 21:

‘How Can I help You?’
Poem by Robert Kirkwood, May 2009
How can I help you?

"I'll h-h-have a Chhhshhhhhhhshhhhhhh..."

How it strives.
Yet simple intent cannot take flight from the tongue.
A spindly spastic perch.
The data is plucked raw.
Where feathers of flight should till in formation,
Bewildered muscle memory compels a bed of vacant follicles
To close tight upon themselves.
Enraged air builds inside shallow lungs

The scorched outline of the young lady
Stands suspended where I leave her
As my eyes screw tight.
Her pale hand poised to swipe a torn white sugar sachet from a tray.
A crescent motif of yellowing granules clings, cemented.

"...chhhshhhhhhhhh..."

Breath battles the ramparts of thin lips to escape to freedom.
Time that is slow to pass does so regardless. Dense and intense.
Not the relaxed breath of an inner certainty
When plump words can be playfully bantered.
Feasted on in all manner of meaning.
Used as valued currency to invest in mutual pleasures
and care-free exchanges.
These are the fragile bones of a breath.
A ghost ship carrying only skeletons of words,
A trail of dots to suggest a form of intent, too vague to be joined
This breath has been snipped at the gate.
The last trickle of air, loaded with the remnants of a sentence.
Enough to indicate my wish to order a

"Cchhhheese a a a a a a a..."

Simple progress leaves me unprepared.
But I have gained ground,
A momentary relaxing of the face and jaw
Eyelids unpeel, gaze refocused.
Revealed, the scene my sight briefly left
Traces of the same young lady, eyes fixed to the tray
Sugar sachets are gone
The granulated crescent remains.
And a male colleague
Turning his head my direction but little else,
A sequence well rehearsed for occasions such as this.

"Cheese sandwich is that mate?"
"Yes please"
"On white?"
"Yes...thanks"

I agree with a tilted smile
Accustomed to throwing a shroud over discomfort and regret.
Lettuce, and brown bread
Shall not be mine today.
Appendix 22:

Lyrics for 'The Chronology Song'
by Robert Kirkwood, August, 2009
Some labels for names
A table of snacks
Has my doctorate really
boiled down to that?

Been avoiding the need to plan
Based on a case that this time's
in the young people's hands
And they'll be here any time now
I know that four's not exactly a crowd
It's just a snap shot
of some young people's lives...

We're eight sessions in
It's Christmas time
We're settling down
And the group's grown to five

Exploring our views in
Drawing and music
And gradually learning 'bout each other's lives
But am I opening up as well?
Or too scared of exposing myself
I feel like a dodgy salesman
Who hides behind a smile.

I'm here because I wanted to use
More than just some interviews
Create an opportunity
To harness creativity
A collaborative inquiry
But now that sounds too trite for me

Cos now I think I'm starting to see
The levels of complexity
When challenging authority
To uphold the group's autonomy to choose

It's early spring
And here's the thing
Set up a second group
In a deaf school
It's such a tight knit community
Like someone's picked me up
And parachuted me in
They're gossiping and mucking about
If I was their teacher I'd shout
But I'm not so I sit and shut up
And self governance starts to emerge.

Both groups independently
Choose to make short documentaries
Each approach it in a different way
But still capture the things they wanted to say.

Continues...
But now the danger is
The films overshadow the processes
Like outcomes measures
That only value the end result.

I'm here because I wanted to use
More than just some interviews
To use meaningful activity
In a spirit of inquiry
Where partnership appears to be
The key to sustainability.

But now as things draw to a close
I reflect upon the path I chose
And all the time it took and those,
who invested their time with me
I hope it gave them something of use.
Appendix 23:

Lyrics for Schön Song – by Robert Kirkwood, August 2009
When Donald shone a spotlight on
What folks already instinctively knew
Just from a different view

He held a bucket beneath the clouds
To capture knowledge as it rained down on him
Is that what we try to do?

I'm trying to hold the reins
As lightly as I can
A catalyst for change
Is that what I think I am?
I'm just offering a space
And that's all I have

A space to find a common ground
Not based on loss, but what we've found
Outside our pigeon holes

To see the patterns in what this brings us
And recognise the subtle shift between
Action and reflection

I'd do well to heed
Our Bill's advice
You never step into
The same stream twice
It's different every time
I fill my bucket full

How will we get from A to B
When there's no map for this journey
We build the road as we go along
I tell the story with my songs

How will we know if we've arrived
How will our voice be amplified
Enough for you to hear
That things are not as they appear

I hold a lens to see the world
But lenses fade the more you hold them
So we look through something new

But there's a danger if all that means
Is compartmentalising life into themes
We lose the human connection

Isn't it just like me
To use sketches of things
Is this my guardedness
Or lack of confidence
Or just that elephant in the room
And boy, you know I love that elephant (repeat x 3)