

Understanding Narratives of Relatedness: Exploring the Journeys of two Young People
with SEND Engaging in a Music-mentoring Programme

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Summary

This Doctoral Thesis is comprised of the following three chapters: literature review, empirical study and a reflective account.

The literature review explores a number of relevant themes, conceptualisations and theoretical frameworks relevant to the use of music as a vehicle to enhance the wellbeing of children and young people. This discussion will be contextualised in light of the current challenges faced by educational settings, services and professionals meeting the needs of children and young people with complex barriers to learning. This will guide a subsequent exploration of the potential utility of programmes using music to address these gaps, presenting a more holistic conceptualisation of wellbeing and music.

The empirical chapter presents a multiple case study, which aimed to gather an in-depth understanding of the experiences of two young people with special educational needs and disabilities, and their parents, music mentors and key professionals, in relation to a music-mentoring programme. Narrative analysis was used to present an overarching 'journey' of the YP, comprising of a secondary analysis of digital blogs, Microsoft Teams calls with the YP and semi-structured interviews with their parents, music mentors and key professionals. The potentially transformational power of such programmes, and implications for professional practice and further research is discussed in light of the findings.

Finally, the reflective chapter will provide an account of the researcher's journey throughout the project, from the initial inception of the idea to its unique contribution and dissemination. This chapter will explore the researcher's experiences, reflections and personal and professional development over the research process. Reflections on the methodology, design and implications for the literature base and professional practice (and appropriate dissemination) will also be explored.

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Contents

List of Tables	6
List of Figures.....	6
Acknowledgements	7
Literature Review	8
Introduction.....	8
Relevant Legislation and the Need for Targeted Support for CYP with SEND.....	12
Wellbeing Conceptualisations.....	14
Literature Linking Music and Wellbeing	16
Evaluation of Music-based Interventions Impacting Wellbeing.....	18
The Move to ‘Musicking’	19
Self Determination Theory, Musicking and Wellbeing	20
SDT within the Context of Interventions using Music	21
Relationships and Intersubjectivity	23
The ‘Informal’ uses of Music and Relatedness	27
Technology and Digital ‘Narratives/Stories’	28
Informal Strategies and Technology.....	28
‘Digital Narratives/Stories’	30
Narratives and EP Practice	31
The Noise Solution Music-mentoring Programme	34
Empirical Chapter	37
Abstract.....	37
Introduction and Rationale.....	37
The Melding of Music, Self Determination Theory and Wellbeing.....	39
The Noise Solution Music-Mentoring Programme.....	40
Aims and Rationale of Present Study.....	43

Methodology	44
Ontological and Epistemological Stance	44
Multiple Case Study Design	45
A Merged Narrative Approach.....	46
Participants.....	47
Data Collection	49
Phase One (Secondary Data)	49
Phase Two (Semi-Structured Interviews).....	50
Data Analysis.....	50
Phase One (Secondary Data)	53
Phase Two (Semi-Structured Interviews).....	58
Ethical Considerations	59
Findings and Discussion.....	61
Introduction.....	61
The Journey of Taylor	62
The Journey of RJM.....	78
Summary of Findings Across the Journeys of Taylor and RJM	99
Implications	108
Limitations and Future Research	110
Conclusion.....	112
Reflective Account	114
Introduction	114
Choosing and Refining the Research Topic	114
Methodology, Methods and Data Collection.....	116
Professional and Ethical Issues.....	119
Data Analysis and the Construction of Narratives	121
Methodological Integrity of the Research	123

Research Contributions	125
Professional Development	125
Literature Base	125
Educational Psychology	126
Dissemination of Findings.....	127
Conclusion	127
Appendices	128
Appendix 1: Semi-Structured Interviews/Microsoft Teams Calls with YP.....	128
Appendix 2: Example Digital Blog Analysis and Summary Documents.....	130
Appendix 3: Example of Narrative Analysis Steps.....	136
Appendix 4: Sample Extract of an Analysis Memo	140
Appendix 5: Example of Overarching Storied Narrative	141
Appendix 6: University Ethics Approval	149
Appendix 7: Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms.....	150
Glossary	171
List of References	172

List of Tables

Table 1: Relevant Information on the two 'Cases'	48
Table 2: Overview of Narrative Analysis Process.....	51
Table 3: Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) Three-Dimensional Space Framework	53

List of Figures

Figure 1: Noise Solution Digital Feed.....	42
Figure 2: An Example of the Digital Platform	49
Figure 3: An Example Digital Blog Analysis Extract.....	54
Figure 4: An Overview of Phase One Analysis	57
Figure 5: An Overview of Phase Two Analysis	59
Figure 6: A Tentative Theoretical Explanation of the Music-mentoring Process.....	106

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Literature Review

Introduction

Educational Psychologists (EPs) apply psychological research and theory to support children and young people (CYP), their families and schools to promote their emotional and social wellbeing (Association of Educational Psychologists; AEP, 2020). This emphasis is also reflected in legislation and guidance, highlighting the agenda to strengthen and 'transform' the mental health and wellbeing provision of CYP in the UK (e.g. Department for Education, 2022; 2018). Research has highlighted the barriers CYP are facing with their mental health and wellbeing (and also their ability to access appropriate support), which can have a significant impact on their learning, development and transition into adulthood (Marmot et al., 2020). Evidence suggests CYP with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) have experienced worsened mental health over the Covid-19 period through higher levels of anxiety, feeling unhappy and being more isolated (e.g. Chandola et al., 2020). This need has been argued to exacerbate the challenges of increasingly stretched professional services, suggesting a growing need to find effective ways to support the mental health and wellbeing of CYP (Iacobucci, 2022).

The importance of targeted support (e.g. by way of support plans, therapeutic intervention and referral to professional services) for CYP with SEND is highlighted in the legislation and literature (e.g. Children and Families Act, 2014; SEND Code of Practice, 2014). The Covid-19 period has arguably intensified this need, with local authorities, educational services and settings under increasing demand to provide psychological support and services for CYP with SEND (Chandola et al., 2020). Despite the increased responsibility of schools to promote CYP's mental health and wellbeing, it is often far from straightforward to identify and provide the most effective and available programmes/interventions or avenues of support for such purposes (Gillard et al., 2021). This perhaps paints an increasingly challenging, fragmented and stretched landscape of support for CYP, with a number of gaps and barriers present in provision (Appleton, 2022).

With this gap in provision in mind, there is a growing recognition of the arts having an important role to play in improving the health and wellbeing of CYP (Leckey, 2011). The arts is a broad field encompassing arts therapies, music, visual arts, poetry, creative writing and performing arts (Daykin et al., 2008). Research on arts, health and wellbeing is an established and dynamic field of interest in the UK, spanning across many academic disciplines and creative agencies (Stickleby et al., 2016). Such research has focused on investigating interventions that enhance health and wellbeing through a myriad of processes and psychological outcomes (e.g. MacDonald, 2012). In their curriculum review

for art and design, Ofsted (2023) highlighted the importance of the arts in the curriculum across all educational settings. There is ample evidence to suggest the positive role of the arts in addressing wellbeing, promoting inclusion, social cohesion, pupil voice and agency, expressing emotion and forming positive identities (Tambling & Bacon, 2023). Despite this interest, spanning health, psychology, sociology, social care and philosophy disciplines, the fragility of the arts in the education agenda has been noted (e.g. Liddiard & Rose, 2021). The precarious and often undervalued position of the arts in the education system has been highlighted in the literature, with research suggesting a decline in both the quality and quantity of art education in UK settings (Cooper, 2018). This has been posited to reflect a decline in real-terms funding (less access to specialist resources; Farquharson et al., 2021), a greater focus and weight on 'core' subjects and greater funding/accountability pressures (Ofsted, 2018). A potential lack of appropriate skills, training and experience for educational staff has also been cited as a further barrier to arts provision, with figures suggesting a steady decline in art and design teachers (Cooper, 2018; DfE, 2021). With this context in mind, it has been argued there has been a systematic downgrading or exclusion of arts subjects and experiences for CYP (Tambling & Bacon, 2023), with potential implications for the opportunities provided for CYP to engage in the arts (which may engender potentially therapeutic outcomes). Therefore, it is argued further research to promote and further explore the use of arts-based programmes appears a timely and valuable pursuit. In particular, the inclusive power of music has been highlighted in the literature, with researchers reporting music-based approaches can yield multiple positive outcomes via a number of linked mechanisms (Fletcher & Hackett, 2021). The need to advocate for music in the educational sphere has garnered particular attention, due to its potential to provide enriched environments and enhance the wellbeing of CYP (Hennessy, 2018). The link between music and wellbeing is argued to be particularly relevant since the outbreak of the Coronavirus disease (Covid-19). There is suggestion in the literature that programmes/interventions using music may have potential to bridge this gap to engage CYP disengaged or marginalised from education (Riley et al., 2019). For example, research has reported positive impacts of music interventions/programmes on wellbeing, emotional regulation/intelligence, self-expression, communication and self-esteem (Jacobson & Artman, 2013). Self Determination Theory (SDT; Ryan & Deci, 2002) has been suggested as a valuable framework to further elucidate how these enhancements to wellbeing may be fostered. SDT argues all individuals have a natural inclination towards psychological growth, internalisation, and wellbeing. Whether individuals realise these natural tendencies (and thus achieve these outcomes) is proposed to depend on the

extent to which three basic psychological needs are met: autonomy, competence and relatedness. This mini theory of SDT (termed Basic Psychological Needs Theory; BPNT) suggests that meeting the need for autonomy (sense of agency and choice), competence (feelings of mastery) and relatedness (sense of belonging and connection) leads to more autonomous forms of motivation and improved wellbeing. As such, SDT places a greater emphasis on the social and relational context/environment in which CYP are surrounded.

The literature has suggested music-making programmes/interventions can foster enhancements in autonomy, competence and relatedness (Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). However, little is currently known about how these enhancements may be fostered or experienced by CYP, and the social and relational context in which they occur. It is argued this social and relational context is increasingly important to consider in light of the Covid-19 period, which has contributed to greater feelings of isolation for CYP and necessitated the use of digital technologies (Ng et al., 2021). These digital technologies refer to the use of online/blended learning, digital blogs, social media, social networking and multimedia tools (the use of video, photo and audio clips). Opportunities to use and integrate digital technologies with music has been suggested to enhance flexible learning, engage CYP and foster connection and collaboration (Adileh, 2012; Biasutti, 2015). There is further suggestion that digital technologies may provide powerful opportunities for CYP to create 'digital narratives' of their musical experiences, demonstrating a strong link to narrative approaches in EP practice. Digital technologies and narrative approaches have been suggested to meld seamlessly with music and hold powerful potential to engage CYP, foster reflective processes around self-identity and enhance wellbeing (Haigh & Hardy, 2011). As such, it seems valuable to further explore the links and potential adjunctive effects of music, digital technologies and narrative approaches that characterise these programmes/interventions in the literature. Such further exploration may deepen our understanding of how these areas meld together, to more holistically understand how these programmes may foster enhancements to the wellbeing and engagement of CYP.

This review aims to provide a thematic/narrative review of relevant literature, covering key themes, questions and issues related to the enquiry. This will focus on an exploration of programmes/interventions using music to enhance the wellbeing of CYP with SEND, linking 'informal' uses of music (away from a music therapy context), digital technologies and narrative approaches. This will be explored through the lens of SDT, which provides a greater appreciation of the environment and context behind these programmes. A thematic review of the literature involves sorting literature into different categories, through which the researcher searches for meaningful themes to reveal

patterns, regularities and inconsistencies (Bhana, 2014). It was felt a thematic approach would be valuable to pull together relevant themes, concepts and theories from multiple disciplines to provide a broad overview. The chapter will firstly contextualise the topic through exploring relevant legislation and issues relevant to CYP with SEND. A multifaceted and holistic conceptualisation of wellbeing will then be presented, drawing upon concepts from positive psychology and social dimensions of wellbeing (e.g. Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Huppert, 2013). The link between interventions/programmes using music and wellbeing will also be explored, maintaining a critical perspective on the limitations and opportunities presented in the literature. An alternative conceptualisation of music (termed 'musicking' by Small, 1998) will then be presented, placing a greater emphasis on the context and relationships of music. This feeds into a further exploration of the literature through the lens of SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2002), which posits relatedness may play a highly influential role in fostering positive outcomes. The melding of music with digital technologies and narrative approaches will subsequently be explored, along with links to EP practice. The chapter will conclude with a brief description of the specific music-mentoring programme used for the multiple case study approach of the empirical research (presented in chapter 2 of this thesis), tying these themes/concepts together.

Extensive literature searches were carried out between March 2022 and April 2022 (updated in March 2023). This initially focused on Google Scholar then widened to electronic databases including PsychINFO, ScienceDirect, SAGE Journals, ERIC, Scopus, Taylor & Francis, Frontiers in Psychology and the University of East Anglia library search. Each database was searched individually, to allow for search terms to be amended accordingly. Additional literature was also sourced from reference lists of retrieved studies and publication citations. Search terms were selected based on initially examining MacDonald's (2013) review and other existing literature (e.g. DeNora & Ansdell, 2014; Glenister, 2017; Levstek and Banerjee, 2021). From these papers, key words from titles and abstracts were identified and broken down into workable search terms. Various search term combinations were used (e.g. using a Boolean 'and'/'or' to filter results), including the following: "musicking", "music-making", "music mentoring", "music intervention", "music program", "inclusive music", "music participation", "disengaged/marginalised young people", "music and wellbeing", "digital technology", "digital narratives", "digital storytelling", "youth/YP engagement", "relatedness and wellbeing", "self-determination theory", "basic needs".

Search terms were limited to 'title' and 'abstract' search fields to filter relevant papers. Only studies published in peer-reviewed journals and written in English were

included. Included studies were largely from the UK, although a small number of papers were considered valuable and relevant to the UK context (particularly given the universal nature and importance of music and wellbeing). Studies within the past 10 years were prioritised although, due to the sparse literature in some areas older studies that provided interesting initial insights were also reviewed. Inclusion criteria related to studies focused on CYP. A broad range of qualitative, quantitative and mixed-method studies were included, providing a valuable breadth of research on the topic.

Relevant Legislation and the Need for Targeted Support for CYP with SEND

Although the precise impact of the Covid-19 period is difficult to establish, evidence suggests CYP with SEND have been disproportionately impacted by the social, educational, economic and mental health/wellbeing impacts of the pandemic (Hagell, 2021). For example, evidence suggests increasing rates of mental health difficulties and anxiety over the Covid-19 period (Creswell et al., 2021), particularly for CYP with SEND. Research has also suggested the Covid-19 period has provided greater flexibility and supported the engagement of some CYP (Irwin et al., 2022), further painting a mixed and equivocal picture. However, it is felt careful attention is warranted for CYP that may have existing barriers to learning that may be exacerbated by the Covid-19 period. The SEND Code of Practice (CoP) (2015) defines a CYP as having SEND if they have “significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age” or “has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age” (p.16). The four broad areas of need outlined by the SEND CoP include communication and interaction; cognition and learning; social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) and physical and/or sensory (Section 5.32). This definition assumes that CYP experience a number of complex barriers to learning spanning these four areas, which can impact on their development, wellbeing and engagement in learning. CYP can encounter a myriad of challenges that impact on their daily functioning, wellbeing and positivity to engage in learning activities (de Bruin, 2021). For example, such challenges can relate to home life, schooling, and peer relationships, which can have negative effects on their social and emotional wellbeing (Zins et al., 2004). Due to the broad nature of the SEND label and its widespread use in the educational system, it appears important to briefly explore the historical context and nuances of the term. In particular, the contribution of the medical model of disability and positivist ideals of the 20th Century have been highlighted in the literature, which relate to a predominant focus on deficit, dysfunction and biologically-based impairments (Frederickson & Cline,

2015). It has been argued this has contributed to fixed views on intelligence, a greater emphasis on attainment/testing and ultimately a history of exclusion, segregation and categorisation for CYP with SEND (Williams et al., 2017). Furthermore, education systems have been characterised by increasing accountability, neoliberalist thinking, 'high stakes testing' and standardised assessment systems (McIntyre & Hall, 2020). Within this historical, social and political context, it could be argued such systems have provided the necessary precursors to a history of disempowerment and exclusion for CYP with SEND (Rushek, 2016), with the arts rendered incompatible and undervalued in this picture. With this context in mind, this research will view SEND in light of a social model of disability (Oliver, 1983), taking a more holistic and balanced view of CYP with SEND. The social model takes a much greater appreciation that barriers to learning arise from societal, environmental, attitudinal and organisational factors external to the individual (Oliver, 1983). Through this lens, a move away from a 'within child' focus can be maintained, whereby a more holistic view of CYP and wellbeing will be presented in this literature review.

There is a growing national recognition and commitment to strengthening the mental health and wellbeing provision for CYP. This may be particularly important to consider for CYP with SEND, with literature suggesting they are at greater risk of challenges with their mental health and wellbeing (Sideropoulos et al., 2021). The Department for Education's Green Paper (DfE, 2018; 2022) highlights the agenda to work towards more effective identification of need and the provision of early intervention and preventative work. The national challenges of meeting these demands have been well documented, relating to overwhelming demands on services/schools to support the complex needs of CYP, staff wellbeing concerns, lack of training/competence, resources/budget cuts, referrals and increasing strain on already overstretched services (Rumble & Thomas, 2017). With such challenges in mind, it has been proposed that support for pupils with SEND is insufficient in the UK, with specialised educational provision required by these pupils often lacking (Sibieta & Cottell, 2020). Such problems have been intensified by the Covid-19 lockdown periods, where it is argued that UK nations have failed to adequately support children with SEND, with provision and support patchy and highly dependent on the pupil's local authority (Blundell et al., 2021). This is consistent with research raising further concerns about a potential lack of access to EP services for CYP and families in need of psychological support (BPS, 2019). As such, local authorities, educational settings and services have been under increasing demand to

provide psychological support and intervention to meet the complex needs of CYP with barriers to learning.

Educational settings and the services/professionals around CYP are in a unique position to meet these needs and prevent further mental health difficulties and disengagement (e.g. Caan et al., 2014). This is demonstrated by the Department for Education's Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (2018) policy document, which called for greater early support and access to specialist support/intervention. A further priority centred around providing suitable support and arrangements for pupils at risk of exclusion/not attending educational provision. For such pupils, fostering motivation, confidence and engagement in education was outlined as a key priority. This context highlights the need for creative and effective targeted support/intervention to support the wellbeing of CYP with SEND. The literature suggests YP with SEND often fail to report positive schooling experiences, particularly those with SEMH needs, which can contribute to marginalisation and educational/social exclusion (Bouchard & Berg, 2017). For such CYP, targeted support/intervention is essential to reengage them in education (or productive activities) and support their SEMH needs (Pomerantz et al., 2007; Cefai & Cooper, 2010). The literature suggests music may be a powerful vehicle to engage CYP and enhance wellbeing, making it potentially well placed to fill gaps and deficits in provision.

Wellbeing Conceptualisations

Music has been identified as a social determinant of health and wellbeing, having the potential to enhance or amplify life satisfaction (e.g. Sheppard & Broughton, 2020). In order to meaningfully explore the effects of music/digital programmes or interventions, it is firstly important to understand what we mean by wellbeing and the assumptions behind these conceptualisations. Wellbeing is a broad and multifaceted construct, with little clear consensus on the best way to define or measure it (Davies, 2013). The term wellbeing has been operationalised in a number of ways, such as referring to psychological flourishing, life satisfaction, happiness or finding meaning in life, optimal functioning (as expressed by SDT) (Howell et al., 2016; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Although definitions in the literature are abundant and open to debate, conceptions on wellbeing have tended to revolve around two distinct, but related philosophies 1) hedonism and 2) eudaimonism (McMahan & Estes, 2011; Chaves, 2021).

The hedonic view of wellbeing focuses on happiness, defining wellbeing in terms of pleasure attainment and pain avoidance (Ryan & Deci, 2001). This would posit that music

(and engaging in interventions using music) enhances subjectively determined positive mental states, such as pleasure and positive affect/emotional responses in the short term (Ryan et al., 2008). The eudaimonic view of wellbeing conceptualises wellbeing in terms of meaning and self-actualisation, which is achieved via meeting needs and experiences that have been found to be objectively good for the person (Kagan, 1992). Within the context of music/digital interventions, a eudaimonic perspective may posit that we use music (or engage in such interventions) to enhance social connection, cohesiveness and experience a sense of accomplishment or to attain a deeper sense of meaning or perspective in life (Gabrielsson, 2011).

Although researchers have argued eudaimonic activity is associated with longer-term and enduring wellbeing (Steger et al., 2008), others have suggested both are conceptually valuable and are differently associated with positive psychological functioning (McMahan & Estes, 2011). With this in mind, more recent conceptualisations have advocated for wellbeing to be subsumed under the term 'flourishing', which combines hedonic and eudaimonic elements to create a more comprehensive and holistic approach (Chaves, 2021). It has been suggested a more holistic approach is needed to acknowledge the significant impact the social context has on the wellbeing of CYP (Bronfenbrenner & Bronfenbrenner, 2009). This appears particularly influential to consider, as social relations outside the family (e.g. peers, teachers and family) become increasingly important and complex during adolescence (Bukowski et al., 2011). Therefore, an appreciation of how these social and environmental factors impact on (or could be subsumed into definitions of) wellbeing appear highly relevant to consider.

This conceptualisation of 'flourishing' moves beyond viewing wellbeing simply as the absence of illbeing (or the presence of positive emotions), drawing on positive psychology (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). This maintains that a key aspect of wellbeing relates to the recognition of strengths, qualities and resources of individuals and their relationships within their environment (i.e. social connections). This appreciation of resources and the social context is felt particularly important for CYP with SEND, who may experience greater challenges with reciprocal friendships/relationships and establishing a secure sense of belonging (Chamberlain et al., 2007). The link between the social environment and wellbeing has been widely suggested in the literature. For example, the development of strengths, resources and social connection has been associated with enhanced happiness and wellbeing, via a more positive/grateful outlook on life, greater social support, positive emotions and prosocial behaviours towards others (Froh et al., 2009). With this in mind, flourishing (and so wellbeing) has been conceptualised as the

combination of feeling good (hedonia), functioning well (eudaimonia), and doing good for others (commitment to prosocial behaviours and choices that benefit others and the wider community) (Huppert, 2013; Waters et al., 2017).

This concept of flourishing also assumes that it is possible to be 'flourishing' in challenging circumstances, e.g. still be in excellent spiritual health when in ill-health, disengaged or experiencing mental health difficulties (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). It is felt this accounts for the potential for CYP to demonstrate remarkable resilience, strength and even flourish in the face of adversity and challenging circumstances. Within the context of music, this appreciates that programmes/interventions have the capacity to enhance feelings of connectedness, cohesion and a sense of accomplishment/greater meaning (eudaimonic wellbeing), but individuals may make meaning in these experiences and the resulting short-term pleasure, happiness and positive feelings in different ways (hedonic/subjective wellbeing). It is acknowledged this is a complex process influenced by the social/environmental context, support networks and the emotional competencies of CYP (Chaves, 2021). The integration of a social component of wellbeing views functioning with optimal effectiveness in social life as an important facet of wellbeing for CYP (e.g. Deci & Ryan, 2008).

It is felt this conceptualisation of flourishing moves away from quantitative (and often medicalised) conceptualisations of wellbeing in the literature, providing greater scope to explore what wellbeing means to CYP and the social context in which they live and learn. This is particularly important given the social constructionist perspective taken by this researcher, which emphasises the everyday interactions between people and language is used to construct their reality (Andrews, 2012). This appreciates that individuals may hold their own interpretation of wellbeing, which is shaped by and with the complex social context and individual circumstances around them. With this in mind, the interconnections between people and their environments represent an important dimension of wellbeing, which is understood as a reciprocal, ecological relation (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). As such, it is argued that a greater acknowledgement of this social context in relation to wellbeing is valuable when exploring the effects of programmes using music.

Literature Linking Music and Wellbeing

The varied conceptualisations and uses of music paints a complex picture of the literature, with some interventions defining this broadly (including listening, singing, instrument playing, performing, movement and musical creativity) and others focusing on the acquisition of non-musical skills (Dumont et al., 2017). Some preliminary findings have

suggested that different music activities may satisfy specific psychological needs to a greater or lesser extent, due to the nature of the activities and group dynamics (e.g. Stewart & Lonsdale, 2016). Research on the impact of music interventions has indicated positive effects on a variety of skills and psychological processes (Dumont et al., 2017).

For example, music has been found to positively impact on wellbeing and emotional intelligence; creating opportunities for self-expression and communication, identifying strengths and maintaining self-esteem (Jacobson & Artman, 2013). There is further suggestion that interventions using music can support the wellbeing and engagement of pupils in challenging circumstances (or with social and emotional difficulties) (Riley et al., 2019). Adolescence has been noted as a critical period during which music plays a major role, serving as a medium for self-regulation, peer-group affiliation and identity formation (Saarikallio & Erkkila, 2007). This is consistent with literature suggesting music can develop and enhance emotional/self-regulation, empathy, social relations and self-expression (Schellenberg & Mankarious, 2012; Gold et al., 2017; Gold et al., 2017; Sakka & Juslin, 2018). This highlights the potential for music to support social and emotional skills/learning; the process through which CYP recognise and manage emotions effectively, formulate goals, show empathy towards others and establish and maintain functioning social relationships (Jones & Bouffard, 2012). This may suggest that possible enhancements to wellbeing may occur through social and emotional processes, via supporting CYP to manage their emotions, form positive relationships with others and express themselves. This fits well with the concept of flourishing, which emphasises the importance of creating strong social connections and the potential role of music to enhance social connection, nurture positive relationships and manage emotions (Chin & Rickard, 2013). However, further research is needed to explore and more comprehensively elucidate these processes.

This was further exemplified by the review of music-based interventions and child development by Dumont et al. (2017). The number of studies specifically targeting and measuring wellbeing was sparse, prompting the authors to conclude further research was needed to explore the potential effects of music-based interventions. Overall, the review reported that studies seem suggestive of beneficial effects in a number of educational and developmental domains (including wellbeing). Interestingly, the review found 16/18 studies using professional music teachers reported positive outcomes in these areas, suggesting the role of the teacher/tutor may be an important factor in fostering enhancements to wellbeing. Indeed, it has been posited that their pedagogical content knowledge and skills in building teacher-CYP relationships may have implications for fostering positive

outcomes (Furrer & Skinner, 2003; Ballantyne & Packer, 2004). Despite the body of literature linking interventions/programmes using music to positive outcomes, a clear picture and consensus on this is yet to be established.

Evaluation of Music-based Interventions Impacting Wellbeing

It has been noted that research exploring the impact of music-based interventions on wellbeing has tended to take a greater focus on cognitive skills, emotional regulation and reducing negative behaviours (i.e. through quantitative measures) (Schafer et al., 2014). The aforementioned critical review by Dumont et al. (2017) noted it was difficult to draw clear conclusions due to a number of methodological issues. For example, this included varying study designs, measures/outcomes, and differing levels of intrinsic motivation within participants (Dumont et al., 2017). Further potential confounding variables have been noted relating to who delivered the interventions (e.g. authors themselves and/or school staff delivering), with potential Hawthorne (participants altering behaviour due to their awareness of being studied) and Rosenthal (expectations of the intervention affecting the performance of participants) effects (Salkind, 2010). This is consistent with authors reporting the efficacy of interventions using music to target CYP's wellbeing has been somewhat equivocal (Rickard et al., 2012), precluding any meaningful conclusions.

This has contributed to calls for more robust research testing the use of music to foster positive outcomes for CYP, with randomised controlled trials (RCTs) cited as the most powerful design for evaluating interventions (Dumont et al., 2017). However, it is argued this fails to appreciate the complexity and importance of the social context and underpinning processes of such programmes. The ecological validity and appropriateness of pursuing evidence from RCTs and quantitative designs has been questioned (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). For instance, RCTs tend to focus on 'what works' rather than 'how', relying on levels of control that are harder to achieve in social environments (Fletcher, 2017). It is felt this cannot account for the complexity and social nature of real-life situations, nor explain the processes by which this positive change happens (DeNora, 2013; Fletcher, 2017).

Due to these challenges, the underlying mechanisms are typically unclear in these interventions. Therefore, the researcher acknowledges that research around music-making programmes/interventions appears equivocal, with key processes and mechanisms still not well understood. However, that is not to say that valuable insights cannot be gleaned from existing research, which may span various influential theories, frameworks and

findings that appear relevant to the inquiry. It is argued that a qualitative approach can provide more comprehensive and integrated insights into the potential effects of music-based interventions (Dumont et al., 2017). As Papinczak et al. (2014) stated, music is one of the most popular leisure activity pursuits among young people (YP), yet little is still known about how music is linked to wellbeing in this population. This may be particularly important to consider given the period between 15-25 years is characterised by considerable personal change and is the peak age of onset for mental health problems (Papinczak et al., 2014). Therefore, it is argued further explorative, qualitative and ecologically valid research is needed to improve our understanding of the ways in which music-based interventions may impact on the wellbeing of CYP.

The Move to 'Musicking'

With this in mind, authors have advocated for a move away from specifically investigating the effects of music, towards an appreciation that music is always in a state of flux and allied with other features (e.g. practices, people, situations and technologies) (DeNora, 2000). This shift sidesteps the incredibly challenging task of clarifying and accurately measuring the unique and direct contribution of music, which has proved problematic to clearly disentangle (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). Instead, greater importance has been placed on the context and processes underpinning these music-based interventions. For example, how relationships, practices, situations and technologies may contribute to potential enhancements to wellbeing.

It has been noted that musical experiences rarely if ever take place in a vacuum, constantly in flux with practices, people, circumstances and technologies interlinked (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). It is this melding of music and other features that has been coined 'musicking' by Small (1998), who advocated for a change of the usage of the word music to a verb. This reflects the varied and often unpredictable ways music is mobilised in combination with other things to initiate positive change. Small posited that, rather than the music itself, the surrounding community, interactions and relationships are of equal (if not more) importance. As such, the umbrella term 'musicking' will be used to refer to music as a process (or verb), reflecting an inclusive approach to music-making which appreciates the social connections/interactions within them. It is argued this provides much greater scope to explore how music-based interventions may enhance wellbeing from a more holistic, 'flourishing' perspective, appreciating the contextual factors (i.e. social context/relationships, situation, practices and technology) and processes underpinning these potential enhancements.

Self Determination Theory, Musicking and Wellbeing

This greater appreciation of the social context in relation to wellbeing is also reflected by Ryan and Deci's (2002) SDT. This integrates hedonic and eudaimonic approaches to view wellbeing as the holistic, full functioning of the individual, subsumed under the concept of flourishing. Due to its acknowledgement of social, cultural, and environmental factors, SDT presents a valuable framework to explore the conditions through which enhancements to wellbeing (or 'flourishing') may be fostered through music-interventions. From this perspective, both internal factors and the social environment influence the degree to which basic psychological needs are met and, in turn, personal growth, vitality and wellbeing (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This would posit that interventions using music provide opportunities to enhance autonomy, competence and relatedness (and in turn, wellbeing). It has been argued that SDT provides much needed theoretical grounding to the exploration of musical participation and wellbeing, overcoming limitations of past research lacking theoretical grounding (Clift & Hancox, 2010). This may also overcome challenges identified in the literature in relation to producing systematic, empirical evidence to support claims sometimes taken to be self-evident (Skingley et al., 2011).

SDT defines the need for autonomy as individuals' need to act with a sense of ownership and feel psychologically free (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Rather than reflecting a need to act independently from the desires of others, autonomy is concerned with acting with a sense of agency, choice, and volition. Competence relates to the need to feel a sense of mastery over the environment and to develop new skills, which is observed in our tendency to explore and manipulate the environment around us (Van den Broeck, 2016). Relatedness represents the need to feel connected to other people and experience oneself as effective in their interaction within their social environment. That is, to feel a sense of belonging and connection to others, and developing close relationships where love and care is reciprocated (e.g. Baumeister & Leary, 1995). The need for relatedness is satisfied when individuals feel part of a group, experience a sense of a communion and close relations (Van den Broeck, 2016). It is argued that through this lens, a deeper exploration of how music-making programmes may enhance the wellbeing and engagement of CYP can be undertaken. This is, potentially providing opportunities to foster autonomy, competence and relatedness (and in turn wellbeing).

SDT within the Context of Interventions using Music

Research has provided initial support that music interventions may enhance wellbeing through providing opportunities to satisfy the three basic psychological needs as proposed by SDT. To investigate this, Levstek and Banerjee (2021) used a mixed methods research design to explore the psychological experiences of marginalised YP participating in inclusive music projects. The study was comprised of 134 YP spanning four different music projects, aimed at YP from lower socio-economic backgrounds or those with SEND. This was explored using retrospective surveys of staff member perceptions, semi-structured interviews and focus groups with YP, parents, and staff members. YP emphasised the importance of being surrounded by supportive and reliable adults, noting the careful balance of validation, challenge and feelings of acknowledgement they provided. Through this support, YP grew in confidence and demonstrated greater social and emotional competence, particularly in relation to communication, teamwork and becoming more socially comfortable around others. The findings highlight the importance of a supportive environment and positive working relationship with teachers/tutors, which has been noted as essential when working with marginalised YP (Hanrahan & Banerjee, 2017). The music-making sessions were also reported to foster relatedness via driving a sense of connectedness, bonding and group cohesion. The supportive and accepting context cultivated by the teacher/tutor was suggested to provide a foundation through which these positive outcomes could be fostered. Concerning the role of autonomy, results suggested that music was a significant contributor to YP's perceptions of ownership over their creative work. The person-centred/youth-led nature of the sessions was reported to foster a sense of agency, self-control and freedom. The findings strongly suggest that music-making programmes provide powerful potential to enhance relatedness in YP, particularly through supportive relationships with tutors/teachers and peers. This collective, social and relational dimension has been identified as crucial for YP marginalised from education, as they are more likely to be excluded from mainstream peer groups and miss out on social learning opportunities (Juvonen et al., 2019). This would suggest that the process of building competence and autonomy may occur within (and be supported by) a safe, supportive and connected music-making environment.

The potential influence of relatedness for YP in challenging circumstances has been further suggested in the literature, which may help further elucidate these processes and their impact on wellbeing. For example, the process of fostering relatedness via music has been linked to the concept of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995), which suggests that interpersonal relations create value for individuals as they

provide resources which can be used to achieve desired outcomes (Bizzi, 2015). According to this theory, social capital is formed through 1) social bonding on the basis of the similarities between participants, and 2) through bridging between different backgrounds and cultures (Gittell & Vidal, 1998; Putnam et al., 2004). Social bonding and bridging has been posited to be of special importance for those excluded in other contexts (i.e. CYP in challenging contexts and/or with SEND), as it introduces new socialising and learning experiences, potentially breaking the cycle of rejection and difficulties with social competence (Banerjee et al., 2011). The use of music has been highlighted as an effective way of reducing prejudice and fostering positive change, potentially through these processes of social bonding and bridging (Pettigrew et al., 2011). A systematic review by McPherson et al. (2014) concluded that the sense of social capital has a strong relation to the wellbeing of YP, further suggesting the potential value of exploring social capital as an additional framework by which the need for relatedness is understood. The findings by Levstek and Banerjee (2021) highlights the potential role for music in driving social bonding and bridging, with participants describing a shared love of music as a fundamental bonding factor as well as a central point of contact among diverse groups of people. This is consistent with findings in the literature emphasising the role of music in social bonding (Savage et al., 2020), conferring benefits to social relations and understanding, and impacting upon interpersonal development (Banerjee et al., 2011). The context and environment provided by such music-making programmes have been associated with youth empowerment and the facilitation of social interactions (Karlsen, 2012). These findings would suggest that enhancements to wellbeing may occur through these processes of relatedness, fostering interpersonal development and enhanced connection with others.

These findings in relation to social capital are also consistent with that of Granot et al. (2021), who administered online questionnaires in 11 different countries. Their results further suggested that music can be highly efficient in regulating mood, defining self-identity, reducing loneliness and creating a sense of togetherness (e.g. Jacobson & Artman, 2013). Music was found to be most efficient at attaining the goal of enjoyment and maintaining a positive mood. The cross-sectional study design and use of convenience/snowball sampling must be noted, which precludes claims of causality or population representativeness in the study. Furthermore, the focus on measuring the perceptions of respondents through surveys was perhaps not able to fully capture how active participation in music activities may impact upon wellbeing. However, interestingly, the findings were evident across different countries and gender, further indicating the role

of music as a central point of contact among diverse groups of people and cultures. This would suggest that the potential benefits of music on wellbeing are universal, persist across cultures and can drive social bonding and bridging (e.g. Mas-Herrero et al., 2020).

A key strength of the studies explored relates to the use of mixed method designs and the exploration of multiple perspectives (e.g. Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). It is felt this triangulation of data from multiple data sources and perspectives deepens our understanding of underlying psychological developments behind music-making programmes. This also presents a richer picture of the perspectives of all stakeholders in the process (e.g. YP, parents, teachers/tutors and professionals), which may be particularly important given the importance of the aforementioned social nature of wellbeing. It is felt from this perspective, the potential for music-programmes to empower marginalised YP can be more meaningfully explored. The findings explored in this section suggest this is achieved via participants experiencing enhanced autonomy (through greater agency, choice and control), competence (development of new positive identities and growth) and relatedness (enhanced connectedness and relationships with those around them) (Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). In particular, the study posits the need for relatedness as being highly influential to enhancing the wellbeing of YP. This is consistent with other research demonstrating that music-making/intervention can facilitate positive relationships (Papinczak et al., 2015), enhance feelings of connectedness and promote collaboration through shared experience (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). We have established this sense of relatedness and connection may be particularly crucial for YP with SEND (or those marginalised/facing educational or social exclusion) (Juvonen et al., 2019). Therefore, a deeper exploration of how these relational factors may contribute to enhancements in wellbeing for YP appears highly valuable and justified.

Relationships and Intersubjectivity

With this in mind, trusting and positive relationships have been consistently identified as central to supporting the learning and wellbeing of CYP (e.g. Levstek and Banerjee, 2021). Trusting relationships with key adults inside and outside of the school environment provides CYP with a 'secure base' to explore the world around them (Bomber, 2007), which may also be highly relevant to music programmes/interventions. One of the most widely accepted and consistent findings of the psychotherapy research literature is that the quality of the relationship between the patient and therapist is a major determinant of psychotherapeutic effectiveness (Saunders et al., 1989). It has been maintained that the quality of relationship between tutor (or teacher) and participant (CYP)

is equally important to fostering positive outcomes in music-making, sharing similarities to a one-to-one psychotherapeutic relationship (Gaunt, 2008). These similarities have been proposed to include longevity, frequency of meeting, interpersonal intensity, privacy, exploration and communication of emotion, developing strengths/capacities and promoting unique voice (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013). Although there are clearly considerable limitations and caution warranted at such a comparison, they point to the value of exploring the complexities and possibilities of the tutor/YP relationship (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013). As suggested by Levstek and Banerjee (2021), this positive relationship between tutor/teacher-YP may provide a powerful context for enhancing the wellbeing of YP within the context of music programmes.

It must be acknowledged that trained (psycho)therapists receive substantial training, have considerable expertise managing interpersonal relationships and are supported by professional structures and supervision (Gaunt & Westerlund, 2013). However, that is not to say the relationships within informal uses of music (i.e. between a tutor/staff member and YP) cannot be transformational or therapeutic. Positive aspects of these relationships have been noted as providing an experience that is trusting and intimate (Gaunt, 2010), fulfilling and inspiring (Gaunt, 2005) and intense both emotionally and the commitment to a shared musical journey (Presland, 2005). Another key characteristic of such relationships is the potential for collaborative learning, referring to situations where groups of two or more people attempt to learn and develop together (Illeris, 2007). This term draws upon constructionist ideology, underpinned by the notion that learners develop through interaction with peers or more knowledgeable others (King, 2008). Within this more 'informal' context of music, the theory of intersubjectivity appears potentially valuable to further understand how these relationships may lay the foundations to achieve positive psychological outcomes.

Intersubjectivity, broadly conceived, concerns the human capacity for understanding relationships between self and others and the fundamental role this plays in all aspects of human experience (Djenar et al., 2018). Authors have highlighted the importance of developing harmonious, responsive relationships with YP, where both partners play an active and equal role (e.g. Djenar et al., 2018; Kennedy et al., 2017). Developing this 'intersubjectivity' has been regarded as the basis of all effective communication, interaction and learning (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001). Bevington et al. (2015) further highlight the importance of establishing trust, secure and positive attachments with YP they termed 'hard to reach'. In their view, the difficulties experienced by these 'hard to reach' YP were characterised by attachment difficulties, impacting upon the ways in which they mentalise,

interpret and connect with the social world around them. They suggested these difficulties are rooted in past traumatic experiences that can activate dismissing, ambivalent or disorganised attachment styles. Although it must be noted that CYP can experience a multitude of different barriers to learning (which arguably precludes any one unifying explanation or model), research has demonstrated attachment styles and experiences can impact on CYPs interactions/warmth towards others, autonomy, self-regulation and trust in social knowledge (Bevington et al., 2015; Taylor et al., 2009).

It has been stated that such challenges can be overcome by specific interventions that make individuals feel understood, thus restoring trust and regenerating a capacity to learn from social experience (also termed epistemic trust) (Fonagy & Allen, 2014). In other words, interventions drawing on trusting relationships (and thus conferring a sense of feeling thought about and valued) can enable individuals to learn new things about their social world. This may, for example, have the potential to change expectations about self, others and the likely interaction between the two (i.e. their internal working models). That is, laying a foundation of trust and security through which CYP in challenging circumstances have the potential to grow and learn, where problematic internal working models (e.g. feeling a lack of self-worth or mistrust of others) can be gradually remodelled. Through its ability to foster collaborative and shared interactions between adults and CYP (i.e. working towards a trusting relationship with an equal balance of power), it is suggested interventions using music hold significant potential to enhance wellbeing through these relational processes. For example, Bevington et al. (2015) maintain that the potential to develop epistemic trust through positive attachments is possible outside of a clinical situation (i.e. between a participant and music tutor), noting that the experience of feeling thought about enables us to learn new things about our social world. This is consistent with Levstek and Banerjee's (2021) study, which reported the new found competence and social connection fostered by music-making programmes overturned previous negative self-perceptions and feelings of low self-worth for YP.

Gaunt (2008) further highlights the influential role of the music tutor/teacher, describing them as 'musical agents', models and motivating forces for their pupils. Alongside the optimal and prolonged moments of synchrony, the tutor-CYP relationship can also be a constant site of negotiated relations, interactions, behaviours of awareness and focus, frustrations, disappointments and epiphanies (de Bruin, 2018). This would further suggest that the reciprocal 'bond' and the interpersonal interactions within the CYP-tutor relationship may hold powerful potential to re-shape how CYP view the world around them and the interactions within them (e.g. Wolf, 2010). With this in mind, one could view

the positive working relationship between supportive music tutors and CYP as potentially transformational spaces. Levstek and Banerjee (2021) provided further indication that this space may be particularly crucial for disempowered members of society (i.e. CYP with SEND), providing the means and opportunity to experience a sense of agency and negotiate/develop their own identity (Karlsen & Westerlund, 2010). This is consistent with suggestions that such spaces can support growth in CYP's perceptions of their own competence and nurture a sense of 'normality' away from external labels and stigma (Herbert, 2009). Such findings highlight the collective dimension of music-making programmes, particularly in relation to fostering supportive relationships and connections with significant others (e.g. with musical tutors and peers). It is argued these relational processes provide powerful potential to enhance the wellbeing of YP with SEND, particularly via feelings of empowerment and agency (autonomy) and new found positive perceptions of themselves (competence) away from prior difficulties and labels (Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). This is consistent with research suggesting attentive, genuine, understanding and supportive relationships can help CYP grow emotionally and socially; perhaps overturning previously disempowering/marginalising experiences and negative perceptions of self (Wubbels, 2015). This process of challenging negative perceptions and fostering new, positive identities has been termed positive signification (or re-signification). Music programmes/interventions may hold powerful potential to foster high quality relationships and positive, empowering experiences (Cooper, 1993).

This further suggests a sense that music-making programmes may provide CYP with the tools to change their personal and social experiences, building a sense of connectedness via experiencing opportunities to build interpersonal skills and relationships (Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). The research reviewed has demonstrated the need for relatedness represents an influential area for consideration in relation to music-making programmes (Papinczak et al., 2015). This is reflected in the potentially transformational nature of the trusting CYP-tutor relationship and opportunities to foster connection, cohesion and collaboration with others (de Bruin, 2018; Mas-Herrero et al., 2020). This represents the capacity for music to be socially cohesive; to engage with music is to engage with others and with things outside the self, musically drawing people together and collectively working/making something together (Proctor, 2011). However, there is a dearth of research exploring how these programmes and contexts may provide opportunities to foster autonomy, competence and relatedness. Due to the often informal and participant-led nature of these programmes, further exploration of the context and nature of the CYP-tutor relationship (and its implications for 'learning' and engagement) is felt valuable.

The 'Informal' uses of Music and Relatedness

Whilst there is plentiful literature on formal uses of music (i.e. formal music education and music therapy), the literature base around informal uses of music appears less well established. Informal uses of music (also termed informal learning approaches or pedagogies; similar to the concept of musicking) have been characterised by bringing about an end goal, of which is largely guided by the learner and often encouraging a sense of play/shared interaction (Jenkins, 2011). Six key features of informal learning have been identified by Beckett and Hager (2002), which appear highly relevant and integrated into music programmes. This includes 1) an organic/holistic approach, 2) contextual, 3) activity-and experience-based, 4) arises in situations where learning is not the main aim, 5) activated by individual learners rather than by teachers/trainers and 6) often collaborative/collegial. One of the advantages of informal learning is the capacity to provide greater control to the learner, and, through its focus on exploration, discovery and collaboration empower them to take charge of their own situation (Jenkins, 2011). Taylor and Parson's (2011) review of the literature emphasises similar themes, highlighting the importance of activities that are relevant/meaningful to CYP; challenging and focused on engagement first; incorporate technology-rich learning environments; and involve collaboration within respectful relationships. Due to the parallels with interventions using music and/or technology, an exploration of these features appears valuable to further disentangle potential opportunities to foster relatedness (and in turn, wellbeing). For instance, this would suggest that the informal learning style of music-making is likely to provide opportunities to foster enhanced autonomy (learner control), competence (through achieving goals) and relatedness (collaboration and exploration) (Taylor & Parson, 2011).

A study by Green (2008) aimed to examine the ways in which informal learning strategies might be beneficial to inform learning/support CYP in schools. Green interviewed 14 popular musicians to explore how learning differed from formal teaching. Green later integrated these informal strategies into a number of music classrooms in the UK, exploring which worked best. Some of these strategies included providing greater choice, collaborative work, holistic immersion in projects and involvement in music-making. This shifted the role of the teacher to that of facilitator, establishing ground rules, setting the task and guiding pupils through a sequential music-making process. These strategies required teachers to take a step back, with pupils and teachers reporting enhanced enjoyment, motivation and connections within their learning. It was concluded this related to the practical and active style (i.e. greater autonomy/freedom of choice and exploration

of instruments), ability to tap into their interests and make connections between what they know/do inside and outside of school (e.g. familiar music, genres and preferences).

Although the definition and understanding of 'informal' music/learning is still not well established, studies such as Green's demonstrates that features of informal learning (e.g. as identified by Beckett & Hager, 2002) warrant further attention and may play an important role in fostering autonomy, competence and relatedness. The work of Green (2008) suggests that positioning of the teacher/tutor in a supporting and facilitator role warrants further consideration. This builds on the aforementioned description of 'musical agents', whereby teachers/tutors hold transformational potential to re-shape previously negative expectations and self-perceptions of YP (Gaunt 2008; Wolf, 2010). In addition to these relational processes, informal learning would posit that the style and experiential approach of tutors/teachers provides further opportunities to foster autonomy, engagement and exploration. It is interpreted that a central theme of Green's work relates to the promotion of autonomy and relationships of a more equal balance of power, moving away from a more instructional/traditional teaching style and towards shared exploration. This shift from a prescriptive, authoritarian relational/teaching style towards a dialogical and co-created style is conducive to meaningfully engage CYP (Narita & Green, 2015) and further explore the process of fostering opportunities for relatedness. Guided by the tutor/teacher via this facilitative style, it is argued further opportunities are provided for YP to experience a sense of autonomy (via agency, choice and ownership) and competence (experiencing success and greater belief in their capabilities). It appears music-making programmes are underpinned by this symbiosis of relational and informal learning features, which may provide a safe and facilitative context through which wellbeing can be enhanced. The literature suggests this may be achieved via opportunities to foster autonomy, competence and relatedness; empowering YP to form new, positive perspectives and expectations about themselves and others (e.g. Wolf, 2010). A further underexplored area of 'informal learning' relates to the use of digital technologies, which are often utilised as part of music-making programmes. Due to the aforementioned impact of the Covid-19 period and necessity for online/blended learning, it is felt an exploration of the potential advantages conferred by digital technologies may be highly relevant to consider (Ng et al., 2021).

Technology and Digital 'Narratives/Stories'

Informal Strategies and Technology

The literature has suggested that using digital technologies in blended online learning can effectively support collaboration (e.g. Chu et al., 2019). In the ubiquitous

digital age, the potential for digital environments/learning to reach disengaged or disempowered YP has been highlighted in the literature (Ng, 2021). Therefore, the potential for digital technologies to supplement or strengthen music-making programmes appears highly relevant to consider. For example, music programmes/interventions have made use of digital technologies including wiki, simulation, social networking sites and social media tools to engage YP and enhance wellbeing (Ng & Chu, 2021). The advantages of using online environments include enhancing flexible learning (Biasutti, 2015), enabling creative opportunities for music-making and production (King & Himonides, 2016), and encouraging pupils to exchange dialogues for collaboration (Adileh, 2012). These opportunities and advantages appear highly related to autonomy, competence and relatedness, providing an environment that may challenge traditional pedagogical approaches. To further explore these factors of digital technologies (and subsequent impact on wellbeing), Johnson and Merrick (2020) used a 30 minute weekly ZOOM live-streaming 'café', focusing on discussions around wellbeing and music. The study found the use of technology supported pupil wellbeing (through experiences of listening, sharing and exploring wellbeing strategies), connection, identity and a sense of community through YP connecting and sharing their musical life together. Although it was unclear precisely how pupil voice was gathered and analysed in the study, it provides a valuable qualitative insight into how digital technologies may offer further opportunities to support wellbeing and build connectedness/relatedness.

This has been a particularly important area for consideration following the Covid-19 period and increasing likelihood of social isolation for many CYP (Ng & Chu, 2021). Further studies have supported the suggestion that digital technologies can successfully engage CYP and foster participation in blended learning practices (e.g. Lee & Freeman, 2013; Wise, 2016). A qualitative study by de Bruin (2021) aimed to investigate the practices employed by music educators during online sessions in secondary schools, exploring the perceptions of teachers through the use of interviews. The study further echoes the importance of the aforementioned discussion on intersubjectivity and informal learning approaches characteristic of music-making programmes. Importantly, it appears possible to integrate such features into digital learning/technologies, with further potential to engage YP disempowered from education. The study found three overarching themes relating to: 1) adaptability and the need for new encounters, 2) interactive improvisations and 3) ways of showing and telling within the teacher/tutor-YP relationship. The collaborative, co-designed and coordinated nature of online sessions revealed humanistic qualities of connectivity for student agency that emphasised shared spaces, problem-

solving and relatedness (de Bruin, 2021). Another major theme was the dominance of dialogic communication skills, reflecting an intersubjective understanding and orientation toward one another's perspectives (Wegerif, 2007). This approach was suggested to provide connectivity and a shared understanding/space where problems and ideas could be explored together, similar to that previously reported of music-making sessions generally.

The open-ended and explorative nature of the interviews were considered a strength of this research, providing scope to explore and expand on topics meaningful to the participant. This enabled the researchers to generate rich insights into teachers' perspectives, suggesting the ability to develop and maintain a view of intersubjectivity (i.e. shared, trusting and equal relationships) extends to the online mode of delivery. However, it is acknowledged that exploring the views of YP is needed to gain a further understanding of how these processes and relationships are experienced from their perspective. Due to the focus and scope of the study, the potential impact of these processes on wellbeing (and other outcomes) was unexplored. Indeed, it appears a comprehensive understanding of how and why these online teaching sessions/interventions (and the underpinning mechanisms) work currently eludes researchers (e.g. Ng et al., 2021). Within the context of YP with SEND (or YP that may be highly resistant to engaging in education), the highly accessible and motivational nature of online modes of delivery may be valuable to further explore. Furthermore, authors have criticised research seeking to understand the effectiveness of online pedagogy as underdeveloped (e.g. Edward et al., 2018). As such, it appears an important next step is to explore how such online strategies/interventions foster positive outcomes for YP, whether as an alternative or adjunctive component of in-person music-making sessions.

'Digital Narratives/Stories'

A further possibility of technology to foster positive outcomes relates to the use of 'digital narratives/storytelling,' which may be highly compatible with music programmes. The terms 'digital' and 'storytelling' have become ubiquitous in the internet age, which has led to a fundamental shift in how stories are told and consumed (Bennett et al., 2008). Due to the ease of recording, creating and sharing stories in this digital age, there has been growing attention on using digital tools to achieve therapeutic, pedagogic and knowledge-generating outcomes (Haigh & Hardy, 2011; Laing et al., 2017). The process of digital storytelling has been described as using facilitation components, skills and techniques that help participants create meaningful digital stories about their life (Lang et al., 2019). These

recorded accounts of individual and group experiences make use of multimedia tools such as videos, photographs, music, text and audio. The possibility and potential power of using digital narratives in music-making programmes has been underexplored in the literature.

Of particular relevance, are the possibilities of digital stories to have a powerful and often therapeutic effect on the audience and storyteller (Haigh & Hardy, 2011; Liang et al., 2017; 2019). A study by To et al. (2014) found the sharing of stories was empowering and helped reaffirm the necessary commitment and strength to overcome difficult experiences. The potential value and relevance of exploring digital technologies is reflected by the significant amount of time YP spend posting content on social media and social networking sites (Rubio-Hurtado et al., 2022). This is increasingly being viewed as an active process, serving as ‘technologies of the self’, which reflect (and portray) one’s own way of acting, interacting with others and the world around them (Davis, 2004; Rodriguez-Illera, 2014). Narrative-based methodologies such as digital storytelling can enable YP to construct their own discourses (or narratives), fostering reflective processes around self-identity, relationships and experiences (Gregori-Signes & Corachan, 2014). These processes have been found to be highly relevant and prominent in music-making programmes, with YP having space to form new positive relationships, identity and self-perceptions (or ‘resignification’) (Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). It is argued the use of digital narratives may hold powerful potential to strengthen this re-signification process, providing YP with further opportunities to share their success, progress and new-found positive identities via online platforms. The literature, although sparse suggests that digital stories may hold further transformational potential to empower YP and foster relatedness, via providing a platform through which their stories can be heard and shared.

Narratives and EP Practice

The potential for music-making programmes to enhance wellbeing and harness the potentially transformational power of digital stories appears relevant to EP practice. Legislation (e.g. the Children and Families Act, 2014) and principles of social justice highlight the importance of lifting up these narratives and understanding the experience of CYP from their own perspectives. These considerations are central to EP practice, considering their social and ethical responsibility to work in the best interests/to the benefit of the CYP, families and communities they work with (Children & Families Act, 2014; Health and Care Professions Council, 2016). Eliciting the views/voices of CYP (and so appreciating and attempting to understand their narratives) is integral to ensuring their inclusion and active participation. Person-centred approaches (e.g. Rogers, 1959; person-

centred planning; Holburn et al., 2007) share this common philosophy of respect for the individual and process of ongoing collaboration (O'Brien & O'Brien, 2000). With this context in mind, it appears the potential for music-making programmes and processes to foster re-signification and empowerment for marginalised/disempowered CYP is highly relevant. The use of narrative approaches (borne from narrative therapy; White & Epston, 1990) is growing in EP practice and appears valuable to consider in light of its potential to meld with music-making programmes. It reflects a respectful and non-blaming approach, which centres around CYP being experts in their own lives and drawing on their skills, beliefs and values (Morgan, 2000). Uzun and LeBlanc's (2017) theoretical framework further highlights the importance of respecting and building confidence in CYP, outlining the following:

1. The importance comes from the meaning given to an interpretation.
2. Meaning is constructed within political, social and cultural systems.
3. People's behaviours are influenced by the narratives that they and others tell about them.
4. People live multiple different narratives concurrently.
5. Problems are externalised from the self. The person is not the problem.
6. The client is the expert in their own life.

Although the formal therapy context is beyond the scope of this discussion, the above propositions appear highly relevant to consider within the context of eliciting the voice of CYP. Particularly pertinent, is the possibility of using narrative approaches in combination with music to help CYP construct meaning and help them change when experiencing challenging circumstances (Zimmerman & Dickerson, 1996). Within these challenging circumstances, CYP can have unhelpful dominant discourses in their lives (often called 'thin descriptions'), which can be oppressive and problematic (Morgan, 2000). These may be held by themselves and/or the people and systems around them, which may directly or indirectly contribute to their enduring beliefs and internal working models about the world. This can prevent CYP from describing their own interpretations of their preferred lives (Snowdon, 2021). This echoes the potential for music-making programmes to foster reflective processes around self-identity, positive perceptions of competence, greater autonomy, competence and relatedness (Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). Therefore, exploring how one can potentially harness and strengthen such positive change via narrative approaches appears valuable to consider. For example, this may provide CYP with a platform to share their stories, progress and sense of identity, further empowering and including them in the process.

Research has indicated that digital stories/narratives can be used to engage CYP in challenging circumstances and develop a sense of agency and identity (Davis & Weinshenker, 2012). In their scoping review, Vecchi et al. (2016) concluded that digital stories/narratives can help adults around CYP learn about, understand and empathise with their lived experience (e.g. Vecchi et al., 2016). Although the relatively small number of studies included precludes any strong conclusions/recommendations, this further supports the possible utility of digital stories for mental health and wellbeing. With this in mind, it is felt further exploration is warranted on the adjunctive benefits of digital stories/narratives, which have been utilised alongside music to enhance the wellbeing of CYP.

Bloustein and Peters (2011) aimed to provide an understanding of how and why music engagement is important to marginalised YP, and what is needed to ensure this fosters social inclusion/relatedness. The use of digital storytelling was found to facilitate the complex processes YP engage with in relation to music-making. Viewed as co-researchers of their own processes, YP told their story of music engagement over time through their own participatory video making. This included scope for personal uploads to social networking sites and blogging to share these stories. Findings indicated the music-making and digital storytelling experiences connected YP to the community, promoted collaboration and fostered skills for sharing knowledge and information on social networking sites. Although further research is undoubtedly needed to further explore underlying mechanisms and how this may enhance wellbeing, such findings provide supporting evidence that the melding of music and digital narratives can provide opportunities to enhance relatedness and empower YP to share their stories.

There is a particular gap in the literature to investigate programmes melding the use of music and digital narratives, to explore the contexts which provide opportunities to support the need for relatedness, and in turn wellbeing. The utility of incorporating a digital narrative component (i.e. through recording journeys through the intervention and sharing these on digital/social media platforms) is currently underexplored in the literature. As these programmes are not delivered in a vacuum, appreciating the importance of the context, meaning and processes through which relatedness may be fostered (and in turn, wellbeing) is needed (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). Due to the social context in which identities and narratives are constructed, it is felt exploring multiple perspectives may be valuable to further elucidate these processes. Research highlights the importance of positive, collaborative relationships between school, family and professionals to enhance wellbeing and foster protective factors for CYP (e.g. Stirling & Emery, 2016). As such, it is

felt parents/carers and key professionals may be highly implicated in these processes due to their interaction with CYP across various contexts. There is a notable absence in the literature of the perspectives of parents/carers in this process, who may hold unique views on how such programmes may provide opportunities for relatedness. It is also within these contexts (and through their relationships with significant others) that CYP will construct and share their identity/sense of self. Therefore, it has been recognised that further research is needed with CYP with SEND across multiple domains, individuals and settings to further explore the utility of such interventions (Foley, 2017). This research will seek to fill these gaps by using a multiple case study approach to explore the utility of a particular music-mentoring programme for the wellbeing of YP (delivered by the social enterprise Noise Solution; NS). This chapter will conclude with a brief description of the NS programme, which integrates a number of key themes from this literature review.

The Noise Solution Music-mentoring Programme

NS delivers music-mentoring programmes, based on SDT, for YP with SEND/facing challenging circumstances. The literature has suggested that YP facing social exclusion and disengagement from education can experience further stress, repeated perceptions of rejection, ostracism, negative perceptions of education and learned helplessness (Baumeister & DeWall, 2005; Siyahhan et al., 2012). Therefore, the potential for music-mentoring programmes such as NS to re-engage and enhance the wellbeing of YP in such challenging circumstances warrants further attention.

The programme explicitly draws on SDT, through which it is argued a greater appreciation of the social and relational factors can be explored (Ryan & Deci, 2002). It is anticipated this will fill a gap in the literature, overcoming aforementioned limitations (as outlined by DeNora & Ansdell, 2014) to provide a more holistic exploration of how relationships, practices, situations and technologies may contribute to potential enhancements to wellbeing. The study by Levstek and Banerjee (2021) highlighted the potential for music-making sessions to satisfy these three basic psychological needs. The need for relatedness appears particularly influential in providing a foundation through which autonomy and competence can be fostered (Calp, 2020). That is, without a positive and trusting connection, YP are less likely to engage and be receptive to support and engage in productive activities (Wood, 2015).

NS pairs YP with professional musicians, using music-making and their own bespoke digital platform as the 'vehicle' to reengage participants and improve their wellbeing. The participant-led, flexible nature of the programme echoes features of

informal learning, e.g. a focus on exploration, discovery and collaboration (Jenkins, 2011). This places the role of the mentor/tutor as a facilitator of the music-making process via a more relational style, which can meaningfully engage and empower young people (Narita & Green, 2015). As such, it is argued there is valuable scope to explore how the mentor-YP relationship may provide opportunities to enhance relatedness and, in turn, autonomy and competence.

The programme also makes use of a bespoke, digital platform, enabling the YP to create digital narratives of the experience using photos, audio and video reflections of their music-making sessions. This exemplifies the melding of music, technology and narrative approaches, which have been suggested to provide powerful opportunities to engage YP and enhance wellbeing (Ng & Chu, 2021). This digital space provides opportunities for the YP to share their journey with significant others of their choice. Crucially, these 'digital stories' are created in a social context (with significant others), providing opportunities for YP to construct their own discourses around their identity and express this in the presence of others (Gregori-Signes & Corachan, 2014; Fairchild & McFerran, 2018). The need for relatedness appears highly relevant in the process of digital storytelling, whereby YP can have their stories heard and shared by those important to them. Therefore, it is argued a narrative approach provides valuable scope to explore how these stories are constructed/shared by YP, and the implications for relatedness and, in turn wellbeing.

Due to this, programmes such as NS may provide a unique opportunity to explore the melding of music and digital narratives to enhance the wellbeing of YP. In particular, it is argued further exploration could be valuable to deepen our understanding of how such programmes may provide opportunities to foster relatedness. There is a growing national recognition and evidence-base behind the NS programme, with evaluations suggesting positive outcomes on the confidence, self-determination and overall wellbeing for YP completing the programme (The Social Investment Consultancy, 2016; Glenister, 2017). However, a number of cautions of such evaluations must also be noted, including a reliance on self-report measures, limited follow-up data and the exclusion of (or limited data on) non-completers of the programme. This impacts on the strength of conclusions that can be drawn from such evaluations. Despite these cautions, the evaluations provide indication of the potential positive outcomes for YP completing the programme. Due to this, it is felt further exploration of 'what works' and the processes and contexts through which wellbeing may be enhanced by these programmes appears valuable. Crucially, including the perspectives of key stakeholders in this process (i.e. YP, music mentors,

parents/carers and key professionals) is argued to deepen our understanding of these processes and how they are experienced.

Empirical Chapter

Abstract

The aim of this research project was to gather an in-depth understanding of the experiences of two young people (YP) with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and their parents, music mentors and key professionals, in relation to a music-mentoring programme (Noise Solution; NS). The literature suggests music-making programmes may hold transformational potential to support reflective processes around self-identity and enhance the wellbeing of YP in challenging circumstances (Gregori-Signes & Corachan, 2014). Using Self Determination Theory (SDT) as a guiding framework, the research sought to explore the narratives of participants to gain a more holistic understanding of how the programme provided opportunities to enhance relatedness and, in turn wellbeing. The research utilised a merged multiple case study and narrative approach, exploring the collective 'journeys' of two YP with SEND. Each 'case' was comprised of the YP, their parent, music mentor and key professional. This included an analysis of secondary data of the bespoke digital blogs of the YP and a Microsoft Teams call with the YP (phase one) and semi-structured interviews with their parents, music mentors and key professionals (phase two). Narrative analysis was used to construct an overarching 'story' of the journey of the YP in relation to relatedness and wellbeing. The findings provide insight into the unique ways in which the stories of YP (and significant adults around them) can elucidate how such programmes may enhance relatedness and, in turn wellbeing. This research provides a holistic account of the social and relational context behind such programmes, highlighting the potentially transformational power of narrative approaches in the music-making process. Implications and recommendations for future research are discussed, highlighting the potential role of local authorities, educational settings and Educational Psychologists (EP's) to promote/utilise such approaches to engage YP in challenging circumstances and empower them to construct powerful alternative stories.

Introduction and Rationale

Research exploring the link between the arts, health and wellbeing has been established as a dynamic and multidisciplinary field of interest in the UK (Stickley et al., 2016). In particular, the use of music has been posited to represent a unique approach to enhance the wellbeing and engagement of children and young people (CYP) (Cardella, 2014), with growing interest in its potential value. The educational sphere has noted the fragility of the arts in the educational agenda as a key barrier to embracing and further

exploring this link (Liddiard and Role, 2021). The potential value of music as a vehicle to enhance the wellbeing and engagement of CYP may be even more pertinent to consider in light of the Coronavirus disease (Covid-19), which has reportedly had a significant impact on the wellbeing of CYP (Panchal et al., 2021). Although the precise and lasting impact is yet to be clearly understood, evidence suggests CYP with SEND have been disproportionately impacted by the social, educational, economic and mental health/wellbeing effects of the pandemic (Hagell, 2021), experiencing higher levels of anxiety, feelings of unhappiness and greater isolation (Chandola et al., 2020; Department for Education, 2020). Therefore, it seems timely, if not pressing to think carefully around creative approaches to engage CYP that may have experienced amplified barriers to their learning.

This is contextualised by the growing national priority and vision to strengthen the mental health and wellbeing provision for CYP in the UK (e.g. the Department for Education's SEND Review and 'Green Paper'; DfE, 2022; 2017). This highlights the agenda to work towards a more effective identification of need and the provision of early intervention and preventative support (e.g. the SEND Code of Practice; DfE, 2015). In particular need of enhanced support/intervention, are CYP who may experience complex and pervasive barriers to learning, are at risk of educational/social exclusion or currently not accessing formal education (de Bruin, 2021). The four broad areas of SEND are outlined in the SEN Code of Practice (DfE, 2015): communication and interaction; cognition and learning; physical and/or sensory; and social, emotional and mental health. It has been posited that educational services and professionals around CYP are in a unique position to meet these needs, prevent disengagement and enhance wellbeing (Caan et al., 2014). For example, this could be achieved through the provision of support plans, therapeutic intervention and appropriate referral.

The power of interventions and approaches tapping into the interests and creativity of CYP to re-engage them in productive pursuits and enhance wellbeing has been noted in the literature (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). There is a growing body of research reporting positive effects of interventions using music on academic, social and wellbeing outcomes (e.g. Jacobson & Artman, 2013; Cardella, 2014). There is further suggestion that music can enhance the wellbeing and engagement of pupils in challenging circumstances (e.g. experiencing social, emotional and mental health challenges) (Riley et al., 2019), suggesting the potential utility of further exploration. Despite these emerging and promising findings, further research is required to gain a more in depth, qualitative understanding of how these interventions/uses of music foster enhancements to wellbeing.

In particular, there is a dearth of research from the perspective of CYP, parents and key professionals in this process.

The Melding of Music, Self Determination Theory and Wellbeing

With such varied conceptualisations and uses of music in the literature, the researcher appreciates that musical experiences rarely take place in a vacuum, constantly in a state of flux with practices, people, circumstances and technologies interlinked (DeNora, 2000). Small (1998) posited that, rather than the music itself, the surrounding community, interactions and relationships are of central importance. It is the melding of these features that have been coined 'musicking' by Small (1998), viewing music as a social process. Through this lens, it is argued there is greater opportunity to explore the interconnections between people and their environment, paying attention to contextual factors and social processes (e.g. DeNora & Ansdell, 2014).

This draws upon positive psychology's concept of 'flourishing', which places strengths, qualities and resources of individuals and their relationships with their environments as key tenets of wellbeing (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Due to the powerful potential for music to enhance social connection and cohesiveness (Rickard et al., 2012), it is felt maintaining this relational focus would help more deeply understand how enhancements to wellbeing may occur in context. This shifts the focus of the enquiry away from the direct effects of music, towards understanding how the melding of music, relationships and contextual factors may foster positive change.

SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2002) has been posited to build on this greater appreciation of social, cultural and environmental factors, providing some much needed theoretical grounding (Clift & Hancox, 2010). SDT (Basic Psychological Needs Theory) theorises that meeting the following three basic psychological needs fosters autonomous motivation and, in turn enhanced wellbeing; autonomy (volition and over decisions and actions), competence (mastery or efficacy) and relatedness (meaningful connections with others). Through its emphasis on how the environment and social context may enhance or thwart these basic psychological needs, SDT has been identified as a valuable framework to further explore music and wellbeing. Levstek and Banerjee (2021) used a mixed methods design to explore the psychological experiences of marginalised young people participating in inclusive music projects. The study used retrospective surveys of staff member perceptions and semi-structured interviews and focus groups with young people (YP), parents and staff members. The study found the music project enhanced feelings of ownership and autonomous engagement in YP; instilled greater confidence performing

and sharing their work with others (competence); and created a sense of social acknowledgement, connectedness and community (relatedness).

Interestingly, the authors reported that the process of competence building and the YP's perception of autonomy and ownership was fostered within (and supported by) trusting relationships with skilled adults. The idea of relatedness as a necessary basis for developing autonomy and competence has been suggested in the literature (e.g. Wood, 2015). In their exploration of music-making projects with YP, Levstek and Banerjee (2021) found that supportive, trusted and skilled adults provided opportunities to enhance the autonomy (YP experiencing greater choice and ownership in their work) and competence (YP feeling their growing skill was acknowledged by trusted adults) of YP. Research has further suggested music-making can foster social inclusion and relatedness, via feeling part of a community, promoting greater collaboration and opportunities for YP to share their skills and knowledge (Bloustein & Peters, 2011; Savage et al., 2020). This further suggests the psychological need for relatedness may be particularly important as a platform through which autonomy and competence can be fostered. Given these music programmes and experiences are not delivered in a vacuum, this need for relatedness appears particularly influential to further explore (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014).

Despite this, there has been seemingly limited research maintaining an explicit focus on relatedness and how these positive enhancements to wellbeing may occur. Furthermore, the ecological validity and appropriateness of the predominantly quantitative literature base has been called into question (De Nora & Ansdell, 2014). It is felt such designs cannot account for the complexity and social nature of real-life experience and the processes through which these positive enhancements are fostered (Fletcher, 2017). It is argued that a more ecologically valid approach is needed, with greater scope to more holistically explore the perspectives of YP and those around them. This is felt crucial to gain a deeper understanding of how YP experience and make-meaning in these musical endeavours; placing their voice more centrally in the research process. This research will use a multiple case study approach to address these gaps, exploring a particular music-mentoring programme (the social enterprise NS).

The Noise Solution Music-Mentoring Programme

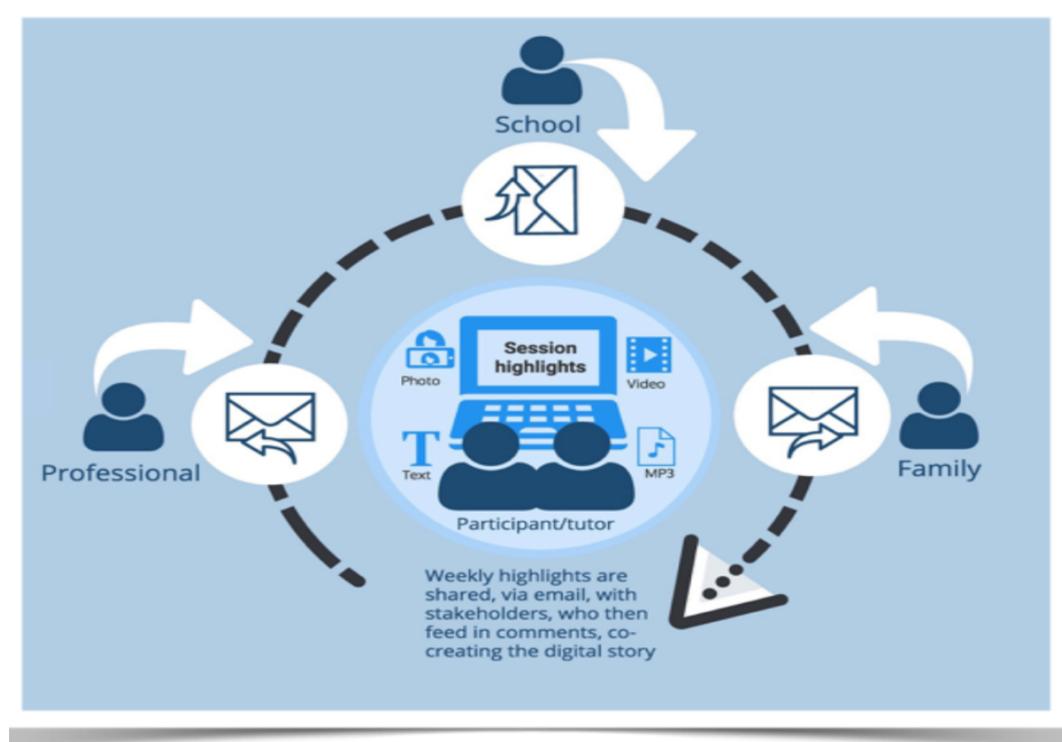
NS deliver music-mentoring programmes for YP facing challenging circumstances (e.g. YP not in education, employment/training or involved with mental health or youth justice services). The aim of the programme is to improve wellbeing and re-engage YP in productive and positive educational activities and trajectories. The YP is paired with a

professional musician, who delivers weekly one-to-one sessions over a ten-week period. The programme is underpinned by SDT, which enables YP to quickly create music of their own choice (autonomy), experience a sense of success and skill-building (competence) and share this progress with significant others (relatedness) via a bespoke digital platform. The impact of the programme is evaluated using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, with qualitative feedback gathered throughout the process from the YP and music mentor. External evaluations of the NS programme have reported 'extremely positive' outcomes for YP completing the programme (e.g. The Social Investment Consultancy, 2016), indicating its positive impact on the wellbeing of YP. Although caution is warranted at the strength of conclusions that may be drawn from such evaluations (e.g. due to limited scope, follow-up data and exclusion of non-completers of the programme), they provide valuable insights into potential enhancements to wellbeing for YP completing the programme. Therefore, it was felt further explorative, qualitative research would be valuable to add further depth and richness.

During these in-person sessions, the YP and music-mentor engage in an informal music-making process, which is supported by a digital, web hosted space using multimedia to capture the highlights of each session (Glenister, 2017). YP select who they share this digital narrative with, typically family, carers, school staff or key referring professionals (e.g. Teachers, Special Educational Needs Coordinators, Pastoral staff members, Tutors, Mental Health Professionals etc.). Chosen key adults are invited to interact and engage with the participant's journey through commenting on the multimedia posts. The sharing of this digital narrative presents opportunities to highlight success and foster two-way communication between the YP, family/carers, school staff and professionals, reinforcing the YP's feelings of competence and relatedness (see figure 1 below for a summary).

Figure 1

Noise Solution Digital Feed (taken from Glenister, 2017)



The NS programme presents a unique opportunity to explore the melding of music, relationships and digital narratives of the journey to enhance the wellbeing of YP. The potential for digital tools/storytelling to achieve therapeutic ends has received growing attention in the literature, supporting participants to create meaningful stories about their life (Haigh & Hardy, 2011; Lang et al., 2019). The literature suggests that digital stories may hold transformational power to empower YP through constructing and sharing their own discourses (or narratives), fostering reflective processes around self-identity, relationships and experiences (Gregori-Signes & Corachan, 2014). Given the possibilities for stories to exert a powerful and often therapeutic effect on the audience and storyteller (Haigh & Hardy, 2011; Liang et al., 2017), the sharing of the digital blog may provide a powerful vehicle to foster relatedness and, in turn enhance wellbeing through these potentially therapeutic effects. For example, the potential for digital storytelling to enhance feelings of connection to the community and share their progress with others has been highlighted (e.g. Bloustein & Peters, 2011).

The utility of a narrative approach to researching these issues is further highlighted by Morgan (2000), noting that YP in challenging circumstances can often have unhelpful or disempowering dominant discourses in their life (often termed 'thin' descriptions). These narratives may be held by themselves and/or constructed or perpetuated by (or in

combination with) those around them. The socially constructed nature of these narratives gives further credence to the value of exploring the perspectives of YP and the important people in their lives (i.e. parents/family, friends and those that work closely with them). In their scoping review, Vecchi et al. (2016) concluded that digital stories/narratives can help adults around the YP learn about, understand and empathise with their lived experience. It is argued narrative approaches have much to offer this inquiry, having the potential to more holistically understand the phenomena and place the voice of the YP more centrally in this process (Foley, 2017).

There is a dearth of research exploring interventions/programmes making use of this melding of music and narrative approaches. It is felt exploring multiple perspectives in this process (i.e. the YP, parent, music mentor and key professionals) will foster a more holistic understanding of how the use of music may enhance relatedness and, in turn wellbeing. It is felt this can be interestingly and uniquely explored through the narratives they tell or construct together during this process. With this in mind, it is felt exploring the 'NS journey' of YP via a multiple case study/narrative approach would provide a deeper understanding of how these processes are experienced by YP and important adults around them.

Aims and Rationale of Present Study

This research aims to gather an in-depth understanding of the experiences of two YP with SEND, and their parents, music mentors and key professionals, in relation to the NS programme. It is hoped a narrative approach will fill a gap in the research base for a richer, more detailed exploration from multiple perspectives. This is in line with calls for more explorative, in-depth approaches appreciating the context and relational nature of these programmes (De Nora & Ansdell, 2014). It is acknowledged that SDT (particularly the psychological need for relatedness) guided the particular focus of the research. This focus centred around how participants may construct/experience a sense of relatedness via the NS programme. However, scope was provided for inductive and alternative narratives to emerge that were felt interesting and relevant to the enquiry, characteristic of narrative approaches (Josselson & Hammack, 2021). In line with the social constructionist and narrative approach of this research, it was felt keeping the research question broad and open would be valuable, leading to the development of a single research question:

“What narratives do YP with SEND, and their parents, music mentors and key professionals provide when asked about their experiences of the NS programme?”

It was felt this would provide space for participants to express their own subjective experiences and narratives, through which the researcher can more meaningfully understand how participants construct/experience opportunities for relatedness (and in turn, experience enhanced wellbeing). By placing these narratives centrally in this process, it is felt the research may potentially hold a transformational or empowering effect. Transformational research is based on the axiological assumption that ethical research should promote social justice and human rights (Mertens, 2017). With this in mind, it is hoped the research also holds a secondary purpose of lifting up the voices and perspectives of YP and parents that may have experienced marginalisation or feelings of disempowerment in the past. This strongly aligns with the researcher's own axiological values and commitment to promote social justice.

Methodology

Ontological and Epistemological Stance

This study was approached from the position of social constructionism, initially proposed by Berger and Luckman (1967). From this perspective, individuals seek to understand the world they inhabit and use personal experience to develop subjective meanings of certain objects or things (Garcia Rodriguez, 2016). According to Cresswell (2003), the multiple and varied meanings created are complex and often socially and historically negotiated. Ontologically, this approach posits that there is no objective reality, only multiple realities and truths that are influenced by the social context and unique constructions of a phenomenon (Robson & McCartan, 2016).

Within the context of this research project, it is anticipated that the YP, and their parents, music mentors and key professionals will have their own views and perspectives on the key issues and research question, reflecting multiple realities unique to their experiences and worldview. This appreciates that the way participants have experienced opportunities to satisfy the need for relatedness (and the meaning attached to this) may be varied, existing within their own unique social context and relationships. This also acknowledges that the meaning and content of the digital blog is likely to be unique for every YP, reflecting their own socially constructed reality. This enabled the digital narratives of the YP to be placed centrally in the research, providing a starting point to further explore the perspectives of participants.

From an epistemological standpoint, social constructionism takes the view that knowledge is constructed by individuals in interaction with their environment and through

engaging in interpretation (Robson & McCartan, 2016). This takes the view that we construct our own versions of reality (as a culture or society) between us, with the researcher having an active role in constructing this knowledge (Burr, 1995; Mertens, 2015). As such, the role of the researcher in the process of constructing knowledge in collaboration with participants is recognised.

The use of narrative research appears highly compatible with the social constructionist position, providing further scope to explore the unique social context, circumstances and stories of participants. Narrative research enables researchers to see multiple and sometimes contradictory layers of meaning, reconstruct meanings through linking these layers, and explore/understand more about individuals and social processes (Frost, 2011). It was felt a narrative approach to the project would enable the researcher to appreciate the multiple and unique experiences and realities of the participants, in line with a social constructionist position.

Multiple Case Study Design

To align with the social constructionist position and narrative approach, a multiple-case study design was used across two 'phases' of data collection (further outlined in the data analysis section below). A multiple-case study design was felt appropriate due to its scope for in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives, accounting for the complexity and uniqueness of a programme such as NS and its potential impact on the wellbeing of YP (e.g. Simons, 2009). The study adopted an 'embedded' approach, whereby the unit of analysis came from multiple levels/sources of data, which can lead to a more detailed and richer understanding of a phenomena (Hamilton, 2011).

A multiple case design provides scope to explore both the factors that are unique to a particular case, whilst providing an opportunity to understand common characteristics of experience (Stake, 2005; Hamilton, 2011). It is hoped this methodology will contribute to a more in depth understanding of how programmes such as NS may provide opportunities to experience a sense of relatedness and, in turn enhance the wellbeing of YP. It is anticipated each participant may experience (and make meaning of) the programme differently, placing the context and relationships within them of central importance.

Case studies use theory to guide data collection from multiple sources and perform in-depth analysis of a phenomenon (e.g. an activity, programme, process or an individual) within its real-world context (Yin, 2018). This design will be used to explore the 'journeys' of two YP that have completed (or have ongoing involvement in) the NS programme. Each 'case' refers to an intertwined group comprising of the YP, and their parent, music mentor

and a key professional (e.g. in this case a Director of Inclusion and Tutor). Given the nature and sense of a shared 'journey' of the YP and the key adults around them (as documented on the digital blog), it was felt drawing on a narrative approach would provide a greater appreciation of the social context, voices and stories of participants (Reissman, 2008).

A Merged Narrative Approach

Although there is a lack of consensus and a clear definition of the term 'narrative', it is possible to explore commonalities that help understand the concept and its utility to the current research project. Narrative has been conceptualised both as a product (a told narrative in the form of interviews or discourse) and process (the process of storytelling and the associated meaning generated from this) (Creswell 2007; Kramp, 2004). We engage in storytelling to connect our actions, mark our identities, make meaning in life and our place within a larger social system (Josselson & Hammack, 2021). For the YP engaged in the NS programme, it is felt both their narratives of the journey (e.g. as expressed through the digital blog and conversations) and how these stories are told (and how meaning is constructed) are central to this research project.

Narrative research is premised on the idea that people live and/or understand their lives in storied forms, connecting events in the manner of a plot that has beginning, middle and end points (Sarbin, 1986). These stories have been posited to provide a window into meaning-making/human knowledge, providing access to human thoughts, concerns, actions and values (Robson & McCartan, 2016; Josselson & Hammack, 2021). During the process of telling stories (and their structure and function), the teller is suggested to create and reveal a sense of their own identity (Hiles et al., 2017). Individuals actively construct meaning through this process, based on their personal experiences, which allows for in-depth analysis of stories (Smith, 2020).

The 'merging' of case study and narrative approaches has been used in the literature (e.g. Sunday et al., 2020), with the purpose of providing an added layer of meaning-making and experiential depth. Within the context of this study, it is acknowledged participants will hold their own account of events and make-meaning in the NS programme in different ways. It is the linking of events through experience, connected through a chronology or plot that provides scope for exploration (Czarniawska, 2004). This allows for in-depth analysis of stories as a whole narrative, appreciating that meaning is constructed within a context and interactions within people (Smith, 2020; Josselson & Hammack, 2021). It is felt this fits well with the social constructionist perspective, providing

scope to bring multiple perspectives together through a whole narrative to more holistically understand and address the research question. This will maintain a focus on the relationships and wellbeing of the YP in relation to the NS programme, whilst providing an inductive scope for alternative narratives to emerge that may be relevant. The very process of reflecting on, storying and re-storying experiences through narrative approaches has been posited to foster therapeutic outcomes; where individuals can generate new meaning, positive identities and opportunities to connect with a raft of purposes, values, hopes and aspirations (White & Cartwright, 2007). As such, it is felt the research provided an opportunity for YP to engage in a potentially therapeutic process, taking an active role in storying/re-storying their experiences in their own words. Through engaging in this active process of storying/re-storying their experiences (working towards a co-constructed narrative), it is felt the research had the potential to be a transformational experience for YP, and their parents, music mentors and key professionals. This is in line with the social constructionist position and social justice/transformational aim of the research, with participants playing an active role in constructing/sharing narratives with the researcher. Through this process, the voices and stories of the participants could be heard and lifted up.

Participants

Participants were recruited across two phases using opportunity sampling. Descriptive criteria initially included YP who had successfully completed the NS programme (i.e. completed the 10 sessions and evaluation measures) within the previous six months. It was felt this relatively short time period would be valuable to help minimise the risk of limited recall of participants due to time elapsed since engaging in the programme. However, due to recruitment challenges, this requirement was removed to widen the pool of potential participants. Subsequently, in both 'cases', the YP recruited was engaging in a second block of NS sessions, meaning that the focus of exploration was on both retrospective (the prior block) and current experiences (ongoing engagement in the programme).

Participants were recruited with the support of NS (the gatekeeper), who had access to the parents of the YP that had completed (or were still engaging in) the programme. The parents of eligible YP were contacted by NS via email and provided with initial information about the study. This included a brief video from the researcher introducing themselves and the research project. The allocated music mentor and key professional (in this instance a secondary school Director of Inclusion and a Tutor

respectively) were also copied into the email. Upon indicating they were open to discussing the study further, the researcher then made initial contact with the parents via email to arrange a further telephone/Microsoft Teams call. The YP was informed of the study by their parents and were invited to join this call to find out more and ask questions. It was felt crucial that the YP and parent was included at every stage of the research, with explicit permission sought for both phases of data collection. Following this, participant information sheets (including a modified version for the YP) and consent forms were signed and returned by two parents and YP.

Prior to data collection, permission was gained for the researcher to undertake an analysis of secondary data (the digital blogs; phase one of this research project). The YP was subsequently sent a summary document of this analysis and invited to share their thoughts on it, and their experiences with NS via email or Microsoft Teams if they wished to.

In phase two, after receiving consent from the YP and parent, music mentors and key professionals were contacted via email, provided with initial information and invited to participate in the study. Following necessary informed consent, the researcher arranged semi-structured interviews with the parents, music mentors and key professionals. A summary of the two cases (and relevant demographic information and pseudonyms) is presented below in table 1.

Table 1

Relevant Information on the two 'Cases'

'Case' 1	'Case' 2
YP (Taylor): female, aged 15, on roll at a mainstream secondary school however not currently attending	YP (RJM): female, aged 15 and currently out of formal education
Mother (Jane)	Mother (Nicki)
Music mentor (Aston)	Music mentor (Marshall)
Director of Inclusion from the secondary school (Stevie)	Tutor (Cardi)

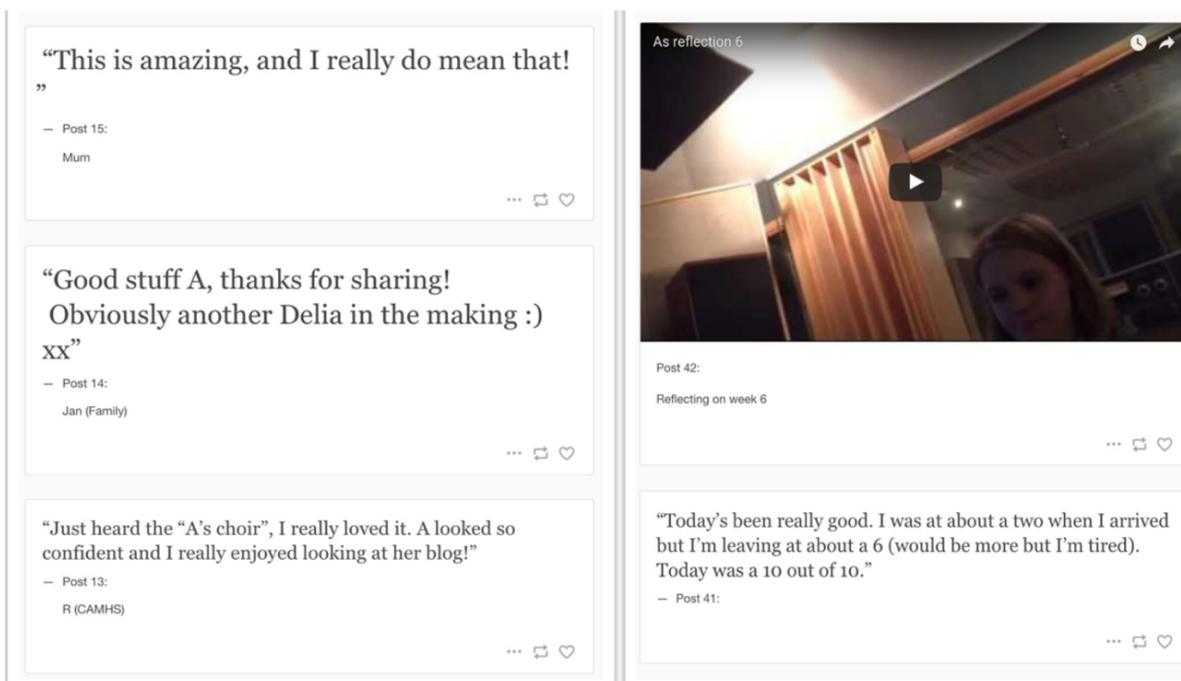
Data Collection

Phase One (Secondary Data)

Phase one data included information from the digital blogs, which are presented in a private, enclosed digital feed (similar to that of social media sites as Facebook). The digital platform enables the YP and mentor to create digital narratives of the experience via uploading photos, audio clips and video reflections throughout the sessions. For example, this includes audio samples of their music, blog posts, and videos/reflections of session highlights involving the YP and music mentor. This provides opportunities for chosen family members and key professionals to connect with the YP via interacting and commenting on this content. An example of this digital space is presented below in figure 2.

Figure 2

An Example of the Digital Platform (taken from Glenister, 2017)



Secondary data was accessed for two YP as part of the first phase of data collection. The researcher found both YP were keen to share their thoughts and experiences. As such, the researcher undertook Microsoft Teams calls with both YP to further explore their experiences. The YP were supported by a parent and tutor respectively during their Microsoft Teams calls. The respective contributions of the parent and tutor were included in the transcripts. The Microsoft Teams calls were open and led by the YP (and their account of their experiences) as far as possible, with the researcher occasionally using open questions to extend their responses and stories.

Phase Two (Semi-Structured Interviews)

The researcher then undertook semi-structured interviews with the YP's parent, music mentor and a key professional (6 interviews in total over the two cases). Semi-structured interviews were felt appropriate due to their potential to explore key issues and probe around the topic to generate rich data (Zapata, 2013; MacGlone et al., 2020). This was informed by the literature review and phase one data analysis (see Appendix 1 for example questions that were used in the semi-structured interviews). These areas were used for the researcher to guide participants towards sharing their narratives in their own words, from their own perspective. In this way, the researcher drew upon principles from narrative interviewing (Schutze, 1977) to further prompt 'unbroken' accounts and experiences of participants. Narrative interviewing is a method of conducting unstructured and in-depth interviews, aiming to generate story-telling schema to emerge (Smith, 2020). It is acknowledged the interviews were informed by SDT (maintaining a particular focus on the psychological need for relatedness) and phase one data analysis. However, holding in mind the following principles of narrative interviewing (as outlined Jovchelovitch & Bauer, 2000) enabled the researcher to be flexible and facilitate inductive discussion/narratives alongside this:

- Flexibility and openness in questioning (e.g. "can you tell me/talk to me a little more about");
- Initial topics were suggested for participants to discuss, with the researcher providing space and limited interruption for narratives to emerge;
- Active listening by the researcher, i.e. holding the language and content of emerging stories in mind to generate further questions/extend narratives (e.g. "what happened then? Is there anything else you might like to add about X"?).

All interviews ranged from 30-60 minutes and were recorded via the Microsoft Teams 'record and transcribe' function, with consent from all participants. The interviews were transcribed from this for the purposes of data analysis.

Data Analysis

Narrative analysis (NA) is an umbrella term for a family of methods that typically focus on the structure, content and functions of stories in written and oral communication (Reissman, 2008; Bamberg, 2012). Due to the lack of unified or agreed-upon procedures for NA, researchers have been invited to interrogate broad approaches, adapt or combine them to fit the purpose of research (Reissman, 2008). In this section, the researcher will

outline the use of two approaches that were undertaken simultaneously across both phases of data analysis.

The first method of NA adopted for this project is outlined by Josselson and Hammack (2021), which is concerned with a holistic approach to the analysis. This focuses on both the content (the patterns of themes) and form (the overall plot and structure) of the narratives. An overview of this process is presented below in table 2 (adapted from Josselson & Hammack, 2021):

Table 2

Overview of Narrative Analysis Process

Reading	Goal	Procedure
1	Identify initial thematic content and overall gestalt (i.e. structure).	Listen to the audio/video recording alongside reading the transcript. Annotate with initial ideas and write analysis memo (i.e. initial impressions, list of thematic content, preliminary gestalt and reflexivity section).
2	Identify the voices, discourses and master narratives with which the text is in dialogue.	Read transcript with an eye towards voices of others (e.g. a parent, ideologies, cultural stories or events). Annotate transcript and add to analysis memo (impressions, any new thematic content and list of voices).
3	Identify patterns and unity in the narrative.	Read transcript and review annotations to identify larger units of pattern and meaning in the text. Annotate transcript and add to analysis memo summarising impressions.
4	Identify links between text and theory	Read transcript and analysis memos and draw links to relevant theories and frameworks (adding links between data and theory into analysis memo).
5	Situate narrative in relation to others collected in the study	Compare and contrast findings of this analysis with others in the study. Write memos as cases are

grouped that share similar patterns and make note of discrepancies.

This method draws on the work of Lieblich et al. (1998), which involves exploring links and associations across the entire story (Hiles & Cermak, 2008), appreciating how specific segments (or 'stanzas') of the text can shed light on the story as a whole (i.e. the journey of the YP over the NS programme). The initial thematic content (larger patterns of meaning) of participants' narratives provided some initial structure and focus to guide the analysis. Exploring the content of stories (larger elements of meaning and thematic content) fits well with the case study approach, enabling the researcher to explore common and unique features of experience to theorise across cases (Reissman, 2008). From this, the researcher could identify and explore links and associations across the story as a whole, exploring the sequential and structural features of the YP's journey. For example, maintaining a focus on how the story was put together, subsequent meaning attached to experiences and a sense of the overall 'gestalt' of the story (i.e. the overarching shape, configuration or structure of the narrative).

To further guide and enhance this analysis, the researcher engaged in a process of 're-storying', which was guided by Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space framework. Re-storying has been described as a process of gathering stories, analysing them for key elements and then rewriting the story to place it within a chronological sequence (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). Given that the interviews were flexible and the participants' narratives did not always follow an organised structure, it was felt re-storying would meaningfully bring together emotions, interactions, context and events that formed their experience (Polkinghorne, 1995). Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space focuses on factors regarding context, interactions, feelings, thoughts and continuity, allowing the researcher to capture a sense of participants' experiences over time (Feingold, 2020). Table 3 below provides an overview of this:

Table 3

Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) Three-Dimensional Space Framework (adapted from Clandinin & Connelly, 2000; Ollerenshaw & Cresswell, 2002)

Interaction		Continuity			Situation
Personal	Social	Past	Present	Future	Context
Look inward to internal conditions, feelings, hopes, aesthetic, moral dispositions	Look outward to existential conditions in the environment with other people and their intentions, purposes, assumptions, and points of view	Look backward to remembered experiences, feelings, and stories from earlier times	Look at current experiences, feelings, and stories relating to actions of an event	Look forward to implied and possible experiences and plot lines	Look at context, time, and place situated in a physical landscape with characters' intentions, purposes and different points of view

In combination with Josselson and Hammack's guidance, this enabled the researcher to re-story the narratives of the YP according to different time points (i.e. before the NS programme, during the music sessions and after). During this process of analysis, the researcher held in mind the 'three dimensional space', paying particular attention to interactional, continuity and situational factors present in the narratives. It was felt this appreciation of the personal experiences and social context facilitated a deeper analysis of participants' narratives (Ollerenshaw & Creswell, 2002). The ways in which these two approaches to analysis were used to integrate the multiple sources and breadth of information will be outlined below (also see Appendices 2, 3, 4 and 5 for further detail and clarity on these steps with examples of the analysis process).

Phase One (Secondary Data)

The researcher initially spent time immersing themselves in the multimedia content of the digital blog, reading through the comments/posts, viewing the weekly reflection videos between the YP and mentor and listening to the audio clips of their music. The researcher undertook multiple 'readings' of the two blogs using Josselson and Hammack's (2021) guidance, annotating a digital copy throughout the process. These annotations focused on:

- initial thematic content/impression of the information;
- the emerging story/journey over the sessions;
- how this was constructed/presented via the shared space between the YP and mentor;
- potential voices, discourses and narratives embedded in the blog.

Although 're-storying' the digital blog was not felt necessary due to its chronological nature, Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space was also drawn upon to deepen the analysis. This enabled the researcher to further explore the following factors:

- The *personal* thoughts, feelings and hope potentially expressed by the YP
- The *social* context/working relationship with their music mentor
- Experiences, events and emerging plots/stories (*continuity*)
- Context of the music setting and different points of view (*situation*)

A sample extract of the digital blog analysis is presented below (see Figure 3), showing how this was guided by the above frameworks:

Figure 3

An example digital blog analysis extract

Week 8 Reflection:
I want to dedicate my song to my great Nan and to anyone who has lost a loved one. It's gone pretty well. I love it!

Emerging journey/story over the sessions The experiences, events and emerging plots/stories (continuity)

Commemorating second track and looking ahead to third

The personal thoughts, feelings and hope expressed by YP

"It's for my great Nan. I just wanna like dedicate it to her and anyone who's lost a loved one... it's gone pretty well" - sense of using the music to express feelings, commemorate loved ones and connect with audience (anyone who may have also lost a loved one)

Shared journey
- Finished second track/sharing and celebrating this
- Moving onto a further track

Shared space/interaction with music mentor
- Sense of progression and signposting what's to come, using the blog as a vehicle to tell a story (using suspense and intrigue to build anticipation and engage the audience)
- Sense of the YP leading the reflective space and music mentor responding to this (sense of a shared adventure and 'secret' project)

3 views Connecting to family members

Like Sense of connecting with audience Comment Responsive and attuned interaction

Use of lyrics and song making as a vehicle

Building confidence/independence and YP leading

Blog used as a story/suspense-building

Write a comment...

Week 7: Editing and mixing with Logic. Really getting the hang of this now!

Building in confidence and skill

Thematic content of the blog

How the story is being constructed/presented via the shared space The social context/working relationship with music mentor

Context of music setting and points of view (situation)

Potential voices, discourses, narratives and patterns of meaning gleaned from this analysis

This presents an example analysis of the blog posts, videos, comments and audio clips. The analysis has been annotated to demonstrate the links to Josselson and Hammack's (2021) guidance (denoted by the black text in the text-boxes) and Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three dimensional space (denoted by the orange text in the text-

boxes). As outlined in Figure 3, the researcher initially focused on the thematic content of the blog (annotated in Figure 3 by the purple text). The researcher also focused on the emerging story/plot over the sessions (summarised/denoted in green) and the social context/interaction between the YP and their mentor (e.g. how the story was constructed/shared in this social context). The personal thoughts and feelings shared by the YP (through their posts and comments via text, audio and video on the blog) were central to this analysis, with quotes from their comments and video highlighted. Due to the sequential (week-by-week) nature of the digital blog, the researcher was able to glean larger patterns of meaning from their annotations (as presented in Figure 3) and present an overall 'story' for each YP based on the multimedia information on the blog. This linked together thematic elements, experiences and events into a coherent narrative. Where possible, the words of the YP and mentor from the blog were used to construct this story, presented alongside possible connections to theory (see Appendix 2 for an example analysis of the blog/'digital stories'). From this analysis, an adapted and accessible 'summary' document was sent to the YP via a parent or key professional, outlining the core aspects of the story and the researcher's tentative observations and interpretation (see Appendix 2 for an example summary document). This data analysis also informed areas for further discussion in the semi-structured interviews (also see Appendix 2).

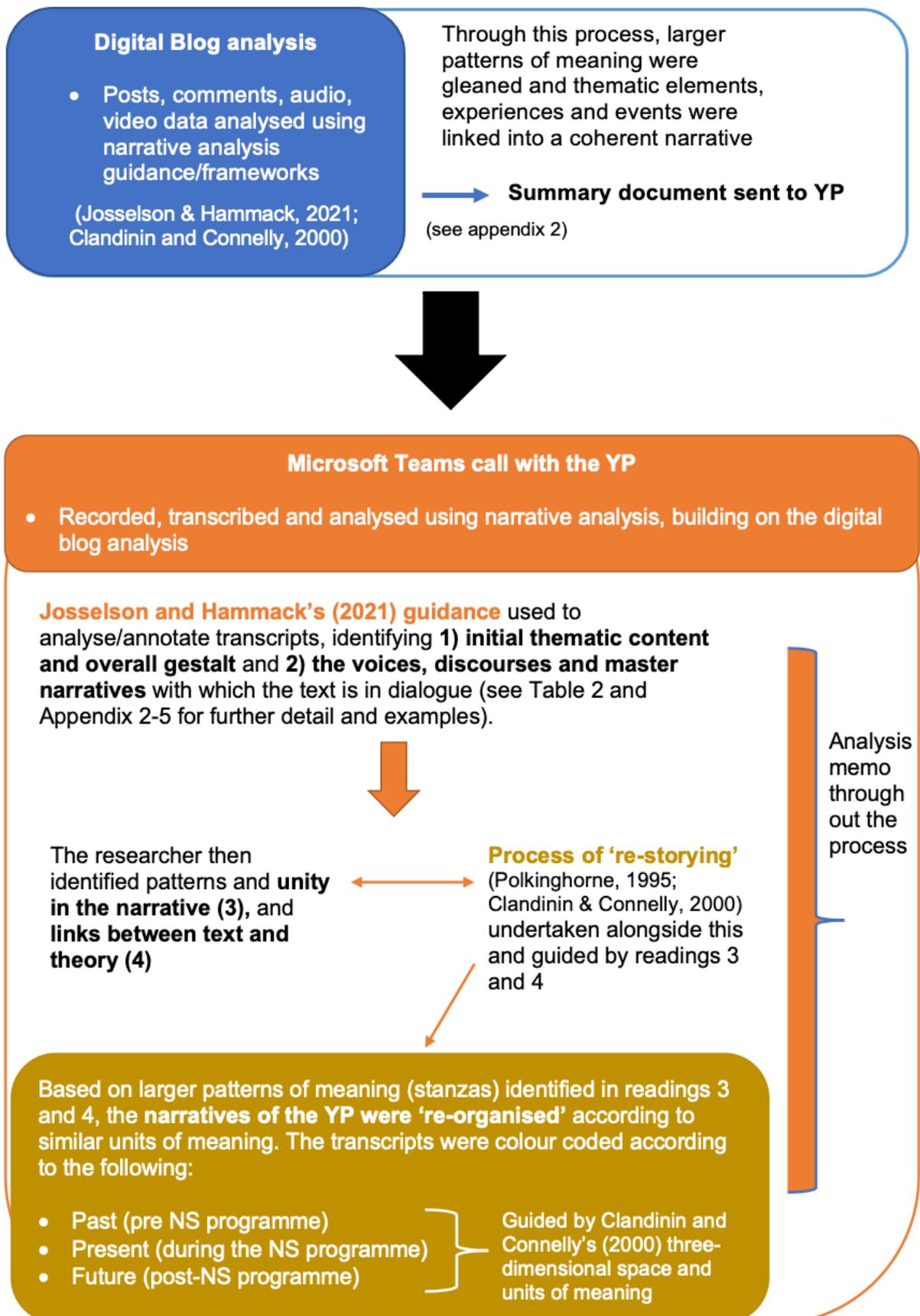
The analysis of the Microsoft Teams call with the YP (and phase two interviews) was guided by a similar process, building on the analysis of the digital stories. The Microsoft Teams recordings of the call with the YP was transcribed by the researcher, which helped to familiarise themselves with the data. It has been argued there are no universal forms to transcription, with the level of detail guided by the particular aims of the research (Reissman, 2008). Due to the focus on the content and form of stories, it was felt capturing paralinguistic features (i.e. laughter and pauses) in the transcript would be valuable. Relevant nuances were also captured in the first reading alongside the video recordings (as outlined above in Josselson & Hammack's guidance), identifying narratives that were felt to be particularly emotive or salient. Due to the lack of a particular focus on the conversational features of the narratives (i.e. discourse analysis), it was felt capturing finer details would not help address the research question.

The transcripts of the YP were analysed using Josselson and Hammack's (2021) guidance (See Appendix 3 for a description and example of the analysis process). The researcher wrote an analysis memo throughout the readings, noting their thoughts after each stage. This provided a reflexive account of each reading and accompanying thoughts, responses and potential biases (see Appendix 4 for a sample extract). Based on

the larger patterns of unity and meaning (stanzas) identified in readings 3 and 4, the researcher engaged in the aforementioned process of 're-storying'. Clandinin & Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space was used to guide this process. This enabled the researcher to colour-code the transcripts based on past, present and future experiences/events (keeping in mind the 'three-dimensional space' factors). From this, the researcher could identify and organise excerpts of the YP's narratives according to similar units of meaning/stanzas (guided by readings 3 and 4 of Josselson & Hammack's steps). This process enabled the researcher to 're-story' the narratives of the YP into a chronological sequence based on these stanzas. The resulting re-ordered narratives (termed 'interim narratives') were considered the connecting 'parts' of the story. This series of interim narratives formed the foundation and main body of the over-arching journey of the YP in relation to the NS programme (termed the 'storied narrative'). An example of this process of data analysis is presented in Appendix 3 (along with the restorying process/steps, interim narratives and 'foundation' journey of the YP). It was felt this would place the voice of the YP centrally in the research, meaningfully representing the detail and richness of their stories to the reader through the use of quotes (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Whilst the complexity and 'messiness' of phase one data analysis is acknowledged, as Reissman (2008) noted, narrative analysis is characterised by flexibility and scope to select and meld frameworks/methods of analysis as appropriate to the research question and data. An overview of this process is presented below in Figure 4 (also see Appendix 2-5 for more detailed steps and examples of the analysis process):

Figure 4

An overview of phase one analysis



A series of Interim Narratives created (connecting 'parts of the story') organised in a chronological/logical sequence



(see appendix 2 and 3)

This series of Interim Narratives formed the over-arching story/journey of the YP in relation to the NS programme (termed the **Storied Narrative), placing their voice at the centre of the analysis**

Phase Two (Semi-Structured Interviews)

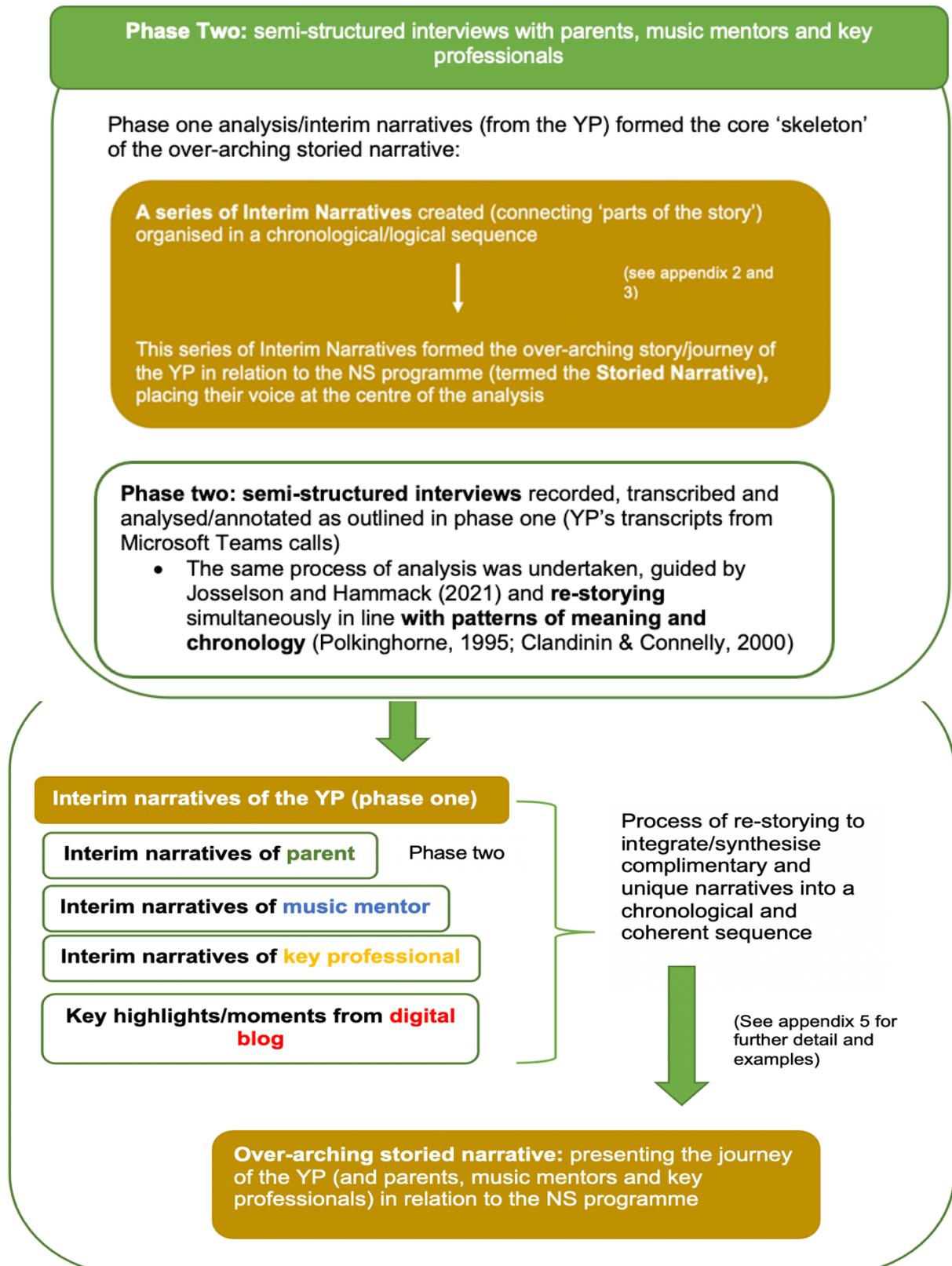
The interviews of the parents, music mentors and key professionals were transcribed and analysed using the same process, guided by Josselson and Hammack's (2021) stages and the same re-storying technique (as outlined in Appendix 3). Through this, the researcher constructed a series of interim narratives from parents, music mentors and key professionals. The aforementioned 'storied narrative' of the YP was used as a central 'skeleton', through which the researcher weaved the narratives/excerpts of other participants alongside and around the YP's voice. This enabled the researcher to maintain a focus on the narratives of the YP and integrate similar/complimentary narratives of other participants into the central 'skeleton' storied narrative (see Appendix 5 for an example of these steps and the integration of participants' narratives around the central skeleton of the YP). The researcher also remained open to the possibility of unique and alternative narratives emerging that may help address research questions, integrating them into the overarching storied narrative (see Appendix 5 for an example overarching 'storied narrative'). This was felt to provide additional depth, richness and layers of meaning to the overarching 'storied narrative' of the YP's NS journey, appreciating that stories are constructed in a social context and in conjunction with others.

During the interviews, the researcher asked the YP and music mentors to discuss key moments or highlights over the sessions. From this, the researcher identified three or four reflection videos from the digital blogs that were felt to represent these 'key moments' of the YP. The videos were transcribed and analysed using the aforementioned methods. The resulting stanzas/patterns of meaning were integrated into the overarching storied narrative to add further depth and include the voice of the YP and their interactions with the music mentor from the digital blog (see Appendix 5 for an example analysis of a digital blog reflection video, integrated into the overarching storied narrative). A summary of

phase two analysis is presented below in Figure 5 (following on from the skeleton interim narratives in phase one as outlined below):

Figure 5

An overview of phase two data analysis



Ethical Considerations

This research received ethical approval from the University of East Anglia's Research Ethics Committee in July 2022 (Appendix 6). The British Psychological Society's Code of Human Research Ethics (2021) was held in mind and used to guide decisions throughout the research process, relating to principles of respect, integrity, social responsibility and maximising benefit and minimising harm. Care was taken to ensure the YP was informed of all aspects of the research and placed centrally in the process. The support of NS as a gatekeeper in participant recruitment is acknowledged, facilitating contact between the researcher and potential participants. It was felt the brief video from the researcher helped to warmly introduce the project and provide initial information. Although the gatekeeper was subsequently aware of their participation, care was taken to ensure the gatekeeper did not 'hand-pick' participants. The researcher followed up with a Microsoft Teams/phone call with the parents and YP to provide further information and address questions or concerns, supporting them to make an informed choice about whether to participate (see Appendix 7 for detailed participation information sheets). The researcher obtained informed consent from parents and the YP for all aspects of the research (i.e. phase one and two data collection/analysis). Following phase one data analysis, it was felt providing YP with a chance to review a summary document and share their views would further include them in the process.

Phase one and two data collection/analysis was undertaken in line with the General Data Protection Regulation Act (2018) and the University of East Anglia Research Data Management Policy (2019). All participants consented to Microsoft Teams recordings of the interviews for the purposes of transcription. At the time of interview, additional verbal consent was obtained prior to recording. The researcher also reiterated research aims and reminded participants of their right to ask questions, end the interview at any point and withdraw their transcripts up to the point of data analysis. As both YP were keen to share their thoughts and experiences via Microsoft Teams, the researcher took a number of measures to ensure their care and protection. This included consulting the Association of Educational Psychologists (AEP, 2021) guidance around working virtually with CYP, which informed decision making and considerations around the Microsoft Teams calls. This included ensuring a parent/key professional was present to support the YP to attend the call in a suitable and comfortable space. The researcher also outlined the YP would not be required to share their video unless they wished to and could share their thoughts and experiences via their key adult if felt more comfortable.

Participant data was only used for the stated purposes and recordings/transcripts were stored on an encrypted file on the researcher's password-protected laptop. From the point of anonymised transcription onwards, participants were referred to via pseudonyms and potentially identifiable/personal information was removed from the transcript and resulting analysis. Due to the small sample size and naming of NS, significant care was taken to omit any information that posed a risk of identifying participants both directly and inadvertently. This contributed to a small number of potentially interesting and conceptually relevant narratives/experiences being omitted from the write-up, as it was anticipated this could potentially pose a risk to the anonymity of the YP and/or mentor. This was also held in mind when accessing and analysing the digital blogs, where the researcher was added to the self-contained NS system as a 'professional' and removed following data analysis. The researcher was only able to view the digital blogs of the two YP for the duration of the project.

It was acknowledged that the 'journey' of the YP and their parents may have been difficult, with charged and emotive topics potentially emerging from the discussions and narratives of participants. The researcher was mindful to have information on hand to signpost participants to relevant support should this be needed (e.g. directing them to the SEND local offer, early help or counselling services). In addition, it was felt offering a 'debrief' session to the parents and YP would be appropriate upon completion of the research, engendering a sense of closure and respect for their time and incredible openness. These complex ethical issues required a high level of reflexivity and conscientiousness from the researcher. The dual role of the researcher as a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP) and associated boundaries/challenges also required careful consideration and will be further discussed in the reflective chapter.

Findings and Discussion

Introduction

The research findings will now be presented in relation to the two phases of analysis. The over-arching 'storied narrative', integrating both phases of data analysis will be presented. These narratives (particularly the narrative of the YP) are central to this research and provide the reader with a unique insight into their experiences of their journey over the NS programme. A detailed background/educational history was not explicitly sought or asked for, due to the potential impact this might have on the research and subsequent interview direction. However, participant's narratives relating to this emerged and are included in the 'storied narrative' and, alongside the researcher's

interpretation, were felt valuable and relevant to address the research question and provide context.

The researcher will attend to the layers and intersections of meanings within the individual cases, appreciating their unique stories and providing interpretation in light of relevant literature/theory simultaneously (i.e. Josselson & Hammack, 2021). The subsequent section of this chapter will explore the unique similarities and differences in patterns of meaning across the narratives of the two cases, drawing this together. Due to the multiple voices and interpretive scope afforded to the researcher, it was felt a third-person approach would be appropriate in presenting the over-arching 'storied narrative'. The narratives of the YP will be *italicised and underlined*, through which their stories (and key points of the narrative) can be highlighted. A brief summary of these key events/themes that link together the storied narrative will be presented prior to each write up.

The Journey of Taylor

The following pseudonyms will be used to represent the participants (characters) of Taylor's journey:

- Taylor (YP)
- Jane (Taylor's mother)
- Aston (Music Mentor)
- Stevie (Director of Inclusion at the mainstream secondary school Taylor was enrolled with but not attending)

The overall gestalt or narrative arc of Taylor's story appears to follow a 'redemptive' sequence, which is characterised by a transformation from a bad, affectively negative life scene to a subsequent good, affectively positive one through a series of events (McAdams et al., 2001). This will be further explored in the presented storied narrative, which links Taylor's narratives and 'key events' together and places them centrally in the story. These linked and sequential interim narratives are presented below (constructed from Taylor's narratives):

- Disempowering prior educational and relational experiences prior to the NS programme.
- A sense of growing engagement, competence and autonomy through the trusting and supportive relationship with Aston.

- Using the music-making process to connect with Jane and wider family to restore/strengthen relationships and feelings of relatedness.
- Using the shared musical space with Aston to explore and present a preferred (alternative) identity of Taylor as an ‘artist/performer’.
- ‘Experiencing an ‘escape’ from her difficulties and being ‘in her element’ in the music-making sessions.
- Managing emotions and self-expression via the music-making process.
- Restoring the ‘old Taylor’; a positive perspective on her capabilities and a renewed sense of aspiration for the future.

Disempowering prior educational and relational experiences prior the NS programme

Taylor chose to start her journey by very briefly discussing her situation prior to the NS programme, in which she appeared acutely aware of her challenging past experiences:

“Before I like before I started noise solution, I was just in that really bad place cause I wanted to learn and get into like specialist school, which was really stressful”.

This painted an initial sense of a challenging and difficult journey for Taylor, with her evaluations of previous educational experiences characterised by stress and negative affect. Taylor’s desire to learn is also present in the extract above (potentially representing a goal or desired end state), with a sense that this remained unfulfilled in light of potentially negative educational experiences. Jane echoed this, drawing attention to Taylor’s desire to learn and highlighted the impact of her anxiety and the wider systems around her:

“Taylor isn’t one of them children that’s been sat at home that doesn’t want to go to school. Hers is through her anxiety that she cannot cope in mainstream school. And the local authority basically just haven’t listened to her needs”.

Interestingly, there was a degree of distancing Taylor from the ‘problems’ in Jane’s narratives. This is termed ‘externalising’, which serves to remove the sense that the problem resides in the person (Rice, 2015). This separated Taylor (the person) from her needs (anxiety) and situation (disengaged and disempowered), which served to attribute responsibility towards wider systems failing to meet or listen to Taylor’s needs. Jane’s

narrative noticeably centred around feelings of being 'let down' by these wider systems. This would fit with criticisms and suggestions in the literature that insufficient support and difficulties meeting the educational, wellbeing and mental health needs of YP with SEND has been commonplace amongst Covid-19 (Chandola et al, 2020). Jane elaborated on what this *"really bad place"* might have looked like for Taylor, noting her needs (diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Autism and anxiety) and *"struggles"* attending mainstream and alternative provision (Pupil Referral Unit):

"But to cut a Long story short, local authority didn't find her a special well, they did find her a special provision that wasn't appropriate for her and actually traumatised her. And this, along with something that happened in 2020 sent her anxiety through the roof".

Stevie's description of Taylor's experiences at mainstream school and the impact of Covid-19 further painted a picture of these challenges, particularly in relation to her readiness to engage in school and social relationships:

"The issue was more the social aspect of people her own age... just her own feeling of not fitting in, you know"...she struggled with being able to come into school and things that were okay were suddenly not okay anymore".

Stevie further evoked a sense that, at this stage Taylor perhaps thought *"that nobody cared about her or had forgotten her"*, perhaps evoking further feelings of marginalisation and isolation. The literature has suggested that social/school exclusion can give rise to feelings of further stress, perceptions of rejection and ostracism (Baumeister & De Wall, 2006; Raufelder & Kulakow, 2021). There was a growing sense that Taylor's time out of school and previously negative experiences may have impacted on her readiness to engage and sense of belonging/feeling valued, which has been posited as a crucial component of YP's sense of wellbeing (DES, 2019). This perhaps helps provide further context behind the *"really stressful"* place Taylor described prior to the NS programme.

These challenging/disempowering experiences and 'problem-saturated' accounts of Taylor's journey ran throughout Jane and Taylor's narratives. This could be considered as a 'dominant story/narrative', which relates to an emerging story which privileges and selects certain events over others, which, through self-fulfilling prophecies can become a template for how people see their lives (Rice, 2015). This perhaps reflects the

overwhelming feelings of disempowerment, marginalisation and “*not fitting in*”, which was further exemplified by Jane’s admission that Taylor had failed to “*gel*” with a number of tutors prior to the NS programme. Although the particularities of the ‘anxiety provoking situation’ in 2020 was not established, Jane noted this further impacted on Taylor’s willingness and comfort to engage with professionals (particularly that were male):

“I was a bit unsure... Was it gonna work with Taylor or is she gonna feel comfortable?”

Interestingly, Taylor chose not to delve deeper into her prior challenging experiences, which prompted reflection around how far she identified with this dominant narrative. Very early in the story, there were themes of Taylor’s ‘untapped potential’ and desire to learn that was yet to be harnessed, which ran counter to patterns of disempowerment, marginalisation and struggle.

A sense of growing engagement, competence and autonomy through the trusting and supportive relationship with Aston

Upon starting the NS programme, Taylor described the immediate sense of interest and skill development she experienced, which perhaps ran counter to prior experiences of disengagement and challenge. Taylor placed her growing working relationship with Aston as central to this:

“But then when I started noise solution it made me like, it just made me realise how you make songs, how you do song writing and like the different techniques of it...and like he showed me like how to put it all together and combine it all together. So he’d train me first and then I’d do it. And that’s what I’ve like found really helpful because I like to learn how to use, how to do it, and then I can do it”.

There was a noticeable sense of something beginning to shift or change in a meaningful way for Taylor, under the support of Aston. It was clear Taylor responded well to the participant-led style of the sessions (informed by SDT), supporting her to learn in ways that suited her. This is reflective of a more informal style to learning, characterised by bringing about an end goal which is largely guided by the learner, experiential/active in nature and encouraging a sense of shared interaction (Jenkins, 2011). Taylor valued this ‘facilitator role’ of Aston, which helped her quickly build a sense of growing competence in her music-

making skills. Taylor further commented on her experience of the sessions and what worked well for her:

“Well I like the idea of like that I can choose my own ideas, rather than letting other people choose my ideas. Because then it’s like my own work.... and he lets me, like lead the way in, like what would happen if we try it out and then we say we can do much better and then we’ll do it over...Like they [Taylor’s tracks] all stand out to me because obviously they’re all important to me in many different ways”

There was a clear sense of Taylor experiencing enhanced autonomy via a greater sense of control, choice and freedom in the music-making process. For Taylor, this quickly fostered a sense of passion and ownership in her music-making, finding value and meaning in this process. Such informal and engaging learning has been posited to provide greater control to the learner through exploration, discovery and collaboration; empowering YP to be in charge of their own situation and engage in collaborative/respectful relationships (Jenkins, 2011; Taylor & Parsons, 2011). This is perhaps reflected in Taylor experiencing greater autonomy/control in producing work she feels is her own and is satisfied with alongside Aston. There appeared to be a growing sense of trust and comfort in this working relationship, as presented in the passages below:

“You’ve really made the most of these sessions and it’s been really lovely working with you... you get such a buzz out of being here”
[Aston to Taylor in a digital blog reflection video].

“I think they have a really good working relationship...and I think it helps cause she gets to know a bit about him” [Jane].

The narratives point towards the importance of the relational dynamic and underpinning values between Taylor and Aston. In particular, the literature has demonstrated the significance of developing harmonious, responsive relationships where both partners play an active role and share a more equal balance of power (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001; Djenar et al., 2018). The two-way nature of this working relationship (and Aston’s relational and participant-led approach) appeared to be influential in establishing trust and fostering a sense of passion for Taylor. Jane further noted this contributed to a very strong and early sense of success and positive emotion for Taylor:

“But actually they just gelled and he was really down to earth, and he listened to her and yeah, he was really good. After the first one she was like, oh my god Mum, this is amazing. I really love it... I think with Taylor, if they don’t gel, she doesn’t learn. I’ve seen this a few times with other tutors that she’s had. And where she hasn’t felt comfortable with them or, you know it’s just not worked... To be around a male is quite a significant thing and she feels comfortable...But yeah, it’s to me, it’s a really big achievement”

The almost instantaneous nature of this positive change clearly struck Jane, positioning Taylor’s positive working relationship with Aston as a possible ‘unique outcome/exception’ to her prior experiences of challenge. Unique outcomes refer to those ‘sparkling’ moments in which the problem does not impede life and individuals have the strengths and means to manage it effectively or put it aside (Hutto & Gallagher, 2017). In this way, Taylor’s working relationship with Aston perhaps signified a restoration in her capacity to form trusting working relationships, experience success and have a sense of control over her learning. Research has demonstrated the introduction of such positive and trusting working relationships can restore a sense of trust and feelings of being heard, understood and open to exploration for YP (Fonaghy & Allen, 2014). This appeared highly relevant to Taylor, where this sense of relatedness with Aston fostered a powerful sense of autonomy, passion and potentially a platform through which new perspectives could emerge. Further suggestion that this positive working relationship had a powerful effect on Taylor is further provided by Aston:

“Once she realised what we could do in the sessions... that she was gonna be leading it, really, her interests were gonna lead it. Not me teaching her some stuff that I thought was important. I think once she sort of realised that I think she just sort of flew really cause, then she was writing lyrics in her own time”.

This echoes Taylor’s narrative around a growing sense of autonomy, passion and finding value in the music-making process which extended to outside of the sessions. The metaphor of Taylor ‘flying’ perhaps further exemplifies the powerful effect of the YP-led approach which built on Taylor’s goals and interests. The literature has linked such approaches to enhanced enjoyment, motivation and connection in learning (Green, 2008). These feelings of enjoyment and positive affect were highlighted by Jane:

“ She definitely feels very happy about her songs that she’s made and they’re her songs...She’ll make one and she can’t wait to start a new one. Do you know she really gets that buzz out of doing them”.

This further reinforces the centrality of Taylor feeling a sense of ownership and pride in her songs, which appeared to foster a sense of happiness and autonomous motivation in the music-making process. It could be posited that, through experiencing a growing sense of connection, guidance and success via her working relationship with Aston, Taylor could feel a greater sense of autonomy, competence and resulting positive affect (happiness) (Van den Broeck, 2016; Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Fostering a sense of closeness with Jane through music

Not only was Taylor experiencing a powerful sense of autonomy and finding value in her music-making/tracks (*“they’re all important to me”*), but she also began including her family in the process. In particular, Taylor discussed how the music-making provided opportunities to connect with Jane:

“Because we just like, vibe to the song don’t we Mum? And it made me like, feel closer and she encourages me like when I’m sat downstairs at night time and my family I like write songs and my Mum helps me with the ideas, and I change it up and it’s my own.”

The significance of this relationship was demonstrated throughout Taylor’s narrative, who warmly recounted times of making lyrics and singing her songs together. The literature suggests music-making programmes have the potential to foster social bonding, providing opportunities to facilitate social interaction and feelings of closeness (Karlson, 2012). For Taylor, this enhanced sense of relatedness with Jane was fostered both through listening/sharing her songs and actively including her in the process. Through this process, it seemed Taylor experienced a sense of closeness with Jane, while maintaining the sense of ownership that appeared so meaningful to her. It emerged that these opportunities for connection had a poignant meaning and significance for Jane:

“I noticed how much happier she is when she comes out of them sessions. The problem is for me myself, it’s been quite a difficult two years because I’ve gone from having a life to actually just being at home all the time. So it’s had quite a big impact on myself. We do argue sometimes...but

you know, when she comes out there, music sessions, she's just so happy she can't wait to tell me what she's done".

Here, the potential strain of Jane needing to be home and available to Taylor prior to the NS programme is highlighted. Not only does this evoke a shared sense of struggle in the journey, but it also suggests a previously turbulent relationship. There is an immediate sense in Jane's narrative of a noticeable change in Taylor's wellbeing immediately following the sessions, with these feelings of happiness occurring alongside a desire to connect and share with others. The literature demonstrates the potential for music to foster a sense of togetherness, enjoyment and positive mood (Granot et al., 2021). Stevie shed further light on this journey and how the relationship between Taylor and Jane gradually began to change:

"It was really hard for Mum, she almost started to become in charge of Mum, and the dynamics changed and she wasn't Taylor. At 15, nearly 16, she was older and her being able to do the Noise Solutions [sic], I also think helped her become a child again. And it changed the dynamic with her and her Mum. So that Mum was her Mum again and not her equal... so it had benefits both sides from the emotional part as well I think".

This narrative suggests the significance of a noticeable relational shift in the power dynamics for both Taylor and Jane, via Taylor's positive affect and connection-seeking behaviours. Research has shown using music with families experiencing marginalisation can provide opportunities to practice creative ways of interacting and bonding together, which in turn has the capacity to improve relationships (Edwards, 2014). Not only did this provide opportunities to experience enhanced closeness and connection through music, but there was also a sense that Jane was providing further validation and encouragement (i.e. "she encourages me...helps me with ideas"). This perhaps had the effect of supporting Taylor to further connect with the music-making process and experience a growing sense of success in her relationships (relatedness). Through this growing sense of relatedness, success and positive affect fostered via the sessions, it appeared there was a sense of a 'restoration' of the power dynamic between Taylor and Jane. That is, this shift in the relational dynamic (and equalising or 'restoration' of power) contributed to a more harmonious and responsive relationship (Djenar et al., 2018; Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001). This is beautifully captured and highlighted in Taylor's song dedicated to Jane. A section of the lyrics are presented below:

"You made this house a home, never be alone,

Always there, always cared,

Never be alone.

My Mum gives the best hugs, full of love,

Even when she's cross,

She rises way up and above,

To give me all her love."

Through this growing sense of relatedness with Jane and Aston (and resulting feelings of success, happiness and autonomy), the story gradually moves away from the disempowering experiences, "battles" with the system and relational challenges that were pervasive in the narrative. This sequence of events could be interpreted to represent an 'alternative story'; relating to experiences or behaviour outside of the problematic context, highlighting moments of competence and positive change (Rice, 2015). For Taylor and Jane, there was a sense of 're-authoring' the story, whereby, they are able to take a step away from the relational challenges and towards a sense of joint exploration and shared adventure through which their relationship can be strengthened. There was perhaps a sense that Taylor also viewed this growing relatedness in terms of supporting her to build or work towards something (i.e. Aston and Jane "helping", "supporting" and "training her"). Taylor's narrative thus far perhaps provided initial indication this related to producing music she was happy with and could share with others, which appeared to vitalise and guide her actions.

Presenting a preferred (alternative) identity and Taylor as an artist/performer via the digital blog and connecting with family

Taylor's discussion of the digital blog perhaps sheds further light on this:

"Well, at the end of every lesson we do like a video and to tell people how we did and what we did in the lesson and to just show you what we've been doing in the lessons...So outside of my blog. I've been showing my songs to like my family and my little cousins. They've been signing a lot. Singing along to it. And then whenever I go over there, they sing it and it makes me happy seeing other people enjoying my song, and realising how good I've made it.

This sense of finding value, positive affect and experiencing a sense of success via producing music and sharing this with others shines through in Taylor's narrative. Not only did this provide further validation, purpose and reaffirm Taylor's connection to music, it appeared to foster a growing sense of connectedness and community with her family. Research has reported this finding of music-making fostering enhanced connectedness and cohesion, which can occur via social bonding (Savage et al., 2020; Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). These opportunities to connect and bond with family perhaps further enhanced Taylor's growing sense of relatedness, which she appeared to gain a sense of happiness and pride from. The importance of a supportive environment and positive relationships for marginalised YP has been identified in the literature (Hanrahan & Banerjee, 2017). It appeared Taylor's music provided a vehicle to foster further connection and community with her family, strengthening the value and meaning she placed on her tracks. This was further exemplified by Aston:

“you know, she actually felt it was like a bit of a hit, obviously within a little group within her sort of friends and family”.

This further highlighted the sense of satisfaction, pride and success Taylor appeared to gain from sharing her music with others. With this growing confidence and validation, Taylor took a further step to release her song more widely:

And I have released my [title of song] song on YouTube, 69 views, Yeah now. It just makes me feel like happy. And like proud about myself that people viewed my song and listen to it. Just feels amazing. Because it's a really, it's a really nice song and I just feel like it should be out there and if anyone has lost a loved one to dedicate to that, that they're thinking of that”.

Taylor quickly embraced the digital blog and appeared to use this confidently and naturally, which perhaps served to establish a connection with the social world and further embrace the music-making process. Research has found that utilising digital technologies alongside engagement in music-making can enhance wellbeing through a sense of connection, identity and a sense of community through YP connecting and sharing their musical life together (Johnson & Merrick, 2020). Taylor's growing confidence and desire to connect with her “audience” and the wider social sphere is further highlighted via sharing her music on YouTube, which fostered further validation, happiness and pride. There was

perhaps an emerging sense that Taylor strongly connected with the artistic process of music-making, providing opportunities to view herself as an ‘artist’/‘performer’ and connect with an ‘audience’. This was further noted by Aston:

“I think she was talking to the camera as if she was talking to like an audience, which not all of them do...I think she views the blog and uses the blog as if she’s talking to an audience, like a fan base. And I don’t, I haven’t sort of picked away at that cause it seems so natural. I think she gets a sense of, you know, people acknowledging that are interested in what she’s doing... I wonder if this helps her feel some sort of connectedness with the people on her blog.”

Aston highlighted the confidence and natural grasp Taylor demonstrated with the digital blog and her desire to “*connect with an audience*” and share her progress in an engaging and interactive way. Through the sessions, Taylor began to increasingly identify and grow into this ‘performer’/‘artist’ side, which is perhaps reflected in her narrative (*“released my song”*) and value she places on the music-making process. Research has shown that such digital storytelling can enable YP to construct their own discourses (or narratives), fostering reflective processes around self-identity, relationships and experiences (Gregori-Signes & Corachan, 2014). The music-making sessions and the support of Aston provided the tools and space for Taylor to engage in this, which appeared to be an active process including both the storytellers (Taylor and Aston) and audience (family, NS community commenting on Taylor’s blog and the wider online community). The literature has highlighted the potential for digital stories to have a powerful and often therapeutic or transformational effect on both the audience and storyteller (Laing et al., 2019).

It is felt this process enabled Taylor to gradually move away from the ‘dominant’ or ‘problem saturated’ story, where she seemingly used the musical space to re-author her story. This alternative story moved away from feelings of marginalisation, disempowerment and isolation and towards one of a more connected, confident and engaged ‘performer’ or ‘artist’ side of Taylor. Not only was Taylor perhaps engaging in a reauthoring process through her music sessions, but she was also actively sharing and constructing this with significant others through her digital blog. The resulting validation, acknowledgement and interaction with those around her highlighted the socially constructed nature of this process (e.g. King, 2008), whereby new expectations of success and self-belief could emerge. The importance of relatedness in this process is highlighted both through opportunities to build

connection/closeness with others, include them in the process and construct/share alternative stories (or more positive identities of herself). Taylor's initial positive experiences connecting to Aston, Jane and her family through her music perhaps provided a platform and the confidence/validation needed to engage in such processes.

Experiencing an 'escape' from her difficulties and being 'in her element' in the music-making sessions

Alongside or perhaps via this enhanced sense of relatedness and emerging alternative story, the music-making sessions fostered a sense of what Taylor referred to as being "in her element":

"Music is my happy place. Yeah I just felt, when I'm doing my music, I feel comfortable and I'm just in my element. Like singing away. And I don't realise it. Yeah I do get anxious before. But then when I'm in there and in the moment, then I'm in my element"... "Like I feel when I'm having my music lesson, I feel much happier in myself and, like confident, and I don't mind singing in front of people. Because when I first had it I was nervous on the first and then as the weeks went on. I started building my confidence up and just started singing".

Taylor provided a further sense of what 'being in her element' looked like:

"Yeah, I feel a little bit less anxious then and that I just felt comfortable doing my music. It's happy, like I'm always happy. Like when I come out of the studio I'm like happy and sharing my songs with Mum, showing her what I've been doing. It's just helped me like as a person to realise what it's all about and makes you in a happier mood".

Taylor's narrative paints a powerful sense of 'escaping' from her anxiety/difficulties and the music-making space fostering positive emotions and greater confidence. For example, this appeared to enable Taylor to build her confidence in singing and performing in front of others. The potential for music to induce positive emotions and contribute to the interpersonal development and mental health of YP has been noted in the literature (Laiho, 2004; Mas-Herrero et al., 2013). Interestingly for Taylor, the positive affect she appeared to experience in the musical space could be characterised by a state of flow. This relates to one being completely and naturally dissolved and immersed in an activity, giving rise to

feelings of joy, pride and engagement (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Taylor appeared to experience a sense of flow and positive affect in her sessions, which appeared to persist via opportunities to connect and share her music with Jane and her family outside of the sessions.

Taylor's comment of the sessions helping her to "realise what it's all about" also appears particularly poignant here, which perhaps further reflects her connecting with her alternative story and things that are important to her (termed 'intentional state understandings'; White & Cartwright, 2007). Her narrative suggests she finds particular value and meaning in her engagement with the music making process (and opportunities to present herself as a musician); establishing a sense of connection/collaboration with those around her and sharing this with an 'audience'. These, alongside underpinning themes of validation, searching for positive affect, connection, belonging and success are revisited and repeated throughout Taylor's story. Connecting to such intentional state understandings can foster enhanced personal agency and 'rich' storyline development (White & Cartwright, 2007). Taylor appeared to be constructing a powerful new perspective (or alternative story) of herself, finding an 'escape' from her anxiety/difficulties and experiencing positive feelings of happiness and connecting to the things that were important to her. This appeared to give rise to positive affect; a space whereby her anxiety was less prevalent, greater confidence and more positive feelings about herself ("I feel much happier in myself").

Managing emotions and self-expression via the music-making process

A particularly meaningful track of Taylor's further presents her growing confidence expressing herself and embracing her emotions. This further exemplified the music-making space providing opportunities for Taylor to connect with and explore things important to her:

"My song and dedicating my last song's called X, go check it out on YouTube. Dedicating it to my great nan, yeah, cause I've spent so much time with her and, like she meant so much to me and I miss her".

Aston had a strong appreciation of the significance of the song and Taylor's relationship/connection to her Great Nan, who had passed away. Aston celebrated Taylor's expression and channelling of emotion into the song in the same reflection video:

“You put a lot of emotion into that song. Music is about expressing your emotions and your thoughts and feelings, and you’ve definitely done that. I think that’s when you feel you can make something that’s really really yours and really important to you. And I think you’ve done that really really well. I’m really proud of you, it’s been great”.

Aston also expressed a sense of this being “one of the more meaningful things” he had experienced making music, suggesting there was a meaningful and reciprocal two-way appreciation and investment in the process. The literature highlights the importance of social context and the role of important others in forming and constructing stories (Rice, 2015), through which the relevant contributions and values others impart on our lives (and vice-versa) can emerge (White & Cartwright, 2007). Taylor’s Great Nan appeared to be a highly influential figure in her life. With the support of Aston, Taylor was able to use the music-making space to reflect on and celebrate the memories and contributions of her Great Nan, providing an opportunity to connect to what is important to her (these positive memories and feelings of closeness with family). Research has demonstrated that YP use music as a self-regulation tool, i.e. to actively manage their feelings (Saarikallio, 2011). The music-making process not only provided an opportunity for Taylor to express herself and celebrate the memory of her Great Nan, but also to seek connection and solidarity with those who have also experienced loss, through dedicating her song and sharing via YouTube. Jane wondered whether there was somewhat of a therapeutic effect of this process, recounting a particularly significant morning where Taylor was able to express her feelings to Aston:

“I think it makes a point that there’s a lot of children out there that just need a little bit of extra help or something to interest them. That may help and I do think it’s a type of therapy because if that’s what helps them, anything you know, it’s therapy isn’t it? You know, it’s helping them deal with some of their problems. I think it’s more, the most is about expressing yourself. She can just be her, you know”.

“I think she finds it hard to express her feelings. That’s where the difficulties come in because of the autism. She can’t get them emotions out, but she gets out in the wrong way sometimes... Yeah I do think the music does help [manage and express her feelings]. You know, like this

week with her mentor she, she had a really bad week last week of anxiety and that and, but I didn't say anything to Aston about it, and she actually said to him herself. And she did actually say to him, you know, I've had a really terrible week so far... she explained how she's been feeling and they had a bit of a chat about it".

Jane expressed a further sense that the sessions were helping Taylor gradually build her self-esteem and express herself, contributing to a growing sense that Taylor was beginning to 'find her voice' and focus on the things that were important and meaningful to her. Jane's passage above further suggests a potential therapeutic effect of the music-making, fostering a sense of self-expression and managing challenges. The potential for music to be beneficial in the grieving process for adolescents has been shown (i.e. through expressing feelings, flowing between a range of emotional states and a vehicle through which to manage their emotions; McFerran et al., 2010; van der Zwaag et al., 2013). Although, as Jane noted the music sessions alone were not a 'silver bullet' for Taylor's anxiety or difficulties, there was a growing sense that (at least momentarily) these challenges "*floated away*". For Taylor, the music-making sessions/process appeared to represent a space through which she could explore her feelings, connect to experiences and people that were important to her (i.e. in this instance her Great Nan) and share this to YouTube with a prosocial purpose (to help others and dedicate this to her Great Nan's memory).

Restoring the 'old Taylor'; a positive perspective on her capabilities and a renewed sense of aspiration for the future

Through the music-making process, Taylor was able to focus on the meaningful things in her life, explore her interests and form a renewed sense of her capabilities:

"It made me feel like proud. I thought like, no I can't do it, I won't be able to do any of this, it's hard for me to do it. And then try it, well I've done it. Yeah, as the weeks went on I learned that my singing got a little better and I've noticed that and because my singing like went really loud. And now with X song, it's gone much more better".

Taylor's positive experiences of success and growing competence appeared to foster a new perspective of her capabilities and potentially an emerging 'growth mindset'. Taylor's narratives above exude a sense of surprise at her accomplishments, evoking a sense that

she has surpassed previous expectations of her capabilities and what was felt possible. This apparent change in Taylor's mindset and belief in her capability is potentially significant, given research findings that the 'mindset' and approach of YP to challenges affects subsequent expectations of success, resilience, goals and beliefs about effort (Yeager & Dweck, 2012). YP experience a 'growth mindset' when they believe their personal qualities can be developed, contributing to a more dynamic and stable sense of their capabilities (Dweck, 2006). There was a sense that Taylor was beginning to move towards a more dynamic 'growth' mindset/view of her capabilities in relation to music, which provided further exceptions to the fixed and 'problem-saturated' story of challenge and disempowerment.

Taylor's comments of "my singing like went really loud" seemed particularly poignant in a metaphorical sense, perhaps embodying her growth and confidence through her journey. This theme of Taylor finding her voice was echoed by Jane:

"Yeah just, you know, when she was younger, she was always very loud, laughing, silly, just enjoying herself...Because I think they've made her realise that music is her happy place...But do you know, like at the end of it, she's just like the old Taylor that I knew, you know, and she was younger before this anxiety set in".

This sense of playfulness and confidence was also reflected in her interactions with Aston:

"She'll just sing and I'll play guitar together and I think I've done a few videos of us doing that, I don't get that that much with students. And It's a nice thing to do because she seems to really get into it like it's a performance thing, she's got her glasses on and you know. She sort of in a, like, say a bit, it's a performance mode that she's in and she sort of clicks into that. That sort of mindset really nicely, that's great. It's been really good and, she's obviously sort of a beginner, but she's got a very natural, uh, a lot of musicality about her."

There was a clear sense of performance and theatre to their interactions in the blog, which perhaps further enabled Taylor to connect to her 'alternative story' of being an artist/performer. There was a restorative nature to Jane's narrative relating to Taylor reconnecting to her playful and confident nature, which Jane construed as 'getting her old

Taylor back'. It is through these positive feelings, experiences and 'exceptions' to the challenges that provide a rich and fertile source for the generation and re-generation of alternative stories (White & Epston, 1990). For Taylor, this appeared to represent a strengthening connection to this performer/artist sense of self, where she was able to gradually step away from her previous challenges, experience new expectations of success and a renewed sense of aspiration for the future. There appeared to be an element of posttraumatic growth (PTG) in Taylor's journey, in light of her prior disempowering and potentially traumatic experiences prior to the NS programme. PTG has been defined as a positive change as a result of experiencing a traumatic event (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996). The literature has suggested a number of indicators of PTG, which appear evident in Taylor's narrative and outlook following the programme. This is reflective of her placing greater value on personal relationships and social bonds; greater self-confidence; greater appreciation of what is valuable to her; and a greater acknowledgement of new possibilities and hope in her life (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996; Ewert & Tessner, 2019).

Jane further discussed Taylor's potential plans of working towards attending college, with Taylor noting the following about her plans to continue plotting this alternative story:

"I'm hoping, I'm hoping Aston can like get me into a band or singing or something. I've always wanted to be like, a singer and like, be out there performing...Music is my happy place...I've always liked music and to be like a songwriter, singer-songwriter and be out on that stage one day".

The Journey of RJM

The following pseudonym's will be used to represent the participants (characters) of RJM's story:

- RJM (YP)
- Nicki (mother)
- Marshall (music mentor)
- Cardi (tutor/key professional)

The overall gestalt or narrative arc of RJM's story similarly followed somewhat of a 'redemptive' sequence (McAdams et al., 2001), which was characterised by a transformation from disempowerment, fractured relationships and disengagement towards

a more positive life scene. However, throughout RJM's story there was a noticeable oscillation and turbulence, which characterised her experience and growth over the NS programme. This will be further explored in the presented storied narrative, which links RJM's narratives and 'key events' together and places them centrally in the story. These linked and sequential interim narratives are presented below (constructed from RJM's narratives):

- Instability, challenge and disengagement in education
- Non-judgemental and trusting relationship between RJM and Marshall
- Music as a story-telling device and supporting emotional regulation
- Collaboration and connection with others through music
- Problem-solving and managing frustrations with Marshall's support
- Sharing music with a wider audience and approaching new challenges

Instability, challenge and disengagement in education

RJM had been out of formal education for a while, her mother Nicki noted that *"it was a very different picture to how it is now"* and discussed the challenges RJM has faced forming positive relationships with tutors and engaging in positive educational pursuits. Early in the narrative, RJM pointed out how a significant event exacerbated her difficulties prior to engaging in the NS programme:

"Yeah, because obviously, basically I was perfectly fine then something happened and obviously changed me and I got PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder] I've got a psychologist and I have it so. And it gave me loads of anxiety and stuff like that... I talk about my life and it's like when I used to be angry and stuff like that, and I wouldn't be scared of anything but now I am. Yeah, cause obviously after what happened, I wasn't that angry because I was quite scared. So I wouldn't argue with anyone and that went on for about four weeks... I didn't feel right. Yeah, it changed me a lot".

This experience appeared to have a significant impact on RJM's wellbeing, characterised by feelings of fear, anxiety and a sense of her changing as a person. RJM's discussion of *"anger"* and *"arguing"* is interesting, perhaps evoking a sense that she viewed herself as 'fearless' and 'formidable' prior to this event. Nicki shed further light and context on her fractured relationship with RJM and the significant event noted by RJM:

“She had an incident like some months ago. Yeah, when she was with some friends and like, you know, with cannabis edibles. So she’s got post-traumatic stress from that”.

“And because we’re quite far distance, and because she was being quite violent to me, I couldn’t you know, which was just awful because I wanted to be there, but I couldn’t. And yeah, that was really, really difficult. Not being able to be there for her. Umm, so yeah, her anxiety is really heightened and she can get quite verbally aggressive and physically aggressive... it’s really difficult because, yeah, that’s the main reason why I couldn’t carry on like we’re carrying on, and yeah, with her being with me”.

This provided further context and highlighted the pervasiveness of RJM’s anxiety and challenges with emotional regulation. Nicki also noted RJM’s diagnosis of ADHD and Autism, further contributing to a sense of deficit, labels and marginalisation in the initial narrative. Research has demonstrated the impact of experiences that may resonate with RJM’s experiences, i.e. adverse childhood experiences/trauma, attachment and mental health difficulties; which shape the way YP mentalise, interpret and connect with the social world around them (Bevington et al., 2015). This can place significant strain on their relationships, self-regulation and interactions with others (e.g. Taylor et al. 2009). This is perhaps reflected in the fractured relationship between RJM and Nicki, culminating in RJM moving in with her Nan. Nicki’s passage painted a powerful and emotive picture of these events, also noting RJM’s challenges forming positive relationships with tutors and engaging in positive educational pursuits:

“Yeah she was being supported by the X tutoring service. She still is but she wasn’t really getting on with the tutor at that time. And so I was pleased that Noise Solutions [sic] came in at that point. Umm, because she needed something really positive... because she’s had so much rejection for education, so many schools said no to her. And then, she was just a lot of the time, just in her room doing nothing all day, and her friends would be at school”.

“But it’s finding the right people and it’s the availability as well because

there's such a, awaiting this backlog. There's not the capacity of practitioner out there for what's needed... there's no stability there, you know, obviously when things flared up for RJM and they sort of, in a way that tutor gave up on her... it's really difficult because she sort of breaks that, you know, it's that rejection she feels".

The start of the story paints a continued picture of instability, challenge, disengagement and interpersonal difficulties in RJM's prior experiences. Research has shown traumatic and negative experiences relating to education and home life can impact on the daily functioning, wellbeing and positivity of YP (de Bruin, 2021). This appears to reflect the challenging prior experiences of RJM and Nicki, which could be considered a dominant, problem-saturated account of RJM's journey. The impact of wider challenges and tensions within the broader system (i.e. provision and support for SEMH needs and medicalised labels) were prevalent throughout this narrative, contributing to a sense that the NS programme perhaps bridged this gap and provided support and stability at a time of particular challenge. Such challenges are exemplified in the literature, with research finding provision and support for YP with SEND inadequate, patchy and highly dependent on the local authority (Blundell et al., 2021). There was a strong sense from Nicki that support and provision to meet RJM's needs was a continued source of challenge and worry.

Non-judgemental and trusting relationship between RJM and Marshall

Running counter to this dominant story of challenging relationships and disengagement, was RJM's account of her working relationship with Marshall upon starting the NS programme:

"Uh yeah, he has helped, he's very good at his work, he knows what he's doing. Makes me a bit less anxious sort of thing. Yep, that he won't like, judge my music and stuff like that. He's that sort of person, as I feel a bit comfortable around him, to be fair... Yeah, he just like, pushes me on to like, you can do this and like that sort of thing, and like, trying to rap and stuff... Like I feel a bit more, I feel to be honest, a bit less anxious now than I did... It's quite good, because I feel like I've got my own space".

RJM clearly valued the non-judgemental stance of Marshall, which appeared to create a safe and comfortable environment of exploration and autonomy. It was felt RJM's feelings of comfort and growing trust with Marshall was noticeable in the story, enabling her to explore her interests and very quickly experience a sense of ownership in the music-making process. This was highlighted in the blog reflection videos, where RJM discussed her goals relating to making her own track:

"Yeah, next week next time I do it I wanna make my own track, my own lyrics and that". [RJM]

"wicked, that would be cool, we can totally do that. Alright well, look, I think you done brilliantly on that". [Marshall]

There was a strong sense of RJM valuing the autonomy provided by Marshall's approach, which enabled her to explore her interests (rapping) and work towards a valued goal (making her own lyrics and tracks). This immediate sense of autonomy, agency and relatedness appeared particularly valuable for RJM, which has been found to enhance intrinsic motivation and engagement (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This appeared to manifest through her comfort and positive connection with Marshall and choice/control over the music-making process. Research has demonstrated such a shift to relational styles is conducive to meaningfully engage YP disengaged from formal education (Narita & Green, 2015). This co-created dialogical style appeared to work well for RJM, fostering a sense of autonomy and responsiveness/comfort in the working relationship. The literature shows that a more equal balance of power can foster a restoration of trust and a sense of openness to learn and explore through this trusting relationship (Fonaghy & Allen, 2014). This appeared relevant for RJM, through her growing relatedness with Marshall and sense of having her "own space" to explore and connect to her interests in a safe space. RJM appeared to value this sense of having her own space, where her difficulties with anxiety seemed less prevalent ("makes me a bit less anxious sort of thing"). Nicki further commented on the significance of this growing trust and positive working relationship:

"You know, there's obviously a really nice connection and trust built and yeah, I think that was different. Yeah, different to what she's experienced before. And I think that might have broken down, it's definitely probably the start of breaking down those barriers of feeling rejected. A good first point really, that she could actually think that learning can be positive, you

know, because she's had such a negative experience...So I think that was a big shift".

This positive relationship and experience of success through her music making appeared a turning-point in RJM's journey. The reciprocal bond and interpersonal interactions within the YP-tutor relationship has been reported to hold powerful potential to re-shape how YP view the world around them and the interactions within them (e.g. Wolf, 2010). Nicki construed this as a sense of 'breaking down barriers', which perhaps paved the way for RJM to gradually re-shape her perspective on learning and form positive relationships with adults. The literature highlights the potential of this epistemic trust to shape internal working models, i.e. future expectations for experiences and guides for how one views the world (Fonaghy & Allen, 2014). From this new perspective and openness, RJM was able to form a positive working relationship with her tutor Cardi, which appeared to be a significant relationship for her. The positive start RJM made to her time at NS was clearly noticed by the adults around her. Nicki was initially struck by RJM's growing sense of confidence and self-belief:

"Right, right from the start , after the first week I could start noticing a difference. You know, but from like building her confidence and self-belief. That was a really, yeah, a big breakthrough I think. And that started with Noise Solutions [sic] and that has sort of built and built now, So I mean she needed that foundation. She needed that first brick to be placed so she could build more bricks you know. That's how it sort of feels like, yeah, so Marshall sort of put that foundation there, you know, the foundation. So she could put the brick on and it wasn't gonna fall apart, you know. So I think that was, yeah, a really, really sort of lovely breakthrough to be honest".

Nicki's placing of NS as the 'foundation' in a 'brick by brick' metaphor was particularly powerful to evoke a sense of these experiences being a catalyst for positive change, within which Marshall was placed as a contributing character. The literature has shown that attentive, genuine, understanding and respectful learning relationships can help YP grow emotionally and socially (Wubbels, 2015), perhaps reflecting the relationship between RJM and Marshall. A sense of re-building was apparent in this metaphor, moving away from prior experiences of fractured or difficult relationships. Therefore, RJM's positive connection to Marshall and Cardi could be interpreted as a 'unique outcome' or 'exception'

to the dominant/problem-saturated story (White & Epton, 1990). RJM's emerging alternative story is perhaps beginning to emerge in her narrative, reflecting her sense of comfort and growing relatedness with Marshall (*"I feel a bit comfortable around him"*), experiencing a sense of autonomous engagement (or working towards a valued goal; *"I wanna make my own track and lyrics"*) and experiencing a safe space where her anxiety was less pervasive (*"makes me a bit less anxious sort of thing"*).

Music as a story-telling device and supporting emotional regulation

With this 'foundation' in place, RJM was beginning to explore her rapping and quickly engaged with the music-making process. Her songs had a distinct 'edge' to them:

"Yeah, definitely comes across as a dramatic, angry emotion, some of them, but also a very caring side of you as well. So the friendship ones and the one about X was lovely, yeah". [Cardi]

"Yeah, it is about my life, sort of. It shows people how I am, sort of thing. I'm a chatty person. That's just how I am. I learned how to express my feelings a bit more. Because I never used to, I used to keep it in, but now I'm expressing it more aren't I. My anxiety is that, I literally tell everyone about it...well it helps me to, like release them and to tell people about them. Makes me feel better about myself". [RJM]

Through her lyrics, the music-making process and her growing trusting relationship with Marshall and Cardi, RJM was more openly expressing herself and channelling her feelings through her songs. The literature demonstrates the potential for music to regulate mood, foster enjoyment and define self-identity (e.g. Jacobson & Artman, 2013), which appeared to be salient in RJM's narratives. The significance and emergence of this self-expression was noted by Cardi:

"I think she's always kept all of that [her feelings] very, very tightly inside. So when I first started working with her she would not speak about anything emotional. And it's only real been the last couple of months, I guess that she will start to discuss sort of emotive subjects and things like that".

RJM noted the value of having this shared space to explore, make sense of her experiences and express her feelings:

Yeah, it does release emotion as well, like obviously my anxiety and depression it releases all on the music. Because it makes me, like because of my anxiety, I can't breathe properly sometimes. And then when I do my music, I'm breathing properly. So it's like I'm singing and then it gets kind of rid of it. So it's quite good, helps with my mental health".

RJM began to increasingly appreciate the potential for music to alleviate physical symptoms of her anxiety and support her emotional regulation. The role of music in adolescence has been highlighted in the literature, serving as a significant medium for emotional regulation, peer group affiliation and identity formation (North et al., 2000; Saarikallio & Erkkila, 2007). Research has also suggested that interventions using music can reduce levels of stress, anxiety and depression (Chanda & Levitin, 2013). This appears consistent with RJM's growing use of music to express herself and experience an alternative story, where these difficult feelings and anxiety appear less pervasive. An example of this was shared by RJM, relating to a song she made in collaboration with her Nan about a challenging relationship with an 'ex-boyfriend':

"It was one of my first ones. Yeah, me and my nan made it. And well, she wrote a few things and I wrote a few things. And then we'd put a rhyme together. And then obviously made the track. It was something to do with my ex-boyfriend...yeah, but to be honest, I don't really like that track anymore because I don't want to think about him. Forget about him. but yeah I'm soon gonna do one about my anxiety and that, and what happened in the past about setting that, bringing it on. Yeah, it does cause obviously it gets all my feelings out".

It was clear that RJM perhaps had a purpose for her tracks and made meaning through her music-making in her own way. There is further indication in the literature that through music, the construction/discussion of lyrics and expressive activities can offer a more accessible and intuitive way for YP to address their mental health (Cole et al., 2018). For RJM in this instance, the music-making process appeared to serve the function of establishing a sense of closure and expressing her feelings, perhaps reflecting her intention not to revisit the track.

Through her music-making RJM was increasingly viewing herself as a 'musician/artist', which she appeared to find a great sense of meaning and space for self-exploration:

"I think in terms of her like viewing herself as a musician and being like, no, I am an artist. I do. I think that's really valuable to her. And I think that really is a big part of the story she tells herself in her head about who she is". [Marshall]

Cardi further highlighted the significance of this, painting a further picture of who RJM might like to be and how she might like others to view her:

"and that is amazing and that really gives her a big boost [receiving positive feedback on social media]. Then I take her to an art club and she'll tell them all that she's a rapper and that thousands of people have listened to her songs...I think that's where she wants to be, if you see what I mean"

There was perhaps a sense that RJM was not only exploring her sense of self, but perhaps actively constructing this through her engagement in the sessions and via her tracks. Researchers have indicated that this process of music-making and storytelling can promote a sense of agency and identity formation for YP (Davis & Weinschenker, 2012), which can help adults around them learn about, understand and empathise with their lived experience (e.g. Vecchi et al., 2016). It appeared RJM was increasingly expressing and making sense of her experiences through her tracks, valuing the private and safe space through which she could explore this with Marshall. Through this process of music-making, it appeared that RJM was actively constructing an alternative story placing herself as a rapper/artist, where she can successfully connect with those around her and perhaps experience a sense of validation. This can provide a platform to explore alternative perspectives away from potentially unhelpful dominant discourses that can often be oppressive and problematic (Morgan, 2000).

On the surface RJM's tracks are characterised by themes of gang culture, violence, conflict and relationship difficulties. This may be viewed in light of the wider music culture and preferred genre of RJM, which perhaps lends itself to a more confrontational and aggressive style and lyricism (e.g. Brown, 2011). However, an alternative perspective might posit that the aforementioned themes (at least in part) might reflect RJM making

sense of some semblance of prior experiences through her music. Cardi wondered whether this was something RJM was continuously grappling with:

“And it’s interesting how I think she still wants to be that person before this incident to how she is now, and I think the music is the connecting factor. I think, if that makes sense it’s, that still links her to what she was back then, that sort of ‘gangster’ type. I think she’s aiming to be that person again, but she realises that she might not be that person. And I don’t know is she actually realised that she might not have been that person, if that makes sense”.

Here, the complexity and link between RJM’s previous sense of self, her ‘significant life event’ and her ongoing sense of identity is highlighted, with music as the connecting factor. As Cardi noted, RJM’s traumatic experience with cannabis edibles (and resulting fear and anxiety) perhaps precipitated feelings of dissonance and uncertainty around “*who she really was*”. It is felt poignant to revisit how RJM perhaps viewed herself prior to this event:

“... I talk about my life and it’s like when I used to be angry and stuff like that, and I wouldn’t be scared of anything but now I am...”

The tension Cardi is alluding to relates to RJM’s prior sense of self as “fearless/formidable” (a “*gangster type*” as she refers to) and the conflicting feelings of fear and anxiety following her experience with cannabis edibles. Through this lens, a greater appreciation of the nuance and potential meaning behind RJM’s lyrics and confrontational style can perhaps emerge. Whether RJM had any prior experiences of some of the stronger content of her rapping was perhaps less relevant; what was important was the meaning she engendered and the stories she was choosing to tell about herself and who she wanted to be. Building on Cardi’s narrative, it could be interpreted that RJM’s confrontational style perhaps reflected a sense of her no longer wanting to be afraid or anxious, through positioning herself as a ‘fearless rapper’ in her music. This is exemplified in her style and lyrics, a section of which is presented below:

*“I’ll put you in a headspin,
You look like a dead ting,
It’s me you’ll be dreadin’,*

Talk about weekdays, waiting for a pay day,

Money on the block, gotta do it my way,

Talkin' bout...what the fuck did you say,

Chattin' on our name, you gotta stay away."

Running alongside or perhaps underpinning RJM's music are prominent themes of loyalty, care, love, self-belief, managing conflict/emotions and pursuing a sense of belonging/connection (as previously suggested by Cardi). It appeared RJM was both expressing and actively constructing or re-calibrating her sense of self through her engagement with music and these themes, which appeared to be an ongoing process for her. The literature demonstrates the potential of music and lyrics to resonate with the lived experience of YP, promote a sense of empowerment, validate adverse experiences and discuss issues in a culturally relevant and youth-centred way (Gold et al., 2017; Hadley & Yancy, 2012). It appears RJM was engaging in a process of making sense of her lived experience via her music, facilitating self-expression, a space to release her emotion and present a preferred alternative story. RJM's resulting positive affect ("makes me feel better about myself"..."helps with my mental health") is echoed in the literature, relating to the use of lyrics and music to address mental health and promote wellbeing (Cole et al., 2018; Levy et al., 2017).

Through her music-making, it appeared RJM was actively engaging in a cognitive process of deliberate rumination, which has been outlined in the literature as a core process underlying PTG (Vloet et al., 2017). Deliberate rumination is characterised by a repeated reflection and contemplation following a traumatic event, seeking to challenge an individual's beliefs about their understanding of the world (Wu et al., 2015). Authors have postulated that repeated reflection can help individuals to rebuild an understanding of the post-traumatic world, reconstructing the basic schemas altered by the traumatic experience (Cann et al., 2011). With RJM's prior experiences of trauma in mind, it appears she was using her songs (and style/genre of music) to make meaning in her experiences and perhaps revise her life narratives, identity and sense of the world around her (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006).

Collaboration and connection with others through music

RJM experienced further opportunities to explore her sense of artistry and connection through her collaboration with her friends and family. In particular, themes of love, loyalty and a sense of connection and value were prevalent in RJM's "*collaboration*"

with a close friend. RJM shared her thoughts on the two-way process and resulting feelings it fostered:

“Yeah it was good, she helped me quite a bit with it. See, she done a similar thing to with my Nan as well. Like we done stuff that rhyme together. Because you gotta get the rhyming words to make a flow...I felt quite happy. I think she was quite happy as well that I made one. Because she was like, oh, that’s so cute. Do you know what I mean? She loved it”.

A section of the lyrics of the song are presented below, highlighting the sense of closeness and connection:

*“When I say I love you I mean it,
Like, sis you are amazing I would never change you for the world,
Like if you ever need me call me or text me,
You’re always my girl and I’m never leaving you,
No matter how far or close we are together you’ll always be my girl”*

Marshall was particularly struck by this heartfelt collaboration and considered it a highlight of RJM’s NS journey (taken from one of RJM’s digital blog reflections):

“So your best friend wrote this about you. This is lovely by the way, and then you sung it and yeah it’s a heart-warming story isn’t it. You know, it’s a tear-jerker, oh my god, emotional times. SO yeah, hopefully it’s like, you’re a little team. Are you gonna do more writing together? Is she gonna write more raps for you?”

RJM was increasingly using her music to connect and collaborate with her friends, which appeared to foster further self-expression and a sense of relatedness. Bourdieu’s (1986) concept of social capital suggests that interpersonal relations create value for individuals, which can be formed via a process of social bonding (i.e. connections between individuals with shared characteristics or interests) (Bourdieu, 1986). Research has suggested the importance of social bonding for YP experiencing educational or social exclusion, with music representing an effective way to introduce new socialising and learning experiences (Pettigrew et al., 2011). This appears consistent with RJM’s experience of her music-making/tracks providing opportunities for connection and collaboration with those important to her. The literature suggests this may also break cycles of rejection and

difficulties with social competence (Banerjee et al., 2011), which perhaps enabled RJM to experience a growing sense of success and competence in her relationships.

This sense of enhanced connection also extended to RJM's relationship with Nicki, with RJM noting *"Yeah, I think it has [had a positive impact on her relationship with Nicki], yeah, I'm seeing her a lot more"*. The meaning and significance of this gradual re-building of the relationship was beautifully articulated by Nicki:

"I started noticing a change in the text messages I was receiving from her. You know, and I say, oh you've got the music tomorrow and I'll get this, like beaming messages of smiles...little boom of happiness will come through the phone because she's so happy of having a music lesson...it's huge and we're taking really, really small steps...And so, yeah, it's like having my girl, my beautiful girl back, back in my life you know, it's just wonderful".

This echoes the earlier placing of NS as a 'foundation', through which the first steps of re-building, restoring or repairing the relationship between RJM and Nicki could take place. The literature has demonstrated the impact of family violence on the mother-child relationship. As mothers are often going through their own parallel process of recovery in understanding their own experiences, their ability to respond to their child may be compromised due to overwhelming feelings of fear, sadness and a lack of perceived safety (Keenan & Evans, 2009). This appears to echo the experiences of RJM and Nicki, which Nicki noted had a *"significant impact"* on them both. Although Nicki was not involved in the digital blog, it appeared the aforementioned positive change in RJM's wellbeing perhaps laid the "foundation" for this relationship to be repaired. Van der Kolk (2015) has described how people who have experienced trauma often recover in the context of relationships, providing opportunities to repair attachments and work towards a place of emotional and physical safety (Pratchett & Yehuda, 2011). Perhaps underpinning this, was RJM's sense of *"happiness"* engendered from the sessions and growing sense of relatedness with Aston, Cardi and her friends via her collaboration/sharing of her music. From this place, it appeared RJM and Nicki were ready to take steps forward in their relationship. This step forward clearly represented an incredibly emotive and meaningful event for Nicki, which perhaps further represents a re-authoring of the story; whereby RJM and Nicki are gradually spending more time together and building towards a more connected

relationship, moving away from the dominant story of challenge and fractured relationships.

Problem-solving and managing frustrations with Marshall's support

With this foundation in place, growing sense of relatedness and positive affect, RJM was able to negotiate the “ups and downs” of her music sessions, which were not always plain sailing:

“Obviously, if I ask him, and if I get a bit stressed out or something, he’ll help me with the backing track. Sometimes I get a bit annoyed, and then he helped me to make it. Umm, obviously, look cause I’ve got quite a short temper. But basically like sometimes I wanna get it finished. I’m impatient sort of thing... I get a bit annoyed with him...He normally just speaks to me quite calmly when I’m like that and just tries to chill with me”.

RJM evoked a sense that the music sessions were not free of challenge or heightened emotional responses, noting her “short temper” and the role of Marshall in her self-regulation. Research shows that emotional dysregulation can represent a key area of difficulty in YP with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or those that have experienced potentially traumatic experiences (Shaw et al., 2014). Irritability, a mood state characterised by poor frustration tolerance is common in YP with ADHD (Leibenluft, 2011), which is perhaps evident in RJM’s account above. While frustration is a typical affective response to blocked goal attainment, YP with increased levels of irritability display a lower threshold for frustration (i.e. low frustration tolerance) (Seymour et al., 2019). This sense of RJM ‘rushing’ and being ‘impatient’ to finish her tracks may reinforce the aforementioned emotional regulation functions of her music. That is, RJM seeking to make-meaning in her experiences, express her emotions and establish a sense of closure by finishing (and at times choosing not to revisit) her tracks. RJM appeared to experience a sense of frustration and anger when this goal was blocked or not progressing as she would like. This ‘low frustration tolerance’ was perhaps reflected in RJM’s narrative, with frustration impacting on her ability to manage instances of challenge and self-regulate:

“So I think with RJM, she’s on the surface, she’s very confident...I think what I’ve noticed with her is that basically she gets frustrated very quickly. And my interpretation of that like instant click into frustration is actually

just sort of a lack of confidence in her ability to problem-solve... You will also get just volatile really, really kind of like very tricky to manage, just you know. I have to be like calm water. Just being like, oh, it's fine".

Marshall further highlighted instances of challenge and heightened emotion in the music-making sessions with RJM. This further painted a picture of RJM's frustration, perhaps reflecting a sense of needing some additional guidance to problem-solve to find solutions to achieve her goals, and manage the resulting frustration that 'bumps in the road' presented. Marshall's perspective on his perceived role in this process is presented in his metaphor below:

"It's kind of like walking over to the door and saying, oh, no, actually, look, if you look here it's actually slightly ajar, maybe just push there and you might find that door just opens, and your job is to see that the locked door is about four yards in front of you, subtly sneak ahead, unlock the code yourself, sneak back and then kind of show them the unlocked door".

Marshall provided a further example of these 'ups and downs' in their music-making sessions where things had taken a positive turn:

"And the sort of way she was structuring her lyrics, it wasn't, to be honest it wasn't really working. And so there's a delicate moment where it's like this could go really pear shaped. She gets frustrated. So a good session, a few weeks ago I said well it's kind of to do with the flow of your lyrics and whether they're landing on the beat and whatnot. And yeah, we had a great session where she sort of really took that on board. We worked through a few lines together and she was happier with the result".

Marshall's perspective on his role in this process echoes what Gaunt (2008) termed 'musical agents', i.e. musical tutors that, through their trusting relationships with YP can act as models and motivating forces. Marshall's responsive, gentle approach was evident in the narrative, guiding RJM towards possible solutions and scaffolding her ability to problem-solve. Alongside moments of synchrony, the tutor-YP relationship can also be a constant site of negotiated relations, interactions, behaviours of awareness and focus, frustrations, disappointments and epiphanies (de Bruin, 2018). This is felt to meaningfully

capture the experiences of RJM and Marshall, where, alongside moments of harmony, instances of heightened emotion, challenge and tension were also evident. The process of gentle and skilled facilitation by Marshall (underpinned by epistemic trust) appeared to provide a 'secure base' through which RJM could explore and make sense of these challenges (e.g. Bomber, 2007). Where previously these tensions may have contributed to disengagement and a rupturing of the relationship, it appeared they provided opportunities for growth, problem-solving and managing tensions/frustrations. This perhaps reflected the trusting and supportive nature of the working relationship, where RJM experienced a sense of emotional containment. Emotional containment refers to the YP feeling a secure sense that their feelings and emotional communication are being received, processed and reflected back to them (Douglas, 2007). This is reflected in Marshall's metaphor of himself as the "calm water", i.e. being available for RJM's feelings, which has been posited to restore the capacity for YP to think and explore (Douglas, 2007). Revisiting the following passage from RJM perhaps demonstrates her feeling a sense of Marshall being able to 'handle' her emotional responses and provide responsive support:

I get a bit annoyed with him...He normally just speaks to me quite calmly when I'm like that and just tries to chill with me".

RJM's growing capacity to 'bounce back', overcome challenges and manage her emotional responses with the support of Marshall perhaps signified considerable growth and resilience. Marshall further commented on what success looked like from his perspective:

"And like sometimes she will offer opinions on what she's done. So in terms of like the working relationship I would say at that point, it's like it's the most functional, and it's taken us quite a while to get there. But we're able to go through periods in a session where she is contributing, engaged, doing her bit, feeding back having input. And that is, just in and of itself, I think that is the success basically...I think through the good and the bad of it, she clearly really values it".

This further suggests that, rather than reflecting a smooth-sailing, harmonious process, the music-sessions represented a safe space for tensions and heightened emotions to be explored and managed. Research suggests these collaborative and shared interactions can be powerful to enhance wellbeing and foster problem solving (Bevington et al., 2015).

For RJM, this shared and trusting space with Marshall appeared to represent a platform through which she could explore, manage challenges and problem-solve. RJM appeared to take value in this and appreciate Marshall's ability to "*chill*" with her, perhaps evoking a powerful sense of her emotions being validated and received. This perhaps represents a powerful unique outcome for RJM, running counter to her previous experiences of challenge with tutors. This emerging alternative story of RJM perhaps paints her as more open to responding to challenges and receiving the support of a trusted adult, whereby new perspectives of relatedness (responding to the support of trusted adults) and competence in her ability to manage her emotional responses (and potential conflict) can emerge. This is consistent with literature demonstrating that this joint and relational process of managing challenges together can support YP to grow emotionally and socially (Wubbels, 2015). RJM's experiences echoes a growing sense of oscillation in the gestalt of the story (McAdams et al., 2001), reflected in her aforementioned re-engagement with her identity and 'up and downs' with her relationships and the music making process along the way. Although this was perhaps an uneasy or turbulent process (as reflected in her working relationship with Marshall), it perhaps enabled RJM to move beyond what was previously comfortable and possible for her. This process of structured facilitation, reflection and working through challenging situations has also been posited to reflect PTG, building the capacity of YP to manage future setbacks and adverse situations (Ewert & Tessner, 2020). The role of Marshall appears particularly influential to support, guide and provide opportunities for RJM to experience (and move beyond) challenging situations, contributing to a new sense of what might be possible and re-shape her expectations of the adults around her.

Sharing music with a wider audience and approaching new challenges

Although RJM suggested the music-making process was not always plain sailing ("*I get a little stressed...annoyed...impatient*"), there was a growing sense of her experiencing greater confidence and pride approaching new challenges:

I think it's really good. I think it's got my confidence up about my rapping and like my singing. Yeah, I feel like I can rap in front of people. Yeah you know what I mean? I feel like I can rap in front of people now and got my confidence for that part.

This sense of performing in front of others and associated growth appeared significant for RJM. She commented further on the meaning she took from this:

“Because obviously I want people to like it and stuff like that. So then I know if people like it or not, and then post more songs. Maybe it’s just for like myself as well, and feel proud of myself if people like it. Happy about what they say in the comments and that... I do feel proud about myself because I’ve posted it, I have posted it on Instagram. Some people didn’t like it. But everyone doesn’t like anything, do you know?”.

RJM’s meaning ascribed to this idea of performing for an audience appeared to relate to positive feelings about herself, and a sense of wanting to connect and experience a sense of belonging with those around her. Research has suggested music-making programmes can provide opportunities for YP to build confidence and share their competence with others, i.e. through performing and engaging with others in the music-making process (Levstek and Banerjee, 2021). RJM was seemingly building confidence in herself and her competence in rapping, contributing to a growing openness to seek connection and validation through sharing her music:

“But I think it has definitely helped her with her self-esteem and confidence 100%, you know she’ll, umm. First of all, she was just sort of showing me all, letting me listen to the music and she was like, you know do you think I should put it online? And I said, you know, as long as you’re aware that people say nice things and people might say not nice things and she’s like, OK, so she put it on. And it was great. Lots of her friends, but lots of positive and bits and pieces”. [Cardi]

Cardi further highlighted the positive impact of the music-making sessions on RJM’s self-esteem and confidence, which is reflected in the literature (Jacobson & Artman, 2013). Interestingly, RJM was able to overcome the tension of potentially opening herself up to social evaluation to share her music with others, experiencing a sense of pride and validation from positive feedback. This can perhaps more meaningfully be viewed through the lens of RJM’s emerging alternative story, whereby RJM views her music as a way to initiate social bonding and build ‘social capital’, with these interpersonal relations providing resources to achieve desired outcomes (Bourdieu, 1986; Bizzi, 2015). For RJM, this desired outcome perhaps appears to relate to her music to be liked and validated by others, experience a sense of success in her interactions with others (relatedness) and share her songs (making meaning in this process) to validate her identity as an artist. This

could be considered RJM's emerging alternative story, which she was construing and sharing via her music-making. Research has suggested that the sense of social capital has a strong relation to the wellbeing of YP (McPherson et al. 2014). RJM appears to gain a sense of meaning and value in this, experiencing feelings of pride and achievement where positive feedback is received ("feel proud of myself if people like it... happy about what they say in the comments"). The aforementioned discussion of RJM's growing resilience is perhaps further reflected in her sense of reconciling the risks of social evaluation ("Some people didn't like it. But everyone doesn't like anything, do you know?"). Through this growing "confidence", RJM appeared more open to approaching challenges and performing her music in front of others:

"The other day, actually we had someone observing one of our sessions. And I, I must admit, I was a bit apprehensive about that personally. I was like, well, I don't know how this might go because I've seen the full range from RJM. We've had great sessions, we've had disasters. And the teacher who sat in on the session asked her to do some of the rapping, in front of her. And privately in my head, I was like, I don't know what's gonna happen, but I was really impressed she gave it a go. But yeah, and then this lady sat in on the session and RJM did some rapping and I could tell that she was a bit nervous, but she gave it a good go, you know. In context it was like, wow."

The significance of this event was recognised by Marshall, which perhaps provided RJM with an opportunity to present her rapping/performing skills and experience a sense of competence. RJM further commented on her renewed aspirations and hopes for the future and the meaning she placed on this:

"I would say, I wanna like get famous sort of thing. Or just like post them around and that sort of stuff. Yeah, and it helps my performance sort of thing. So like I'm not scared to perform in front of people that I used to be scared. I think it's because I've got better than I was...I wanna keep going with them and see how they go. And I wanna see if they ever get released like famous...I do want to be famous a bit like the rappers, but then I don't at the same time because I don't want all them cameras on me. Obviously like, that people like you and chat good things about your name and stuff like that".

As Marshall's narratives suggest, RJM was steadily increasing in confidence, becoming more able and willing to move outside of her comfort zone to engage in new experiences. The significance of this struck Marshall, which perhaps painted this experience as a particularly meaningful 'unique outcome', where RJM was able to move beyond her apprehension and anxiety to manage and succeed in a tricky situation. White and Cartwright (2007) noted the ways in which our understandings of self can be reconstructed and circulated within the context of social networks and through others (e.g. performing or sharing this to an audience). For RJM, it was perhaps a chance to present and share this alternative or 're-authoring' of her story of herself as a performer. The literature highlights the potential for such processes of storytelling and performance to help YP construct their own discourses/narratives, fostering reflective processes around self-identity (Gregori-Signes & Corachan, 2014). Through these social processes, it appeared RJM was continuing to construct, share and make meaning in this emerging alternative story. As RJM's narrative suggests, this relates to her sense of performance/artistry, sharing her music with others and feeling a sense of success and validation through these social processes and relationships. From this, RJM was perhaps gradually moving away from the fear and anxiety that had characterised her experiences prior to the NS programme. This is perhaps exemplified in her growing confidence performing in front of others and sharing her music (*"So like I'm not scared to perform in front of people that I used to be scared"*). Cardi further commented on the sense of success RJM was experiencing, connecting this to her dreams:

"I think because she enjoys the music. I think she enjoys thinking that she can achieve from it. I also think she thinks that that's her sort of dream, that's her fantasy of being, that sort of singer".

This further highlights the dream and aspirations of RJM. As Cardi suggests, through this re-construction of self RJM can experience a renewed sense that she can achieve and be successful (fostering a sense of competence; *"I've got better"*). This fits with the repeated pattern of RJM experiencing positive affect (i.e. *"happiness, pride, confidence and feeling less anxious"*) throughout via the music-making sessions. This also appeared to foster an autonomous engagement and connection with her dreams, values and aspirations for the future (*"I do want to be famous a bit like the rappers"*), which enabled RJM to look forward to the future and be more open to productive experiences:

"And, you know, and like, now she's talking about wanting to be, you

know, like going into hair and beauty or music or, you know, but before it was, she had no aspiration, really. She lost that, she had gone from having aspiration to having no aspiration to then having aspiration for, to have career again, you know and now it has been able to build on it. But yeah, she sort of she's so keen and eager to have these things in her life now, you know".

This re-engagement and restoration of aspiration appeared particularly significant for Nicki, noting RJM's openness to exploring next steps in music or hair and beauty. Here, it appears RJM has come a long way in her journey from the 'problem-saturated'/dominant story, where new perspectives and aspirations have emerged through which she can take steps forward in her life. Research suggests that marginalisation in education has negative long term consequences for YP in terms of social engagement in the wider world, academic attainment, emotional development and wellbeing (Murthy, 2022), which perhaps resonates with RJM's experiences prior to the NS programme. In contradiction to prior experiences of disempowerment, marginalisation and labels, such music-making projects can foster a process of 'resignification' where YP can evaluate and alter their participation and engagement in society (Deane, 2015). It appears RJM was continuously engaging in this process to construct an alternative story and sense of self. Although this is undoubtedly an ongoing process characterised by oscillations, challenges and adversity in RJM's story, it appears the NS programme has empowered her to look forward and experience a renewed engagement and sense of direction in her future. In this alternative story, RJM can connect to her preferred sense of self (away from fear, anxiety and rejection), experience a greater sense of relatedness (trusting and more connected relationships with others), autonomy (connecting to her goals and dreams of being a respected rapper) and growing confidence and competence in her capability to manage the world around her. Through the oscillation, tensions and engagement in an active process of deliberate rumination, it is felt RJM's journey is interspersed with a number of indicators implicated in PTG; a greater sense of confidence and personal strength; a more open attitude towards others and positive changes in interpersonal relationships; feeling more able to face future challenges; and a greater sense of new possibilities and aspirations (Laceulle et al., 2015).

Summary of Findings Across the Journeys of Taylor and RJM

The narratives of Taylor and RJM paint a rich and complex picture of their journeys, providing potential scope to explore both the unique features of their experience and similarities in the patterns of meaning that emerge. Throughout and guided by these narratives, the researcher has explored tentative links to theory/literature, whilst holding in mind possible interpretations that may elucidate how Taylor and RJM may story or re-author their experiences (Polkinghorne, 1995). While it is held in mind that the unique and contextual features of the narratives should be appreciated, it appears meaningful to explore potential patterns, similarities and unique features of the narratives (Reissman, 2008).

The process of storying and ‘re-storying’

In both Taylor’s and RJM’s narratives, a ‘dominant’ story emerged which could be considered ‘problem-saturated’ accounts or narratives of their experience, characterised by a history of disempowerment, labels and marginalisation through their social, educational and potentially traumatic experiences. Researchers have noted YP in challenging circumstances can often be surrounded by unhelpful dominant discourses in their lives (often called ‘thin’ descriptions), which can be particularly problematic and disempowering (Morgan, 2000). Similar wider themes were noted in relation to the systems around YP as potentially contributing to a sense of instability, disruption and lack of support when it may be needed most (e.g. Blundell et al., 2021), further intensifying these feelings of rejection and disempowerment. For RJM, a fractious and challenging relationship with her mother appeared a significant part of this story, alongside her traumatic experience with cannabis edibles. It was clear both Taylor and RJM had experienced potentially traumatic experiences prior to the NS programme, which can serve as ‘seismic challenges’ to individuals’ view of themselves, their relationships and their world (Mayerson et al., 2011).

Research has suggested the potential for narrative approaches to help YP construct meaning and help them change when experiencing challenging circumstances (Zimmerman & Dickerson, 1996). The researcher was particularly struck by the continued active engagement of Taylor and RJM in this process, which appeared to powerfully foster new positive identities (alternative stories) around their sense of self, expectations for success, relationships, engagement and mental health (as demonstrated in the literature; Jacobson & Artman, 2013). There was a strong sense that the NS programme provided a ‘foundation’ or catalyst through which these alternative stories could emerge, which were

unique to RJM and Taylor. The music mentors were placed as influential 'characters' in the story for both YP, facilitating and contributing to this active process.

Forming new trusting working relationships

For both Taylor and RJM, the trusting and positive working relationships they formed with their music mentors appeared highly influential throughout the journey. The music mentors provided plentiful opportunities to enhance competence, autonomy and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Interestingly, there was a strong sense from both storied narratives that the sense of relatedness with their music mentor provided the conditions (or environment) through which enhancements to autonomy (ownership, control and freedom) and competence (feelings of success and growing mastery in the music-making process) could be fostered. This idea of relatedness as a necessary platform to foster autonomy and competence has been suggested in the literature (Wood, 2015). The 'informal learning' style utilised by both music-mentors appeared effective in engaging Taylor and RJM, providing opportunities for them to connect with their passions, explore and experience an enhanced sense of autonomy. Such environments have been characterised by enhanced learner autonomy, experiential activities and a more relational style, through which an enhanced sense of autonomy and connection to their goals could be maintained (Jenkins, 2011). Interestingly, while both Taylor and RJM appeared to hold valued goals relating to making their own tracks and experiencing a sense of artistry, the nuances behind these intentions or purposes were unique and rich. The resulting alternative stories that emerged will be revisited throughout this section.

The relational and interpersonal dynamic/climate created by the music mentors appeared to lay the foundations for building trust and a more equal balance of power for both YP, which appeared particularly meaningful to them. This reflected notions of intersubjectivity and epistemic trust, which has been posited to restore a sense of feeling heard, understood and valued (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001; Djenar et al., 2018). Importantly, there are nuances in the ways in which Taylor and RJM valued and made meaning in their working relationship with their mentors (and how this relatedness manifested and was experienced). Interestingly for Taylor, this evolved throughout the process, moving from viewing her mentor as a role model (i.e. "training" her and building competence) towards a greater sense of exploration, performance and collaboration in this working relationship.

RJM appeared to place significant meaning on the non-judgemental style of her mentor and the private/safe space it afforded for her to accomplish her goals, explore and

grow in a space where her anxiety and difficulties were less prevalent. This appeared to foster a restoration of a sense of trust, security and an openness to learn and explore (Fonagy & Allen, 2014). This was reflected in the narratives around problem-solving, frustration and the role of the mentor providing emotional containment and guidance. Reflective of these experiences, research has suggested such positive and collaborative relationships can foster problem solving processes and enhance wellbeing (Bevington et al., 2015). In RJM's case, opportunities to experience challenges and heightened emotional responses appeared to provide opportunities for growth and resilience, which did not appear to follow a neat, comfortable or orderly pattern. This was reflected in the sense of oscillation and turbulence in RJM's story/journey (or overall 'gestalt') over the NS programme, which appeared to provide valuable opportunities for growth and problem-solving.

Connecting with others in the music-making process

Both Taylor and RJM's narratives highlighted the opportunities the music-making process provided to experience a sense of belonging, connect, collaborate and share their music with others. The literature has reported music-making programmes can foster enhanced connectedness and cohesion (Levstek & Banerjee, 2021), which was reflected in both narratives. Through their interaction with friends and family, there was a clear sense of Taylor and RJM using music to foster social bonding. Research has suggested that such interpersonal experiences create value and resources for individuals (i.e. social capital; Bourdieu, 1986) that can overturn cycles of rejection and perceived difficulties with social competence (Pettigrew et al., 2011). In Taylor's case, she very quickly embraced this process and appeared to find meaning and experience positive feelings of happiness and closeness through sharing and collaborating with family. Although RJM was perhaps a little more guarded (at least initially) with her music, this process of social bonding was evident in her collaboration with friends. RJM appeared to place great value on the validation, positive feedback and feelings of enhanced closeness she experienced in this process. This further reflected a sense of using the music-making process to generate social capital. Through this, enhanced relatedness could be experienced, which perhaps represented a move away from RJM's dominant story of challenge/fractured relationships and towards experiences of success in her social relationships.

Interestingly, there was an incredibly powerful sense of restoration or reparation of relationships between the YP and their mother in both narratives. This perhaps further highlights the potential of these experiences to repair relationships and attachments, aid

the recovery from trauma and enhance connectedness (e.g. Pratchett & Yehuda, 2011; Van der Kolk, 2015). This perhaps represented a re-authoring of the story for both Taylor and Jane, whereby a step towards a more harmonious and cohesive relationship was evident. Interestingly, this occurred both directly (for Taylor and Jane via direct collaboration and involvement in the music-making process) and indirectly (for RJM and Nicki via increased positive affect and a readiness/foundation to repair their relationship), which appeared to foster a renewed sense of hope and connection (or re-connection) in both instances. In both storied narratives, such unique outcomes/exceptions emerged that were highly individualised and unique to the experiences and meaning engendered by the YP. Through these experiences and linking of positive events, an alternative story quickly began to emerge for both YP (White & Cartwright, 2007).

Connecting to their alternative stories and enhanced positive affect

As we have established through their connections and relationships with family, friends and their music mentors, the ways in which Taylor and RJM appeared to 're-author' and present their alternative stories varied. Taylor very quickly embraced the digital blog to connect with the artistic process of music-making, using this as a vehicle to present herself as a musician. This links to research highlighting the potential for digital technologies and narratives to enhance wellbeing through a sense of connection, identity and community (Johnson & Merrick, 2020). Taylor appeared to find significant meaning in this process and increasingly connected with the story of herself as a musician, which fostered feelings of growing connection, confidence, achievement and enjoyment in this process. Not only did this foster an enhanced sense of relatedness with her mentor (via opportunities to perform and collaborate together), but provided a space through which she could construct, explore and present this identity to the digital blog, family and YouTube. The literature exemplifies the role of the audience as 'active participants' in reflective processes around identity (e.g. Small, 1998; Ferran & Saarikallio, 2014), which contributed to a growing sense of competence, confidence and validation for Taylor. Sharing her music with others appeared to provide further opportunities to experience a sense of relatedness (connection and strengthened relationships with family), competence (validation of her music and a growing sense of skill), which ran counter to previous experiences of marginalisation and disempowerment.

Similarly to Taylor, RJM was using this music-making process to increasingly connect with and construct her alternative story, placing herself as a respected, and perhaps formidable rapper. For RJM, the edge in her lyrics and style of music represented

a process of making meaning of her prior experiences and expressing her feelings about these events. RJM's charged and confrontational style of music and lyrics could potentially represent a source of concern for some. However, crucially, it was the intentionality of how and why RJM was engaging in the music-making process that was important and meaningful to appreciate. This is consistent with literature suggesting that a focus on the intentionality of how YP and practitioners engage (i.e. interpret and interact) with music is critical to facilitating positive outcomes (Saarikallio et al., 2015). One would argue this intentionality is also critical to understand the lived experience of YP and how they may construe positive outcomes. Through placing herself as a formidable rapper, RJM was perhaps seeking to move away from the fear and anxiety she experienced following her traumatic event, grappling with tensions and dissonance to engage in a reflective process of reconstituting and exploring her identity. A more nuanced and richer account of RJM's story and music-making connects with prevalent themes of love, care, loyalty and belonging, which she channelled via her music in her own way. RJM appeared to find significant value in using the music-making process as a vehicle to express and channel her emotions and make sense of difficult prior experiences, giving rise to feelings of autonomy (choice to explore what was meaningful to her), a sense of closure and a release for her frustration. Studies have shown the potential for music to support YP to express emotions and discharge negative emotions (Saarikallio & Erkkila, 2007). This research extends these findings, suggesting (in RJM's case) the music-making process and lyricism held powerful potential to process and make sense of challenging experiences, fostering a reflective process of reconstituting and sharing her identity.

Through this process, RJM began to experience an environment whereby her pervasive anxiety appeared less prevalent. Research has shown that programmes using music can reduce levels of stress, anxiety and depression (Chanda & Levitin, 2013), which appears particularly influential in adolescence to support emotional regulation and identity formation (Saarikallio & Erkkila, 2007). This echoed Taylor experiencing music-making as an 'escape' from her anxiety and a safe space to express her feelings relating to lost loved ones. The literature highlights the potential for music to positively impact on wellbeing, emotional intelligence and foster potentially therapeutic effects (e.g. supporting the grieving/loss process) (McFerran et al., 2010; Jacobson & Artman, 2013). Taylor appeared to quickly enter a state of 'flow' in her sessions where her anxiety 'faded away', giving rise to feelings of happiness, autonomous engagement and passion (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). While this appeared to be the case to some extent for RJM too, the positive (or potentially

therapeutic) effects of the music-making were perhaps more meaningfully characterised by her channelling of strong emotions and making sense of prior experiences via her tracks.

Crucially, the narratives demonstrate the powerful potential for music to foster reflective processes around self-identity, relationships and experiences (Gregori-Signes & Corachan, 2014). For both Taylor and RJM, a rich and meaningful alternative storyline emerged, through which they could connect with experiences and events relating to themselves as performers/artists and gradually move away from their disempowering experiences. There was a sense in both storied narratives that the music-sessions were not a 'silver bullet' to overcome these challenges, but perhaps provided the foundation through which positive change and alternative storylines could emerge '*brick by brick*'. For Taylor, her experiences of success appeared to foster an emerging 'growth mindset', surpassing previous expectations of herself. From this, Taylor was able to take a more dynamic perspective on her capabilities (Dweck, 2006) and demonstrate renewed aspirations and vigour for her future. For RJM, her growing capability to manage the 'ups and downs' and 'turbulence' of her story fostered an openness to approach challenges (i.e. performing in front of others and sharing her music) and a renewed sense of aspiration and hope. From this, RJM experienced a sense of happiness, pride, confidence and social validation via positive feedback on her music. This connects to wider themes of autonomy (choice to share and own her music), competence (experiencing success via social validation, positive feedback and increased confidence to perform in front of others) and relatedness (fostering connection and closeness with others). This sense of belonging, connection and relatedness can have powerful implications for the wellbeing of YP, overturning prior experiences of rejection, ostracism and marginalisation (Cullinane, 2020). This appears to characterise the journeys of both Taylor and RJM, whereby a 'redemptive arc' was present in both of their stories, moving from disempowerment to a more positive outlook on their lives and enhanced wellbeing. For RJM, this journey was characterised by an oscillation and turbulence, suggesting this process is not always neat, orderly or without challenge. However, it appeared these experiences provided powerful opportunities to problem-solve, grow and build resilience, whereby new perspectives of herself and her capabilities could be formed. Engaging in these reflective processes have been posited to assist individuals to reconstruct their personal narratives in the aftermath of trauma or challenging/disempowering experiences (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006). It appeared both YP were re-constructing their identity, hopes, expectations and relationships through the NS programme. The process of deliberate rumination was evident for both YP, reflected in the processing of (and perhaps working through) traumatic events and experiences through

their music-making. In addition to fostering reflective processes around self-identity, it is argued both YP showed strong indicators of PTG throughout their journey. The potentially transformational role of the music mentor in this process is highlighted, providing a foundation through which the YP's expectations, beliefs and worldview can be reconstructed or restored.

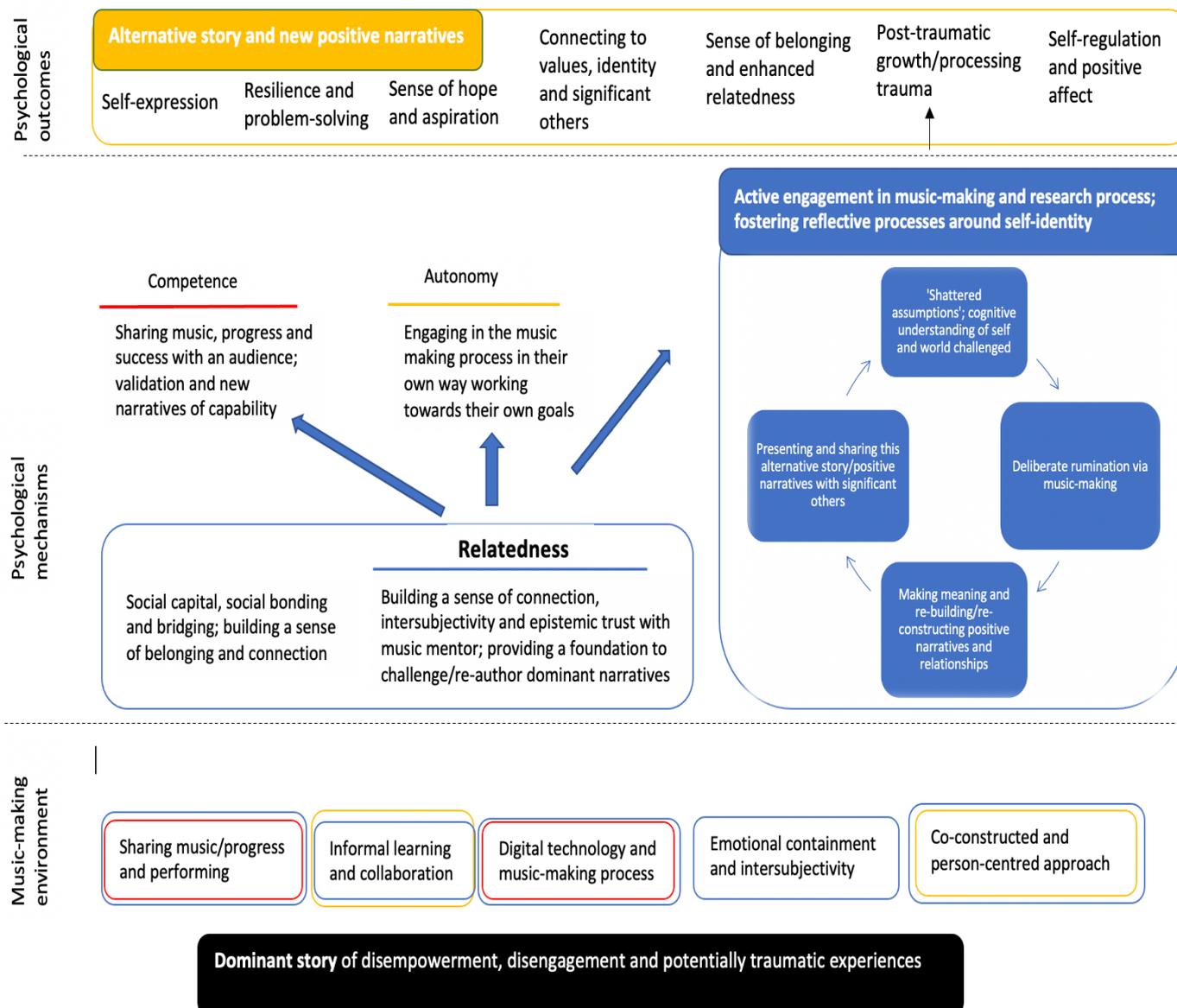
This research echoes Small's (1998) placing of music as a creation and celebration of relationships and experiences between different participants located within, and reflecting their context. Importantly, the music-making process appeared to enable both YP to connect with a raft of values, hopes, goals and purposes, through which the unique direction and positive outcomes have been meaningfully explored (White & Cartwright, 2007). This is demonstrated in the unique and subjective ways both YP found meaning in the music-making process, explored their own interests/goals and connected with important others around them to engage in a reflective process around their self-identity. With the safe and trusting relationship with their music mentor as a platform, both YP appeared to experience a powerful sense of autonomy, competence and resulting enhancements to wellbeing via a number of guises. Fundamental to this, is the reciprocal relationship between music, context and relationships, where a focus on the intentionality (i.e. how Taylor and RJM made meaning in and used this process) is critically important to more holistically understand these processes. The importance of the 'audience' as active participants in this reconstructive process is similarly influential (Grocke & Wigram, 2007), as reflected in the powerful opportunities provided for Taylor and RJM to express their identity through sharing and performing their music.

A theoretical summary of music-mentoring programmes

The findings highlight the complex and multiple processes that may underlie music-making/mentoring programmes such as NS. The current research suggests relatedness and narrative processes may be highly implicated in (or perhaps underlying) possible enhancements to wellbeing. Figure 6 (below) provides a summary/diagram of the researcher's tentative theoretical explanation based on the research process, findings and relevant literature relating to music-making programmes (e.g. models by Saarikallio, 2019; Levstek & Banerjee, 2021), narrative approaches (White & Epston, 1990) and models of PTG and trauma (Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996; Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006).

Figure 6

A tentative theoretical explanation of the music-mentoring process



This highlights the influential role of narrative approaches/processes, where YP may be surrounded by a dominant narrative of disempowerment, disengagement and trauma. Such experiences have been posited to fragment individuals' assumptions about the world, forcing a reconfiguration of beliefs, goals and worldview (Mayerson et al., 2011). Figure 6 shows a number of features integrated into music programmes, where YP are supported to engage in a collaborative, informal and co-constructed process of music-making with a trusted adult (Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). It is argued the trusting relationship between the YP and music mentor (underpinned by a view of intersubjectivity

and epistemic trust) provides a necessary and powerful basis through which enhancements to autonomy and competence can occur. For example, the music mentor is central in providing a sense of freedom for YP to engage in the music making process in their own way; build new narratives of success; recognise progress and share this with significant others to build a further sense of relatedness (e.g., via social bonding and bridging; Bourdieu, 1986).

It is through this relatedness and freedom for YP to engage in the music-making process in their own way, that YP can engage in reflective processes around their identity, sense of self and views about the world around them (Gregori-Signes & Corochan, 2014). The theory of 'shattered assumptions' (Janoff-Bulman, 2004) posits that PTG arises out of a need to develop a positive cognitive understanding of the world, which is often 'shattered' or challenged following trauma. Through the music-making process, YP are supported to actively engage in deliberate rumination (reflections about the beliefs before and after traumatic/disempowering events), with the music mentor providing space and emotional containment in this process. Deliberate rumination may be evident in their style/genre of music, lyrics, focus of the song and the stories they tell through this process (i.e. the intention behind their engagement in music). This process of deliberate rumination can support YP to re-build positive narratives (or core cognitive schemas) about the world around them, their relationships and beliefs in themselves (Cann et al., 2011). The music mentor likely plays a highly influential role in re-shaping core beliefs, restoring a sense that the world is meaningful and that the self is worthy, competent and able to successfully connect with those around them (Janoff-Bulman, 1992; Jirek, 2016;). It is argued one of the most powerful and insightful ways to gain insight into this process, is through the resulting narratives/stories that YP (re)construct and share with significant others.

Through this process, the YP can begin to form a rich alternative story and engage in a 're-authoring' process through their engagement in music. This reflects a move away from the dominant, problem-saturated account of their lives and towards a more meaningful and positive account of their capabilities, relationships, values and hopes (White & Cartwright, 2007). Given the social nature of this process, the role of the mentor and digital blog/technologies appears integral in facilitating this process and providing a platform (or audience) for these alternative stories to be expressed and circulated (White & Epson, 1990). It is highly likely the research process provided further opportunities for the YP to engage in further reflection around their identity and experiences, which has been posited as a potentially therapeutic process (White & Cartwright, 2006). Through their active engagement in the research and music-making process, it is highly likely similar

therapeutic and meaning-making potential was afforded to the YP's parent, music mentor and key professional. Given that these individuals are active in shaping the stories and experiences of the YP (White & Epton, 1990), the research and music-making process may provide opportunities for the supporting 'unit' or ecosystem around the YP to generate new meaning, process their collective experiences and strengthen relationships.

It is felt the psychological outcomes are perhaps most usefully conceptualised by the alternative story of the YP, whereby new positive and meaningful narratives about their life and relationships emerge. Through this re-authoring process and deliberate rumination, YP are provided opportunities to connect to the values, people, things and pursuits that are important to them (intentional state understandings), through which personal agency, meaning, renewed hope and aspiration can emerge (White & Cartwright, 2007). As such, this alternative story is likely to be highly meaningful, unique and powerful for the YP's sense of self and future direction. For example, some YP may experience enhanced self-expression, self-regulation (e.g. an 'escape' from their mental health difficulties or worries), positive affect (happiness, pride and enjoyment) and a greater ability to approach challenges, which is also highlighted in the literature (Jacobson & Artman, 2013; Cardella, 2014). Through these processes, YP may also experience PTG in the wake of disempowering and traumatic experiences, indicative of a growing awareness of new possibilities, relatedness, personal strength, appreciation of life, greater self-confidence and working through trauma (Tedeschi & Calhoun, 1996; Ewert & Tessner, 2019).

Implications

The implications of the current research may be viewed in light of the current context of SEND processes and systems in the UK. In line with the literature, these storied narratives add to an emerging picture of CYP and their families experiencing significant barriers to accessing appropriate support (BPS, 2019). Under increasing pressure and demand to provide psychological support and intervention, local authorities are perhaps increasingly in need of exploring creative alternatives and avenues to meet the needs of YP with complex barriers to learning. This research adds to a growing body of literature suggesting the potential for creative interventions or programmes using music to have a powerful impact on the re-engagement and wellbeing of YP (e.g. MacDonald et al., 2012; Levstek & Banerjee, 2021). The current research suggests that programmes such as NS are able to effectively fill a provision gap within a system of overwhelming demand and increasing wait lists; holding transformational potential to provide a foundation or

springboard for positive change for YP and families. As such, exploring how local authorities can make use of such programmes and services using music would appear a fruitful and meaningful pursuit. For example, this could be achieved through raising the profile of such programmes/interventions, further evaluation of their effects, exploring funding streams for such creative interventions or effective signposting to services that can effectively deliver this.

Educational settings and the services/professionals around YP have been posited to be in a unique position to meet the SEMH needs of YP and prevent further mental health difficulties and disengagement (Caan et al., 2014). The current research would suggest that accessing, referring and signposting to services such as NS would be a valuable step forward for YP that have experienced educational and social marginalisation, disempowerment and trauma. Therefore, the powerful potential for such programmes to foster therapeutic and reflective processes around identity; foster PTG; and enhance wellbeing should be highlighted and further explored/harnessed. This is felt particularly important given calls for greater early support and access to specialist support and intervention for YP at risk of exclusion in educational settings (DfE, 2018). The research also calls for greater acknowledgement and utilisation of storytelling/narrative approaches in educational settings, which may hold powerful potential to re-engage and enhance the wellbeing of YP with SEND (Lang et al., 2019). It is argued there are plentiful opportunities and scope to meld these approaches into the teaching of the arts and intervention (e.g. potentially utilising Emotional Literacy Support Assistants and other suitably trained staff), which may yield powerful opportunities for YP to communicate and story their lived experience (Vecchi et al., 2016).

Due to their role in recommending, implementing and evaluating SEMH interventions in schools, it is argued there is scope for EPs to connect with such creative interventions (Roffey, 2015). The current research highlights the value of EPs promoting and utilising narrative approaches in their work, being well placed to promote and facilitate the process of eliciting new knowledges, stories and meaning from the perspectives of YP. It is argued there is further scope to utilise concepts inherent in the NS programme and this study design to shape/inform the five 'core functions of EP work'; assessment, consultation, intervention, research and training (Birch et al., 2015). For example, the use of narrative therapy/storytelling, digital narratives and the use of music may hold powerful potential to inform intervention design and work targeting the wellbeing and re-engagement of YP in challenging circumstances. The use of a narrative therapy approach may contribute to further opportunities to empower YP to share their own interpretations of

their preferred lives, connecting to values of social justice (Snowdon, 2021). This process of listening, constructing and sharing these alternative stories with significant others appears to hold empowering potential for YP. It is felt the use of music and/or digital technologies hold untapped potential to foster these processes, supporting YP to move away from unhelpful dominant discourses (Zimmerman & Dickerson, 1996), re-engage in productive pursuits and build positive relationships.

Strengths, Limitations and Future Research

The nature of narrative research and associated absence of consensus and clarity in the procedures should firstly be acknowledged in this research. The subsequent complexity and challenge in data analysis is often cited as a limitation of the approach, which was perhaps reflected in the 'messiness' of phase one data analysis. Whilst the flexibility and creativity could be considered a hallmark of narrative analysis with multimedia data (Reissman, 2008), such complexity has been argued to pose questions of validity through interpretation (Squire, 2013). It has also been noted that narrative models/frameworks are sparse and difficult to clarify (Howitt, 2010). However, the engagement of the researcher in a reflexive and conscientious process (outlined by Josselson & Hammack, 2021) sought to alleviate such challenges and enhance the transparency of the research.

It is acknowledged that the dual role of the researcher potentially confers a number of tensions and complexities in the project. For example, the dual layer and melding of concepts from narrative therapy approaches (e.g. White & Epston, 1990) and narrative analysis in the interpretation must be noted. The researcher acknowledges their own limitations and developing understanding of narrative approaches. Although these factors perhaps influenced the direction and nature of the analysis, it is felt the flexibility and creativity narrative approaches provide contributed to an interesting and illuminating account of participants' experiences, adding a unique contribution to the literature.

A further potential limitation of the current research relates to the use of opportunity sampling, with both YP engaging in a second block of sessions. This may confer a possible greater likelihood of participants opting into the research who may have had a particularly positive experience or relationship with NS. However, care was taken to ensure participants were not preselected by the gatekeeper. It is also acknowledged that participants were recruited in relation to a particular music-mentoring programme, in a particular context and location. As such, it could be argued that the transferability of the current research may be limited. Due to the fact that both YP were concurrently engaging

in the programme at the time of the research, the long-term or lasting nature of these possible effects are unclear. However, the research prioritised a smaller number of participants to create a rich, detailed and 'thick' description of the phenomena', whereby generalisability or transferability was not an aim of the research. It was felt the depth, richness and breadth of data and analysis could be considered a significant strength of the research, strongly linking to the social constructionist epistemology. It was felt this enabled the researcher to address the research question in a rich, interesting and meaningful way. Further discussion relating to the methodological integrity of the research (and how this was addressed and achieved) will be presented in the reflective account.

The lack of a clear and predefined narrative interview method/technique could be considered a potential limitation of the research. It is acknowledged that the semi-structured nature of the interviews could have impacted on the narratives that emerged. However, the melding of semi-structured interviews and narrative interviewing principles to guide questioning has been argued for in the literature (Hermans, 1991). Furthermore, the researcher drew upon principles of narrative interviewing and was conscious to maintain an open and flexible approach to the interviews. Overall, it was felt this was successful in eliciting the narratives and stories of participants in a meaningful and open way.

The role of the researcher in actively constructing the narratives of participants through the process of data collection, analysis and 're-storying'/re-ordering is also acknowledged. Although this is not considered a limitation of narrative approaches (in line with the social constructionist position), the further use of member checking could have enhanced the credibility of the research (Reissman, 2008). Unfortunately, due to time constraints it was not possible to undertake additional member-checking with participants in relation to the final 'storied narrative'.

With this in mind, further research could seek to incorporate additional member checking and co-construction with YP, placing them more centrally throughout the process. This could also include the use of participatory designs, including YP as 'co-researchers' in this process of storying and 're-storying' their experiences. For example, undertaking this process with YP either during and/or following a programme such as NS would provide valuable insights into how YP truly make sense of these experiences. Given that the dominant narratives of YP can often be 'storied' by the people or systems around them (Snowdon, 2021), empowering YP to be an active part of the research could be incredibly powerful and illuminating to explore this from their perspective. Due to the transformational and therapeutic potential of narrative approaches to research, further

exploration of how YP (and significant others) experience the process of sharing and restoring their experiences would be valuable. For example, it could have been incredibly illuminating to arrange a follow-up interview or debrief with participants, to explore how they found engaging in the research process and highlight/discuss any potentially therapeutic effects or reflections. Therefore, it is argued further research should seek to appreciate the transformational potential of narrative approaches to research and seek to further explore and capture potential therapeutic effects in collaboration with participants. Further exploration of processes around PTG and cognitive processing of trauma would also be valuable and highly relevant, given that many YP engaging in such programmes have experienced potentially traumatic and disempowering life events (as reflected in this research). Further research could also seek to explore how the melding of narrative approaches and music may be effectively used in educational settings. This would provide a valuable exploration of how these processes may operate in these contexts, providing an applied and ecologically valid approach to bridge the gap between research and practice.

It is felt the current research represents a valuable step forward in painting a more holistic picture from the perspectives of YP, their parents and significant adults involved in their journey. In this way, the research achieved its aims of presenting a rich, thick description of the phenomena and lifting up the stories/narratives of participants, which may have been previously unheard or underprivileged/underutilised in previous research designs. Ultimately, the unique melding of a multiple case study and narrative approach was felt to facilitate a powerful and illuminating exploration of the journeys of the two YP, with a number of implications for professional practice and research.

Conclusion

This research aimed to gather an in-depth understanding of the experiences of two YP with SEND, and their parents, music mentors and key professionals, in relation to the NS programme. It is hoped this merged case study and narrative approach fills a gap in the research base for a richer, holistic exploration of the ways in which music-making programmes may foster enhancements to the wellbeing of YP (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). The underpinning framework of the NS programme (SDT), particularly the psychological need for relatedness provided a valuable lens through which to explore this. Placing the narratives/voice of YP centrally in the process, the current research project has provided a deeper understanding of how this journey was experienced by the YP, with their parents, key professionals and music-mentors providing depth to the story. The present findings align with a view promoting Small's (1998) move to viewing music as a social process,

highlighting the interconnections between people and their environment/contexts. With this in mind, the findings suggested that the NS programme fostered a plethora of opportunities for the YP to experience a sense of relatedness, through which autonomy, competence (and, in turn enhanced wellbeing) could be fostered. The present findings have elucidated the alternative stories and unique ways in which YP utilise and make-meaning in the music-making process, highlighting the value of exploring the phenomenon from their perspective. It is hoped these findings will inform future developments in theoretical understanding, the utilisation of narrative approaches in professional practice and future research directions. Therefore, the present research appears to have meaningfully addressed its aims and research questions, highlighting the utility of such programmes (and narrative approaches) to fill a gap in provision to meet the needs of YP in challenging circumstances.

Reflective Account

Introduction

In addition to contributing to the literature base, research skills have been suggested to advance Educational Psychology (EP) service delivery via its own professional identity and improved outcomes for children and young people (CYP) (Topping & Lauchlan, 2020). The need for reflexivity and an awareness of how values, knowledge and experiences shape research and EP practice has been highlighted in the literature (Mahdi, 2020). This reflexive process was ongoing and crucial to the development and refinement of the research, particularly in relation to ethical and methodological considerations. The British Psychological Society's Code of Human Research Ethics (BPS, 2021) outlines key principles and values applicable to all research contexts. This includes principles of respect for the autonomy, privacy and dignity of participants (2.1), scientific integrity (2.2), social responsibility (2.3) and maximising benefit and minimising harm (2.4), which informed subsequent reflection and decision making. This strongly aligns with the three moral principles that underpin the EP role (autonomy, beneficence and social justice) (Mahdi, 2020), which subsequently guided this reflexive process. This chapter will provide a reflective account of my research journey, including the inception/development of the project, design/methodology, ethical considerations and implications for practice and dissemination.

Choosing and Refining the Research Topic

During my experiences as an Assistant EP and as a Trainee Educational Psychologist (TEP), the use of music outside of formal education and music therapy appeared sparse. My interest in the area stemmed from my personal beliefs around the therapeutic potential of music and prior experience working with CYP in challenging circumstances. From personal experience, tapping into the interests and passions of CYP is often a powerful way to foster a sense of engagement and feeling heard, which is echoed in the literature (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014). I felt a sense that these strengths, passions and interests were often underexplored, undervalued and representing a powerful starting point for positive change. This links to wider issues of social justice, which has been defined as full and equal participation of all groups of society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs (Schultze et al., 2017). Therefore, considerations of social justice, and how we can most effectively engage and meet the needs of CYP with complex barriers to learning were central to the inception of the research.

For disempowered or marginalised CYP, the impact of the Covid-19 period was evident both through my experiences as a TEP working closely with schools and in my initial reading around the topic. The literature suggests there is a growing need to support the wellbeing and mental health of CYP, in light of the impact of Covid-19 and increasingly stretched professional services (Iacobucci, 2022). This prompted further reflection on the EP role in terms of therapeutic work, intervention and signposting to effective support. Part of this related to my own feelings of tension and unease about whether there were sufficient avenues of support and funding for CYP in challenging circumstances/disengaged from education. A number of studies have argued EP's are well placed to engage, promote and oversee therapeutic/intervention work due to their breadth and depth of knowledge in psychology and therapeutic models (Squires & Dunsmuir, 2011). Following conversations with my fieldwork supervisor, the inherent challenges in engaging these CYP was clear, alongside gaps in our provision and knowledge of how CYP may experience programmes/interventions to re-engage them. This coincided with the introduction of the 'Inclusion Framework' (IF) in the local authority, which represented an alternative avenue of funding/support for educational settings to access. This signalled a commitment and growing interest in promoting and funding creative 'outside the box' interventions/programmes to meet the needs of CYP in challenging circumstances. Following conversations with colleagues working closely on the IF (including the music service), it appeared the use of creative programmes/interventions using music was underexplored.

Upon my initial reading, it was immediately clear the multidisciplinary nature of the topic and complex picture painted by the literature presented a number of challenges. This contributed to an initial sense of confusion and feeling overwhelmed by the differing aims and approaches of the research. I was immediately struck by the complex and often equivocal nature of the research, which contributed to a period of uncertainty regarding my research design and direction. DeNora and Ansdell's (2014) paper on the melding of music with relationships, contexts and other factors provided inspiration and direction for my evolving research design. This guided a greater focus towards the relational and contextual factors of music-making programmes that seemed under-researched.

The opportunity to work with Noise Solution (NS) provided a unique opportunity to explore this. Through its emphasis on the social context and environment, the underpinning Self Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 2002) was felt to fit well with a positive psychology approach (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). I regularly draw upon positive psychology in my practice, which involves exploring the strengths, resources

and capacities of the CYP I work with. This helped shape a research design that moved away from a medicalised perspective and towards an increasingly explorative qualitative approach. It was felt this more closely aligned to principles of social justice and my core values of person-centred working, with scope to include the perspectives of CYP and families in this process. The potential fit of a narrative approach to elicit their perspectives emerged through discussion with my research supervisor and university teaching. What ensued was a challenging and complex journey. Upon further reading, the paper by Levstek and Banerjee (2021) provided an exciting indication that relatedness in particular may be highly influential to consider. This prompted reflection around the centrality of person centred approaches (Rogers, 1959) and relationships to my work as a TEP. I quickly noticed there was a dearth of literature including CYP, parents and professionals and exploring these relational/contextual factors. As I became more immersed in narrative and case study approaches, I felt a sense that SDT could provide a valuable guide to explore the narratives of participants (i.e. with a central thread of relatedness), while providing potential space for an inductive lens that could shed further light on the phenomena.

Methodology, Methods and Data Collection

After ongoing refinement and consideration, it was felt the following broad research question provided scope for a flexible exploration of the NS programme:

“What narratives do YP with SEND, and their parents, music mentors and key professionals provide when asked about their experiences of the NS programme?”

This was underpinned by a social constructionist position, which views knowledge as socially constructed by people, in interaction with their environment and engaging in interpretation (Mertens, 2015). It was felt the research question provided an opportunity for participants to share their story, whereby the contextual and subjective features could be appreciated. It should be acknowledged that the research focus and question was influenced by my own conceptions of the topic and areas previously explored in the literature, which culminated in a focus on relatedness. By lifting up the stories and narratives of CYP (many of whom may have experienced marginalisation and exclusion), it was hoped the research might have a transformational effect or facilitate social change. Transformative research is related to the promotion of social justice, human rights and facilitating the inclusion of all individuals (Mertens & Ginsberg, 2008). Mertens (2017) noted the researcher has a responsibility to design strategies that allow those with

traditional power and those who have been excluded from power to be engaged in respectful ways. It is felt the use of a narrative approach to the research addressed such issues of power, providing greater scope for participants to have their voice heard and tell their stories in ways that were meaningful to them. This aligns with my own values of social justice and respect for the rights and views of others (BPS 2.1). As such, I felt placing participants (particularly YP) at the centre of the research would not only potentially fill a gap in the literature, but also have a potentially empowering effect via having their stories heard.

The social constructionist position appreciated that participants will likely hold unique perspectives on how the NS programme provided opportunities to foster relatedness. From the perspective of social constructionism, inquiry is considered a collaborative process between those involved (researchers and participants) in the construction of new ways of knowledge (McNamee, 2012). In this way, it was immediately clear that the research process would be characterised by a collaboration and construction between participants and myself. A narrative approach appeared to fit seamlessly with the social constructionist position and my underpinning core values. For example, narrative approaches are concerned with the significance of relationship, context and community in influencing thinking, action and meaning (Hobbs et al., 2012). These factors were considered highly relevant to the research, where I prioritised a more holistic, 'thick' description of the phenomenon over pursuing generalisability or universal truths. From my own perspective, this was felt to reflect a more meaningful and illuminating account of music programmes, adding a depth and richness that was perhaps lacking in the literature. The epistemological and philosophical underpinnings of narrative approaches were considered and reflected upon throughout the research. This perspective would assert that the stories of the experiences that form people's lives are both individually and socially constructed in the past, present and future (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). The merged approach with a multiple case study design was felt to provide further scope to explore the perspectives of multiple participants in a rich and interpretive way. This can contribute to an in-depth insight into participants' lived experiences in a particular context (Hamilton, 2011), which was felt a priority of the research. Due to the attention paid to the patterns and intersections of meaning across cases (Josselson & Hammack, 2021), I felt the narrative and case study approach would merge well to provide an integrated and holistic view.

Initially, the complexity and challenge of using narrative analysis with multiple voices (and stories) of participants was a little overwhelming. The question of how best to

construct, use and present the narratives of participants was an ongoing source of reflection and tension. For example, this included questions of how to manage and integrate the different narratives, and the implications of these decisions (i.e. whose narratives should be prioritised and how does this sit within a social constructionist position?). My decisions were guided by a combination of methodological, theoretical and ethical considerations. I felt placing the voice of the YP as centrally as possible in the research was important to move towards a holistic understanding of music-based programmes (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014) and connect with values of social justice, autonomy and respect of the YP.

Therefore, a wholly qualitative design was chosen, with phase one focusing on an analysis of secondary data (digital blogs) and Microsoft Teams calls with YP, and phase two involving semi-structured interviews with parents, music mentors and key professionals. It was hoped the blogs would provide an indication of the 'journey' of the YP in context (i.e. with the music mentor in the sessions), guiding initial areas for further exploration in the semi-structured interviews. Initially, I was unsure whether the YP would be open and willing to share their thoughts and experiences, in which case the secondary data could potentially represent their voice in some form. I was incredibly relieved and excited to find that both YP were willing and enthusiastic to share their views and experiences. Due to this, I was able to increasingly place the YP and their stories at the centre of the research. This was strengthened by sending the YP a summary document of the analysis of the digital blogs and asking them for 'key moments/highlights' when meeting virtually with them. In this way, attempts were made for the research to have a participatory element, which reflects the value and process of involving research participants in the knowledge-production process (Bergold, 2007). Although there was undoubtedly further scope and missed opportunities to include YP more directly as 'co-researchers' in the process, opportunities were provided for them to guide the scope and direction of exploration. For example, while the Microsoft Teams calls with the YP were guided by the analysis of the digital blogs (and perhaps influenced by key concepts in the literature), there was scope and flexibility for the YP to share their experiences in their own way and guide the direction. The inherent balance of power between the researcher and YP was acknowledged in this process, i.e. whether I was prioritising my own conceptions and directions influenced by my experiences, intentions and knowledge. It was felt acknowledging these tensions, biases and engaging in an ongoing reflexive process was crucial to make sense of my role as researcher and ensure I was giving space for participants to share their stories in a meaningful way. The use of guidance outlined by

Josselson and Hammack (2021) was important to further guide and strengthen this reflexive process.

The use of semi-structured interviews in phase two provided an opportunity to add further depth and layer meaning from the perspectives of the parent, music-mentor and key professional. It was felt this was justified due to semi-structured interviews providing an opportunity to explore the researcher's own interest/topics and allowing room for the participants' more spontaneous descriptions and narratives (Figgou & Pavlopoulos, 2015). In this way, the interviews were guided by the narratives and salient features of the YP's experiences and analysis of the digital blogs. However, this also presented a tension in relation to how far I was eliciting the 'authentic' narratives and experiences of participants. Upon reflection, fully adopting and embracing a narrative interview would have strengthened the research and perhaps enabled further 'unbroken' accounts of experience to emerge. However, I was able to draw on and hold in mind narrative interviewing principles (Schutze, 1977) throughout the interviews, which I felt enabled flexible and inductive discussion (and narratives) to emerge.

Professional and Ethical Issues

The design of my research presented a number of complex ethical and professional issues that required ongoing and careful consideration. In particular, my 'dual role' as a TEP and researcher was a particular source of tension and ongoing reflection. The role of the interpersonal and analytical skill of the researcher has been suggested as central to success in research using narrative approaches (Ziebland et al., 2013). Here, the dual role of TEP and researcher is highlighted both as a source of strength and potential tension and challenge. During the interviews I was careful to ensure my own interpretation of participants' experiences (i.e. akin to that of 'hypothesis testing' or 'testing out' my own thoughts) did not overly lead or guide the direction. As such, I had to remind myself I was not there in a professional (TEP) capacity, nor was I conducting an assessment or consultation. Due to the rich and highly insightful picture I gained about the lives, strengths and needs of the YP throughout data collection, I was careful to protect against a sense of 'formulating' their experiences as I might in a professional capacity. Although this was a tricky process, I was extremely careful to be tentative and curious in my use of prompting and questioning, aiming to elicit the stories and experiences of participants in their own words naturally as far as possible. It is felt my own interpersonal and consultation skills supported this process, helping to facilitate a rich, sensitive and explorative account of the experiences of participants. The Health and Care Professions Council's Standards of

Proficiency (HCPC, 2015) outlines the need for practitioner psychologists to reflect on and review practice. My developing knowledge and ability to embrace and reflect upon the 'scientist-practitioner' role was felt important to manage these tensions and processes sensitively and conscientiously.

Ethical considerations around participant recruitment was discussed in the empirical chapter, highlighting the ongoing process of placing the YP at the centre of the research (i.e. informed of and included at all stages). It was hoped a video explaining the process and introducing myself, alongside an opportunity to discuss with their parent would protect against a sense of the research 'being done to them' (respecting the autonomy and rights of the YP). The implications of the use of opportunity sampling has been noted previously, however a further important consideration relates to the engagement of YP in the research and NS programme simultaneously. Initially, it was anticipated that YP would have completed the NS programme, providing a lens through which to explore the before, during and after of the programme (in light of a narrative approach). However, due to recruitment challenges, both YP participating in the research were engaging in a second block of the NS sessions. Not only does this perhaps contribute to a greater likelihood of participants having a positive relationship with NS, but presents ethical considerations in light of the current and ongoing relationships between the YP, parent and NS. I reflected on whether the research could impact on these relationships and how the YP might feel about their music-mentor being interviewed, particularly if there was potential for challenging topics or perspectives to emerge. In light of these considerations, it was made clear in the participant information sheet that the research would not impact on their relationship with NS. I was sure to provide reassurance and a sense of transparency to the YP and parent prior to the informed consent stage, making the potential topics and aims of the music mentor and key professional interviews clear. This principle of maximising benefit and minimising harm (BPS 2.4) was also held in mind when constructing the narratives of participants, being mindful of how the YP and their relationships were presented.

Further ethical considerations related to issues of anonymity and the use of quotes, lyrics and content of the digital blog. Although the risk was perhaps slight, steps were taken to minimise and protect against YP potentially being identified via the presented narratives. For example, information that was considered potentially problematic was discussed with my research supervisor and ultimately omitted from the write up. This also potentially limited the use of the lyrics of the YP's songs, which could have added further richness and depth to the narrative. It was also noticeable that, for the second 'case' the

parent was not included in the digital blog of the YP, which appeared to reflect the wishes of the YP. Due to this, I was careful not to disclose any information from the blog in a way that might go against these wishes. With the permission of the YP, the key professional (tutor) was sent the phase one summary document to look over with the YP, which was felt to respect their choice and wishes and act in the best interests of the YP (HCPC 2.1). This ongoing and reflective process of considering issues of power, trust, expertise and social responsibility (HCPC, 2015; BPS, 2021) was central to conducting ethical research. This runs alongside the responsibility of EPs to promote equality, diversity and issues of social justice.

Data Analysis and the Construction of Narratives

While grappling with the complexity and multitude of approaches to narrative analysis (NA), I initially experienced a sense of apprehension and confusion about how to tackle this in a rigorous and coherent way. Considering my inexperience using narrative approaches, the enormity of the task and sense of vagueness that perhaps characterises NA struck me (e.g. Howitt, 2010). Research and guidance by Reissman (2008) provided a valuable starting point to become familiar with different methods and aims of narrative analysis, which prompted reflection on what would suit my research. It was a challenging and ongoing process to ascertain whether a focus on the structure, content, performance or visual nature of stories (or a combination of these) would be most appropriate and valuable to the research. This prompted further reading around narrative analysis and narrative inquiry, which are considered two distinct, but often overlapping approaches. In order to establish clarity and transparency in my research design and analysis, it was necessary to immerse myself in these approaches. Narrative inquiry has been described as a complex and dynamic methodology, whereby the researcher collects stories, negotiates relationships and transactions, and explores new ways of collaborating with the participant to actively involve them in the research process (Wang & Geale, 2015). Crucially, this includes active collaboration throughout the research process, continually discussing the participant's stories and reflecting on personal, social and political background (Wang & Geale, 2015). Although this was an inspiring prospect with further potential to place YP centrally (akin to a more participatory design), it was felt the time and ethical challenges (i.e. of maintaining ongoing contact with the YP) made this unfeasible.

It was also felt a narrative analysis approach would more accurately capture the research design, which was guided by SDT (particularly the need for relatedness). This approach enabled a focus on relatedness within the narratives of participants, providing

greater scope to address the aims and research question. NA not only functions as a method through which researchers explore how people remember, structure and story their experiences, it also serves as a process through which researchers can understand the complexities of human selves, lives and relations (Frost, 2011). This was felt highly compatible with the social constructionist position and design of the research. Due to the richness of the data, both in terms of the digital blog (encompassing photo, video and audio content) and interviews, each of the four methods of NA (content, structure, performance and visual) appeared potentially justifiable and valuable to consider. However, the complexity of potentially taking on multiple purposes and aims in the analysis appeared problematic and perhaps above my expertise and knowledge. I also wondered how best to analyse the digital blog and capture the interaction and journey between the YP and music-mentor in a structured way. The approach from Josselson and Hammack (2021) provided some much needed guidance, representing a turning point in my journey and approach to the analysis. I felt this captured and provided scope to meaningfully explore the patterns of meaning (content) and structure (the way the story is put together) in the narratives.

The use of Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three dimensional space framework and a re-storying process was felt to further enhance the structural analysis, placing the story in a coherent sequence or 'journey' of the YP. This was an incredibly intensive but ultimately rewarding experience, adding multiple layers to the analysis. I engaged in a multiple-step process as outlined previously, which required a high level of immersion and interpretation in the transcripts. Engaging in a reflexive process of writing analysis memos (as outlined by Josselson & Hammack, 2021) was incredibly valuable to record my emerging thoughts, ideas and interpretations, as well as manage my own biases and assumptions. Re-storying has been described as a process of 'toing-and-froing' between the data and emerging thematic plots, through which a final storied narrative is created by the researcher (Polkinghorne, 1995). This 'toing-and-froing' was characteristic of my analysis, regularly revisiting, refining and reflecting on the emerging narrative and my own decisions in this process. This enabled the voice of the YP to take centre stage in the research, reconciling the aforementioned tension of how to analyse and present the multiple narratives of participants. In a sense, it was felt placing the YP's narrative as a central skeleton provided some order in the chaos, providing scope to weave and integrate complimentary and unique narratives of the other participants. I reflected on the complexity behind this idea of 'merging' and integrating narratives between multiple participants, and whether this was in conflict with underpinning philosophical assumptions. However, if we

assume that stories are constructed with significant others in a social context (Weedon, 2004), then it seems intuitive that this integrated approach can provide further depth, texture and meaning to address the research question. The research did not seek to capture a 'truth' or 'absolute' account of the NS programme, rather, facilitate a socially constructed narrative between myself and participants; painting a 'thick' description of the phenomena, context and underpinning relationships. In this way, I feel the research achieved its aims of painting this journey in a rich, interpretive and meaningful way. Furthermore, the use of NA was felt to further meet the social justice emphasis of the research. For example, Parker (2005) noted that NA respects each individual's story and voice, and explores how a sense of self emerges from culturally given resources (Parker, 2005). In this way, I feel the research demonstrated principles of respect, autonomy and social responsibility (BPS, 2021), lifting up the voices of YP that may have previously been marginalised or disempowered. Throughout data collection and analysis, I was particularly struck by how powerful the thoughts, reflections and narratives of participants were. I felt a strong sense in the Microsoft Teams calls with YP and semi-structured interviews that participants were making-meaning in their experiences and reflecting on the stories they were sharing. With my knowledge of narrative approaches and processes in mind, I quickly began to wonder whether this active engagement represented something of a therapeutic process for them. That is, the process of sharing, reflecting and re-authoring their experiences (e.g. building new perspectives away from the 'dominant' narrative) was supporting to generate new meaning of the situation, themselves and their relationships. Given the potential for narrative approaches to foster therapeutic outcomes and reflective processes around identity (White & Cartwright, 2007), I felt it was highly likely both the research process (the sharing and construction of the narratives) and NS programme was therapeutic for the YP. This was felt particularly powerful in light of the YP's disempowering and traumatic life experiences/events, where there was a sense of them 'working through trauma' via the music-making process.

Methodological Integrity of the Research

The growing recognition and value placed on qualitative inquiry in psychological research has prompted the need for researchers to demonstrate methodological integrity – the methodological basis of confidence in the worthiness of a research project and its claims (Levitt et al., 2017). When assessing the trustworthiness of the research and its fidelity to the phenomena, it should be acknowledged that issues of generalisability and validity are problematic to the narrative approach and underpinning social constructionist

position. Narratives are considered a context and time-specific snapshot of an individual's interpretation of reality (Murray & Sargeant, 2012), placing the uniqueness, contextual factors and experiences of individuals as central tenets of the research.

The utility of the research in achieving the aims of the study has also been noted as an important further consideration (Josselson & Hammack, 2021; Yardley, 2000). For example, is the analysis useful and interesting to address the research question? With this in mind, Josselson and Hammack (2021) outlined the need for researchers to be explicit about the amount and contextualisation of the data collected, demonstrating credibility through an appropriately determined sample size and providing sufficient context about participants. Thoroughly analysing each individual narrative has also been cited to promote rigour (Yardley, 2000). With this in mind, I prioritised a smaller number of cases to explore in depth, providing greater scope to capture the context and complexity in the journeys of the YP. The anticipated depth and richness of the data (i.e. from the digital narratives and multiple participants) was felt sufficient to address the research question without potentially 'diluting' the voice of the YP. The 'completeness' of the interpretation and analysis has also been posited to be consideration of rigour (Yardley, 2000). I felt the methodological choices enabled a deep immersion in the data, engaging in a reflexive and meaningful process of analysis.

Also relevant, is Yardley's (2000) theme of coherence, referring to the fit between the research question and philosophical stance of the research. I felt there was a strong coherence between the social constructionist position/methodology, methods and data analysis. Although the research sought to present the narratives or 'journey' of the YP, it is acknowledged that the overall 'storied narrative' was constructed by myself. Such reflections relate to Levitt et al's. (2017) principle of 'perspective management', referring to the transparency of the perspective and interpretations of the researcher and its impact on data collection. The use of reflexivity memos enabled me to attend to how my own identities and experiences might be influencing the research (see Appendix 4), considering a range of alternative interpretations. Making these explicit and integrating these into the analysis/written report has been posited to provide the reader with trustworthiness in the findings and enhance integrity (Josselson & Hammack, 2021). Therefore, I was careful to make stages of data collection, analysis and subsequent interpretations and reflections clear to promote a sense of transparency to the reader.

Opportunities for participants to respond to the analysis of the researcher has been stated to enhance the credibility of research and links to ethical principles of autonomy and respect for participants (Josselson, 1996; BPS, 2021; Caretta & Perez, 2019). Although

this was not utilised in phase two, I felt providing the YP with a summary of phase one analysis helped ensure my interpretations fitted with their experience and included them in the process (i.e. as a form of member-checking).

Research Contributions

Professional Development

The research has enhanced my ability to engage in a conscientious reflexive process around complex ethical issues, holding in mind aforementioned principles and values (BPS, 2021). Although professional codes are incredibly important to guide practice (HCPC, 2016; BPS, 2021), it was clear engaging in a critical and ongoing process of reflection was crucial. This has enhanced not only my understanding of how to undertake ethically-sound research, but also my ability to promote equality, inclusion and promote social justice in a research and professional capacity.

Engaging with NA has been a complex, challenging and ultimately incredibly meaningful process. Through this, I have developed a greater awareness of conducting research through a social constructionist lens, strengthening my understanding of how actors involved in the research construct meaning and realities through the process (Cisneros-Puebla, 2007). This has inspired me to consider how participatory and narrative approaches can be used to elicit the voices of those often unheard. Participatory research has been described as a demanding process where two spheres of action (science and practice) meet, interact and develop an understanding of one another (Ardivissson et al., 2008). Although the research design may not be considered wholly participatory, it has undoubtedly enhanced my awareness of how these approaches can bridge the gap between theory and practice. Within the context of this research, it was felt painting a 'thick' description of phenomena presented a more holistic understanding of the topic in a 'real-world' context, appreciating the role of relationships in this process.

Literature Base

It is hoped the research fills a gap in the literature for a more ecologically valid, interpretive and holistic approach (DeNora & Ansdell, 2014), appreciating the contextual and relational features characteristic of music-making programmes. This research extends and builds on the findings of Levstek and Banerjee (2021), suggesting that relatedness represents a powerful platform through which competence, autonomy (and in turn, wellbeing) can be fostered. As noted previously, the unique contribution of the research can be found in the rich narratives that illuminate the topic and subsequent meaning

engendered from the perspectives of participants. The research further advocates for designs that lift up the voices of YP in the process, echoing Small's (1998) placing of music as a verb and inextricably linked to context and relationships. The research maintains that the intentionality of the ways in which YP and practitioners engage in music, and the resulting meaning they make in the process is where transformational change occurs (e.g. Saarikallio et al., 2015). Potential ideas for further research were noted in the empirical chapter, relating to participatory designs and including YP as 'co-researchers' in the process. I feel this could represent an incredibly illuminating and creative opportunity for YP to construct their own stories, with potential value for both research and practice. It is also felt further exploration of posttraumatic growth and cognitive processing of trauma in relation to music-making programmes would be valuable. The current research adds to the literature base and strongly suggests such processes are highly relevant to consider alongside narrative approaches.

Educational Psychology

Although the research findings are not intended to be generalisable or make any kind of claims of truth or certainty, it is hoped the research will advocate and provide support for the use of programmes such as NS to meet the needs of CYP in challenging circumstances. The incredibly powerful impact of the NS programme on both YP strongly resonated with me, fostering further reflection on the use of music programmes/approaches to engage CYP marginalised from education. At a time where professional services are increasingly stretched and young people are facing increasing challenges with their mental health and wellbeing (Chandola et al., 2020), the potential utility for programmes such as NS appears worthy of further consideration.

It is argued there is also untapped potential in the use of music to merge with narrative approaches and/or digital technologies, given their potential to foster reflective processes around self-identity and enhance wellbeing (Gregori-Signes & Corochan, 2014). This appears to be an area that is underexplored in relation to EP practice, which could link with narrative therapy approaches and hold powerful transformational potential via supporting YP to construct rich alternative stories. Given the potential for the music-making process to foster therapeutic outcomes/posttraumatic growth, the findings might be highly relevant to consider in relation to YP that have experienced trauma and disempowering experiences; providing opportunities to process and work through trauma, supporting them to construct new positive identities and narratives.

Dissemination of Findings

Considering how to effectively disseminate research findings has been outlined as a core competency of EP practice and a crucial part of the research process (BERA, 2018; HCPC 8.9). In anticipation of potentially publishing the research, I outlined the possibility of this in my participant information sheet and consent form. This was in line with the BPS Code of Human Research Ethics (2021), ensuring potential participants were aware of this. This represents a potential way to raise the profile of my research and disseminate more widely. As stated in my participant information sheet, I will share an executive summary with participants to inform them of the research findings and offer a further debrief session to ensure a sense of closure and appreciation for their time.

There is also scope to further disseminate my research at the local authority level. I am planning to present my research at an annual service day to EP colleagues, hoping to raise the profile of my research and open dialogue with those that may take an interest in the area. I anticipate there will be further opportunities to distribute executive summaries to colleagues and network with relevant services in the local authority and more widely. I hope there will also be further opportunities to link with social enterprises and services such as NS to further share and explore future opportunities to build on this research. I anticipate there will be further contact with NS to share my findings and reflect on the implications of this, which may be used to inform, review or shape further practice and evaluation of the programme.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a reflective account of my research journey, from the initial inception to its unique contribution and dissemination. This journey has been fraught with complexity, unfamiliarity and, perhaps most importantly a willingness to jump into the unknown. Not only has this provided me with valuable experience and knowledge of all aspects of the research process, but it has also contributed to a renewed vigour embracing methodologies and designs that place the YP centrally in the process. I hope this account provides the reader with a transparent window into the ongoing reflections, tensions and opportunities experienced over the duration of the research. I will conclude with White and Cartwright's (2007) proposition that individuals give meaning to their lives and relationships by storying their experience and that, in interacting with others in the performance of these stories, they are active in the shaping of their lives and relationships. It has been a privilege to engage in this 'dance' with participants, providing a window into their world, and, most powerfully, their incredibly rich and illuminating alternative stories.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Semi-Structured Interviews

Questions will be left open to facilitate conversations, stories and further exploration. This will draw upon principles from narrative interviewing to prompt stories and accounts from participants. As such, there was no final or formal series of questions used in the semi-structured interviews for the parents, music mentors and key professionals. These were guided by the stories, responses and direction of the participant as far as possible. What follows, are examples of the kind of questions that were used flexibly across the phase two semi-structured interviews.

- Could you tell me a little about how things were before the NS programme? (in terms of key relationships, wellbeing and engagement - over the interview, explore before, during and after the NS sessions)
 - Could you provide a little background about your involvement with X at the start/during the NS programme?
- How did you find the NS journey?
 - Could you tell me a bit about where the journey started and what this journey was like?
 - Who were the important people in the NS journey? How did the sessions impact on the relationships between X during programme and beyond? Do you think any changes you observed in their relationships impacted on their wellbeing? Could you tell me a little more about this?
 - How was the relationship between X and the music mentor? How were they a part of the journey? What do you think worked well? Is this different to relationships they have had with key adults in the past?
 - Are there any changes you noticed in X throughout the programme? Do you have any thoughts on what might have contributed to this and what it might mean?
- How would you describe the 'narrative' or 'journey' of you and X over the programme?
- Could you tell me a little about the digital blog and how X may have used or shared this?
 - Are there any stories you could share about this?
 - Has X shared any of her work with you? Could you tell me more about this and how it might have impacted on them or your relationship?

- Has it helped you support/engage with X or supported relationships in any way? Could you provide an example?
- Could you tell me a little about how X may have found the sessions?
 - Can you think of any moments, examples or stories that might stand out?
 - Do you think the sessions helped X in any way? Could you tell me about what you might have noticed?
 - Do you think the sessions helped X express or get across anything about themselves/learn about themselves that was important or different to before? Can you think of an example or story that might speak to this? Who do you think X would like to be and how might this relate to their music?
- Were there any notable or favourite moments or tracks that stand out? Can you share any stories about these (why they might be important and where they came from)?
- Were there any challenges or things that potentially didn't go so well over the programme?
- In what way do you think X's songs might have been important to them? What might this say about them and who they might like to be?
- Could you tell me a little about how you see your role in X's journey? How did your relationship with X develop?
 - How do you think this was experienced by X, can you think of any examples?
 - What did this experience/being involved in this journey mean to you?
 - Are there any values that underpin your work that you'd like to share?
- How do you feel this might support X in the future? Where do you think the story might be going next?

Appendix 2: Example Digital Blog Analysis and Summary Documents

Initial steps of Josselson and Hammack's (2021) guidance: identifying initial thematic content:

Week 8 Reflection:
I want to dedicate my song to my great Nan and to anyone who has lost a loved one. It's gone pretty well. I love it!

Commemorating second track and looking ahead to third



3 views **Connecting to family members**

Like **Sense of connecting with audience** Comment

Responsive and attuned interaction

Building confidence/independence and YP leading **Use of lyrics and song making as a vehicle**

Write a comment... **Blog used as a story/suspense-building**

Week 7: Editing and mixing with Logic. Really getting the hang of this now!

Building in confidence and skill

"It's for my great Nan. I just wanna like dedicate it to her and anyone that's lost a loved one... it's gone pretty well" - sense of using the music to express feelings, commemorate loved ones and connect with audience (anyone who may have also lost a loved one)

Shared journey

- Finished second track/sharing and celebrating this
- Moving onto a further track

Shared space/interaction with music mentor

- Sense of progression and signposting what is to come, using the blog as a vehicle to tell a story (using suspense and intrigue to build anticipation and engage the audience)
- Sense of the YP leading the reflective space and music mentor responding to this (sense of a shared adventure and 'secret' project)

Further stages of the digital blog analysis (in line with Josselson & Hammack, 2021):

Identifying voices and discourses building on initial thematic content of the blogs:

Thematic cluster	Voices
Sense of fun, autonomy and enjoyment in sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting, validating and recognising effort/praise - YP's passion and engagement in music - Sense of YP feeling valued, listened to and understood (sense of autonomy and freedom)
Sense of joint-exploration and familiarisation with the music-making process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Two-way process, teamwork and facilitation
Building competence and learning new skills; experiencing a sense of success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mentor lifting up strengths and supporting new narratives/experiences of success
Building a positive working relationship with mentor; trust and a shared journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intersubjectivity (two-way interaction) - Person-centred approaches and power - Shift in the reflective space being more organic/relational as sessions progressed
A growing sense of ownership and independence in music-making; fostering a sense of pride	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting music-making beyond sessions; future aspiration
Sense of connection and expressing feelings in music-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Language, lyrics and meaning-making through songs
Sense of performance, collaboration and enjoyment in the interaction between YP and mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shift in nature of the relationship and enjoyment of the shared space - Connecting to the performer side of the YP's self-identity and interacting with the audience
YP leading the blog/sharing their journey with audience; greater sense of control and confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-identity of the YP as a musician - Sharing progress with key adults - Sense of NS community (praise and positive feedback)
Sharing music with a wider 'audience' (i.e. YouTube); fostering a sense of pride and connection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital technologies/YouTube/blog
Mentor fostering a sense of reflection and lifting up strengths and progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identifying strengths, positives and skills of YP
Mentor supporting YP to problem-solve and approach new challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expertise, guidance and facilitative role of mentor

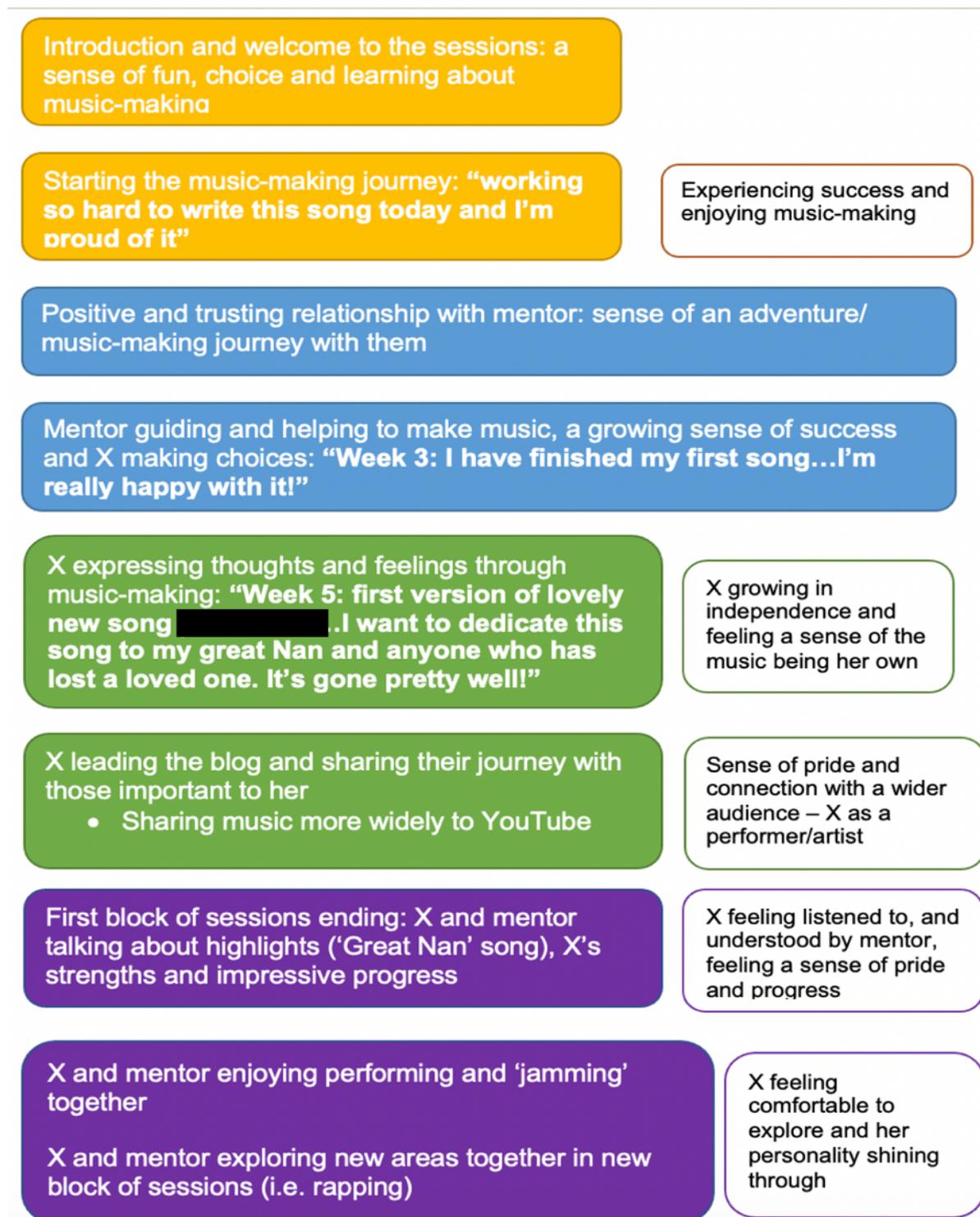
- Providing emotional containment and support

Identifying patterns and unity in the text, and links between text and theory:

Pattern	Theory connections
Introduction and welcome; promoting a sense of autonomy, fun and familiarisation with music-making	Informal learning Dialogical and co-creation styles SDT; BSNT (autonomy)
“Working so hard to write this song today and I’m proud of it”; starting the music-making journey and quickly experiencing a sense of success, competence and enjoyment (“I give this a 10/10”)	SDT; intrinsic motivation; BSNT (competence within the shared space)
Building a positive and trusting working relationship with mentor; ongoing sense of connection and shared journey	Theory of intersubjectivity and power SDT; BSNT (relatedness) Epistemic trust
Week 3: I have finished my first song...I’m really happy with it!”; growing sense of ownership and independence; mentor as a facilitator in the music-making process	SDT; BSNT (mentor supporting to foster a sense of autonomy) Internal working models
“Week 5: First version of lovely new song X; expressing feelings through music-making and connecting with audience Shift in balance; YP taking greater ownership and control of blog and reflective space	SDT; BSNT (mentor supporting to foster a sense of autonomy) Person-centred approaches Theory of intersubjectivity and power ‘musical agents’
“Week 8: I want to dedicate my song to my great Nan and anyone who has lost a loved one. It’s gone pretty well!”; celebrating and ‘releasing’ second song to commemorate loved one YP leading the blog/sharing their journey with those important to them; fostering a sense of pride and connection with a wider ‘audience’ via YouTube	Emotional regulation and music Social capital Digital narratives/technology SDT; BSNT (relatedness)
Final reflections and ending of the first block; mentor facilitating reflection on highlights and impact of ‘Great Nan’ song to express and manage feelings Celebrating and lifting up the strengths and progress of the YP; fostering a sense of pride and feeling validated	Emotional regulation and music Positive psychology and person-centred approaches SDT; BSNT (relatedness) Intersubjectivity and epistemic trust Resilience and approaching challenges (growth mindset)
New block of sessions; shared understanding of music-making process and mentor supporting YP to problem-solve and approach new challenges (i.e. making a rap song)	

<p>Increasing sense of performance, collaboration and 'jamming together'; exploring and enjoying the musical space together</p> <p>Personality and confidence of the YP shining through; contributing to warm and playful interactions</p>	
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Summary document of digital blog analysis for YP 1 (Taylor)



Summary document of digital blog analysis for YP 2 (RJM)

Getting to know mentor and talking about interests	X maybe a little apprehensive and uncertain
"It's always fun" – enjoying making X's first song	Experiencing success and learning new skills
<i>"It's been good, it always is"</i> – building a trusting working relationship with mentor	
Exploring lyrics and recording vocals in the studio – sharing songs on Instagram/YouTube	Talking about feelings and a sense of pride and control
X's voice coming through and growing in confidence: <i>"I think it's got my confidence up about my rapping and singing. Now I feel like I can rap in front of other people"</i>	X aware of her growing confidence and strengths – mentor supporting this
X's first 'independent' song in the studio: "feels good, I'm proud of it" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Praise and positive feedback from NS community 	X feeling a sense of pride, achievement and doing more things on her own
Collaborating with friends and family in the music-making process: ██████' song – <i>"I think it's the sweetest thing I've ever heard"</i>	Helping to build closeness with others through music
Expressing feelings and talking about tricky past events and herself in her music	X expressing her feelings through/in the music and making sense of her life
Thinking more carefully about her songs, finding what works with mentor and exploring 'freestyling': <i>"It sounds great... I love it"</i> <i>"Really good fun...I've never seen you smile so much you know, it was really lovely you just seemed like you were enjoying it"</i>	X enjoying exploring new things with her mentor and improving her skills

From the analysis of the digital blogs, further areas for exploration were noted and held in mind to elicit the perspectives of participants.

Further areas to explore based on phase one analysis of Taylor's (YP 1) digital blog:

- Co-working and relationship with mother
- Sense of YP as a 'performer'
- Growing and increasingly trusting and performance-oriented relationship with music-mentor

- Real sense of enthusiasm and passion in the music-making process
- Emotive songs around her relationship with her mother and passing of her Nan
- Increased sense of YP leading the blog

Further areas to explore based on phase one analysis of RJM's (YP 2) digital blog:

- Initial sense of apprehension in the digital blog
- Growing sense of trust in the YP-mentor relationship, playful and warm interactions
- Sense of an edge, powerful emotions and aggression in the genre and content of songs (themes of relationships, conflict, love, power)
- Collaboration with friends and family in the music-making

Appendix 3: Example of Narrative Analysis Steps

This sample is taken from the analysis of YP 1 (Taylor). The screen shot below relates to the initial analysis of the transcript; step 1 of Josselson & Hammack's (2020) guidance. The process of 'restorying' is also highlighted (yellow = before NS, blue = during NS sessions and green = following NS sessions), with Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) three-dimensional space held in mind (see right hand side comment for analysis).

<p>YP1: It's just helped me like as a person to realise what it's really about and it makes you in a happier mood and. Like when you're in a bad mood, it just makes it. It helps you bring into a good mood. And it makes you like relax and stuff.</p> <p>R: And did you find? You felt that after the sessions?</p> <p>YP1: Yeah I just felt like. Is it me that I've done this? Like made-up of song and, like it just didn't feel real that I've made-up my first song.</p> <p>R: And how did that feel to do that with your mentor?</p> <p>YP1: It made me feel like proud that I've made my first song And I didn't. And I thought like, no, I can't do it. I can't do it. I won't be able to do any of this. It's hard for me to do it. And then, try it. Why I've done it.</p> <p>R: And did you learn anything about yourself?</p> <p>YP1: Yeah, as the weeks went on I learned that that my singing got little bit better and I've noticed that and because with my first only went like really loud. And now with this song and my [REDACTED] song, it's gone much more better</p> <p>R: Brilliant, and do you think you were able to sort of put yourself across over the blog as well?</p> <p>YP1: Yeah, like, I just felt, like I don't know how to describe it.</p> <p>R: That's okay, you can take a sec to think if you need to. Is there anything in the blog that makes you think yeah that's me, that's X.</p> <p>YP1: Yeah, just like making my songs and, is that really me. And it was me and signing it, had the headphones on and was in front of microphone. I even played the drums in the studio and</p> <p>R: Yeah I did see you drumming a little bit too.</p>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 10px;"> <p>JJ Jake Jackson</p> <p>Building competence, experiencing success and overcoming previous self doubt. There was a sense of perhaps the YP feeling a sense of surprise of her progress and achievements, gaining a real sense of pride in this. This was evident in her discussion of her singing improving and developing confidence (e.g. in the volume and self-expression in her singing).</p> <p>There was also perhaps a sense of the YP learning about themselves and the success potentially contributing to changing perspectives about themselves and their capabilities. A strong sense of being proud of the successes and (growth mindset comes to mind here and overcoming challenges). There is a growing sense of narrative/story here around the YP building competence/ self-efficacy and belief in themselves.</p> <p>- RECOGNISING AND CELEBRATING GROWTH - SELF-IDENTITY AND EXPRESSION - OVERCOMING SELF-DOUBT AND NEW PERSPECTIVES</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Save Cancel</p> </div>
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Step 2: presenting the voices, discourses and master narratives:

Thematic cluster	Voices
Disempowering discourses and institutions (pre-NS)	Challenges with learning; SEN (school systems) Sense of disempowerment, challenge and self-identity
Role of music mentor and process of music-making	Through the 'shared space' and exploration/adventure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modelling and building independence - Building competence and knowledge - Sense of mastery, success and skill-building Shared enjoyment and relationship-building Shifting narratives and role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration and performance - Autonomy, power and control (moving away from dyadic)
Connecting with others through music	Collaboration Relationship with significant others (e.g. Mum and Nan) Digital connectedness Sense of community
Making-meaning through music	Identity as an artist/performer Storytelling and sharing through blog Making sense of/commemorating loss Building new narratives of success Sharing music, pride and wider connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing to YouTube - Prosocial function of music and engaging with 'audience' (reconnecting?)
Enhancing mood and managing emotion	Sense of happiness, flow and 'escapism' Alleviating anxiety YP "in her element"
Building resilience, confidence and self-esteem	Feeling empowered to approach new situations/challenges Moving beyond fixed mindsets/narratives Overcoming challenges Sense of accomplishment and success
Identity intersections	Sense of identity/self and SEN Overcoming self-doubt and changing narratives Restoring "the old X" X as a performer/artist
Future aspirations	Restoring hope, positivity and enthusiasm Pursuing passions and realising Forming new expectations of success and aspiration

These thematic clusters were extrapolated and built upon in light of the analysis and emerging patterns of meaning to construct a series of 'interim narratives'.

Steps 3 and 4: identifying patterns and unity in the narrative and links to theory:

Pattern (interim narratives)	Theory connections
Sense of disempowerment, challenge and difficulty from prior experiences of education, impacting on stress levels and wellbeing	Learned helplessness
Fostering a sense of competence, mastery and success through the shared space (mentor and YP), working to overturn previous narratives A sense of shared enjoyment, exploration and performance; moving towards an equal balance of power and collaboration with music mentor	SDT BPNT (Ryan & Deci, 2002); fostering competence (sense of skill-building), autonomy (choice and volition) and relatedness (shared exploration and journey) 'Musicking' (Small, 1998) Theory of intersubjectivity (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001) Social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) Informal learning (Becket & Hager, 2002)
Music-making as providing opportunities to share and collaborative with family and a wider 'audience', fostering a sense of cohesion and connectedness	SDT BPNT Social capital (Bourdieu, 1986)
Music as storytelling and connecting with the artist/performer self-identity of the YP; making meaning through her tracks and sharing with a wider 'audience'	Social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) Digital technologies and narratives (de Bruin, 2021)
Music-making sessions enhancing mood and fostering a sense of flow and positivity; reflecting the YP "in her element" and alleviating anxiety	Positive psychology and 'flow' Models of self-regulation and managing emotions/research linking music and emotions (i.e. Jacobson & Artman, 2013)
Music sessions providing opportunities to overcome/approach challenges and experience a sense of accomplishment, fostering resilience and building alternative narratives around confidence and self-esteem	Growth mindsets (Dweck, 2006) Resilience models Social capital and social bridging (Bourdieu, 1986) Narrative theory (LeBlanc, 2017) and digital narratives (de Bruin, 2021)
X overcoming self-doubt and problematic narratives around herself and her learning; a sense of "restoring the old X" and connecting with her preferred stories around performance and artistry X experiencing a sense of hope, positivity and passion for the future; forming new expectation of success, aspiration and taking the next steps in her music journey	Self-identity/self-concept Narrative theory (LeBlanc, 2017) and digital narratives (de Bruin, 2021)

This series of 'interim narratives' was considered the foundation/skeleton of the journey. The orange interim narrative will be used to demonstrate an example of 'restorying'. This process involved highlighting, organising and pasting excerpts (or 'stanzas') in line with/linking to their respective interim narratives (as shown above). What followed, was the

series of interim narratives with relevant excerpts/stanzas of the YP integrated to elucidate these narratives. An example of this is presented below:

Interim narrative	Theory
Music as storytelling and connecting with the artist/performer self-identity of the YP; making meaning through her tracks and sharing with a wider 'audience'	Social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) Digital technologies and narratives (de Bruin, 2021)
Excerpts/stanzas of the YP	
<p>Fostering connectedness through blog</p> <p>YP1: So outside of my blog, I've been showing my songs too like my family and my little cousins. They've been like singing a lot.</p> <p>YP1: They've been like singing along to it. And then that whenever I go over there like, they're, like can you play X or, and then they sing it and it and it makes me happy seeing other people enjoying my song, and realising how good I've made it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YP sharing this with warmth, enthusiasm and with a general sense of happiness (as shown through her wide smile), this seemed influential for her and contributing to a sense of togetherness and happiness <p>Sharing music to wider audience</p> <p>And I have released my It's called my X song on YouTube</p> <p>YP1: 69 views. Yeah now.</p> <p>YP1: It just makes me feel like happy. And like proud about myself that people viewed my song and listen to it. Just feels amazing.</p> <p>YP: Because it's a really, It's a really nice song and I just feel like it should be out there and if anyone has lost a loved one to dedicate it to that, that they're thinking of that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - YP was very enthusiastic and excited to share the number of views on YouTube, dedicating this to people (with a sense of wanting to help others, connecting to her experience with her Nan). I wonder what the 69 views meant to the YP and whether it reflected a sense of recognition/pride and the YP positioning herself as an 'artist' in her own way? Helping to build positive feelings about herself. 	

This series of interim narratives and linked excerpts/stanzas formed the 'skeleton/foundation' of the journey of the YP. The same process was followed to analyse the transcripts of parents, music mentors and key professionals. However, the skeleton/foundation (from the YP's narratives) guided the focus of the analysis of other participants. In other words, subsequent data analysis of parents, music mentors and key professionals aimed to build on and integrate with the central skeleton formed from the YP's narratives (presented above).

Appendix 4: Sample Extract of an Analysis Memo

It was quickly apparent that Taylor spoke very warmly and positively about the sessions, being quick to build a rapport and articulating herself well. She discussed her experiences with a genuine sense of pride and 'owning' her work and progress. I was struck by her confidence and willingness to explore and reflect on her experiences. She clearly felt a strong sense of pride and progress in her NS journey, which was very noticeable in her non-verbal features (i.e. a warm and positive tone of voice, smiles and laughing when re-counting her stories and experiences). Undertaking the first reading analysing the video and transcript simultaneously was felt crucial to pick out these features and what they might suggest about the experiences of the YP. For example, it was felt Taylor demonstrated a genuine sense of empathy and conscientiousness when discussing the motivation for one her songs (dedicated to her late Nan). This sense of wanting to dedicate it to the memory of her Nan and others that have experienced loss was a lovely moment. I began to notice clear and repeated narratives and themes across the transcript in the way Taylor discussed her songs, sharing them (i.e. on YouTube) and her aspirations. It was through such narratives I began to wonder whether there was a clear sense of Taylor identifying with the performance aspect of the music-making, i.e. whether she felt a sense of being an 'artist'/'performer' and connected with this part of her identity. I wondered how Taylor made meaning in these experiences and how she saw herself in relation to this, which was important to pocket and revisit later in the interview. I was careful to look out for confirming narratives and responses, being mindful not to impose this interpretation without further corroborating responses. It quickly became evident that there seemed to be a clear trajectory or direction of the narratives, relating to a challenging beginning (prior to NS); the process of the music-making sessions and experiences of this; and things changing (a sense of improving and overcoming challenge). Overall, there was a sense of overcoming challenging times/experiences and alternative perspectives emerging relating to the wellbeing, self-confidence, identity and resilience of Taylor. This was identified as one of the key 'voices' coming through in the transcript, with Taylor reflecting on her experiences and making meaning in her journey. It was felt there were wider discourses that could be linked to the narratives of Taylor, particularly relating to her challenging experiences of education (potentially serving to marginalise and disempower her), special educational needs and fixed vs. dynamic mindsets (or views on ability). It was tricky to explore these further with Taylor, perhaps due to the intricacies and complexity of unpicking this and concern whether it was perhaps beyond the scope of the enquiry...

Appendix 5: Example of Overarching Storied Narrative

As aforementioned, the same process of data analysis was applied to the parent, music mentor and key professional interviews. The transcripts were analysed as previously described (step 1 of Josselson & Hammack's guidance), with a particular focus on narratives linked to the YP's central skeleton (as presented in Appendix 3). Steps 2, 3 and 4 were integrated into this central skeleton, where the narratives were colour coded (YP, parent, music mentor and professional). A selection of 'key moments/highlights' identified by the YP and music mentors were also analysed and integrated into this central skeleton, alongside the digital narratives in phase one (denoted by 'blog'). An example of a transcribed reflection video from the digital blog (which was later integrated into the storied narrative) is presented below:

M1: Yeah, it's very much about what you want, the sound you wanna make the style you wanna make and how you wanna do it. Yeah. You know, I make my own music and I make all the decisions about it, so why shouldn't you? You know? But I think... what's been the highlights do you think, for the last little while.

YP 1: I think, making my songs and dedicating my last song's out on YouTube. Dedicating it to my great nan. Yeah, cause I've spent so much time with her and, =like she meant so much to me and I miss her.

M1: Yeah, yeah. You put a lot of emotion into that song. Yeah. And that's what it's all about, you know. Music is it's about expressing your emotions and your thoughts and feelings, and you've definitely done that. You really use these sessions to really do that, and I think that's when you feel you can make something that's really yours and really important to you. And I think you you've really done that really, really well. I'm really proud of you, it's been great. So yeah, we hope that we can do some more sessions with you in the future.

YP 1: I hope so too

JJ

Jake Jackson

Mentor facilitating reflection and looking back on the block - highlight was dedicating song to great Nan - lovely quote illustrating her use of music to express thoughts and feelings, making meaning in this/celebrating through her track

Mentor lifting up the self-expression and emotion behind YP's music-making and the role of this. A genuinely warm sense of pride and celebrating the progress and engagement of the YP

- Music and emotions
- Making sense of past experiences
- Self-determination theory (relatedness)

Following step 1 analysis (thematic content of transcripts), step 2 is outlined below:

Thematic cluster	Voices
Disempowering discourses and institutions (pre-NS)	Challenges with learning; SEN (school systems) Sense of disempowerment, challenge and self-identity ADHD and Autism/SEN needs Inappropriate specialist and mainstream provision Transition to secondary and YP's needs Impact of lockdown and lack of provision
Role of music mentor and process of music-making	Theoretical underpinning; engagement and enjoyment Through the 'shared space' and exploration/adventure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Modelling and building independence - Building competence and knowledge - Sense of mastery, success and skill-building Appreciating the unique strengths and needs of YP Shared enjoyment and relationship-building Shifting narratives and role: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collaboration and performance - Autonomy, power and control (moving away from dyadic) Easing parental apprehension, trust and overturning previous narratives Engaging in something positive and productive (overturning challenges experiences)
Connecting with others through music	Collaboration Relationship with significant others (e.g. Mum and Nan) Digital connectedness and confidence Sense of community Connecting with the audience; YP as a performer
Making-meaning through music	Identity as an artist/performer Storytelling and sharing through blog Making sense of/commemorating loss Building new narratives of success Sharing music, pride and wider connections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing to YouTube - Prosocial function of music and engaging with 'audience' (reconnecting?) Fostering a sense of passion and engagement
Enhancing mood and managing emotion (Anxiety and positive mood)	Sense of happiness, flow and 'escapism' Alleviating anxiety YP "in her element" General passion for music Overcoming challenges relating to SEN Needs

(Expressing and managing feelings)	Music as a foundation Therapeutic effect and finding a voice (self-expression)
Passion and fostering competence (facilitated by mentor)	Experiencing a sense of success and mastery Passion and engagement
Building resilience, confidence and self-esteem	Feeling empowered to approach new situations/challenges (feedback and Moving beyond fixed mindsets/narratives Overcoming challenges Sense of accomplishment and success Filming experience (approaching challenges)
Identity intersections	Sense of identity/self and SEN Overcoming self-doubt and changing narratives Restoring “the old X”/seeing the ‘real X’ X as a performer/artist/popstar
Future aspirations	Restoring hope, positivity and enthusiasm Pursuing passions and realising Forming new expectations of success and aspiration Wider systems; funding, opportunities and post-16 Exploring together and fostering independence
Restoring parental hope and respite	Generating alternative narratives and hope Parent of YP with SEN Supporting parental MH/wellbeing and shaping the relational dynamic

This illustrates the integration of the narratives of parents, music mentors and key professionals with the central skeleton of the YP. In steps 3 and 4, complementary interim narratives from parents, music mentors and key professionals were integrated or added to relevant sections of the central YP skeleton. It was felt this added further texture and meaning to the analysis. Unique and rich narratives also emerged from other participants, which were felt relevant to the research question. The overarching storied narrative is presented below (steps 3 and 4):

Pattern	Theory connections
<p>Sense of disempowerment, challenge and difficulty from prior experiences of education, impacting on stress levels and wellbeing</p> <p>The music-sessions and positive experiences restoring a sense of hope and reparation for challenging past experiences</p> <p>YP feeling a sense of being let down, disempowered and disconnected in her education</p> <p>The music-sessions providing a sense of restoring/repairing a sense of belonging and feeling valued</p>	<p>Learned helplessness</p>
<p>Mentor approach underpinned by SDT; fostering a sense of engagement and enjoyment through a child-led approach</p> <p>YP having a sense of control and ownership over music-making; growing independence, choice and awareness of growing skills (Week 3 first song reflection and week 11 after 'Nan song')</p> <p>Growing sense of trust, playfulness and comfort in the working relationship between mentor and YP (Week 3 first song reflection)</p> <p>Fostering a sense of competence, mastery and success through the shared space (mentor and YP), working to overturn previous narratives and apprehension</p> <p>A sense of shared enjoyment, exploration and performance; moving towards an equal balance of power and collaboration with music mentor</p> <p>Fostering a sense of comfort, trust and feeling heard in the shared space with the music mentor</p> <p>Mentor appreciating the uniqueness, strengths and needs of the YP; quickly developing a positive and trusting relationship</p> <p>"you get such a buzz out of being here"; YP experiencing a sense of enjoyment and growing in the studio environment (Week 6 first session in the studio)</p> <p>Music-sessions building on YP's interests and future aspirations, fostering intrinsic motivation and a sense of passion</p>	<p>SDT BPNT (Ryan & Deci, 2002); fostering competence (sense of skill-building), autonomy (choice and volition) and relatedness (shared exploration and journey) 'Musicking' (Small, 1998)</p> <p>Theory of intersubjectivity (Trevarthen & Aitken, 2001) Social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) Informal learning theories (Becket & Hager, 2002) Emotional containment</p>

<p>X finding her passion/"thing" and experiencing a sense of success that was missing</p>	
<p>Music-making as providing opportunities to share and collaborative with family and a wider 'audience', fostering a sense of cohesion and connectedness</p> <p>Music-making as a vehicle to connect with the 'people that matter'; including them in the process and fostering a sense of achievement</p> <p>Music sessions providing respite and strengthening the connection between YP and mother</p> <p>Music sessions supporting parental MH and wellbeing; providing respite and re-shaping the relational dynamic</p> <p>Sharing progress and digital interactions fostering a sense of pride, achievement and recognition</p>	<p>SDT BPNT Social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) Theories of parental stress</p>
<p>Music as storytelling and connecting with the artist/performer self-identity of the YP; making meaning through her tracks and sharing with a wider 'audience'</p> <p>YP connecting with the performer/artist aspect of her identity; music sessions providing a platform to explore, showcase and connect with an 'audience'</p>	<p>Social capital (Bourdieu, 1986) Digital technologies and narratives (de Bruin, 2021)</p>
<p>Music-making sessions enhancing mood and fostering a sense of flow and positivity; reflecting the YP "in her element"</p> <p>The 'therapeutic' relationship music and her mentor supporting the YP to express herself, manage her emotions and find her voice</p> <p>A possible therapeutic effect via supporting YP to connect with their thoughts and feelings; promoting a sense of self-expression and finding her 'voice'</p> <p>Mentor fostering joint reflection on music-making and emotion; YP expressing thoughts and feelings through her tracks (Week 11: 'Nan' song)</p> <p>Mentor feeling a sense of privilege at seeing the 'real' YP, the music sessions as a 'distraction' or escape from the difficulties and anxiety</p> <p>Music sessions alleviating feelings of anxiety and contributing to physical changes in the YP's wellbeing</p>	<p>Positive psychology and 'flow' Models of self-regulation and managing emotions/research linking music and emotions (i.e. Jacobson & Artman, 2013)</p>

<p>Mentor feeling a sense of privilege at seeing the 'real' YP; music sessions as a 'distraction' or escape from the difficulties/anxiety</p>	
<p>Music sessions providing opportunities to overcome/approach challenges and experience a sense of accomplishment, fostering resilience and building alternative narratives around confidence and self-esteem</p> <p>Music sessions providing a platform/foundation to build confidence and approach new challenges (leading to more positive narratives and opportunities)</p> <p>X approaching new challenges with positivity; fostering a sense of pride, achievement and wanting to share this with others</p>	<p>Growth mindsets (Dweck, 2006) Resilience models Social capital and social bridging (Bourdieu, 1986) Narrative theory (LeBlanc, 2017) and digital narratives (de Bruin, 2021)</p>
<p>X overcoming self-doubt and problematic narratives around herself and her learning; a sense of "restoring the old X" and connecting with her preferred stories around performance and artistry</p>	<p>Self-identity/self-concept Narrative theory (LeBlanc, 2017) and digital narratives (de Bruin, 2021)</p>
<p>X experiencing a sense of hope, positivity and passion for the future; forming new expectation of success, aspiration and taking the next steps in her music journey</p> <p>Building competence and exploring together; fostering a sense of independence and tapping into X's passion for music in the future</p>	<p>Alternative stories and narrative therapy principles</p>

As described in Appendix 3, relevant excerpts/stanzas were highlighted, re-organised and pasted linking to relevant interim narratives. This formed the overarching storied narrative of Taylor's journey. A sample of this is presented below, which integrates the narratives of participants around the central skeleton (interim narrative of the YP):

Interim narrative	Theory connection
<p>Music-making sessions enhancing mood and fostering a sense of flow and positivity; reflecting the YP "in her element" and alleviating anxiety</p> <p>The 'therapeutic' relationship music and her mentor supporting the YP to express herself, manage her emotions and find her voice</p> <p>Mentor fostering joint reflection on music-making and emotion; YP expressing thoughts and feelings through her tracks (Week 11: 'Nan' song)</p> <p>X approaching new challenges with positivity; fostering a sense of pride, achievement and wanting to share this with others</p> <p>Mentor feeling a sense of privilege at seeing the 'real' YP, the music sessions as a 'distraction' or escape from the difficulties and anxiety</p> <p>Music sessions alleviating feelings of anxiety and contributing to physical changes in the YP's wellbeing</p>	<p>Positive psychology and 'flow'</p> <p>Models of self-regulation and managing emotions/research linking music and emotions (i.e. Jacobson & Artman, 2013)</p>

Excerpts/stanzas of participants

<p>Music and emotions</p> <p>YP1: I actually liked it, like doing the music and, music is my happy place. Like when I'm upset or anything, I go upstairs and listen to music in my bedroom and I've always liked music from very little age</p> <p>YP1: Yeah I just felt, when I'm doing my music, I feel comfortable and I'm just in my element. Like singing away. And I don't realize it.</p> <p>YP1: Yeah I do get anxious before. But then when I'm there and in the moment and in the moment, then I'm in my element</p>	<p>JJ Jake Jackson ...</p> <p>Role/function of music to YP; self-regulation, calming and area of passion/interest. A sense of this representing future aspirations and a performative aspect. This was expressed with a real positivity and enthusiasm</p> <p>Reply</p>
<p>YP1: Yeah, I felt little bit less anxious than and that I just felt comfortable doing my music. It's happy, like I'm always happy. Like when I come out of the studio I'm like happy and sharing my songs with Mum, showing her what I've been doing.</p> <p>YP1: It's just helped me like as a person to realise what it's really about and it makes you in a happier mood and. Like when you're in a bad mood, it just makes it. It helps you bring into a good mood. And it makes you like relax and stuff.</p> <p>Enhancing confidence and feelings of happiness</p>	<p>JJ Jake Jackson ...</p> <p>The music sessions improving mood and fostering a sense of happiness and relaxation. From the repetition of these themes I had a sense that the YP greatly appreciates this</p>

YP1: Like I feel when I'm having my music lesson, I feel much happier in myself and, like confident, and I don't mind singing in front of people. Because like when I first had it I was nervous on the first day and then as the weeks went on, I started like building my confidence up and just started singing.

YP1: Well, I just, I just feel more happier when I'm doing my music lesson.

YP1: Yeah, a lot. I just felt happy when I'm doing my music.

Alleviating anxiety and challenging feelings

P1: Yeah. And even like I, I never forget in the first lot of sessions that we had, there was a one session where we would do to go over to the studio and that morning had been horrendous. She was anxious, she'd been crying. She was like, I don't wanna go. And I said you are going because I know that once you've done your session, you'll feel completely different. And I didn't say anything to the mentor because by the time we've got there, she was in an all right kind of mood. She wasn't crying or anything. And she went in fine. And when they come out, she was really happy to tell me all about this session.

P1: Ohh yeah, definitely. I mean she her anxiety just goes when she's in them sessions. Perhaps it's because she's focusing on something that she really is passionate about.

Music sessions alleviating anxiety, a release and distraction

M1: Yeah, yeah, it flows nicely, actually really, really well. And there was one session last week where she was feeling quite anxious, she's not been doing too well. But she still did it and did a really good session and we sort of talked a bit afterwards. I sort of tried to sort of get wanted her to see if she could acknowledge that. That doing music sort of helped her anxiety and helped her calm. And she said it had before. But I've sort of not really seen it. She told me that it had helped her anxiety before and her mom had said that, but I hadn't actually seen that. I just saw someone who was keen to get cracking on. And, you know, after two hours is, you know, could carry on for another two hours quite happily. I didn't see a lot

space, which perhaps helps to regulate her emotions

Reply

JJ Jake Jackson

Repetition of the music-making fostering happiness and enhancing confidence. There was a sense of this developing over time and overcoming initial obstacles (feelings of worry and anxiety). This was reflected in her singing.

Reply

one of the first sessions and music-making as being beneficial to emotions and stress
A sense of something changing and the anxiety and difficult emotions 'floating away'

- EXCEPTIONS TO CHALLENGES AND MUSIC AS AN 'ESCAPE'
- PASSION FOR MUSIC (MUSIC CULTURE AND INTERESTS)

Reply

of anxiety in her until the last session and. I could see she was sort of struggling a bit and she'd had a bit a bit of a tough night, I think.

M1: She did. By the end of the session, you know, you seem just seem normal X.

M1: I think so. Yeah. I think it's a bit of a release for, I also think it's a distraction as well. I think it's like with sort of anxiety. I don't, I haven't talked to her much about her anxiety, but in some cases, it's sort of ruminating thoughts, isn't it? And like obsessive sort of worry, whereas if you're like doing something like applying yourself to something that requires quite a lot of your attention, you haven't. You haven't got the this sort of mental bandwidth to sort of obsess and stress out too much so. My attitude was like, all right, well, let's just, let's just crack on and make some music. And if you

What ensued, was an iterative process of back and forth between the interim narratives of participants, e.g. decisions relating to which excerpts/stanzas to use in the write-up. The centrality of the YP's narratives guided this decision-making progress, with the researcher careful to maintain a coherent thread (and overarching story) using these interim narratives. From this, the researcher was able to present a cohesive and overarching narratives of the journey of the YP.

Appendix 6: University Ethics Approval

[< Back](#)

Ethics ETH2223-0521 (Significant amendments): Mr Jake Jackson : Decision

[Home](#)
[University of East Anglia](#)
[Central Units](#)
[Faculty of Arts and Humanities](#)
[Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences](#)
[Faculty of Science](#)
[Faculty of Social Sciences](#)
[Committees](#)
[Upcoming meetings](#)
[Past meetings](#)
[Accessibility](#)

Sent on **25 Oct 2022** by **Lee Beaumont**

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Study title: The Need for Relatedness: Exploring the ways in which a Digital Music Intervention Affects the Wellbeing of Young People with SEND

Application ID: ETH2223-0521 (significant amendments)

Dear Jake,

Your application was considered on 25th October 2022 by the EDU S-REC (School of Education and Lifelong Learning Research Ethics Subcommittee).

The decision is: **approved**.

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

This approval will expire on **20th June 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.

This approval will expire on **20th June 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,

Lee Beaumont

[Committees](#)
[Upcoming meetings](#)
[Past meetings](#)
[Accessibility](#)

Appendix 7: Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms

Jake Jackson
Postgraduate Researcher

August 2022

Faculty of Social Sciences
School of Education and Lifelong
Learning

University of East Anglia
Norwich Research Park
Norwich NR4 7TJ
United Kingdom

Email: jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk
Web: www.uea.ac.uk

Exploring the ways in which a digital music intervention affects the wellbeing of children and young people

PARENTAL/GUARDIAN INFORMATION STATEMENT

(1) What is this study about?

Your child is invited to take part in a research study about the ways in which the Noise Solution programme affects the relationships and wellbeing of children and young people. I am interested in finding out about how the programme provided opportunities for your child to build relationships and a sense of belonging with others, and how this impacted on their wellbeing.

With the permission of yourself and your child, I will be exploring the information already collected by Noise Solution around the journey of your child (including online blog posts, session reflections/conversations with music mentors and wellbeing scores). Your child will be given an opportunity to review my interpretation and share any thoughts/experiences if they wish to.

I will also be seeking the perspective of yourself and a key professional (who was in contact/working with your child over their Noise Solution journey, for example a school staff member, key adult or referring professional). I will be seeking to find out your perspectives on how the programme may have impacted relationships with others and the wellbeing of your child. Please see participant information sheet for further detail around what you will be asked to do should you wish to take part.

You and your child have been invited to participate in this study because your child has completed the Noise Solution programme. It is felt you will hold valuable insight into the journey of your child in relation to their relationships with others and their wellbeing.

This Participant Information Statement tells you about the research study. Knowing what is involved will help you decide if you and your child would like 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 for your child to take part in the research study as outlined below.
- Agree to the use of your child's personal information as described
- You have received a copy of this Participant Information Statement to keep.

(2) Who is running the study?

The study is being carried out by Jake Jackson, Postgraduate Researcher at the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of East Anglia, jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

This study will take place under the supervision of Dr Kimberly Bartholomew, Associate Professor, School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of East Anglia, k.bartholomew@uea.ac.uk

(3) What will the study involve for my child?

Your child will be asked for their permission to use their information already collected by Noise Solution. This includes online blog posts, session reflections/conversations with music mentors and wellbeing scores from their time at Noise Solution.

This information will be analysed to learn more about their relationships whilst engaging in the music-making programme. To ensure your child has the opportunity to be part of this process, they will be given the option to review what I learned after looking through this information. This will be in the form of a short summary document. If your child would like to, they can reply with their thoughts about this (for example, if they would like to change, add or say anything about their experiences). They can reply via the email with your support or, if preferred I would be happy to arrange a time to talk to you both via Teams to discuss or answer any questions. In the event of this (and with your permission), I will record this Microsoft Teams meeting, transcribe the conversation and include their thoughts in the write up of the project.

Permission will also be sought for me to interview yourself and a key professional. This may include a school staff member or a professional that works closely with you and your child (e.g. a Teacher, Special Educational Needs Coordinator, Family Support Worker, Educational Psychologist, Social Worker etc.).

After providing consent if they are happy to, your child will not be asked to do anything further. They will also be provided with the option to receive a summary document, presenting what I learned after the project has been completed.

(4) How much of my child's time will the study take?

As there is no specific request for time (or meeting) with your child, the study is not expected to take up a particular amount of time. There may be a small amount of time required if your child wishes to review my initial thoughts on the information, share their thoughts or discuss this. However, this is not expected to take a significant amount of time (i.e. no longer than one hour, depending on how much time your child wishes to spend on/share their thoughts).

(5) Does my child have to be in the study? Can my child withdraw from the study once they have started?

Being in this study is completely voluntary and your child does not have to take part or consent to their information being used. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relationship with the researcher or anyone else at the University of East Anglia or Noise Solution now or in the future.

If you decide to let your child take part in the study and then change your mind later (or they no longer wish to take part or consent for their information to be used), they are free to withdraw from the study at any time and, you can withdraw your consent up to the point that

interview data is analysed and my thesis is submitted. You can do this by emailing me at jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

(6) What are the consequences if my child withdraws from the study?

Your child is free to stop the research activity at any time, e.g. if they no longer wish for their information to be used for the study or for the interviews to take place. They can also indicate if they no longer wish for their thoughts to be included after reviewing my initial analysis. If you or your child disagrees with anything in my initial analysis, I am happy to discuss this, re-shape/include your thoughts or remove that part of the analysis.

Unless you and/or your child say that you want us to keep them, any materials (e.g. images, recordings, text from Noise Solution information and interviews) will be erased and the information you or your child has provided will not be included in the study results. Your child may also refuse to take part in any of the activities that they wish.

If you decide at a later time to withdraw your child (or your child decides this) from the study their information will be removed from our records and will not be included in any results, up to the point I have analysed and published the results, and this would include the submission of the thesis for assessment purposes.

(7) Are there any risks or costs associated with my child 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 for your child. I do not anticipate your child will find reviewing my initial analysis or sharing their thoughts upsetting or distressing. However, if this is difficult for them I will share the contact information of some organisations who may be able to help your child to deal with any challenging feelings.

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

By taking part in this study, your child will contribute to a better understand how programmes like Noise Solution affect the relationships and wellbeing of children and young people. This may help inform how children and young people are supported in the future (e.g. using programmes such as Noise Solution's). This may also provide them with a new perspective/understanding of their experience at Noise Solution and an opportunity to contribute to this (e.g. by opportunities to share their thoughts).

(9) What will happen to information provided by my child and data collected during the study?

Your child's personal data and information will only be used as outlined in this Participant Information Statement, 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](#).

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

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

When you have read this information, Jake will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have about the study. You can contact me at jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

(11) Will my child be told the results of the study?

You and your child have a right to receive feedback about the overall results of this study.

You can tell me that you wish to receive feedback by contacting me at jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk. The feedback will be in the form of a summary of the research findings and will be available after completion of the research (August 2023).

(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 at the following address:

Jake Jackson
School of Education and Lifelong Learning
University of East Anglia
NORWICH NR4 7TJ
jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

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 the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, Professor Yann Lebeau at y.lebeau@uea.ac.uk

(13) How do we 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 my child needs 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.uk in the first instance.

(15) OK, I am happy for my child to take part – what do I do next?

If you are happy to provide consent to take part, please fill in one copy of the consent form and email a scanned copy or photograph to j.jackson@uea.ac.uk. Please keep the letter, information sheet and the second copy of the consent form for your information.

Your child will also be send a separate information sheet and consent form, for them to provide their permission if they are happy to be involved in the study. If you could support them to read this, fill in one copy of the consent form and email a scanned copy or

photograph that would be appreciated (if they are happy to give their consent to take part). They can keep the letter information sheet and the second copy of the consent form for their information.

(16) Further information

This information was last updated on 6th June 2022.

If there are changes to the information provided, you will be notified by me via email (from j.jackson@uea.ac.uk)

This information sheet is for you to keep.

Please indicate below the name and email address of the key professional that could be contacted as part of this research:

Key Professional's name Email:

If my child wishes to share their thoughts with the researcher, I consent to:

My child's thoughts/experiences being included in the write up of the research YES NO

The Microsoft Teams call being recorded YES NO

Would you like to receive a written copy (transcription) of our interview? YES NO

Would you like to receive feedback about the overall results of this study? YES NO

If you answered **YES**, please indicate your preferred form of feedback and address:

Postal: _____

Email: _____

.....
Signature

.....
PRINT name

.....
Date

Key Professional's name Email:

If my child wishes to share their thoughts with the researcher, I consent to:

My child's thoughts/experiences being included in the write up of the research YES NO

The Microsoft Teams call being recorded YES NO

Would you like to receive a written copy (transcription) of our interview? YES NO

Would you like to receive feedback about the overall results of this study? YES NO

If you answered **YES**, please indicate your preferred form of feedback and address:

Postal: _____

Email: _____

.....
Signature

.....
PRINT name

.....
Date

Jake Jackson
Postgraduate Researcher

August 2022

Faculty of Social
Sciences

School of Education and Lifelong
Learning

University of East Anglia
Norwich Research Park
Norwich NR4 7TJ
United Kingdom

Email: jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk
Web: www.uea.ac.uk

Exploring the ways in which a digital music intervention affects the wellbeing of young people

Study Information Sheet

Hello. My name is Jake



This information sheet is for you. If you need help to read or understand anything on this form, please ask an adult to help you.

I am doing a research project to find out more about your journey through your time at Noise Solution. I am interesting in finding out how the music sessions might have helped you build relationships with others (for example your parents/carers, school staff or other adults that supported you on this journey).

I am asking you to be in my study because you have completed all of your sessions at Noise Solution. I would like to ask for your permission to use your online blog posts and session reports/reflections with your music mentors for the study. This will also include your questionnaire scores. If you would like to, you can look through my thoughts on this information and share anything you might like to change or add.

I would also like to ask your permission for me to talk to your parents/carers and other adults that were involved in your journey (this could include a teacher/staff member or another adult that supported you). I would like to talk to them about what they noticed about your relationships before, during and after your time at Noise Solution, and how this may have affected your wellbeing (feeling happy, comfortable and healthy).

You can decide if you want to take part in the study or not. You don't have to - it's up to you. This sheet tells you what I will ask you to do if you decide to take part in the study. Please read it carefully so that you can make up your mind about whether you want to take part.

If you decide you want to be in the study and then you change your mind later, that's ok. All you need to do is tell me that you don't want to be in the study anymore. You or your family or someone who looks after you can email me at jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

If you have any questions you can speak to me or your family or someone else who looks after you. If you want to, you can contact me on jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

What will happen if I say that I want to be in the study?

If you decide that you want to be in my study, I will ask you to do these things:

- If you are happy to, provide your permission for me to use your information from Noise Solution for the study. This includes your online blog posts, conversations/reflections with music mentors and your questionnaire scores. I will ask you to provide your permission for me to talk to your parents/those who look after you or key adults that were part of your Noise Solution journey.
- If you would like to, you can look at what I thought and learned from your online blog posts and session reports/your conversations with your music mentor. I can send you a short summary page of what I found to the email address of your parents or whoever looks after you. You can share any thoughts you might have (or what you might like to change or add) by replying to this email. Or, if you would like to talk to me about this and share your views, I would be happy to arrange a time to talk to you and your parent or whoever looks after you (they can help you let me know). It is completely up to you if you would like any thoughts you give to be included in the study.
- After this, with your permission I will take to your parent or whoever looks after you and other adults that know you well. You will not need to do anything for this part.

Will anyone else know what I say in the study?



If you choose to share your thoughts with me, I won't tell anyone else what you say to me, except if you talk about someone hurting you or about you hurting yourself or someone else or doing something you should not be doing. Then I might need to tell someone to keep you and other people safe.

All of the information that I have about you from the study will be stored in a safe place and I will look after it very carefully. I will write a report about the study and show it to other people, but I won't put your name in the report and no one will know that you're in the study.

How long will the study take?



Looking over the summary document of my thoughts (and sharing yours) if you would like to, should take no longer than 30 minutes. If you do not wish to look over this or share your thoughts with me, the study will not take up any of your time and you will not need to do anything else.

Are there any good things about being in the study?



By taking part in the study, you will be helping us to understand more about how the music-sessions work. You won't get anything for being in the study, but you will be helping me do my research. I will feel very grateful that you have taken the time and given permission for me to explore your journey.

Are there any bad things about being in the study?



This study will take up a little of your time, if you wish to look at my thoughts and share your own. I don't think it will be bad for you or cost you anything. I do not think you will find looking over my thoughts or sharing your own upsetting, but if you do find it difficult I can share the contact information of some people that may be able to help you.

Will you tell me what you learned in the study at the end?

Yes, I will if you want me to. There is a question on the next page that asks you if you want me to tell you what I learned in the study. If you circle Yes, when I finish the study I will tell you what I learned after talking to your parents/carers and other adults that were part of your Noise Solution journey. This is in addition to sending my thoughts to you after I have looked over your online blog and session reports, if you wish.

What if I am not happy with the study or the people doing the study?

If you are not happy with how I am doing the study or how I treat you, then you **or the person who looks after you** can:

- Write an **email** to me on jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk
- Write an **email** to the Head of School Yann Lebeau y.lebeau@uea.ac.uk



This sheet is for you to keep.

Exploring the ways in which a digital music intervention effects the wellbeing of young people

Consent Form 1 (A copy for me)

If you are happy to be in the study, please

- **write** your **name** in the space below
- **sign** your **name** at the bottom of the next page
- put the **date** at the bottom of the next page.

You should only say 'yes' to being in the study if you know what it is about and you want to be in it. If you don't want to be in the study, don't sign the form.

I,[PRINT NAME], am happy to be in this research study.

In saying yes to being in the study, I am saying that:

- I know what the study is about.
- I know what I will be asked to do.
- Someone has talked to me about the study.
- My questions have been answered.
- I know that I don't have to be in the study if I don't want to.
- I know that I can pull out of the study at any time if I don't want to do it anymore.
- I know that I don't have to answer any questions that I don't want to answer.
- I know that the researchers won't tell anyone what I say when I talk to each other, unless I talk about being hurt by someone or hurting myself or someone else.

Now I am going to ask you if you are happy to do a few other things in the study. Please circle 'Yes' or 'No' to tell me what you would like.

Are you happy for me to use your information from Noise Solution (e.g. your online blog posts, session Reflections/conversations with music mentors, and questionnaire scores)?	Yes	No
--	------------	-----------

Do you want me to share what I learned after looking over this information? This may include you sending your thoughts through email or talking to me if you wish.	Yes	No
---	------------	-----------

Are you happy for me to include any thoughts or experiences you share with me in the study?	Yes	No
--	------------	-----------

Are you happy for me to record our conversation on Microsoft Teams (if we have one)	Yes	No
--	------------	-----------

Do you want me to tell you what I learned in the study at the end?	Yes	No
---	------------	-----------

.....
Signature

.....
Date

Exploring the ways in which a digital music intervention effects the wellbeing of young people

Consent Form 1 (A copy for you)

If you are happy to be in the study, please

- **write** your **name** in the space below
- **sign** your **name** at the bottom of the next page
- put the **date** at the bottom of the next page.

You should only say 'yes' to being in the study if you know what it is about and you want to be in it. If you don't want to be in the study, don't sign the form.

I,[PRINT NAME], am happy to be in this research study.

In saying yes to being in the study, I am saying that:

- I know what the study is about.
- I know what I will be asked to do.
- Someone has talked to me about the study.
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Are you happy for me to **use your information** from Noise Solution (e.g. your online blog posts, session Reflections/conversations with music mentors, and questionnaire scores)? **Yes** **No**

Do you want me to **share what I learned** after looking over this information? This may include you sending your thoughts through email or talking to me if you wish. **Yes** **No**

Are you happy for me **to include** any thoughts or experiences you share with me in the study? **Yes** **No**

Are you happy for me **to record** our conversation on Microsoft Teams (if we have one) **Yes** **No**

Do you want me to tell you what I **learned** in the study at the end? **Yes** **No**

.....
Signature

.....
Date

Jake Jackson
Postgraduate Researcher

August 2022

Faculty of Social Sciences
School of Education and Lifelong
Learning

University of East Anglia
Norwich Research Park
Norwich NR4 7TJ
United Kingdom

Email: jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk
Web: www.uea.ac.uk

Exploring the ways in which a digital music intervention affects the wellbeing of children and young people

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

(1) What is this study about?

You are invited to take part in a research study about the ways in which the Noise Solution programme affects the relationships and wellbeing of children. I am interested in finding out about how the programme provided opportunities for children to build relationships and a sense of belonging with others, and how this impacted on their wellbeing.

I will be exploring the information already collected by Noise Solution around the journey of the children (including online blog posts, session reflections/conversations with music mentors and wellbeing scores). I will also be seeking the perspectives of parents/carers and key professionals on how the programme may have impacted relationships with others and their wellbeing.

You have been invited to participate in this study because you have been part of the journey of a child while they have completed the Noise Solution sessions. It is felt you will hold valuable insight into this journey in relation to their relationships and wellbeing.

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 Jake Jackson, Postgraduate Researcher at the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of East Anglia, jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

This study will take place under the supervision of Dr Kimberly Bartholomew, Associate Professor, School of Education and Lifelong Learning, University of East Anglia, k.bartholomew@uea.ac.uk

(3) What will the study involve for me?

The study will involve taking part in an online, one-to-one interview with me (Jake Jackson) via Microsoft Teams. During this call I will ask you about your perspective of the relationships and wellbeing of the child prior to, during and after engaging in the Noise Solution programme. For example, what you might have noticed about their relationships and wellbeing over this time.

If you provide consent, I will record our conversation with an audio recorder and record the virtual meeting on Microsoft Teams.

(4) How much of my time will the study take?

The virtual meeting on Microsoft Teams will take between 30 to 60 minutes.

(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 researcher or anyone else at the University of East Anglia or Noise Solution now or in the future.

If you decide to take part in the study, you can withdraw your consent up to the point that interview data is analysed and my thesis is submitted. You can do this by emailing me at jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

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

You are free to stop the interview at any time. Unless you say that you want us to keep them, any recordings will be erased and the information you have provided will not be included in the study results. You may also refuse to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer during the interview. If you decide at a later time to withdraw from the study your information will be removed from our records and will not be included in any results, up to the point I have analysed and published the results, which would include the submission of the thesis for assessment purposes.

(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.

It is not expected that you will find our conversation upsetting or distressing. However, if for any reason you find it difficult talking about your experiences difficult, the conversation will be stopped immediately. I will share the contact information of some organisations/services that may be able to help with any difficult feelings that might arise during our conversation.

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

By taking part in this study, your views will help to better understand how programmes like Noise Solution affect the relationships and wellbeing of children and young people. This may help inform how children and young people are supported in the future (e.g. using programmes such as Noise Solution's).

(9) What will happen to information provided by me and data collected during 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.

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

When you have read this information, Jake will be available to discuss it with you further and answer any questions you may have about the study. You can contact me at jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

(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 tell me that you wish to receive feedback by contacting me at jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk. The feedback will be in the form of a summary of the research findings and will be available after completion of the research (August 2023).

(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 at the following address:

Jake Jackson
School of Education and Lifelong Learning
University of East Anglia
NORWICH NR4 7TJ
jake.jackson@uea.ac.uk

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 the School of Education and Lifelong Learning, Professor Yann Lebeau at y.lebeau@uea.ac.uk

(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.uk in the first instance.

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

If you are happy to provide consent to take part, please fill in one copy of the consent form and email a scanned copy or photograph to j.jackson@uea.ac.uk. Please keep the letter, information sheet and **the second** copy of the consent form for your information.

(16) Further information

This information was last updated on 6th June 2022.

If there are changes to the information provided, you will be notified by me via email (from j.jackson@uea.ac.uk)

This information sheet is for you to keep.

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (First Copy to Researcher)

I, [PRINT NAME], agree to take part in this research study.

In giving my consent I state that:

- I understand the purpose of the study, what I will be asked to do, and any risks/benefits involved.
- I have read the Participant Information Sheet, which I may keep, for my records, and have been able to discuss my involvement in the study with the researcher if I wished to do so.
- The researcher has answered any questions that I had about the study and I am happy with the answers.
- I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary and I do not have to take part. My decision whether to be in the study will not affect my relationship with the researcher or anyone else at the University of East Anglia or Noise Solution now or in the future.
- I understand that I may stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, and that unless I indicate otherwise any recordings will then be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study results. I also understand that I may refuse to answer any questions I don't wish to answer.
- I understand that personal information about me that is collected over the course of this project will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that I have agreed to. I understand that information about me will only be told to others with my permission, except as required by law.
- I understand that the results of this study will be used for a thesis assessment and may be published but that the thesis and any publications will not contain my name or any identifiable information about me.

I consent to:

Audio-recording	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recording of the Microsoft Teams meeting	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would you like to receive a written copy (transcription) of our interview?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Would you like to receive feedback about the overall results of this study?	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you answered **YES**, please indicate your preferred form of feedback and address:

Postal: _____

Email: _____

.....
Signature

PRINT name

.....

Date

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM (Second Copy to Participant)

I, [PRINT NAME], agree to take part in this research study.

In giving my consent I state that:

- I understand the purpose of the study, what I will be asked to do, and any risks/benefits involved.
- I have read the Participant Information Sheet, which I may keep, for my records, and have been able to discuss my involvement in the study with the researcher if I wished to do so.
- The researcher has answered any questions that I had about the study and I am happy with the answers.
- I understand that being in this study is completely voluntary and I do not have to take part. My decision whether to be in the study will not affect my relationship with the researcher or anyone else at the University of East Anglia or Noise Solution now or in the future.
- I understand that I may stop the interview at any time if I do not wish to continue, and that unless I indicate otherwise any recordings will then be erased and the information provided will not be included in the study results. I also understand that I may refuse to answer any questions I don't wish to answer.
- I understand that personal information about me that is collected over the course of this project will be stored securely and will only be used for purposes that I have agreed to. I understand that information about me will only be told to others with my permission, except as required by law.
- I understand that the results of this study will be used for a thesis assessment and may be published but that the thesis and any publications will not contain my name or any identifiable information about me.

I consent to:

Audio-recording	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Recording of the Microsoft Teams meeting	YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	NO	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would you like to receive feedback about the overall results of this study?

YES NO

If you answered **YES**, please indicate your preferred form of feedback and address:

Postal: _____

Email: _____

.....
Signature

.....
PRINT name

.....
Date

Glossary

AEP:	Association of Educational Psychologists
BPNT:	Basic Psychological Needs Theory
BPS:	British Psychological Society
CoP:	Code of Practice
Covid-19	Coronavirus Disease
CYP:	Children and Young People
DfE:	Department for Education
EP:	Educational Psychology
HCPC:	Health and Care Professions Council
IF:	Inclusion Framework
NA:	Narrative Analysis
NS:	Noise Solution
RCT:	Randomised Controlled Trial
SDT:	Self Determination Theory
SEMH:	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
SEND:	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
TEP:	Trainee Educational Psychologist
YP:	Young People

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