Exploring the relationships between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, behaviour management strategies, and use of exclusion in UK classrooms

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Abstract

The use of both permanent exclusion (i.e. a pupil who is excluded and who will not come back to that school) and suspension (e.g., a pupil who is excluded from a school for a set period) in UK schools has increased significantly over the last 10 years (Department of Education, 2022). Given the levels of vulnerability and poor outcomes among children who are excluded (Department for Education, 2023), it is essential that we understand the factors that increase or decrease the use of exclusions. Many studies have shown that school culture, ethos, attitudes, and teaching practices affect a school's willingness to exclude (e.g., Hatton, 2013; Warin, 2017). However, there has been limited research examining the relationships between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and how this might translate to differing levels of teacher self-efficacy and different behaviour management practices, including the use of exclusions. This thesis explores teacher attitudes, beliefs, and practices to understand in greater detail the teacher level factors that lead to more inclusive school atmospheres that make less use of reactive and exclusionary behaviour policies.

This thesis consists of three separate sections: 1) the literature review; 2) the empirical study and 3) the bridging and reflective chapter. The thematic literature review explores current themes in research looking at inclusive education and exclusion. It looks at recent trends around the use of exclusion in schools and the factors that have been shown to affect exclusion rates. Alongside this, the literature review also explores the factors that have been shown to foster or hinder inclusion in school. The literature review highlighted that while there is a wealth of literature examining some of the links between attitudes towards inclusion, teaching practices and exclusion, there is a gap in understanding which of these factors link to specific teaching practices (e.g., proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies) and subsequent use of exclusion. The literature review also highlighted that teachers' stress, levels of support and teacher characteristics influence attitudes, beliefs and teaching practice, but again no study has

included these in a model to predict teachers' behaviour management and use of exclusions. Given the trend in rising levels of exclusion, and the detrimental effect this can have on children's outcomes, it is important to understand what can be done to foster more inclusive ethe in schools and reduce the levels of exclusions. The focus of this research was therefore to survey teachers to understand their attitudes towards inclusion, their self-efficacy, use of proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies, levels of exclusions in their schools, as well looking at teacher characteristics, levels of stress and support. The study examined specific relationships between all these constructs to better understand how teacher level and school ethos factors can lead seemingly similar schools to have significantly different practices when it comes to inclusion and levels of exclusion.

104 teachers responded to the online survey. Path analysis showed that teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion significantly predicted higher rates of self-efficacy, which in turn predicted proactive behaviour management and less use of exclusionary behaviour management strategies. This adds to our knowledge of what teacher-level factors lead to a pro-inclusive ethos at school as well as contribute to the use of exclusions. Regression analysis also showed that teachers' levels of stress moderated the relationship between teachers' reactive behaviour management and use of exclusionary strategies. MANOVA analysis showed that there were significant differences in teachers' self-efficacy and behaviour management strategies depending on school stage, gender, and the levels of deprivation or affluence of the area they taught in. Secondary level, being male and teaching in an area of high deprivation were all linked to higher use of reactive behaviour management and use of exclusions. These results show the importance of engaging with teacher attitude and belief systems in fostering inclusive schools and reducing the use of exclusions, and these factors should be considered in the design of any training or support for school staff that aims to improve inclusion.

Finally, the bridging and reflective chapter explores the personal experience of carrying out the research project. This covers my personal identification with the research topic, reflections on the design, methods, and analysis processes as well as exploring the ethical issues and limitations associated with the research. This chapter also reflects on the implications of this research project on professional development as well as for the wider knowledge base within Educational Psychology practice.

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List of abbreviations

APA	American Psychological Association
COVID-19	Coronavirus
DfE	Department for Education
ECT	Early Career Teacher
EEF	Education Endowment Foundation
EHCP	Educational, Health and Care Plan
EP	Educational Psychologist
FTE	Fixed Term Exclusion
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
GDPR	General Data Protection Regulation
HCPC	The Health and Care Professionals Council
IE	Internal Exclusion
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
RSA	Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce
RQ1	Research Question 1
RQ2	Research Question 2
RQ3	Research Question 3
SEBD	social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties
SENCo	Special Educational Needs Coordinator
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
TEP	Trainee Educational Psychologist
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Chapter 1: Literature Review

Introduction

Exclusion from school is becoming a common place event, particularly in England, where exclusions have risen significantly over the last decade, with a sharp increase following the return to regular schooling after the Covid19 lockdowns (Department of Education 2022). Latest statistical releases from the Department of Education showed that there were 6,495 permanent exclusions in 2021-2022, a significant increase of 3,938 on the previous year and 578,280 suspensions, up from 352,454 compared to 2020-2021. There has also been a return to focus on attainment and attendance following Covid 19 lockdowns (Department for Education, 2023), while at the same time, more vulnerable groups of children were disproportionately affected by school closures during lockdown, both in terms of educational attainment but also poorer emotional health (Skipp et al., 2021). It is often these same children who are more at risk of exclusion (Gill et al., 2017; Skipp et al., 2021).

There is compelling evidence demonstrating the harmful consequences of exclusion. Munn et al. (2000, 2005) explored pupils' feelings and experiences following a school exclusion: students reported feelings of rejection and stigmatisation, increased conflict at home and worries about future opportunities. Longitudinal research has repeatedly shown the damaging consequences of exclusion: children who have been excluded from school are more likely to leave school without qualifications, have long periods of unemployment, experience homelessness, be involved in the criminal justice system and have poorer mental and physical health (Pirrie et al., 2011). Additionally, children who are excluded are "four times more likely to have grown up in poverty, seven times more likely to have a special educational need and ten times more likely to have poor mental health" (Gill et al., 2017, p.16). The rising rates of exclusion are a significant cause for concern, not least for the negative outcomes for students, but because they signal a school system failing to include and protect

its most at-risk students. An understanding therefore of what works to promote more inclusive cultures at school and reduce exclusions is essential to improving the outcomes for vulnerable students and tackling social inequality. Many studies have shown that school culture, ethos, attitudes, and teaching practices affect a school's willingness to exclude (e.g., Hatton, 2013; Warin, 2017). Schools that have a more positive ethos around inclusion appear to have lower rates of exclusion (Hatton, 2013; Kinsella, 2020; Warin, 2017). Understanding how to achieve a more inclusive school that makes less use of exclusionary behaviour management and excludes less frequently is key to improving outcomes for some of our most marginalised groups.

Inclusive education is key to supporting all children to feel engaged and supported in schools (Kefallinou et al., 2020). Inclusive education is a priority for many governments around the world and continues to be enshrined in legislation and international declarations (United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, 2009; UNESCO, 1994; UNESCO 2020). The UNESCO Salamanca Agreement in 1994 made a commitment to promote inclusive education for all children and young people. Governments of most western nations, including the UK, have had inclusive education and a commitment to providing children access to mainstream schools as a stated aim in education policy since the outlining of the Salamanca agreement.

This position led to the development of the Code of Practice in England in 2001 and 2015. The 2015 Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of practice places a duty on local authorities to ensure that children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) are first and foremostly educated within a mainstream setting. The SEND Code of Practice also places a duty on teachers to educate all children inclusively and make sure that all children can access the curriculum. Despite this, the practical implementation of inclusive practices in mainstream schools remains a challenge (Sharma et al., 2012). The high level of

exclusions also demonstrates the difficulties some schools face in trying to educate all their students. Government statistics also show that certain groups of pupils are a lot more likely to be excluded. For instance, children with special educational needs (SEN), children who are on the 'at risk' register, children who receive free school meals (FSM), and children from certain ethnic backgrounds are all more likely to be excluded (Department for Education, 2023). As a result of these rising exclusion rates, it has been a stated aim of government to investigate the underlying causes of this and intervene to reduce the number of exclusions (Timpson, 2019).

The Department for Education also recently announced the establishment of a £10m behaviour hub programme. This programme will create centres of excellence to guide schools towards best practice behaviour management policies. There is a clear willingness among policymakers to address some of the underlying issues surrounding behaviour in schools, and a desire to reduce exclusions. Understanding how to achieve a more inclusive school that makes less use of exclusionary behaviour management, and permanently excludes less frequently is key to improving outcomes for our most marginalised students who are at higher risk of exclusion.

It can be difficult to unpick, however, the complex range of factors that contribute to a more inclusive ethos in schools, and lower rates of exclusions. There is significant research examining the student characteristics that are associated with an increased likelihood of being excluded (e.g., Department for Education, 2023; Paget et al., 2018; Timpson, 2019). There are also significant disparities in exclusion rates between the nations of the UK, with research pointing to differences in legislation and policy driving higher rates in England ((Duffy et al, 2021; McCluskey et al, 2021; Thompson et al, 2021). There also clear differences in rates between schools. However, there is less written about school and teacher level factors that lead to differences in exclusion rates. One useful paper is the Timpson 2019 review of

exclusion in England. This provides an exploration of the factors driving exclusion rates, and ways to tackle the issue. The paper discusses how some schools appear to have lower rates of exclusions compared to schools with similar characteristics of students, and there appears to be some evidence that differences in the ethos, culture, and leadership of schools lead to more or less use of exclusions (Timpson, 2019). This reflects Hatton's (2013) research looking at differences in ethos between high excluding and low excluding schools. This study concluded that low excluding schools had greater consistency in their responses to challenging behaviour. The findings also showed differences between schools when it came to beliefs about inclusion and behaviour management, with low excluding schools having more positive beliefs towards teaching children with SEN and reported using behaviour management strategies more consistently. High excluding schools were also more likely to see exclusion as a 'useful strategy' (Hatton, 2013, p. 164).

This link between inclusion and higher levels of consistency in behaviour management was also found in a study by Monsen et al., (2014). This study found that positive attitudes towards inclusion among teachers was linked to classroom environments with greater levels of satisfaction and cohesiveness and lower levels of friction. Moreover, the study reported a link between positive attitudes towards inclusion and greater levels of support and lower levels of stress among teachers. Similarly, Gibbs and Powell (2012) found that there was a relationship between teachers reporting higher levels of self and collective efficacy and lower levels of exclusion. Collective efficacy refers to the confidence teachers have in their school's leadership and policies and the consistency of culture and approach across the school. This links to the findings reported by Hatton (2013) and Monsen et al., (2014).There are also a number of studies that report differences in teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy, and teaching practices according to their gender, their years of experience, the school level they teach as well as the characteristics of student profile taught (e.g., Aloe et al.,

2014; Avramidis et al., 2000; Gülsün et al., 2023; Ellins & Porter, 2005; Klassen & Chiu, 2010; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Nickerson & Martens, 2008; Wilson et al., 2020). It appears that factors like teacher attitudes and beliefs are essential to understand how to develop an inclusive ethos in schools, and also reduce the level of exclusions. This literature review will focus on exploring these school and teacher level differences in more detail. It aims to understand what makes up an inclusive ethos and unpick how different attitudes and beliefs among teachers contribute to the use of exclusionary practices.

The scope and structure of the review

The aim of this literature review is to explore and organise research in relation to exclusion, attitudes towards inclusion, and teaching practices. To explore the literature and relevant studies around the themes of exclusion, attitudes towards inclusion, and teaching practices, a thematic literature review was used. Thematic reviews identify patterns within research studies and organise these studies by the emerging patterns or themes (Jesson et al., 2011). Themes are then discussed under relevant headings to give insight into each relevant topic (Snyder, 2019). This fits well with the objective of placing the study within the existing body of research as well as ensuring that a broad range of themes and literature is included (Jesson et al., 2011; Snyder, 2019).

It was decided that a systematic literature review which starts with a well-defined research question would be too narrow to understand the contribution of different factors to this current study (Snyder, 2019). The thematic literature review will give a clear picture of the themes and questions that are significant to the research area to develop a conceptual framework. This framework will define the key concepts in this study and the relationships between them, which will serve as the foundation for understanding the use of exclusion in schools and provides a theoretical basis for the study. The University of East Anglia's

electronic database was employed to carry out an initial exploration of the literature. The literature search was then expanded to include the databases ScienceDirect, ERIC, PsycINFO and Google Scholar. Initially, broad terms such as ‘exclusions’, ‘inclusive ethos’, ‘behaviour’ management’ and ‘inclusive school culture’ were used. The search was then broadened based on this initial review and due to the large number of papers found using these terms, more specific terms were used (outlined below). Journals investigating inclusion, for example, the International Journal of Inclusive Education, the British Journal of Special Education, the European Journal of Special Educational Needs and Journal of research in Special Educational Needs were extensively searched as specific research journals in the field. Journals on the topic of teaching and education were also reviewed extensively: for example, Learning and Instruction, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties and Teaching and Teacher Education. Additionally, Educational Psychology in Practice and the British Journal of Educational Psychology were also reviewed to include relevant literature from the field of Educational Psychology. The literature review also explored other relevant articles and books. Furthermore, grey literature such as government reports, policy publications and legislation were also used for the literature review.

The main areas explored were:

- Exclusion: Drivers of exclusion, factors linked to exclusion, outcomes for excluded children and research on effective interventions to reduce exclusion.
- Inclusion: Factors linked to effective inclusion in schools, links to exclusion and teaching practices, teachers’ attitudes towards inclusion and factors linked to teachers’ attitudes towards inclusion.

- Teaching practices: Both proactive behaviour management practices and reactive behaviour management practices associated with higher rates of exclusion, and the links between this and teacher attitudes.
- Teacher self-efficacy: Specifically linking to teacher practices, use of exclusion and attitudes towards inclusion.
- Levels of stress: Teachers experience of stress and any links to teaching practices and attitudes.
- Levels of support at school: Specifically whether this links to differences in teaching practices and attitudes towards inclusion.
- Differences in teacher characteristics that influence their attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, and behaviour management practices.

Key words and combinations of terms searched were: 'exclusions'; 'inclusion'; 'inclusive education', 'teacher attitudes towards inclusion'; 'teaching practices; 'teacher self-efficacy; 'challenging behaviour'; 'behaviour management'; 'classroom management'; 'persistent disruptive behaviour; 'teacher stress'; 'teacher burn-out' and 'teacher support'. The search was carried out between October 2021 and June 2023. The literature search also included relevant government reports, advice and guidance and legislation. Reports from relevant think tanks and independent research organisations were also included. For the most part, studies were included from the year 2002 onwards to ensure that research findings were as up-to-date and relevant as possible. In a small number of instances, studies from before the year 2002 were included due to their significance in the field. Literature was predominantly drawn from studies of teachers in the UK, US and Europe.

This literature review begins by exploring research in the area of exclusions. It then looks at inclusion and teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. It looks at research in the area of

behaviour management and the links to inclusive ethos at school and the use of exclusions. It then explores other significant factors that contribute to the use of exclusions in schools, namely teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, behaviour management strategies, levels of stress and perceived levels of support in school. Literature looking at differences in teacher characteristics (such as school level, gender, years of experience) was also reviewed to understand the influence these factors have on teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, behaviour management strategies and levels of stress. It concludes with an exploration of the gap in this area and how this led to the current research.

Exclusions: definitions and factors linked to exclusion

There are a number of different ways to define the term 'Exclusion'. This ranges from permanent exclusion from school to both formal and informal removals from the classroom and school. This can be a formal fixed term exclusion or suspension, or can be in the form of an exclusion at school where a student attends a separate classroom or space (often called isolation) (Barker et al., 2010; Gazeley, 2015; Glass, 2013; Golding, 2021). Managed moves also occur when a student is at risk of exclusion but a parent, pupil and school agree to a new school placement to avoid an official permanent exclusion (Messeter et al., 2018). Indeed, there is some research that more 'hidden' forms of exclusions like internal exclusion and use of managed moves make it hard to estimate the true numbers of children who are being excluded in some shape or form (Power & Taylor, 2020). Permanent exclusion can be seen as the most extreme form of discipline in response to student behaviour and it is associated with the most negative outcomes for children (Timpson, 2019).

This review will explore a range of exclusionary practices in schools, from permanent exclusion to other forms of exclusionary behaviour management (e.g., suspensions, internal exclusion, and isolation). Permanent exclusion is still a rare event. However, as mentioned previously, the rate of both fixed term and permanent exclusions has been rising in England

since 2013, particularly at secondary level. By 2017, the total number of permanent exclusions had increased by 60% since the academic year 2013/14. Latest government figures show an increase in exclusions following Covid19 lockdowns (Department for Education, 2023). A headteacher can decide to exclude a pupil on a fixed term basis, or permanently, under section 52 of the Education Act (2002). According to government guidance, permanent exclusions should be seen as a last resort, and a response to "a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school" (Department for Education, 2022, p.12).

Data on school exclusions show that the most common reason given for a permanent exclusion is persistent disruptive behaviour. This accounts for a third of all permanent exclusions. Following this, other common reasons include physical assault against a pupil (13%) and physical assault against an adult (10%). Although 'persistent disruptive behaviour' is given as the most common reason for a permanent exclusion, there is a lack of consensus as to what behaviour this involves in different schools. Persistent disruptive behaviour can include low-level disruptions such as calling out, as well as more aggressive behaviours (O'Regan, 2010).

The lack of consistency in understanding the 'threshold' for what behaviour is serious or persistent leads to differences in schools' behaviour management approaches and inconsistences between different schools when it comes to permanent exclusions (Cole et al., 2019; O'Regan, 2010; Partridge et al., 2020; Thompson et al., 2021). This is proposed as one of the reasons behind significant differences in rates of permanent exclusions between different regions, and different school types (Cole et al., 2019; O'Regan, 2010; Partridge et al., 2020; Thompson et al., 2021).

The recent review of exclusions found that four out of every five children who were permanently excluded had either a special educational need, were eligible for free school meals, or were classified by their school as 'in need' (Timpson, 2019). The highest rates of exclusions also occur in areas of high deprivation which also indicates that levels of exclusions are linked to a wide and complex range of unmet needs (Department for Education, 2019). Boys are three times more likely to be permanently excluded than girls, and the highest rates of exclusion occur at age 14 (Department for Education, 2023). Permanent exclusion of children with SEN but no education, health and care plan (EHCP) is six times higher than the national average, whereas, in children with SEN and an EHCP, it is two times higher (Department for Education, 2023). This shows the protective nature of an EHCP and may reflect guidance on exclusions that emphasises head teachers should avoid excluding children with an EHCP (Department of Education, 2023).

Certain ethnic groups have a much higher rate of exclusion, the most recent statistics showing that Gypsy/Roma, Irish Traveller, Black Caribbean and mixed White and Black Caribbean children have the highest rates of permanent exclusion (Department for Education, 2023). An analysis of the Avon longitudinal birth cohort study by Paget et al. (2018) looked at significant predictors of exclusion. This study found that being male, lower socio-economic status, maternal psychopathology, mental health and behavioural difficulties, psychiatric disorder, social communication difficulties, language difficulties, antisocial activities, bullying/being bulled, lower parental engagement with education, low school engagement, poor relationships with teachers, low educational attainment, and SEN were all factors that significantly predicted exclusion. Clearly, these analyses point to vulnerable groups in society and paint a picture of underlying need. As previously mentioned, while permanent exclusion indicates the most extreme action a school can take in response to student behaviour, the rates are also reflective of a shift in school cultures, attitudes, and expectations as well as increased

use of other forms of exclusion (Power et al., 2018). This inconsistency in the threshold for what warrants an exclusion as well as the vulnerability of students who are excluded make the rising rate of exclusions an issue of social justice.

As mentioned previously, there has been a sharp increase in the rates of permanent exclusion and suspensions in England following the Covid19 lockdowns (Department of Education 2022). Rates of exclusion have shown a general trend of increasing over the last 10 years (Department of Education 2022). However, it is worth noting that exclusion rates are not at their highest level compared to rates over the last 25 years. The current rate of permanent exclusion is 0.08 (this is the number of permanent exclusions as a proportion of the overall school population; (Department of Education 2022). This is higher than the low rates achieved in 2011-2013 which were at 0.06 (Timpson, 2019), but it is not as high as rates in 1997-1998 which stood at 0.16 and in the early to mid-2000's where the rate was consistently at 0.12 and 0.13 (Timpson, 2019). However, since 2013, rates of exclusion have been rising (Timpson, 2019). There was a brief reduction in rates of exclusion during the Covid19 lockdowns when the rate dropped to 0.05 (Department of Education 2022). This did, however, include the Spring term when schools were closed to most students which meant that schools had a period of time where they did not exclude students. Since schools have reopened fully, both permanent exclusions and suspensions have increased significantly. There were 6,495 permanent exclusions in 2021-2022, up from 2.997 in 2020-2021 (an increase of 3,938) and 578,280 suspensions, up from 352,454 compared to 2020-2021 (an increase of 225,826) (Department of Education 2022).

The rising rates of exclusion are also a reflection of changes in belief and approach at a policy level. New government policies and agendas have had an impact on school exclusions rates, with evidence that an increased shift to 'zero tolerance' behaviour policies and academisation is associated with increased exclusions, both internal, fixed term and permanent

(Partridge at al., 2020; Power et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2021). Zero tolerance behaviour policies refer to schools strictly enforcing their rules and regulations, as well as using a framework of punishments, for example, a warning, followed by a second warning, then a detention, or use of isolation, a suspension and then a permanent exclusion. While many schools use some of these behaviour management approaches, zero-tolerance approaches differ in the level of patience or tolerance shown for low level behaviour and are viewed as harsher or quicker than other schools to hand out punishments (Kang-Brown et al., 2013). Zero-tolerance approaches are particularly associated with the increase in academies in the UK (Partridge et al., 2020).

There is also concern that increased pressure to 'show results' and commitments around raising standards combined with less accountability around exclusion, and reduced funding for special educational needs support create perverse incentives for schools to exclude (Ball, 2003; Connell, 2009; Thompson et al., 2021). Indeed, studies exploring this topic have raised concerns on the fundamental tension that exists between a drive to raise standards and the aims of inclusion (Ball, 2003; Connell, 2009; Thompson et al., 2021).

Research conducted by the RSA (Partridge et al., 2020) explores a number of these policy influences. For example, their research found that the issue of exclusions has been intensified by the lack of support available from other public services due to cuts. Their analysis found that in the most deprived areas, council funding has been cut by 31% of £432 per person while per pupil funding in England fell by around 8 percent in real terms from £6,539 in 2009/10 to £5,994 in 2018/19. The report also highlighted that the move towards academisation has had an impact on exclusions. Interview findings pointed to increased academisation leading to less cooperation between schools to ensure that pupils remain in the mainstream system. Headteachers interviewed for the study spoke about some academies opting out of processes to find pupils a school place following an exclusion. Interviewees also spoke about zero

tolerance policies leading to an increased level of exclusions. This often occurred because of students receiving consequences for low level behaviour such as pupils speaking out of turn in class or being late. Over time, these minor behaviours lead to either a fixed-term or permanent exclusion. The research for the report also found that 79% of teachers surveyed believed that "repeatedly removing a pupil from lessons is detrimental to their learning and progress" (Partridge et al., 2020, p.37). Teachers also spoke about wanting more support from outside professionals to best meet pupils needs (Partridge et al., 2020).

While the rates of suspensions and permanent exclusions in England remain high, this is not the case with other nations in the UK. There are current and historical differences between Northern Ireland, Wales, Scotland, and England when it comes to the levels of suspensions and permanent exclusions (Duffy et al, 2021; McCluskey et al, 2021; Thompson et al, 2021). The most recent statistics comparing these rates show the discrepancies between different jurisdictions of the UK in 2018-19: 0.01% of students were permanently excluded in Northern Ireland, 0.004% in Scotland, and 0.06% in Wales, compared to a rate of 0.1% in England (Duffy et al, 2021). These statistics show that the rate of permanent exclusions in England is 100 times higher than that of Northern Ireland, and 250 times higher than that of Scotland. Many papers have examined the policies and practices within the different jurisdictions of the UK to understand these disparities.

Cole et al. (2019) compared English practices towards exclusion to the other jurisdictions in the UK. The study examined policies in the four nations of the UK and also interviewed local authority officers in England to understand some of the causal factors contributing to higher levels of exclusions in England. Local authority officers cited government guidance emphasising the use of exclusion; school accountability frameworks, the neglect of Special Educational Needs and the loss of Local Authority powers as factors leading to the increasing levels of exclusions. McCluskey et al. (2021) also explored the policies and

practices within the Scottish Education landscape and compared these two the three other nations of the UK. The study highlighted the emphasis in Scotland on prevention and relationships in managing behaviour which differs significantly to recent English policies of more punitive behaviour management policies. The paper also found that Scotland has an emphasis on co-design and planning which can help to ensure joined up services when supporting young people. Duffy et al. (2021) examined the factors that are linked to the lower rates of exclusion in Northern Ireland and found a significant theme to be an 'ethos of caring' within many schools. This meant that schools' default approach was to support and retain challenging pupils, and that exclusion was mostly not considered as an option. The paper also highlighted the wide use of EOTAS (Education other than at school) support and alternative provision in Northern Ireland to support pupils temporarily planning for re-integration back to mainstream. Given the clear differences in rates of exclusion between then four nations of the UK, it is important to reflect on the policies and practices that give rise to this. Clearly, the different policies of the four nations are leading to different cultures around inclusion in schools which makes it all the more pertinent to unpick the factors at play that foster inclusive and exclusive approaches in English schools.

It is also important to highlight the impact of the pandemic and Covid19 lockdowns on levels of exclusion. As previously mentioned, levels of exclusions reduced during the Covid19 lockdowns as schools closed. However, many studies have pointed to an increase in vulnerability of previously at-risk children as a result of the pandemic (e.g. OECD, 2021). The increased pressure on services following on from pandemic closures has also meant that these groups of young people have been less likely to receive support and so this has increased the level of need in schools (OECD, 2021). Daniels et al. (2023) pointed out that this has led to an increase in vulnerability of students at school. This along with increasing pressure on teachers and the school system in England has led to an increase in suspensions, exclusions, and other

forms of exclusion (Daniels et al., 2023). As outlined above, levels of exclusions are affected by a complex range of factors. These include vulnerable characteristics of pupils as well as policy changes in the school system. The vulnerable characteristics of students at risk of exclusion is relevant for schools when it comes to the Equality Act (2010) as they are required to have reasonable adjustments in place to ensure that children are not treated unfairly because of their disability or additional needs. However, it appears that children are often excluded because of these additional needs. This makes it all the more pertinent for educational psychologists to understand school levels factors that drive exclusions, and how best to prevent these from happening.

What works to reduce exclusions?

The literature base provides some useful learning on approaches that have been successful in preventing exclusions in different schools and contexts. Two systematic reviews looking at what works to reduce exclusions were carried out by Valdebenito et al. (2018) and Mielke and Farrington (2021). Most of the available research looks at studies from the USA and four studies were included from the UK. Many interventions to prevent exclusion are geared towards individual children or small groups and as a result, the evaluations are often small in scale. Overall, the two systematic reviews by Valdebenito et al. (2018) and Mielke and Farrington (2021) suggest that more targeted support for children is linked to larger reductions in exclusions than whole-school approaches.

For example. interventions that use Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) have shown promising results. One intervention trialled in the USA is the Rochester Resilience Project (Wyman et al., 2010). This programme used aspects of CBT and social-emotional learning and was delivered through 6 one-to-one lessons to students who were identified with emotional regulation problems at primary school level. The evaluation of this programme showed a significant decrease in the level of suspensions for these students. Positive Action (Lewis et al.,

2013; Snyder et al., 2010) is a similar programme that teaches social emotional skills and also uses a whole-school climate intervention. Results from evaluations of the programme showed improved student behaviour and an increase in high school graduation rates (Jackson, 2018). Another study by Okonofua et al. (2016) looking at empathy-based philosophy, found that encouraging teachers to adopt empathetic attitudes towards student discipline was effective at reducing exclusions and low in cost to deliver. Additionally, evidence from the Timpson Review highlights the need for family support, staff training and fostering positive relationships between parents and schools.

Even though exclusions have been rising in England for almost a decade and excluded children are at risk of highly negative life outcomes, there is still a lack of research looking at what is most effective at reducing or preventing exclusion (Timpson, 2019). The literature looking at interventions to reduce exclusions highlights some approaches that have promising evidence of impact. What is less clear from this literature on interventions to reduce exclusions are the more complex factors of why certain schools have a more inclusive ethos and make less use of exclusion. As discussed, certain characteristics of students increase the risk of an exclusion, and there are policy factors that appear to be contributing to the increase seen in the last decade (Partridge at al., 2020; Power et al., 2018; Thompson et al., 2021). However, it has also been highlighted that there are inconsistencies and disparities in exclusion rates between geographic locations and different schools. Some schools with similar cohorts of students differ in their rates of exclusion, with some evidence that school culture, ethos, attitudes and teaching practices affect a school's willingness to exclude (e.g., Cole et al., 2019; Hatton, 2013; Warin, 2017). The following sections of this literature review will examine literature that has explored factors linked to more inclusive cultures and practices in schools as well as level of exclusions. Many of the factors highlighted as underpinning inclusive practices involve teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices (e.g., Cole et al., 2019; Gibbs & Powell., 2012; Hatton, 2013; MacFarlane

& Woolfson, 2013; Monsen et al., 2014; Warin, 2017; Wilson et al., 2020; Yada et al., 2022). The literature review will also examine these factors to understand if and how they contribute to inclusive practice and use of exclusions.

The link to inclusive practice

While there is some debate with regards to the exact definition of inclusion (Norwich, 2014), at its core, inclusion refers both to an aspiration to include every child and young person in a classroom (Visser & Stokes 2003) as well as ensuring equal opportunities for all in schools (Norwich, 2014). The lack of clarity in definitions was examined by Nilholm and Göransson (2017). They reported that most educators viewed inclusion through the lens of a 'placement' definition – in other words – the location where education takes place. However, the SEND code of practice focusses on supporting children with additional needs within mainstream school settings and emphasises that inclusion should be about the support received rather than type of placement (Department for Education & Department of Health, 2015).

This lack of clarity over what exactly constitutes inclusive education is problematic when it comes to understanding how best to meet the needs of a wide range of children. When it comes to understanding exactly how to promote positive inclusion, it is clearly important to have a consistent definition. Some clarity has been offered by Ainscow et al. (2006) who separated inclusive education into six main categories: (a) inclusion concerned with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); (b) inclusion as a response to disciplinary exclusions; (c) inclusion as about all groups vulnerable to exclusion, (d) inclusion as the promotion of the school for all, (e) inclusion as 'Education for All', and (f) inclusion as a principled approach to education and society. UNESCO (2008) also describes the key parts of inclusive education as: (a) promoting student participation and reducing exclusion from and for education; (b) the presence, participation and achievement of all students, but especially of those who are excluded or at risk of marginalisation. Villegas et al (2017) give a useful

framework for understanding different approaches to inclusion that range from all children being included, through to exclusion (all children with differences being excluded), and touches on segregation (where children with different needs are educated in special settings) or integration (where children with special needs may be educated within the same school, but in a separate class, for example). Figure 1 below gives a useful representation of these different characteristics of inclusion and exclusion. This diagram is useful when thinking about schools who differ in how inclusive they are and in how frequently they make use of exclusion.

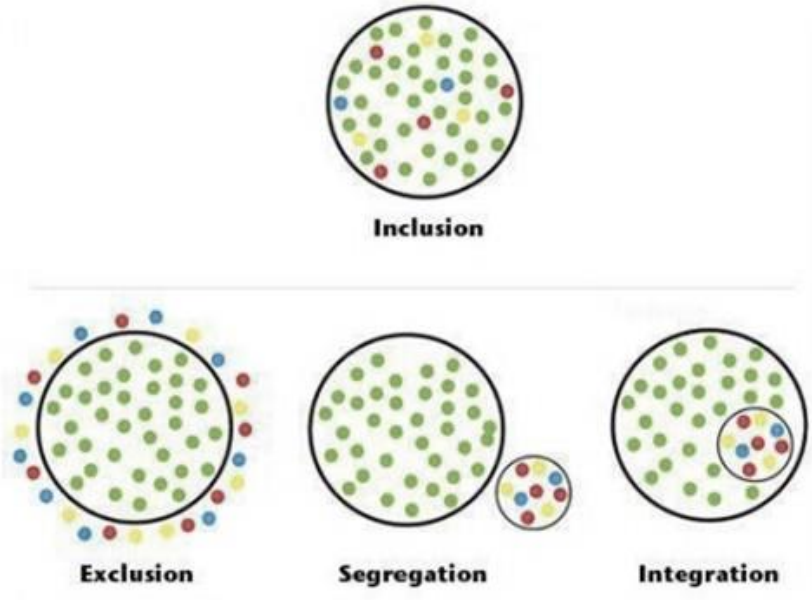

Figure 1: A visual Representation of the concept of Inclusion (Villegas et al., 2017)

As mentioned previously, the agenda of inclusion in schools has changed hugely over the last 30 years, and particularly since the publication of the United Nations Salamanca Statement in 1994. This clearly stated the idea that mainstream schools must meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities (UNESCO, 1994). The Warnock Report (1978) and the Education Act (1981) in England have also been significant to the way that children with additional needs are supported, first through the introduction of statements and common educational goals for all students. Additionally, the SEND Code of Practice (2015) made it

clear that schools are not allowed to refuse enrolment of students with SEND. Kefallinou et al. (2020) found that successfully implemented inclusive education has a number of wider benefits: it can improve the quality of education, improve student outcomes, promote longer term social inclusion and has an effect on levels of exclusion. Therefore, understanding the factors leading to a positive inclusive ethos in schools plays a key role in understanding both exclusion and how to create positive outcomes for all students.

There have been a number of studies that look at the school-level factors that are linked to both inclusive cultures and use of exclusions. For example, Gazeley et al., (2015) carried out qualitative research with 55 staff members and 53 young people in six secondary schools to understand more closely the interplay between inequalities and school exclusions. Their findings showed a clear link between inclusive practice and exclusions, with schools that viewed their role as educating all students regardless of need and seeing exclusion as a 'last resort' being less likely to exclude. Stakeholders interviewed for the research consistently spoke about 'differences in schools' thresholds for inclusion' and how this affects exclusion practices (Gazeley et al., 2015, p. 500). These thresholds were described as different schools having more or less patience for challenging behaviour, or some being more willing to exclude as they saw the child's needs as beyond their area of expertise. The report concluded that this 'inconsistency between different schools' practices means that some groups of children are more vulnerable to poor immediate and long-term outcomes of exclusion than others.' Linked to this are the competing demands in schools between catering to students' additional needs and achieving academic success.

For example, a study by Gill et al. (2017) highlighted the tensions between teachers' focus on achieving academic progress and a wish to implement inclusion. Another study by Rose et al. (2018) looked at a group of schools working to reduce fixed-term exclusions. The

study noted that a key component in achieving this was implementing more inclusive systems within the schools. The key feature of the inclusive systems was greater focus and consistency on behaviour management within the school, as well as teachers' having greater understanding and empathy for children's experiences in their classrooms, and schools focussing on greater communication with families. These changes led to a reduction in fixed terms exclusions.

The finding that helping teachers to reflect on student's behaviour and having greater insight into the drivers behind behaviour is similar to findings reported by Stanforth and Rose (2018). This study examined discourses around inclusion and exclusion for students displaying challenging behaviour in an English secondary school. The study used a mixed-methods approach analysing data from school referrals (temporary exclusions from lessons) and interviews with staff and students. Findings highlighted the differing ways that students were perceived by staff. Importantly, interview themes showed that teachers had greater willingness to change their practice and understand pupils' behaviour contextually when they felt there was a mitigating reason from a student's home life or background to do so. This change in perspective and practice also led to reduced temporary exclusions from lessons. These studies have shown that schools that successfully implement inclusive practices are less likely to exclude students.

The finding that teachers' narratives about a child's behaviour having an influence on exclusion is also similar to findings reported by Stanbridge and Mercer (2019). Their study found that the language used in schools to describe children's behaviour can influence the 'framing' of behaviour and therefore the responses of teaching staff, including the use of harsher discipline. Their study concluded that schools should avoid language that explains behaviour through a 'within-person' account. Their paper emphasises that successful inclusive practice should view children through a 'situational perspective' which would allow schools to

take a more equality-based approach. Another study looking at the views of schools with regards to inclusion examined the perspectives of student teachers (Essex et al., 2019). Findings showed that the majority of student teachers held a 'deficit-based' view of inclusion which led student teachers to view children with additional needs as having 'problems' that needed remediation strategies. These differing attitudes to inclusion were also examined in a study by Kinsella (2020). This study found that schools who become more inclusive move from seeing children's behaviour through an 'individual' lens to considering the wider context for challenging behaviour. From these studies, it appears that the attitudes and views of teachers towards students with SEN or additional needs play a role in subsequent inclusive practice. What is less clear from these studies is how different attitudes towards inclusion link to different teaching practices and what exact teaching practices are affected. This question will be explored below.

Attitudes towards inclusion and links to teaching practices

Previous research has found support for the link between attitudes towards inclusion and differences in teachers' teaching practices – specifically how teachers choose to manage behaviour and use of exclusions at school (e.g., Gibbs & Gardiner, 2008; Gibbs & Powell, 2012; Jull, 2008; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Miller et al., 2002; Munn et al., 2000; Stanovich & Jordan, 2015). For example, Munn et al. (2000) concluded that a key focus in reducing exclusions is to understand and alter the school's values and beliefs that underpin practices. This study also explored school ethos and its link to exclusions by looking at the perceptions of school staff, parents, pupils, and education professionals. The study found that lower excluding schools placed more value on the importance of personal and social development. Similar to this, Miller et al. (2002) found that teachers' attributions about causes of behaviour that are connected to factors beyond the teacher's control can lead to less successful behaviour management approaches. A study by Harris et al. (2006) also looked at

how schools can create constructs around a 'problem' pupil and highlighted that a reduction in stigma around previous behaviour can be a key part in reducing exclusions and promoting inclusion as part of the school's ethos.

These studies show that the beliefs and narratives that schools and teachers have around pupils and how they view behaviour can lead to differences in how they then manage that behaviour. This may explain the differences in inclusive culture across different schools. Specifically attitudes towards inclusion also appear to predict differences in teaching practices. For example, a study by Kuyini and Desai (2007) used surveys and observations in primary schools in Ghana to understand principals' and teachers' attitudes towards and knowledge of inclusive education and to see if these were predictors of effective teaching practices. Results showed that attitudes towards inclusion and knowledge of inclusion predicted effective teaching practices but principals' expectations on these two areas did not.

Related to this, Jull (2008) concluded that 'pathologising' children's behaviour is a common step in legitimising inaction or a punitive response, making it difficult to take a more positive approach. Gibbs and Gardiner (2008) also looked at teachers' attributions for misbehaviour. Their study found that the way teachers attribute the difficulties of a student can influence how behaviour is managed, for example whether teachers attributed behaviour as being the responsibility of the child, or whether attributions considered wider contextual factors for the child's behaviour. Again, this might explain the differences between schools in terms of inclusive practice and levels of exclusions. For example, Spink (2011) looked at differences in school ethos between high excluding schools and low excluding schools in one local authority area. Study findings showed differences between the two school groups in terms of how schools conceptualised beliefs about inclusion and beliefs about reducing exclusion. Low excluding schools were more likely to use consistent behaviour management, and less likely to legitimatise the use of an exclusion.

Similarly, Gibbs and Powell (2012) explored the attributions of teachers working in low excluding schools. Findings showed that these teachers were more likely to attribute difficulties to external factors like socioeconomic deprivation. MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) also looked at the relationships between teacher attitudes and teaching practices used with children who had social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties (SEBD) in one hundred and eleven primary school teachers. They found that teachers' feelings and beliefs towards inclusion predicted their intention to include children with SEBD. They also found that teachers who attended more INSET sessions had more positive attitudes towards the inclusion of students with SEBD, whereas teachers with more years of experience had less positive attitudes.

Similarly, Monsen et al. (2014) looked at teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and the classroom learning environment. They found that teachers with more positive attitudes towards inclusion were reported by their pupils to have classroom environments with greater levels of satisfaction and cohesiveness and lower levels of friction, competitiveness and difficulty than teachers who held less positive attitudes. Additionally, Stanovich and Jordan (2015) highlighted two main differences in teachers' beliefs around inclusion. Their research divided teachers into two groups based on their attitudes: those with 'interventionist beliefs' (all students benefit from suitable teaching) and 'pathognomonic beliefs' (attributing difficulties to a deficit within the child). Their findings showed that teachers with 'pathognomonic beliefs' were less likely to employ inclusive practices. These studies show how teachers' attitudes and beliefs can lead to differences in their teaching practice, often in how they choose to manage behaviour and can have an impact on the atmosphere of the classroom and school. What is less clear from the research reviewed so far is what exact teaching practices are impacted and how this may lead to less or greater use of exclusion. It is important to understand more specifically how teachers' attitudes and beliefs can influence their behaviour management and how this is linked to the use of exclusions.

Behaviour management practices

As mentioned above, there is a clear link between a school's ethos and teachers' attitudes towards inclusion. There is also evidence that differences in teachers' attitudes links to different teaching practices (e.g. Gibbs & Gardiner, 2008; Gibbs & Powell, 2012; Jull, 2008; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Miller et al., 2002; Munn et al., 2000; Stanovich & Jordan, 2015). However, it is important to understand specifically what teaching practices are linked to positive inclusion and what is linked to greater use of exclusion.

Educational Psychologists are well versed in considering issues from a multi-systems perspective (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) and the same is true when it comes to understanding exclusion. Many studies have examined specific school environment factors, like behaviour management policies and strategies that can contribute to exclusion. This is especially important given that schools have a degree of control over their own policies and practices and so can differ significantly when it comes to use of exclusion (e.g., Gregory et al., 2011; Hatton, 2013; Partridge et al., 2020).

Behaviour management is one of the specific areas of teaching practices that is mentioned consistently in the literature. Specifically, the use of more proactive or reactive behaviour management are linked to higher rates of exclusion (e.g., Cole et al., 2019; Gaffney et al., 2021; Okonofua et al., 2016; Timpson, 2019; Valdebenito et al., 2019). A systematic review of school wide behaviour interventions to promote inclusion and reduce disciplinary exclusion suggested that intervening to support the school environment ecologically, and in ways that are positive and preventative, may contribute to the reduction of exclusion (Hindmarch, 2017). The Timpson review of school exclusions highlighted punitive behaviour management policies and the increasing focus on academic attainment as 'push' factors in school exclusions (Timpson, 2019). Another study that looked at pupils' own narratives after being permanently excluded found that these young people thought the transition from primary

school to a less understanding and more disciplinarian culture at secondary school to be a significant factor in their exclusions (Farouk, 2015). Some of these more punitive behaviour approaches have also been shown to worsen the behaviour of students who have underlying emotional needs (Warin & Hibbin, 2016). Additionally, overly strict or punitive behaviour policies in school have been linked to negative outcomes for young people (Daniels et al., 2003).

Similarly, a study by Okonofua et al. (2016) looking at empathy-based philosophy, found that encouraging teachers to adopt empathetic attitudes towards student discipline was effective at reducing exclusions and low in cost to deliver. Valdebenito et al. (2019) carried out a systematic review and meta-analysis examining interventions that led to reduced school exclusions. Their findings highlighted positive effects of whole school programmes that aim to create positive environments, with clear rules that promote good behaviour, learning, and safety. Additionally, Cole et al. (2019) found that schools that invest in training and have a culture of openness and reflection often have lower exclusions rates. Restorative practices, in particular, have been highlighted as warranting additional research in their focus on reflection and moving away from blame and within-child factors for behaviour (Gaffney et al., 2021).

Proactive and reactive behaviour management

Behaviour management strategies can generally be described as either proactive or reactive, and some sit on a continuum between these two poles (Wilks, 1996). As mentioned previously, reactive and more punitive approaches to behaviour management appear to be linked to higher rates of exclusion (Gerlinger et al., 2021; Krezmien et al., 2014; Skiba & Losen, 2016; Vincent & Tobin, 2011). These approaches tend to be in response to a behaviour and are more likely to involve the use of a sanction. Given that these harsher and more reactive behaviour management practices appear to be linked both to negative pupil outcomes and higher rates of exclusion (e.g., Daniels et al., 2003; Warin & Hibbin, 2016) and positive,

more proactive strategies appear to either reduce exclusion or act in a preventative manner (e.g., Valdebenito et al., 2019), it is important to understand what factors influence teachers' use of either proactive or reactive behaviour management.

Reactive strategies are often used in response to disruptive behaviour whereas proactive strategies are used to prevent disruptive behaviour occurring or escalating. Reactive strategies involve a remediation in response to inappropriate behaviour (e.g., giving a consequence or removing a child from a lesson). Proactive strategies may involve establishing rules, or giving praise and rewards (Little et al., 2002; Safran & Oswald, 2003). Over 30 years ago, it was highlighted by the Elton Report (1989) that teachers lacking in classroom management skills can perceive students as hostile, and that this can lead to a negative atmosphere with teachers more likely to criticise students and make less use of praise. The report emphasises that this is often a source of confrontation in class. Reactive behaviour management evolved from behaviourist approaches that involve teachers using an intervention to control, condition, adapt, and correct students' behaviour, either to eliminate misbehaviour or maximise good behaviour (Landrum and Kauffman, 2006). Reactive approaches tend to use a hierarchy of responses in response to misbehaviour. They are distinguished from proactive as they tend to be a direct response to a student's misbehaviour and the aim is to establish control (Garrett, 2014).Proactive behaviour management strategies in contrast, often involve developing relationships, setting up expectations and routines and using engaging instruction (Clunies-Ross et al., 2008). This is linked to empathy-based philosophy as it also involves developing relationships and an understanding of students' needs (Clunies-Ross et al., 2008). Proactive behaviour management emerged from constructivist ideas that were opposed to behaviourism. They proposed that teachers should actively involve learners in the classroom (Fox, 2011). This led to the use of student-centred approaches and a move away from teachers as the central figure delivering content and

controlling behaviour to the teacher playing a more facilitative role (Alfieri et al, 2011). This shift led to the use of more proactive behaviour management strategies (Debs et al., 2019) which were seen as ensuring effective use of the class space, establishing rule and routines, focussing on positive relationships with students and delivering highly engaging lessons (e.g. Maeng & Bell, 2015; Martell, 2013).

In reality, most teachers use a combination of both proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies (Martin and Sass, 2010). However, some teachers tend to use more or less of these strategies and sit somewhere on a continuum of high classroom control to low classroom control (Martin and Sass, 2010). To assess teachers' use of both proactive and reactive strategies and the continuum of control, Martin and Sass (2010) developed the behaviour and instructional management scale (BIMS), which was based on an integration of theoretical perspectives of classroom management ideologies. The dimensions of the BIMS assesses teachers' underlying beliefs around control and use of either proactive or reactive strategies. The BIMS has been widely used to assess teachers' underlying levels of control in the classroom. It was used by Alasmari et al. (2021) who examined the link between teachers' use of proactive and reactive classroom management strategies, classroom environment, and self-efficacy. Their study used an adapted from of the BIMS to examine proactive classroom management strategies and reactive classroom management strategies. Martin et al. (2012) also used the BIMS to look at the relationship between teacher burnout, student misbehaviour, and predictors of teachers' intents to leave the profession. The study found that teachers' who had more reactive approaches to behaviour management had less satisfaction in their role and were more likely to report intending to leave. Lopes et al. (2017) also used the BIMS in research looking at Portuguese teachers' behaviour management and the relationship to students' misbehaviour. The BIMS was useful in distinguishing teachers who rated themselves as high in reactive methods, and this was linked to students' misbehaviour (Lopes et al., 2017).

There has been a limited amount of research looking at the differential effects of using proactive and reactive strategies in schools. One early study looked at the use of proactive and reactive strategies in a sample of 52 mothers and their young children. The study found that children had lower levels of behavioural issues when mothers used more proactive strategies while reactive strategies predicted a continuation of issues at age five (Gardner et al., 1999). Studies in school have generally shown that proactive strategies enhance the classroom environment and increase learning and on-task behaviour (Arthur et al., 2003; Beaman, 2006).

For example, Clunies-Ross et al. (2008) looked at the relationship between self-reported and actual use of classroom management strategies in a sample of 97 teachers. The study looked specifically at how proactive and reactive strategies were linked to teacher stress and student behaviour. Findings showed that a predominant use of reactive strategies significantly predicted elevated teacher stress and decreased student on-task behaviour. Nash et al. (2015) examined teachers' perceptions of disruptive behaviour. The study surveyed 426 teachers in primary and secondary schools across England and findings highlighted that for students who have additional needs, behaviour management at school is more effective when it involves a nurturing and collaborative approach alongside the school's other behaviour policies.

Related to this, Nye et al. (2016) surveyed special educational needs coordinators' (SENCos) views on strategies used by teachers to support children identified with SEN and problematic behaviours. Interviews were completed with six SENCos, all working in the Southwest of England. Thematic analysis showed that SENCos highlighted preventative strategies, proactive strategies and strategies that focussed on building trust and relationships, rather than coercive behaviour management, as most effective. They also promoted the use of adapted strategies for children with additional needs, for example ignoring low level behaviour,

or allowing a child to self-regulate in class by having breaks or sensory toys. Payne (2015) looked at schoolchildren's own perception of behaviour management systems used with their classrooms. The study surveyed UK secondary school pupils in Year 7 and Year 11. Results of the survey showed that students had a complex range of responses to different types of behaviour management strategies. For example, students responded that some sanctions for behaviour did lead to increased on task behaviour (e.g., staying quiet and increasing focus and engagement on learning). However, responses from pupils also showed that other sanctions like missing a break or giving detentions were viewed as counterproductive by pupils and led to decreased motivation to complete work in class. Responses also showed that rewards, such as giving 'stamps' led to students 'liking' their teacher more but did not necessarily lead to increased effort in lessons. However, rewards like a school trip or contact with home were found to be effective at increasing motivation.

These findings are important to understand the different ways that pupils respond to different types of behaviour management strategies and provide support for the negative effects of more exclusionary approaches. Similarly, Orejudo et al. (2020) examined the relationship between student misbehaviour and teacher coercion from a teacher perspective in a sample of 480 secondary and 351 primary teachers in Spain. Results showed a close relationship between student misbehaviour and teacher coercion. Furthermore, a review by Greene (2009) in the United States found that 'zero-tolerance' behaviour policies exacerbated behaviour problems and student absences. From the research base, there appears to be a link between the use of reactive behaviour management strategies and escalations in students' behaviour which, in turn, makes it more likely that more severe sanctions like exclusion will need to be used.

Teacher self-efficacy

There also appears to be a relationship between teacher self-efficacy and the use of either proactive or reactive behaviour management strategies. Teacher self-efficacy, in particular, has been linked to rates of exclusion, as it appears that lower self-efficacy in teachers can lead to less confidence in behaviour management and instruction which can then mean that teachers rely on harsher forms of discipline (e.g., Gibbs & Powell., 2012; Yada et al., 2022). Self-efficacy was first coined by Bandura (1977, p.3) as the "belief in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of actions required to produce given attainments". When it comes to teacher self-efficacy, this refers to the belief that a teacher can affect student outcomes (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). There are three dimensions that are measured when it comes to teacher self-efficacy: self-efficacy in classroom management efficacy, instructional strategies, and student engagement. A study by Tournaki and Podell (2005) found that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy were more likely to have higher expectations for students, and students who had higher levels of attainment. Their study also suggested that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy were more likely to engage in inclusive teaching and adapt practices to the needs of their students.

Similarly, Sorlie and Torsheim (2011) surveyed 1,100 teachers in 48 Norwegian elementary schools examining the relationships between teachers' collective self-efficacy and pupils' problem behaviours in schools. Results showed that a positive change in the schools' average levels of collective efficacy predicted reductions in teacher-reported problem behaviour in their students. Increased levels of teacher-reported problem behaviour was also predicted by a reduction in collective self-efficacy. Likewise, Gibbs and Powell (2012) examined individual and collective self-efficacy in a sample of 197 teachers from 31 primary and nursery schools in the Northeast of England. They found that higher levels of collective

self-efficacy, which generally links to a supportive school culture predicted lower levels of exclusion.

Hosford and O'Sullivan (2015) also looked at the links between school climate, teachers' efficacy for inclusion and their behaviour management. The study found strong relationships with teachers' perceptions of their school climate and higher levels of efficacy for teaching inclusively. Interestingly, the study also asked teachers to rate their confidence in managing commonly experienced challenging behaviours in classrooms. The findings also showed a link between teachers' levels of efficacy for teaching inclusion and their confidence in managing challenging behaviour, with high levels of efficacy for teaching inclusively linked to higher levels of confidence for managing behaviour. Wilson et al. (2020) examined teachers' mastery experiences, perceptions of the school environment, self-efficacy and reported inclusive teaching in a sample of 148 Scottish primary school teachers. Results showed that school environment (collective efficacy and school climate), and mastery experiences were important in predicting teachers' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy also acted as a mediator between teachers' perceptions of the school climate and reported inclusive behaviour. Kiel et al. (2020) surveyed 471 German teachers on their perceptions of self-efficacy and the implementation of inclusive education. Results showed that teachers with the most positive self-efficacy had the most positive attitudes with regards to the implementation of inclusion. Alasmari et al. (2021) examined the link between teachers' use of proactive and reactive classroom management strategies, classroom environment and self-efficacy. Findings showed a link between teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and use of proactive management strategies.

The studies reviewed so far show a link between self-efficacy and different aspects of inclusive teaching practices, including reactive and proactive behaviour management and use of exclusions. However, it is not clear from the literature what the specific relationship is between attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy and how these two constructs interact to

influence teacher practice. This was addressed in a recent study by Wilson et al. (2022) who examined mainstream schoolteachers' explicit and implicit attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, and intentions towards children with intellectual disability and their relationship to inclusive teaching. Results showed that self-efficacy predicted reported inclusive behaviour and mediated the relationship between explicit attitudes and reported behaviour. Additionally, Yada et al. (2022) carried out a meta-analysis of 43 studies examining the relationship between teacher self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusion. Results showed an average significant positive relationship between the two variables. It appears that self-efficacy is an important construct when it comes to understanding both teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and actual classroom practice. It is frequently cited as both a predictor and a mediator or moderator of both attitudes and practice. Given the relevance of self-efficacy in the literature, this is an important construct to include as part of this present study to more fully understand its contribution to attitudes and reported teaching practices.

Teacher stress

There is a strong relationship between student misbehaviour and teacher stress (e.g., Hastings & Bham, 2003). Teachers' levels of stress also appear to have a moderating effect on attitudes, self-efficacy and practices (e.g., Aloe et al., 2013; Clunies-Ross et al., 2008; Monsen et al., 2014; Yada et al, 2022). For example, Clunies-Ross et al. (2008) found that teachers' reactive behaviour management strategies had a significant relationship with elevated teacher stress. Monsen et al. (2014) looked at the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, levels of stress, perceived support and the classroom learning environment. Findings showed that teachers who had more positive attitudes towards inclusion were more likely to have classroom environments with greater levels of satisfaction and cohesiveness and lower levels of friction, competitiveness, and difficulty.

Galaterou and Antoniou (2017) investigated attitudes towards inclusive education among 208 primary and secondary school teachers in Greece. Findings showed that teachers' attitudes were correlated with occupational stress in that less positive attitudes towards inclusive education were associated with increased levels of stress.

Aloe et al. (2013) carried out a meta-analysis of studies examining the link between teacher burnout and the different dimensions of teacher self-efficacy (self-efficacy in classroom management, instructional strategies and student engagement) classroom management self-efficacy. Results showed a significant relationship between classroom management self-efficacy and three dimensions of burnout, suggesting that teachers with positive classroom management skills are less likely to experience burnout. While classroom management self-efficacy is linked to lower rates of stress-induced burnout, there is conflicting findings on the other areas of teacher self-efficacy and teacher burnout. Some studies also report a link between higher levels of student engagement self-efficacy and higher levels of burnout (e.g, Bümen, 2010; Holmstrom et al., 2023).

Levels of support

Levels of support is another factor that appears to be linked to teacher attitudes and practices. Avramidis and Norwich (2002) looked at factors within schools that support inclusive attitudes. Their study found that increased resources and support in schools lead to increased positive attitudes towards inclusion. Stanforth and Rose (2018) also found that support for teachers to enhance their knowledge of students displaying challenging behaviour in order to understand and empathise with them, could lead to more inclusive teaching practice and reduce exclusions.

Another study by Weber and Greiner (2019) examined the development of pre-service teachers' self-efficacy beliefs and attitudes towards inclusive education through first teaching experiences. The study also looked at burnout-related variables (job-related satisfaction and

exhaustion and perceived competence support). Results showed a small but significant positive relationship between more supportive experiences during the placement and self-efficacy and attitudes. The teachers' perceived support from university supervisors was also a significant predictor of attitudes towards inclusive education. These studies suggest that the levels of support available for teachers can play a significant role in how they feel about teaching students with special educational needs and is therefore an important to consider when it comes to understanding what influences the development of an inclusive ethos.

Teacher characteristics

Characteristics of teachers themselves (like demographics and years of experience) and the schools they teach in (e.g., student profiles and levels of poverty in the school area) also appear to play a role in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, their self-efficacy, and their teaching practices. Many studies suggest also differences in gender when it comes to inclusive education. Female teacher trainees are reported to be more tolerant in implementing inclusive education (Avramidis et al., 2000, Ellins & Porter, 2005). There is also some evidence of gender differences in teachers' classroom management and attitudes towards inclusion. Klassen and Chiu (2010) in their survey of 1,430 teachers found higher levels of self-efficacy in classroom management among male teachers. Klassen and Chiu (2010) also reported that female teachers had greater workload stress and greater classroom stress from student behaviours, and lower classroom management self-efficacy.

MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) found that teachers who had attended more in-service training (INSET) sessions held more positive feelings towards including children with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) but interestingly, teachers with more experience were less willing to work with children with SEBD. Wilson et al. (2020) also demonstrated that mastery experiences were important in predicting teachers' self-efficacy. A recent study by Gülsün et al. (2023) showed that years of teaching experience significantly

predicted teachers' self-efficacy in behaviour management in a positive direction while also significantly predicting teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in a negative direction. The study also found that the number of students with attention or behavioural problems reported by teachers in their class had a negative significant effect on self-efficacy in behaviour management. Given the influence of some of these characteristics, this will also be an interesting area to explore to understand how differences in teacher demographics, and the schools they teach in lead to any differences in attitudes, self-efficacy, and teaching practices.

Conceptual Framework: Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to integrate research on Attitudes, Self-Efficacy, Behaviour Management Practices, Exclusions and the role of Stress and Support

The literature discussed thus far shows a number of relationships between the constructs of interest in this study. There are clear links between attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, behaviour management and exclusions. Levels of stress and the support available in school have also been highlighted as influencing both teacher attitudes as well as specific behaviour management practices like the use of either proactive or reactive approaches. However, most of the literature reviewed so far has looked at one or two of these factors but very few have examined the relationships between all of them.

A small number of studies have looked at attitudes towards inclusion as well as classroom practice and other factors like support and stress. For example, Monsen et al. (2014) surveyed teachers in England on their attitudes towards inclusion, classroom learning environment, support, and stress. The study also surveyed 2514 students on their perceptions of the classroom learning environment only. Findings of the study showed that teacher attitudes towards inclusion had a significant impact on classroom learning environments and teachers' perceptions of available support. Teachers with more positive attitudes towards inclusion were also reported by their students to have classroom environments with greater levels of satisfaction and cohesiveness and lower levels of friction, competitiveness, and difficulty.

These findings show support for links between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, perceived support and classroom environment, however the study did not examine the role of teacher self-efficacy, behaviour management or use of exclusions.

Malak et al. (2017) examined the relationships between primary school teachers' attitudes, efficacy beliefs, perceived support, and their intentions to teach students who display inappropriate behaviour in regular classrooms. A total of 1090 teachers in one educational region of Bangladesh were surveyed. Results showed that attitudes, efficacy beliefs and perceived support were significant predictors of teachers' behavioural intentions to teach students who exhibit inappropriate behaviour. However, this study solely measures teachers' intentions to teach and did not look at teachers' actual teaching practice, such as the use of different types of behaviour management or use of exclusions. Sokmen and Kilic (2019) explored the relationship between primary school teachers' sense of self-efficacy, autonomy, job satisfaction, teacher engagement, and burnout variables. The study found that higher teaching self-efficacy significantly predicted teacher higher engagement, job satisfaction, and autonomy while lower self-efficacy significantly predicted burnout. These findings show the links between self-efficacy and burnout but do not examine how these constructs may translate to differences in teaching practices.

Wilson et al. (2020) examined teachers' mastery experiences, perceptions of the school environment, self-efficacy, and reported inclusive teaching. Regression analyses showed that school environment (collective efficacy and school climate), and mastery experiences were significant predictors of teachers' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy also acted as a mediator between teachers' perceptions of the school climate and reported inclusive behaviour. Again, these findings show the link between self-efficacy and teachers' inclusive behaviour but do not examine more specific aspects of teachers' behaviour management and the use of exclusions. Schwab and Alnahdi (2020) also examined the links between teachers' attitudes towards

inclusive education, self-efficacy, and teaching practices among 221 Austrian teachers. Results showed that teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy were associated with inclusive teaching practices; and self-efficacy predicted teachers' use of inclusive teaching practices.

Linked to the constructs discussed, Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) provides a useful framework for explaining and predicting human behaviour and has been used in a number of studies to predict teaching behaviour. Ajzen's (1991) theory proposes that our intention to engage in a certain behaviour is linked to three factors: attitudes, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control. Perceived behavioural control is closely related to Bandura's (1997) definition of self-efficacy (Ajzen, 1991). Several studies have used TPB as a framework to understand and predict teachers' intentions and behaviours concerning inclusive teaching practice (e.g., Gülsün et al., 2023; Opoku et al., 2021a; Yan & Sin, 2014). These previous studies have used the constructs of attitudes towards inclusion and teacher self-efficacy to measure the attitudes and perceived behavioural control aspects of TPB (e.g., Emmers et al., 2020; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Schwab et al., 2022a; Sharma et al., 2018). However, subjective norm has been measured in a number of different ways: some have interpreted subjective norm as perceived school support (e.g., Ahmmed et al., 2014; Opoku et al., 2021b) whereas other studies have used principals' expectations of teachers (Kuyini & Desai, 2007). A study by Gülsün et al. (2023) also made used of the TPB. Results from this study found that attitudes towards inclusive education predicted teacher self-efficacy in managing behaviour, and collective efficacy in student discipline which, in turn, predicted teachers' behaviour of teaching appropriate behaviours to their students.

While it is interesting to see studies reporting a clear link between attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, and different elements of teaching, no study has looked at how attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy predict different aspects of teachers' behaviour management (specifically proactive or reactive strategies) and their use of exclusions. Given

the variation in exclusion levels between schools, this is an area worth exploring to understand how much differences in teachers' attitude and belief systems drive reactive and exclusionary behaviour management approaches.

Conclusion

The literature clearly shows that already vulnerable children who are excluded from school have poor outcomes. This group of children often have multiple vulnerabilities, which can be exacerbated by a lack of understanding, punitive behaviour policies, and exclusionary approaches in schools. Additionally, recent statistics show that children's mental health has worsened over the last five years and this has been exacerbated by the Covid19 lockdowns and a reduction in services and support (Newlove-Delgado et al., 2021). Schools are also under increasing pressure to support children with these additional needs whilst maintaining high levels of academic success, which creates incredible pressure on teachers. Emphasising the risks of this pressurised environment, the negative effects of a reactive and punitive approach to behaviour management, as well as the benefits of proactive approaches and an inclusive ethos in schools is therefore a key part in fostering more positive, happy, and emotionally healthy schools. Although there is a wealth of literature examining some of the links between attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, teaching practices, and exclusion, to the best of the author's knowledge, research is yet to explore the differential effects of these constructs and the exact links between attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, specific teaching practices (e.g. proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies) and subsequent use of exclusion. It is also unclear how much a moderating role stress and levels of support play and the influence of teacher characteristics.

Given the trend in rising levels of exclusion, and the detrimental effect this can have on children's outcomes, it is important to understand what can be done to foster more inclusive ethe in schools and reduce the levels of exclusions. The focus of this research will therefore be

to survey teachers to understand their attitudes towards inclusion, their self-efficacy, their use of proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies, and levels of exclusions in their schools. The moderating effect of stress and perceived support will also be tested. The study will also examine whether differences in teacher characteristics (gender, years of experience, primary/secondary level and deprivation in the school's location) lead to differences in teachers' attitudes, behaviour management and use of exclusions. The study aims to examine the relationships between all these constructs to better understand how teacher level and school ethos factors can lead seemingly similar schools to have significantly different practices when it comes to inclusion and levels of exclusion. As stated previously, understanding this is essential in supporting schools to adopt inclusive practices and reduce exclusions, which have been shown to have a substantially negative impact on the most vulnerable students.

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Chapter 2: Empirical Paper

Abstract

Levels of exclusions in England (permanent and fixed term) have increased significantly over the last 10 years (Department for Education, 2023). Given the levels of vulnerability and poor outcomes among children who are excluded (Department for Education, 2023), it is essential that we understand factors that lead to or reduce exclusions. There are many factors that contribute to fostering an inclusive school ethos. Leadership, school policies, training, pupil characteristics and relationships with the community are among some of the school level factors that contribute (Andrews et al., 2021; Avramidis et al., 2002; Keon, 2020; Vince, 2021). Teacher-level factors like workload, support, stress, skills and knowledge, attitudes, confidence and teaching practices are all associated with an inclusive ethos (Andrews et al., 2021; Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Keon, 2020; Vince, 2021). Specifically, teacher attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy and behaviour management have been highlighted in the literature as factors that contribute to this inclusive ethos and also appear to have an effect on teachers' willingness to exclude (Andrews et al., 2021; Hatton, 2013; Keon, 2020; Spink, 2011; Warin, 2017).

However, there has been limited research looking specifically at the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy and how this might translate to differing levels of behaviour management practices that then impact on a teacher's and school's willingness to exclude. Guided by the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, 1991) and the findings from relevant empirical literature, this study collected data on UK teacher attitudes, beliefs, and practices via an online survey (N=104). Path analysis showed that teachers' positive attitudes towards inclusion significantly predicted higher rates of self-efficacy which, in turn, predicted proactive behaviour management and less use of exclusionary behaviour management strategies. This adds to our knowledge of what teacher-level factors lead to an

inclusive ethos, exemplified in this study by a higher use of proactive behaviour management strategies and lower levels of exclusions. Regression analysis also showed that teachers' levels of stress moderated the relationship between teachers' reactive behaviour management and use of exclusionary strategies in that higher levels of stress reduced the magnitude of the effect of reactive behaviour management on teachers' use of exclusionary strategies. In addition, MANOVA analyses revealed significant differences in behaviour management strategies depending on certain characteristics, with secondary teachers, males and those teaching in an area high in deprivation more likely to use reactive behaviour management and exclusionary strategies. This is the first study that has linked attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy to the use of exclusions among teachers, adding to our knowledge of how differences in teacher attitudes, beliefs and practices are linked to levels of exclusions in schools. These findings bring us closer to understanding the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, teaching practices, and use of exclusions. Engaging with teacher attitude and belief systems is an important step in fostering inclusive schools and reducing the use of exclusions.

Literature review

Background

Children who are excluded have significantly worse negative longer-term outcomes than children who are not excluded (Madia et al., 2022; Parsons & Castle, 1998). Children who are excluded are also more likely to come from Black, Minority and Ethnic backgrounds, be disadvantaged, be on the at-risk register, or have a special educational need (Black, 2022; Joseph, 2020; Parsons, 2009; Timpson, 2019). Exclusion as a general term refers to children who, for whatever reason, are not fully accessing or participating in their education – this could be for a number of reasons (Black, 2022). Exclusions as a disciplinary measure refers to children being formally removed from the school setting for a set number of days (also referred to as a suspension or fixed term exclusion) or permanently removed from the school (referred to as a permanent exclusion) (Timpson, 2019).

There are other less obvious forms of exclusion where a student may still be in school but attends a separate classroom or space (often called internal exclusion or isolation) (Barker et al., 2010; Gazeley, 2015; Glass, 2013; Golding, 2021). Managed moves also occur when a student is at risk of exclusion, but a parent, pupil and school agree to a new school placement to avoid an official permanent exclusion (Messeter et al., 2018). Some studies highlight that more 'hidden' forms of exclusions like internal exclusion and use of managed moves make it hard to estimate the true numbers of children who are being excluded in some shape or form (Power & Taylor, 2020). Permanent exclusion can be seen as the most extreme form of discipline in response to student behaviour and it is associated with the most negative outcomes for children (Timpson, 2019). This study asked teachers about their use of exclusionary strategies such as the use of detentions, removals from lessons, internal exclusion, fixed term exclusion and the number of permanent exclusions at their school.

Exclusions in England have been increasing since 2010, with some decreases over the years of the Covid19 lockdowns. Latest statistical releases from the Department of Education showed that exclusions are increasing again. There were 6,495 permanent exclusions in 2021/2022, a significant increase of 3,938 on the previous year and 578.280 suspensions, up from 352,454 compared to 2020/2021. There has also been a return to focus on attainment and attendance following Covid19 lockdowns (Department for Education, 2023), while at the same time, vulnerable groups of children were disproportionately negatively affected by school closures during lockdown, both in terms of educational attainment but also emotional health (Skipp et al., 2021).

This sets the scene for the context of rising exclusions where children who are finding it difficult to cope, often because of an underlying special educational need or factors related to their home lives, are excluded because a pressurised system with highly stressed staff often resort to more punitive measures to control disruptive behaviour (e.g., Partridge et al., 2020). This makes it easier for teachers to get through lessons, cover the curriculum and support those who are not disruptive, but the cost of this are the rising numbers of children who are deemed 'unsuitable' for a mainstream school (Partridge et al., 2020). As discussed, the high level of exclusions in England is a concern not least because of the increased likelihood of children having worse educational, economic, and social outcomes (Timpson, 2019) but also because it is in direct opposition to the ideal of inclusive education, where children, regardless of their needs are educated together.

The use of exclusion is also a question of social justice given the disproportionate impact on those from disadvantaged and marginalised backgrounds. There are a number of factors linked to high rates of exclusion. These include child and family levels factors (Cole et al., 2019) as well as school and teacher level factors (Timpson, 2019; Trotman et al., 2015). There have been a large number of studies which look at the characteristics of children who

are excluded and the causes given by schools. There is less known in the literature, however, as to what factors drive different behaviour policies and use of exclusions at the school level (e.g., Gibbs & Powell, 2012; Hatton, 2013; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013). Additionally, there is also a dearth of research looking at how an inclusive ethos is developed in a school, and the role that factors like teachers' attitudes, beliefs and teaching practices play in underpinning this (Ainscow, 2020; Ainscow & Sandhill, 2010; Artiles et al., 2006).

Understanding how to achieve a more inclusive school that makes less use of exclusionary behaviour management, and permanently excludes less frequently, is key to improving outcomes for some of our most marginalised groups of children. Inclusive education is a fundamental aspect in supporting all children to feel engaged and supported in schools (Kefallinou et al., 2020). Some studies have pointed to differences in school culture, ethos, attitudes and teaching practices driving a school's willingness to exclude and therefore explaining these variations across schools (e.g., Hatton, 2013; Warin, 2017).

Particularly for children with persistent disruptive behaviour (the most common reasons cited for an exclusion), schools that have more inclusive policies appear to distinguish between a more 'individualising' model, where the cause of challenging behaviour is viewed as lying within the individual, and a 'contextualising' model, where the cause of the challenging behaviour is viewed as being driven by an individual's environment (Stanforth & Rose, 2018). Hatton (2013) in a study comparing high excluding schools and low excluding schools found that key elements of a more inclusive school were clear and consistent behaviour management strategies and policies, an emphasis on using preventative behaviour management strategies, policies implemented at a whole school level, staff using rewards more frequently than sanctions and a sense of shared responsibility for the behaviour of all pupils within the school community.

Past research has also highlighted how schools with policies emphasising positive student-teacher relationships have lower rates of exclusions (Gazeley et al., 2015; Malmqvist, 2016; Stanforth & Rose, 2018). There are many studies that also cite the importance of leadership and collective efficacy in a school as being important for an inclusive ethos (Gibbs & Powell, 2012). However, while a school policy lays out what 'should' happen in a school, it is classroom teachers who implement these, and make everyday decisions about what strategies and practices to use. What is less clear in the literature is how teacher-levels factors (like attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy) interact within the school to make it more or less likely that teachers will employ different behaviour management strategies and therefore make more or less use of exclusions. Some studies attempting to unpick teacher level factors and attributes have looked at attitudes, beliefs, and practices to understand how these affect inclusion and willingness to exclude.

Attitudes towards inclusion

A study by Stanforth and Rose (2018) found that teachers showed a greater willingness to change teaching practice and take a more sympathetic view of students' behaviour when they perceived that there were mitigating reasons from students' home lives. Similarly Kinsella (2020) found that schools who changed to having more inclusive atmospheres also had a change in attitudes where the wider context leading to challenging behaviour was also considered.

Stanbridge and Mercer (2019) looked at the language used in schools to describe children's behaviour. Findings showed that different language around behaviour can influence the responses of teaching staff, suggesting that successful inclusive practice should view children through a 'situational perspective' which would allow schools to take a perspective that is more likely to lead to an equality-based approach. This links to the current study as it shows that how teachers' view children's difficulties and whether they perceive children's

behaviour as an additional need or not can lead to different teaching responses. In terms of the link between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and different teaching practices, research findings suggest that attitudes towards inclusion are associated with differences in teaching – specifically how teachers choose to manage behaviour (e.g., Gibbs & Gardiner, 2008; Gibbs & Powell, 2012; Jull, 2008; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Miller et al., 2002; Munn et al., 2000; Stanovich & Jordan, 2015).

One study by Munn et al. (2000) which examined factors linked to the use of exclusions found that a key focus in reducing exclusions is to understand and alter the school's values and beliefs that underpin practices. This study also explored school ethos and its link to exclusions by looking at the perceptions of school staff, parents, pupils, and education professionals. The study found that lower excluding schools placed more value on the importance of personal and social development. This links to the current study in that schools with more understanding perspectives on behaviour (which is linked to positive attitudes) are less likely to exclude.

Another study by Harris et al. (2006) explored schools' constructs and understanding of pupils with challenging behaviour. Findings suggested that narratives that reduce stigma around a student's past behaviour is linked to reducing exclusions. Similar to this, Kuyini and Desai (2007) looked at principals' and teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. Findings showed that attitudes towards and knowledge of inclusion predicted effective teaching. Jull (2008) found that 'pathologising' children's behaviour is often linked to a more punitive response in schools. Gibbs and Gardiner (2008) looked at teachers' attributions for misbehaviour and found a link between the attributions teachers make for difficult behaviour and how that behaviour is managed, for example, if attributions place the causes of behaviour as the child's responsibility, behaviour management can be more punitive.

Similarly, Spink (2011) looked at the effects of school ethos on exclusion rates by examining differences in school ethos between high excluding schools and low excluding

schools. Findings suggested that differences in school staff's beliefs about inclusion and exclusion appeared to be linked to differences in rates of permanent exclusion. Monsen et al. (2014) found that positive attitudes towards inclusion among teachers was linked to classroom environments with greater levels of satisfaction and cohesiveness and lower levels of friction, competitiveness, and difficulty. Similarly, Stanovich and Jordan (2015) examined 'interventionist beliefs' (all students benefit from suitable teaching) and 'pathognomonic beliefs' (attributing difficulties to a deficit within the child) among teachers. Findings showed that teachers with 'pathognomonic beliefs' were less likely to use inclusive practices in their teaching. These studies show how teachers' attitudes and beliefs can lead to differences in their teaching practice, often in how they choose to manage behaviour. This can then have an impact on the atmosphere of the classroom and school. What is less clear from the research reviewed so far is what exact teaching practices are impacted on and how this may lead to less or greater use of exclusion. It is also unclear why attitudes towards inclusion may lead to differences in behaviour management, and the mechanism for this. It is important to understand more specifically how teachers' attitudes and beliefs can influence their behaviour management, and how this is linked to the use of exclusions.

Teacher self-efficacy

From the literature, teachers' attitudes towards inclusion clearly play a role in whether a school is more inclusive and makes less use of exclusions. Many studies have also looked at the mechanism by which attitudes can lead to differences in practice. Some of this literature has focussed on teacher self-efficacy as a key construct that influences differences in teaching practices. Originating from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), self-efficacy refers to a person's confidence and belief in their ability to perform a given behaviour (Bandura 1992, 1993, 1994, 1997). Self-efficacy for teachers is therefore a belief relating to their perceptions of how well they can carry out various roles and tasks within teaching – e.g. academic

instruction and creating a positive learning environment (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). There are three dimensions that are measured when it comes to teacher self-efficacy: self-efficacy in classroom management efficacy, instructional strategies, and student engagement (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001).

Teachers' self-efficacy is linked to differences in teaching practice, as well as having links to inclusive practices. For example, Tournaki and Podell (2005) showed that teachers who had higher levels of self-efficacy also had greater expectations of students and higher levels of attainment. Findings also suggested that higher levels of teacher self-efficacy were linked to inclusive teaching practices. Similarly, Sorlie and Torsheim (2011) surveyed 1,100 teachers in Norway and found that higher levels of school collective efficacy was linked to lower levels of challenging behaviour in students. A study by Gibbs and Powell (2012) also found that individual and collective self-efficacy predicted lower levels of exclusion. Similar to this finding, Wilson et al. (2020) showed that school environment (collective efficacy and school climate), and mastery experiences predicted teachers' self-efficacy which then acted as a mediator predicting teacher reported inclusive behaviour.

Kiel et al. (2020) in a study exploring self-efficacy and inclusive teaching practices among 471 German teachers found that teachers with high levels of self-efficacy had more positive attitudes towards inclusion. Teacher self-efficacy has also been linked to behaviour management strategies. For example, Alasmari et al. (2021) looked at teachers' use of proactive and reactive classroom management strategies, classroom environment and self-efficacy among a sample of 80 Saudi teachers. Findings showed that higher teacher self-efficacy beliefs predicted the use of proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies. The study also found that teachers perceived proactive behaviour management strategies to be more effective than reactive behaviour management strategies. This link is relevant as it shows that teacher self-efficacy is linked to the use of behaviour management strategies.

Similarly, Woodcock et al. (2022) carried out semi-structured interviews with teachers scoring high in self-efficacy and low in self-efficacy to compare differences in attitudes towards inclusion and teaching practices. Their study found that teachers who were high in efficacy are more likely to use more mixed and flexible approaches in their teaching, for example, mixed groupings of students and 'cooperative learning experiences intended to be relevant, interesting, and to foster the involvement of all students'. In contrast, teachers scoring low in self-efficacy had a stronger focus on managing behaviour and a greater propensity to categorise students according to their differences. These teachers also tended to focus on children's ability levels, often using grouping or differentiated tasks based on their perceived ability of students. Wilson et al. (2022) also examined teachers' explicit and implicit attitudes, self-efficacy and intentions towards children with intellectual disability and their relationship to inclusive teaching. Findings showed that self-efficacy predicted teachers' reported inclusive behaviour and also mediated the relationship between teachers' explicit attitudes and teaching practices. This link has also been shown in a 2022 meta-analysis by Yada et al. (2022). This meta-analysis found significant positive relationships between teachers' attitudes toward inclusion and teacher self-efficacy. From the research, self-efficacy appears to be an important factor linked both to teachers' attitudes towards inclusion as well as differences in teaching practices, including behaviour management.

Behaviour management

Many studies have also explored the use of harsher more punitive and reactive approaches to behaviour management. As mentioned above, more punitive behaviour management strategies are linked to higher rates of exclusion (Gerlinger et al., 2021; Krezmien et al., 2014; Vincent & Tobin, 2011). Reactive strategies are often an immediate reaction to disruptive behaviour whereas proactive strategies are employed to prevent disruptive behaviour occurring. Reactive strategies tend to be more punitive (giving a 'punishment' or

'consequence' like removing a child from a lesson) and proactive strategies may involve building relationships with students, giving praise and rewards and establishing class rules, routines and expectations (Little et al., 2002; Safran & Oswald, 2003). The literature on such strategies generally show that proactive strategies appear to enhance the classroom environment and are linked to improved learning and on-task behaviour (Arthur et al., 2003; Beaman, 2006).

A study by Clunies-Ross et al. (2008) looked at whether teachers' use of proactive and reactive strategies were linked to teacher stress and student behaviour. Findings showed that higher reported use of reactive strategies significantly predicted elevated teacher stress and decreased student on-task behaviour. Nash et al. (2015) also found that for students who have additional needs, behaviour management at school is more effective when it involves a nurturing and collaborative approach.

Levels of stress and support

Levels of stress and burnout are also significant factors to consider when exploring any aspect of teacher attitudes, beliefs, and practices as both have been highlighted in a number of studies as being significant drivers of these constructs. For example, many studies show a link between students' challenging behaviour and teacher stress (e.g., Hastings & Bham, 2003). Other studies suggest that teachers' levels of stress has a moderating effect on attitudes and practices (e.g., Aloe et al., 2013; Clunies-Ross et al., 2008; Monsen et al., 2014). Clunies-Ross et al. (2008) also found that teachers' use of reactive management strategies was linked to elevated teacher stress.

Aloe et al. (2013) carried out a meta-analysis looking at the link between teacher burnout and classroom management. Results showed a significant relationship between classroom management self-efficacy and teacher burnout suggesting that teachers with higher levels of classroom management self-efficacy are less likely to experience burnout. Galaterou

and Antoniou (2017) also looked at teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education and occupational stress levels. Results suggested that less positive attitudes towards inclusive education were associated with increased levels of stress. Teachers' perceptions of the support they receive around inclusion and behaviour management also plays an important role. To explore this, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) looked at factors within schools that are linked to inclusive attitudes. Their study found that increased resources and support in schools was linked to more positive attitudes towards inclusion. Similarly, Stanforth and Rose (2018) found that support and training for teachers was linked to more inclusive teaching practices and reduced levels of exclusions.

Characteristics of teachers and schools

There also certain characteristics of teachers and the students they teach that appear to influence attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy and behaviour management. Many studies have highlighted that student behaviour is more likely to be challenging at secondary or high school level (Aloe et al., 2014; Nickerson & Martens, 2008). Additionally, in England, exclusion rates are highest in Key Stage 3 and age 14 is the most common age to be permanently excluded (Department for Education, 2023). There is also evidence to suggest differences in gender when it comes to inclusive education. Female teacher trainees are reported to be more tolerant in implementing inclusive education (Avramidis, et al., 2000, Ellins & Porter, 2005). There is also some evidence of gender differences in teachers' classroom management and attitudes towards inclusion. Klassen and Chiu (2010) for example, found higher levels of self-efficacy in classroom management among male teachers. Their survey of 1,430 teachers reported that female teachers had greater workload stress, greater classroom stress from student behaviours, and lower classroom management self-efficacy. MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) found that teachers who had attended more in-service training (INSET) sessions held more positive feelings towards including children with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties (SEBD)

but interestingly, teachers with more experience were less willing to work with children with SEBD. Wilson et al. (2020) also demonstrated that mastery experiences were linked to teachers having higher levels of self-efficacy. This suggests that teachers who have more years of experience, and therefore more opportunities to develop mastery may have higher levels of self-efficacy. It also highlights the importance of training to give teachers experiences of mastery to improve self-efficacy, while at the same time challenging views and beliefs around inclusion.

A recent study by Gülsün et al. (2023) showed that years of teaching experience significantly predicted teachers' self-efficacy in behaviour management in a positive direction while also significantly predicting teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in a negative direction. The study also found that the number of students with attention or behavioural problems reported by teachers in their class had a negative significant effect on self-efficacy in behaviour management.

Integrating research on Attitudes, Self-Efficacy, Behaviour Management Practices, Exclusions and the role of Stress and Support

It is clear that there are established relationships between attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, behaviour management and levels of exclusion. However, no single study has looked at all four variables. Monsen et al. (2014) surveyed teachers in England on their attitudes to inclusion, classroom learning environment, support, and stress and showed that teacher attitudes towards inclusion had a significant impact on classroom learning environments and teachers' perceptions of available support. Similarly, Malak et al. (2017) found that teachers' attitudes, efficacy beliefs and perceived support were significant predictors of teachers' behavioural intentions to teach students who exhibit inappropriate behaviour. Another study by Schwab and Alnahdi (2020) also looked at teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education, self-efficacy and teaching practices. Findings showed that teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy were

linked to the use of inclusive teaching practices. Inclusive teaching practices is a complex combination of several teaching approaches with two specific features often cited as the most common: individualisation (e.g., taking students' successes, interests and feelings into account) and the use of differentiation (Schwab and Alnahdi, 2020).

None of these studies have looked specifically at the links between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, specific teaching practices like proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies, and the subsequent use of exclusion. While there have been some studies looking at what predicts teachers' behaviour when it comes to inclusive practice, no study has looked specifically at what factors make it more likely that a teacher will make use of exclusionary strategies. Understanding the specific factors in a school that lead to use of exclusions is important not only to foster more inclusive schools, but also to reduce the harmful negative effects associated with exclusion (e.g., Munn et al, 2000; Pirrie et al, 2017). To fill this gap, this research aims to understand how teachers' attitudes towards inclusion affects different beliefs and practices within teaching (measured through teacher self-efficacy), how this may affect the use of proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies and whether this is linked to the use of exclusions.

Specifically, the study aims to use Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) as a framework for explaining and predicting teachers' behaviour when it comes to exclusionary strategies. The TPB provides a useful model when thinking about how to unpick the factors leading to the use of exclusions. Many studies looking at teacher practice have also used the TPB to examine the links between teacher attitudes, self-efficacy, and different aspects of teaching practice (e.g., Gülsün et al., 2023; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Schüle et al., 2016). Research into predictions of specific behaviours propose that attitudes on their own are not useful for predicting behaviours (Ajzen, 1982; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). This is why it is useful to use the TPB to split out the constructs of attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy,

and behaviour management as all appear to play a role in predicting the use of exclusionary behaviour. A unique aspect of this study is looking at different aspects of teachers' behaviour management and use of exclusionary strategies, and how this can be predicted by attitudes and self-efficacy. This study will explore whether attitudes towards inclusion predict self-efficacy, whether this predicts proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies and whether these predict exclusionary strategies. Given the importance of factors like levels of stress and perceptions of support, these constructs will also be included to understand if they act as moderators affecting the relationship between attitudes, self-efficacy, behaviour management and use of exclusions. Teacher characteristics including school stage, gender, years of experience, and levels of deprivation in the school location, will also be examined to understand if they lead to any differences in teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and practices. It is essential to unpick the drivers behind use of reactive and punitive behaviour management and use of exclusions, particularly when these practices are linked to significantly negative outcomes for our most vulnerable students. This research attempts to further elucidate the teacher level factors that can either contribute to the use of exclusions or make it less likely that this sanction will be used. Hopefully, this will contribute to our knowledge of how to develop a more inclusive ethos in schools.

To conclude, as discussed, to address the gap in the literature and to further understand how teacher-level characteristics can lead to differences in the use of exclusions, the main research question in this study is:

- How are teachers' attitudes linked to feelings of self-efficacy and how does this, in turn, affect behavioural management strategies and the subsequent use of exclusions? (RQ1)

The sub-questions in the research are:

- Do levels of stress and levels of support moderate any of the relationships between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, behaviour management strategies, and use of exclusions? (RQ2)
- Do certain characteristics of teachers including school stage, gender, years of experience, and school location lead to differences in their attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, behaviour management, and use of exclusions? (RQ3)

Methodology

Methodological paradigm

Ontology and epistemology refer to the underlying philosophical beliefs of the researcher: ontology concerns the assumptions that we make about the nature of the world and epistemology refers to our understanding of knowledge, what can be known and how (Al-Saadi, 2014; Snape & Spencer, 2003). Both these beliefs impact on methodological decisions taken by the researcher.

This research was carried out from a critical realist perspective. Critical Realism is an epistemological position that sits between realism (where we assume the world consists of real structures and rules that can be studied) and relativism (where we assume that the world does not fall neatly into any structure or conform to generalisable rules) (Archer et al., 1998; Bergin et al., 2008; Ryba et al., 2020). Critical realism believes that a reality exists, but that each of us understand and construct this differently (Danermark et al., 2002; Patomäki, 2020). Differentiation is an important concept in critical realism as it refers to the belief that we cannot observe reality directly but that we can observe it through events which are an actualisation of reality (Archer et al., 2016; Bergin et al., 2008; Ryba et al., 2020).

Ontology concerns the assumptions that we make about the nature of the world, existence, and reality (Al-Saadi, 2014; Snape & Spencer, 2003). A critical realist perspective on ontology proposes that every action has an outcome and that this is influenced by different contexts (Burnett, 2007). Critical realists' views on epistemology argue that knowledge can change according to different contexts, and that reality is influenced by social structures (Easton, 2010). Therefore, research carried out from a critical realist perspective aims to look at underlying factors that may influence a research question and how these mechanisms interplay to create the phenomena. This position sits well with this current research study which acknowledges that reality differs according to different contexts and is influenced by

different social structures. This study therefore examines concepts like teacher attitudes, beliefs, and practice to understand the main research question of what factors lead to teachers using exclusionary strategies.

Adopting a critical realist perspective means that this study aims to examine the many interdependent relationships between factors that influence exclusionary practices in schools. This research used a quantitative research paradigm to guide the design and analysis. Using a quantitative research design fits with the critical realist belief of observing reality indirectly to allow for generalisation of social structures (Scott, 2010; Shaw et al., 2019). The reality of exclusion and different school contexts may be different for each teacher responding to this study, but this reality will be measured by tapping into teachers' attitudes, beliefs and behaviour management practices. Therefore, a quantitative approach using an online survey was chosen as it fits with the researchers' view of reality and knowledge and was best placed to answer the main research questions arising from the literature review: what factors (e.g., attitudes, self-efficacy, behaviour management strategies) lead to teachers using exclusionary strategies and how are these affected by levels of perceived stress and support. This research also accounts for different social structures by exploring school and teacher level differences in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, behaviour management and use of exclusionary strategies.

Lawani (2020) also argues that when trying unpick relationships within social phenomena, quantitative methods can often be best placed to do this and that this can fit well with the position of critical realism, as it can examine all the different factors and structures that may influence the different realities of participants. Therefore, consistent with beliefs in critical realism, a quantitative research study of the relationship between teacher attitudes and their practises allows for comparisons between different variables and for the identification of

a significant model to understand teacher level factors that predict the use of exclusionary practises in schools.

Participants

Data were collected from a convenience sample of 104 teachers based in primary and secondary schools across the United Kingdom. Four respondents had missing responses and were deleted listwise from the sample. This followed guidelines set out for dealing with missing data outlined by Newman (2014). This left a final sample of 100 participants. 75 of these participants were female and 25 male. This gender split is similar to the overall population of teachers in the UK: for example, the most recent survey of the school workforce reported that 76% of teachers are female. Analysis was also carried out looking at the proportion of female and male teachers teaching at primary and secondary level in this sample. Of the 75 female teachers in the sample, 49 taught in primary schools (65%) and 26 in secondary (45%). Of the 25 males in the sample, 7 taught in primary schools (28%) and 18 in secondary (72%).

The majority of participants to this survey (39%) were between the ages of 25 to 34, 31% were aged between 35 and 44, 28% between 45 and 64, and 2% were aged between 18 and 24. These percentages are broadly comparable to the UK population of teachers where 4.8% of teachers are under the age of 25, 14.7% are between 25 and 29, a third are between 30 and 39, and 27.7% are between 40 and 49, 17% between and 59 and 2.6% are aged 60 and over school (Department for Education, 2022).

This current study had participants from all countries and regions of the UK, however most participants taught in schools in the following regions: East of England (41%), London (21%), South East of England (14%), East Midlands (8%) and the South West (5%). This differs to the overall population of teachers in the UK in that the current sample is more

heavily weighted towards responses from teachers based in the East of England (41% for this sample compared to 9% of teachers overall) and London (21% for this sample compared to 15% of teachers overall) (Department for Education, 2022).The majority of participants (43%) described teaching in areas mixed in terms of levels of poverty and affluence. 24% reported teaching in an area that was high in levels of deprivation, and 18% reported teaching in an area somewhat high in levels of deprivation. 13% described their area as somewhat affluent and 2% as very affluent. The majority of participants described their role as 'class teacher' (51%). 21% were subject teachers and 12% were in positions of senior leadership. This percentage is slightly lower than the national average of 15% of teachers who work in positions of senior leadership (Department for Education, 2016). 8% of participants had been teaching for 1 to 3 years, 16% for 3 to 5 years, 28% for 5 to 10 years, 18% for 10 to 15 years, 13% for 15 to 20 years, and 17% for 20 years plus.

Over half of participants (53%) taught in primary schools, 42% taught in secondary schools, and 5% selected 'other'. Again this is broadly comparable to the population of teachers overall where 42% of teachers teach in primary school and 39% teach in secondary (Department for Education, 2022). 6% of participants taught in independent schools and 6% taught in special schools. Both these percentages are comparable to the overall population of teachers in the UK where 6% are employed by independent schools (Independent Schools Council, 2021). In this current survey, 20% of primary teachers taught in academies and 72% of secondary teachers taught in academies. This is somewhat lower than the overall average of 40% of primary teachers and 80% of secondary teachers who work for an academy-run school (Department for Education, 2022). Analysis of the characteristics of teachers responding to the current survey shows that they are broadly comparable to teachers in the UK as a whole, although this current sample is more heavily weighted towards participants teaching in the East of England and London.

Ethical considerations

It is of central importance to consider the ethical dimensions of any piece of research particularly when working both as a practitioner and as a researcher which is commonplace in Educational Psychology. The BPS Code of Ethics and Conduct (2018) states that researchers need to respect participants' rights and dignity during research, ensuring participants have confidence in the researcher by promoting mutual trust and respect between researchers and participants. Before commencing this research, ethical approval was sought from the University of East Anglia Research Ethics Committee by submitting an ethics application and risk assessment. The submission received committee approval in June 2022. To ensure that participants understood the research study and gave their informed consent, an approved information sheet was provided at the beginning of the survey explaining the purposes of the research and detailing contact details of the researcher. Participants were reminded that they had the right to freely withdraw from the study at any point. This includes asking for the destruction of data already contributed (BPS, 2014). Where participants had partially completed the survey, it was assumed that they had withdrawn from the research and survey responses for that participant were deleted.

Participants were reminded that their data was confidential. This survey was fully anonymous and no identifiable information was collected such as name or school name. Demographic information was collected but it was not possible to identify individuals through this data. Once survey responses were collected, this data was stored securely, with online data being password protected. It is possible that asking teachers about their experiences of behaviour management and the experience of support and stress in their role may be considered a sensitive topic. Some of these items may relate to experiences participants have had which may have been upsetting. Participants were fully informed of the nature of the research topic and survey questions prior to giving consent and reminded of

their right to withdraw at any time. Contact details were also given for services offering emotional support to teachers in the information sheet.

Measures

1. Attitudes towards inclusion

Sentiments, Attitudes and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised Scale. Attitudes towards inclusion were measured using the Sentiments, Attitudes and Concerns about Inclusive Education Revised Scale (SACIE-R) (Forlin et al., 2011). The SACIE-R is a 15-item questionnaire that has been widely used in the literature to measure teachers' attitudes and concerns about inclusive education (Murdaca et al., 2016). Only the Attitudes and Concerns subscales from the SACIE-R were used in this research. The Sentiments subscale was not used as, on inspection of the items, they measured constructs more closely linked to teachers' sentiments towards those with special educational needs and disabilities outside the classroom (Forlin et al., 2011). The purpose of this current study was to examine teachers' attitudes and concerns towards inclusive teaching and so the Attitudes and Concerns subscales better suited this variable. Each subscale consists of 5-items that make use of a 7-point Likert scale, ranging from 'completely disagree' to 'completely agree'. Example items from the attitudes scale include, 'Students who need an individualised academic program should be in regular classes', and 'Students who are inattentive should be in regular classes.' Example items from the concerns subscale include, 'I am concerned that my workload will increase if I have students with disabilities in my class,' and 'I am concerned that it will be difficult to give appropriate attention to all students in an inclusive classroom'. Higher scores on the SACIE-R subscales indicate more positive attitudes towards inclusion.

The SACIE-R showed good psychometric properties in the original scale development paper (Forlin et al., 2011). The final validation of the SACIE-R was carried out on a sample of 542

pre-service teachers from four countries (Canada, Hong Kong, India, and the United States). Internal reliability for the scale as measured by Cronbach's alpha was acceptable for the overall scale (.74) and for each of the individual subscales (.75 for sentiments; .67 for attitudes; and .65 for concerns). The authors highlighted that the alpha levels were lower than desired for the attitudes and concerns subscales, but still acceptable to measure these constructs (DeVellis, 1991). A recent review of questionnaires in this area also concluded that the SACIE-R was one of the most psychometrically sound instruments (Ewing et al., 2018). Cronbach's alphas of .74 to .90 have been reported for the SACIE-R attitudes and concerns subscales in previous studies (Murdaca et al., 2016). With the present sample, Cronbach's alphas were acceptable with a Cronbach's alpha of .69 for the combined attitudes and concerns subscales, .76 for the attitudes subscale, and .73 for the concerns scale.

2. Teacher self-efficacy

The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale. The Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES; Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy 2001) is a widely used measure of teacher self-efficacy (Klassen & Chiu 2010; MacFarlane & Woolfson 2013; Poulou 2007; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster 2009). The scale contains 12 items related to teachers' beliefs and confidence in their teaching practice. The measure contains three subscales (instructional strategies self-efficacy, classroom management self-efficacy, and student engagement self-efficacy). Participants responded to items using a 9-point Likert scale ranging from 'nothing at all' to 'a great deal'. Example items from the instructional strategies subscale include, 'To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?' and 'How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?'. Example items from the classroom management subscale include, 'How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?' and 'How much can you do to control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?'. Example items from the student engagement subscale include, 'How much can you do to get students to believe they can do

well in school work?' and 'How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?'. High internal consistency has been reported for the scale and its subscales (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) Previous research has reported a Cronbach's Alpha of .90 for the overall scale (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). In the present sample, Cronbach's alpha for the full TSES scale was .90, .75 for the instructional strategies subscale, .83 for the classroom management subscale, and .85 for the student engagement subscale, suggesting acceptable levels of internal consistency for the full scale and for each of the subscales.

3. Teachers' reactive and proactive behaviour management

The Behavioral and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS). Teachers' behaviour management practices were measured by the Behavioral and Instructional Management Scale developed by Martin & Sass (2010). This scale is a 12-item questionnaire looking at different behavioural and instructional strategies used by teachers. The scale consists of two separate subscales (reactive and proactive behaviour management). Participants responded to a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'. The BIMS evaluates teachers' tendency to use more or less controlling behavioural and instructional management approaches. There are six items on the reactive subscale which assesses teachers' tendency to use more reactive behaviour management approaches. Example items include 'I strongly limit student chatter in the classroom', and 'I strictly enforce classroom rules to control student behaviour.' The proactive subscale also consists of 6 items and assesses teachers' tendency to use a more proactive approach to behaviour management. Items include 'I nearly always adjust instruction in response to individual student needs.', and I nearly always use collaborative learning to explore questions in the classroom.' The final 12-item scale was validated in a population of 550 teachers based in the southwestern United States with reported Cronbach alphas of .77 for both the reactive subscale and the proactive subscale

(Martin & Sass, 2010). In the present sample, Cronbach's alphas were acceptable with an alpha of .82 for the full scale, .85 for the reactive subscale, and .76 for the proactive subscale.

4. Exclusionary strategies

A scale was developed for the purposes of this research to understand teachers' use of exclusionary behaviour management strategies. The scale asked teachers about their use of detentions, isolations, sending children out of the classroom as well as internal and fixed-term exclusions. These items were developed from the literature on the use of different consequences and sanctions in UK schools (e.g. Barket et al., 2010; Bayraktar & Dogan, 2017; Payne, 2015; Sealy et al., 2021; West et al., 2011) as well as the researcher's knowledge from professional experiences of school practices. Teachers were asked to rate whether they used these strategies on a five-point scale ranging from 'never' to 'very frequently'. Example items include, 'Remove students from the lesson', 'Give an internal exclusion', 'Send students to an isolation or reflection room'. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was acceptable at .82.

5. Permanent exclusions

Teachers were also asked to report the number of permanent exclusions in their schools in the last academic year as well as rating whether they perceived the level of exclusions at their school to be lower than, in line with, or higher than what would be typical for their type of school.

6. Stress

Levels of stress were explored using a single item question designed for the purposes of this study, 'How stressful is your job?' Teachers responded on a 10-point Likert scale where 1 was 'not stressful at all', and 10 was 'very stressful'. This single item question on stress was used in research by Herman et al. (2018) and was found to be highly correlated with emotional

exhaustion on the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach et al., 1996). The MBI is a 9-item scale that measures feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work. Items include ‘I feel mentally exhausted because of my work’.

7. Support

Teachers were asked to rate how well they felt supported by their school on a five-point scale. This was based on a similar item used to assess teachers’ perceived levels of support in research by Monsen et al. (2014).

8. Demographic information and school characteristics

The questionnaire was also used to collect demographic information on respondents’ age, gender, geographic location, years of teaching experience, role in school, and type of school (e.g., mainstream/special/private/secondary/primary/local authority maintained/academy/alternative provision/other) as well as levels of deprivation and affluence in the school’s location.

Procedure

After ethical approval was obtained, the online survey was distributed via the Microsoft Forms platform to local school networks. This was distributed online as well as through the researcher’s own networks. Convenience sampling was used as the main strategy to reach participants as the researcher had professional contacts through their previous career in teaching, as well as contacts through their Educational Psychology Service (EPS). Information and consent forms with the survey link were sent to headteachers and SENCo’s of schools who were contacts of the researcher as well as contacts of the researchers’ EPS. This invited them to share the email with teachers in their school. The email was also sent to colleagues within the EPS in which the researcher was undertaking their placement to ask them to circulate the survey to schools.

A benefit of using an online survey is that it can often be circulated more widely and reach participants more easily than a traditional paper form (Roberts & Allen, 2015). It is also possible for participants to complete the survey by smartphone which increases the convenience for participants. However, as often reported, response rates can be low for online surveys (Kolar & Kolar, 2008). To account for this, it has been suggested that online surveys need to be short and circulated via many networks, including social media platforms (Lavidas et al., 2022). The survey was, therefore, also distributed widely through social media and online forums. Recruitment posters were shared on the researcher's Twitter account as well as on teaching Facebook groups. The survey was also shared through the researcher's university cohort who were on placement in EPS's across England. In addition, the survey was posted on the EPNET forum. EPNET is a mailing list for EPs and other professionals working in education. Teachers were also asked to forward the survey on to their own networks.

As discussed in the section on sample above, the final sample was biased towards teachers based in the East of England and London, and underrepresented in the Northwest, Northeast, Yorkshire and the Humber and West Midlands as well as in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. However, a comparison to the overall demographic characteristics of teachers in the UK suggest that the sample of teachers responding to this survey are broadly similar to the wider UK teaching population aside from being based mainly in the East of England and London.

Data Analysis strategy

1. Data screening and missing data

Upon the closure of the online survey, 104 teachers had submitted responses via Microsoft Forms. Of these, four had partially missing responses and so were deleted listwise from the survey, leaving a final sample of 100. All analysis was carried out using Statistical Package

for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 28 and EQS version 6.4. For each of the standardised scales used, relevant items were reverse scored and mean scores were computed for each participant for each scale and subscale. This resulted in mean scores for each participant in each main scale and subscale: attitudes towards inclusion as well as mean scores on the concerns and attitudes subscales, teacher self-efficacy, as well as on the instructional strategies, classroom management, and student engagement subscales, behaviour management, as well as on the proactive and reactive subscales, and on the use of exclusionary strategies. Total scores were used for the support and stress variables as these consisted of single question items. The survey asked participants about levels of exclusions at their school as this was a main variable of interest. However, on inspection, most participants replied that they did not know, or could not answer, and so it was not possible to carry out any meaningful analysis using this item. Instead, use of exclusions was assessed using items from the exclusionary strategies subscale. There is clear precedence for doing this as the use of such sanctions are linked to high use of fixed term and permanent exclusions in UK schools (e.g., Barker et al., 2010; Kline, 2016; Stanforth & Rose, 2020).

The main analysis used in this study was path analysis using EQS (version 6.4) (Bentler, 1995) and moderation analysis using IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28). Prior to carrying out path analysis and moderation analysis, it is important that data meets main assumptions for path analysis and regression - variables must have a linear relationship, must be normally distributed, have little or no multicollinearity and meet the assumption of homoscedasticity (Stage et al., 2004). Prior to the analysis, the variables were assessed for normal distribution by looking at histograms for each variable. Skewness and kurtosis values were also examined for each variable and all were within acceptable ranges (skewness equals +2 to -2; kurtosis equals +7 to - 7) (Kim, 2013). Multicollinearity was also evaluated using correlations. In addition, the data were examined for outliers by calculating Z scores for all

main variables and examining the data to check for any z score greater than + 3 or – 3 as values greater than these number are considered to be outliers (Pituch & Stevens, 2015). Homoscedasticity was tested by examining the scatterplots of residuals against the predicted values of each dependent variable. The data met these assumptions and so it was possible to carry out regression and path analysis without modification of the data.

2. Descriptive statistics

Means and standard deviations were calculated using SPSS descriptives and frequencies. Descriptive statistics for teacher demographic information was compared to statistics for the UK teacher population (where available) to understand how this sample of teachers compared to the total population of teachers in the UK.

3. Correlation analysis.

A correlation matrix was generated to examine the intercorrelations between the main variables of interest and to assess for issues of multicollinearity. Field (2013) suggests that variables with very high correlation coefficients (over .90) are problematic and may produce less reliable results. No variables had a correlation of .90 or above and so this was not an issue for the current sample.

4. Hypothesised model and path analysis

The proposed model predicting teachers' use of exclusionary strategies was developed based on the literature review and aims to answer RQ1. This model was informed by Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), which provides a valuable framework for understanding and predicting human behaviour. Many previous studies have used the TPB model to predict teachers' inclusive behaviours within the classroom (e.g., Gülsün et al., 2023; Knauder & Koschmieder, 2019; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Savolainen et al., 2012; Urton et al.,

2023). It was predicted that teachers' attitudes would positively predict differences in teacher self-efficacy which would, in turn, negatively predict reactive management strategies and positively predict proactive behaviour management strategies. Behaviour management strategies were subsequently hypothesised to predict the use of exclusionary strategies. The proposed hypothesised model is presented below.

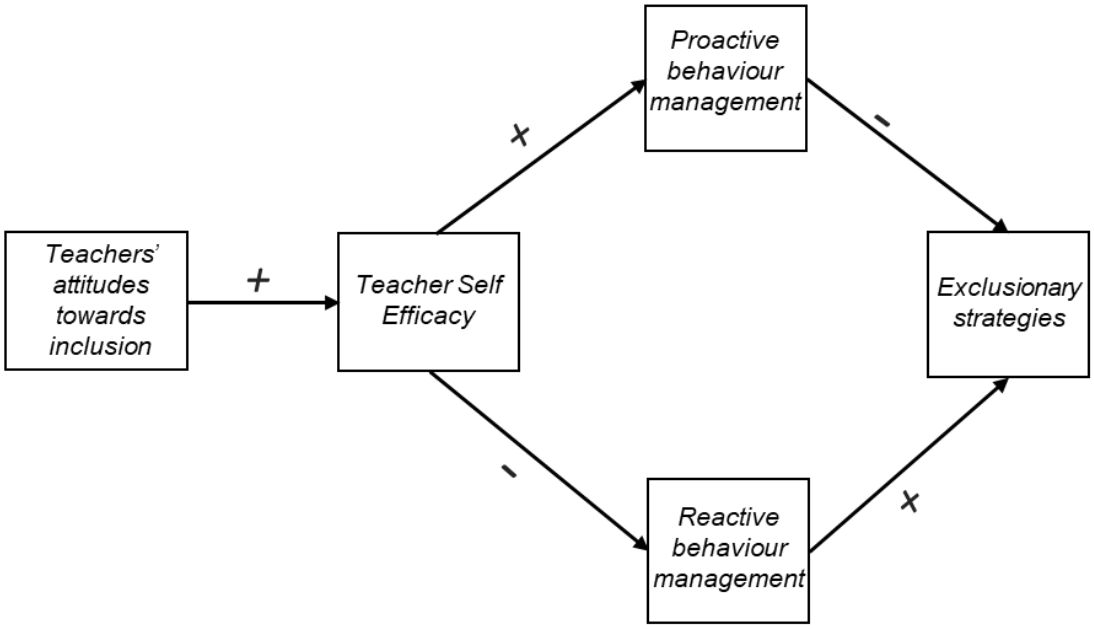

Figure 2: Hypothesised model

The hypothesised model was tested using path analysis in EQS. Path analysis is an extension of multiple regression and is advantageous to using regression alone as it allows for more complicated and realistic modelling (Stage et al., 2004). Path analysis can be considered a type of structural equation modelling (SEM) (Jeon, 2015). SEM is an advanced statistical procedure which simultaneously examines the relationships between variables. In path analysis, observed variables only are used whereas in SEM both observed and latent variables are used and a measurement model is tested alongside the structural pathways. Path analysis has an advantage over regression techniques in that it can examine relationships between

variables in a proposed model simultaneously whereas linear regression is limited to looking at one relationship at a time (Teo et al., 2013). Path analysis uses a number of different statistical tests to test the model fit to the data. The chi-square test is used to looked at the difference between expected (hypothesised model) and observed (data) covariance matrices. Comparative Fit Indices also indicate how well the model fits the data. CFI ranges from 0 to 1 with a larger value indicating a better fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) is also used to indicate how well the model fits the data and looks at the residuals in the model. Standardised Root Mean Squared Residual (SRMR) is also calculated in the path analysis and indicates the mean difference between predicted and observed variances and covariances in the model, based on standardised residuals. Smaller SRMR values indicate a better model fit. Parameter estimates are also examined in the path analysis to understand the associations between the variables in the model (Hoyle, 1995). Path analysis, is therefore, useful for examining relationships among all independent variables and results in a model showing 'causal' mechanisms and both direct and indirect effects on a dependent variable (Stage et al., 2004). It is also important to note that while path analysis tests the hypothesised causal relationships between variables, it ultimately does so by using correlation studies and so this is a weaker form of evidence for causality (Babin & Svensson, 2012).

Compared to full SEM models, in which the measurement model is tested alongside the structural model, a disadvantage of path analysis is that a degree of measurement error is likely. This is a common problem in path analysis (Jeon, 2015). One main issue in path analysis that increases the measurement error is when independent variables are correlated highly. This reduces the model's ability to detect significant effects and the path coefficients become less accurate as a result (Jeon, 2015; Tarka, 2018). To ensure that this is not an issue, Myers (1990) suggested that all VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) should be less than 10. VIF

was checked in this analysis and were all less than 10. SEM also requires large samples (often 300 or more depending on the number of variables) (Wolf et al., 2014) which meant that SEM was not a possibility given the sample of 104 in the present study. While path analysis is appropriate with smaller samples as the models are less complex (i.e., there is no measurement model), the estimation of the coefficients are still influenced by the ratio of the number of pathways in the model to the sample size (De Carvalho & Chima, 2014; Jeon, 2015). This means that studies using path analysis will still need large sample sizes, often larger than those required to carry out simple and multiple linear regression analyses.

Despite these limitations, path analysis was appropriate for this study as it allows for the decomposition of correlations among variables, and as a result improves our interpretation of the model and of the effects of one variable on another (AmirAlavifar, 2012). It is suggested that the sample size should be at least 20 times larger than the number of estimated paths (Jeon, 2015; Stage et al., 2004). Given there are five separate paths in the proposed model in the current study, a sample size of 100 would be considered acceptable (Jeon, 2015; Stage et al., 2004). All constructs in the path model were tested as observed variables indexed by their mean total subscale scores. The analysis was carried out using maximum likelihood estimations. The degree of model fit was evaluated using multiple fit indices, such as the chi-square statistic, the comparative fit index (CFI), the standardized root mean residual (SRMR), and the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). Although values indicative of acceptable model fit remain controversial (Marsh et al., 2004), it is typically accepted that CFI values exceeding .90 and .95 are indicative of good and excellent fit, respectively (Hu & Bentler, 1999), and SRMR and the indicators of RMSEA values < .8 are acceptable, values between .08 and 0.1 are marginal, and values greater than 0.1 are poor (Fabrigar et al., 1999). Additionally, Hu and Bentler (1999) also suggest that values of .95 or higher for CFI, .08 or lower for SRMR, and .06 or lower for RMSEA indicate

a relatively good fit and that values of .90–.94 for CFI, .09–.10 for SRMR, and .07–.10 for RMSEA indicate an acceptable fit.

5. Moderation analysis

The moderating effect of teachers' perceived levels of support and levels of stress was analysed in relation to each of the pathways in the model. Hayes' (2013) PROCESS macro was used to examine the moderating role of teachers' perceived levels of support and levels of stress in the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and their self-efficacy, self-efficacy and the use of proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies, and behaviour management strategies and the reported use of exclusionary strategies. Moderation analysis is used to understand how the effect of one variable on another is influenced (or moderated) by a third variable. For example, in the case of this study, whether teachers' stress levels moderates the effect of teachers' use of reactive behaviour management on their use of exclusionary strategies. A moderation analysis can examine whether the third moderator variable (stress levels in this case) increases or decreases the effect of reactive behaviour management on use of exclusionary strategies. This is also known as an interaction. Ten moderation analyses were carried out to test for the moderating role of perceived support, and then perceived stress, in each of the five pathways identified in the path analysis. The PROCESS Macro (Hayes, 2013) is used in social and health research to estimate direct and indirect effects in two- and three-way interactions. Understanding a moderating effect of a variable in research can greatly add to our understanding of the relationships between different variables (Holbert & Park, 2020). The PROCESS macro is advantageous to other methods when examining a moderating effect as it can test the moderating effect directly rather than looking indirectly through a series of regressions (Igartua & Hayes, 2021). PROCESS also simplifies the analysis and generates the output

needed to interpret the moderating effect using a simple line and command in SPSS (Rockwood & Hayes, 2020). The analysis also looks at the effect of the independent variable at various values of the moderator (i.e., an analysis of simple slopes; Spiller et al., 2013). Hayes (2022) uses the 16th, 50th, and 84th percentiles to examine the moderator effect between two variables.

6. Secondary analysis

A series of one-way MANOVAs in SPSS version 28 were also performed in order to look for differences in key variables between different subgroups in the sample. As discussed in relevant literature, teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy, and behaviour can vary according to gender, school stage (e.g., primary or secondary), years of experience, and characteristics of the school's location (e.g., Gülsün et al., 2023; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014; Wilson et al., 2020; Wray et al., 2022; Yada et al., 2022). Therefore, analyses were carried out to look at whether there were any significant differences in the main variables in the study depending on gender, school stage (primary or secondary), years of teaching experience as well as levels of affluence and deprivation in the school's location. This analysis was carried out as a secondary analysis rather than a preliminary analysis, as the sample size was not large enough to control for these variables in the path analysis and the variables prioritised in the hypothesised model needed to be those related to the primary research question of the study. Instead, an understanding of whether any of the main variables differed depending on the characteristics above was examined after the main model was fitted.

Results

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations, and correlation coefficients for the main variables in the study. These results show that respondents had moderately positive attitudes towards inclusion (M = 2.69, SD = 0.38) out of a range of 1 to 4 where 4 indicates the most positive attitudes. Participants also had moderate use of both reactive (M = 3.59, SD = 0.71) and proactive behaviour management (M = 3.98, SD = 0.47) from a range of 1 to 5 where 5 is high use of strategies. Respondents had high levels of self-efficacy (M = 4.12, SD = 0.50) out of a range of 1 to 5, where 5 is high self-efficacy. Participants also reported low use of exclusionary strategies (M = 1.84, SD = 0.67) from a range of 1 to 5 where 5 is high use of such strategies. Support was moderately high (M = 3.54, SD = 0.98) from a range of 1 to 5 where 5 is feeling very supported. Participants also reported high levels of stress (M = 7.53, SD = 1.54) on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 is high levels of stress.

Table 1

Partial Correlations, Means and Standard Deviations for study variables.

	Mean	S.D.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
1. Attitudes towards INC	2.69	.38	-			.						
2. Reactive BVR	3.59	.71	.01	-								
3. Proactive BVR	3.98	.47	.11	-.11	-							
4. SE	4.12	.50	.46**	.04	.42**	-						
5. SE in classroom management	4.18	.53	.44**	.29**	.32**	.83**	-					
6. SE in instructional strategies	4.25	.52	.41**	.17	.39**	.87**	.65**	-				
7. SE in student engagement	3.94	.68	.35**	-.16	.37**	.88**	.55**	.64**	-		.	
8. Exclusionary strategies	1.84	.67	-.07	.43**	-.23*	-.25*	-.15	-.17	-.31**	-		
9. Support	7.53	1.54	.38**	-.49**	.73**	.35**	.23*	.27**	.37**	-.08	-	
10. Stress	3.54	.98	.06	.04	.09	.25*	.12	.23*	.28**	.01	-.06	-

*Note*s: n=100. ***<p.001; **p<.01; *p<.05. INC = inclusion; BVR = behaviour management; SE = Teacher self-efficacy.

The correlation matrix shows that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion were positively correlated with overall teacher self-efficacy as well as self-efficacy subscales (classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement efficacy) and teachers' perceived levels of support. Interestingly, there were no significant correlations between teachers' attitudes and behaviour management strategies and exclusionary strategies. Teachers' use of reactive behaviour management was significantly and positively correlated with classroom management self-efficacy, and the use of exclusionary strategies. Teachers' use of proactive behaviour management was significantly and positively correlated with overall teacher self-efficacy as well as self-efficacy subscales (classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement efficacy) and significantly and negatively correlated with the use of exclusionary strategies.

Overall teacher self-efficacy was significantly positively correlated with each of the self-efficacy subscales as well as being significantly negatively correlated with the use of exclusionary strategies. As expected, self-efficacy was significantly and positively correlated with teachers' perceived levels of support, but also unexpectedly with levels of stress. Many of the items measuring self-efficacy indicate teachers spending more time on areas of student engagement and instruction, and this may be why it is correlated with higher levels of stress. Classroom management self-efficacy was significantly positively correlated with the use of exclusionary strategies. Instructional strategies self-efficacy was significantly positively correlated with teachers' perceived levels of support and levels of stress. Finally, student engagement self-efficacy was significantly negatively correlated with the use of exclusionary strategies and significantly positively correlated with teachers' perceived levels of support and levels of stress. Items on the student engagement self-efficacy subscale requires teachers to spend time on areas outside of direct classroom teaching which may add to workload. This may be why it is correlated with levels of stress. It is also worth noting the differences

between the correlations of the subscales of the self-efficacy scale and teachers' reactive and proactive behaviour management. Classroom management self-efficacy was significantly positively correlated with reactive behaviour management, whereas the other two subscales had no significant correlations with reactive behaviour management. Classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement self-efficacy subscales were all positively correlated with proactive behaviour management.

Predicting teachers' use of exclusionary strategies

The path model demonstrated an acceptable to good fit to the data: χ^2 (10) = 75.71, p = .116, CFI = .94, SRMR = .07, RMSEA = .09. The standardized path coefficients and residuals are presented in Figure 3. Attitudes significantly predicted teachers' feelings of self-efficacy (β = .46, p < .001; R^2 = .21). In turn, self-efficacy was significantly and positively associated with proactive behavioural management strategies (β = .42, p < .001; R^2 = .18) but not associated with reactive behavioural management strategies (β = .04, p > .05). Finally proactive behavioural management strategies negatively predicted teachers' use of exclusionary strategies (β = -.19, p < .001) whereas reactive behavioural management strategies were a strong positive predictor of the use of exclusionary strategies (β = .41, p < .001; R^2 = .20). While the model showed an acceptable to good fit overall, the RMSEA of .09 is higher than models in previous studies (e.g. Gülsün et al., 2023; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Sharma et al., 2018). Hu and Bentler (1999) suggest that values of .06 or lower for RMSEA indicate a relatively good fit and that values of .07–.10 for RMSEA indicate an acceptable fit. In the case of the RMSEA value reported in this study, this would suggest an acceptable fit. However, Hu and Bentler (1999) also suggest that values of .95 or higher for the CFI, and .08 or lower for SRMR, indicate a relatively good fit. The CFI in the current study is .94 and the SRMR is .07 which is closer to the required cut offs for a good fit.

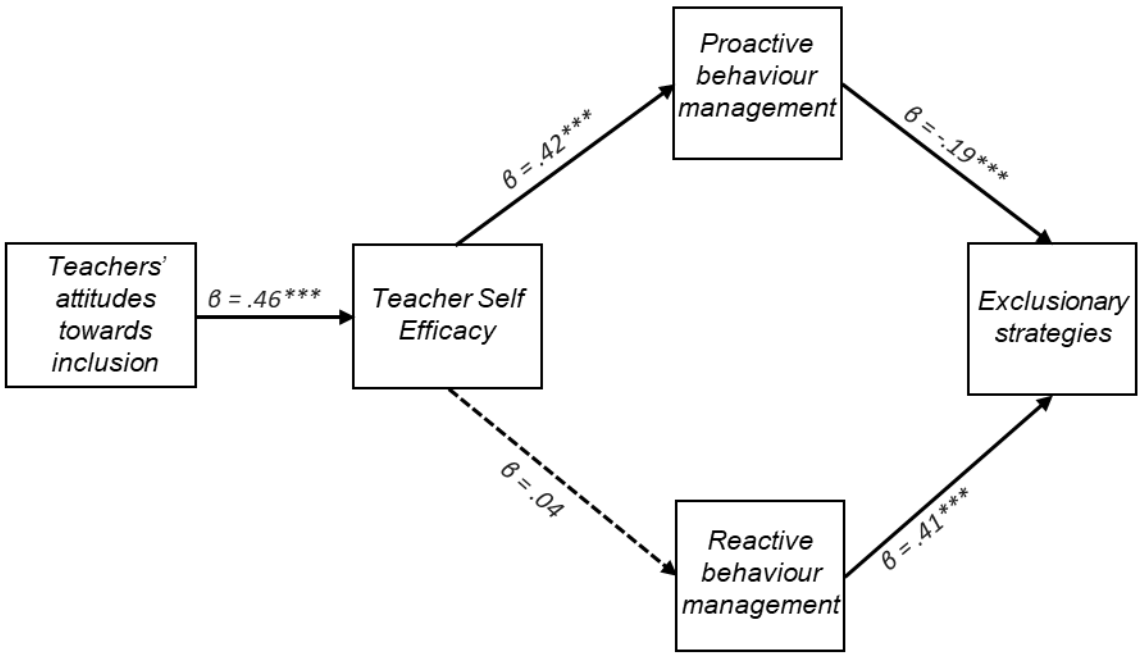

Figure 3: path analysis

Teachers' perceived levels of support and levels of stress as moderators

No significant findings were found in relation to the moderating effect of support. A significant effect was found in relation to the role of stress. To test the hypothesis that teachers' reactive behaviour management predicts the use of exclusionary strategies, and whether teachers' levels of stress moderates the relationship between teachers' reactive behaviour management and use of exclusionary strategies, a hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted. In the first step, reactive behaviour management accounted for a significant amount of variance in teachers' use of exclusionary strategies, $R^2 = .19$, $F(2, 99) = 11.02$, $p < .001$. Results showed that when stress was added to the regression model, this accounted for a significant proportion of the variance in teachers' use of exclusionary strategies, $\Delta R^2 = .04$, $\Delta F(1, 96) = 4.94$, $p = .001$, b = -.12, $t(96) = -2.22$, $p < .05$. Examination of the interaction plot showed an enhancing effect. As stress and use of reactive behaviour management increased, the use of exclusionary strategies also increased. However, on

examination of the simple slope, the effect of reactive behaviour management on use of exclusionary strategies was significant at low (b = 0.50, SE = 0.10, t = 5.00, p < .001) and average levels of stress (b = 0.50, SE = 0.10, t = 5.00, p < .001). However, at high levels of stress, reactive behaviour management is not associated with exclusionary strategies. (b = 0.10, SE = 0.10, t = 1.00, p > .05). This suggests that there is a decrease in the magnitude of the effect of reactive behaviour management on the use of exclusionary strategies as stress levels increase. This effect is demonstrated on the graph below which shows that the highest use of exclusionary strategies occur at low stress levels and high use of reactive behaviour management.

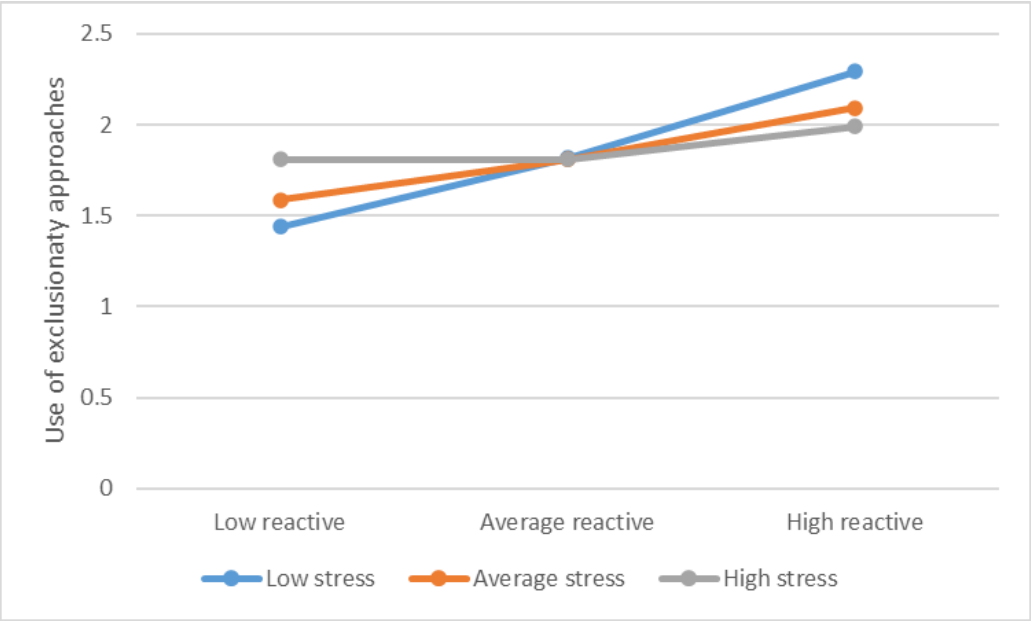

Figure 4: Moderating effect of stress

Secondary analysis

A series of one-way MANOVAs in SPSS version 28 were performed to understand whether differences in characteristics of the participants led to any differences across the main variables of interest. From previous research, the main characteristics of teachers that have been associated with differences in attitudes, self-efficacy, and behaviour are often cited as

gender, school stage, years of experience, and characteristics of the school (like location or student profiles) (e.g., Gülsün et al., 2023; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014; Wilson et al., 2020; Wray et al., 2022; Yada et al., 2022).

School stage

A one-way MANOVA was carried out with teachers' attitudes towards inclusion (both attitudes and concerns subscales), teacher self-efficacy, proactive and reactive behaviour management, exclusionary strategies, stress and support as the dependent variables and school stage as the fixed factor (i.e., the independent variable). Results showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the dependent variables described above based on a participant's school stage, F (11, 87) = 2.25, $p < .01$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.61$, partial $\eta 2 = .22$. Further analysis of how the main variables differed according to school stage showed that there were statistically significant differences between primary school teachers' and secondary school teachers' concerns about inclusion (measured on the concerns subscale from the SACIE-R) F (1, 98) = 6.90; $p < .01$; partial $\eta 2 = .12$; reactive behavioural strategies F (1, 98) = 5.21; $p < .01$; partial $\eta 2 = .01$ and the use of exclusionary strategies F (1, 98) = 11.23; $p < .001$; partial $\eta 2 = .19$.

It appears that secondary school teachers report greater concerns when including children with SEN, report higher use of reactive behavioural management, and greater use of exclusionary strategies. Table 2 below presents the means and standard deviations for these variables for both primary and secondary school teachers.

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, and one-way MANOVA for concerns about inclusion, behavioural strategies, and use of exclusionary strategies by school stage.

Measure	Primary		Secondary		F (2,97)	η^2
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Attitudes towards inclusion	2.6	.35	2.7	.42	1.3	.01
Concerns about inclusion	2.3	.45	2.6	.63	6.90	.12
Teacher self efficacy	4.1	.48	4.1	.52	.71	.01
Reactive behavioural strategies	2.7	.42	3.0	.59	5.21	.01
Proactive behavioural strategies	4.1	.43	3.8	.51	5.8	.06
Use of exclusionary strategies	1.6	.55	2.2	.64	11.23	.19
Stress	7.6	1.5	7.5	1.6	.02	.00
Support	3.4	.91	3.6	1.0	1.3	.01

Gender

A one-way MANOVA was also carried out with teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, proactive and reactive behaviour management, exclusionary strategies, stress and support as the dependent variables and gender as the fixed factor (i.e., the independent variable). There was no statistically significant main effect. However, there were some statistically significant differences between male and females and their reactive behaviour management, self-efficacy in student engagement, use of exclusionary strategies, and reported levels of stress. Results show that males report greater use of reactive behaviour management strategies ($F (1, 98) = 6.3$; $p < .01$; partial $\eta 2 = .06$) and use of exclusionary strategies than females ($F (1, 98) = 4.4$; $p < .01$; partial $\eta 2 = .04$). Females appear to report higher levels of self-efficacy in student engagement (($F (1, 98) = 7.3$; $p < .01$; partial $\eta 2 = .07$) and higher levels of stress than males ($F (1, 98) = 7.7$; $p < .01$; partial $\eta 2 = .05$). Table 3

below presents the means and standard deviations for these variables for both male and female teachers.

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and one-way MANOVA for reactive behaviour management, self-efficacy in student engagement, use of exclusionary strategies and stress by gender.

Measure	Male		Female		F (1,98)	η^2
Measure	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Attitudes towards inclusion	2.8	.46	3.0	.45	2.7	.03
Reactive behavioural strategies	3.9	.76	3.5	.68	6.3	.06
Proactive behavioural strategies	3.9	.47	4.0	.46	1.6	.02
Self-efficacy student engagement	3.6	.66	4.0	.66	7.31	.07
Use of exclusionary strategies	2.1	.68	1.8	.65	4.4	.04
Stress	7.0	1.5	7.7	1.5	7.7	.05
Support	3.2	1.0	3.6	.95	3.2	.03

Years of experience

A one-way MANOVA was also carried out looking at any differences in the main variables depending on participants' years of experience. No significant differences were observed in the variables depending on years of experience.

Levels of deprivation and affluence

A one-way MANOVA was also carried out with teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, proactive and reactive behaviour management, exclusionary strategies, stress and support as the dependent variables and levels of deprivation or affluence in school location as the fixed factor (participants rated the area that their school was located in as either very affluent/somewhat affluent, mixed, or somewhat high/very high in levels of

deprivation). Results showed a statistically significant difference in the constructs described above based on the deprivation or affluence of participants' school locations, F (18, 178) = 2.22, $p < .01$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.61$, partial $\eta 2 = .18$. Further analysis showed that depending on the deprivation/affluence of the school's location, teachers had significant differences in their reactive behaviour management, F (2, 97) = 7.63, $p < .001$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.61$, partial $\eta 2 = .14$. and use of exclusionary strategies, F (2, 97) = 5.40, $p < .01$; Wilk's $\Lambda = 0.61$, partial $\eta 2 = .10$. Results showed that teachers whose schools are located in areas either very high or somewhat high in levels of deprivation report greater use of reactive behaviour management strategies and use of exclusionary strategies than teachers whose schools are located in mixed areas or more affluent areas.

Table 4

Means, Standard Deviations, and One-Way MANOVA for reactive behaviour management and use of exclusionary strategies by school area.

Measure	High/somewhat high in levels of deprivation		Mixed		Very affluent/Some what affluent		F (2,97)	η^2
Measure	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*		
Attitudes towards inclusion	2.8	1.4	2.6	1.8	2.8	1.0	2.8	.05
Teacher self-efficacy	4.1	.44	4.0	.52	4.4	.52	2.6	.05
Proactive behavioural strategies	4.0	.42	3.9	.50	3.9	.53	.27	.01
Reactive behavioural strategies	3.9	.10.	3.4	.10	3.2	.17	7.6	.14
Use of exclusionary strategies	2.1	.01	1.7	.10	1.6	.17	5.4	.10
Stress	7.3	1.4	7.5	1.8	8.1	1.0	1.6	.03
Support	3.5	.92	3.4	1.0	3.8	.86	.74	.02

Discussion

This study aimed to understand how teacher-level characteristics like attitudes toward inclusion, self-efficacy, and differing behaviour management strategies lead to differences in the use of exclusions. The main research question in this study was:

- How are teachers' attitudes linked to feelings of self-efficacy and how does this, in turn, affect behavioural management strategies and the subsequent use of exclusions? (RQ1)

The sub-questions in the research were:

- Do levels of stress and levels of support moderate any of the relationships between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, behaviour management strategies, and use of exclusions? (RQ2)
- Do certain characteristics of teachers like school stage, gender, years of experience and school location lead to differences in their attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, behaviour management, and use of exclusions? (RQ3)

Teachers' attitudes predicting self-efficacy, behaviour management, and use of exclusions

Path analysis was used to model the relationships between attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, reactive and proactive behaviour management, and the use of exclusionary strategies. The main hypothesis of this study, that teachers' attitudes toward inclusion predict self-efficacy and differences in behaviour management which, in turn, predicts use of exclusionary strategies was supported. Results showed that the path model demonstrated a good to acceptable fit to the data. In this model, teachers' attitudes towards inclusion significantly predicted teachers' levels of self-efficacy. This result suggests that the more positive teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are, the more likely they are to report higher levels of efficacy. This is an interesting result pointing to the importance of positive attitudes towards inclusion as a factor in more efficacious teaching. This relationship has also been

reported in a recent meta-analysis looking at the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes towards inclusion (Yada et al., 2022). The meta-analysis examined 41 individual studies and found an average significant positive relationship (= 0.351) between teachers' self-efficacy and attitudes. The current study adds to the previous literature in showing that attitudes towards inclusion significantly predicts teacher self-efficacy, and that this relationship is positive. This might be explained by teachers who believe that they are responsible for the outcomes of all students, and do not blame external factors on students' difficulties in lessons, may be more likely to engage in more inclusive teaching. Inclusive teaching involves greater engagement of all students and greater differentiation which is linked to increased self-efficacy (Lindner & Shwab, 2020). This idea is supported by a number of studies who report that teachers are more likely to use inclusive practices when they consider the wider context for pupils' behaviour and also hold less within-child explanations for behaviour (e.g., Essex et al., 2019; Gibbs & Gardiner, 2008; Jull, 2008; Kinsella, 2020, Stanbridge & Mercer, 2019).

This possible explanation for the link between inclusive attitudes and self-efficacy was also reported in research by Wilson et al. (2016) who found that high self-efficacy beliefs among teachers is linked to teachers having a greater belief in the importance of inclusive practices. While the model in this study hypothesised that attitudes towards inclusion would predict self-efficacy, this is still just an association. It may also be possible that teachers who are higher in self-efficacy have more positive attitudes towards inclusion as a result of feeling more confident in the classroom, or it may be that more positive attitudes make it more likely that teachers invest in techniques to engage all students, and this has an effect on their efficacy. Adding to previous research, this study further elucidates the different relationships between teacher self-efficacy and different types of behaviour management (i.e., proactive and reactive). Results from the path analysis showed that teacher self-efficacy was

significantly associated with proactive behavioural management strategies but not with reactive behavioural management strategies. Specifically, the findings indicated that higher levels of self-efficacy among teachers predicted greater use of proactive behaviour management which appears to be a protective factor in making it less likely that teachers will use exclusionary strategies. This finding was also reported by Alasmari et al. (2021) who found a link between self-efficacy and proactive behaviour management among EFL teachers in Saudi Arabia. This is possibly explained by teachers who are high in self-efficacy being more confident in responding to behaviour without needing to use exclusionary approaches.

Additionally, high levels of teacher self-efficacy and proactive behaviour management involve planning routines and expectations for students in advance and anticipating possible difficulties in lessons to be prepared before behaviour become challenging. Again, this advance planning may make it less necessary to use exclusionary strategies. These findings also reflect research by Hosford and O'Sullivan (2015) who found a link between teachers' levels of efficacy for teaching inclusion and their confidence in managing challenging behaviour, with high levels of efficacy for teaching inclusively linked to higher levels of confidence for managing behaviour. This finding adds to our knowledge of how teachers' self-efficacy is linked to more proactive behaviour management.

However, surprisingly, and in contrast to findings reported by Alasmari et al. (2021), self-efficacy did not predict reactive behaviour management. The results of correlation analysis also help to explain the non-significant relationship between overall self-efficacy and reactive behaviour management. Teacher self-efficacy was measured using three subscales of the TSES: classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement. The results of correlation analysis showed that the overall TSES scale was significantly and positively correlated with proactive behaviour management, but not reactive behaviour management. All three subscales were also significantly and positively correlated with proactive behaviour

management. However, only classroom management was significantly and positively correlated with reactive behaviour management. Given that the items making up this subscale (e.g., How much can you do to control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?) are very closely related to the discipline described in the reactive behaviour management subscale (e.g., 'I strictly enforce classroom rules to control student behaviour'), this is not surprising. Additionally, the proactive subscale also measured teachers' use of strategies to prevent challenging behaviour from occurring such as planning engaging activities, involving students in discussion, and engaging in relationship building. This construct is also closer to items in the instructional strategies subscale of the TSES (e.g., 'To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?') and the student engagement scale (e.g., 'How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?').

This relationship between self-efficacy and proactive behaviour management is also reported in a study by Woodcock et al. (2022) who found that teachers who were high in efficacy were also likely to use more mixed and flexible approaches in their teaching: for example, mixed groupings of students and 'cooperative learning experiences intended to be relevant, interesting, and to foster the involvement of all students' (Woodcock et al., 2022, p.10). In contrast, those scoring low in self-efficacy had a stronger focus on managing behaviour and a greater propensity to categorise students according to their differences.

Similarly, Schwab and Alnahdi (2020) found that teachers' attitudes and self-efficacy were linked to the use of more inclusive teaching practices - inclusive teaching practices here being conceptualised as a complex combination of several teaching approaches with two specific features often cited as the most common: individualisation (e.g., taking students' successes, interests, and feelings into account) and the use of differentiation (Schwab & Alnahdi, 2020). These features of inclusive teaching have similarities to proactive behaviour management techniques. The results in this current study add a more in depth understanding of

the relationships between all three subscales of the TSES and proactive and reactive behaviour management which has not been reported in previous literature. This study shows that classroom management efficacy was significantly positively correlated with both proactive and reactive behaviour management strategies. Instructional management efficacy and student engagement efficacy was significantly positively correlated with proactive behaviour management strategies.

The path analysis also showed that proactive behaviour management negatively predicted teachers' use of exclusionary strategies, while reactive behaviour management positively predicts teachers use of these strategies. This reflects findings in the literature that show how the use of exclusionary and punitive behaviour management strategies are linked to higher rates of exclusion (Gerlinger et al., 2021; Krezmien et al., 2014; Skiba & Losen; Vincent & Tobin, 2011; Skiba & Losen, 2016).

Overall, the results from the path analysis show that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, and proactive and reactive behaviour management is a useful model when predicting teachers' use of exclusionary strategies. This is a valuable finding when thinking about how to support teachers to develop more inclusive approaches and reduce the likelihood that a reactive and exclusionary approach is used. The findings suggest that it is important to tackle both teachers' attitudes and their self-efficacy beliefs. This is in line with past research that has shown that teachers' who have high levels of self-efficacy have greater ability to make use of engaging teaching practices, make use of more proactive behaviour management and are less likely to have a deficit-based view of students (e.g., Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Florian & Spratt, 2013; Burić & Kim, 2020; Woodcock et al., 2022; Gülsün et al., 2023). This makes it more likely that such teachers will succeed in teaching children with additional needs in a mainstream classroom and make less use of exclusion or microexclusions - like sending a child out of the class, or to a separate space to be instructed

elsewhere (Burić & Kim, 2020; Wilson et al., 2016; Woodcock et al., 2022)). Wilson et al. (2016), for example, discussed how inclusive teaching can be more challenging and that teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy may have greater energy and ability to use teaching practices that are needed to engage students and avoid excluding those that find learning more challenging. This current study gives further evidence to this mechanism of why high levels of teacher self-efficacy may lead to greater proactive behaviour management and less use of exclusionary strategies.

This study used aspects of Ajzen's (1991)'s theory of planned behaviour as a framework to understand how attitudes and beliefs can lead to differences in behaviour. The TPB provides a useful model when thinking about how to unpick the factors leading to the use of exclusions. Consistent with past research (e.g., Gülsün et al., 2023; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Schüle et al., 2016), this study found that teacher attitudes towards inclusion did not significantly predict behaviour alone (proactive and reactive behaviour management or use of exclusionary strategies). This reflects research into predictions of specific behaviour which proposes that attitudes on their own are not useful for predicting behaviours (Ajzen, 1982; Ajzen & Fishbein, 1977). This is why it is useful to use the TPB to split out the constructs of attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, and behaviour management as all appear to play a role in predicting the use of exclusionary behaviour management strategies. As previously discussed, many studies have used the TPB to examine different aspects of attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, and teaching practice.

Given that proactive behaviour management was a significant negative predictor of exclusionary strategies, and reactive behaviour management is a significant positive predictor, it is important to unpick the factors that make it more likely that teachers will engage in proactive strategies rather than reactive. In this case, high levels of teacher self -efficacy appear to predict high use of proactive behaviour management, but more specifically, it appears to be

important that teachers have high self-efficacy in all three domains – classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement in order to make use of teaching strategies that engage students and make it less likely for challenging behaviour to occur, and to develop relationships by engaging with students outside the classroom. These findings are supported by literature in the area which find that teacher self-efficacy is an important factor in teachers' inclusive teaching practices (e.g.,MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Wilson et al., 2016; Adjei, 2018; Knauder & Koschmieder, 2019; Schwab & Alnahdi, 2020; Alasmari et al., 2021; Wray et al., 2022; Gülsün et al., 2023).However, the findings reported in this study connect these constructs to reactive and proactive behaviour management and exclusions which has not been explored in one study before. This study, guided by the TPB highlights the key role of teacher self-efficacy in linking teachers' attitudes to different types of behaviour management, and subsequently their use of exclusionary strategies.

Teachers' perceived levels of support and levels of stress as moderators

No significant findings were found in relation to the moderating effect of support. This was an unexpected finding given that support has been highlighted as an important factor affecting teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, and teaching practice. For example, Avramidis and Norwich (2002) found that increased resources and support in schools was linked to more positive attitudes towards inclusion. Monsen et al. (2014) also found that teacher attitudes towards inclusion increased with greater perceived adequacy of both internal and external support. Similarly, Stanforth and Rose (2018) found that support and training for teachers was linked to more inclusive teaching practices and reduced levels of exclusions. It may be that the sample of teachers surveyed for this study differed to samples in previous research. For example, in this sample of teachers, most participants felt positive about the support they received from their school. The majority of participants (57%) to this survey said that they felt either extremely or somewhat well supported to teach students with SEN. A

further 27% were neutral, and 16% did not feel well supported. Although support did not emerge as a significant moderator, correlation analysis showed that teachers' rating of support was significantly correlated with attitudes towards inclusion (with higher ratings of support linked to more positive attitudes). High ratings of support were also linked to high levels of teacher self-efficacy. This is similar to findings for teachers' perceptions of support found in previous studies (e.g., Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Goodman & Burton, 2010; Monsen et al., 2014; Stanforth & Rose, 2018).

In contrast, multiple regression analysis showed that stress was a significant moderator of the relationship between reactive behaviour management and use of exclusionary strategies. This relationship was positive with increased levels of reactive behaviour management and stress leading to greater use of exclusions. This is supported by previous literature showing a link between teacher levels of stress and use of reactive behaviour management strategies as well as levels of challenging behaviour in the classroom (e.g., Clunies-Ross et al., 2008; Aloe et al., 2014, McCarthy et al., 2014; Gray et al., 2017). For example, Clunies-Ross et al. (2008) found that teachers' reactive management strategies had a significant relationship with elevated teacher stress. It is also important to note the impact of stress and support on teachers' behaviour management strategies and views of inclusion when it comes to the differences between the four nations of the UK. As mentioned previously, research has pointed to a different legislative context in Scotland where there is more focus on prevention and relationships in managing behaviour (McCluskey et al (2021). Duffy et al. (2021) also reported on an 'ethos of caring' within schools in Northern Ireland where exclusion was mostly not considered as an option. This emphasis from policy may lead to different support and training for teachers which then influences their classroom practices, thus leading to differences in the use of exclusionary strategies.

Interestingly, however, and perhaps somewhat counterintuitively, the result of this analysis showed that stress reduced the magnitude of the effect of reactive behaviour management on the use of exclusionary strategies. In other words, teachers' who report high levels of reactive behaviour management are more likely to use exclusionary strategies. However, as their stress levels increase, it is less likely that high use of reactive behaviour management will lead to exclusionary strategies. When looking at the literature around teachers' stress levels and the link to inclusive practice, there appears to be a strong relationship between teacher stress and inclusive practice, with many studies suggesting a link between high levels of stress and less use of inclusive teaching practices (Split et al., 2011; Harmsen et al., 2018; Aldrup et al., 2018; Von der Embse et al., 2018). It is possible that the result in this study may be showing teachers' experiencing higher levels of stress who are less willing to exclude pupils and are therefore experiencing high stress levels because they are trying to keep these students in their classroom. Consistent with this idea, student behaviour is frequently cited as one of the most common reasons for teachers experiencing high stress levels and burnout (e.g., Gray et al., 2017; Aldrup et al., 2018).

From the correlation analysis, there are also significant positive correlations between teachers' stress levels and teacher self-efficacy, as well as teacher self-efficacy in instructional strategies and student engagement. This could mean that teachers who have higher levels of self-efficacy are more likely to report high levels of stress. Given the effort required to plan lessons effectively and engage with students outside of lesson time (which is what is measured in these items on the TSES) it is perhaps unsurprising that there is a link to higher levels of teacher stress in this study. This reflects findings from Holmstrom et al. (2023) who looked at profiles of teachers' work engagement and burnout among a sample of 225 teachers in Finland.

Specifically, this study looked at the association between teachers' self-efficacy in different domains, using the TSES and alongside a measure of teacher burnout. Results showed

that there were three different teacher groups with distinct well-being profiles: (1) engaged, (2) engaged-exhausted, and (3) burned-out. The study also looked at whether teachers' engagement and burnout profiles differed depending on their sense of efficacy. Results showed that engaged and engaged-exhausted teachers scored significantly higher than burned-out teachers on student engagement self-efficacy. This reflects findings in this study where stress levels were most highly correlated with student engagement self-efficacy. The Holmstrom et al. (2023) study also reported that a third of teachers in its sample fell into the engaged-exhausted profile. It may be that a similar profile exists in this present study's sample, and that might explain why stress reduced the magnitude of the effect of reactive behaviour management on the use of exclusionary strategies. Interestingly, a similar relationship was reported by Bümen (2010) in a sample of 801 Turkish teachers who found that teacher self-efficacy for student engagement contributed statistically to emotional exhaustion. This finding adds to our knowledge of how stress levels may play a role in behaviour management and use of exclusionary strategies.

Teacher characteristics and differences in attitudes, self-efficacy, behaviour management and exclusions.

Characteristics of teachers themselves (like demographics and years of experience) and the schools they teach in (e.g., student profiles and levels of poverty in the school area) also appear to play a role in teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, their self-efficacy, and their teaching practices. Results from this study showed that whether a teacher taught in primary or secondary education led to significant differences in many of the constructs of this study. Findings showed that secondary school teachers report greater concerns when including children with SEN, report higher use of reactive behavioural management and greater use of exclusionary strategies. This is supported by the literature which reports that student behaviour can be more challenging at secondary or high school level (Nickerson & Martens, 2008; Aloe et al., 2014). Additionally, in England, exclusion rates are highest in Key Stage 3 and age 14 is the most common age to be permanently excluded (Department for Education, 2023). According to the

latest government statistics, secondary schools made up 87% of permanent exclusions in Spring 2021/22 (Department for Education, 2023). Shwab and Alnahdi (2020) in a study of 221 Austrian teachers also reported more positive attitudes towards inclusion among primary level teachers.

It is interesting that secondary school teachers significantly differ to primary teachers in their concerns about inclusive education. This may be an important factor underlying the differences in greater use of reactive strategies and exclusions. As previously discussed, attitudes towards inclusion are linked to differences in teachers' behaviour management and likelihood of using an exclusion (e.g., Cooper et al., 2013; Hatton., 2013; Miller, 2003; Munn et al., 2000). It would have been interesting to use multi-group analysis to replicate the path analysis while controlling for school stage to see if the model tested in this study differed depending on education level (i.e., primary and secondary). However, this was not possible due to the smaller sample size. These differences between primary and secondary teachers in terms of their attitudes, behaviour management, and use of exclusionary strategies would be a worthwhile topic for future studies to explore.

Results from this study also found that there were significant differences between males and females in terms of their self-efficacy, stress, reactive behaviour management strategies and use of exclusionary strategies. Results showed that males report greater use of reactive behaviour management strategies and use of exclusionary strategies than females. Females also report higher levels of self-efficacy in student engagement and higher levels of stress than males. This result builds on previous findings of differences between males and females in attitudes and teaching practices. For example, previous research has found that female teacher trainees are reported to be more tolerant in implementing inclusive education (Avramidis et al., 2000, Ellins & Porter, 2005).

There is also some evidence of gender differences in teachers' classroom management and attitudes towards inclusion. Klassen and Chiu (2010) for example, found higher levels of self-efficacy in classroom management among male teachers, although a meta-analysis by Yada et al. (2022) reported that the relationship between gender and inclusive practices has been inconsistent in previous studies. The finding of females having higher levels of stress has also been reported in previous research. Klassen and Chiu (2010) in their survey of 1,430 teachers, reported that female teachers had greater workload stress, greater classroom stress from student behaviours, and lower classroom management self-efficacy. This study adds to our knowledge of gender difference in self-efficacy and stress and different types of behaviour management which has not been explored before.

Results also showed that teachers who reported teaching in 'deprived' or 'very deprived' locations reported greater use of reactive behaviour management and exclusionary strategies. These findings reflect, in some part, national statistics which show that a disproportionate number of exclusions occur in the most disadvantaged locations (Partridge et al., 2020). Gill et al. (2017) also report that children excluded from school are 'four times more likely to have grown up in poverty, and students who receive free school meals (FSM) are four times more likely to be excluded than other children (Department of Education, 2012). It is important to note that in the sample of teachers responding to this survey, more females (65% of all female participants) taught in primary level compared to 28% of male participants.

Therefore, the gender differences in relation to the main measures discussed above may also reflect variations in teachers' attitudes due to the phase (primary or secondary) they teach in. Clearly, poverty and deprivation play an important role in the use of exclusions but is a complex relationship that is difficult to unpick (Alexiadou, 2002). Children from disadvantaged background are more at risk of having emotional and behavioural problems (Ackerman et al.,, 2004; Bradley & Corwyn, 2002; McLoyd, 1998) and this may lead to more use of reactive

behaviour management and the use of exclusions (possibly to gain support/or move children to an alternative setting). Similar findings were also reported by Gülsün et al. (2023). They found that when teachers reported greater numbers of children with attention and behavioural difficulties in their class, this had a significant negative effect on self-efficacy in behaviour management. Given the well documented research showing that children from disadvantaged backgrounds are more likely to be excluded (e.g., Department of Education, 2012; Gill et al., 2017) and the harmful effects of exclusion (Pirrie et al., 2011), it is concerning that schools in more deprived areas, where presumably there is a higher level of need, report greater use of exclusionary and reactive behaviour management.

Limitations of this study

The findings from this study should be interpreted with some caution as they are based on a cross sectional survey design. As such, the analysis is unable to explore cause and effects. Future research could look at the longer-term causes and effects of teacher attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy on teachers' behaviour management and use of exclusions using longitudinal designs. Again, because the study is based on self-reported data, there is a risk that teachers responded with social desirability in mind. This effect should have been reduced however, by ensuring that the online survey was anonymous and confidential (Grimm, 2010). Future research looking at the relationship between teacher attitudes towards inclusion and behaviour management could include observations of classroom practice to have a richer measure of teachers' teaching approaches and could also be used to link and validate teachers' self-reported use of different strategies.

The study also asked teachers about the rate of permanent exclusions in their schools. However, on inspection of these survey responses, most participants replied that they did not know, or could not answer on the level of permanent exclusions in their school. It was, therefore, not possible to carry out any meaningful analysis using this item. This is not

surprising as teachers are not often aware of how many students have been permanently excluded in their schools. This is one limitation of the study as instead, use of exclusions was assessed looking at teachers' use of exclusionary strategies. This is relevant to permanent exclusions as use of such strategies is linked to high use of fixed term and permanent exclusions in UK schools (e.g., Barker et al., 2010; Kline, 2016; Stanforth & Rose, 2020). However, it would be of interest to see if and how attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy and behaviour management predict actual exclusions in a school. Future studies may wish to look at these constructs within low excluding and high excluding schools to further examine the contribution of teacher attitudes, beliefs, and practices towards permanent exclusions and suspensions.

Whilst the model showed an acceptable to good fit to the data, the RMSEA was a little high but it is likely that this was affected by the relatively small sample size. While the sample size of 100 is considered acceptable given the number of paths in the model (Jeon, 2015), it is on the lower side of samples used in path analysis (e.g., Bentler & Chou, 1987). In future research, it would be of benefit to examine the relationships between the constructs explored in this study and replicate the model in a larger sample of teachers. This study's sample size also meant that it was not possible to conduct multi-group analysis to compare relationships in the main constructs across school level, gender, and levels of deprivation in the school location, which would be worthwhile to look at in any future research.

This study supported Ajzen's (1991) Theory of Planned Behaviour. However, only two of the elements of the TPB were used in this study (attitudes and self-efficacy). Future research could include other aspects of the TPB (subjective norms and intentions for example) to understand if a full TPB model is useful in predicting teachers' behaviour when it comes to behaviour management and use of exclusions.

Implications for Educational Psychology practice and policy

The results of this study have a number of implications for practice and policy. The findings show that teacher attitudes and beliefs are important factors to consider that contribute to inclusive cultures in schools and make the use of exclusions less likely. The findings show that attitudes towards inclusion and teacher self-efficacy predict the use of more proactive behaviour management which is linked to less use of exclusionary approaches. This understanding of what potentially leads to teachers using either proactive, reactive, and exclusionary behaviour management approaches is highly valuable when thinking about training and support for schools that aims to improve the school's inclusive practices and policies. The findings in this study offer Educational Psychologists and other professionals who support schools a model to change teachers' behaviour management styles. It suggests that any training and support should aim to target attitudes and self-efficacy as explicit aims as these appear to be key factors that lead to changes in behaviour management styles. Additionally, the SEND Code of Practice places a duty of teachers to educate all children inclusively and make sure that all children can access the curriculum. Despite this, the practical implementation of inclusive practices in mainstream schools remains a challenge (Sharma et al., 2012). This research highlights that an important aspect in fostering more inclusive schools is to engage with teacher attitudes and belief systems, and to think about how to improve attitudes and self-efficacy in order to encourage more inclusive teaching.

The findings also show that there are significant differences between teachers in their attitudes and behaviour management depending on their gender, whether they teach at primary or secondary level, and whether they teach in a deprived or affluent area. Males, secondary school teachers and those teaching in deprived locations all report higher use of reactive behaviour management and exclusions. This is useful knowledge to have when thinking about where to target support to improve attitudes towards inclusion, and tackle the

underlying reasons for why teachers are using more reactive and exclusionary strategies. This training could focus on helping teachers to understand how their own underlying attitudes and beliefs have an impact on their reactions to and strategies used with children. The training could also unpick what has shaped teachers' attitudes and beliefs in order to more effectively challenge less positive views towards inclusion.

Understanding how to tackle underlying factors like teacher attitudes and beliefs is a key part of changing practice within schools systemically. The findings in this study could be used to support a whole school approach to developing more inclusive policies and strategies. This study contributes to the field of educational psychology research as it unpicks aspects of what contributes to pro-inclusive cultures, and therefore less use of exclusions in schools. Promoting inclusion is a core principle of the role of the EP and so understanding how to support schools to become more inclusive and support all their students is key to best practice. Additionally, it is useful to know that improving teachers' self-efficacy is a core part of reducing the likelihood that teachers will use reactive and exclusionary behaviour management strategies.

Enhancing pro-inclusive attitudes and self-efficacy should also be a clearer aim of pre-service teacher training and would also be useful to incorporate into support and training for early career teachers. Sharma and Nuttal (2016) for example, report on the effects of a nine-week university course to enhance to pre-service teachers' knowledge of inclusive education and the implementation techniques. Pre and post evaluation showed significant improvements in pre-service teachers' attitudes and efficacy around inclusion, while concerns decreased significantly. Programmes that improve teacher self-efficacy with the aim of reducing the use of reactive and exclusionary behaviour management should also be a key focus of those supporting schools and teachers. One such programme is the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management programme. A recent evaluation of an Educational

Psychologist-led implementation of the programme among 368 teachers in Ireland showed that it significantly improved teacher self-efficacy and well-being, and significantly reduced feelings of burnout (Kennedy et al., 2021). Furthermore, this programme has strong evidence from a number of different countries and contexts. A recent systematic review looking at nine studies from England, Ireland, Jamaica, the United States and Wales found that the Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management programme significantly reduced teachers' use of negative classroom management strategies and reduced conduct problems among high-risk children (Nye et al., 2018). These are the types of programmes educators should be looking to when it comes to tackling the complex issue of improving inclusion and reducing the use of reactive and exclusionary behaviour management strategies, which also appears to reduce the risk of teacher burn-out.

Educational psychologists should challenge teachers' attitudes and beliefs, and aim to develop self-efficacy through training, or through using consultation and supervision. Educational Psychologists are also well placed to support school staff to develop a more consistent approach to understanding and managing behaviour, and particularly understanding when children with challenging behaviour have unmet SEND needs. As a workforce, Educational Psychologists should challenge the use of exclusions, particularly when used with students who have SEND, and are from disadvantaged backgrounds. We should use our skill in navigating difficult conversations and in consultation to challenge negative attitudes towards inclusion, and the use of exclusionary practices that harm already vulnerable students. On a policy level, there needs to be scrutiny and understanding of why exclusions occur, and what support schools need to prevent them from taking place. The variability in exclusions across schools and regions show that there are many school-level factors that influence the rate of exclusions, and this variation and inconsistency should also be addressed at a policy level.

Conclusion

The results from this study support the overall hypothesised model that teachers' attitudes towards inclusion predict teacher self-efficacy, and that this in turn predicts proactive behaviour management strategies which subsequently predicts the use of exclusionary strategies. This is an important finding because it highlights how different aspects of teacher attitudes and beliefs shape the behaviour management practices used in a school. These teacher level attitudes, beliefs, and practices play a significant role in contributing to either a positive, or negative inclusive ethos in schools. The findings from this study also show that attitudes and beliefs are important factors to consider in any training programme that aims to improve teachers' behaviour management. Training and support should also focus on particularly reducing the use of reactive strategies given its link to the use of exclusionary approaches. The finding that levels of stress moderate and reduce the effect of the relationship between teachers' use of reactive strategies and exclusions is an interesting relationship that warrants further exploration.

A number of studies (e.g., Bümen, 2010; Holmstrom et al., 2023; Salmela-Aro & Upadyaya, 2018) have reported a link between teachers who have high self-efficacy in students' engagement who also score highly on measures of burnout. Any intervention to reduce the use of exclusions at school and enhance teacher's skills should be mindful of the knock-on effect this may have on teachers' stress levels and the risk of burnout. Teachers can be supported to use approaches that are proactive when it comes to managing behaviour that do not risk emotional exhaustion, hopefully aiming for teachers who have high levels of self-efficacy but low levels of burnout, as reported in research by Holmstrom et al. (2023).

This study highlights the importance of challenging teachers' internal attitudes and beliefs around inclusion when it comes to developing a more inclusive ethos in schools. Additionally, training should focus on attitudes towards inclusion and aim to support the

development of teachers' self-efficacy as this may lead to increased use of proactive strategies, and reduced use of exclusions. Given the pervasive use of exclusions in schools in England, particularly among children who are disproportionally likely to live in poverty, it is important to think about and tackle all the factors that contribute to its high use. This research offers a potentially useful model to think about changing teachers' behaviours when it comes to using more reactive, punitive, and exclusionary approaches. The findings show that changing attitudes and beliefs of teachers is an important piece of the puzzle to reduce the level of exclusions in schools, knowledge which educational psychologists might use when thinking about support and intervention for schools in their practice.

Chapter 3: Bridging and reflective chapter

Exploratory stage

The initial idea for my thesis stemmed from experiences and reflections I had as both a teacher and a trainee EP. In my practice, I had seen how some teachers often had very different attitudes and self-efficacy beliefs when it came to including children with special educational needs, and this appeared to have an impact on the practices used in schools (particularly exclusions). My own personal beliefs also influenced my interest: I am firmly committed to children being educated inclusively and believe that this is more positive for all groups of children and society, although through teaching and working as a trainee EP, I have observed how difficult it can be to implement inclusion on a practical level.

Both in teaching and working as a trainee EP, I have observed how teacher attitudes and school cultures can lead to differences in inclusive practices and have an impact on a school's willingness to exclude pupils. Given my own personal alignment with inclusive education, and the significantly negative outcomes associated with excluding pupils (Paget et al., 2018; Partridge et al., 2020; Timpson, 2019), I was interested in understanding more about why there are differences in inclusive ethe and exclusion rates between schools, as understanding this can potentially inform how to support schools to develop more positive cultures and practices around inclusion, and therefore reduce the high rates of exclusion.

I started quite broadly and looked at research literature related to exclusions in schools, and the factors linked to this (e.g., Timpson, 2019; Valdebenito et al., 2019). While there is significant research examining the student characteristics that are associated with an increased likelihood of being excluded (e.g., Department for Education, 2023; Paget et al., 2018; Timpson, 2019) there is less written about school and teacher level factors that lead to differences in exclusion rates. The Timpson 2019 review of exclusion in England is an extremely useful paper that examined exclusion rates, factors leading to this, and ways to

tackle the issue – this paper discussed how some schools appear to have lower rates of exclusions compared to schools with similar characteristics of students, and there appears to be some evidence that differences in the ethos, culture and leadership of schools lead to more or less use of exclusions (Timpson, 2019). This also chimed with what I have observed in practice – with the culture of a school often leading to differences in beliefs with regards to where children's challenging behaviour stems from and the use of more punitive responses.

I became interested in these differences in ethos between schools and the relationship to behaviour management and use of exclusions and decided to explore the literature to understand any gaps and inform ideas for a research question and study. My reading in this area led me to Hatton's (2013) research looking at differences in ethos between high excluding and low excluding schools. This study concluded that low excluding schools had greater consistency in their responses to challenging behaviour. The findings also showed differences between schools when it came to beliefs about inclusion and behaviour management.

This research led to an increased interest in exploring these school level differences in more detail. I wanted to understand what makes up an inclusive ethos and unpick how different beliefs among teachers contribute to this ethos. I had also carried out qualitative research as part of a study in the first year of my doctoral course – this research interviewed teachers on their views of exclusions, causes for exclusions, and what support was most effective to prevent students from being excluded. One of the findings from this project was that some teachers clearly believed that some students were not well suited to a mainstream setting and that often a quicker route to that student being placed in more appropriate provision was to permanently exclude them. This incentive was also reported by Timpson (2019, pg. 39) who also found that some schools report permanent exclusion as 'a deliberate tool' to trigger an assessment of a child's needs and to 'fast track' a move to an alternative

setting. I was interested in this view and why some schools and teachers appeared to have this belief while other schools and teachers wanted to keep students with special educational needs in their mainstream school and viewed exclusion as a last resort.

Conducting the literature review

I started to review research looking at teachers' beliefs and attitudes around inclusion and behaviour management. I was interested in how teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards inclusion might lead to differences in teaching practices, and ultimately whether it influenced the use of exclusions. I carried out further research into this area and read a number of studies looking at how teachers' attitudes towards inclusion are linked to different teaching practices (e.g., Gibbs & Powell, 2012; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Yada et al., 2018). I was particularly interested in Macfarlane and Woolfson's 2013 study looking at how teachers' attitudes towards inclusion for children with social, emotional, and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) was linked to different teaching practices. For example, teachers were more positive in their views towards teaching children with SEBD if they had a headteacher with more positive views and who was more supportive. Teachers were also more positive if they had attended more INSET sessions. This made me reflect on the factors that may make teachers more positive and thus have an impact on their teaching styles when it comes to children with SEBD.

I then read Gibbs and Powell's 2012 research looking at how teachers' self and collective efficacy was linked to the use of exclusions. From Gibbs and Powell's research, I became interested in teacher self-efficacy and how this construct influences practice – again Gibbs and Powell's study suggested that there was a relationship between high levels of self and collective efficacy and lower levels of exclusion. This chimed with my anecdotal experience of some teachers who had positive attitudes around inclusion and were also confident in their ability to teach inclusively. In discussion with such teachers (from my

previous teaching role and in my work as a trainee), there was a clear difference in some teachers' attitudes towards inclusion – with more positive attitudes towards inclusion, higher levels of self-efficacy and less willingness to exclude appearing to be linked. This initial reading and reflection made me wonder whether there was a specific link between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, their self-efficacy, and their teaching practice (specifically the use of exclusions). This also reflected what I had observed in schools both as a teacher and as a trainee and I wondered whether attitudes towards inclusion and levels of self-efficacy could be used to explain why some schools had very different atmospheres when it came to inclusion and willingness to exclude pupils.

The literature review was a critical element of the research process in identifying gaps in the research base. Although exclusion and inclusion are widely researched topics, they are both very large areas with a substantial amount of research looking at different aspects of practice. Most studies also focussed on risk factors associated with exclusion at the pupil level, as well as outcomes associated with exclusion. As I was interested in differences between schools in terms of inclusion and exclusion at a culture and practice level, I started to focus on papers that researched factors associated with inclusive atmospheres and practices, as well as with reduced levels of exclusion. I reflected that this was a broad theme to begin with and it was challenging to see themes emerge between studies, as there were so many different aspects of inclusion and exclusion that had been studied in this literature. However, I wanted to start my literature review as generally as possible to avoid missing relevant studies.

It is still possible that my choices to explore teacher level factors linked to positive school culture towards inclusion/reduced exclusion may have resulted in some studies being missed. However, I also reflected that as with any research study, the decision on where to start reviewing the literature needs to consider relevance and time constraints. I used set

terms to explore the literature and tried to be objective and be guided by the literature rather than my own previous thoughts on the research area.

Formulating a research question

Following the literature review and wide reading of research in the area, I was led to studies looking at teacher level factors that are linked to inclusive teaching. I was specifically interested in research linking teacher attitudes and self-efficacy to differences in teachers' practices. However, no study had looked specifically at what factors predict teachers' use of different types of behaviour management and the use of exclusions. Many studies looked at teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy as well as teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and teaching practice (e.g, Gibbs & Powell, 2012; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Yada et al., 2018), but no study looked specifically at the link between attitudes and the use of more punitive behaviour management practices (including exclusion). Some studies (e.g. Gibbs & Powell, 2012) had linked teacher self-efficacy to the use of exclusions but had not explored the role of teacher attitudes toward inclusion as part of this.

This led to further refining of my research area as it appeared there was a gap in research looking at the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and the use of more punitive and exclusionary behaviour management practices (including permanent exclusion). Following the literature review, the final research questions for the study were developed. These were formulated from the gaps in the research base and also with a view of what research would be useful to educational psychology practice and schools. Through my reading of relevant literature (e.g, Gibbs & Powell, 2012; Gülsün et al., 2022; MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013; Yada et al., 2018; Wilson et al., 2022), I had noted that there was a link between attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy, and links between self-efficacy and use of exclusions.

However, no study in the literature had looked at the specific relationships between attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, and teachers' use of different types of behaviour management, including exclusion. From my own experience and wider reading, I wondered whether less positive attitudes towards inclusion were linked to self-efficacy and greater use of reactive and exclusionary behaviour management and greater levels of exclusion. I thought that it was worthwhile trying to understand why there are differences between teachers when it comes to this area as it has a huge influence on the significant number of children who are permanently excluded, who often have special educational needs and disproportionately come from disadvantaged backgrounds (Timpson, 2019). In the literature review, I had also come across frequent mention of other factors that can affect teacher attitudes. Support and levels of stress were cited by a number of studies as two factors that can affect how teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy, and teaching practice. I thought that it would be valuable to include these two areas as it is likely they have an impact on teachers' attitudes, feelings, and practices in school. Furthermore, the literature reviewed also suggested that there can be differences in teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy, and teaching practices according to their characteristics. Many studies have noted differences in these constructs depending on gender, years of experience, characteristics of students taught, and school stage. Therefore my research questions were:

1. How are teachers' attitudes linked to feelings of self-efficacy and how does this, in turn, affect behavioural management strategies and the subsequent use of exclusions? (RQ1)
2. Do levels of stress and levels of support moderate any of the relationships between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, behaviour management strategies, and use of exclusions? (RQ2)

3. Do certain characteristics of teachers like school stage, gender, years of experience and school location lead to differences in their attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy, behaviour management, and use of exclusions? (RQ3)

Research Design

The research was designed from a critical realist paradigm, which holds that reality exists, but that each of us understand and construct this differently (Danermark et al., 2002; Patomäki, 2020). Central to critical realism is the belief that our own experiences and constructions, have an impact on our perceptions of the world and the 'reality' that is measured in any research study (Archer et al., 1998; Bergin et al., 2008; Ryba et al., 2020). Throughout the course of the doctorate, I had a number of reflections on my own ontological views.

Prior to the doctorate, I very much aligned with a more positivist school of thought, although I was aware that research can be very much influenced by different contexts. The modules and discussion on epistemology and ontology led to a reflective process where I questioned my own views on reality and how it is created. I shifted my beliefs somewhat and felt that while I do fully ascribe to the value of empirical research, I feel that when it comes to research involving social and psychological phenomena, it is not possible to untangle an objective and true reality from our own constructions, environments, culture, history, and context. However, I believe that an approximation of this reality can be measured and can throw light on important research questions. These beliefs align well with critical realism. In terms of the research design, I wanted to unpick the constructs I had uncovered in my review of the literature as my main research question asked how teachers' attitudes were linked to feelings of self-efficacy and how this, in turn, affects behavioural management strategies and the subsequent use of exclusions. Exploring this construct and building a model to predict teacher behaviour required a quantitative research design.

I reflected on whether it would have been more aligned with critical realism to carry out qualitative interviews with teachers to explore in much more detail their beliefs and practice around inclusion and exclusion, however, I felt that a survey would allow me to answer my research question with greater accuracy and would add more to the literature base. My research questions were about generalisation and prediction of teacher behaviour and so this also necessitated a predominantly quantitative design (e.g., Yilmaz, 2013). I also considered whether a mixed methods design would be worthwhile in adding detail to quantitative findings and giving more rich information on teachers' views, however, I felt that there is an overwhelming amount of qualitative research that has already been conducted on teachers' attitudes and beliefs around inclusion, and I wanted my study to address what I observed to be a gap in the literature – and this meant using quantitative measures to build a model to predict what factors led to more exclusionary behaviour management and use of exclusions.

I had also carried out qualitative research in year 1 of the doctorate exploring teachers' experiences of working with students who had been excluded and were at risk of exclusion, and I did not want to duplicate this work in the current study given time constraints. I included several questions in the survey to capture demographic information. I included these as I wanted to analyse whether any teacher or school characteristics led to differences in teacher attitudes, beliefs, and practices. Questions relating to characteristics were chosen based on the literature review and what factors appeared to be linked to differences in attitudes, beliefs, and practices. In terms of the survey, the measures used were very much driven by the literature review and all of the measures used to explore the main constructs of the study (attitudes towards inclusion, teacher self-efficacy, behaviour management) had been used in previous research and had been validated for their psychometric properties. This made sense as I wanted to build on the existing literature and use these measures to explore and link to reactive behaviour management and use of

exclusions as this had not been looked at in previous studies. The selection of valid, reliable and accurate measures was a significant part of this research process. This conceptualisation, operationalisation and measurement of variables was critical to the study as the design was solely quantitative and so it was essential to ensure that sensitive, valid and reliable measures were selected to use in the online survey (e.g., Brown & Zhao, 2023). There were a number of iterative phases of searching the literature base and assessing items for relevance and fit with the current study's aims, discussing scales with my supervisor and also checking psychometric properties and whether the scales had been previously used with a UK teaching population. A further benefit to using validated measures and an online survey was also that teachers could fill it out at any time and from any location, which I hoped would help with response rates given the time pressures that teachers work under. I carried out a pilot of my survey before launching it online which was useful to gain feedback from teachers on their interpretation of the questions and whether the survey made sense to them. It was also useful to check that the survey only took 5 to 10 minutes which was important to boost response rates.

I did reflect that it may have been useful to have some open-ended questions in the survey to allow for more comments from teachers, but did not want to add unnecessary time to the survey, particularly when the quantitative questions alone would answer my research question, and ethically, I did not want respondents to spend time writing responses that would not be analysed or used in the study. I did reflect however, that one limitation of relying solely on quantitative measures is that it can risk losing the complexity and richness of what is happening in schools. Using validated scales that have been developed and used to accurately and reliably measure a specific construct is one way of overcoming this risk, (DeVellis & Thorpe, 2021), but these measures can be simplifications of the complexity of the real world (Mitchell, 2003). I feel this is certainly true when it comes to attempts to

operationalise teachers' behaviour management. I know that, in reality, teachers use a wide range of both types of behaviour management – disciplinary and what might be perceived as reactive as well as setting up rules and routines and planning engaging lessons (what might be called proactive). In real world teaching, I reflected that it is not always possible to neatly categorise teaching and behaviour management approaches in to one of either proactive or reactive behaviour management, and that equally most teachers use a combination of all these strategies. There is potential for future quantitative research to test interactions between these different types of behaviour management or use profile designs to explore this. I also wondered about the extent to which the BIMS can accurately measure 'reactive' and proactive' behaviour management strategies, particularly when so many 'reactive' strategies may be part of a school's policy and so teachers may not have choice about their use (Partridge et al., 2020). This may make it difficult to measure this construct by using scales in a way that is ecologically valid.

However, the idea that behaviour management occurs on a continuum of control (as proposed by Martin & Sass, 2010) and teachers' having personal discretion of what strategy they use in some occasions does have merit, and has been borne out in research using the BIMS scale that show real differences between teachers' levels of control and how this can lead to differences in other teaching practices and ultimately children's experiences of that teacher and classroom climate and school culture (Alasmari et al., 2021., Lopes et al., 2017., Martin et al., 2012). I reflected that when taking a quantitative approach, and particularly when building a model using quantitative measures, it is necessary to use psychometric measures that may oversimplify real world practice (Cooper, 2023). This is necessary in order to measure a construct reliably and in a quantitative way. This can then enable analysis to understand how useful certain constructs are (like teacher self-efficacy and different types of behaviour management) in predicting actual teacher behaviour (like the use of exclusions).

The benefit of using psychometric scales is that they can then be used to make more accurate assessments and predictions about what drives teaching practice and behaviour (Rust & Golombok, 2014). On reflection, it may have been useful to have carried out a small number of interviews or all owed some open-ended comments in the survey to bring some of this richness to my research and balance the risk that a reliance on quantitative measures might oversimplify practice in schools.

I also consulted with my research supervisor and looked at relevant studies to understand the sample size I would need to carry out my analysis. This was one limitation of the quantitative design as I needed to ensure I had sufficient responses in order to carry out a path analysis, but had limited control over how many responses the survey received. This is something I will be more aware of for future research – having a clearer participant recruitment strategy to keep response rates high as well as a clearer understanding of what analysis is possible with different sample sizes (i.e., significant testing and power). The design chosen allowed me to explore the main constructs of the study in a much larger sample of teachers than would have been possible using qualitative research. However, it means that some of the richness of teachers' experiences or their own explanations for why they might feel this way is missing. The results are also based on a convenience sample, and probability sampling was not employed, so while the final sample of 100 is appropriate for the statistical analysis conducted (e.g., Stage et al., 2004; Wolf et al., 2013) and seemed to reflect the wider population in terms of key characteristics aside from geographical location, we cannot be completely sure that the sample was representative of the wider population of teachers in the UK. It may be that there are differences between the teachers responding to this survey and teachers overall.

Ethical issues

In advance of commencing this study, all potential ethical issues were considered and a proposal was submitted to the University of East Anglia School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Committee for approval. This process was useful in considering all aspects of ethics, confidentiality, data storage and access as well as making information about the study clear and accessible to participants.

One of the ethical issues from the study was the risk of the questions leading to distress in teachers as they may recall difficult or stressful situations with students where they had used a punitive response or given an exclusion. I reflected upon the HCPC standard 6.1 when it came to this ethical issue. This states that psychologists must take all reasonable steps to reduce the risk of harm to service users, carers and colleagues as far as possible (HCPC, 2016). Therefore to reduce the risk of any distress in response to questions, the topic of the survey was clearly explained on the consent and information form, and participants were reminded that their participation in the study was voluntary and that they could choose to end their participation in the study at any point. The information sheet also included signposting information to a support line for school staff should they feel the need to discuss any emotive topics arising from participation in the study. As the study was anonymous and online and participants did not reveal any identifiable information, there were no concerns about anonymity and confidentiality. One ethical concern I was mindful of (having been a teacher myself) was the burden on teacher time – even with 104 responses – this equates to 1040 minutes of teacher time. Given the work pressures and time constraints of teachers currently, I wanted the survey to be as short as possible without compromising on the integrity of the research. I also wanted to ensure that the findings of the study were practical and relevant and used to support schools, so that benefit goes back to schools and teachers for giving up their time to participate.

Procedure and Analysis

The process of data collection was somewhat challenging in that I was relying on schools and teachers unknown to me to take an interest in the study and respond to the survey. I also knew that I needed a final sample close to 100 in order to carry out a path analysis. I knew in advance that getting a good response rate would be challenging as teachers can be hard to contact and have limited time. I had planned to send the survey out widely to contacts, as well as schools within my EP service, professional networks and online forums on social media. I thought that this would lead to sufficient responses but this proved difficult. I needed to push out the survey numerous times and sent four reminders before having a sample of 104. This was four months after initially sending out the survey. I had not anticipated the time or the effort required to obtain this sample size.

I reflected that even more research into professional networks, contact lists and forums to send the survey out to may have led to a greater response rate, and that it would be useful to spend more upfront time on this in any future research. I also reflected on some of the bias that was introduced through the use of existing networks. Many of the schools I sent my survey to had pre-existing relationships with me – either from my last role as a teacher or my current trainee role. This may have made it more likely for teachers from these schools to respond. Carrying out the research made me very aware of the intense time constraints that schools and teachers operate under, and the competing demands they manage. This led me to reflect on the importance of making it even easier for teachers to participate in research as it is so essential that their views and experiences are foremost when thinking about how to change practice in the education system. For this reason, I think that short online surveys work very well to increase the ease of access for teachers. In fact, teacher tapp - https://teachertapp.co.uk/ - was set up for exactly this reason. This is a daily survey app for teachers that quickly surveys teachers with one short survey question a day. It aims for the

voices of those on the ground to be at the heart of positive change within schools. I considered contacting teacher tapp for this research, but the length of my survey did not fit with their requirements. However, this undertaking of making research easy for teachers to participate in is an important reflection I have had throughout this process.

In terms of time and planning, the length of time it took to obtain a sufficient sample size meant that there were delays to the rest of the research stages. Making use of gantt charts in excel helped me to plan the timeframe for the rest of the study to ensure that I had sufficient time. I reflected that in the planning stages of the study, I should have allowed more contingency and risk assessment for unexpected challenges or for when a stage took longer than planned as it made the later stages of the study significantly pressurised in terms of time. A key reflection throughout this research, was the strain in undertaking a complex study and the difficulty in anticipating impacts on timelines with having a 2-year-old and 6 month old (now 3 and 1), and the many days one or both of them were sent home unwell from nursery. It was not possible to plan for the effects this had on the time needed to complete the study, but clearly the key reflection is allowing for even more contingency time.

I had originally wanted to measure the rate of actual permanent exclusions and suspensions in schools and then see how attitudes towards inclusion, self-efficacy and behaviour management practices predicted these. However, it became clear as teachers responded to the survey that teachers are not always aware of these figures and so it was not possible to use this data. This would be an interesting aspect to examine in any future study – particularly to look at differences in high excluding and low excluding schools.

The statistical analysis of the data was also a particularly challenging stage as I did not have any previous experience of SEM or path analysis and so I felt stretched in terms of my comfort and knowledge at times. I was very aware of Kolb's experiential learning cycle

(Kolb, 1984), and feel that the concrete experience of designing, executing, and writing the findings of this research has led to a more abstract conceptualisation of the research process more generally. I feel I have a greater understanding of the process and can more clearly see how I might contribute to research as a practicing EP in the future. I was also aware of the four stages of competence (e.g. Howell, 1982; Lindon, 2012) during the data analysis phase and shifted from conscious incompetence to a more conscious competence in some areas of statistical analysis.

Contribution to Personal Knowledge/Professional Development

The scientist practitioner model of EP practice has always held particular appeal for me, and has been one of the aspects of the doctorate and role I was particularly excited by. Having been through the detailed process of designing, researching, and writing my own research project, I feel much more aligned with the identity of an applied psychologist than I did previously. I now feel that I have much greater awareness of the academic research process and have the necessary skills to hopefully add to educational psychology research in future. I have learned how to think about ethical issues and go through an ethical review process. I have also learnt how to communicate research to a wider audience of schools and teachers. Completing the study has also been a core part in meeting the required BPS competency 9.4 of effectively planning and conducting a rigorous research project (BPS 9.4 (HCPC 14.27)) as well as applying these skills in the role of a scientist practitioner (HCPC 14.30).

I also reflected on a number of theories of learning throughout the research process. Being the learner in this process gave me a unique perspective of being able to consider different theories on learning and the learning cycle. Throughout the study, I made use of Gibbs' Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988) which helped me to understand the stages of learning and reflection I went through as I moved from discomfort to more fluency with some aspects of the research process. Research supervision and peer supervision was also invaluable in

allowing for the 'Reflective Observation' stage of learning (Kolb, 1984). Although challenging, I am pleased with the study and the direction I chose overall as I feel that the findings genuinely add knowledge to aspects of inclusive education that had not been researched previously. I have also significantly increased my own competence in understanding inclusive practice and the multitude of factors influencing a school's decision to exclude.

In my role as trainee, I frequently work with children at risk of exclusion and this study has given me much greater insight into the system of factors that impact on that decision to exclude. This, I hope, will help me to make my support of schools and students in this situation even more effective, particularly when it comes to moving away from a narrow, within-child view of why that child is at risk of exclusion. It has improved my knowledge of seeing schools as a system and how to unpick the many factors that make up that school culture. I plan to work with schools next year to think about how they intervene earlier for children at risk of exclusion, and I am hoping that my research on teacher attitudes and beliefs will make this support more effective as these will be among the factors I aim to address. I strongly believe that skill and knowledge in research is one of the unique aspects of the EP profession and while practically, time constraints can make research and adding to the literature base more difficult, it is essential in tackling some of the more pressing systemic and policy issues within education. This research study has given me confidence to make this a core part of my practice after qualification.

Contribution to knowledge/relevance to practice and future directions

As mentioned previously, a unique aspect of the EP role is the scientist practitioner model and the ability to work both practically with schools and teachers while also using and adding to research. Indeed Dunsmuir et al. (2009) noted that "evaluation has become increasingly important in the contexts in which educational psychologists (EPs) practice" (Dunsmuir et.

al., 2009, p.53). Additionally, a core part of EP training is to be able to "use research, reasoning and problem-solving skills to determine appropriate actions" and this is enshrined in the HCPC Standards of Practice 2b.1. Finally, honing the skills of researcher is what allows us to be applied psychologists which is invaluable in the bridging role that EPs play – being part of frontline practice in schools and feeding the knowledge and understanding gained from this back to policy and research. There are very few roles that have this unique and valuable duality. In that vein, it is important that the results of any study we undertake have practical and actionable implications for schools.

The results of this study have a number of implications for practice. Firstly the findings add to the literature base exploring factors like teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and self-efficacy and how this predicts inclusive practice – like the use of either proactive or reactive behaviour management and the use of exclusions. The study also gave further validation to the use of the Sentiments, Attitudes and Concerns towards Inclusive Education Scale, (SACIE-R) and the teacher sense of self-efficacy scale (TSES) in a UK context. It was also the first time that the Behavioural and Instructional Management Strategies (BIMS) scale was used in a population of UK teachers which will be useful to any researcher wishing to explore the constructs of proactive and reactive teaching among UK teachers.

The findings also point to the importance of understanding teacher attitudes and beliefs when it comes to developing more inclusive cultures and reducing the use of exclusions. The findings show that attitudes towards inclusion and teacher self-efficacy link to the use of more proactive behaviour which is linked to less use of exclusions. This will be useful to consider in any training and support for schools that aim to improve the school's inclusive practices and policies and offers a model to think about behaviour change in the training of teachers. Given the SEND code of practice places a requirement on schools to educate all children inclusively and make sure that all children can access the curriculum,

understanding how to foster more inclusive cultures schools is essential. This study shows that teacher beliefs and attitudes are key aspects to focus on when thinking about fostering inclusion and reducing the use of exclusions. As previously mentioned, there are promising training programmes that have been shown to improve teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, and self-efficacy (e.g., Kennedy et al., 2021; Sharma & Nuttal, 2016). Educational Psychologists need to focus explicitly on these factors when supporting schools to develop inclusive policies and also when thinking about tackling the factors driving high exclusion rates.

The findings also show that there are significant differences between teachers in their attitudes and behaviour management depending on their gender, whether they teach at primary or secondary level, and whether they teach in a deprived or affluent area. Males, secondary school teacher and those teaching in deprived locations all report higher use of reactive behaviour management and exclusions. This is very useful knowledge to have when thinking about where to target support to improve attitudes towards inclusion, and tackle the underlying reasons for why teachers are using more reactive and exclusionary strategies. This training could focus on helping teachers to understand how their own underlying attitudes and beliefs have an impact on their reactions to and strategies used with children. This study has touched on the role of punitive and reactive approaches to behaviour management and how this may play a role in exclusions. Clearly, overly punitive school cultures play a role in the use of exclusions. However, in reality most teachers and schools need to use a mixture of discipline and proactive approaches. It is important to move away from a debate that pitches these two different approaches against each other but recognise that inclusive and person-centred pedagogical practices are key to fostering inclusive cultures in schools that move away from a reliance on exclusion.

Understanding how to tackle underlying factors like teacher attitudes and beliefs is a key part of changing practice within schools systemically, and when thinking about organisational change within schools – this reflects the BPS competence 7.7 which outlines how EPs should have knowledge of the process of organisational analysis and change. The findings in this study could be used to support a whole school approach to developing more inclusive policies and strategies. This study contributes to the field of educational psychology research as it unpicks aspects of what contributes to pro-inclusive cultures, and therefore less use of exclusions in schools.

Promoting inclusion is a core principle of the role of the EP and so understanding how to support schools to become more inclusive and support all their students is key to best practice. Additionally, it is useful to know that improving teachers' self-efficacy is a core part in reducing the likelihood that teachers will use reactive and exclusionary behaviour management strategies. This reflects research by Gibbs & Miller (2013) who discuss that educational psychologists can use consultative skills to support the development of teachers' self-efficacy to manage children's behaviour, and this can lead to more inclusive approaches in school.

Summary

There has been increasing focus on evidence and evaluation within the education landscape (Edovald & Nevill, 2021). This will become even more critical in the current economic climate and the budget pressures being faced by schools (Sibieta, 2022). Furthermore, at the heart of education is the desire to improve outcomes for children and help them to fulfil their potential. An understanding therefore of the best ways to improve outcomes is essential. An ability to understand and use research is a unique skill that Educational Psychologists can offer to schools when it comes to recommending practices that achieve the very best for our students.

My own reflections throughout the doctorate and this research study has bolstered my belief that so much of the unique value and contribution EPs make in schools is the ability to wear two different hats: a practitioner who understands how schools work, how to engage with children and knowing what will be useful and practical to teaching staff while also being a researcher who can communicate to schools the latest findings on what approaches work most effectively for children, as well as carry out research in schools to add to the evidence base. This study has helped me to hone and develop my own skills as a researcher, and I now have greater efficacy in this being part of my role once I qualify. I have a more thorough understanding of research design, methods, and analysis, as well as greater knowledge of the educational psychology literature.

Most importantly, my reflections throughout the research process have reaffirmed my belief in the importance of research that has a practical end result. Research's most important aim is realised not in its collection and publication but in the consumption and implementation of its recommendations in frontline practice. Having this end use in mind is essential when thinking about future research that will benefit teachers, children, and our school communities.

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Appendix 1: Ethical Approval Form

University of East Anglia
Norwich Research Park
Norwich. NR4 7TJ

Email: ethicsmonitor@uea.ac.uk
Web: www.uea.ac.uk

Study title: Exploring the relationships between teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, behaviour management strategies and use of exclusion in U.K schools.

Application ID: ETH2122-1307

Dear Eibhlin,

Your application was considered on 16th June 2022 by the EDU S-REC (School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Subcommittee).

The decision is: **approved - on the condition that the minor errors on your Participant Information Sheet are corrected and these are approved by your supervisor before being sent out.**

You are therefore able to start your project subject to any other necessary approvals being given.

This approval will expire on **31st October 2023**.

Please note that your project is granted ethics approval only for the length of time identified above. Any extension to a project must obtain ethics approval by the EDU S-REC (School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Subcommittee) before continuing.

It is a requirement of this ethics approval that you should report any adverse events which occur during your project to the EDU S-REC (School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Subcommittee) as soon as possible. An adverse event is one which was not anticipated in the research design, and which could potentially cause risk or harm to the participants or the researcher, or which reveals potential risks in the treatment under evaluation. For research involving animals, it may be the unintended death of an animal after trapping or carrying out a procedure.

Any amendments to your submitted project in terms of design, sample, data collection, focus etc. should be notified to the EDU S-REC (School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Subcommittee) in advance to ensure ethical compliance. If the amendments are substantial a new application may be required.

Approval by the EDU S-REC (School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Subcommittee) should not be taken as evidence that your study is compliant with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. If you need guidance on how to make your study UK GDPR compliant, please contact the UEA Data Protection Officer (dataprotection@uea.ac.uk).

I would like to wish you every success with your project.

On behalf of the EDU S-REC (School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Subcommittee)

Yours sincerely,

David Jones

Appendix 2: Information and consent form for Participants

Ms Eibhlin Niogain
Doctoral student in Educational Psychology

Faculty of Social Sciences

School of Education and Lifelong Learning

03 May 2022

University of East Anglia

Norwich Research Park

Norwich NR4 7TJ

United Kingdom

Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and teaching practices

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

(1) What is this study about?

You are invited to take part in a research study about teachers' attitudes towards teaching students with special educational needs, and different teaching practices. Anyone who is a teacher in a UK school can take part. You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a teacher in a UK school. This study will ask you about your attitudes towards inclusion (for example how you feel about teaching students with special educational needs) teaching practices you use use and how schools use exclusions.

This Participant Information Sheet tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you want to take part in the study. Please read this sheet carefully and ask questions about anything that you don't understand or want to know more about.

Participation in this research study is voluntary. By giving consent to take part in this study you are telling us that you:

- ✓ Understand what you have read.
- ✓ Agree to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- ✓ Agree to the use of your personal information as described.
- ✓ You have received a copy of this Participant Information Sheet to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by the following researcher(s): Ms Eibhlin Niogain. This will take place under the supervision of Dr Kimberley Bartholomew (Email: k.bartholomew@uea.ac.uk, Tel: +44 (0) 1603 593179).

(3) What will the study involve for me?

The survey involved completing an online anonymous survey. Once you click on the link, you will be taken to the survey. You will be asked questions about your age, gender, where you teach and how long you've been teaching, as well as questions about your attitudes towards inclusion and your teaching practices.

(4) How much of my time will the study take?
(5) The survey will take 10 minutes to complete.
(5) Do I have to be in the study? Can I withdraw from the study once I have started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and you do not have to take part.

Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researchers or anyone else at the University of East Anglia now or in the future.

If you decide to take part in the study, you can withdraw your consent at any point. You can do this by exiting the survey at any point. Your responses will not be stored and will not be included in the study.

(6) What are the consequences if I withdraw from the study?

If you decide to take part in the study and then change your mind, you are free to withdraw at any time before you have submitted the questionnaire. Once you have submitted it, your responses cannot be withdrawn because they are anonymous and therefore we will not be able to tell which one is yours.

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with being in the study?

Aside from giving up your time, we do not expect that there will be any risks or costs associated with taking part in this study.

(8) Are there any benefits associated with being in the study?

It is hoped that by understanding how attitudes and teaching practices link schools' use of exclusion, this can be used to support schools to put in place effective provision for vulnerable students and lower the need to exclude.

(9) What will happen to information provided by me and data collected during the study? Your responses to the survey are anonymous and will stored in Microsoft forms. Results from the study will be published as part of a final thesis in January 2024. Data from the study will only be accessed by the researcher and research supervisor. It will be held on an encrypted laptop and stored for 10 years following the completion of the study.

Your personal data and information will only be used as outlined in this Participant Information Sheet, unless you consent otherwise. Data management will follow the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA 2018) and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), and the University of East Anglia's Research Data Management Policy.

The information you provide will be stored securely and your identity will be kept strictly confidential, except as required by law. Study findings may be published, but you will not be identified in these publications if you decide to participate in this study.

Study data may also be deposited with a repository to allow it to be made available for scholarly and educational purposes. The data will be kept for at least 10 years beyond the last date the data were accessed. The deposited data will not include your name or any identifiable information about you.

(10) What if I would like further information about the study?

When you have read this information, Ms Eibhlin Niogain (e.niogain@uea.ac.uk, +44 (0) 1603 456161) will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have.

(11) Will I be told the results of the study? You have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study.

You can receive feedback from You can see the results of this study by looking at UEA thesis publications- https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk

The thesis will be available to view in January 2024.

This feedback will be in the form of a published thesis.

This feedback will be available by January 2024.

(12) What if I have a complaint or any concerns about the study?

If there is a problem please let me know. You can contact me via the University of East Anglia at the following address:

Ms Eibhlin Niogain

School of Education and Lifelong Learning

University of East Anglia

NORWICH NR4 7TJ

e.niogain@uea.ac.uk

+44 (0) 1603 456161

If you are concerned about the way this study is being conducted or you wish to make a complaint to someone independent from the study, please contact the Head of School of Education and Lifelong Learning [INSERT NAME OF HEAD OF SCHOOL/DEPARTMENT AND EMAIL AND TELEPHONE NUMBER].

(13) How do I know that this study has been approved to take place?

To protect your safety, rights, wellbeing and dignity, all research in the University of East Anglia is reviewed by a Research Ethics Body. This research was approved by the EDU S-REC (School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Subcommittee).

(14) What is the general data protection information I need to be informed about?

According to data protection legislation, we are required to inform you that the legal basis for processing your data as listed in Article 6(1) of the UK GDPR is because this allows us to process personal data when it is necessary to perform our public tasks as a University.

In addition to the specific information provided above about why your personal data is required and how it will be used, there is also some general information which needs to be provided for you:

- The data controller is the University of East Anglia.
- For further information, you can contact the University's Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@uea.ac.uk
- You can also find out more about your data protection rights at the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).
- If you are unhappy with how your personal data has been used, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer at dataprotection@uea.ac.ukin the first instance.

(15) OK, I want to take part – what do I do next?

If you are happy and consent to take part in the study simply access the questionnaire at this website https://forms.office.com/r/bzh9ANZ7Bt and answer the questions. By submitting your responses you are agreeing to the researcher using the data collected for the purposes described above. Please keep the information sheet for your information.

If you find any aspect of participating in this survey upsetting, the following organisations offer practical and emotional support to teachers. **Education support** run a counselling helpline for teachers and can be contacted on 08000 561 562. **Frontline19.com** offer free and confidential psychological support for frontline workers (including teachers).

(16) Further information

This information was last updated on 03 May 2022.

If there are changes to the information provided, you will be notified by e-mail.

This information sheet is for you to keep.

Appendix 3: Survey questions

Exploring attitudes towards inclusion and teaching practices among UK teachers

1. **Participant Information Sheet:** Please click on the link below to read the full participant information sheet and then return to the survey before continuing with the questions. participantinformation.tiiny.site

   ◯ Please tick this box to indicate that you have read the participant information sheet and are happy to continue with the survey.

2. What is your gender?

   ◯ Female

   ◯ Male

   ◯ Non-binary

   ◯ Rather not say

3. What is your age?

   ◯ 18-24

   ◯ 25-34

   ◯ 35-44

   ◯ 45-64

   ◯ 65+

4. What area of the UK do you work in?

- ◯ Scotland
- ◯ Wales
- ◯ Northern Ireland
- ◯ London
- ◯ South East of England
- ◯ East of England
- ◯ South West
- ◯ West Midlands
- ◯ East Midlands
- ◯ Yorkshire & the Humber
- ◯ North West
- ◯ North East

5. How would you describe the area where your school is located?

- ◯ High in levels of deprivation
- ◯ Somewhat high in levels of deprivation
- ◯ Mixed
- ◯ Somewhat affluent
- ◯ Very affluent

6. What is your teaching role?

- ◯ Class teacher
- ◯ Subject teacher
- ◯ Special Educational Needs Coordinator
- ◯ Headteacher/Principal
- ◯ Assistant headteacher/Vice-Principal
- ◯ Member of Senior Leadership Team
- ◯ Other

7. How many years have you been teaching since qualifying?

- ◯ 1 to 3 years
- ◯ 3 to 5 years
- ◯ 5 to 10 years
- ◯ 10 to 15 years
- ◯ 15 to 20 years
- ◯ Over 20 years

8. What type of school do you teach in?

- ◯ Local authority maintained primary/junior/infant school
- ◯ Local authority maintained secondary/high school
- ◯ Academy run primary/junior/infant school
- ◯ Academy run secondary/high school
- ◯ Independent primary/junior/infant school

- ○ Independent secondary/high school
- ○ Special or complex needs school - primary
- ○ Special or complex needs school - secondary
- ○ Alternative provision
- ○ Special Resource Base within a primary school
- ○ Special Resource Base within a secondary school
- ○ Other

9. The following questions are about your attitudes towards people with special educational needs and disabilities, and how you view teaching students with special educational needs and disabilities. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Students who have difficulty expressing their thoughts verbally should be in regular classes.	○	○	○	○
Students who frequently fail exams should be in regular classes.	○	○	○	○
Students who need an individualised academic program should be in regular classes.	○	○	○	○

Students who are inattentive should be in regular classes.	○	○	○	○
Students who require communicative technologies (for example Braille and sign language) should be in regular classes.	○	○	○	○
I am concerned that my workload will increase if I have students with disabilities in my class.	○	○	○	○
I am concerned that it will be difficult to give appropriate attention to all students in an inclusive classroom.	○	○	○	○
I am concerned that I will be more stressed if I have students with disabilities in my class.	○	○	○	○

I am concerned that students with disabilities will not be accepted by the rest of the class.	○	○	○	○	
I am concerned that I do not have knowledge and skills required to teach students with disabilities.	○	○	○	○	

10. The following questions are about your approaches to teaching and behaviour management. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement.

	Strongly disagree	Disgree	Neither agree or disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I nearly always intervene when students talk at inappropriate times during class	○	○	○	○	○
I strongly limit student chatter in the classroom.	○	○	○	○	○
I nearly always use collaborative learning to explore questions in the classroom.	○	○	○	○	○

I engage students in active discussion about issues related to real world applications.	○	○	○	○	○
I nearly always use group work in my classroom.	○	○	○	○	○
I use student input when creating student projects.	○	○	○	○	○
I firmly redirect students back to the topic when they get off task.	○	○	○	○	○
I insist that students in my classroom follow the rules at all times.	○	○	○	○	○
I nearly always adjust instruction in response to individual student needs.	○	○	○	○	○
I strictly enforce classroom rules to control student behaviour.	○	○	○	○	○

If a student's behaviour is defiant, I will demand that they comply with my classroom rules.	○	○	○	○	○
I nearly always use a teaching approach that encourages interaction among students.	○	○	○	○	○

11. The following statements are about how you feel about your teaching practices. Please rate how much you can engage in the following practices.

	Nothing	Very little	Some influence	Quite a bit	A great deal
How much can you do to control disruptive behaviour in the classroom?	○	○	○	○	○
How much can you do to motivate students who show low interest in school work?	○	○	○	○	○
How much can you do to get students to believe they can do well in school work?	○	○	○	○	○

How much can you do to help your students value learning?	○	○	○	○	○
To what extent can you craft good questions for your students?	○	○	○	○	○
How much can you do to get children to follow classroom rules?	○	○	○	○	○
How much can you do to calm a student who is disruptive or noisy?	○	○	○	○	○
How well can you establish a classroom management system with each group of students?	○	○	○	○	○
How much can you use a variety of assessment strategies?	○	○	○	○	○
To what extent can you provide an alternative explanation or example when students are confused?	○	○	○	○	○

How much can you assist families in helping their children do well in school?	○	○	○	○	○
How well can you implement alternative strategies in your classroom?	○	○	○	○	○

12. Please rate the extent to which you use the following behaviour management strategies.

	Never	Rarely	Occasionally	Frequently	Very frequently
Remove students from the class	○	○	○	○	○
Give students detention	○	○	○	○	○
Send students to an 'isolation' or 'reflection' room	○	○	○	○	○
Give an internal exclusion	○	○	○	○	○
Give a fixed term exclusion	○	○	○	○	○

13. How many students have been permanently excluded in your school in the last academic year (2021-2022)? If you cannot say, please enter 'Cannot say'

Enter your answer

14. How would you rate the number of permanent exclusions in your school?

- ◯ We exclude a lot less students compared to other schools of our type and size
- ◯ We exclude somewhat less students compared to other schools of our type and size
- ◯ We exclude about the same number of students compared to other schools of our type and size
- ◯ We exclude somewhat more students compared to other schools of our type and size
- ◯ We exclude a lot more students compared to other schools of our type and size

15. How well do you feel supported to teach students with special educational needs by your school?

- ◯ Not supported at all
- ◯ Not very well supported
- ◯ Neutral
- ◯ Somewhat well supported
- ◯ Extremely well supported

16. How stressful is your job? Where 1 is 'not stressful at all', and 10 is 'very stressful'.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

17. Thank you for participating in this survey. If you would like to make any comments about this topic, feel free to do so below.

Enter your answer

Submit